

rang to say he'd have some dinner sent in to him : he'd ring when he wanted it."

Her mistress said nothing, and the maid went away. Standing near the mantelshelf on which the candles in the tall old stands had been lit Helen Ambrose read her letter.

"DEAR MRS. AMBROSE," it ran, "I am so sorry not to have been able to have joined your little meeting to-day but my son who arrived unexpectedly refused to let me go out : he was afraid I should catch cold as it has been so damp and raw to-day. I regret this more than I can tell you. It is always such a real pleasure to me to meet you and I do want to be of some use. If there is any sewing to be done will you very kindly send along my share? And if you have a free hour to-morrow will you come and have tea with me? Please do not bother to write, you will find me here : you know I am more or less of a fixture.

"With kindest regards, dear Mrs. Ambrose,

"I am,

"Yours sincerely,

"OLIVIA MARY CHESTON"

Helen Ambrose gave another little sigh as she folded the letter, but the sigh was one of pleasure this time.

"I'll go to-morrow sure," she decided, "it will be a break and do me good."

It flashed across her mind that something more perhaps than mere sympathetic comprehension in her difficulties might be forthcoming from the mistress of

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