

extraordinary thing has happened, the most completely extraordinary thing! Two, in fact, but we'll take them one at a time. Sit down in that chair by the window where you can see that little plum tree, for what I'm about to tell you, Melvina Rust, is every bit as exciting as that little tree."

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Mrs. Rust moved slowly toward the chair, but she kept a wary eye on the carryall and on Miss Davis.

"You needn't tell me there's going to be a thunder shower today," she said, "for I can see with my own eyes there isn't. I haven't a sore throat, and I'm not doing any mending for you. I'm going home at four o'clock, and that's that!"

Emma Davis settled old Mrs. Rust in the chair and knelt beside her on the floor. She looked big beside Mrs. Rust, who was a little woman with shaking hands and vague blue eyes and scraggly gray hair in curlpapers.

"I wouldn't stop you for worlds, Rusty," she said. "There couldn't be a better day for a journey; but before you pack, you've got to hear my news. I'm bursting with it, and so is Miss Norton. There's going to be a Special dinner today to celebrate it. Rusty, it's about: