

HIS MOTHER

After a moment of silence, he replied: "All right, then. I'll bring her." And rising abruptly from the table, he stalked into the front room and sat down at the window.

She did not need any further proof that the girl had caught him, for he was not the sort of boy to bring any young woman to see her unless he had been already committed, in his own mind, to matrimony. The prospect of his death itself would hardly have been less welcome to her; and yet the hardening of her face and a little trembling of her hands as she took up the dishes were the only signs she showed of her emotion. He was going to marry! She would have to share Larry with a strange woman — if he did not desert her altogether.

She continued her work, all the joy of it gone from her, miserable, but bearing her misery dumbly. She did not even ask him who the girl was. What did it matter *who* it was? She tidied up her kitchen determinedly. "She'll not find the place dirty when she comes," she promised herself — reserving an opinion of what it would be like before the girl had been long in charge of it. And when Larry had dressed and gone out, she attacked the little front room with the same thought — arranging the folds in her lace curtains to conceal patching, and covering the delinquencies of her "crimson plush" with a cushion here and a tidy there, and dusting the paper fans and the framed photograph in its red-velvet mat, and assuring herself that the block of wood was safely supporting the back leg of the easy