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Howells. The parlor-car and  
the sleeping-car.



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Number 240

IVERSIDE LITERATURE SERIES

THE PARLOR-CAR  
AND  
THE SLEEPING-CAR

BY  
WILLIAM D. HOWELLS



HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY  
BOSTON, NEW YORK, AND CHICAGO  
*The Riverside Press Cambridge*

Price, paper, 15 cents

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THE PARLOR-CAR, AND  
THE SLEEPING-CAR

BY

WILLIAM D. HOWELLS

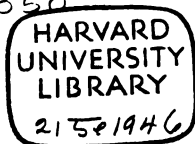
*WITH AN INTRODUCTION*



BOSTON NEW YORK CHICAGO  
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Prof. Ch. S. Thomas

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## INTRODUCTION.

MR. HOWELLS has written a long series of poems, novels, sketches, stories, and essays, and has been perhaps the most continuous worker in the literary art among American writers. He was born at Martin's Ferry, Belmont County, Ohio, March 1, 1837, and the experiences of his early life have been delightfully told by himself in *A Boy's Town*, *My Year in a Log Cabin*, and *My Literary Passions*. These books, which seem like pastimes in the midst of Howells's serious work, are likely to live long, not only as playful autobiographic records, but as vivid pictures of life in the middle west in the middle of the nineteenth century. The boy lived in a home where frugality was the law of economy, but where high ideals of noble living were cheerfully maintained, and the very occupations of the household tended to stimulate literary activity. He read voraciously and with an instinctive scent for what was great and permanent in literature, and in his father's printing-office learned to set type, and soon to make contributions to the local journals. He went to the state Capitol to report the proceedings of the legislature, and before he was twenty-two had become news editor of the *State Journal* of Columbus, Ohio.

But at the same time he had given clear intimations of his literary skill, and had contributed several poems to the *Atlantic Monthly*. His introduction to literature was in the stirring days just before the war for the Union, and he had a generous enthusiasm for the great principles which were then at stake. Yet the political leaven chiefly caused the bread he was baking to rise, and his native genius was distinctly for work in creative literature. His contribution to the political writing of the day, besides his newspaper work, was a small campaign life of Lincoln; and shortly after the incoming of the first Republican administration he received the appointment of consul at Venice.

At Venice he remained from 1861 to 1865, and these years may fairly be taken as standing for his university training. He carried with him to Europe some conversance with French, German, Spanish, and Italian, and an insatiable thirst for literature in these languages. Naturally now he concentrated his attention on the Italian language and literature, but after all he was not made for a microscopic or encyclopædic scholar, least of all for a pedant. What he was looking for in literature, though he scarcely so stated it to himself at the time, was human life, and it was this first-hand acquaintance he was acquiring with life in another circumstance that constituted his real training in literature. To pass from Ohio straight to Italy, with the merest alighting by the way in New York and Boston, was to be transported from one world to

another; but he carried with him a mind which had already become naturalized in the large world of history and men through the literature in which he had steeped his mind. No one can read the record of the books he had revelled in, and observe the agility with which he was absorbed, successively, in books of greatly varying character, without perceiving how wide open were the windows of his mind; and as the light streamed in from all these heavens, so the inmate looked out with unaffected interest on the views spread before him.

Thus it was that Italy and Venice in particular afforded him at once the greatest delight and also the surest test of his growing power. The swift observation he had shown in literature became an equally rapid survey of all these novel forms before him. The old life embedded in this historic country became the book whose leaves he turned, but he looked with the greatest interest and most sympathetic scrutiny on that which passed before his eyes. It was novel, it was quaint, it was filled with curious, unexpected betrayals of human nature, but it was above all real, actual, a thing to be touched and as it were fondled by hands that were deft by nature and were quickly becoming more skilful by use. Mr. Howells began to write letters home which were printed in the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, and grew easily into a book which still remains in the minds of many of his readers the freshest of all his writings, *Venetian Life*. This was

followed shortly by *Italian Journeys*, in which Mr. Howells gathered his observations made in going from place to place in Italy. A good many years later, after returning to the country of his affection, he wrote a third book of a similar character under the title of *Tuscan Cities*. But his use of Italy in literature was not confined to books of travels; he made and published studies of Italian literature, and he wove the life of the country into fiction in a charming manner. Illustrations may be found in *A Foregone Conclusion*, one of the happiest of his novels, whose scene is laid in Venice, in *The Lady of the Aroostook*, and in many slight sketches.

When Mr. Howells returned to America at the close of his term as consul, he found warm friends whom he had made through his writings. He served for a short time on the staff of *The Nation*, of New York, and then was invited to Boston to take the position of assistant editor of the *Atlantic Monthly* under Mr. Fields. This was in 1866, and five years later, on the retirement of Mr. Fields, he became editor, and remained in the position until 1881, living during this period in Cambridge. He was not only editor of the magazine; he was really its chief contributor. Any one who takes the trouble to examine the pages of the *Atlantic Index* will see how far his work outnumbers in titles that of all other contributors, and the range of his work was great.

He wrote a large proportion of the reviews of books,

which in those days constituted a marked feature of the magazine. These reviews were conscientiously written, and showed penetration and justice, but they had besides a felicitous and playful touch which rendered them delightful reading, even though one knew little or cared little for the book reviewed. Sometimes, though not often, he wrote poems, but readers soon learned to look with eagerness for a kind of writing which seemed almost more individual with him than any other form of writing. We mean the humorous sketches of every-day life, in which he took scenes of the commonest sort and drew from them an inherent life which most never suspected, yet confessed the moment he disclosed it. He would do such a commonplace thing as take an excursion down the harbor, or even a ride to town in a horse-car, and come back to turn his experience into a piece of genuine literature. A number of these pieces were collected into a volume entitled *Suburban Sketches*.

It is interesting to observe how slowly yet surely Mr. Howells drew near the great field of novel-writing, and how deliberately he laid the foundations of his art. First, the graceful sketch which was hardly more than a leaf out of his note-book; then the blending of travel with character-drawing, as in *A Chance Acquaintance* and *Their Wedding Journey*, and later stories of people who moved about and thus found the incidents which the author had not to invent, as in *The Lady of the Aroostook*. Meanwhile, the eye

which had taken note of surface effects was beginning to look deeper into the springs of being, and the hand which had described was beginning to model figures also which stood alone.

So there followed a number of little dramatic sketches, where the persons of the drama carried on their little play; and since they were not on a stage before the spectator, the author constructed a sort of literary stage for the reader; that is to say, he supplied by paragraphs what in a regular play would be stage directions. This is seen in such little comedies as *A Counterfeit Presentment*, which, indeed, was put on the stage. But instead of pushing forward on this line into the field of great drama, Mr. Howells contented himself with dexterous strokes with a fine pen, so to speak, and created a number of sparkling farces like *The Parlor Car*.

The real issue of all this practice in the dramatic art was to disengage the characters he created from too close dependence on the kind of circumstance, as of travel, which the author did not invent, and to give them substantial life in the working out of the drama of their spiritual evolution. Thus by the time he was released from editorial work, Mr. Howells was ready for the thorough-going novel, and he gave to readers such examples of art as *A Modern Instance*, *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, and that most important of all his novels, *A Hazard of New Fortunes*. By the time this last novel was written, he had become thoroughly

interested, not merely in the men, women, and children about him, but in that mysterious, complex order named by us society, with its roots matted together as in a swamp, and seeming to many to be sucking up maleficent, miasmatic vapors from the soil in which it was rooted. Like many another lover of his kind, he has sought to trace the evils of individual life to their source in this composite order, and to guess at the mode by which society shall right itself and drink up healthy and life-giving virtues from the soil.

But it must not be inferred that his novels and other literary work have been by any means exclusively concerned with the reconstruction of the social order. He has indeed experimented with this theme, but he has always had a sane interest in life as he sees it, and with the increasing scope of his observation he has drawn his figures from a larger world, which includes indeed the world in which he first began to find his characters and their action.

Not long after retiring from the *Atlantic* he went to live in New York, and varied his American experience with frequent travels and continued residence in Europe. For a while he maintained a department in *Harper's Magazine*, where he gave expression to his views on literature and the dramatic art, and for a short period returned to the editorial life in conducting *The Cosmopolitan*; later he entered also the field of lecturing, and thus further extended the range of his observation. At the present time, Mr. Howells is



the writer of "Editor's Easy Chair" in *Harper's Magazine*. He was recently made president of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

This in fine is the most summary statement of his career in literature, — that he has been a keen and sympathetic observer of life, and has caught its character, not like a reporter going about with a kodak and snapping it aimlessly at any conspicuous object, but like an alert artist who goes back to his studio after a walk and sets down his comments on what he has seen in quick, accurate sketches, now and then resolving numberless undrawn sketches into some one comprehensive and beautiful picture.

**THE SEQUENCE OF MR. HOWELLS'S  
BOOKS.**

**MR. HOWELLS** is the author of nearly seventy books, from which the following are selected as best representing his work in various fields and at various periods.

Venetian Life. Travel and description. 1867.

Their Wedding Journey. Novel. 1871.

Italian Journeys. Travel and description. 1872.

Suburban Sketches. 1872.

Poems. 1873 and 1895.

A Chance Acquaintance. Novel. 1873.

A Foregone Conclusion. Novel. 1874.

A Counterfeit Presentment. Comedy. 1877.

The Lady of the Aroostook. Novel. 1879.

The Undiscovered Country. Novel. 1880.

A Fearful Responsibility, and Other Stories. 1881

A Modern Instance. Novel. 1881.

The Rise of Silas Lapham. Novel. 1884.

Tuscan Cities. Travel and description. 1885.

April Hopes. Novel. 1887.

A Hazard of New Fortunes. Novel. 1889.

The Sleeping Car, and Other Farces. 1889.

A Boy's Town. Reminiscences. 1890.

**Criticism and Fiction. Essays. 1891.**

**My Literary Passions. Essays. 1895.**

**Stops of Various Quills. Poems. 1895.**

**Literary Friends and Acquaintances. Reminiscences.  
1900.**

**Heroines of Fiction. Criticism. 1901.**

**The Kentons. Novel. 1902.**

**Literature and Life. Criticism. 1902.**

**London Films. Travel and Description. 1905.**

**THE PARLOR-CAR.**

*FARCE.*



# THE PARLOR-CAR.

*Farce.*

---

SCENE: A Parlor-Car on the New York Central Railroad. It is late afternoon in the early autumn, with a cloudy sunset threatening rain. The car is unoccupied save by a gentleman, who sits fronting one of the windows, with his feet in another chair; a newspaper lies across his lap; his hat is drawn down over his eyes, and he is apparently asleep. The rear door of the car opens, and the conductor enters with a young lady, heavily veiled, the porter coming after with her wraps and travelling-bags. The lady's air is of mingled anxiety and desperation, with a certain fierceness of movement. She casts a careless glance over the empty chairs.

*Conductor:* "Here's your ticket, madam. You can have any of the places you like here, or,"—glancing at the unconscious gentleman, and then

at the young lady, — “if you prefer, you can go and take that seat in the forward car.”

*Miss Lucy Galbraith*: “Oh, I can’t ride backwards. I’ll stay here, please. Thank you.” The porter places her things in a chair by a window, across the car from the sleeping gentleman, and she throws herself wearily into the next seat, wheels round in it, and lifting her veil gazes absently out at the landscape. Her face, which is very pretty, with a low forehead shadowed by thick blond hair, shows the traces of tears. She makes search in her pocket for her handkerchief, which she presses to her eyes. The conductor, lingering a moment, goes out.

*Porter*: “I’ll be right here, at de end of de cah, if you should happen to want anything, miss,” — making a feint of arranging the shawls and satchels. “Should you like some dese things hung up? Well, dey’ll be jus’ as well in de chair. We’s pretty late dis afternoon; more’n four hours behin’ time. Ought to been into Albany ’fore dis. Freight train off de track jus’ dis side o’ Rochester, an’ had to wait. Was you going to stop at Schenectady, miss?”

*Miss Galbraith*, absently: “At Schenectady?”  
After a pause, “Yes.”

*Porter*: "Well, that's de next station, and den de cahs don't stop ag'in till dey git to Albany. Anything else I can do for you now, miss?"

*Miss Galbraith*: "No, no, thank you, nothing." The *Porter* hesitates, takes off his cap, and scratches his head with a murmur of embarrassment. *Miss Galbraith* looks up at him inquiringly and then suddenly takes out her porte-monnaie, and fees him.

*Porter*: "Thank you, miss, thank you. If you want anything at all, miss, I'm right dere at de end of de cah." He goes out by the narrow passage-way beside the smaller enclosed parlor. *Miss Galbraith* looks askance at the sleeping gentleman, and then, rising, goes to the large mirror, to pin her veil, which has become loosened from her hat. She gives a little start at sight of the gentleman in the mirror, but arranges her head-gear, and returning to her place looks out of the window again. After a little while she moves about uneasily in her chair, then leans forward, and tries to raise her window; she lifts it partly up, when the catch slips from her fingers, and the window falls shut again with a crash.



*Miss Galbraith*: "Oh, dear, how provoking! I suppose I must call the porter." She rises from her seat, but on attempting to move away she finds that the skirt of her polonaise has been caught in the falling window. She pulls at it, and then tries to lift the window again, but the cloth has wedged it in, and she cannot stir it. "Well, I certainly think this is beyond endurance! Porter! Ah,—Porter! Oh, he'll never hear me in the racket that these wheels are making! I wish they'd stop,—I"—The gentleman stirs in his chair, lifts his head, listens, takes his feet down from the other seat, rises abruptly, and comes to *Miss Galbraith's* side.

*Mr. Allen Richards*: "Will you allow me to open the window for you?" Starting back, "Miss Galbraith!"

*Miss Galbraith*: "Al—Mr. Richards!" There is a silence for some moments, in which they remain looking at each other; then,—

*Mr. Richards*: "Lucy"—

*Miss Galbraith*: "I forbid you to address me in that way, Mr. Richards." ·

*Mr. Richards*: "Why, you were just going to call me Allen!"

*Miss Galbraith*: "That was an accident, you know very well, — an impulse" —

*Mr. Richards*: "Well, so is this."

*Miss Galbraith*: "Of which you ought to be ashamed to take advantage. I wonder at your presumption in speaking to me at all. It's quite idle, I can assure you. Everything is at an end between us. It seems that I bore with you too long; but I'm thankful that I had the spirit to act at last, and to act in time. And now that chance has thrown us together, I trust that you will not force your conversation upon me. No gentleman would, and I have always given you credit for thinking yourself a gentleman. I request that you will not speak to me."

*Mr. Richards*: "You've spoken ten words to me for every one of mine to you. But I won't annoy you. I can't believe it, Lucy; I can *not* believe it. It seems like some rascally dream, and if I had had any sleep since it happened, I should think I *had* dreamed it."

*Miss Galbraith*: "Oh! You were sleeping soundly enough when I got into the car!"

*Mr. Richards*: "I own it; I was perfectly used up, and I *had* dropped off."

*Miss Galbraith*, scornfully: "Then perhaps you have dreamed it."

*Mr. Richards*: "I'll think so till you tell me again that our engagement is broken; that the faithful love of years is to go for nothing; that you dismiss me with cruel insult, without one word of explanation, without a word of intelligible accusation, even. It's too much! I've been thinking it all over and over, and I can't make head or tail of it. I meant to see you again as soon as we got to town, and implore you to hear me. Come, it's a mighty serious matter, Lucy. I'm not a man to put on heroics and that; but *I* believe it'll play the very deuce with me, Lucy,—that is to say, Miss Galbraith,—I do indeed. It'll give me a low opinion of woman."

*Miss Galbraith*, averting her face: "Oh, a very high opinion of woman you have had!"

*Mr. Richards*, with sentiment: "Well, there was one woman whom I thought a perfect angel."

*Miss Galbraith*: "Indeed! May I ask her name?"

*Mr. Richards*, with a forlorn smile. "I shall be obliged to describe her somewhat formally as — Miss Galbraith."

*Miss Galbraith* : " Mr. Richards ! "

*Mr. Richards* : " Why, you've just forbidden me to say *Lucy* ! You must tell me, dearest, what I have done to offend you. The worst criminals are not condemned unheard, and I've always thought you were merciful if not just. And now I only ask you to be just. "

*Miss Galbraith*, looking out of the window : " You know very well what you've done. You can't expect me to humiliate myself by putting your offence into words. "

*Mr. Richards* : " Upon my soul, I don't know what you mean ! I *don't* know what I've done. When you came at me, last night, with my ring and presents and other little traps, you might have knocked me down with the lightest of the lot. I was perfectly dazed ; I couldn't say anything before you were off, and all I could do was to hope that you'd be more like yourself in the morning. And in the morning, when I came round to Mrs. Philips's, I found you were gone, and I came after you by the next train. "

*Miss Galbraith* : " Mr. Richards, your personal history for the last twenty-four hours is a matter of perfect indifference to me, as it shall be for the

next twenty-four hundred years. I see that you are resolved to annoy me, and since *you* will not leave the car, *I* must do so." She rises haughtily from her seat, but the imprisoned skirt of her polonaise twitches her abruptly back into her chair. She bursts into tears. "Oh, what *shall* I do?"

*Mr. Richards*, dryly: "You shall do whatever you like, Miss Galbraith, when I've set you free; for I see your dress is caught in the window. When it's once out, I'll shut the window, and you can call the porter to raise it." He leans forward over her chair, and while she shrinks back the length of her tether, he tugs at the window-fastening. "I can't get at it. Would you be so good as to stand up, — all you can?" *Miss Galbraith* stands up, droopingly, and *Mr. Richards* makes a movement towards her, and then falls back. "No, that won't do. Please sit down again." He goes round her chair and tries to get at the window from that side. "I can't get any purchase on it. Why don't you cut out that piece?" *Miss Galbraith* stares at him in dumb amazement. "Well, I don't see what we're to do. I'll go and get the porter." He goes to the end of the car, and

returns. "I can't find the porter, — he must be in one of the other cars. But" — brightening with the fortunate conception — "I've just thought of something. Will it unbutton?"

*Miss Galbraith*: "Unbutton?"

*Mr. Richards*: "Yes; this garment of yours."

*Miss Galbraith*: "My polonaise?" Inquiringly, "Yes."

*Mr. Richards*: "Well, then, it's a very simple matter. If you will just take it off I can easily" —

*Miss Galbraith*, faintly: "I can't. A polonaise isn't like an *overcoat*" —

*Mr. Richards*, with dismay: "Oh! Well, then" — He remains thinking a moment in hopeless perplexity.

*Miss Galbraith*, with polite ceremony: "The porter will be back soon. Don't trouble yourself any further about it, please. I shall do very well."

*Mr. Richards*, without heeding her: "If you could kneel on that foot-cushion, and face the window" —

*Miss Galbraith*, kneeling promptly: "So?"

*Mr. Richards*: "Yes, and now" — kneeling be-

side her — “if you’ll allow me to — to get at the window-catch,” — he stretches both arms forward; she shrinks from his right into his left, and then back again, — “and pull, while I raise the window” —

*Miss Galbraith*: “Yes, yes; but do hurry, please. If any one saw us, I don’t know what they would think. It’s perfectly ridiculous!” — pulling. “It’s caught in the corner of the window, between the frame and the sash, and it won’t come! Is my hair troubling you? Is it in your eyes?”

*Mr. Richards*: “It’s in my eyes, but it isn’t troubling me. Am I inconveniencing you?”

*Miss Galbraith*: “Oh, not at all.”

*Mr. Richards*: “Well, now then, pull hard!” He lifts the window with a great effort; the polonaise comes free with a start, and she strikes violently against him. In supporting the shock he cannot forbear catching her for an instant to his heart. She frees herself, and starts indignantly to her feet.

*Miss Galbraith*: “Oh, what a cowardly — subterfuge!”

*Mr. Richards*: “Cowardly? You’ve no idea

how much courage it took." *Miss Galbraith* puts her handkerchief to her face, and sobs. "Oh, don't cry! Bless my heart,—I'm sorry I did it! But you know how dearly I love you, Lucy, though I do think you've been cruelly unjust. I told you I never should love any one else, and I never shall. I couldn't help it; upon my soul, I couldn't. Nobody could. Don't let it vex you, my" — He approaches her.

*Miss Galbraith*: "Please not touch me, sir! You have no longer any right whatever to do so."

*Mr. Richards*: "You misinterpret a very in-offensive gesture. I have no idea of touching you, but I hope I may be allowed, as a special favor, to — pick up my hat, which you are in the act of stepping on." *Miss Galbraith* hastily turns, and strikes the hat with her whirling skirts; it rolls to the other side of the parlor, and *Mr. Richards*, who goes after it, utters an ironical "Thanks!" He brushes it, and puts it on, looking at her where she has again seated herself at the window with her back to him, and continues, "As for any further molestation from me" —

*Miss Galbraith*: "If you *will* talk to me" —



*Mr. Richards*: "Excuse me, I am not talking to you."

*Miss Galbraith*: "What were you doing?"

*Mr. Richards*: "I was beginning to think aloud. I—I was soliloquizing. I suppose I may be allowed to soliloquize?"

*Miss Galbraith*, very coldly: "You can do what you like."

*Mr. Richards*: "Unfortunately that's just what I can't do. If I could do as I liked, I should ask you a single question."

*Miss Galbraith*, after a moment: "Well, sir, you may ask your question." She remains as before, with her chin in her hand, looking tearfully out of the window; her face is turned from *Mr. Richards*, who hesitates a moment before he speaks.

*Mr. Richards*: "I wish to ask you just this, *Miss Galbraith*: if you couldn't ride backwards in the other car, why do you ride backwards in this?"

*Miss Galbraith*, burying her face in her handkerchief, and sobbing: "Oh, oh, oh! This is too bad!"

*Mr. Richards*: "Oh, come now, Lucy. It breaks my heart to hear you going on so, and all for

nothing. Be a little merciful to both of us, and listen to me. I've no doubt I can explain everything if I once understand it, but it's pretty hard explaining a thing if you don't understand it yourself. Do turn round. I know it makes you sick to ride in that way, and if you don't want to face me — there!" — wheeling in his chair so as to turn his back upon her — "you needn't. Though it's rather trying to a fellow's politeness, not to mention his other feelings. Now, what in the name" —

*Porter*, who at this moment enters with his step-ladder, and begins to light the lamps: "Going pretty slow ag'in, sah."

*Mr. Richards*: "Yes; what's the trouble?"

*Porter*: "Well, I don't know exactly, sah. Something de matter with de locomotive. We sha'n't be into Albany much 'fore eight o'clock."

*Mr. Richards*: "What's the next station?"

*Porter*: "Schenectady."

*Mr. Richards*: "Is the whole train as empty as this car?"

*Porter*, laughing: "Well, no, sah. Fact is, *dis* cah don't belong on dis train. It's a Pullman that we hitched on when you got in, and we's taking it

along for one of de Eastern roads. We let you in 'cause de Drawing-rooms was all full. Same with de lady," — looking sympathetically at her, as he takes his steps to go out. "Can I do anything for you now, miss?"

*Miss Galbraith*, plaintively: "No, thank you; nothing whatever." She has turned while *Mr. Richards* and *The Porter* have been speaking, and now faces the back of the former, but her veil is drawn closely. *The Porter* goes out.

*Mr. Richards*, wheeling round so as to confront her: "I wish you would speak to me half as kindly as you do to that darky, Lucy."

*Miss Galbraith*: "He is a gentleman!"

*Mr. Richards*: "He is an urbane and well-informed nobleman. At any rate, he's a man and a brother. But so am I." *Miss Galbraith* does not reply, and after a pause *Mr. Richards* resumes. "Talking of gentlemen, I recollect, once, coming up on the day-boat to Poughkeepsie, there was a poor devil of a tipsy man kept following a young fellow about, and annoying him to death — trying to fight him, as a tipsy man will, and insisting that the young fellow had insulted him. By and by he lost his balance and went overboard, and the other

jumped after him and fished him out." Sensation on the part of *Miss Galbraith*, who stirs uneasily in her chair, looks out of the window, then looks at *Mr. Richards*, and drops her head. "There was a young lady on board, who had seen the whole thing—a very charming young lady indeed, with pale blond hair growing very thick over her forehead, and dark eyelashes to the sweetest blue eyes in the world. Well, this young lady's papa was amongst those who came up to say civil things to the young fellow when he got aboard again, and to ask the honor—he said the *honor*—of his acquaintance. And when he came out of his state-room in dry clothes, this infatuated old gentleman was waiting for him, and took him and introduced him to his wife and daughter; and the daughter said, with tears in her eyes, and a perfectly intoxicating impulsiveness, that it was the grandest and the most heroic and the noblest thing that she had ever seen, and she should always be a better girl for having seen it. Excuse me, *Miss Galbraith*, for troubling you with these facts of a personal history, which, as you say, is a matter of perfect indifference to you. The young fellow didn't think at the time he had done anything extraor-

dinary ; but I don't suppose he *did* expect to live to have the same girl tell him he was no gentleman."

*Miss Galbraith*, wildly : "O Allen, Allen! You *know* I think you are a gentleman, and I always did!"

*Mr. Richards*, languidly : "Oh, I merely had your word for it, just now, that you didn't." Tenderly, "Will you hear me, Lucy?"

*Miss Galbraith*, faintly : "Yes."

*Mr. Richards* : "Well, what is it I've done? Will you tell me if I guess right?"

*Miss Galbraith*, with dignity : "I am in no humor for jesting, Allen. And I can assure you that though I consent to hear what you have to say, or ask, *nothing* will change my determination. All is over between us."

*Mr. Richards* : "Yes, I understand that, perfectly. I am now asking merely for general information. I do not expect you to relent, and, in fact, I should consider it rather frivolous if you did. No. What I have always admired in your character, Lucy, is a firm, logical consistency ; a clearness of mental vision that leaves no side of a subject unsearched ; and an unwavering con-

stancy of purpose. You may say that these traits are characteristic of *all* women; but they are pre-eminently characteristic of you, Lucy." *Miss Galbraith* looks askance at him, to make out whether he is in earnest or not; he continues, with a perfectly serious air. "And I know now that if you're offended with me, it's for no trivial cause." She stirs uncomfortably in her chair. "What I have done I can't imagine, but it must be something monstrous, since it has made life with me appear so impossible that you are ready to fling away your own happiness — for I know you *did* love me, Lucy — and destroy mine. I will begin with the worst thing I can think of. Was it because I danced so much with Fanny Watervliet?"

*Miss Galbraith*, indignantly: "How can you insult me by supposing that I could be jealous of such a *perfect* little goose as that? No, Allen! Whatever I think of you, I *still* respect you too much for *that*."

*Mr. Richards*: "I'm glad to hear that there are yet depths to which you think me incapable of descending, and that Miss Watervliet is one of them. I will now take a little higher ground. Perhaps you think I flirted with Mrs. Dawes. I

thought, myself, that the thing might begin to have that appearance, but I give you my word of honor that as soon as the idea occurred to me, I dropped her — rather rudely, too. The trouble was, don't you know, that I felt so perfectly safe with a *married* friend of yours. I couldn't be hanging about you all the time, and I was afraid I might vex you if I went with the other girls; and I didn't know what to do."

*Miss Galbraith*: "I think you behaved rather silly, giggling so much with her. But" —

*Mr. Richards*: "I own it, I know it was silly. But" —

*Miss Galbraith*: "It wasn't that; it wasn't that!"

*Mr. Richards*: "Was it my forgetting to bring you those things from your mother?"

*Miss Galbraith*: "No!"

*Mr. Richards*: "Was it because I hadn't given up smoking yet?"

*Miss Galbraith*: "You *know* I never asked you to give up smoking. It was entirely your own proposition."

*Mr. Richards*: "That's true. That's what made me so easy about it. I knew I could leave it off

*any* time. Well, I will not disturb you any longer, Miss Galbraith." He throws his overcoat across his arm, and takes up his travelling-bag. "I have failed to guess your fatal — conundrum; and I have no longer any excuse for remaining. I am going into the smoking-car. Shall I send the porter to you for anything?"

*Miss Galbraith*: "No, thanks." She puts up her handkerchief to her face.

*Mr. Richards*: "Lucy, do you send me away?"

*Miss Galbraith*, behind her handkerchief: "You were going, yourself."

*Mr. Richards*, over his shoulder: "Shall I come back?"

*Miss Galbraith*: "I have no right to drive you from the car."

*Mr. Richards*, coming back, and sitting down in the chair nearest her: "Lucy, dearest, tell me what's the matter."

*Miss Galbraith*: "O Allen! your not *knowing* makes it all the more hopeless and killing. It shows me that we *must* part; that you would go on, breaking my heart, and grinding me into the dust as long as we lived." She sobs. "It shows me that you never understood me, and you never



will. I know you're good and kind and all that, but that only makes your not understanding me so much the worse. I do it quite as much for your sake as my own, Allen."

*Mr. Richards* : "I'd much rather you wouldn't put yourself out on my account."

*Miss Galbraith*, without regarding him : "If you could mortify me before a whole roomful of people, as you did last night, what could I expect after marriage but continual insult ?"

*Mr. Richards*, in amazement : "*How* did I mortify you ? I thought that I treated you with all the tenderness and affection that a decent regard for the feelings of others would allow. I was ashamed to find I couldn't keep away from you."

*Miss Galbraith* : "Oh, you were *attentive* enough, Allen ; nobody denies that. *Attentive* enough in non-essentials. Oh, yes !"

*Mr. Richards* : "Well, what vital matters did I fail in ? I'm sure I can't remember."

*Miss Galbraith* : "I dare say ! I dare say they won't appear vital to you, Allen. Nothing does. And if I had told you, I should have been met with ridicule, I suppose. But I knew *better than* to tell ; I respected myself too *much*."

*Mr. Richards* : "But now you mustn't respect yourself *quite* so much, dearest. And I promise you I won't laugh at the most serious thing. I'm in no humor for it. If it were a matter of life and death, even, I can assure you that it wouldn't bring a smile to my countenance. No, indeed! If you expect me to laugh, *now*, you must say something particularly funny."

*Miss Galbraith* : "I was not going to say anything *funny*, as you call it, and I will say nothing at all, if you talk in that way."

*Mr. Richards* : "Well, I won't, then. But do you know what I suspect, Lucy? I wouldn't mention it to everybody, but I will to you — in strict confidence: I suspect that you're rather ashamed of your grievance, if you have any. I suspect it's nothing at all."

*Miss Galbraith*, very sternly at first, with a rising hysterical inflection: "Nothing, Allen! Do you call it *nothing*, to have Mrs. Dawes come out with all that about your accident on your way up the river, and ask me if it didn't frighten me terribly to hear of it, even after it was all over; and I had to say you hadn't told me a word of it? 'Why, Lucy!'" — angrily mimicking Mrs. Dawes,

—“‘you must teach him better than that. I make Mr. Dawes tell *me* everything.’ Little simpleton! And then to have them all laugh — Oh, dear, it’s too much!”

*Mr. Richards*: “Why, my dear Lucy” —

*Miss Galbraith*, interrupting him: “I saw just how it was going to be, and I’m thankful, *thankful* that it happened. I saw that you didn’t care enough for me to take me into your whole life; that you despised and distrusted me, and that it would get worse and worse to the end of our days; that we should grow farther and farther apart, and I should be left moping at home, while you ran about making confidantes of other women whom you considered *worthy* of your confidence. It all *flashed* upon me in an *instant*; and I resolved to break with you, then and there; and I did, just as soon as ever I could go to my room for your things, and I’m glad, — yes, — Oh, hu, hu, hu, hu, hu! — *so* glad I did it!”

*Mr. Richards*, grimly: “Your joy is obvious. May I ask” —

*Miss Galbraith*: “Oh, it wasn’t the *first* proof you had given me how little you really cared for me, but I was determined it should be the last. I

dare say you've forgotten them! I dare say you don't remember telling Mamie Morris that you didn't like embroidered cigar-cases, when you'd just *told* me that you did, and let me be such a fool as to commence one for you; but I'm thankful to say *that* went into the fire, — oh, yes, *instantly!* And I dare say you've forgotten that you didn't tell me your brother's engagement was to be kept, and let me come out with it that night at the Rudges', and then looked perfectly aghast, so that everybody thought I had been blabbing! Time and again, Allen, you have made me suffer agonies, yes, *agonies*; but your power to do so is at an end. I am free and happy at last." She weeps bitterly.

*Mr. Richards*, quietly: "Yes, I *had* forgotten those crimes, and I suppose many similar atrocities. I own it, I *am* forgetful and careless. I was wrong about those things. I ought to have told you why I said that to Miss Morris: I was afraid she was going to work me one. As to that accident I told Mrs. Dawes of, it wasn't worth mentioning. Our boat simply walked over a sloop in the night, and nobody was hurt. I shouldn't have thought twice about it, if she hadn't happened to brag of their

uncoupled, and the rest of the train has gone ahead, and left us standing on the track, now particular." He leans back in his chair, feels it round from her.

*Miss Galbraith*, mortified, yet anxious: "We  
*Mr. Richards*: "Well, until they miss us, I shall be obliged to your indulgence. I will try not to disturb would go out and stand on the platform, it's raining."

*Miss Galbraith*, listening to the rain-fall on the roof: "Why, so it is!" Timidly, "Did you notice when the car stopped?"

*Mr. Richards*: "No." He rises and goes to the rear door, comes back, and sits down again.

*Miss Galbraith*, rises, and goes to the looking-glass to wipe away her tears. She glances

*Mr. Richards*, who does not move. She sits down in a seat nearer him than the chair she has occupied. Some faint murmurs and hesitations,

After a moment she asks, "Will you please tell me why you went away?"

*Mr. Richards*, with indifference: "Yes. I saw the red signal was out."

*Miss Galbraith*, after another hesitation: "Why?"

*Mr. Richards*: "Because, if it wasn't out, some train might run into us from that direction."

*Miss Galbraith*, tremulously: "Oh! And was it?"

*Mr. Richards*, dryly: "Yes."

*Miss Galbraith* returns to her former place, with a wounded air, and for a moment neither speaks. Finally she asks very meekly, "And there's no danger from the front?"

*Mr. Richards*, coldly: "No."

*Miss Galbraith*, after some little noises and movements meant to catch *Mr. Richards's* attention: "Of course, I never meant to imply that you were *intentionally* careless or forgetful."

*Mr. Richards*, still very coldly: "Thank you."

*Miss Galbraith*: "I always did justice to your good-heartedness, Allen; you're perfectly lovely that way; and I know that you would be sorry if you *knew* you had wounded my feelings, however accidentally." She droops her head so as to catch a sidelong glimpse of his face, and sighs, while she nervously pinches the top of her parasol, resting the point on the floor. *Mr. Richards* makes no answer. "That about the cigar-case

might have been a mistake; I saw that myself, and, as you explain it, why, it was certainly very kind and very creditable to — to your thoughtfulness. It *was* thoughtful!"

*Mr. Richards*: "I am grateful for your good opinion."

*Miss Galbraith*: "But do you think it was exactly — it was quite — nice, not to tell me that your brother's engagement was to be kept, when you know, Allen, I can't bear to blunder in such things?" Tenderly, "*Do you? You can't say it was?*"

*Mr. Richards*: "I never said it was."

*Miss Galbraith*, plaintively: "No, Allen. That's what I always admired in your character. You always owned up. Don't you think it's easier for men to own up than it is for women?"

*Mr. Richards*: "I don't know. I never knew any woman to do it."

*Miss Galbraith*: "Oh, yes, Allen! You know I often own up."

*Mr. Richards*: "No, I don't."

*Miss Galbraith*: "Oh, how can you bear to say so? When I'm rash, or anything of that kind, you know I acknowledge it."

*Mr. Richards* : "Do you acknowledge it now?"

*Miss Galbraith* : "Why, how can I, when I haven't *been* rash? *What* have I been rash about?"

*Mr. Richards* : "About the cigar-case, for example."

*Miss Galbraith* : "Oh! *that!* That was a great while ago! I thought you meant something quite recent." A sound as of the approaching train is heard in the distance. She gives a start, and then leaves her chair again for one a little nearer his. "I thought perhaps you meant about—last night."

*Mr. Richards* : "Well."

*Miss Galbraith*, very judiciously : "I don't think it was *rash*, exactly. No, not *rash*. It might not have been very *kind* not to—to—trust you more, when I knew that you didn't mean anything; but— No, I took the only course I could. *No*body could have done differently under the circumstances. But if I caused you any pain, I'm very sorry; oh, yes, very sorry indeed. But I was not precipitate, and I know I did right. At least I *tried* to act for the best. Don't you believe I *did*?"



*Mr. Richards*: "Why, if you have no doubt upon the subject, my opinion is of no consequence."

*Miss Galbraith*: "Yes. But what do you think? If you think differently, and can make me see it differently, oughtn't you to do so?"

*Mr. Richards*: "I don't see why. As you say, all is over between us."

*Miss Galbraith*: "Yes." After a pause, "I should suppose you would care enough for *yourself* to wish me to look at the matter from the right point of view."

*Mr. Richards*: "I don't."

*Miss Galbraith*, becoming more and more uneasy as the noise of the approaching train grows louder: "I think *you* have been very quick with *me* at times, quite as quick as I could have been with you last night." The noise is more distinctly heard. "I'm sure that if I could once see it as you do, *no* one would be more willing to do anything in their power to atone for their rashness. Of course I know that everything is over."

*Mr. Richards*: "As to that, I have your word; and, in view of the fact, perhaps this analysis of

motive, of character, however interesting on general grounds, is a little" —

*Miss Galbraith*, with sudden violence: "Say it, and take your revenge! I have put myself at your feet, and you do right to trample on me! Oh, this is what women may expect when they trust to men's generosity! Well, it *is* over now, and I'm thankful, thankful! Cruel, suspicious, vindictive, you're all alike, and I'm glad that I'm no longer subject to your heartless caprices. And I don't care what happens after this, I shall always — Oh! You're sure it's from the front, Allen? Are you sure the rear signal is out?"

*Mr. Richards*, relenting: "Yes, but if it will ease your mind, I'll go and look again." He rises, and starts towards the rear door.

*Miss Galbraith*, quickly: "Oh, no! Don't go! I can't bear to be left alone!" The sound of the approaching train continually increases in volume. "Oh, isn't it coming very, very, *very* fast?"

*Mr. Richards*: "No, no! Don't be frightened."

*Miss Galbraith*, running towards the rear door. "Oh, I *must* get out! It will kill me, I know it will. Come with me! Do, do!" He runs after her, and her voice is heard at the rear of the car.

"Oh, the outside door is locked, and we are trapped, trapped, trapped! Oh, quick! Let's try the door at the other end." They re-enter the parlor, and the roar of the train announces that it is upon them. "No, no! It's too late, it's too late! I'm a wicked, wicked girl, and this is all to punish me! Oh, it's coming, it's coming at full speed!" He remains bewildered, confronting her. She utters a wild cry, and as the train strikes the car with a violent concussion, she flings herself into his arms. "There, there! Forgive me, Allen! Let us die together, my own, own love!" She hangs fainting on his breast. Voices are heard without, and after a little delay *The Porter* comes in with a lantern.

*Porter*: "Rather more of a jah than we meant to give you, sah! We had to run down pretty quick after we missed you, and the rain made the track a little slippery. Lady much frightened?"

*Miss Galbraith*, disengaging herself: "Oh, not at all! Not in the least. We thought it was a train coming from behind, and going to run into us, and so — we — I" —

*Porter*: "Not quite so bad as that. We'll be into Schenectady in a few minutes, miss. I'll

come for your things." He goes out at the other door.

*Miss Galbraith*, in a fearful whisper: "Allen! What will he ever think of us? I'm sure he saw us!"

*Mr. Richards*: "I don't know what he'll think now. He *did* think you were frightened; but you told him you were not. However, it isn't important what he thinks. Probably he thinks I'm your long-lost brother. It had a kind of family look."

*Miss Galbraith*: "Ridiculous!"

*Mr. Richards*: "Why, he'd never suppose that I was a jilted lover of yours!"

*Miss Galbraith*, ruefully: "No."

*Mr. Richards*: "Come, Lucy,"—taking her hand,—“you wished to die with me, a moment ago. Don't you think you can make one more effort to live with me? I won't take advantage of words spoken in mortal peril, but I suppose you were in earnest when you called me your own—own”— Her head droops; he folds her in his arms a moment, then she starts away from him, as if something had suddenly occurred to her.

*Miss Galbraith* : "Allen, where are you going?"

*Mr. Richards* : "Going? Upon my soul, I haven't the least idea."

*Miss Galbraith* : "Where *were* you going?"

*Mr. Richards* : "Oh, I *was* going to Albany."

*Miss Galbraith* : "Well, don't! Aunt Mary is expecting me here at Schenectady, — I telegraphed her, — and I want you to stop here, too, and we'll refer the whole matter to her. She's such a wise old head. I'm not sure" —

*Mr. Richards* : "What?"

*Miss Galbraith*, demurely : "That I'm good enough for you."

*Mr. Richards*, starting, in burlesque of her movement, as if a thought had struck *him* : "Lucy! how came you on this train when you left Syracuse on the morning express?"

*Miss Galbraith*, faintly : "I waited over a train at Utica." She sinks into a chair, and averts her face.

*Mr. Richards* : "May I ask why?"

*Miss Galbraith*, more faintly still : "I don't like to tell. I" —

*Mr. Richards*, coming and standing in front of her, with his hands in his pockets : "Look me

in the eye, Lucy!" She drops her veil over her face, and looks up at him. "Did you — did you expect to find *me* on this train?"

*Miss Galbraith*: "I was afraid it never *would* get along, — it was so late!"

*Mr. Richards*: "Don't — *tergiversate*."

*Miss Galbraith*: "Don't *what*?"

*Mr. Richards*: "Fib."

*Miss Galbraith*: "Not for worlds!"

*Mr. Richards*: "How did you know I was in this car?"

*Miss Galbraith*: "Must I? I thought I saw you through the window; and then I made sure it was you when I went to pin my veil on, — I saw you in the mirror."

*Mr. Richards*, after a little silence: "Miss Galbraith, do you want to know what *you* are?"

*Miss Galbraith*, softly: "Yes, Allen."

*Mr. Richards*: "You're a humbug!"

*Miss Galbraith*, springing from her seat, and confronting him. "So are you! You pretended to be asleep!"

*Mr. Richards*: "I — I — I was taken by surprise. I had to take time to think."

*Miss Galbraith*: "So did I."

*Mr. Richards*: "And you thought it would be a good plan to get your polonaise caught in the window?"

*Miss Galbraith*, hiding her face on his shoulder: "No, no, Allen! That I never *will* admit. *No* woman would!"

*Mr. Richards*: "Oh, I dare say!" After a pause: "Well, I am a poor, weak, helpless man, with no one to advise me or counsel me, and I have been cruelly deceived. How could you, Lucy, how could you? I can never get over this." He drops his head upon her shoulder.

*Miss Galbraith*, starting away again, and looking about the car: "Allen, I have an idea! Do you suppose Mr. Pullman could be induced to *sell* this car?"

*Mr. Richards*: "Why?"

*Miss Galbraith*: "Why, because I think it's perfectly lovely, and I should like to live in it always. It could be fitted up for a sort of summer-house, don't you know, and we could have it in the garden, and you could smoke in it."

*Mr. Richards*: "Admirable! It would look just like a travelling photographic saloon. No, Lucy, we won't buy it; we will simply keep it

as a precious souvenir, a sacred memory, a beautiful dream,—and let it go on fulfilling its destiny all the same.”

*Porter*, entering, and gathering up *Miss Galbraith's* things: “Be at Schenectady in half a minute, miss. Won't have much time.”

*Miss Galbraith*, rising, and adjusting her dress, and then looking about the car, while she passes her hand through her lover's arm: “Oh, I do hate to leave it. Farewell, you dear, kind, good, lovely car! May you never have another accident!” She kisses her hand to the car, upon which they both look back as they slowly leave it.

*Mr. Richards*, kissing his hand in the like manner: “Good-by, sweet chariot! May you never carry any but bridal couples!”

*Miss Galbraith*: “Or engaged ones!”

*Mr. Richards*: “Or husbands going home to their wives!”

*Miss Galbraith*: “Or wives hastening to their husbands.”

*Mr. Richards*: “Or young ladies who have waited one train over, so as to be with the young men they hate.”



*Miss Galbraith* : "Or young men who are so indifferent that they pretend to be asleep when the young ladies come in!" They pause at the door and look back again. "'And must I leave thee, Paradise?'" They both kiss their hands to the car again, and, their faces being very close together, they impulsively kiss each other. Then *Miss Galbraith* throws back her head, and solemnly confronts him. "Only think, Allen! If this car hadn't broken *its* engagement, we might never have mended ours."

**THE SLEEPING-CAR.**

*FARCE.*



# THE SLEEPING-CAR.

Farce.

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## I.

SCENE: One side of a sleeping-car on the Boston and Albany Road. The curtains are drawn before most of the berths: from the hooks and rods hang hats, bonnets, bags, bandboxes, umbrellas, and other travelling-gear; on the floor are boots of both sexes, set out for *The Porter* to black. *The Porter* is making up the beds in the upper and lower berths adjoining the seats on which a young mother, slender and pretty, with a baby asleep on the seat beside her, and a stout old lady, sit confronting each other — *Mrs. Agnes Roberts* and her *Aunt Mary*.

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Do you always take down your back hair, aunty?"

*Aunt Mary*: "No, never, child; at least not since I had such a fright about it once, coming on from New York. It's all well enough to take

down your back hair if it *is* yours; but if it isn't, your head's the best place for it. Now, as I buy mine of Madame Pierrot" —

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Don't you *wish* she wouldn't advertise it as *human* hair? It sounds so pokerish — like human flesh, you know."

*Aunt Mary*: "Why, she couldn't call it *inhuman* hair, my dear."

*Mrs. Roberts*, thoughtfully: "No — just *hair*."

*Aunt Mary*: "Then people might think it was for mattresses. But, as I was saying, I took it off that night, and tucked it safely away, as I supposed, in my pocket, and I slept sweetly till about midnight, when I happened to open my eyes, and saw something long and black crawl off my bed and slip under the berth. *Such* a shriek as I gave, my dear! 'A snake! a snake! oh, a snake!' And everybody began talking at once, and some of the gentlemen swearing, and the porter came running with the poker to kill it; and all the while it was that ridiculous switch of mine, that had worked out of my pocket. And glad enough I was to grab it up before anybody saw it, and say I must have been dreaming."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Why, aunty, how funny! How

*could* you suppose a serpent could get on board a sleeping-car, of all places in the world ?”

*Aunt Mary* : “That was the perfect absurdity of it.”

*The Porter* : “Berths ready now, ladies.”

*Mrs. Roberts*, to *The Porter*, who walks away to the end of the car, and sits down near the door : “Oh, thank you ! — Aunty, do you feel nervous the least bit ?”

*Aunt Mary* : “Nervous ? No. Why ?”

*Mrs. Roberts* : “Well, I don’t know. I suppose I’ve been worked up a little about meeting Willis, and wondering how he’ll look, and all. We can’t *know* each other, of course. It doesn’t stand to reason that if he’s been out there for twelve years, ever since I was a child, though we’ve corresponded regularly — at least *I* have — that he could recognize me ; not at the first glance, you know. He’ll have a full beard ; and then I’ve got married, and here’s the baby. Oh, *no* ! he’ll never guess who it is in the world. Photographs really amount to nothing in such a case. I wish we were at home, and it was all over. I wish he had written some particulars, instead of telegraphing from Ogden, ‘Be with you on the 7 A.M., Wednesday.’”

*Aunt Mary*: "Californians always telegraph, my dear; they never think of writing. It isn't expensive enough, and it doesn't make your blood run cold enough, to get a letter, and so they send you one of those miserable yellow despatches whenever they can—those printed in a long string, if possible, so that you'll be *sure* to die before you get to the end of it. I suppose your brother has fallen into all those ways, and says 'reckon' and 'ornary' and 'which the same,' just like one of Mr. Bret Harte's characters."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "But it isn't exactly our not knowing each other, aunty, that's worrying me; that's something that could be got over in time. What is simply driving me distracted is Willis and Edward meeting there when I'm away from home. Oh, how *could* I be away! and why *couldn't* Willis have given us fair warning? I would have hurried from the ends of the earth to meet him. I don't believe poor Edward ever saw a Californian; and he's so quiet and pre-occupied, I'm sure he'd never get on with Willis. And if Willis is the least loud, he wouldn't like Edward. Not that I suppose he *is* loud; but I don't believe he knows anything about literary men. But you can see,

aunty, can't you, how very anxious I must be? Don't you see that I ought to have been there when Willis and Edward met, so as to — to — well, to *break* them to each other, don't you know?"

*Aunt Mary:* "Oh, you needn't be troubled about that, Agnes. I dare say they've got on perfectly well together. Very likely they're sitting down to the unwholesomest hot supper this instant that the ingenuity of man could invent."

*Mrs. Roberts:* "Oh, do you *think* they are, aunty? Oh, if I could *only* believe they were sitting down to a hot supper together now, I should be *so* happy! They'd be sure to get on if they were. There's nothing like eating to make men friendly with each other. Don't you know, at receptions, how they never have anything to say to each other till the scalloped oysters and the chicken salad appear; and then how sweet they are as soon as they've helped the ladies to ice? Oh, thank you, *thank* you, aunty, for thinking of the hot supper! It's such a relief to my mind! You can understand, can't you, aunty dear, how anxious I must have been to have my only brother and my only — my husband — get on nicely together? My life would be a wreck, simply a



wreck, if they didn't. And Willis and I not having seen each other since I was a child makes it all the worse. I do *hope* they're sitting down to a hot supper."

*An angry Voice* from the next berth but one: "I wish people in sleeping-cars" —

*A Voice* from the berth beyond that: "You're mistaken in your premises, sir. This is a waking-car. Ladies, go on, and oblige an eager listener." Sensation, and smothered laughter from the other berths.

*Mrs. Roberts*, after a space of terrified silence, in a loud whisper to her *Aunt*: "What horrid things! But now we really must go to bed. It *was* too bad to keep talking. I'd no idea my voice was getting so loud. Which berth will you have, aunty? I'd better take the upper one, because" —

*Aunt Mary*, whispering: "No, no; I must take that, so that you can be with the baby below."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Oh, how good you are, Aunt Mary! It's too bad; it is really. I can't let you."

*Aunt Mary*: "Well, then, you must; that's all. You know how that child tosses and kicks about in the night. You never can tell where his head's

going to be in the morning, but you'll probably find it at the foot of the bed. I couldn't sleep an instant, my dear, if I thought that boy was in the upper berth; for I'd be sure of his tumbling out over you. Here, let me lay him down." She lays the baby in the lower berth. "There! Now get in, Agnes — do, and leave me to my struggle with the attraction of gravitation."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Oh, *poor* aunty, how will you ever manage it? I *must* help you up."

*Aunt Mary*: "No, my dear; don't be foolish. But you may go and call the porter, if you like. I dare say he's used to it."

*Mrs. Roberts* goes and speaks timidly to *The Porter*, who fails at first to understand, then smiles broadly, accepts a quarter with a duck of his head, and comes forward to *Aunt Mary's* side: "Had he better give you his hand to rest your foot in, while you spring up as if you were mounting horseback?"

*Aunt Mary*, with disdain: "*Spring!* My dear, I haven't *sprung* for a quarter of a century. I shall require every fibre in the man's body. His hand, indeed! You get in first, Agnes."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "I will, aunty dear; but" —

*Aunt Mary*, sternly: "Agnes, do as I say."  
*Mrs. Roberts* crouches down on the lower berth. "I don't choose that any member of my family shall witness my contortions. Don't you look."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "No, no, aunty."

*Aunt Mary*: "Now, porter, are you strong?"

*Porter*: "I used to be porter at a Saratoga hotel, and carried up de ladies' trunks dere."

*Aunt Mary*: "Then you'll do, I think. Now, then, your knee; now your back. There! And very handsomely done; thanks."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Are you really in, Aunt Mary?"

*Aunt Mary*, dryly: "Yes. Good-night."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Good-night, aunty." After a pause of some minutes. "Aunty!"

*Aunt Mary*: "Well, what?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Do you think it's perfectly safe?" She rises in her berth, and looks up over the edge of the upper.

*Aunt Mary*: "I suppose so. It's a well-managed road. They've got the air-brake, I've heard, and the Miller platform, and all those horrid things. What makes you introduce such unpleasant subjects?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Oh, I don't mean accidents. But,

you know, when you turn, it does creak so awfully. I shouldn't mind myself; but the baby" —

*Aunt Mary:* "Why, child, do you think I'm going to break through? I couldn't. I'm one of the *lightest* sleepers in the world."

*Mrs. Roberts:* "Yes, I know you're a light sleeper; but — but it doesn't seem quite the same thing, somehow."

*Aunt Mary:* "But it is; it's quite the same thing, and you can be perfectly easy in your mind, my dear. I should be quite as loath to break through as you would to have me. Good-night."

*Mrs. Roberts:* "Yes; good-night. — Auntie!"

*Aunt Mary:* "Well?"

*Mrs. Roberts:* "You ought to just see him, how he's lying. He's a perfect log. *Couldn't* you just bend over, and peep down at him a moment?"

*Aunt Mary:* "Bend over! It would be the death of me. Good-night."

*Mrs. Roberts:* "Good-night. Did you put the glass into my bag, or yours? I feel so very thirsty, and I want to go and get some water. I'm sure I don't know why I should be thirsty. Are you, Aunt Mary? Ah! here it is. Don't disturb yourself, auntie; I've found it. **It was in my bag,**

just where I'd put it myself. But all this trouble about Willis has made me so fidgety that I don't know where anything is. And now I don't know how to manage about the baby while I go after the water. He's sleeping soundly enough now; but if he should happen to get into one of his rolling moods, he might tumble out on to the floor. Never mind, aunty, I've thought of something. I'll just barricade him with these bags and shawls. Now, old fellow, roll as much as you like. If you should happen to hear him stir, aunty, won't you—Aunty! Oh, dear! she's asleep already; and what shall I do?" While *Mrs. Roberts* continues talking, various notes of protest, profane and otherwise, make themselves heard from different berths. "I know. I'll make a bold dash for the water, and be back in an instant, baby. Now, don't you move, you little rogue." She runs to the water-tank at the end of the car, and then back to her berth. "Now, baby, here's mamma again. Are you all right, mamma's own?" A shaggy head and bearded face are thrust from the curtains of the next berth.

*The Stranger*: "Look here, ma'am. I don't want to be disagreeable about this thing, and I

hope you won't take any offence; but the fact is, I'm half dead for want of sleep, and if you'll only keep quiet now a little while, I'll promise not to speak above my breath if ever I find you on a sleeping-car after you've come straight through from San Francisco, day and night, and not been able to get more than about a quarter of your usual allowance of rest — I will indeed."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "I'm very sorry that I've disturbed you, and I'll try to be more quiet. I didn't suppose I was speaking so loud; but the cars keep up such a rattling that you never can tell how loud you *are* speaking. Did I understand you to say that you were from California?"

*The Californian*: "Yes, ma'am."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "San Francisco?"

*The Californian*: "Yes, ma'am."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Thanks. It's a terribly long journey, isn't it? I know quite how to feel for you. I've a brother myself coming on. In fact, we expected him before this." She scans his face as sharply as the lamplight will allow, and continues, after a brief hesitation. "It's always such a silly question to ask a person, and I suppose San Francisco is a large place, with a great many

people always coming and going, so that it would be only one chance in a thousand if you did."

*The Californian*, patiently: "Did what, ma'am?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Oh, I was just wondering if it was possible — but of course, it isn't, and it's very flat to ask — that you'd ever happened to meet my brother there. His name is Willis Campbell."

*The Californian*, with more interest: "Campbell? Campbell? Yes, I know a man of that name. But I disremember his first name. Little low fellow — pretty chunky?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "I don't know. Do you mean short and stout?"

*The Californian*: "Yes, ma'am."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "I'm sure I can't tell. It's a great many years since he went out there, and I've never seen him in all that time. I thought if you *did* happen to know him — He's a lawyer."

*The Californian*: "It's quite likely I know him; and in the morning, ma'am" —

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Oh, excuse me. I'm very sorry to have kept you so long awake with my silly questions."

*The Man in the Upper Berth*: "Don't apologize, madam. I'm not a Californian myself, but I'm an orphan, and away from home, and I thank you, on behalf of all our fellow-passengers, for the mental refreshment that your conversation has afforded us. I could lie here, and listen to it all night; but there are invalids in some of these berths, and perhaps on their account it will be as well to defer everything till the morning, as our friend suggests. Allow me to wish you pleasant dreams, madam."

*The Californian*, while *Mrs. Roberts* shrinks back under the curtain of her berth in dismay, and stammers some inaudible excuse, slowly emerges full length from his berth: "Don't you mind me, ma'am; I've got everything but my boots and coat on. Now, then," standing beside the berth, and looking in upon the man in the upper tier. "You! Do you know that this is a lady you're talking to?"

*The Upper Berth*: "By your voice and your shaggy personal appearance I shouldn't have taken you for a lady — no, sir. But the light is very imperfect; you may be a bearded lady."

*The Californian*: "You never mind about my



looks. The question is, Do you want your head rapped up against the side of this car ? ”

*The Upper Berth* : “ With all the frankness of your own Pacific Slope, no.”

*Mrs. Roberts*, hastily re-appearing : “ Oh, no, no, don’t hurt him ! He’s not to blame. I was wrong to keep on talking. Oh, please don’t hurt him ! ”

*The Californian* to *The Upper Berth* : “ You hear ? Well, now, don’t you speak another word to that lady to-night. Just go on, ma’am, and free your mind on any little matter you like. I don’t want any sleep. How long has your brother been in California ? ”

*Mrs. Roberts* : “ Oh, don’t let’s talk about it now ; I don’t want to talk about it. I thought — I thought — Good-night. Oh, dear ! I didn’t suppose I was making so much trouble. I didn’t mean to disturb anybody. I ” — *Mrs. Roberts* gives way to the excess of her confusion and mortification in a little sob, and then hides her grief behind the curtains of her berth. *The Californian* slowly emerges again from his couch, and stands beside it, looking in upon the man in the berth above.

*The Californian* : "For half a cent I *would* rap your head up against that wall. Making the lady cry, and getting me so mad I can't sleep! Now see here, you just apologize. You beg that lady's pardon, or I'll have you out of there before you know yourself." Cries of "Good!" "That's right!" and "Make him show himself!" hail *Mrs. Roberts's* champion, and heads, more or less dishevelled, are thrust from every berth. *Mrs. Roberts* remains invisible and silent, and the loud and somewhat complicated respiration of her *Aunt* makes itself heard in the general hush of expectancy. A remark to the effect that "The old lady seems to enjoy her rest" achieves a facile applause. *The Californian* again addresses the culprit. "Come, now, what do you say? I'll give you just one-half a minute."

*Mrs. Roberts* from her shelter: "Oh, please, *please* don't make him say anything! It was very trying in me to keep him awake, and I know he didn't mean any offence. Oh, *do* let him be!"

*The Californian* : "You hear that? You stay quiet the rest of the time; and if that lady chooses to keep us all awake the whole night, don't *you* say a word, or I'll settle with you in the morning."

Loud and continued applause, amidst which *The Californian* turns from the man in the berth before him, and restores order by marching along the aisle of the car in his stocking feet. The heads vanish behind the curtains. As the laughter subsides, he returns to his berth, and after a stare up and down the tranquillized car, he is about to retire.

*A Voice*: "Oh, don't just bow! Speak!" A fresh burst of laughter greets this sally. *The Californian* erects himself again with an air of bated wrath, and then suddenly breaks into a helpless laugh.

*The Californian*: "Gentlemen, you're too many for me." He gets into his berth, and after cries of "Good for California!" "You're all right, William Nye!" and "You're several ahead yet!" the occupants of the different berths gradually relapse into silence, and at last, as the car lunges onward through the darkness, nothing is heard but the rhythmical clank of the machinery, with now and then a burst of audible slumber from *Mrs. Roberts's Aunt Mary*.

## II.

At Worcester, where the train has made the usual stop, *The Porter*, with his lantern on his arm, enters the car, preceding a gentleman somewhat anxiously smiling; his nervous speech contrasts painfully with the business-like impassiveness of *The Porter*, who refuses, with an air of incredulity, to enter into the confidences which the gentleman seems reluctant to bestow.

*Mr. Edward Roberts*: "This is the Governor Marcy, isn't it?"

*The Porter*: "Yes, sah."

*Mr. Roberts*: "Came on from Albany, and not from New York?"

*The Porter*: "Yes, sah, it did."

*Mr. Roberts*: "Ah! it must be all right. I" —

*The Porter*: "Was your wife expecting you to come on board here?"

*Mr. Roberts*: "Well, no, not exactly. She was expecting me to meet her at Boston. But I" —

struggling to give the situation dignity, but failing, and throwing himself, with self-convicted silliness, upon *The Porter's* mercy. "The fact is, I thought I would surprise her by joining her here."

*The Porter*, refusing to have any mercy: "Oh! How did you expect to find her?"

*Mr. Roberts*: "Well — well — I don't know. I didn't consider." He looks down the aisle in despair at the close-drawn curtains of the berths, and up at the dangling hats and bags and bonnets, and down at the chaos of boots of both sexes on the floor. "I don't know *how* I expected to find her." *Mr. Roberts's* countenance falls, and he visibly sinks so low in his own esteem and an imaginary public opinion that *The Porter* begins to have a little compassion.

*The Porter*: "Dey's so many ladies on board I couldn't find her."

*Mr. Roberts*: "Oh, no, no! of course not. I didn't expect that."

*The Porter*: "Don't like to go routing 'em all up, you know. I wouldn't be allowed to."

*Mr. Roberts*: "I don't ask it; that would be preposterous."

*The Porter*: "What sort of looking lady was she?"

*Mr. Roberts*: "Well, I don't know, really. Not very tall, rather slight, blue eyes. I—I don't know what you'd call her nose. And—stop! Oh, yes, she had a child with her, a little boy. Yes!"

*The Porter*, thoughtfully looking down the aisle: "Dey was three ladies had children. I didn't notice whether dey was boys or girls, or *what* dey was. Didn't have anybody with her?"

*Mr. Roberts*: "No, no. Only the child."

*The Porter*: "Well, I don't know what you are going to do, sah. It won't be a great while now till morning, you know. Here comes the conductor. Maybe he'll know what to do." *Mr. Roberts* makes some futile, inarticulate attempts to prevent *The Porter* from laying the case before *The Conductor*, and then stands guiltily smiling, overwhelmed with the hopeless absurdity of his position.

*The Conductor*, entering the car, and stopping before *The Porter*, and looking at *Mr. Roberts*. "Gentleman want a berth?"

*The Porter*, grinning: "Well, no, sah. He's lookin' for his wife."

*The Conductor*, with suspicion: "Is she aboard this car?"

*Mr. Roberts*, striving to propitiate *The Conductor* by a dastardly amiability: "Oh, yes, yes. There's no mistake about the car—the Governor Marcy. She telegraphed the name just before you left Albany, so that I could find her at Boston in the morning. Ah!"

*The Conductor*: "At Boston?" Sternly: "Then what are you trying to find her at Worcester in the middle of the night for?"

*Mr. Roberts*: "Why—I—that is"—

*The Porter*, taking compassion on *Mr. Roberts's* inability to continue: "Says he wanted to surprise her."

*Mr. Roberts*: "Ha—yes, exactly. A little caprice, you know."

*The Conductor*: "Well, that may all be so."  
*Mr. Roberts* continues to smile in agonized helplessness against *The Conductor's* injurious tone, which becomes more and more offensively patronizing. "But I can't do anything for you. Here are all these people asleep in their berths, and I can't go round waking them up because you want to surprise your wife."

*Mr. Roberts*: "No, no; of course not. I never thought" —

*The Conductor*: "My advice to *you* is to have a berth made up, and go to bed till we get to Boston, and surprise your wife by telling her what you tried to do."

*Mr. Roberts*, unable to resent the patronage of this suggestion: "Well, I don't know but I will."

*The Conductor*, going out: "The porter will make up the berth for you."

*Mr. Roberts* to *The Porter*, who is about to pull down the upper berth over a vacant seat: "Ah! Er — I — I don't think I'll trouble you to make it up; it's so near morning now. Just bring me a pillow, and I'll try to get a nap without lying down." He takes the vacant seat.

*The Porter*: "All right, sah." He goes to the end of the car, and returns with a pillow.

( *Mr. Roberts*: "Ah — porter!"

*The Porter*: "Yes, sah."

*Mr. Roberts*: "Of course you didn't notice; but you don't think you *did* notice who was in that berth yonder?"

He indicates a certain berth.



*The Porter*: "Dat's a gen'leman in dat berth, I think, sah."

*Mr. Roberts*, astutely: "There's a bonnet hanging from the hook at the top. I'm not sure, but it looks like my wife's bonnet."

*The Porter*, evidently shaken by this reasoning, but recovering his firmness: "Yes, sah. But you can't depend upon de ladies to hang deir bonnets on de right hook. Jes' likely as not dat lady's took de hook at de foot of her berth instead o' de head. Sometimes dey takes both."

*Mr. Roberts*: "Ah!" After a pause. "Porter!"

*The Porter*: "Yes, sah."

*Mr. Roberts*: "You wouldn't feel justified in looking?"

*The Porter*: "I couldn't, sah; I couldn't, indeed."

*Mr. Roberts*, reaching his left hand towards *The Porter's*, and pressing a half-dollar into his instantly responsive palm: "But there's nothing to prevent *my* looking if I feel perfectly sure of the bonnet?"

*The Porter*: "N-no, sah."

*Mr. Roberts*: "All right."

*The Porter* retires to the end of the car, and

resumes the work of polishing the passengers' boots. After an interval of quiet, *Mr. Roberts* rises, and, looking about him with what he feels to be melodramatic stealth, approaches the suspected berth. He unloops the curtain with a trembling hand, and peers ineffectually in; he advances his head farther and farther into the darkened recess, and then suddenly dodges back again, with *The Californian* hanging to his neckcloth with one hand.

*The Californian*, savagely: "What do you want?"

*Mr. Roberts*, struggling and breathless: "I—I—I want my wife."

*The Californian*: "Want your wife! Have I got your wife?"

*Mr. Roberts*: "No — ah — that is — ah, excuse me — I thought you *were* my wife."

*The Californian*, getting out of the berth, but at the same time keeping hold of *Mr. Roberts*: "Thought I was your *wife*! Do I look like your wife? You can't play that on me, old man. Porter! conductor!"

*Mr. Roberts*, agonized: "Oh, I beseech you, my dear sir, don't — don't! I can explain it —

I can indeed. I know it has an ugly look ; but if you will allow me two words—only two words” —

*Mrs. Roberts*, suddenly parting the curtain of her berth, and springing out into the aisle, with her hair wildly dishevelled : “ Edward ! ”

*Mr. Roberts* : “ Oh, Agnes, explain to this gentleman ! ” Imploringly : “ Don’t you know me ? ”

*A Voice* : “ Make him show you the strawberry mark on his left arm. ”

*Mrs. Roberts* : “ Edward ! Edward ! ” *The Californian* mechanically loses his grip, and they fly into each other’s embrace. “ *Where* did you come from ? ”

*A Voice* : “ Centre door, left hand, one back. ”

*The Conductor*, returning with his lantern : “ Hallo ! What’s the matter here ? ”

*A Voice* : “ Train robbers ! Throw up your hands ! Tell the express-messenger to bring his safe. ” The passengers emerge from their berths in various *deshabille* and bewilderment.

*The Conductor* to *Mr. Roberts* : “ Have you been making all this row, waking up my passengers ? ”

*The Californian*: "No, sir, he hasn't. I've been making this row. This gentleman was peaceably looking for his wife, and I misunderstood him. You want to say anything to me?"

*The Conductor*, silently taking *The Californian's* measure with his eye, as he stands six feet in his stockings: "If I did I'd get the biggest brakeman I could find to do it for me. I've got nothing to say except that I think you'd better all go back to bed again." He goes out, and the passengers disappear one by one, leaving the *Robertses* and *The Californian* alone.

*The Californian*, to *Mr. Roberts*: "Stranger, I'm sorry I got you into this scrape."

*Mr. Roberts*: "Oh, don't speak of it, my dear sir. I'm sure we owe you all sorts of apologies, which I shall be most happy to offer you at my house in Boston, with every needful explanation." He takes out his card, and gives it to *The Californian*, who looks at it, and then looks at *Mr. Roberts* curiously. "There's my address, and I'm sure we shall both be glad to have you call."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Oh, yes, indeed." *The Californian* parts the curtains of his berth to re-enter

it. "Good-night, sir, and I assure you *we* shall do nothing more to disturb you — shall we, Edward?"

*Mr. Roberts*: "No. And now, dear, I think you'd better go back to your berth."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "I couldn't sleep, and I shall not go back. Is this your place? I will just rest my head on your shoulder; and we must both be perfectly quiet. You've no idea what a nuisance I have been making of myself. The whole car was perfectly furious at me one time, I kept talking so loud. I don't know how I came to do it, but I suppose it was thinking about you and Willis meeting without knowing each other made me nervous, and I couldn't be still. I woke everybody up with my talking, and some of them were quite outrageous in their remarks; but I didn't blame them the least bit, for I should have been just as bad. That California gentleman was perfectly splendid, though. I can tell you *he* made them stop. We struck up quite a friendship. I told him I had a brother coming on from California, and he's going to try to think whether he knows Willis." Groans and inarticulate protests make themselves heard from different berths. "I de-

clare, I've got to talking again! There, now, I *shall* stop, and they won't hear another squeak from me the rest of the night." She lifts her head from her husband's shoulder. "I wonder if baby will roll out. He *does* kick so! And I just sprang up and left him when I heard your voice, without putting anything to keep him in. I *must* go and have a look at him, or I never can settle down. No, no, don't you go, Edward; you'll be prying into all the wrong berths in the car, you poor thing! You stay here, and I'll be back in half a second. I wonder which is my berth. Ah! that's it; I know the one now." She makes a sudden dash at a berth, and pulling open the curtains is confronted by the bearded visage of *The Californian*. "Ah! Ow! ow! Edward! Ah! I—I beg your pardon, sir; excuse me; I didn't know it was you. I came for my baby."

*The Californian*, solemnly: "I haven't got any baby, ma'am."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "No — no — I thought *you* were my baby."

*The Californian*: "Perhaps I am, ma'am; I've lost so much sleep I could cry, anyway. Do I *look* like your baby?"

*Mrs. Roberts* : "No, no, you don't." In distress that overcomes her mortification. "Oh, where is my baby? I left him all uncovered, and he'll take his death of cold, even if he doesn't roll out. Oh, Edward, Edward, help me to find baby!"

*Mr. Roberts*, bustling aimlessly about: "Yes, yes; certainly, my dear. But don't be alarmed; we shall find him."

*The Californian*, getting out in his stocking feet: "We shall find him, ma'am, if we have to search every berth in this car. Don't you take on. That baby's going to be found if he's aboard the train, now, you bet!" He looks about and then tears open the curtains of a berth at random. "That your baby, ma'am?"

*Mrs. Roberts*, flying upon the infant thus exposed. "Oh, baby, baby, baby! I thought I had lost you. Um! um! um!" She clasps him in her arms, and covers his face and neck with kisses.

*The Californian*, as he gets back into his berth, *sotto voce*: "I wish I had been her baby."

*Mrs. Roberts*, returning with her husband to his seat, and bringing the baby with her:

"There! Did you ever *see* such a sleeper, Edward?" In her ecstasy she abandons all control of her voice, and joyfully exclaims: "He nas slept all through this excitement, without a wink."

A solemn *Voice* from one of the berths: "I envy him." A laugh follows, in which all the passengers join.

*Mrs. Roberts*, in a hoarse whisper, breaking a little with laughter: "Oh, my goodness! there I went again. But how funny! I assure you, Edward, that if their remarks had not been about me, I could have really quite enjoyed some of them. I wish there had been somebody here to take them down. And I hope I shall see some of the speakers in the morning before— Edward, I've got an idea!"

*Mr. Roberts*, endeavoring to teach his wife by example to lower her voice, which has risen again: "What — what is it, my dear?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Why, don't you see? How perfectly ridiculous it was of me not to think of it before! though I did think of it once, and hadn't the courage to insist upon it. But of course it is; and it accounts for his being so polite and kind to



me through all, and it's the only thing that can. Yes, yes, it *must* be."

*Mr. Roberts*, mystified: "What?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Willis."

*Mr. Roberts*: "Who?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "This Californian."

*Mr. Roberts*: "Oh!"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "No *stranger* could have been so patient, and — and — attentive; and I know that he recognized me from the first, and he's just kept it up for a joke, so as to surprise us, and have a good laugh at us when we get to Boston. Of *course* it's Willis."

*Mr. Roberts*, doubtfully: "Do you think so, my dear?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "I *know* it. Didn't you notice how he looked at your card? And I want you to go at once and speak to him, and turn the tables on him."

*Mr. Roberts*: "I — I'd rather *not*, my dear."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Why, Edward, what can you mean?"

*Mr. Roberts*: "He's very violent. Suppose it *shouldn't* be Willis?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Nonsense! It *is* Willis. Come,

let's both go and just tax him with it. He can't deny it, after all he's done for me." She pulls her reluctant husband toward *The Californian's* berth, and they each draw a curtain. "Willis!"

*The Californian*, with plaintive endurance: "Well, ma'am?"

*Mrs. Roberts*, triumphantly: "There! I knew it was you all along. How could you play such a joke on me?"

*The Californian*: "I didn't know there'd been any joke; but I suppose there must have been, if you say so. Who am I now, ma'am—you husband, or your baby, or your husband's wife, or"—

*Mrs. Roberts*: "How funny you are! You *know* you're Willis Campbell, my only brother. Now *don't* try to keep it up any longer, Willis."

*Voices*, from various berths: "Give us a rest, Willis!" "Joke's too thin, Willis!" "You're played out, Willis!" "Own up, old fellow—own up!"

*The Californian*, issuing from his berth, and walking up and down the aisle, as before, till quiet is restored: "I haven't got any sister, and my name ain't Willis, and it ain't Campbell. I'm

very sorry, because I'd like to oblige you any way I could."

*Mrs. Roberts*, in deep mortification: "It's I who ought to apologize, and I do most humbly. I don't know what to say; but when I got to thinking about it, and how kind you had been to me, and how sweet you had been under all my — interruptions, I felt perfectly sure that you couldn't be a mere stranger, and then the idea struck me that you must be my brother in disguise; and I was so certain of it that I couldn't help just letting you know that we'd found you out, and" —

*Mr. Roberts*, offering a belated and feeble moral support: "Yes."

*Mrs. Roberts*, promptly turning upon him: "And you ought to have kept me from making such a simpleton of myself, Edward."

*The Californian*, soothingly: "Well, ma'am, that ain't always so easy. A man may mean well, and yet not be able to carry out his intentions. But it's all right. And I reckon we'd better try to quiet down again, and get what rest we can."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Why, yes, certainly; and I will try — oh, I will *try* not to disturb you again. And if there's anything we can do in reparation

after we reach Boston, we shall be *so* glad to do it!"

They bow themselves away, and return to their seat, while *The Californian* re-enters his berth.

## III.

THE train stops at Framingham, and *The Porter* comes in with a passenger, whom he shows to the seat opposite *Mr. and Mrs. Roberts*.

*The Porter*: "You can sit here, sah. We'll be in, in about half an hour now. Hang up your bag for you, sah?"

*The Passenger*: "No, leave it on the seat here."

*The Porter* goes out, and the *Robertses* maintain a dejected silence. The bottom of the bag, thrown carelessly on the seat, is toward the *Robertses*, who regard it listlessly.

*Mrs. Roberts*, suddenly clutching her husband's arm, and hissing in his ear: "See!" She points to the white lettering on the bag, where the name "Willis Campbell, San Francisco," is distinctly legible. "But it can't be; it must be some other Campbell. I can't risk it."

*Mr. Roberts*: "But there's the name. It would

be very strange if there were two people from San Francisco of exactly the same name. *I will speak.*"

*Mrs. Roberts*, as wildly as one can in whisper: "No, no, I can't let you. We've made ourselves the laughing-stock of the whole car already with our mistakes, and I can't go on. I would rather perish than ask him. You don't suppose it *could* be? No, it couldn't. There may be twenty Willis Campbells in San Francisco, and there probably are. Do you think he looks like me? He has a straight nose; but you can't tell anything about the lower part of his face, the beard covers it so; and I can't make out the color of his eyes by this light. But of course, it's all nonsense. Still, if it *should* be! It would be very stupid of us to ride all the way from Framingham to Boston with that name staring one in the eyes. I *wish* he would turn it away. If it really turned out to *be* Willis, he would think we were awfully stiff and cold. But I can't help it; I *can't* go attacking every stranger I see, and accusing him of being my brother. No, no, I *can't*, and I *won't*, and that's all about it." She *leans* forward, and addresses the stranger with

sudden sweetness. "Excuse me, sir, but I *am* very much interested by the name on your bag. Not that I think you are even acquainted with him, and there are probably a great many of them there; but your coming from the same city, and all, *does* seem a little queer, and I hope you won't think me intrusive in speaking to you, because if you *should* happen, by the thousandth of a chance, to be the right one, I should be *so* happy!"

*Campbell*: "The right what, madam?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "The right Willis Campbell."

*Campbell*: "I hope I'm not the wrong one; though after a week's pull on the railroad it's pretty hard for a man to tell which Willis Campbell he is. May I ask if your Willis Campbell had friends in Boston?"

*Mrs. Roberts*, eagerly: "He had a sister and a brother-in-law and a nephew."

*Campbell*: "Name of Roberts?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Every one."

*Campbell*: "Then you're" —

*Mrs. Roberts*, ecstatically: "Agnes."

*Campbell*: "And he's" —

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Mr. Roberts!"

*Campbell*: "And the baby's" —

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Asleep!"

*Campbell*: "Then I *am* the right one."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Oh, Willis! Willis! Willis! To think of our meeting in this way!" She kisses and embraces him, while *Mr. Roberts* shakes one of his hands which he finds disengaged. "How in the world did it happen?"

*Campbell*: "Oh, I found myself a little ahead of time, and I stopped off with an old friend of mine at Framingham; I didn't want to disappoint you when you came to meet this train, or get you up last night at midnight."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "And I was in Albany, and I've been moving heaven and earth to get home before you arrived; and Edward came aboard at Worcester to surprise me, and — Oh, you've never seen the baby! I'll run right and get him this instant, just as he is, and bring him. Edward, you be explaining to Willis — Oh, my goodness!" looking wildly about. "I don't remember the berth, and I shall be sure to wake up that poor California gentleman again. *What shall I do?*"

*Campbell*: "What California gentleman?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Oh, somebody we've been stirring up the whole blessed night. First I took



him for baby, and then Edward took him for me, and then I took him for baby again, and then we both took him for you."

*Campbell*: "Did he look like any of us?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Like *us*? He's eight feet tall, if he's an inch, in his stockings—and he's always in them—and he has a long black beard and mustaches, and he's very lanky, and stoops over a good deal; but he's just as lovely as he can be, and live, and he's been as kind and patient as twenty Jobs."

*Campbell*: "Speaks in a sort of soft, slow grind?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Yes."

*Campbell*: "Gentle and deferential to ladies?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "As pie."

*Campbell*: "It's Tom Goodall. I'll have him out of there in half a second. I want you to take him home with you, Agnes. He's the best fellow in the world. *Which* is his berth?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Don't ask me, Willis. But if you'd go for baby, you'll be sure to find *him*."

*Mr. Roberts*, timidly indicating a berth: "I think that's the one."

*Campbell*, plunging at it, and pulling the curtains open: "You, old Tom Goodall!"

*The Californian*, appearing: "I ain't any Tom Goodall. My name's Abram Sawyer."

*Campbell*, falling back: "Well, sir, you're right. I'm awfully sorry to disturb you; but, from my sister's description here, I felt certain you must be my old friend Tom Goodall."

*The Californian*: "I ain't surprised at it. I'm only surprised I *ain't* Tom Goodall. I've been a baby twice, and I've been a man's wife once, and once I've been a long-lost brother."

*Campbell*, laughing: "Oh, they've found *him*. I'm the long-lost brother."

*The Californian*, sleepily: "Has she found the other one?"

*Campbell*: "Yes; all right, I believe."

*The Californian*: "Has *he* found what *he* wanted?"

*Campbell*: "Yes; we're all together here."

*The Californian* makes a movement to get into bed again. "Oh, don't! You'd better make a night of it now. It's almost morning anyway. We want you to go home with us, and Mrs. Roberts will give you a bed at her house, and let you sleep a week."

*The Californian*: "Well, I reckon you're right,

stranger. I seem to be in the hands of Providence to-night, anyhow." He pulls on his boots and coat, and takes his seat beside *Campbell*. "I reckon there ain't any use in fighting against Providence."

*Mrs. Roberts*, briskly, as if she had often tried it and failed: "Oh, not the least in the world. I'm sure it was all intended; and if you had turned out to be Willis at last, I should be *certain* of it. What surprises me is that you shouldn't turn out to be anybody, after all."

*The Californian*: "Yes, it is kind of curious. But I couldn't help it. I did my best."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Oh, don't speak of it. *We* are the ones who ought to apologize. But if you only had been somebody, it would have been such a good joke! We could always have had such a laugh over it, don't you see?"

*The Californian*: "Yes, ma'am, it would have been funny. But I hope you've enjoyed it as it is."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Oh, very much, thanks to you. Only I can't seem to get reconciled to your *not* being anybody, after all. You *must* at least be some one we've heard about, don't you think?"

It's so strange that you and Willis never even met. Don't you think you have some acquaintances in common?"

*Campbell*: "Look here, Agnes, do you always shout at the top of your voice in this way when you converse in a sleeping-car?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Was I talking loud again? Well, you can't help it, if you want to make people hear you."

*Campbell*: "But there must be a lot of them who don't want to hear you. I wonder that the passengers who are not blood-relations don't throw things at you — boots and hand-bags and language."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Why, that's what they've *been* doing — language at least — and I'm only surprised they're not doing it now."

*The Californian*, rising: "They'd better not, ma'am." He patrols the car from end to end, and quells some rising murmurs, halting at the rebellious berths as he passes.

*Mrs. Roberts*, enraptured by his championship: "Oh, he *must* be some connection." She glances through the window. "I do believe that was Newton, or Newtonville, or West Newton, or

Newton Centre. I must run and wake up baby, and get him dressed. I sha'n't want to wait an instant after we get in. Why, we're slowing up! Why, I do believe we're there! Edward, we're there! Only fancy being there already!"

*Mr. Roberts*: "Yes, my dear. Only we're not quite there yet. Hadn't we better call your Aunt Mary?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "I'd forgotten her."

*Campbell*: "Is Aunt Mary with you?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "To be sure she is. Didn't I tell you? She came on expressly to meet you."

*Campbell*, starting up impetuously: "Which berth is she in?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Right over baby."

*Campbell*: "And which berth is baby in?"

*Mrs. Roberts*, distractedly: "Why, that's just what I can't tell. It was bad enough when they were all filled up; but now, since the people have begun to come out of them, and some of them are made into seats, I can't tell."

*The Californian*: "I'll look for you, ma'am. I should like to wake up all the wrong passengers on this car. I'd take a pleasure in it. If you

could make sure of any berth that *ain't* the one, I'd begin on that."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "I can't even be sure of the wrong one. No, no; you mustn't" — *The Californian* moves away, and pauses in front of one of the berths, looking back inquiringly at *Mrs. Roberts*. "Oh, don't ask *me!* I can't tell." To *Campbell*: "Isn't he amusing? So like all those Californians that one reads of — so chivalrous and so humorous!"

*Aunt Mary*, thrusting her head from the curtains of the berth before which *The Californian* is standing: "Go along with you! What do you want?"

*The Californian*: "Aunt Mary."

*Aunt Mary*: "Go away. Aunt Mary, indeed!"

*Mrs. Roberts*, turning toward her, followed by *Campbell* and *Mr. Roberts*: "Why, Aunt Mary, it is you! And here's Willis, and here's Edward."

*Aunt Mary*: "Nonsense! How did they get aboard?"

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Edward came on at Worcester, and Willis at Framingham, to surprise me."

*Aunt Mary*: "And a very silly performance. Let them wait till I'm dressed, and then I'll talk

to them. Send for the porter." She withdraws her head behind the curtain, and then thrusts it out again. "And who, pray, may *this* be?" She indicates *The Californian*.

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Oh, a friend of ours from California, who's been so kind to us all night, and who's going home with us."

*Aunt Mary*: "Another ridiculous surprise, I suppose. But he shall not surprise *me*. Young man, isn't your name Sawyer?"

*The Californian*: "Yes, ma'am."

*Aunt Mary*: "Abram?"

*The Californian*: "Abram Sawyer. You're right there, ma'am."

*Mrs. Roberts*: "Oh! oh! I knew it! I knew that he must be somebody belonging to us. Oh, thank you, aunty, for thinking" —

*Aunt Mary*: "Don't be absurd, Agnes. Then you're my" —

*A Voice* from one of the berths: "Long-lost stepson. Found! found at last!"

*The Californian* looks vainly round in an endeavor to identify the speaker, and then turns again to *Aunt Mary*.

*Aunt Mary*: "Weren't your parents from Bath?"

*The Californian*, eagerly : "Both of 'em, ma'am — both of 'em."

*The Voice* : "O my prophetic soul, my uncle !"

*Aunt Mary* : "Then you're my old friend Kate Harris's daughter ?"

*The Californian* : "I might be her son, ma'am ; but my mother's name was Susan Wakeman."

*Aunt Mary*, in sharp disgust : "Call the porter, please." She withdraws her head and pulls her curtains together ; the rest look blankly at one another.

*Campbell* : "Another failure, and just when we thought we were sure of you. I don't know what we shall do about you, Mr. Sawyer."

*The Voice* : "Adopt him."

*Campbell* : "That's a good idea. We will adopt you. You shall be our adoptive" —

*The Voice* : "Baby boy."

*Another Voice* : "Wife."

*A Third Voice* : "Brother."

*A Fourth Voice* : "Early friend."

*A Fifth Voice* : "Kate Harris's daughter."

*Campbell*, laying his hand on *The Californian's* shoulder, and breaking into a laugh : "Don't mind them. They don't mean anything. It's just their



way. You come home with my sister, and spend Christmas, and let us devote the rest of our lives to making your declining years happy."

*Voices*: "Good for you, Willis!" "We'll all come!" "No ceremony!" "Small and early!"

*Campbell*, looking round: "We appear to have fallen in with a party of dry-goods drummers. It makes a gentleman feel like an intruder." The train stops; he looks out of the window. "We've arrived. Come, Agnes; come, Roberts; come, Mr. Sawyer — let's be going." They gather up their several wraps and bags, and move with great dignity toward the door.

*Aunt Mary*, putting out her head: "Agnes! If you must forget your aunt, at least remember your child."

*Mrs. Roberts*, running back in an agony of remorse: "Oh, *baby*, did I forget you?"

*Campbell*: "Oh, *aunty*, did she forget you?" He runs back, and extends his arms to his aunt. "Let me help you down, Aunt Mary."

*Aunt Mary*: "Nonsense, Willis. Send the porter."

*Campbell*, turning round and confronting *The Porter*: "He was here upon instinct. Shall he fetch a step-ladder?"

*Aunt Mary*: "He will know what to do. Go away, Willis; go away with that child, Agnes. If I should happen to fall on you" — They retreat; the curtain drops and her voice is heard behind it addressing *The Porter*: "Give me your hand; now your back; now your knee. So! And very well done, thanks."



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