



The Alternative

At nine o'clock the next morning she was called to the telephone. She was at breakfast, and her bag was ready for the train. An early glance from the window had filled her with misgivings. The street was absolutely impassable, it seemed to her.

"I won't talk to the reporters," she said to Stokes.

"It is n't a reporter, Miss. It's a gentleman."

"Don't be a snob, Stokes. Who is it?"

"It's Mr. Van Pycke, Miss."

She started. Then she flushed warmly.

"Say to him, Stokes, that I have gone," she said, after a moment.

"Very good, Miss. Anything else?"

She pondered. "Yes, Stokes. Ask him to hold the wire."

"Hold the wire, Miss?"

"Yes, while you run to the door to call me back."

A moment later she was in the telephone room, quite out of breath.

"Who is it?" she called. She compelled him to repeat the name four times. Eventually he got her serious attention.

"No trains until this afternoon?" she cried despairingly.

"Why, the children will be at the station to meet me."

"Trains all snowbound," he announced quite cheerfully. "I've been telephoning."

"It's awfully good of you. I'll call up the Pennsylvania —"

"Don't bother," he called. "I've seen to all that."