

"Oh! dear! Why? I'm sorry!"

There was something more than a suspicion of an American accent when Helen Ambrose spoke, but this only made her warm voice a little more fascinating.

"I do hate to have you disappointed with me," she said.

"Well, the first time I saw you I took to you. Of course I shall always care for you, but I am disappointed in you all the same. I thought you were going to do such marvels with these children. You seemed to be the very right person to deal with them."

"I get along pretty well, Agnes dear."

"I wish I had the handling of them," the other woman had observed a trifle grimly, and then she had given a jerk of her head in the direction of the red flannel. "Who's going to help you with all that—Silvia?"

"I don't want any help. I'll get through it right enough."

Miss Dalywood had sniffed.

"You had better let me take some of it away. Give me a piece of newspaper."

"Really and truly, Agnes," Mrs. Ambrose had protested with some energy, "that won't worry me one little bit."

"I wish something would worry you! Your one great fault is that you won't concentrate. Now have you ever sat down and just looked things straight in the face?"

"No," the other woman had confessed; and then she had laughed. "It wouldn't be much use, because I am horribly short-sighted."

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