

It would be more to the point, Anne considered, if I could think of a plan the people would be willing to try. She had something of her mother's lack of patience with any sort of failure. Anne went white and strained those days; took the defection of the Tierra Longans much to heart. If she made what she felt about it cover a trouble of her own, there was none to know of it but the Keeper of Women's Hearts, who must by now be inured to the keeping of pitiful secrets, and did not tell on her.

She bought a car, and though it was used chiefly for keeping in touch with Palomitas, — every member of the family learned to drive, including Peters, — she did somehow pull her business up to the point which justified it. Anne, so Kenneth averred, had gone on a regular jag of business; she drowned her sorrows in it.

Ellis, who heard him, arched her eyebrows.

"Anne is never sorry," she protested. "She might have disappointments and feel pain, but she would n't be sorry."

"Well, then, I wish she did n't feel so disappointed about this business. I heard to-day that Tuttle had sold, but I hardly dare tell her."

"To Rickart?"

"He does n't know. To a stranger. That's the beginning," he said; "next they'll stampede it. First one inconspicuous sale and another, and before they know it they'll be falling over themselves to sell. That's what the Agreement would have saved them from, Rickart in disguise, but they can't see it."

"What Anne can't see is, why you are n't more disappointed yourself."

"Well, I'm going to be, I suppose, when it gets through