

## THE LADY OF THE CROSSING

that it beat cock-fighting. At the back of his mind (that was what the twinkle implied) was the thought that the escapade would be talked of; Marsden, city contractor, riding up on the tramway for a wager! "Say! It beats cock-fighting!"

"I suppose you knew there was a man killed doing that stunt not long ago?" he enquired.

"You bet you," said Marsden.

"Did you know?" said the boss, turning to Sam.

He nodded. "I was working the tram-engine when he came up," he replied. "Awful! I was cut up more than I can say. I had to quit work for the rest of the day when I knew."

"You! Well, that beats cock-fighting!" The boss stoked more steak, and as he munched, bent over his plate, he had another thought. "Anyone that said you lost nerve over that affair can look cheap now. You lost nerve over another man falling out of a bucket when you were tending the engine, but you did it yourself. That's *ver-ry* interesting, right interesting. Is it a big stake you gents had on it?"

"Trifling," replied Marsden quickly. "Yes—trifling, all right, all right." He bent forward and glanced abruptly past the boss, at his rival, with an expression beyond Sam to fathom.

Haig made no response, allowed Marsden's reply to suffice, merely thanked the bouncing "hash-slinger" for peaches and custard at that moment placed before him. When the shaft-whistle blew they shook hands with the boss and with those