

DR. SCOTT

Well, Mrs' Brown, I've decided I'll have to operate.

CHARITY

MY Lord! Doctor — don't say that!

DR. SCOTT

It's the only chance.

CHARITY

You mean she'll get well if you do?

DR. SCOTT

No, I can't say that — It's just a chance — a last chance. And I'll do just what I said, cut the price of the operation down to fifty dollars. I'm willing to do that for you.

(*Charity throws up her hands in dismay.*)

CHARITY

Doctor, I was so in hopes you wouldn't operate — I — I — And yo' say you ain't a bit sure she'll get well — even then?

DR. SCOTT

No. I can't be sure. We'll just have to take the chance. But I'm sure you want to do everything —

CHARITY

Sure, doctor, I do want to — do — everything I can do to — to — Doctor, look at this cup.

(*Picks up fortune cup and shows the doctor*)

My fortune's jes' been told this very morning — look at these grounds — they says —

(*Softly*)

it ain't no use, no use a-tall.

DR. SCOTT

Why, my good woman, don't you believe in such senseless things! That cup of grounds can't show you anything. Wash them out and forget it.

CHARITY

I can't forget it. I feel like it ain't no use; I'd just be spendin' the money that I needs — for nothing — nothing.

DR. SCOTT

But you won't though — You'll have a clear conscience. You'd know that you did everything you could.

CHARITY

I know that, doctor. But there's things you don't know 'bout — there's other things I got to think about. If she goes — if she must go . . . I had plans — I been getting ready — now — Oh, doctor, I jest can't see how I can have this operation — you say you can't promise — nothing?

DR. SCOTT

I didn't think you'd hesitate about it — I imagined your love for your child —

CHARITY

(*Breaking in*)

I do love my child. My God, I do love my child. You don't understand . . . but . . . but — can't I have a little time to think about it, doctor? It means so much — to her — and — me!

DR. SCOTT

I tell you. I'll go on over to the office. I'd have to get my —

(*Hesitates*)

my things, anyhow. And as soon as you make up your mind, get one of the neighbors to run over and tell me. I'll come right back. But don't waste any time now, Mrs' Brown, every minute counts.

CHARITY

Thank you, doctor, thank you. I'll shore send you word as soon as I can. I'm so upset and worried I'm half crazy.

DR. SCOTT

I know you are . . . but don't take too long to make up your mind. . . . It ought to be done to-day. Remember — it may save her.

(*Exits.*)