

by the empty fireplace — in the shadow — his head turned in his strange, listening, attentive way toward the table — toward the four who were grouped around it. There had been no one to stay with him in his own room, and so Helena had brought him there — to play his silent part.

At the table, Pale Face Harry, bronzed and rugged, clear-eyed, a robust figure from his clean living, his months of the out-of-doors, traced the grain of the wood on the table mechanically with his finger nail, his face sober, perplexed; while the Flopper, clear-eyed too, his face almost a handsome one in its bright alertness, now that it had rounded out and the hard, premature lines were gone, mirrored Pale Face Harry's perturbed expression, his eyes fixed anxiously on Madison opposite him; and Helena, sitting beside Madison, was very quiet, her forehead wrinkled and pursed up into little furrows, the brown eyes with a hint of dismay and consternation lurking in their depths, one hand stretched out to lay quite unconsciously on Madison's sleeve — and from the sleeve to steal occasionally into Madison's hand.

Madison, his lips tight, pushed back his chair suddenly — they had been sitting there an hour.

"You were right, Helena," he said, with a nervous laugh. "The more you try to figure it out the worse it gets."

"Aw, say, Doc," pleaded the Flopper desperately, "don't youse give it up — youse have got de head — youse ain't never left us in a hole yet."