

to each query whether they had a son named Harold or Hal, came back the clear response. No, they had not.

There remained then merely the one name, Senator T. Beveridge Holloway, the big man of Alberta. She became flustered at the thought that he could possibly be the father of Ellie's young man. In her little world of work and Elspeth, she had learned very little concerning the families of any of the handful of Alberta magnates, as she lacked that feminine quality of curiosity that caused people to pry into the intimate secrets of their neighbors and fellow townspeople. She was indifferent to and most incapable of gossip.

She put her finger in the circle that caused the little automatic disc to ring, and the number W 4839 revolved around. A gruff voice at the other end admitted he was Senator Holloway, and a moment later, yes, he had a son named or known as Hal, though, shouted the senator, the lad's name was Harold Beveridge Holloway.

Then she broke the news to him, a bit tremulously, without awe of the magnate, but with a sympathetic thrill as she realized the power of the man who was now her Elspeth's father-in-law.

"You're son and my daughter have eloped and. . ."

"What's that you say? What are you talking about?"

She replied:

"I said your son and my daughter have eloped. They are married now."

There was a silence, bristling with explosive energy, and presently a voice shot back through the 'phone.

"Who are you?"

"You mean my name? It's Maitland."

"Never heard it before. Who are you, and what the blazes do you mean by coming with a story like that. Who are you? What do you do?"

"Why I—I'm a stenographer in the Fairbanks-Ross company's office, and I. . ."

"A stenographer!"

He shouted the word as if it were something offensive and damnable.

"And you're trying to tell me you've hooked my boy, are you?"

"I don't know what you mean. I'm trying to tell you that your son is married to my daughter."

"Like hell he is!"

Words were sizzling at the other end, and somehow the fury reminded her strangely of Ellie when Ellie was in one of her tantrums. This Senator Holloway was barely able to stutter, and the oaths he was using were unbelievably grotesque and strange. A string of them followed one after another in a long stream, and words were cut in half for oaths to be slipped in between.

Mrs. Maitland stared at that telephone, the color ebbing and flowing from her cheeks. That she should be called such names, and spoken to in this dreadful fashion. That she should be accused of conspiring to. . ."

She let the telephone receiver lie on the table, but the shouting, fearfully swearing voice issued from its end no longer at her ear."

". . . . .not a G. . .d. . . penny! Two more years at college. . . cut him off. . . young cub. . . blanketty blank fool. . . couple of adventuresses and cheat swindlers, blackmailers. . .I'll show you. . .an."

After a while she gingerly lifted the telephone receiver and hung it back upon the hook. Then her finger slowly picked out another number, and whirled the disc around.

"Mr. Fairbanks?"

"The same."

"Mrs. Maitland speaking. About our conversation to-day. I've changed my mind."

"Told you you would." What's the reason?"

"Well, I've just changed my mind, that's all."

"Glad to hear it. What about that Insurance?"

"I—I've got to use it for something else. You see I—I've got another person to support now and. . ."

"What? Say that again."

"Yes, another person—a boy at college. I want him to go on. He—He's my son-in-law you see!"

"Well, for the love of Pete. Has that girl gone and done it?"

"Oh yes, and I think it's my duty to take care of them both, and that's why I have to keep my—my job. I hope you haven't advertised yet—have you?"

"Not yet, but I will unless you'll do something for me."

"What?"

"Got your hat on. I'm coming over with my car. You're going for a ride with me."

Her voice was vibrant, a young treble voice, quite as sweet as a girl's and with even the little thrill of laughter to it that somehow was characteristic rather of Elspeth.

"I don't mind," she said.

