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THE SITTING OF THE STRAY.
The man turned upon him a look of bitter malignity, and opened his mouth as if to speak, when he was prevented by a cry of surprise from the chief, Hanford.
"Hello! Hello! Why, boys, this is a capture indeed! And who do you think this is?" bending down and peering into the handcuffed man's face.
"Who?" asked Tom.
"Scar Top Johnny, of all men in the world. This is a good night's haul. Twenty-five hundred dollars reward for this bird. He's been wanted these eight months for the stealing of the child of that rich man near Hartford."
"With this he took the man's head in his hands and parting the hair showed a deep scar on it."
"An old acquaintance, Tom. I gave him this scar myself six years ago, when he and a gang were robbing express cars in the west."
Tom had evidently determined that, whatever else might occur, speech from him would not, and he contented himself with bending a look of deep hatred on the jubilant chief.
Tom, who had been looking on this scene with great interest, said to the man:
"You didn't abduct this girl on your own accord. You were hired to do it?"
An expression on the scoundrel's face showed him that he had hit the truth closely. This time he spoke.
"I didn't abduct her, you simply took care of her after abduction."
This time Tom had hit the truth squarely, and the man's face showed it.
"Who was the man who hired you?"
Scar Top Johnny regarded Tom with a contemptuous sneer.
"Well," said Tom, "you can answer or not as you please. We can wait for the half-past ten man. He'll tell."
The face of Scar Top Johnny lit up with a passing thought, and an expression of resolve passed over it.
Tom interpreted it accurately, but before he could act upon it, the Shadow gave warning of another comer, and a foot was heard stumbling in the darkness.
The chief, however, had also penetrated the purpose of his prisoner, and pressing the muzzle of his revolver against Scar Top Johnny's head, he said:
"If you utter a cry, or make an alarm, I'll blow your brains out. The reward is dead or alive."
The next moment there was a knock at the door.
Tom, who was closely watching the face of the villain on the floor, saw an expression of surprise flit over it, and saw him turn his head toward the door with a look of curiosity.
The chief called out in a loud voice:
"Enter!"
The door swung open and in walked Harry Fountain.
He was dressed in the same kind of a suit as that the U. S. T. had made their uniforms.
CHAPTER XXXIV.
THE TRAP IS SPRING.
Fountain could not have been more astonished when he viewed the scene before him than was Tom.
Tom was sure, also, that the man on the floor was quite as much astonished as he was. Evidently he was not expecting Fountain, and it was also clear that he did not know who he was.
"That man has come into the other room," said Tom, "and don't let him utter a sound. Gag him. Then we'll make sure."
He was obeyed. The man attempted to make resistance, but he was quickly overpowered and forced into the other room, where the gag was applied.
Fountain looked upon the scene with undisguised amazement. Tom waited for him to speak. Finally, having recovered from his astonishment, he said:
"May I ask the meaning of this strange disguise, Mr. Fountain?" retorted Tom, pointing to his clothes.
"I will relieve your astonishment," continued Tom solemnly, after a moment's silence. "This is a rescue party. These men are detectives. A girl was abducted in broad daylight this morning and confined here. She has just been taken away, having been rescued by myself and friends. Her name, Mr. Fountain, is Annie Templeton--a sister of the murdered Templeton."
Fountain's face expressed neither alarm nor fright, nor anything else but intense surprise and interest.
"You are now waiting for the abductor," added Tom.
"If that's the case, Mr. Bryan, it were better that I retire."
He turned to go to the door.
Tom made a sign to the two detectives. They stepped forward.
"Fardon me, Mr. Fountain, you can not do that. All who enter here are under arrest."
Light broke in on Fountain, and with it intense anger. He turned on Tom, his eyes blazing.
"I understand you? You find that I am not to be trifled with?"
Tom interrupted him in a hard, cold, metallic voice, low in tone:
"No, heroism, Mr. Fountain. You are my prisoner until you can explain your presence here in this den, on this particular night. You can frighten no one here; we're used to just such haughty scoundrels as you are, just as we are to vicious rascals like the one lying in there. His wife's face as dangerous as you can ever be."
The cold self-possession and masterfulness of Tom was irritating in the highest degree to Fountain, and if ever his bounded self-command was needed by him it was at that moment. Appearances were so strongly against him that, angered as he was, he could not fail to realize it.
By a violent effort he put a curb upon his passions, and in a moment he said:
"You think I am the abductor?"
"I don't think it; I'm certain of it."
"You are mistaken." This was said in a tone as cold and as firm as that Tom had used.
"Indeed," said Tom, "perhaps you can explain this?"
He handed to Fountain the slip of paper which had been taken from the

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George Holland is now with me and will be pleased to receive his old patrons.
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NORTH CAROLINA
Anson County--Superior Court.
Edmond D. Gaddy, Administrator, D. B. S. C. T. A. of the Estate of J. Gaddy, and Administrator of Elizabeth G. Gaddy, deceased, Plaintiffs.
J. T. Gaddy and others, Defendants.
PETITION FOR FINAL SETTLEMENT AND DISCHARGE
The undersigned defendant, Joseph H. Gaddy, Ellen D. Gaddy, Charles C. Gaddy, Ann McLean and her husband, Joseph H. Gaddy, Ellen McCreger, and her husband, William E. McCreger, are hereby notified and commanded to appear at the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court for Anson County, at the Court House in Wadesboro, on the 25th day of May, 1890, and plead in answer or desire to the Petition of the said plaintiffs now on file in this office, or to be rendered according to the proceedings of the same previous or final settlement of the estate of J. Gaddy, deceased, made on the 24th day of April, 1890.

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