

head inside the door, Berger began on him.

"Hey, you butter-in! I hope you're satisfied now. I ain't, that's *allus*. I bet you two got it all made up between you together to ruin me, and by Golly! I got it a notion to fire you both out—each, bodily!

"I'm losing money faster than I made it, let me tell you that, and all on account of you. Nothing would do you but I must fire it out a good man and hire one what's so rotten that—"

"Why! What's the matter—isn't Julius a good man?" inquired Sam, not without trepidation.

"Good! That's a joke. He is the very most rottenest feller what I ever knew with nerve enough to call himself a designer. He could not design cases for sausages. Already he's spoiled enough piece goods to make me wisht I never saw this business. Come here! I'll show you the freaks he's been turning out. It's enough to make a fourth rate designer die laughing. This morning he shows me a design what if I ever made it up would bring Andy Comestocks down here running."

"Whew!" whistled Sam.

"Yes, a couple of whews! I wisht I didn't a listened to your fool's advices, and hadn't never let Kraussman go. Maybe he is a conservative, but anyhow he is on time, and don't come walking in two mornings, one after the other, ten minutes late.

"After this, don't you butt in on the factory. You aint such a much on the road, but at that, you're better there than as a adviser here." So saying, Sol rushed out of the office in a rage.

He returned half an hour later wearing an even blacker scowl, and after banging his hat on a nail and wriggling out of his coat in a way that reminded Sam of a cat frantically dragging itself out of a hole too small for it, he let loose a torrent of profanity.

"I just seen Mrs. Kraussman in the street. She tells me Kraussman is working by Jaffee & Janowitz and is doing fine. She says he gets five dollars more a week as what I paid him and is tickled to death with his job.

"Because I'm such a big fool as to listen to you I has to go it and hire the worst designer in the business what Jaffee & Janowitz fires, and they get it in the place of a fakir, a fine man. Now, if I get

Kraussman back again I got to give him extra a week six dollars, maybe seven."

"So you want him back?" ventured Sam.

"Do I want it a million dollars?"

"You don't seem very grateful for all I try to do for you," said Sam, rising, "but I think maybe I can fix it."

"You ain't much of a fixer, believe me. You better leave it alone before you do it yet more damages," retorted Sol.

But Sam, noting that it was Julius' lunch hour, left without replying. He intercepted that worthy young man and in spite of an unfriendly frown, joined him.

"Hello Julius, I just got back in town. Had a swell trip. What do you think of Mr. Berger and your new job?"

Thereupon, Julius proceeded to give his opinion of his new position and Sol Berger and all Sol's ancestors, in terms that made up in sulphur what they lacked in grammar.

"Why!" he concluded, "I'd rather take it two dollars a week less from my old bosses, bad as they were, than stay with Berger for fifty dollars a minute. That's what I got for listening to your fool advice. I might have been connected up with a good concern if it hadn't been for you."

"That gratitude!" Sam commented, bitterly. "But just to show you that I don't hold it against you, I think I can get you back your old job again, but perhaps you'd rather I didn't butt in any more."

"Gee, Sam, get me back my old job and I'll eat my hat! Jaffee & Janowitz aint exactly the easiest fellers to get along with, but they aint the worst in the business, neither; and, anyhow, they know a designer from a butcher, and that's more as Sol Berger does. I heard Kraussman has my old job. If that aint a pretty kettle of fish!"

"Say, Julius, what'll you have to eat? The lunch is on me."

"I think I'll have a plate of *gefulte fische* and a cup of coffee," answered Julius promptly, smiling for the first time in ten days.

After Julius, filled to satisfaction, had departed, Posner drank two cups of coffee and finished his *mohn kuchen*, meanwhile doing some consider-

ing. Then, he telephoned his wife, told her the results of that consideration, and asked her advice. It was not what he had hoped it would be, so he proceeded to act contrary to it, after the manner of men.

Sam went out of his way again to meet Kraussman as he was leaving his new position that night, and asked him how he liked it.

"Like it!" stuttered Kraussman, "I'd like it like a cat likes to swim! Such a fierce job I never had it yet. Jaffee & Janowitz are both crazy mens. Nothing suits them. They treat everybody like a mangy dog. *Ach*, I wisht I had my old job back. How is that young feller what's got it doing?"

"Fine. But he can't get along with Berger. Now, listen!"

Posner unfolded his scheme. Kraussman declared it was "a lofely idee" and promised to give Jaffee & Janowitz plenty of reason for complaint in case Sam's scheme did not work.

"But, say!" he added, anxiously, "are you sure Berger will fire that feller and that I will get it the job?"

"Dead sure. He is crazy to have you back, and says he knows after this, that you will give us some new stuff. You have it in you, I know that."

The next day Posner called upon Jaffee & Janowitz and found that they entertained much the same opinion of Kraussman as Berger did of Julius and quite as much ill-will toward himself as the cause of all the trouble.

Registering a mental vow never to try to do anyone a good turn again, he told Jaffee & Janowitz, in the strictest confidence, that Berger had offered Kraussman three dollars a week more than they were paying him, to return to him, and that he meant to leave as soon as he had picked up a little more information about their business.

This so enraged Jaffee & Janowitz that they dismissed Kraussman on the spot.

Sam, waiting around the corner, took him in tow and accompanied him back to the home of the Esther B., waist and Berger.

As they entered the office, they found Sol just dismissing Julius, who did not appear at all cast

(Continued on page 24.)

"A S G O O D A S N E W"

By WM. BANKS, JR.

HARRY drove the car home himself. He was greatly excited. "What do you think of it?" he said to mamma and myself. "It's a four seated roadster. Runs like clockwork; is as good as new, and I got it for one quarter of the regular price. Isn't it a beaut?"

"Harry!" said mamma, gently—she does abhor slang.

"Oh, well, mamma, you know what I mean, and surely a little slang doesn't matter when one gets his truly own car, and pays for it out of his own allowance, and—"

Dad came in just then. He's a bit old fashioned, is Dad, and sticks to his horses and the brougham for mamma and me. When Harry told him of his bargain Dad shook his head and eyed the roadster critically. "A little too shiny, isn't it boy?" he asked; and really it did look as though it had been scraped and varnished and rubbed and—oh, well, you know the look, too fixy.

But Harry didn't think so. He asked me if I would go for a spin with him in the morning, and of course I promised. I knew very well there wouldn't be many more invitations from him if the car behaved itself, for he was just perfectly foolish over Flossie Delisle, and she has two sisters who go everywhere with her. She's good to her sisters, is Flossie. Harry had a notion that none of our set, not even Flossie, knew how hard hit he was. He might have counted on me knowing, at any rate; the only girl in a family of six, and two years his senior. But really a boy at twenty-one is so stupid in some things.

We started out the next morning in charming weather. All the stories say that, I know, but this is mere statement of fact, and the roadster ran beautifully. And you should have heard Harry talk about it. I had never dreamed that an automobile possessed so much machinery of so much importance; and talking about machinery always did make my head ache anyway.

We made for the Big Macadam road—there's sixty miles of it altogether, and it runs through the most delightful country—and, well, never mind that part of it. About three miles outside of the city limits the roadster suddenly stopped. There wasn't the slightest warning; it just stopped dead, and almost threw me out. Harry muttered something naughty, jumped out, cranked the machine, climbed into the seat, and pulled the lever, or whatever it

is they do pull to start an auto, but it never moved. He jumped out again, and just as his feet touched the ground the machine started. Harry climbed in quickly and I choked back a scream. One look at Harry's face convinced me that it wasn't a good time to ask questions.

Nothing particular happened for fifteen minutes, and then the roadster began to run from one side of the road to the other in an aimless kind of fashion. It's ridiculous, I know, but really I couldn't help thinking of the way a chicken will sometimes do that without apparent reason or excuse. Of course that started me giggling, and then you should have heard Harry. He was talking wildly about steering columns, whatever they are, up to the time I giggled, and then he began to talk about me.

In the middle of a particularly scathing sentence the roadster stopped again, and Harry once more climbed out to investigate. I haven't the time, really, to tell you all that he did, or pretended to do to that wretched machine. Every time I ventured a suggestion he glared at me like the villain does at the hero in one of those melodrama cry producers. So I just sat still.

By this time quite a number of cars were passing us, some outward bound, some for the city. Quite a few stopped—perhaps a dozen in all—and their drivers proffered any assistance in their power. Harry refused the first proffer so curtly that I was heartily ashamed. Thereafter, every time I noticed a driver about to slow up his car I shook my head. Autoists are quick to understand; there were no more proffers for a long time. Finally, Harry lay flat on the ground and wriggled under the car until I could see nothing of him but his legs from the knees down. I could still hear him though; it was terrible.

It seemed to me that Harry must have been under that car for an hour when he decided to come out for a breathing spell. I know it sounds heartless, but I couldn't help it; the moment my eyes rested upon him I laughed and I kept on laughing. What's the use of trying to tell you what oil, and road dirt, and perspiration had done for him. I laughed until the tears began to roll down my cheeks, and Harry stood in the road with a big wrench in one hand,

a hammer in the other, and a pocket knife in his teeth. He dropped the knife and fairly hissed at me, "get out."

I got; spread a rug near the road fence and sat down, still laughing. I don't know how long I would have kept it up, but just as I was drawing my breath for a new start a quiet voice said, "What's the joke?"

That stopped me. I knew the owner of that voice; it was Mr. Ross Ford. There he was, alone in a big touring car; his own. He had brought it to a standstill near us.

Of course Harry should have explained the trouble to him at once, but he continued to glare at me, and that made me quite angry. I waved a hand towards that abominable roadster and simply said, "that," and, would you believe it, the word was hardly out of my mouth when that roadster began to shiver and shake and grunt. It was the weirdest thing you ever saw. And every moment or two something dropped from it. A bolt, a wire, a nut; it fairly rained hardware. Harry acted like a maniac. He threw the wrench at the machine and smashed a lamp, and was about to throw the hammer when Mr. Ross Ford called out "Whoa," and like a well-trained horse the roadster "whoa'd."

Then Ross—I mean Mr. Ross Ford—looked the wreck all over and said, very deliberately, "It's a four-seated roadster; runs like clockwork; is as good as new, and you can have it for one quarter of the regular price."

I thought for a moment that Harry would make an attempt to strangle him, but Ross—I mean, Mr. Ross Ford—went on, "Don't get angry, old fellow, but the shark who caught you with that relic of the pre-historic period has many notable catches to his credit. He happens to be under considerable indebtedness to my Dad, and we'll see if we cannot make him return some of the money he got out of you. Better come along with me. You can leave that noble ruin there without fear; no one will touch it."

By the time we were almost home Harry had plucked up heart enough to ask, "What's the matter with that roadster I bought, anyway?" and Ross—I mean, Mr. Ross Ford—said, "Oh, nothing much. It needs a new carburetor, a new clutch, two or three new cylinders, two new wheels, a new front axle, a new front spring, and a few odds and ends like that. Otherwise 'it's as good as new.'"