

THE HOUSE OF WINDOWS

"She is a dear good friend," said Celia warmly. "But listen, she wants me to go away for my holidays. And mind, you are not to encourage her in it. I don't want to go."

"Aren't you all going, as usual?" asked Tommy in surprise.

"Why, I thought——" began Christine. But Mrs. Flynn's brisk voice interrupted.

"Those stairs get worse and worse!" she declared without preliminaries. "Why you girls stay here can't see! You'll break your necks some day. It's scandal. Can't you make your landlord-man do anything? How d'ye do, Tommy? Why can't you see the man for Celia?"

"Celia won't let me." Tommy's tone was injured.

"No, I won't. The last time Tommy complained Ada was just worried to death by men coming to 'see about it.' As many as nine different people came and then nobody did anything. There isn't any landlord really; we pay our rent to an estate."

"Then I would move. There is a nice apartment house going up now just around the corner from us. Very reasonable rent. I'll get Sam to speak for you."

"Well, I never!" murmured Christine. But Celia, alarmed, interposed hastily, "No, Fanny, don't do that! We hate the idea of moving." She made a slight gesture in Ada's direction. Mrs. Flynn's eyebrows went up. She liked Ada, but Celia was her special favourite and she thought her continual sacrifice for her blind sister somewhat overdone.

"Well, you know best. If you trip on that loose board and kill yourself, don't blame me. I've warned you. And here is the address I promised you. You won't know yourself after a fortnight of Lakeview Farm."