

MRS. ALMOND. Even so, Marian will like that.

DR. SLOPER. Are you entirely satisfied with the arrangement? (*Sits on love-seat.*)

MRS. ALMOND. (*Shrugs.*) She wanted him.

DR. SLOPER. Do you suppose that there is another Arthur somewhere in this great city of ours?

MRS. ALMOND. Oh, Catherine will find a husband!

DR. SLOPER. (*Amused.*) Do you think so?

MRS. ALMOND. (*Impatiently.*) She has the prospect of thirty thousand a year.

DR. SLOPER. (*Smiling.*) I see that you appreciate her.

MRS. ALMOND. I don't mean it's her only merit. You always have a way of alluding to her as an unmarried girl!

DR. SLOPER. You see what she is like with young men.

MRS. ALMOND. That is the trouble in New York; the men are too young. They marry at the age of innocence, before the age of calculation. If they only waited a little, Catherine would fare better.

DR. SLOPER. As a calculation? Thank you very much!

MRS. ALMOND. Of course, I didn't mean it that way!

DR. SLOPER. (*Shrugs.*) We need not deceive each other, my dear.

MRS. ALMOND. Austin, are you really as detached as you seem about Catherine?

DR. SLOPER. Detached? Why, that's the last thing I am! I am deeply interested in every phase of her life. Detached! Hah, I wish I were!

MRS. ALMOND. Why?

DR. SLOPER. Because I wish I could have confidence in her ability to manage herself, and her future, with some wisdom, or even some intelligence.

MRS. ALMOND. I see that you have none. I imagine that Catherine sees it, too.

DR. SLOPER. If you are reproaching me, Liz, you must be more specific. What would you like me to do for her that I have not done? Is there something that I have missed? She has gone to the best schools in the city. She has had the finest training I could get her in music and dancing. She has sat here with me evenings on end, and I have tried to make conversation with her, and give her some social adeptness. She has never been constrained in the spending of money, or in the directing of this household. I have