

Angela's Business

"Well, well! Look who's here! Come for the spring-cleaning, Mr. Garrott? Ha, ha!"

She, in her inner absorption, had failed to hear the approaching feet. But at that she raised her head, with a kind of jerk.

"Don't mind the dust, Mr. Garrott — it eats all right! Ha, ha! Walk in!"

Mr. Garrott stood silent in the office door, looking at Miss Wing. The eyes of the old friends briefly met. Something in the young man's appearance vaguely arrested Mary Wing. She had noted, as her glance lifted, the torn glove on his right hand. Now she was remotely aware that the face looking back at her so intently appeared somehow subtly changed: there was something faintly wrong with it, it seemed. But such details Mary's consciousness hardly registered at all. All in one flash, she wondered how he happened to be here, thought how good it was of him to come, and knew that she had never been less glad to see anybody in her life.

"Good-afternoon," said she.

"How'do, Miss Mary?" said Charles; and then started forward. "How are you, Mr. Geddie? I seem to be rather late to help with the good work."

"Yes, sirree! — Can't come in at the eleventh hour and take our credit away! Can he, Miss Wing? — ha, ha! All over but the applause!"

However, Mr. Geddie did not know himself for a tactful man for nothing. Observing that Miss Wing continued to drop magazines on the floor in silence, and that her young man there did n't seem to know what to do with himself, he gracefully adopted a new position. From the third round of the ladder, he made a roguish address, the meat of which was that there was a whole corner left of the bottom shelf, and if Mr. Garrott insisted, etc.