

## **Grace, Tom, Mrs. Fryer**

MRS. FRYER. Thirty-five dollars a week and she quits the place.

TOM. More to life than money.

MRS. FRYER. That's what ya say when you're young, Tom. But you'n Grace get to be my age-with a house fulla yer kids underfoot. You'll thank God for every penny ya put by.

TOM. We got money put by.

MRS. FRYER. How much?

TOM. Enough to get married on.

MRS. FRYER. Don't take much to get married on. Do ya have enough to *stay* married on?

TOM. You let us get married, we'll find out. (*TOM laughs as GRACE enters*)

GRACE. Are you still eatin', Tommy?

TOM. It's good.

GRACE. You're going to get fat.

MRS. FRYER. Gotta keep up his strength. He works hard for his money.

GRACE. Don't start, Ma.

MRS. FRYER. I didn't say nothin'. It's your father who hit the roof over it.

GRACE. He didn't hit the roof.

MRS. FRYER. You shoulda seen the man's face, Tom, when he found out Grace wasn't workin' no more. Most girls would give their eyeteeth for a job like that—good money, easy work, nice-lookin' fellas around the plant-

TOM. You didn't tell me about them, Grace.

GRACE. Wasn't that many of 'em. Hardly seemed worth the mention.

MRS. FRYER. And she leaves it all behind. For reasons unknown. I'm tired of it up there, she says. Are you tired of the paycheck, I says? Who needs a paycheck, she says. I got me a boyfriend to take me out Saturdays.

TOM. She said that?

GRACE. Oh you know I didn't. And for your information I got a job. I start at the bank on Monday.

MRS. FRYER. Oh yeah, the bank! And what's it pay?

GRACE. Enough.

MRS. FRYER. Enough. Always enough. You know what that means, Tom. It don't come close to what it pays up at the radium plant.

GRACE. It's office work.

MRS. FRYER. Office work! Well, I guess that means you'll be spendin' more money on clothes, then. *(She takes TOM's empty plate and leaves.)*

TOM. Boy, she is really steamed at you.

GRACE. I don't see what difference it makes so long as I'm workin' somewheres.

TOM. Don't make no difference to me. I just thought ya liked it up there. *(He looks at her.)*

GRACE *(avoiding his gaze)*. Sure I liked it. I worked there four years.

TOM. So? I been deliverin' mail almost eight years. I plan to keep on deliverin' mail another twenty or thirty years. If I'm lucky. Nothin' like steady work and a good pension to help ya sleep at night.

GRACE. I don't have a pension, and I sleep just fine.

TOM. I bet you do.