

private retreat; but before he turned to read the confirmation of his suspicion, he had time for a swifter realization still, that there had been no preliminary click of the outer door, and to gather himself for what, when he did finally wheel from the window out of which he blindly gazed, confronted him.

"Father! You never listened!"

"Ah, when I saw what she had come for, what she would probably do to you . . ." He was ashamed, though it was not at his eavesdropping, and there was a queer kind of exultation mixed with his shame. He was pleased as men always are when by sheer force of her womanhood a woman outwits them.

"Well, then," — Frank was rather high with him, — "you are prepared to hear that she did 'do' me; that I've promised to use my influence with you to have this suit dropped . . . that it is to be dropped?"

"I did n't hear you promise — " The Old Man put up a protesting hand. "Oh, that's all right . . . I'll go you. I only meant that the promise was n't necessary." He broke into a queer sort of chuckle, "To think of her hitting on the one thing that you'd *have* to come to . . . the courage of it . . . the damned courage . . ."

"Father, if you please —"

"All right — all right . . ." He looked speculatively at the cigar which he had taken out of his mouth as if wondering how it could be got to express his sense of that courage. "I'd forgotten," he said, "that there are women like that . . . the courage of it! . . . I'd marry her myself if I thought she'd have me! I don't know why men don't marry women like that . . . why in hell don't we . . ." He gave it up and restored his cigar to its accustomed angle,