

TOM: I'll pull up in a minute. Well, it means taking hold of something else pretty quick. Going at it again.

ANN: Yes, keeping at it—that's it. What a terrible lot chance has to do with it.

TOM: Oh no, that isn't it.

ANN: Yes, it is, too.

TOM: No—I failed. I didn't get it, that's all.

ANN: You'll do something greater—next time—because of this.

TOM: *[taking her hand]* You're a brick! Now, see here, don't you be cut up about this. It's not the end of everything, you know. Stop that! You're not crying, I hope?

ANN: No, I'm not. Of course, I'm not! *[With passionate tenderness]* Oh, my boy. I never loved you so much—never believed in you as I do now. This is only a little hard place that will make you all the stronger.

TOM: Dear old girl! What would I do without you? I'll tell the others and get it over. *[Rising, he stops, staring at one of the letters on the table.]* Ann!

ANN: Um?

TOM: *[taking up a letter]* Ann—here's one for you, too.

ANN: What? *[She tears open the letter.]* Tom! They've given the commission to me! Look! Read it! Is that what it says? Is it? Now aren't you glad you let me do it? You haven't lost! We've got it! Say you're glad. Say you're proud of me, dear. That's the best part of it all.

TOM: Of course I am, dear; of course I am.

ANN: Oh, Tom, I wanted you to get it more than I ever wanted anything in my life, but this is something to be thankful for. Doesn't this almost make it right?

TOM: Yes, dear, yes. Don't think of me. That's over—that part of it. Tell the others now.

ANN: Wait!

TOM: Aren't you going to?

ANN: I only want to be sure that you're just as happy that I won, as I would have been if you had.

TOM: Of course I am. You know that. *[Kissing her]*

ANN: Tell the others, then, Tom—I can't. Say you're glad, dear.

TOM: You know I am, dear. You know that.

ANN: *[with a sigh of relief ANN sits at left of fire]* Think how I'll have to work. I can't even go to the country in the summer.

TOM: *[sitting opposite ANN at the fire]* And what will you do with Millicent this summer?

ANN: Oh, there are lots of nice things for her to do. The money! Think what it will mean to you!

TOM: Let me tell you one thing, Ann, in the beginning. I'll never touch a penny of the money.

ANN: What?

TOM: Not a cent of it.

ANN: What are you talking about?

TOM: That's your money. Put it away for yourself.

ANN: I never heard you say anything so absolutely unreasonable before in my life.

TOM: If you think I'm unreasonable, all right. But that's understood about the money. We won't discuss it.

ANN: Well, we will discuss it. Why shouldn't you use my money as well as I use ours?

TOM: That's about as different as day and night.

ANN: Why is it?

TOM: Because I'm taking care of you. It's all right if you never do another day's work in your life. You're doing it because you want to; I'm doing it because I've got to. If you were alone, it would be a different thing. But I'm here, and so long as I am, I'll make what keeps us going.

ANN: But I'll help you.

TOM: No, you won't.

ANN: I will. I'm going on just as far as I have ability to go, and if you refuse to take any money I may make—if you refuse to use it for our mutual good, you're unjust and taking an unfair advan—Oh, Tom! What are we saying? We're out of our senses—both of us. You didn't mean what you said. Did you? It would—I simply couldn't bear it, if you did. You didn't—did you?

TOM: I did—of course.

ANN: Tom—after all these years of pulling together, now that I've done something, why do you suddenly balk?

TOM: *[rising]* Good Heavens! Do you think I'm going to use your money? Don't try to run my end of it. It's the same old story—when you come down to it, a woman can't mix up in a man's business. *[He moves away.]*

ANN: Mix up in it? Isn't it a good thing for you that I got this commission?

TOM: No. I don't know that it's a good thing from any standpoint to have it known that I failed, but my wife succeeded.

ANN: I thought you said you were glad—proud of me.

TOM: It's too—distracting—too—it takes you away from more important things.

ANN: What things?

TOM: Millicent and me.