



By Bentley Ridge

CHAPTER XIII—(Continued) "KINDLY EXPLAIN"

After some minutes Guthrie came in to the tent, still wearing his dark-blue Chinese dressing gown.

Lynne rolled over on to her side away from him, and from sheer physical weakness, burst into tears.

Cartwright stared at Lynne with great curiosity, and some discomfort. Despite some dishevelment, and a long streak of dirt across her forehead he could see she was a very pretty girl.

Lynne broke off. She had been about to say that Julian had left her to go and make arrangements for the very road which had taken place that night.

"You were on the cliff, and you took part in the raid tonight to that extent at any rate," went on Guthrie's voice remorselessly.

Cartwright was staring at his chief in surprise. In all the four years that he had known Guthrie, he had never seen him really angry, and he had never known him to do or say an ungenerous thing.

"I was only on the cliff by chance," said Lynne.

Lynne turned a shade paler, and raised her left hand to cover her eyes. They waited for her to speak but she said nothing.

"That's all," said Guthrie, in a tone of finality. "You needn't explain to me, you can explain to the Persian police!"

Lynne closed her eyes almost overcome by this relief in tension. Guthrie moved towards her, and she started when he momentarily closed his hand over hers.

"Yes, you are cold," he said drawing back, half pretending that he had made certain because he fancied that she was lying.

It was the last straw. Guthrie walked out of the tent and left them. He strolled round the camp, pretending to notice what was being done to put it to rights.

"I have no doubt at all that your brother put the Lyons up to this business tonight! None whatever!

"I think so, too," said Guthrie.

"Then—" Cartwright hesitated, and finally came out with it. "Then will it be much use, sir, sending her to Tehran?"

Guthrie, who had forgotten all about his threat of turning Lynne over to the police, said: "Oh, I shan't do that! One can't, very well."

Cartwright uttered a smothered sigh, and Guthrie realized that the boy had been quite anxious about the matter.

"I must keep a hold on myself! I mustn't play the fool as I did last time I was with her."

Both men waited uncomfortably for Lynne's convulsive weeping to cease; and then Cartwright took matters into his own hands.

"That's better!" said young Cartwright. He drew the rug back slightly from her face.

"I had a bit of a talk with her," Cartwright said. "I asked her what the idea was, and so on, but there was nothing to be got out of her."

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What no doubt is Passion woked; Though till now I never knew, I believe I dole on you; Love unguessed Filled my breast, I will marry you—Yes, Sir, Yes!

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