

MARY MORELAND

CHAPTER I

MISS MORELAND estimated the moods of her employer by the way he took off his gloves when he came into the office in the morning.

If they were carelessly flung down on the table, she knew that Mr. Maughm was in a business humour and likely to begin dictating immediately. If he did not take off his gloves at all, but thrust his hands into his overcoat pockets and waiked over to the window, to stand there, she knew the financier's humour to be meditative, and that something had gone wrong "up at the house," as she called the world in which her employer lived, moved, and had his social being. "Up at the house" he was lost to her.

If he slowly drew his gloves off, finger by finger, put them together and rolled them up into a ball, this indicated that something important was about to interest the office. There might be some big deal in the wind or a personal matter to be thought over. And when Mr. Maughm stood directly in front of his secretary, looking down upon her, Mary knew that, whatever it was, she was to hear all about it.

It was a habit of Thomas Maughm's, when he came down town, to go directly into his stenographer's room. "Up at the house" he had no habits. Where everything is uncongenial and one gets away as fast as possible, one doesn't have fixed customs, unless it be that of clearing out.