

share the secret with another. That is the way of love, which denies when taunted, then writes a sonnet, confessing to the world.

"Tell me about her, Ared," she pressed.

"I have put her out of my heart, little Pardner, and shut the door," said he.

"And nobody else ever will open it; it's that kind of a door," said Jo, shaking her wise head sadly.

"If I knew that she was worthy——"

"She is—worthy of more than I could give. She put seven thousand dollars that her father left her into that scheme, Jo. It was to finish fitting her for her operatic ambitions, and he scraped and saved for years on it, they say."

"I'm sorry for her, then," said Jo. "Fleming is making a big talk in the paper about prosecution, and putting an end to wildcatters, and all that kind of stuff. Is there any ground for prosecution, Ared?"

"Unless I can come to some agreement with the stockholders, I'm afraid there is, Jo," he admitted.

"The *Star* says she's the heaviest stockholder of them all," said she.

"That's true, my father tells me."

"Well, it wouldn't give her back her money to send your father to prison, as Fleming threatens," said she.

"Far from it. I have assumed his obligations, but the difficult part of it will be to assure the stockholders with the security of a promise," said he.

"The paper says they sold over a hundred thou-