

Jo; if we'd have been half as smart we'd have had a contract."

"I feel that both mother and myself are bound to divide with you the proceeds of the sale of the lease by just as strong an obligation as a contract in writing. We can't get away from that."

"I've been paid for the work of drilling the well, Jo. That lets you out of it, so don't trouble over it any more."

"You have a moral claim on a fourth of the fifty thousand doliars that she sold out for to——"

"Was *that* all she got?" said he.

"Fleming robbed her," sighed Jo, "but she believes she made a brilliant bargain. Well, I'll have my share of it at the end of a year, and then we'll have a settlement."

"We've had our settlement, Jo," he told her gravely, laying his hand on her shoulder. "I'll never split a penny of that little share of yours, so put that out of your head."

"We'll see," said she, nodding seriously. "You don't know how much mother has been to blame in this—why, they sneaked letters to her, and—I found one of them yesterday when I was helping her pack. I don't know when she got it, and there was only a line of typewriting on it: 'Advance on royalties,' it said. I think there was money in it."

"Perhaps," said he easily, not caring now.

"It was that fat little Sandford, undermining us all along," she said, with hot spitefulness.