

incessantly with her fine fingers, she could drum up expedient for diverting the course of events.

Ellis, who had adopted the family point of view the only figure on the screen worth considering was Kenneth, planted a fruitful suggestion.

"If somebody could only get at Mr. Rickart!"

"I can't," said Anne, "after all he's done for me. And besides, Ken has forbidden me."

"Oh, I don't mean to beg him off — but anybody who had his own reasons for not wanting him to go on with that suit — anybody who could influence him?"

"It would n't be any woman . . . I think my mother tried once."

"But suppose young Mr. Rickart —"

"Frank? But what reason would *he* have? You know he's never answered Ken's letter. Ken wrote, of course as soon as it all happened, and it's just been passed over.' They were sitting in Anne's room in Summerfield on an evening when she had come in from the ranch, reporting Ken looking strained and thinner than was good for him. Anne had her hair down, twisting long ropes of it and biting them in her perplexity. "I know he cares tremendously, but he won't have Frank blamed; naturally, he must side with his father."

"I don't see why . . . I don't see why he could n't bring his father around to side with *him*." Ellis took a brush and began to brush her employer's hair as she often did when Anne was overdone. "And it would be easy enough to bring Frank over to your side," she let fall.

"I — oh!" And after a longish interval, in which the brush went rather wide of its mark without either of them noticing it, "Ellis — I can't — you don't know . . ."