

We had been speaking in low tones, for the subject of our conversation naturally did not lend itself to loud talk; and besides, during the last quarter of an hour or so a murmur of voices from the verandah had warned us to be careful. We had not shut the door leading to the veranda, as it was the only one, and we needed it open to give us light and air. Petersham walked towards it, but instead of stepping out, he turned and laid a hand like a vice on my arm.

"Quiet! quiet, for your life!" he whispered. "She must never know we were here!"

"But, Joe, you're mistaken; Joe . . . I wish it!" It was Linda's voice, shy and trembling as I had never heard it.

"Ah, that's all your great goodness, Miss Linda, and I haven't earned none of it."

I pointed frantically to the door . . . we must shut that door and shut out those voices, but Petersham swore at me under his breath.

"Darn! You know those hinges screech like a wild cat! It can't be helped, for it would kill her to know we heard a word of this."

We crept away into the farthest corner of the workshop, but even there phrases floated to us, though mercifully we could not hear all.