

Dora clenched her fists and choked down her sobs. "All right, Mr. Dyer," she said, "but I have one thing to say to you. When the new management took things over I had charge of that letter about the patent. It was placed in my hands by Mr. Atterbury a week before he died. It wasn't filed among the other letters. Mr. Atterbury knew that some day there would be thousands of dollars dependent on it. And you won't get it."

"Eh?" blustered Dyer. "What do you mean?"

"I mean just what I say," answered Dora. "That letter was placed by me in a certain part of the office, among certain papers and it will take the whole force just a month to find it. Think you can wait a month, Mr. Dyer?"

"What the—" began Dyer. Then, checking himself. "See here, Miss Henderson, do you realize that this is blackmail?"

"No," answered Dora. "I have not asked you for anything."

"But you imply that you refuse to hand over that paper unless you are reinstated."

"Nothing of the kind," said Dora. "I wouldn't work for a man like you. I wouldn't work after Mr. Lawson had gone."

"Think a mighty lot of Lawson, don't you?" jeered Dyer. "Now, see here, young woman, my stenographer has been taking down every word you have said and unless you divulge where you have put that paper I'll call a policeman."

"But that won't give you the paper," answered Dora.

Dyer looked at her in despair and tried a new tack.

"How much do you want for it?" he asked.

"It isn't for sale."

"You are an employe of this company. It is your duty to deliver it to me. That is what you get your salary for. If you refuse you can and will be arrested."

"I am no longer an employe of this

company," retorted Dora. "You have just discharged me."

Dyer glared at her. "Well, what are your terms?" he demanded with a ferocious scowl.

"A three years' contract for Mr. Lawson," answered Dora.

"You're crazy!" shouted Dyer, rising. "Do you think I am going to be blackmailed in this way?"

"Evidently not," answered Dora. "Good afternoon, Mr. Dyer. One moment, please. If you put your hand on me I shall have you arrested."

Dyer glared at her in baffled bewilderment. And at that moment Lawson himself appeared at the door.

"Good-day, Mr. Dyer," he said, holding out his hand. "If there is anything I can do to clean up before I leave—"

"I'm wise to this game!" snarled Dyer. "You pretended that you had gone home and sent this woman—this woman—in here to blackmail me."

Lawson stepped forward, his face set, his fists clenched. But Dora intervened.

"I have just been discharged, Mr. Lawson," she said, "and Mr. Dyer wants that paper referring to the contract which Mr. Atterbury thought would some day have value. You remember I have often spoken of it to you."

"Ah, yes," said Lawson vaguely. "Where is it, Miss Henderson?" And the tone of his voice was so obviously sincere that Dyer realized his theory of blackmail had fallen to the ground.

"Mr. Dyer has discharged me," pursued Dora, "and consequently I have no further duty toward this office. He will get it in return for a three years' contract with you to remain chief executive."

"He will, will he?" shouted Lawson in a rage. "Well, I guess he won't. I've just called up the Smith-Benson company and accepted a position as their manager at 50 per cent more money."