

BAT WING BOWLES

"Well," suggested Bowles, after a long pause, "perhaps we could go by that way. Maybe her folks are keeping your letters from her, or something like that. If there is anything I can do for you, Brig, don't hesitate to ask for it. I might go around and see her for you—or if you need money——"

"No," protested Brigham petulantly; "money won't buy me nothin' with her. I'm up ag'in the whole Mormon church—and if you knew half of what I do about 'em, you'd know that you can't buck these bishops. The Mormon folks is fine people—they'll feed you, and help you, and do anything in the world fer you—but them priests and apostles and bishops—umph-umm! The more you know about 'em, the worse it scares you up—and I'm shore down on their black books. No, pardner, I ain't got a chanc'st, so let's fergit it. I talked it all over with Dix, and she kinder heartened me up; but it ain't no use. My girl don't like me enough to cut loose and quit her people, and I won't turn Mormon fer nobody—so there you are. Come on, let's go to bed!"

It was a hard and tragic problem, and long after the fatalistic Brig had gone to sleep, Bowles lay awake and tried to find a way out. His own petty griefs seemed sordid by the side of it, and all the way to town he turned it over in his mind.