

A MATTER OF CONVENIENCE

There was a knock at the door, a rather cold, officious knock which meant that it could only be the knocking of Miss Pringle, the bosses secretary. Zimmerman pushed himself away from his drafting table and hurried across the empty room to get the door. However, Miss Pringle, impatient as usual, opened the door ^{herself} before he could reach it.

She was a striking woman always perfectly groomed with not one silver hair out of place, or one fleck of dandruff or one slight wrinkle to mar the perfection of her expensive suit. Nevertheless, she was not ^{very} attractive woman and this was probably because she was too perfect, too well-groomed, too much like a department store mannequin to be warm flesh and blood. ^{the office}

" Mr. Zimmerman, " she said. (she was the only ⁱⁿ one who did not call him Fred.)"Mr. Meriweather wants to see you immediately in his office. " And having said that, she turned and left before Zimmerman could complain that it was his coffee break, and that he had already lost ten minutes completing a rush job ^{for} on Mr. Howard, the chief Petroleum engineer.

It was a long walk to the bosses office. Mr Meriweather was the kind of boss who was seldom seen by the employees at the back part of the ~~office~~ floor, but his invisible hand was seen in the performance of everyone of Coastal Oil Company's two hundred employees.