

edly which he did not feel — however great a blow his pride had received. At that, he had really wanted to marry Vistar. She was a woman to do any man proud. She would be as great satisfaction as a first mortgage on city real estate. And she was turning him down.

He stood uncertainly before her, swaying like a great blackbird on the rundown heels of his enormous shoes. His ancient Prince Albert coat was pushed back, his fingers shoved into the pockets of his much-mended grey vest. His expression showed equal portions of lugubriosity and surprise. He had not expected this. "Nev' can tell bout'n wimmin. . . ." His fingers brushed against something hard. He frowned — then remembered the ring he had that day received as security from Cass Driggers.

He drew it forth and inspected it glumly. The light from the electric bulb struck it full and reflected dazzlingly into the popping eyes of Vistar Goins. Realizing that he was making his final exit from the list of Vistar's matrimonial possibilities Semore instinctively gave play to the theatrical instinct of his race. He turned the diamond over and over, muttering miserably; scarcely conscious that Vistar's eyes were focussed covetously upon the stone's scintillant perfection.

"Reckon I ain't gwine have no use for this ring now," mourned Semore sadly. "Might's well th'ow it away."

"Wh-what's that?" faltered Vistar.

"Nothin'. Nothin' on'y jes' a hund'ed an' fifty dollar di'min' 'gagement ring."

"Whar you git it at?"