

CHAPTER II

THE meeting of the Friday Club had been held in the Auditorium, a hall which accommodated moving pictures, an occasional vaudeville performance, political orators, and subscription balls of more than one social stratum. It was particularly adapted to the growing needs of the Friday Club, as it impressed visitors favorably, and there was a small room in the rear where tea could be served.

It was a crisp autumn evening when the President and her committee sped the parting guest of this fateful day and walked briskly homeward, either to cook supper themselves or to prod the languid "hired girl." Starting in groups, they parted at successive corners, and finally Mrs. Balfame and Dr. Anna were alone in the old street. The doctor's offices were in Main Street under the Auditorium, between the Elsinore Bank and the Emporium drug store, but she too had inherited a cottage in what was now known as Elsinore Avenue, and almost at the opposite end from the "Old Balfame Place."

"Come in," she said hospitably, as she opened a gate set superfluously into the low boxwood hedge. "You can 'phone to the Elks' and tell Dave to try the new hotel. It's ages since I've seen you."

"I will!" Mrs. Balfame's prompt reply was accompanied by what was known in Elsinore as her inscrutable smile. "It is kind of you," she added