

room, she took from it a folded piece of rather dirty paper and handed it to Mr. Burns. With the girls looking breathlessly over his shoulder, he held the paper to the light and read, in sprawling and illiterate characters, these words:

*"She was one too many. Her father won't keep her, and I can't. She ain't been named yet."*

Mr. Burns, in a sudden impulse of indignation, struck the piece of paper with an emphatic finger. "By Jove, that's cool! A case of cold-blooded desertion if ever there was one!"

"Horrible!" agreed Miss Eden.

Celia, blushing, snatched the paper back. "I think I'll burn it."

"No!" Mr. Burns' tone was one of startled protest. "You mustn't do that, you know." For a moment he had an impression that all women were fools (except, perhaps, that lovely blind girl who had come into the room like a vision!) "You see, that paper is evidence. You never can tell when it might be wanted. If you do not want the little one ever to see it, hide it—but one doesn't burn evidence, you know. By Jove, no!"

Celia wavered. She considered Mr. Burns rather a pleasant young man, but his sudden tone of authority inclined to give offence. Nevertheless, he was a man, and perhaps in this case he represented the masculine point of view, and at any rate, if the paper were securely hidden it could do no harm.

"Very well," she said, "but it seems cruel to keep it. Poor baby. Well, she shall never want for care and love here."

"And oh," added Miss Eden, "how she will love you both when she knows!"