looked by so many prying agricultural eyes. We parted by
the old church on the common, where she is going to wait
while I get a few things together, and then return to her at
once. To-morrow morning will see us the other side of the
Chamber, and safe from all pursuit. Pursuit, who is there to
pursue? Fane will probably have the good sense to say
very little of the affair, for he can't care much for his wife,
or he would not have neglected her, as he has done for years.
Had I been in his place, no man should ever have had the
chance to supplant me in her affections, but then we
Southerners know how to love—these English only play at
the game at which we were proficient before they commenced
to learn.

(crosses to R.)

Mrs. Reffel appears at the door, closing it
behind her and standing with back against it.

Rtv. Where is Mrs. Reffel?

Mrs. Mantmister, permit me.

(holding out his hand)

(refusing by a gesture to shake hands as he desires)

Where is Mrs. Reffel?

Mrs. Reffel. She is not here. Why do you ask?

Rtv. Why do you ask? This procrastination is useless and
dishonest, for my eyes are now open to your perfidy, and I
possess proof that she has been enticed from her home by
you! What have you done with her?

Rtv. (recovering composure) A plain question and deserving
a plain answer, the more especially as you seem to have
learned just enough to make you misjudge me. I admit she
has quit a roof where she knew only unhappiness, but wherever she may be at the present moment, you
must not expect me to point out!

Mrs. Reffel. You are bolder in your villainy than even I
thought you would be!

Rtv. You condemn me, of course. I expected nothing
else; the world will follow your example; for all that, I love
her passionately—truly!

Mrs. Reffel. No man who loves a woman truly
will bring upon her the storm of its
reproach.

Rtv. My dear Mrs. Mantmister, you are angry, and an
angry lady is allowed the privilege of wagging a bitter tongue.
In reply, let me calmly tell you that you do not know the
circumstances that led to the step you have taken, therefore you cannot be competent to condemn it!

Mrs. Reffel. No circumstances can justify such a deed as you
have done! No circumstances can excuse one man robbing another of his wife, or depriving a child of its mother. Once for all I say—where is Mrs. Moffat?
Ruy. I cannot tell you!
Moffat. Were I a man—Beattie's brother instead of her sister—and stood over you with a horsewhip, your answer would be different!
Ruy. Quite! It would not be so civil—and probably take the form of a piece of lead!
Moffat. I cannot thrash you as you deserve, but I can cut you out yet and-well! From the first I inspected your motives, and when I found that you were not the poor artist you represented yourself to be, but a rich man, I saw through your scheme of robbing this cottage and gaining my sister's affection, but—but—she positively refused to listen to my advice, and will pay the penalty!
Ruy. I propose to dry her tears, not to cause her fresh anguish.
Sir. Your cool effrontery disgusts me! Once for all, and for the last time—will you take me to—"m-m-m-m-m-m-m-m-m-m-m-m-m-m-
Ruy. Sorry to refuse a lady, but.
Sir. Then I will find her myself! Find her without your help, and in spite of your base manoeuvres, and when I meet her, I have but to whisper one sentence to restore her to a sense of her forgotten duty, for something has happened since she left her home that would break the heart of the best mother in the world to her knees and cause her to beg to be taken back!"

Ruy. Confound the luck! An angry woman is capable of anything—especially of following me, so I dare not return straight to Waddington as I promised. What is to be done? A good thought! (looks at watch) There's a clear hour before the next train stops at Waddington; Hawkins shall take a letter directing him to go on alone to the station. (strides bell, enter HAWKINS, e., with portmanteau.) I want you to go with a note for me, and deliver it to a lady you will find near the seat behind the old church.
Hawk. Yes, sir, the churchyard side?
Ruy. Yes! I will write it in an instant—follow me! (Exeunt, e.)

Directly they have gone off, the arm-chair in which Robert is supposed to be asleep, is wheeled round—discovering him to be very much awake.

Robert (without rising) Jove! this is an eye openah! Heard every word! No fault of mine—don't you know—really. It's not awkward when a fellow goes to sleep as innocent as a child, yet wakes up to find himself in the middle of a family affair of this delicate character! What could I do? Couldn't pop up and shout out, "Here, I say, don't you know, drop this recrimination until I got off the carosh?" (rising) Jove! Now I see why she did not want me to let Robert see the paper?—No, he's asleep with Mrs. Pate, has he? What a confounded scoundrel!—ah, Jove, I introduced him to the family—horribly unpleasant for me—Jove! I suppose I ought to do something to stop his little game—not a bad idea, if I only knew what to do. (Enter HAWKINS, e.) I'll square the man to begin with! (to HAWKINS) Heah! Heah! (returning to R.)
Hawk. Oh! sir, I thought you had gone for good—I told master so—shall I say you've come back, sir?

Ruy. No! (aside) Now for a triumph! I say, don't you know—I'm rather in a fix, I want somebody to run on an errand for me—you must go!
Hawk. Very sorry, sir, but I have got a very important letter to deliver for master. (shows envelope) You had better let me tell him you are here, sir!
Ruy. (detaining him) No! (aside) I've thought of another trump! (to HAWKINS) Look here, you must do this little job for me—most important, Here's a fiver for you, but I want the most important—and the most important!
Hawk. (taking £5) But the letter—I'm afraid—
Ruy. Don't be afraid! (taking letter quickly) I'll see that that goes all right!
Hawk. Will you, sir? I shall be so much obliged! It's for a lady you will find waiting just by Misselton Church.
Ruy. Yes! Mrs. Pate! (aside) Another trump! (to HAWKINS) Now you be off to my tailor, Gardner, in Yorkstone Street, and say he's not to put pockets on the outside of the coat he measured me for yesterday—I've altered my mind!
Hawk. (pursed) Five pounds for altering your mind?
Robert. Yes, I've been saying I haven't much mind to alter another seventeen—
Hawk. (aside) This makes it even money. Wouldn't have those pockets put in for twice the amount!
Hawk. Certainly, sir—much obliged, sir—just heard that master thinks of discharging me, so I must put by for a rainy day!
Ruy. Of course and I've given you enough to buy a gin—eh, the occasion.
Hawk. You won't forget the letter, sir!
She shall have it all right! (Exit Hawkins, door in flat) To-morrow or the day after! Not bad for a damn fool! With this letter in my pocket I shall have the pleasure of starting my friend Rivola off on a wild-goose chase to the station, where Mrs. Rivola will certainly not be to meet him! (Enter Rivola, e., with railway rug on arm and hat on, he has changed clothes) Hullo! dear boy, just dropped in on you!

Riv. (aside) The devil! at such a moment, too!

Riv. Don’t you remember promising me a few lessons in the noble art of canvas-spoiling? you did— didn’t you?

Riv. (tirulously) Yes! no time like the present— except tomorrow.

Riv. Well, to tell you the truth, I am rather in a hurry to catch a train. (he puts down rug and crosses to l.) I have heard a telegram from an aunt—she's very ill—not expected to live—so must hasten up to town.

(refer to railway guide)

Riv. Oh! (aside) What accomplished liars some of these foreigners are!

Riv. (looking at watch) I want to catch the nine forty most particularly.

Riv. That's not a train to town, dear boy! It's coming from town—express to Folkstone, don’t you know! (aside) I'm getting him in a nice mess—he’ll have to show the talent of the late lamented Ananias to lie himself out of it.

Riv. (receded) You seem to have developed a capacity for cross-examination I never noticed in you before. Can’t you see I am worried—fearfully worried by the news!

Riv. News of your aunt—is she a rich aunt? Can understand it would worry a fellow if a rich aunt were queer, and he didn't know which way her will was worded!

(sits on table, l.)

Riv. (aside, looking at watch) I must start, for she would have the letter by now. I’ll give this idiot the go-by on the road. (aloud) Well, I am off! (Rivola crosses towards E. C.) Gus follows. Rivola turns at door, disgusted at not being able to shake him off) Not that way—I am going out by the book door!

Riv. Hesit. Why?

Riv. It’s a short cut!

Riv. Bet you fifty to one it isn’t—really!

Riv. Pshaw! I cannot wait!

Riv. I’m with you, dear boy! Hope you will find her all right when you get there.

Riv. (suspiciously) Her! Whom?

Riv. (innocently) Whom? Why, your aunt!

Riv. (horrified) music; then, after a pause, tapping heard on front door, enter WAH, c., she looks around anxiously, and, seeing no one, comes down.

Wah! Thank God he left me! While he was by my side to urge me on the path I had chosen, there was no looking back, but when I was left alone under the shadow of Mons., tke Church, I began to think! My memory went back to the old days of long ago, and while wavering in my mind and gazing round in the dim light of the autumn evening, I wandered towards the churchyard, and, looking through the railings at the quiet stones that cover it, I suddenly saw my mother’s grave! Then my baseness came back to me with redoubled force—I had forgotten her! Forgotten her! It seemed as if I heard her voice say, “Turn back, it may not even now be too late—turn back before it is!” Without giving myself time to think more, I left the well-known spot, resolved to tell Rafael that I had determined to repair the wrong I was so near committing, to lay of him to see me no more, and let me live the better life my mother’s spirit had prompted me to seek! Where is he? I cannot wait! Time is precious now! Yes! Yes, I will go home! I will go home! (she turns from r. and goes to c.)

WAH opening door in flat as she approaches it and standing in door-way.

WAH My husband!

WAH (bitterly) Yes, your husband! A strange guest beneath this roof. (WAH turns) Stop! I would speak with you.

WIN. Spare your reproaches—you come to punish me!

WIN. No!

WIN. Then you despise me too much even for revenge!

WIN. If in the first moment of my cruel bereavement I felt a desire for vengeance, it was crushed by the second blow that Heaven sent to paralyse my uplifted hand.

WIN. What do you mean?

WIN. In the very moment of your treacherous flight, your child—and mine— was brought to death’s door!

WIN. (with a cry) Trissy! Not dead! Not dead!

WIN. Not dead, but I fear—dying.

WIN. And you come to tell me this—you are right, you

WIN. Need no common vengeance.
Insensible at first, and then half delirious she called on her mother's name—that mother who had placed herself beyond the reach of her own child's cry for help.

**WILL.** The doctor declared that until we could quiet that troubled spirit, yearning for its natural comforter, no hopes of recovery could be entertained—with a mother's care they said she might live—without it, she must die!

**WILL.** And I have killed her, for I have lost the right to return—I have taken the fatal false step downward that can never be retraced!

**WILL.** Now, I come here to ask you to save her!

**GRIZ.** Oh! may I go back? may I go back? let me kneel to you and kiss your hand for the blessing it bestows!

*(kneeling)*

**WILL.** Thank me not! This act is not for your sake. I would have left you to the life you have chosen, but I dare not punish the child for the mother's sin. If I allow you to return, it will be on condition that you never more see or communicate with the paragon of your flight!

**GRIZ.** (quickly) Most humbly do I consent to any conditions, but let us leave at once.

*(crossing to L.)*

**GRIZ.** Never to return!

**GRIZ.** Never! by true repentance I hope to deserve my having a life being spared. It is noble of you to have done this for my sake!

**GRIZ.** No! For our child's sake!

He opens door centre to let her pass out—she endeavours to kiss his hand, but he sternly points off. She then crosses slowly, stopping to make silent appeal before going out at door. Grizan remains relentless.

**CURTAIN.**
Dear Mrs. Goodrich,

I have nearly come to the end of my money and shall have to go back to work again. I should not have been able to give myself this chance but that my uncle spent the sum of his money to which I added my savings so

So I shall go back to work.

You shall Miss Good,

Not for long, Mrs. M.

You are cruel. And the disagreeable man—Mrs. Allison, what will he do without you? Ben

He will go back never think of me again.

Mrs. M.

Yes he will go back to his cheese store and photograph is become more of a bear than ever.

I believe you are wrong, he I believe he thinks more of our little Benjamin than as my husband calls you, than you think.

Mrs. M.

It is only your romantic fancy.

Ben

Denise {name}
ACT III.—SALOON IN HOTEL AT NAPLES.
THE RETURN OF THE TEMPTER!

"Tis one thing to be tempted, another thing to fall." — SHAKESPEARE.

Scene.—Salaon overlooking the sun-lit Bay of Naples; doors left second entrance, left first entrance; centre at back large French window leading to balcony; table, &c., couch, &c., with small occasional table by it; gilt furniture disposed about room; piano, &c. As curtain rises Mrs. WILKES is at work. The latter ceases to watch Trixy, who is playing with a large toy alphabet (or, if preferable, child's business can be done with slate and pencil).

Trix. (placing letters in order) T.B.I.X.Y. See, mamma, how well I can spell! I like to put them all together! this is can.

WIN. There's a good girl. If you knew how pleased your mother was to see the roses coming back to her darling's cheeks, there is a long word you would always be trying to write.

Trix. What's that, mamma?

WIN. Gratitude!

Enter WILFRED.

WILL. (taking up and kissing child, who runs to him) Well, Trixy! How get on your researches amid the mysteries of the alphabet?

Trix. Oh, so fast! But mamma gave me a long, long word just now that I could not spell; it was "gratitude." What is gratitude?

WILL. It means thankfulness! Thankfulness that you have got over the illness which nearly took you from us. Now, as you have been so good you can come with me for a ride in the carriage I have arranged.


WIN. (Exit, dragging off coat, &c., WILL, after watching them off, sits down with a sigh as though depressed in spirits.)

WIN. Cheer up, my dear. Our darling's life is saved, and was not that what we all prayed for beyond everything else?

Annie. (both at door embrace) She's nicer than ever. (both laugh)

Robt. (enters C,!) And so she is going away, Bermothe. Is it possible that the days will come if go, & I shall not know how you are, whether you are better and more hopeful about your life and your work, or whether the old misery of indigence & ill health is still clung to you. It does not seem possible that such a time can come. Many cruel things have happened to me. But this is the most cruel of all. Against my wish and my knowledge...
I am not unmindful of it, but there are other troubles that weigh down my spirits.

O Eck. I think I know them! But struggle bravely on, for there is a goal of happiness ahead, if your strength is great enough to let you reach it!

Wise. Always at hand with a cheering word, mamma! Always strive to throw a ray of sunlight across others' darkness. I will try to battle with my grief for your sake!

Br. And for your child—

Triss. (re-entering, R., with Mrs. Worthing.) Come, papa, now I'm quite ready! (Vans enter)

Mrs. (cheerfully) And prettier than ever!

(he kisses Triss; cezent, L.)

Wise. (looking after them) His glance seemed less severe, his voice less heavy of late. Perhaps, do you think I can ever hope to be forgiven, even after long, long years of amendment for this past?

Mrs. M. Have you not saved the one creature he loves best on earth—his child? Did you not watch by her bedside day and night, until the dark shadow of death was lifted from her little life? He will not forget!

Wise. He may not forget, but can he forgive! As for the work, it drove every thought out of my conscience-stricken soul. I could not sleep, therefore I spent my time in watching, watching and praying! What mother could have done less?

Mrs. M. Poor Beatrice! I can trace your suffering in your anxious eyes! He suffers too! Be patient, dear. Deserve his love and you will regain it yet. I will never leave you!

Wise. I can accept no such sacrifice as that. You are young and may marry again.

Mrs. M. Marry, indeed! Whom am I to marry? Men seem afraid of widows, and a more harmless, gentle set of creatures I never knew! Never!

Beatrice. What about Gusie Comstocking?

Mrs. M. He's forgotten my very existence, no doubt months ago. His memory was defective—poor, was minded dear!

Beatrice. I don't believe it! He's probably pursuing half over the world in a frantic state at the present moment.

Mrs. M. Very frantic, no doubt! He comes of a fine family. If ever a dim recollection of me crosses his sluggish brain it probably finds expression in some such anxious way as—(coming to centre and imitating)—Oh! I say, you k

don't you know—really! Wonders where that—a widow's— a—got to! Wasn't such a bad sort of widow, don't you know—really! But you know— really—

Mrs. M. Oh! Beatrice, if you love me—say—do I look all right?

Enter Gus. In Alpine costume, knickerbockers, &c., and with large alpenstock in hand he comes, C.

Gus. At last, my Jove! Oh! I say you know, don't you know—really! (aside) She's nicer than evah! Mrs. M. Can it be you? After six months of studied neglect why this uncalled for condescension?

Gus. Oh! I say, don't you know, let a fellow explain—really!

Beatrice. Still on one leg—like a music stool, do sit down!

Gus. (crosses his legs, incorporates them—crosses them the other way, sucks the top of his climbing crook—aside) She's nicer than evah! Wish I could say something—awful hard when a fellow can't say something!

Beatrice. We were talking of you just as you arrived.

Gus. Of me! Really?

Wise. We thought—at least, my sister thought, you had purposely deserted us!

Gus. Never! Been half over Europe since we last met.

Beatrice. In search of the lovely! (Beatrice goes up to piano and plays softly)

Gus. No! I was in search of—somebody. Now I come to think of it—it was in search of the lovely! Not bad for me! Jove—really! Been up mountains and down valleys—over waterfalls and under horrid precipices, but no good; nearly broke my neck several times in Switzerland—Switzerland's so slippery—fell into a snowdrift—caught horrid cold, but never gave up search!

Beatrice. Like the knights of old who buckled on their swords—you, not having a sword, put your feet in mustard, tallowed your nose, and dashed heedlessly onward. But did you expect to find this person in such extremely out-of-the-way places?

Gus. Knew she was travelling on Continent, didn't know anything—have questioned hundreds of railway porters, and cross-examined scores of ticket collectors—no good!

Mrs. M. Oh! Beatrice, if you love me—say—do I look all right?

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Gus. Knew she was travelling on Continent, didn't know anything—have questioned hundreds of railway porters, and cross-examined scores of ticket collectors—no good!
Gus. Oh yes, I have! Don't you know—really—I have! And now I have found her, didn't you know I mean to say to her——

Mrs. M. What?

Gus. Eh! Oh, don't you know—really (breaking down)—nice day! Nice! nice day! I shall remember!

Mrs. M. (aside) As aggravating as ever! (aloud) Do you stay long here, Mr. Cholmondeley?

Gus. That depends on—the person I have been looking for!

Mrs. M. So you mean to attach yourself to her?

Gus. I am attached already to her—(not bad for me!) like—well like—really don't you know!

Mrs. M. Like ivy to an oak.

Gus. Firmer—much firmer—like—well like! Singamy to what you may call it!

Mrs. M. (aside) Like a cockle to his shell—like a miser to his money—like a woman to a whim.

Gus. (confused) Yes! like a cockle to his money—like a miser to his shell. No, I mean like a miser to his cockle. Like all of them, only more so! (aside) She's nicer than ever!

Mrs. M. (aside) I suppose I must help him another chance! (aloud) Well, now you are here, suppose you go and see the ruined chateau on the hill! (Exit, n.)

Gus. Pleasure! I adore ruined chateaux, especially on hills! (Exit, n.) Mrs. M. Wait while I put on my bonnet! (Exit, n.) Mrs. M. (aside) If I don't propose to her this time may I be condemned to wear cheap ready-made suits for the rest of my life?

Wyn. How was dear old Cloverdale looking when you left it?

Gus. Didn't stop long after you started—called and found place shut up—rather staggered me, don't you know—really! We quitted England somewhat suddenly on the advice of our doctor and for the benefit of our child.

Mrs. M. Talking of doctors, I left my poor friend Rivola in their hands—bad case, they said—brain fever—delirious—dreadful!

Wyn. (anxiously, yet suppressing her feelings) Indeed! You have not heard—do you not know whether he recovered?

Gus. No! No chance—been shifting about so—couldn't have letters addressed "G. Cholmondeley, Esq., top of Mount Venetian or bottom of Swiss precipice," or anything of that sort, don't you know!

Mrs. M. (entering, r.) Come on and I will show you these ruins!

Gus. (offering her his arm) Jove! I will propose this time—really! She is nicer than ever! (Exit, l.)

Wyn. How each casual remark serves to revive the memories of the past. So he is ill—maybe dying; or even dead. I seem to bring a curse on all who dare who profess to love me! (Enter Count with card, r.) "The Count of Braccio." (reading card) Some friend of my husband's, no doubt!

Lust. The gentleman said it was with you he wished to speak, Signora.

Wyn. I will see him then, although I have never heard the name before. Admit the gentleman!

Lust. The Count of Braccio!

Enter Rivola, he is pale and much changed as by a long illness and grown a full beard—hair slightly grey on temples, &c.; he carries hat in hand. (Exit, l.)

Riv. Rafael!

Wyn. Yes, tis! You thought never more to behold me. You may have wished me dead!

Riv. No, no! But for heaven's sake—come, my husband might at any moment return, and I should be lost!

Wyn. I knew he was away or I would not have sent up my card. Besides, he has never yet set eyes upon me, nor does he even know me by the name I now bear!

Riv. (reproachfully) A false one? Yes?

Wyn. No! My own by just inheritance from my dead father. I am now a nobleman, and richer than I was in the old time. I come here to ask you——

Riv. Ask me nothing now! I will hear nothing! Between us there exists an impassable gulf!

Wyn. (crossing to l.)

Riv. (n.) Do you think to be rid of me like this? Do you think that I who have loved you to madness, who even adored you so deeply, that when I learned that you had left me at the very moment I thought my happiness approaching completion fell a victim to an illness that nearly brought me to a close by death——(intensely)——Beatrice, I love you more than ever now—did you dream I was capable of forgetting?

Wyn. No! But I thought that in those returning to molest me since that awful night, you had, for my sake, ceased to let a passion develop into a persecution.

Riv. (entering, L.) And so she is going away. Remember, is it possible, that the days will come to go, & I shall not know how you are, whether you are better and more hopeful about your life and your work, or whether the old misery of my suffering & ill health is still clinging to you. It does not seem possible that such a time can come when cruel things have happened to me, but this is the most cruel of all. Against my wish, and my knowledge.
Vivian. When I said I loved you, I spoke as a wayward woman speaks, and under a delusion—the tears have fallen from my eyes. I find that what I thought was love for you was but a flimsy sentiment as unlike love as a glowworm is unlike the sun.

Riv. I cannot, I will not, believe you. Words are useless. Today I come to live in this hotel that may be near you!

Vivian. Oh spare me! My husband must meet you!

Riv. He shall! Introduce me to him. Say I am an old friend of the family’s, he will suspect nothing!

Vivian (bitterly). It is my own fault that you insist upon it. Once more, will you leave me?

Riv. If I go it will be to make myself known to him tomorrow as Rafael di Rivola—he will probably prove me to a duel, and one of us will fall!

Vivian. Infamous alternative! (entering) Philippe, leave me!

(crossing quickly to Bermonde)

Bermonde. (recognising Rivola) You there?

Riv. Yes! (Bermonde is about to introduce me to her husband—at my request) (to Bermonde) Choose the name by which he is to know me!

Bermonde (half fainting). Allow me to introduce you to the Count di Braci, (the men bow) A friend—a friend of my father's!

Riv. Any friend of the late Mr. Desmond will always find a welcome from me. (Bermonde offers hand to Vivian)

Riv. (coolly) I am in Naples to look for a suitable house to purchase. In the meantime I am a fellow occupant of this hotel, so we often meet. Shall we meet?

Bermonde (of course you smoke). Riv. Like all Italians!

Bermonde. (looking at Vivian) Oblige me. Offering cases—this business should be conducted in a common-place, conversational style, and in contrast to the women’s anxious looks—they stroll up and down, and exclaim on the balcony talking.

Bermonde. This must be a dream! Can it be true that I saw you deliberately introduce the author of your misfortunes to your husband and under a name not his own too? It is simply treachery and double deceit. Where the paths you swore to me all false when you told me you had found out that you had never loved me then?

Vivian. Not at all, see how one falsehood drags others after it. Unless I consented to introduce him to George and permitted him to reside in this same hotel, he threatened to kill my husband. What could I do?

Bermonde. Perhaps you were powerless, but should George’s suspicions be but once aroused all would be lost. Come, have courage—tell him the truth and brave the result!

Vivian. If it should be George’s death?

Bermonde. Better he should die in your defence than live in your dishonour. (Exeunt, i.)

Vivian. I will not let his life be risked. Sooner would I cut the knot by seeking a suicide’s grave myself. Oh! to think that I should be driven on by my own foolish act, from weakness into error, from error into crime.

Enter Wilhelmine from balcony.

Wilhelmine (entering). Where’s Fanny? Directly I had left our friend the Count on the steps, I stumbled across an old flame of hers—Gus Cholmondeley—and at once conceived the idea of bringing him here and giving you a pleasant surprise, but he seems he has already found you out.

Vivian. Oh, yes! Fanny and he went out for a stroll together, did you not see her?

Wilhelmine. No! He was at the door engaged in a wild altercation with a cabman—not about his fare, for I know he always pays double, but as to the Neapolitan jamais his driving capacity.

She sits extreme left, and takes up newspaper.

Gus. (entering, with Mrs. Merryleather) Confound these foreign cabbies, they know no more of driving than cats. My man’s been standing up in his seat and yelling like a howl for the last twenty minutes. Then look at their whips and the insane way they crack them. If I were a horse I should turn round and laugh—should, don’t you know—really!

Wilhelmine. Well, Mr. Cholmondeley, how long do you stay here?

Gus. That depends on—a certain party! (looking at Mrs. Merryleather)

Wilhelmine. Whose identity Mr. Cholmondeley persists in keeping a secret?

Gus. Ball! What ball? (rising, and coming c.) Mrs. M. The Embassy ball! We are all going!
Gus. Oh! I say, don't you know—and I have not an invitation! Jove, I'll go as a waiter—hand round ices—rather infra dig., but don't you know, I'll do it! really!

Well. The Consul is a friend of mine, and perhaps I can procure an invitation.

Gus. Jove! think so? Shall be awfully so much obliged, don't you know—real! May I ask you for the first waltz?

(to Mrs. Merryweather)

Mrs. M. Not if you come as you propose, in the character of a waiter!

Gus. Oh! I say—(to George)—but don't forget, you know!

Well. Never fear! but apropos of the ball there will be a gentleman there whom you have met before—the Count di Braci.

Gus. Never heard the name—Jove!

[aside to Gus, quickly] Say yes!

Gus. (looking at Mrs. Merryweather with amazement)

Yes! I should say yes, don't you know—really! (questioning at random) How's the dear old boy?

Well. He seems all right! Were you well acquainted?

Gus. (looking at Mrs. Merryweather, who signals with handkerchief) Oh! I say, don't you know, we were at college together!

Well. I should have thought him older than you, though perhaps his beard gives him the appearance of seniority.

Gus. Ah! he had no beard when I knew him—at college!

[aside] Now he knows him too well!

Gus. (gaining confidence) So the dear boy is here—should like to see him—Jove, really! So nice to come across people whom you have never seen—(Mrs. Merryweather signals, for a long while!)

[aside] The Count di Braci, here he comes!

Gus. (aside) I'm going to be introduced for the first time to my old friend! Wonder what he is like!

Mrs. M. (low to Gus) Just you be more careful, please!

Gus. Oh! I say, don't—(they go down towards R.)

Mrs. M. (stopping him) Hush!

Rivola. L.

Riv. Once more intruding myself! Ah, Cholmondeley!


Mrs. M. Glad of that, you know, really—you were awfully bad at

[aside] (r. quickly to him) That's enough!

Gus. (puzzled) Really, don't you—

Mrs. M. Hush!

Gus. Oh!

Riv. (to George, who is L.) I hear the house at the corner of the Corso is for sale, and I think of bidding for it and settling down here permanently!

Gus. Oh! I say, fancy you settling down, dear boy! You always told me you never meant to quit England any more, but that was just before—

Riv. Hush!

Mrs. M. Hush!

Gus. C., is again dreadfully puzzled, looking first at one, then at the other, finally dropping into chair, in speechless wonderment.

Riv. At one time I had thought of your country as a permanent abode, but (looking at Beatrice) circumstances have altered and made me more of a wanderer than I was. (to George) From the top balcony a good view can be had of the place I mean—come and give me your opinion of its value.

[Aside to Mrs. Merryweather] This torture is terrible! To think that Rafael should be here, face to face with George, and yet unknown to him. Oh, Fanny! it will kill me!

Gus. (rising) Is Mrs. Fane ill? Really, let me do something!

Mrs. M. No! you've done quite enough already. Have you no brains? Sit down! (he sits) And don't move an inch till I return! Come, darling, bear up! Let me help you to your room!

Gus. But don't you know!

Mrs. M. Will you be quiet? Sit down! (following)

Riv. But really—

Mrs. M. Will you sit down?

[Aside Mrs. Merryweather and Rivola, L.]

Gus. (he subsides helplessly into chair) Damn it, don't you know I've put my foot in it! Very hard when a fellow can't open mouth without putting foot in it! Everybody's whispering to me at once! "Hush!" "Silence!" "Be quiet!" "Where are your brains?" Deuce take it, how should I know!

[Aside, (exclaiming in a rage, taking the stage in front) It's too much! This sort of thing cannot go on!] Gus.
comes down to her, following her backwards and forwards)
And you are a pretty specimen of a lunatic at large, you are!

Gus. (aside) She's nicer than ouch! Really!

Mrs. M. You made me shake in my shoes!

Gus. (innocently) Oh! what's the matter? Anything wrong?

Mrs. M. Anything wrong? The man asks if there is anything wrong? Could you see? Couldn't you understand?

Gus. No! I tried to understand, but you wouldn't let me. You said (imitating) Hush! Seems to be a sort of game of blind man's buff going on round me. I am suddenly told I am to meet an old friend—all right; then I hear that old friend's name is Di Braci—all wrong; then I find old friend is really Rivola—all right; then I ask for explanation—all wrong; I say nothing! all right! I say the same again—all wrong.

Mrs. M. We want none of your idiotic conjectures! The fact is, your friend Rivola or Di Braci, or whatever other alias he chooses to go by, has dared to thrust himself in here to annoy and insult my sister, whom he pretends to love!

Gus. Italian fellows such demons to love!

Mrs. M. You must ask him at first, and if he refuses, force him to quit these premises and give her up!

Gus. Suppose he won't quit premises—suppose he won't give her up! Not so easy to make fellow in love quit premises, not so easy to make him give girl up—should like to see anybody who would force me to quit these premises or make me give her up!

Hale! paralyzed at what he has blurted out, he is suddenly covered with shame.

Mrs. M. At last! You do love me, then? (Gus about to speak) Don't answer! I knew it months ago! You want to marry me? Don't answer! I knew that months ago! You can't marry me—understand! Never! never—never—never! Unless you save my sister!

Gus. (after pause) Think I understand now! I may not be quick at comprehension but when I do understand I understand awfully well.

Appeal to his feelings as a man of honour first— 
if that fails, try sharper means to remove him.

Gus. Yes, but I say, what right shall I have to talk to him like this?

Mrs. M. The best of rights! You are going to be one of the family! (x 3)

Gus. (delightedly) Jove! I am! If he don't go, I'll call him out—if he won't come then I'll throw him out—out of the window—really!

Mrs. M. That might lead to a duel between you—can you fight?

Gus. Rather! I may be no good for lots of things, but I can do very decent pistol practice. I know I can't see a joke, but I can see the bull's eye of a target at six hundred yards and, with a good gun, hit it generally. Leave him to me, don't you know!

Mrs. M. You are a dear! That's what you are, a perfect dear, and I love you! There's no time to wait—however; he's in the smoking-room, now go and see him at once! (strike bell, utter (low) Ask the Count di Braci to step down here!

Gus. Ah! If can't settle this thing amicably, shall meet with a couple of friends to-morrow morning before breakfast at some quiet place—outside the town. Very likely only one of us will come back, and I think that one will be me! (with a touch of pathos) If shouldn't be me, would it be too much to ask you to drop tear on my tomb?

Mrs. M. No, Gusie, I should weep for you as long as I lived. And here I swear, should anything happen, never to marry again, but to die a widow!

Gus. Thanks! But don't you know you wouldn't be my widow after all! Never mind, it's a comfort to leave a widow—even if it's some other fellow's widow—to do the heavy business when you are gone!

Mrs. M. He may be down directly, and mustn't see me—remember you are one of the family now we are engaged (going), and that reminds me (coming very close to Gus) you've never asked me (laying her head upon his shoulder) to kiss you!

Gus. No! I say don't you know, will you—

Mrs. M. Of course I will, you great stupid! (business)

Gus. Really! (they kiss)

(As Mrs. Merryweather is running off, laughing.

With appears on balcony, c., strolling into room)

Mrs. M. Allow me to introduce you to the future Mrs. Auguste Cholmondeley.

With. No! Gusie has never proposed!

Mrs. M. He has!

Gus. (proudly) I have!
Mrs. M. Yes, by accident! It popped out unexpectedly like the cork of a ginger beer bottle!

WILL. I am sure he will make the best of husbands, and I wish you both every happiness!

GUS. Happiness! I never was so happy since the day I found a man who could cut trousers like an angel! I must go and smoke a cigar to soothe my feelings.

(Exit into balcony, c.)

Mrs. M. George, I shall expect a wedding present, and a valuable one!

WILL. Name it!

Mrs. M. It is not for myself but for my sister and it is something I should prize beyond all earthly gifts—forgiveness for her long repented past!

WILL. My dear Fanny, you ask me for what I should be as glad to give you as you would be to see it given. Beatrice is sorry for her one fault, and time is already beginning to heal the wound her conduct caused. I promise not to fight against the feeling of forgiveness that has already begun to rise within my heart!

Mrs. M. More than that I dare not; I would not ask! Here comes our little household fairy!

WILL. It was her innocent face that first helped me to forgive!

Enter Trixx. Mrs. Merryweather goes off, e.

TRIXX. Papa, I want to show you how well I can read. I can spell three syllables!

WILL. You are a clever little girl!

TRIXX. (leading him to a table) Look! (she arranges the letters ENTERED. WIRED) That's mamma's name and yours!

WILL. An ill-omened combination!

TRIXX. Now what's this? F.A.N.Y.? That's auntie!

WILL. Wonderful!

TRIXX. And now—C.H.O.L.M.U.M.—Oh, bother, his name's too long, but here's another one—(arranging letters N.Y.O.L.A.)

WILL. Starting Who taught you to spell that word?

TRIXX. Nobody! It's the name of the gentleman who used to come and see us so often—Handsome! Ah! I remember him very well. He is here now! Haven't you seen him? He has grown a big beard since he was with us before, but I knew him directly!

WILL. (sinking in seat, overcome with anguish and sobbing) Oh!

TRIXX. What's the matter, papa dear? (putting her arm round his neck) Have I been a naughty girl? There are great tears in your eyes; I will tell mamma that you have been crying; she will be so sorry, so very sorry for me!

WILL. (with firmness) No, no, my child, it is nothing. Don't mention it to your mother! (with a forced smile) Look, I am laughing now! Go, my pet!

(He kisses her, she goes off slowly, e.)

WILL. (rising) Again betrayed! And by her! The child has revealed the mother's secret. More than once I could have excelled, she has dared to bring here the villain who wrecked my once happy home! But I will be revenged, most bitterly revenged! They shall not live to laugh at me! No, I will kill him even within the shelter of her arms! Ah! the ball to-night! He is to be there! Yes, yes! That was why she consented to go! Traitoress! I will watch you with an affixed attention, the easier to assume, as you believe me blind. I will go to this scene of cursed revelry. Amongst the crowd of hypocrites I will play the Judas too! I will smile as they smile, lie as they lie, and after—let them beware my vengeance! No more tears, no more weakness, my heart is dead! To the ball, to the ball.

WILL. (Leaves off excitedly, e.)

Enter Gus, from balcony.

GUS. Now for it! Here comes the gentleman we want to take an exterior view of the premises.

RIVULSKY appears on balcony smoking, he stroll in, looking right and left.

RIVULSKY. A convenient balcony! Runs right along from my window to hers. Good!

GUS. Hullo! dear boy, you appear to be taking a measure of the place like a surveyor's clerk.

RIVULSKY. You think so? Gus. Want to have a word or two with you, don't you know—a serious sort of an explanation.

RIVULSKY. Oh! how long have you taken to serious lecturing? Gus. Never mind how long I have taken to it, dear boy. Look here, we are old cronies, we've lived in the same hotels, smoked the same cigars, ridden the same horses, broke the same tailors, spooned the same girls, till the society papers christened us the Twins. It was my fault, perhaps, for following you, but I admired you.

RIVULSKY. (ironically) This is flattery! Gus. But I don't admire you now! No! I think your
conduct's that of a confounded cad. What business have
you to come here when you know you are not wanted!
Riv. (emphatically) You seem to have learnt your lesson
well, Mr. Parrot!
Gus. Parrot! Don't object to the expression—rather be a
good honest parrot than a dam cruel hawk and prey on help-
less birds!
Riv. Your morality's amusing!
Gus. Very likely, but look here. I don't want to quarrel
with you, so if you'll promise to get out of this at once, I'll
say no more about it. Take the express to Paris or Timbuc-
too, or anywhere, lose the return ticket, old feller, and my
blessing will travel with you. You will go, won't you, dear boy?
Riv. No!
Gus. Really?
Riv. Really!
Gus. Oh! then we must change the subject, and I beg
to inform you of my approaching marriage with Mrs. Merry-
weather!
Riv. (coolly) I congratulate you!
Gus. Thanks! This marriage makes me one of the family
—George Fane will be my brother, and his wife my sister!
Now I don't want my brother made a fool, because I'm
going to be the fool of this family, nor my sister made
miserable. She's weak, perhaps, but she's not wicked.
Understand?
Riv. I understand you are attempting to drive me away
from here.
Gus. More than attempting—I'm doing it!
Riv. And if I refuse—?
Gus. Well, don't you know, I shall make you!
Riv. By telling
Gus. Not such an ass! I shall call you out on my own
account!
Riv. Suppose I refuse to fight?
Gus. You couldn't refuse an old friend!
Riv. (serenely) Enough of jesting! Listen to me. I am a
Corsican by descent, and you know for what Corsica is famous!
Gus. (after reflection) Brothers?
Riv. No, vengeance! Thwart me now and I will kill you!
Gus. That's my look out, don't you know—my bullet
would start at about the same time as yours! We are sure
to meet a couple of obliging friends at the ball tonight who
can arrange everything, and in the meantime—get out!
Riv. (threateningly) Dare you insult me?

Riv. (at door, empress) She's nicer than

Riv. (rules C.) And so she is going away. Remember,
I don't promise that the days will come & go, & I
shall not know how you are, whether you are
terrible or more hopeful about your life and
endeavor work, or whether the old misery of
indifference & ill health is still clinging to
you. It does not seem possible that such a
time can come. Many cruel things have
happened to me but this is the most cruel
of all. Against my wish and my knowledge,
Challenger call my life a failure now, I may have failed in everything else, but not in loving. Oh little one it can't be that I am not to have you for my very own (couple) no, no it is not I who may hold you in my arms. Some strong man must love & care for you and then that troubled spirit may find rest. - Would to God I were that strong man.

What do you think about death have you any them?
Your love has crept into my life as a necessity.
And now I have to give you up. All of it, if
were only like other men, if I only had
a little hope of getting well. But I
must not darken your life by a word that
will let you know how I suffer. You are
better, God bless you, and you will go
back into a fuller life and it carry on
your work, and it put to account those
talents which no one realizes more than I
do, as for myself. God help me, I shall
be left to wither away.

(Enter D) Oh Miss Alliston have you heard?

What? Beth,

That little German who occupied No. 54 has
committed suicide.

Beth

Well there is one person less in the world.

Beth

I think you make these remarks from habit.

What do you think about life & death? Have you any
theories about life & death & the bridge between them?

Nothing. Beth

Has there been no value in philosophy there?

Philosophy! What has it done for us? It has taught
us a few wonderful things that interest the few, but
centuries have come and gone, & the only thing
remains unknown—our beloved ones shall we meet them & how? The great secret of the
universe. We ask for bread and these
philosophers give us a stone. Why cannot we
learn to be more impersonal?
And still the question of what comes after death can never be put aside, we shall go on building our bridge between life & death each one for himself. When we see it is not strong enough we shall break it down & build another. We shall watch other people building their bridges, we shall imitate, criticise or condemn. But as time goes on, we shall learn not to interfere, we shall know that one bridge is probably as good as another, & that the greatest value of them all has been in the building of them. It does not matter what we build, but build we must. You & everyone.

I have long since ceased to build my bridge.

Perhaps you are still at work, or perhaps you are only resting.

(Look, at her—suddenly takes paper from pocket) Here is something to interest you—an article on Realism—I don't want the paper again.

I thought you never liked anything much less gave it.

Not usually, I think I told you once that I thought selfishness perfectly legitimate if we had made the one great sacrifice.

I have often wondered what you considered the one great sacrifice.
The one great sacrifice is the gain on living, when everything that would seem to make life acceptable has been wrested away. I have made this sacrifice the greatest thing I had to give up. I gave up my death. I was to die. I should break my mother's heart, and I should not like to grieve her. So I am wanting—When my mother dies I shall be free. Then—

And then? Why should there be any doubt? You little thing, I have something to ask you.

Well?

I am a little nervous of offending you, yet I trust you. It is only this: You said you had come to the end of your money, that you must go home. It seems a pity when you are getting better. I have so much more than I need. I don't offer it to you as a gift, but I thought if you wished to stay longer, a loan from me, would repay as quickly, or as slowly as you wish.
Mr. Allsteen, you did well to trust me. But I could not borrow money of any one unless I was obliged, if I could. If I were not(-to be continued)

month ago since I was a little anxious about money. My remittances did not come. I thought then I was obliged to ask for temporary help. I should come to you. So you see, if you have trusted me, I, too, have trusted you.

Robert

Supposing you change your mind you will not find that I have changed mine.

Robert

That is hardly possible.

Robert

And tomorrow you will be gone?

Robert

Yes, and I shall miss you.

Robert

That is simply a question of time. I shall probably miss you at first, but we adjust ourselves easily to altered circumstances — mercifully. A few days a few weeks at most, and then that state of resignation.

Robert

Then you think that every day companionship, the every day exchange of thoughts and ideas, counts for little or nothing?
Rob,

That is about the color of it, I shall send you a guide book from Nyrol, I shall be going there to see my mother, Rob. I hope you will find her in good health.

Good bye and good luck to you. (shakes hands.)

Good bye & good luck to you, (you turn to door then hesitates then makes off.)

And so, the many pleasant houses we have passed here are at count for nothing! Why should I care, I am nothing to him & he is nothing to me, nothing - but I love him! I love him, and my heart is breaking.

Our ten!
EN ROUTE.
Gros.

(Enters at right in most elaborate evening dress.
Tremendous expansion of skirt front & big bouquet.
High collar tight trousers)

How am I so glad I'm engaged, this being the first time we have been into society as fiancees I have taken my end of pains with my get-up, nearly drove my husband out of his mind, made him do - when a fellow's not got much inside his head it makes him careful to have the exterior well looked after! This bouquet ought to fit here, where it's sure to see it - (B.o.)

No here (his) no there - (B.o., laughs) Some one is coming mustn't see me

(to go) Too late! At any rate they shan't see the

[Conceals it, R.]

Bernardine

(Enters R.) Where is Mrs. Ruffold? She ought to be

in her fine feathers by this time, Eh? Oh! what's the matter, are you in pain?
Gus. Pain! No—really!

Gus. Thought you might be, for you seem to be literally lifted off the ground by the tightness of your—unbreathables! Excuse me laughing. I cannot help it!

Gus. Oh! I say don’t you know—really! It’s the fashion to have everything tight now, collars tight, boots tight, sleeves tight, gloves tight—

And I fear too often—money tight as well with most of the dress-to-death class you seem anxious to emulate.

Gus. Can’t fly in the face of fashion, don’t you know! Fashion has invented the “masher,” and everybody who is anybody must do as fashion commands.

Ben. Oh! the modern masher is nothing new, although perhaps he fancies he is; in the days of Shakespeare he was a “fool,” he advanced to the “exquisite,” he rebudded into the “macaroni,” then developed into the “dandy,” sprouted once more into the “swell,” and finally emerged as the latest, laziest and most ludicrous specimen of a man ever turned out by nature’s enemy—the tailor!

Gus. Come now, really you are too severe—don’t you know. Don’t you think to see so much shirt front? I thought you’d admire this single stud in the centre!

Ben. Look’s like a bull’s-eye floating in a pail of milk!

Gus. You do take a fellow’s clothes off so! You’ve taken off my hat, you’ve taken off my coat, you’ve taken off my collar, and now you are going to take off my—

Ben. (suddenly) Ha—hum. (Mrs. M. enters R. dressed for call.)

Gus. My tremendously carefully starched front. Linen’s a weakness of mine, I confess it! I like the best of everything, so I have the best horses, the best carriages, the best cook, and the best clothes; I wanted the best wife—so I got engaged to you?

Mrs. M. No prettier compliment could come from a—

(Aisle) This is too much for me. I will go excuse me?

Mrs. M. Why, certain! (To Gus.)

(Aisle) What a romantic troubadour! Will you modify your taste and cease to live up to a costume ideal and worship at the broadcloth shrine of St. Polo?

Gus. Will I! Ask me to eat peas with a knife, ask me to enlist in the militia, play pitch-and-toss at the corner of Beagles-square, wear corduroys, eat bread in Whitechapel, join the Salvation Army—ask me anything, Fanny, and I’d do it! I would, Fanny, for your sake—really!

Mrs. M. I do not demand such terrible sacrifices or alarming social peneumonies, but I_should_ like to suppress a tendency you have to let good taste run to foolishness. Man dresses to live, and does not live to dress.

Gus. That’s very well put! Do you know it never struck me that way before—really!

Mrs. M. I can’t stop here delivering sententious lectures, I must run and find my sister—you go and see if the carriage is at the door.

Gus. Pleasure! Jove, how true her words are! Oh, what a wife she will make—really! and when we are once married—oh, she’ll be nicer than evah!

(Exit, R.)

Enter _Will_, u., going to looking-glass.

_Will._ Have you schooled my features to hide the tempest surging in my heart? Yes! Let them be as puppets, and dance at the bidding of my will. (impatiently) Why will she not come? Alone I cannot keep up this miserable mockery!

(Exit, L.)

Enter _Will_, u., dressed as in previous Act; she goes to table, &c., and sits.

_Will._ (looking at her) Come, _Will_, have you forgotten the time? Fanny was almost ready an hour ago!

_Will._ (timidly) _Will_, I am here to ask of you a favour.

_Will._ Whatever it may be I promise to grant it should it lie within my power.

_Will._ It is in your power! for it is to excuse me accompanying you to the Embassy ball to-night!

_Will._ At the last moment, and after so cordially accepting the invitation. Why this sudden capitulation?

_Will._ (timidly) _Will_, I to not feel well. This morning, when, perhaps, I was somewhat excited, I overestimated my little strength—for you know I have not been strong lately. I did promise to go to-night, but I find I cannot.

_Will._ (aside) She wishes to be left alone! Why! (aloud) I am sorry to hear of this sudden attack, it makes me anxious.
Gus. Pain! No—really!

Mrs. M. Thought you might be, for you seem to be literally lifted off the ground by the tightness of your—unbreathables! Excuse me laughing; I cannot help it!

Gus. Oh! I say don't you know—really! It's the fashion to have everything tight now, collars tight, boots tight, sleeves tight, gloves tight—

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Gus. My tremendously carefully starched front. Linen's a weakness of mine, I confess it. I like the best of everything, so I have the best horses, the best carriages, the best cook, and the best clothes; I wanted the best wife—so I got engaged to you!

Mrs. M. No prettier compliment could come from a very properly romantic trouvaille.

(Aside) This is too much for me. I will say excuse me.

Mrs. M. Why certain (In a hurry)

WINNIE. No! no, it's nothing! To-morrow I shall be as well as ever, but if I went to the ball the heat of the room would be sure to upset me, and—

WINNIE. (to her hands, and looking steadfastly at her finger nails). Your hands are burning with a feverish fire, your face is flushed! So I had better not go either, but remain here and keep you company.

WINNIE. (anxiously) No, don't think of that! I—

WINNIE. (aside) She expects him! (aloud) Yes, I have quite decided—for without you whatever could I do at such a place?

WINNIE. You will find many friends there besides, think of Fanny's disappointment—you must go for her sake.

WINNIE. I would rather not.

WINNIE. (persuasively) For your sake—

WINNIE. Very well then, I yield—for your sake.

WINNIE. (joyfully) Thank you, Wilfried.

WINNIE. The loss is more yours than mine! For you would have surely moved the centre of a circle of admiring eyes.

WINNIE. I care not for admiration now. The shadow of my one act of folly darkens my days, and turns to bitterness my pleasure!

WINNIE. Have I not kept the promise I made—have you not kept yours?

WINNIE. You have to the letter, though had you not done so I should not have dared to complain. My punishment is self-reproach—you could not inflict it on me—nor can you lift the burden from my heart!

Mrs. M. (entering, R.) Well, good people, are you ready? (She stands at door buttoning her glove)

WINNIE. Here's your sister! How charming she looks, and we know she is as good as she is beautiful. (Aside) Oh, ain't she lovely.

WINNIE. (and peremptorily, to think that you should ever find a place in the heart of a human creature so far as this)

Mrs. M. So there you are, brother-in-law! Ready and no doubt, waiting for ever so long. I wish we were a men—men have not half the trouble we poor women have to dress themselves; with us, we have to struggle with button hooks and laces. Why Winnie—not dressed yet!

WINNIE. How's this?

WINNIE. I am not going to the ball to-night! George had kindly enjoined me, as I do not feel well.

WINNIE. This is a disappointment. (With resignation) Never mind, here goes to take off all my pretty things.

WINNIE. No! You shall not have your evening spoilt, especially as I know our friend Cholmondeley is to be there.

Mrs. M. I promised him the first waltz, and no end of quadrilles, and I verily believe it will turn his poor little brain if I throw him over at the last moment. (Sigh) A bouquet! From him—bless his thoughtful little head and his dear big heart! Shall I go, dear?

WINNIE. Yes; yes, by all means!

Mrs. M. Not that I shall stop long—just long enough to see what those Gibson girls have on, and what is the latest thing from Paris!

WINNIE. No! We will make a night of it. You shall waltz to your heart's content, and I will have a quiet rubber in the corner with the crew of card players and warders among our troublers—bonds at every door. I'm going to get into training for a man of the world, but a few easy lessons in lying and cheating. Ha, ha! Come along!

Mrs. M. Good-bye, dear! (Exit, L.)

WINNIE. Good-bye! Good-bye! Oh, I can see through that mask of feigned contentment. Silently he suffers for the pardon he bestowed on me for my Tixy's sake. And for all his pain, for all his anguish, I am alone to blame! The consciousness of my guilt is my gravest punishment—help it! (Going to the window)

TIXY. (Looking in at door, R.) Mamma!

WINNIE. My darling, I thought you were in bed long ago.

TIXY. I should have been, but I begged so hard of Eliza to let me stop up and see you dressed in your pretty new frock. But mamma dear, you have not got on your new frock! Are you not going to the grand party you told me of?

WINNIE. No, dear, mamma is not well to-night, so you must go to bed like a good girl and see me wear it another time. (sitting on low chair and taking child close to her) You never forget to say your prayers before you go to sleep, do you, darling?

TIXY. No, mamma dear, I always pray for everybody who is good to me—for auntie—for papa—and for you too.

WINNIE. That's right, dear, and pray as well for those who have done wrong to your good and kind papa—ask God for forgiveness, for God listens to innocent voices. (rising and leading Tixy towards the door, R.) You will not forget, my darling!

TIXY. Oh, no, mamma! (kissing WINNIE) Good-night! (Exit Tixy)

WINNIE. May her prayer be heard! (Going to window) Is there hope for me, as Fanny declares? Somehow I feel a
Gus. Pain! No—really!

Riv. Thought you me might be, you seem to be literally lifted off the ground by the tightness of your—unbreathables! Excuse me, laughing, I cannot help it!

Gus. Oh! I say you not—really! It is the fashion to have everything tight now, collars tight, boots tight, wine tight, gloves tight—

Riv. And I fear too often—money tight as well with most of the dressed-to-death class you seem anxious to emulate.

Gus. Can't fly in the face of fashion, don't you know! Fashion has invented the "masher," and everybody who is anybody must do as fashion commands.

Riv. Oh! the modern masher is nothing new, although perhaps he fancies he is; in the days of Shakespeare he was a "fop," he advanced to the "exquisite," he redbudded into the "maceraius," he developed into the "dandy," sprouted once more into the "stede," and finally emerged as the latest, laziest, and most ludicrous specimen of a man ever turned out by nature's enemy—the tailor!

Gus. Come now, really you are too severe—don't you know. Don't you like to see so much shirt front? I thought you'd admire this single stud in the centre!

Riv. Look's like a bull's-eye floating in a pool of milk!

Gus. You do take a fellow's clothes off so! You've taken off my hat, you've taken off my coat, you've taken off my collar, and now you are going to take off my tr—

Riv. (Suddenly) Ha—hum.

Gus. My tremendously carefully starched front. Linen's a weakness of mine, I confess it! I like the best of everything, so I have the best horses, the best carriages, the best cook, and the best clothes; I wanted the best wife—so I got engaged to you?

Mrs. M. No prettier compliment could come from a

W.A. (And) this is too much for me. Will you excuse

me?

Mrs. M. Why, certainly (to Gus). X

Foreboding of danger close at hand—a feeling of approaching peril ready to snatch the cup of joy that longed to ease, from my eager lips! I wish George had not left me alone. Pahaw! Why should I be so nervous and excited?

(crosses down L. Music: Rivola enters at window, crosses and locks door, L., and takes off my)

The atmosphere is stifling, I want air! Ah! you here! (recalling in terror)

Riv. (in whispering tone) Speak lower or we may be heard.

W.A. I care not who hears us, ask you how it comes that you dare to force your presence here under my husband's roof at such an hour—what do you seek?

Riv. A treasure I would sell my soul to possess—yourself—your body—

W.A. I will listen to nothing in secret, leave this room. Have you not brought me shame and misery enough?

Riv. We're not wretched before I came—a deserted wife!

W.A. No! You it was who poured the poison of flattery in my ear and lured me on to commit a crime, no time can lessen, and no repentance palliate.

Riv. You were unhappy—you are unhappy now!

W.A. Dare you—the cause of my sorrow, trouble, come to tell me that?

Riv. Why fight against fate—your swollen eyes, your tremulous voice, tell me that you have been struggling in vain to throw off the affection I know is as deep-rooted as my own. You love me, you say.

W.A. By the heavens above us, I swear I do not!

Riv. There is no time to argue, your acts have spoken louder than words. I love you! My passion for you has thrown me on a bed of sickness, it may yet be my death.

W.A. Consent to fly with me to-night by the mail for Spain, and this time no hand shall snatch you from me—then I'll live and love together.

W.A. You insult me in my husband's home. Quit this house!

Riv. Never, without you! Death has no terrors, life no joys alone!

W.A. (her fierceness almost breaking into tears) Pity! Oh, pity me! I beg of you.

W.A. (appears on balcony in moonlight)

Riv. I do pity you, in dragging you from a loveless life!

W.A. It is false, I tell you, and a man of honour would refrain from insulting a mother within hearing of her child.

(Riv. pointing off, x.)

Riv. (passionately) I was a man of honour once!
Gus. Pain! No—really!

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(suddenly) Ha—hum. (Mrs. M. enters and is turned for ball)

M. My tremendously carefully starched front. Linen's a weakness of mine, I confess it! I like the best of everything, so I have the best horses, the best carriages, the best cook, and the best clothes; I wanted the best wife—so I got engaged to you!

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(gigantically romantic tone)

arrived at the Embassy than, as if by magic, he disappeared. Being rather anxious, I return in haste without to find that door locked, and the place apparently deserted. What can have happened? Where is Beatrice? (as she crosses the room she sees Beatrice fainting on sofa) Ah! My sister, (kneeling) and immisible! Beatrice, darling, look up!

(Gradually regaining, she sits up and looks around wildly, then seeing Mrs. Merryletter becomes pacified)

Oh, Fanny, it was then a horrible dream! I saw them standing there.

M. Saw whom?

Wife. My husband and that man!

Mrs. M. George, he returned, then?

Wife. Yes, yes! They were both there in my dream!

Mrs. M. At last, then, they have met face to face!

(sound of pistol shots in quick succession)

Wife. (taking centre with a shriek) Ah! It was no dream!

Undel. (wakes up) Come to me!

(a pause)

Mrs. M. (to Gus) Find them!

Gus. I fly!

(as he is about to go out Wife enters at door L.)

Wife. My husband! Thank God, not dead! not dead!

(staggering towards him)

Wife. No, not dead. It was not willed that we should be torn asunder at the moment of our reconciliation. Let the past be forgotten—the future belongs to us. (embrace)

Mrs. M. (hug me) There, and this is all our doing! Are you not delighted?

Gus. Quite so.

Then why don't you do something to show your appreciation of the tableau?

Mrs. M. (struck with a bright idea) Suppose we form a companion picture!

Gus. Then I am waiting to be framed! (They embrace)

B. (in the past I stood—forgive me!)

Gus. Have you not made atonement, and by that act are saved?

Mrs. B. (Where's my frame?)

CURTAIN.
(Sit at table, opens book & reads.)

Ships that pass in the night and
Speak each other in passing
Only a signal shown
And a distant voice in the darkness
So on the ocean of life
We pass & speak one another
Only a look and a voice
When darkness again & silence.
(Enters) Tomorrow! Yes, tomorrow I shall be
far from here. I shall go back to Uncle.
Poor old uncle! How little I have they done
in return for all your care. Strange I
never have felt for any one's loneliness
until now when my own sorrow brings it
all before me, but I will try and help to
make his old age bright. I shall be content
to dust the books instead of trying
to write them all. Where is Robert?
Where? Will he come? Think of me, after I have
gone, or—will it all end here the night?

Rob. (Enters.) You little thing I have come to
see you.

Ber. You—how pale you look, are you ill?

Rob. Not more so than usual, I have come to tell you
that I have just received word my mother
is dead, and now I am free.

But you are not free

Rob. Yes, and I shall leave Petershoff for good.

Ber. No, no, you will remain here.

Rob. Why should I remain here now?

Ber. For the same reason you came here
7 years ago.

Rob. I came here for my mother sake.

Ber. Then you will remain now for my
sake.
Lettie Bernardine, is it possible you care what becomes of me?

Rob.

Yes I do care. I care with all my heart and
even if I did not care you could not be free.
We do not belong to ourselves there are countless
people depending on us, people whom we have
never seen and whom we never shall see
what we do decides what they will be. But it
is not for those others that I plead, I plead for
myself. I can't spare you indeed, indeed I
can't spare you!

Rob.

Lettie child, little child since you wish
it I will remain in the mountains.

Bar.

And you will try to get well? But your
life out here like Robert. Others may play
themselves towards but the disagreeable
Man has a better port to play.

Rob.

There is one thing that I want you to
know, indeed I am not the gruff fellow
I have so often seemed. I wanted you
to harden your heart against me—

Bar.

I knew it—Robert, I knew it, but you me
it was all in vain.

Bater Mrs. Merryweather and Gus, C.

Mrs. M. What does it all mean? Sarcely had George