

politely, for even with old friends she never forgot her manners. "I long for a cup of your tea — if you will make it yourself. I really could eat nothing after those sandwiches."

"I'll make it myself, all right. First because it wouldn't be fit to drink if I didn't, and second because it's Cassie's night out."

She took the key from beneath the door-mat, and pressed an electric button in the hall and another in a comfortable untidy sitting-room. In her parents' day the sitting-room had been the front parlour, with an atmosphere as rigid as the horsehair furniture, but in this era of more elastic morals it was full of shabby comfortable furniture, a davenport was close to the radiator, the desk and tables were littered with magazines, medical reviews, and text books.

"How warm and delicious," said Mrs. Balfame brightly, removing her hat and wraps and laying them smoothly on a chair. "I'll telephone and then close my eyes and think of nothing until tea is ready — I know you won't have me in the kitchen. What a blessed relief it will be to hear you sing in your funny old voice after that woman's strident tones."

She made short work of telephoning. Mr. Balfame, having "just stepped across the street," she merely left a message for him. Dr. Anna, out in the kitchen, lighted the gas stove, rattled the aluminum ware, and sang in a booming contralto.

Mrs. Balfame went through no stage formalities; she neither tiptoed to the door nor listened intently. From the telephone, which was on the desk, she walked over to the strongest looking chair, carried it to the discarded fireplace, mounted and peered into the little