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"Melvina must realize, however," she said, "that my stay will be necessarily brief."

"Of course," Emma Davis said, rising from her chair and feeling for just an instant a bit unsteady even on her broad white feet. "Of course, Annie. But some people manage to *make* a party just by looking in on it. And that's *you*!"

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MRS. SIGRID CHRISTIANSON'S ROOM WAS only three doors away from Annie Tiddle's, but in the few steps between them Emma Davis ousted from her mind everything but stark and ruthless necessity. "On, Emma, on!" she cried sternly to herself, for she was plainly *Emma* at this moment, with all openings firmly closed, not a vista discernible, not a garden gate ajar. She walked straight past Miss Sophonisba Clark's open door, not pausing to encourage Sophonisba, who, she well knew, was unsuccessfully striving to put the finishing touches on a paper entitled *Noble Women of the Old Testament* to be read at her literary club; past Mrs. Wilcox's, whose agitation