

Angela's Business

A curious let-down feeling took possession of the young man. He pressed his hand to his forehead; and then for the first time was aware that his head ached furiously. In the same moment, his eye was unpleasantly caught by his burst-out gloves. Having stared at his hands for a second, he silently stripped off the gloves, balled them, and pitched the ball into a waste-basket near by.

"I'll just have a look into this closet for myself," said he, turning away. "I don't believe Geddie —"

"No! — please don't! — don't trouble! I really don't need any help, thank you. I don't . . ."

Her wish to be alone was all but woundingly plain to him. And still it seemed to Charles physically impossible to turn now and walk out of the door. So, not looking at her, he answered in a peculiarly mild manner that, of course, this was n't help at all, only a little indulgence of himself, which she really must n't refuse him. And while he yet spoke, allowing no opportunity for such refusal, he hung his hat on Mr. Geddie's hook, and all the forepart of him disappeared upward into the closet.

After an interval rather longer than necessary, he re-emerged to view, a few periodicals in one hand, a faded bundle of typewritten papers in the other.

"Geddie's made a clean sweep. There's hardly another armful."

His manner was almost as cheery as Geddie's own. His "note" was to go ahead as if nothing had happened.

"Put them here?" asked Charles.

Mary Wing's arms quivered a little on the table.

"Put them *anywhere*! It doesn't make the *least* difference!"

So Charles laid his burden down on the table, and quietly