

Bowen the whole story. Lady Tanagra looked reproachfully at her brother. Then turning to Patricia she said with unwonted seriousness:

"I saw that was the only way to—to—well get you for a sister-in-law and," she paused a moment uncertainly, "I knew you were the only girl for that silly old thing there, who was blundering up the whole business."

"Your mania for interfering in other people's affairs will be your ruin, Tanagra," said Patricia, as she turned to Elton, her look clearly enquiring if he had any excuse to offer.

"The old Garden of Eden answer," he said. "A woman tempted me."

"Then we will apply the old Garden of Eden punishment," announced Patricia.

Elton, who was the first to grasp her meaning, looked anxiously at Lady Tanagra, who with knitted brows was endeavouring to penetrate to Patricia's meaning. Bowen was obviously at sea. Suddenly Lady Tanagra's face flamed and her eyes dropped. Elton stroked the back of his head, a habit he had when preoccupied—he was never nervous.

"You two," continued Patricia, now thoroughly enjoying herself, "have precipitated yourselves into my most private affairs, and in return I am going to take a hand in yours. Peter has asked me when I will marry him. I said I would tell him after dinner this evening."

Bowen looked across at her eagerly, Elton lit an-