

there are so many Browns that it seems to be a kind of common-property name."

"Yes, of course, just so," stammered Tommy. But somehow a restraint had fallen upon the table talk, and presently Ada rose and went over to the open window. Standing there she seemed scarcely changed at all from the girl of sixteen years ago. The years had left her peculiar loveliness almost untouched; with that strange immunity of the blind she had escaped unscathed. Although but three years younger than Celia, there was no thread of grey in her dark hair, and her forehead was as unlined as a child's. Save for a deeper note in her voice and a soft seriousness of manner she seemed scarcely older than the girl Christine. Tommy's eyes followed her with worshipful reverence.

"It begins to feel like autumn," she said. "Come and see the garden, Tommy. What a pity that asters have no perfume!"

"Ah, but you forget the colours," said Tommy instantly. "Massed against that green hedge they satisfy without perfume. They are such big, straight, sturdy fellows, flaunting, yet brave, like soldiers."

"Yes," eagerly. "Go on, Tommy. You make me see it all. Tell me about the golden-rod in the east corner." She leaned out over the dream garden and Tommy went on. He told of golden-rod and of the late dahlias and of how the wind had blown some yellow leaves, first warning of dead summer, upon the garden walk; but he looked only at her face. For both of them the garden was real, the weeds and the tin cans did not exist; he was a gardener and she was a princess in an enchanted land.

The other two watched them with wondering eyes. "Doesn't he do it well?" whispered Christine. "When