

Angela's Business

only continued to look at him with the same lidless fixedness.

"At the same time," said the principal, a rather more resolute note tingeing his voice, "you appreciate as well as I that teachers can't be picked up and moved about like chessmen. We must have some — permanence — some constancy — to insure efficiency. And frankly, my personal judgment — after fifteen years' experience, and considering the brilliant work of Johnson Geddie — is that you could hardly hope to see your friend promoted — well, immediately."

"So you would advise —?"

Mysinger's eyelid seemed to flutter a little: he really did have a purpose, it seemed.

"I am told — ahem! — that your friend has recently received a most flattering offer — from elsewhere?"

How had he known this? "Well?"

"Well, the party in question," said he, with his set smile, "seems to have a certain prejudice against me. She refuses to speak to me, in fact, — why, I cannot imagine. All the same, I am, and always have been, her sincere well-wisher. And after earnest thought, I honestly feel sure that her friends would make no mistake if they urged her not to let slip this — ahem — well-deserved promotion. I thought," he added, his gaze a threat now, "I'd better bring the point to your attention."

Charles's fixed eyes did not waver. But before them there unrolled a thin gray mist, briefly shutting the principal from his sight. The mist queerly turned red, and became shot with fiery sparks. Then all cleared; and, behind him, the young man's hand felt for, and touched, the open door. Gently, moving only his arm, he shut it. And it seemed to him that he must be turning white inside.