

The proceedings had the form of order, but were primitive and practical; yet every step, voice, motion, detail, took on an exaggerated sense of the ominous, as if a man's body were on trial instead of merely his soul.

Nor was Elder Burbeck at all approving of Hampstead's manner to-night. The minister had shown again his utter incapacity to appreciate a situation. He was too cool, too unmoved. He had taken a full minute to stand there posing in pretended serenity while he looked the congregation over. From Burbeck's point of view, this man's œuvre was dangerous tactics. There was always some indefinable power in that deep-searching look of Hampstead's. If the man should stand up there and look at these people for ten minutes longer, he might have them all over there palavering about him. He was looking in the gallery now. Well, let him look there as long as he liked. The gallery couldn't vote. Burbeck's own eyes wandered into the gallery. On the other side from him just where the horseshoe curve began to draw in toward the choir loft, sat his son, Rollie.

"Rollie should not be up there," the Elder instructed turning to an usher. "Go and tell him to come down."

"He says he is with a lady who is not a member," reported the usher on returning.

"Huh?" ejaculated Burbeck, turning a surprised gaze upon the figure of a woman heavily veiled who sat beside his son.

That woman! What sacrilege had impelled his son to bring her here? Had she not wrought ruin enough already? Must she gloat over the shame she had brought upon this congregation and upon the church of the living God? And must his son be the means of her coming? What was that boy thinking of, anyway?

And yet, since Rollie had grown into so fine a figure of a man, his father had come to regard his son and what