

"Sit down, Miss Moreland," repeated Mrs. Maughm. "I sent for you — I haven't any work for you to do. It's not that."

The stenographer saw that Mrs. Maughm had been crying, and that she did not seem ashamed to reveal the fact to her husband's stenographer.

"You don't want me to do any work?" Miss Moreland began.

"No," said the lady; "but I do want very much to see you — very much indeed."

Mary waited and Mrs. Maughm considered her, as a woman does, with one comprehensive glance. In her plain, tailored skirt, her neatly fitting shirt-waist, her spotless collar, her tidy jacket, her becoming small hat, and her fresh, nicely-adjusted veil, the stenographer was an attractive figure. But there was about her something better than beauty, there was repose. She had an eminently peaceful presence.

"Miss Moreland," and Mrs. Maughm's voice still bore a trace of tears, "I don't know what you'll think of me, sending for you like this. I can't understand how I came to do so. But don't you know," she half appealed, "that we all of us do extraordinary things now and then, in spite of ourselves — things we never, never could imagine ourselves capable of doing and which in another we would censure? Do you know what I mean?"

Mary did know what she meant.

"I really think," said Mrs. Maughm, "that we women cannot judge each other too harshly -- or ourselves, for that matter. We are so dreadfully impulsive. Don't you think so?" She did not wait for the other woman to reply. "We are almost irresponsible, aren't we, sometimes? Such different things influence us. We feel so safe and so secure, and all of a sudden something happens to change everything, and we find ourselves acting in an