

Cass had worked fast and expertly. Bent fenders had been straightened, an axle treated likewise, a new wheel provided, one casing vulcanized, new lenses placed in the headlights (Cass confided long afterwards that he had used window-glass), the car had been washed and polished and the top put up and dusted. "One graham cracker an' a glass of milk in 'er radiator an' she'll be better'n new," exulted Cass.

Urias was converted. In the face of his friend's mechanical legerdemain he hadn't the heart to withdraw. The glittery beauty of the car impressed him vastly. "Ought to git fo' hund'ed for that," he muttered.

By three o'clock the conspirators reached the neighbourhood which Mr. and Mrs. Urias Nesbit graced with their presence. Urias reconnoitred meticulously, ascertained positively that his wife was engaged in divorcing certain pieces of Caruthers linen from more or less dirt, and pussy-footed nervously through the front door.

He opened the bureau drawer. The real diamond sparkled a welcome. He acted swiftly — speed being a virtue. The fake diamond was substituted and Urias retreated precipitately. From the corner he paused to observe the swaying form of his wife who laboured earnestly over the wash-tub.

Cass relieved his friend of the ring and departed joyfully townward. "Gwine see Ol' Semore Mashby an' raise that sevumty-five dollars," he proclaimed. "Yo'd better not come with me if'n you ain't want Semore to sispec' whar I got this heah ring at."