

he talks to Ada like that, Tommy is a real poet. Say, Celia, did you ever notice——"

"Yes," said Celia dryly. "I have noticed." She drew a breath of relief. "If it is so plain that the child notices it," she thought, "I need never worry over that particular question again. However bad things may be I can never take that way out."

"Christine," she said abruptly. "Get me the note Mr. Banks left for me."

Wondering a little at her tone the girl handed her the envelope. Celia opened it slowly. She had already guessed what the note contained and had braced herself to bear the confirmation of her fears. Mr. Banks wrote briefly that he was sorry that he must confirm the news of which he had spoken to her before; the Moulton Oil Company had gone into liquidation and the shares upon which Miss Brown had been receiving dividends were now worthless. He expressed his sorrow and his willingness to be of service.

"Well!" exclaimed Christine, who was almost dancing with impatience. "Is—is anybody dead?"

"Dead?" said Celia stupidly. "Oh, no. At least, there is no fortune left to us. It is merely a—business letter."

"Oh!" There was disappointment in Christine's tone. She would have liked to have seen the letter, but Celia did not offer to show it. Instead she changed the subject.

"Isn't that someone on the stairs, Christine? Open the door. The landing is so dark. Fanny said she intended coming over."

"Oh, dear!" Christine's sigh was heartfelt. She did not care for the bustling ways of Mrs. Harcourt Flynn.