

starin' puzzled through his glasses. "You say you are uncertain whether my services will be—"

"Now listen, Percey," says I. "I'm the most uncertain party at the present writing that you ever saw. But if I should 'phone, I want you to answer the call like a deputy chief goin' to a third alarm. Get that? And I'm payin' time and a half for every minute after dark. See?"

Maybe that wasn't just the way to hire a reverend, but I was too rushed to think up the proper frills. I had to attend to a lot of little things, among 'em bein' this plant with Auntie's cruisin' friend, the widow. She was in the habit, Mrs. Mumford was, of pickin' Auntie up now and then for an evenin' drive in her limousine; and what I was tryin' to suggest was that this would be a swell night for it.

"But I don't see how I can," says she, cooin' as usual. "Mrs. Hemmingway is to be a guest at a going-away dinner, and may not be home until late."

"Eh?" says I. "Why, that's fine—I mean, for Auntie. Ripping, eh, what? Much obliged."

The foxy old girl. She'd never mentioned it. And if I hadn't found out just as I— But I did. It simplifies things a lot. That is, it would unless— Here I grabs the 'phone again and calls up Vee.