

The woman whose skirt he had seen was in front of him before he became aware of her presence. He found himself looking into the cool half-mocking face of Marie.

"Are you afraid to read your sentence?" she taunted. "Had it not been for you, *he* would have had the mine and a million from his contract and *me*. The President conferred with Senator Clemmer an hour ago. The treaty appropriation bill will be passed with a clause that no commission is to be paid for the services of any tribal agent or representative. *He* has lost everything. And now — I am waiting to see you read that paper."

Hardy drew himself up, opened the envelope, took out the document, and read.

As Marie saw the look of blank incredulity that came into his face, her eyes flashed under the lowering veil of their long lashes. He stared up at her, but was too dazed to perceive the change in her expression.

"Acquitted — honorably — on all charges!" he murmured. "On all charges —! Honorable mention recommended — Approved — the President!"

Marie smiled with cool condescension.

"Merely a question of doing justice to you, Captain Hardy. When a man has done his duty, however harshly, it is the duty of others to see that he receives just compensation. I take credit for having helped to bring this about."