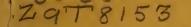
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The Man Who Went

A Play in Four Acts

Originally produced under the title of "The Black Feather"

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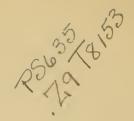
W. A. TREMAYNE

Author of "Lost—24 Hours," "The Dagger and the Cross," "The Secret Warrant," etc.

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BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.



The Man Who Went

CHARACTERS

(In the order of their appearance.)

BARON VON ARNHEIM, in the German Secret Service.

JACK THORNTON, a King's Messenger.

EVELYN THORNTON, Jack's sister.

SIR GEORGE CAXTON, in the British Foreign Office.

LADY VENETIA CAXTON, his wife.

DICK KENT, in the English Secret Service.

HOGUE, a German spy.

COUNTESS WANDA VON HOLTZBERG, in the Austrian Secret Service.

BARNES, a chauffeur.

PATTON, a keeper.

N. B. The action of the play takes place in the early summer of 1914.



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Copy of the Original Programme.

Grand Opera House, Toronto, Week of September 11th, 1916.

ALBERT BROWN

In a Melodramatic Comedy

"THE BLACK FEATHER"

By W. A. TREMAYNE

CHARACTERS

(In the order of their appearance.)

| BARON ERNEST VON ARNHEIM | | - F. Gatenby Bell |
|--------------------------------|------|-----------------------|
| JACK THORNTON | | Robert Richard Ranier |
| EVELYN THORNTON, Fack's sister | | - Clemence Randolph |
| SIR GEORGE CAXTON | - | - Charles Welsh-Homer |
| LADY VENETIA CAXTON | | Sara Perry |
| DICK KENT | | |
| Paul Hogue | | - Henry Sherwood |
| COUNTESS WANDA VON HOLTZBER | RG - | - Gladys Hopetown |
| BARNES, a chauffeur | | |
| | | Thomas Shaw |

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I. Sitting-room of Jack's apartments, London.

Note: The curtain will be lowered for a few seconds during Act I, to denote the lapse of a few hours.

ACT II. A corner of Sir George Caxton's Estate at Thorncliffe.

Note: The curtain will be lowered for a few seconds during Act II, to denote the lapse of a few hours.

ACT III. Same as Act I. ACT IV. Same as Act I.

The action of the play takes place during the summer of 1914.

Production staged under the personal direction of Mr. Brown and the author.

For Mr. Brown.

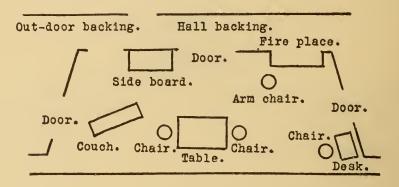
Manager - - - - - - L. E. WEED.

Representative - - - - - - STEPHEN MARCHALL.

SCENE PLOTS

Acts I, III, IV

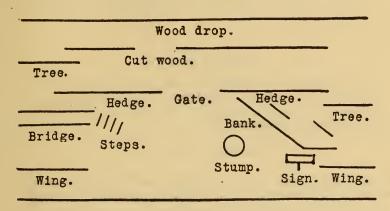
JACK THORNTON'S chambers in Portman Square, No. 7, London.



The room is comfortably but plainly furnished. A door, c., leads out into hall beyond; another door, R., near front, leads into room occupied by the BARON; another door, L., leads to JACK's room. There is an open fireplace at the back, L., and at the back R., a large window looking out onto the square; a table c., with a chair on either side of it, a couch or sofa down R., near front, a large armchair to R. of fireplace, a writing desk L., with a chair to R. of it, a sideboard at back, R. c., between door and window, with cigars, cigarettes, decanter of whiskey, syphon of soda, etc.; a 'phone on desk L.

ACT II, SCENES I AND 2

Retired spot on the borders of SIR GEORGE CAXTON'S estate in Kent, not far from London.



The back cloth and cut drop represent a wood; from R. to L., below this, runs a hedge with a gate or opening in the c.; to the L., running obliquely from about L. C., is a bank about three feet high, overshadowed by weeping willows. At the end of this bank nearest the audience a sign-board with the words "Beware of the Dog" on it. An entrance leads off to L. first entrance, and another at R. first entrance; at the back, just in front of hedge, a few rough stone steps lead up to a rustic bridge, part of which is just seen, and which leads off to R.; a few water lilies underneath the end of it, where the brook is dry—or almost dry. A tree stump seat L. of c. The boughs of the willows on bank are practical, so that they can be moved aside.

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The Man Who Went

ACT I

SCENE 1.—Jack Thornton's apartments, No. 7, Portman Square, London. See Scene Plot.

(When curtain rises BARON VON ARNHEIM is discovered in evening clothes and smoking jacket, half lying on couch R., reading a newspaper and smoking a cigar. 'Phone bell rings; he rises and goes to 'phone, sitting L. of desk; takes up receiver and begins conversation. He speaks with a slight foreign accent, indicated more by a certain slowness of delivery and an occasional idiom than by actual accent.)

BARON. Yes—good-evening, Countess. (As he speaks he turns his head and glances in a peculiar way at door L.) Ah, yes—we are leaving in a few moments..... How could we dream of neglecting the call of so charming a lady? (He listens at the 'phone and gives another glance toward door L. before answering.) No—no. Nothing important—yet. Next week, possibly, but not definite. Certainly, Countess—I will call him. (He places receiver on table and goes up to door L., calling.) Thornton! Thornton!

(He moves away c., and Jack enters at door L. in evening dress, pinning a flower in buttonhole.)

JACK. Yes?

BARON. The Countess wishes to speak to you at the telephone.

Jack. Oh, thanks. (An expression of pleasure lights up his face and he goes to desk and sits, taking up receiver. Baron, resuming his paper on sofa, looks at Jack with a smile, almost a sneer. Jack, at 'phone.) Good-evening, Countess....Oh, certainly. I wouldn't miss your reception for the world.....No—no, that's not a mere polite phrase—I wouldn't. (In a tender and more earnest voice.) You know that—don't you? (Pause.) Don't you? Ah, thank you for your belief in me. Yes—we leave very soon. Au revoir.

(He hangs up receiver, goes to sideboard, pours himself out a whiskey and soda and drinks it; takes a cigarette and lights it; BARON watching him all the time with a curious expression.)

BARON. The Countess is a charming woman—is it not so?

JACK. The most charming I ever met.

BARON. And born under a lucky star—only thirty or a trifle over—her own mistress—with beauty, wit, wisdom and wealth.

JACK (crossing up to fireplace L. c. and leaning against it, smoking). How long has she been a widow?

Baron. About five years.

JACK. What like was the late Count Von Holtzberg? BARON. The late Count, when he married, was over sixty-five. He suffered from gout, and the effects of a wound received in the Franco-Prussian War, where he served as a volunteer. He was admired by some, feared by all—and loved by nobody.

(He blows a cloud of smoke into the air.)

JACK. Not even his wife? (The BARON shrugs his shoulders with an expressive gesture.) And yet he was her choice?

BARON. Oh, no—her father's. She was only seventeen, so she accepted what he chose.

JACK. How damnable.

Baron. My dear Thornton ——

JACK. It's the only word for such a marriage.

BARON. But, my friend, what would you? The Holtzbergs are noted for having the richest blood and the poorest exchequer among the nobility of Austria.

JACK. And so she was sold to make good the deficit. BARON. My dear Thornton, what strange words you English use. Sold? Bah—no—she sacrificed herself for the good of her family—she took her chance, and God was good to her and called the Baron to the home of his forefathers, wherever that may be, while she was still young—and now she reaps her reward—her wealth is enormous, and she has complete control of it.

JACK. And how about the years before he died? When she was paying the price of her—sacrifice. Can

she ever forget?

BARON. Pardon me, my friend, but you are young and sentimental. I have no doubt that even during her husband's lifetime the Countess contrived to enjoy herself. Money can buy most things.

JACK (shrugging his shoulders impatiently). Money—

bah!

BARON (rather pointedly). Exactly—in youth we despise it—later on we learn to know its value.

(A pause; Jack tosses his cigarette into the grate, and comes down L. C., looking at the Baron as if to see if his words had any ulterior meaning; then he speaks.)

JACK. Talking of money, Baron, I am sorry not to have been able to repay that loan you made me.

Baron (protestingly). My dear Thornton—

JACK. I expected to do so long ago, but my luck at bridge has been infernal, and my allowance does not fall due till next week.

BARON. Why speak of it? Are we not friends? Am I not your debtor for saving me from the loneliness of a hotel, and letting me share your charming apartments and equally charming society? (As he speaks, he watches JACK closely with half lowered lids.) Besides, who knows, from the position that you hold, some day you may be able to give me useful information.

JACK (turning on him sharply, and speaking almost

indignantly). What do you mean?

BARON. Eh?

JACK. Any information I obtain through my position is sacred—I share it with no one.

(The Baron affects surprise for a moment, then throwing himself back on the sofa, bursts out laughing.)

BARON. Oh, but you are droll, you English,—you take yourselves and your country so seriously. What use could I, a humble man of letters, make of your "sacred information"? I merely meant that, as you move in diplomatic circles and know so many political people of note, you might give me a few hints for my work,— European Systems of Government—that was all.

Jack (rather ashamed of himself). I—I beg your pardon—I didn't understand—the way you put it—it

sounded rather strange.

BARON. I see; and haunted by the ever present British bogey of foreign spies, you perhaps did me the honor to think that I was one? Oh, fie, my friend, fie!

(The door-bell rings; Jack goes to door c. and opens it; Evelyn Thornton enters; she is in evening dress and an opera wrap; Jack looks surprised when he sees her, and a trifle annoyed.)

JACK. Evelyn.

(The Baron rises and bows; Eve. looks at him rather coldly, and returns his bow.)

Eve. Good-evening, Baron.

BARON. Good-evening, Miss Thornton.

JACK. Where did you spring from?

Eve. I am going to a reception with Sir George and Lady Caxton—I wanted to speak to you for a few minutes alone,—(looking rather pointedly at the BARON) so I asked them to pick me up here.

BARON. I will go and finish my toilet. Remember, Thornton, we must not be late for our own reception.

(He bows to Eve. and exits door R., leaving a crack of the door open behind him; JACK sits on end of sofa,

R. C., Eve. sits on chair R. of table C., throwing back her cloak and looking rather suspiciously toward door R.)

Eve. Jack, do you know it's nearly two weeks since

you've been to see me?

JACK. Really—is it as long as that? I've been so infernally busy, I haven't noticed how time passed.

(A pause.)

Eve. Jack, what's wrong? JACK. Wrong? Nothing.

Eve. Oh, yes, there is—you can't fool me. (She rises, goes to him and lays her hand affectionately on his shoulder.) Jack, dear, I don't think you know quite how much you mean to me; all the folks here are good and kind, and I'm very fond of them, but they're not you; they belong to the present, not to the past out in Canada, with Dad, and—and Mother—where we were both kiddies, and played and quarrelled, and were good and naughty together; and so, when it seems as if you were drifting from me, it makes me feel very sad and very lonely.

(JACK is evidently touched by this, but ashamed of his emotion, he tries to laugh it off.)

JACK. Don't be silly, Eve—you know there's no one in the world I care for like you; but we aren't kiddies any longer—we are man and woman, with a man's and woman's duties.

Eve. And a man's and woman's pleasures. Is it the duties or the pleasures that keep us apart?

JACK (annoyed). What do you mean?

(Eve. sits beside him on the sofa and takes his hand, speaking in a low voice and glancing toward door R. as if afraid of being heard.)

Eve. Listen, Jack—you're very foolish in the friend-ships you've been making lately.

JACK. You mean —? (Looks toward door R.)

Eve. (nodding). Yes—and the Countess. JACK. I wish you'd leave her out of it. Eve. I'd like to, but I can't.

JACK. What silly nonsense have you got in your head now?

Eve. It's not my silly nonsense. Sir George was

speaking to me to-day—that's the reason I came.

JACK. What rot! Sir George is a nice one to talk isn't he having them both down to Thorncliffe next week?

Eve. That's different. In his position Sir George is bound to entertain people, especially those connected with

the Foreign Embassies; he can do it because —

JACK. Because he's an old fogey and a Baronet—and I can't because I'm young and a King's messenger. Well, my private friendships are mine, and no one has a right to dictate to me; my duty's my duty, and I'll do it—but I'll choose my own friends.

(He rises as if the matter were settled, and walks up to fireplace L. C. Eve. looks at him in distress, then rises and follows him up to fireplace, and continues speaking in a low voice.)

Eve. And you're going to risk your career and the good-will of those who have helped and trusted you for a boy's whim? Jack, dear, listen ——

JACK. I haven't time to listen; the Baron and I are

due at a reception, and we're late now.

Eve. At the Countess'?

JACK. Yes.

How long will you be there? JACK. Oh, I don't know—why?

Eve. Because, if you'll slip away early, so will I, and we'll come back here and have a talk together,—and Sir George can fetch me later.

JACK. Oh, nonsense—can't you wait?

EVE. (in a determined tone). No I can't. I've waited for the past two weeks, but you never came, or if you did, you were always in a hurry, on business-or pleasure. It's no idle whim. Don't you know me better than that? Sir George spoke to me quite seriously to-day—I must

see you. Ah, Jack—for the sake of old times—
(Putting her arm around his neck and looking tenderly

into his face.) For my sake?

JACK (yielding with a bad grace). Oh, well, have it your own way; you always did boss me—only Lord knows when I can get away without offending the Countess. Here—you'd better take my latch-key—(taking key from his pocket and handing it to her) then if you get back first, you can come in and wait. (Eve. takes key and slips it into her dress, then throws her arms around JACK's neck impulsively and kisses him; he takes the caress with rather a bad grace; the door-bell rings.) That's Sir George, I suppose. I hope to Heaven he hasn't any long-winded oration to deliver.

(He opens door c. and Sir George enters with Lady Caxton; Sir Geo. looks hot and irritable, as if he had been having an argument; Lady C. is very placid and calm, and carries a look of martyr-like resignation on her face, but is evidently obstinate; the Baron enters almost simultaneously at door R.; he carries a light overcoat and opera hat, which he lays on chair at R.)

LADY C. (to JACK). Good-evening, Jack.

(She casts a look of stern disapproval at Eve., and passes to chair R. of table, while Sir Geo. speaks to Jack, shaking hands with him.)

SIR GEO. How are you, Jack?

(He bows to the Baron and looks at Eve., raising his eyebrows as if to intimate that there was trouble.)

LADY C. Good-evening, Baron.

(She holds out her hand to the BARON, who takes it and raises it in foreign fashion to his lips.)

BARON. Dear Lady Caxton.

(LADY C. sits R. of table; EVE. on chair by desk L.; SIR GEO. and JACK stand by fireplace talking.)

LADY C. My dear Baron, I hope you will not be shocked at my niece Evelyn, visiting a bachelor's apartments without a chaperon. She was brought up in the Colonies, where things are—to put it mildly—less conventional.

SIR GEO. Good Heavens, Venetia, surely a girl can

visit her own brother?

LADY C. In bachelor apartments shared with another bachelor-when she might run the risk of finding her brother out and the other bachelor in? (She shudders slightly.) In my young days, a woman's reputation has been shattered for less than that.

SIR GEO. (half to himself). It must have been d—d

brittle then.

LADY C. (after a glance of indignation at SIR GEO.). In those days we cherished our reputations like delicate flowers, that the icy wind of scandal must never blow upon. I remember a cousin of mine was almost ostracized for riding alone in a hansom.

SIR GEO. How the devil could she lose her reputation

when she was alone?

Eve. (mischievously). Perhaps the cabby was fas-

cinating.

LADY C. Evelyn! (Eve. turns away to hide a smile, and LADY C. turns to the BARON again.) On the Continent, I believe they manage things much better-the chaperon still exists there.

Baron (on couch R. C.). Assuredly.

LADY C. Young girls are not allowed a freedom that degenerates into license?

BARON. Never, unless they are English or Americans.
LADY C. And then?
BARON. We think them charming, but, pardon me, a little mad—and make allowances.

Sir Geo. Well, I'll be —

LADY C. (severely). George! SIR GEO. Well, I will if I like!

Baron. You understand I do not speak my personal

sentiments, only the view-point of my country.

LADY C. And a very proper point of view, too. Home life in England is going, and, after all, home is a woman's proper sphere; her place is with her husband and children.

Eve. But suppose she hasn't any? LADY C. Then she ought to have.

Eve. But, Aunty, there aren't enough men to go

round. Surely you wouldn't suggest polygamy?

LADY C. I wouldn't even mention the word; when I was a girl, we knew nothing of such things.

Eve. Not even as a man's prerogative?

(SIR GEO. emits a half chuckle and then tries to stifle it.)

LADY C. Ahem! Well, we were taught, delicately, that men were very often very bad, but that good women should look leniently upon their faults, and bring about their reform by marrying them.

SIR GEO. Good Lord! Some poor devils found the cure worse than the disease, I'll wager.

LADY C. George!

Eve. And wasn't it rather rough on the woman to have to start her honeymoon as a social reformer?

LADY C. If she accomplished her purpose, Virtue had

its own reward.

EVE. (quietly). And if she failed?

LADY C. (rather nonplussed for the moment). Why, then—ahem—then —

BARON (stepping into the breach). If she were as charming and virtuous as Lady Caxton, surely there could be no such word as "fail."

(SIR GEO. looks at the BARON with an expression of disgust as much as to say, "What a liar," and coming down to Eve., L., speaks to her in a low voice, while the BARON and LADY C. converse; JACK at the fireplace shows signs of impatience, and looks at his watch.)

SIR GEO. (to Eve.). Did you speak to him? Eve. Only for a moment—we're going to thrash it out to-night. (Raising her voice.) Aunt Venetia— LADY C. Yes, dear.

(She turns from the Baron with a well pleased smile, as if she had found his conversation pleasant.)

Eve. You won't be angry if I slip away early from the reception to-night?

LADY C. Early—by yourself?

Eve. Yes, Jack and I have a little business to talk over, and—

LADY C. Where?

Eve. Here.

(Lady C. looks at the Baron with a pleading glance as if asking for sympathy, then raises her eyes toward heaven and shudders; she speaks in a voice of resignation.)

LADY C. Sir George is your guardian, not I; if he approves, it is not for me to oppose, but when I was a girl ——

SIR GEO. Yes, but you're not a girl now, Venetia.

LADY C. No, thank Heaven! SIR Geo. Times have changed.

LADY C. (with a deep sigh). They have.

SIR GEO. Evelyn's business is important. (With a meaning glance at JACK, who is so irritated at the delay

that he scarcely notices it.) I see no harm —

LADY C. That is sufficient, George—I have nothing more to say. (SIR GEO. breathes a sigh of relief, and LADY C. at once continues.) Only, the liberty you are giving Evelyn is the thin end of the wedge—the next thing she'll be wanting is a vote, and when she doesn't get it, she'll be pouring things into letter boxes, and burning up houses and furniture. I wash my hands of the affair, but when you see her in a Police Court, don't say I didn't warn you.

SIR GEO. I won't-I couldn't without lying.

JACK (looking at his watch). I—I don't want to appear inhospitable but aren't you folks almost due ——

Eve. (rising). And you other folks, too; we won't

keep you waiting any longer, Jack.

LADY C. I thought the ending of a visit was generally left to a married lady, but doubtless I am old fashioned in

my ideas. (Rising and holding out her hand to BARON.) We shall see you and the dear Countess at Thorncliffe next week?

BARON. I am looking forward to my visit with the greatest pleasure—I have pleasant memories of former ones. (He bows over her hand.)

Eve. (up; to Jack). Good-bye, Jack—and don't keep

me waiting-there's a dear boy.

SIR GEO. (to JACK, in a rather low voice). Goodbye, Jack-and take good advice when you get it. (Speaking louder.) Good-bye, Baron,—see you next week.

(The BARON bows with a smile; EVE. bows to BARON coldly, and says "Good-night"; BARON bows in return. Exeunt LADY C., SIR GEO. and EVE., door c., followed by JACK, who sees them out; the BARON glances after them sharply, then moves quickly to the desk and 'phone L.; the door outside slams; the BARON stops with a look of annoyance, and moves back to R.; JACK enters C.)

JACK. Confound women's tongues! If I were married to Lady Venetia I think I'd strangle her. (He looks at his watch.) The Countess will think we're never coming. (He hurries out at door L.; the BARON stands glancing at 'phone rather anxiously; he picks up his coat and hat and puts them on; takes out a cigarette and starts to light it; JACK enters door L. in light overcoat and hat.) Come on, Baron, and put the lights out.

(He hurries impatiently out at door c.; the BARON at once crosses quickly to 'phone, and taking up receiver, speaks in a low voice.)

BARON. Give me 2 double O-6, Gerard. Yes—yes (A pause.) Are you there? Ah, Countess—is that you? Just a moment—detain Thornton at the reception as long as possible—it's important.

JACK (off c.). Baron—Baron—aren't you coming?

(Appearing at door c.) What the ——
BARON. So sorry. (Hanging up the receiver hastily.)
A wrong call on the 'phone.

(Jack goes away from door; Baron switches off lights, leaving stage in darkness, then he goes out door c. and door off stage slams as tableau curtain descends in darkness. A minute's interval only to indicate lapse of a few hours.)

SCENE 2.—The same as Scene 1. The curtain ascends on a dark stage except for faint moonlight through window R. C. As it rises, church chime, outside, strikes eleven; a pause-then a door slams, and some one fumbles with the lock of the door c. as if having difficulty with the key; then the door opens and DICK KENT enters; he gropes round in the darkness, and at last finds the switch; he turns on the lights, then looks around the room with a sharp, quick glance, as if taking in everything; he takes off coat and hat, and places them on chair R. at back; crosses to sideboard, looks at decanter of whiskey doubtfully, as if debating whether he should steal a drink, then pours himself out a whiskey and soda and drinks it off; then he goes to door R. and looks into room as if getting the lay of the place; he then crosses to door L. and does the same business; at that moment the 'phone bell rings; he pauses and looks toward the 'phone; it rings again; he comes quickly down, sits at desk, picks up receiver and listens; as he does so, a strange look comes into his face; then he speaks.)

DICK. Oui—le Baron? Oui—c'est moi—oui—c'est vrais — Semaine prochaine — Chez Sir George Caxton — Oh oui — Loin dela maison — Près un affiche, avec les mots — Prenez Garde du Chien — C'est bien. Au revoir. (He hangs up the receiver, takes a note-book from his pocket and makes a hasty note—"Beware of the dog!"; the door outside slams; he stops and listens, puts note-book in his pocket, springs up, goes quickly up to back and switches off the lights; he crosses to sofa R. C., throws himself on it, covering himself with the rug, closing his eyes and assuming an attitude of sleep; the door c. opens, and

EVE. enters; she switches-on the lights, and turning round faces the sofa and sees Dick; she utters a cry, half of surprise, half of fear; DICK starts and sits up, rubbing his eyes, and simulating drowsiness, but as soon as his eves light on Eve., all signs of sleep disappear, and he stares at her in astonishment, and at the same time with pleasure, and speaks with a gasp.) The Girl in the Mackintosh!

(A look of surprise and recognition comes into Eve.'s face.)

Eve. The Man in the Blue Pajamas!

(Dick springs up and rushes toward her with outstretched hands, but EVE. regards him rather doubtfully, and does not move to take his hand; he stops, rather embarrassed.)

DICK. I say, how on earth did you get here? Eve. Just the question I was going to ask you.

Dick. Eh?—er—oh—I—I belong here.

Eve. Then the last time we met you were a good way

from your belongings.

Dick. That's an idiosyncrasy of mine—I'm always turning up in out-of-the-way places. One of those clever Club Johnnies who always says the thing you'd have liked to have said yourself, if you'd only thought of it in time—told me that if he ever helped to discover the North Pole, he'd expect to find me sitting on the top of it.

Eve. But you say you belong here?

Dick. Yes.

EVE. In this room?

Dick. Well, yes—er—that is temporarily.

Eve. Temporarily? Oh, then you know my brother? Dick. Never even knew you had a brother.

Then how —

DICK (as if struck with a sudden idea). Oh, I say by Jove—you're not old Chipman's sister? That would be ripping!

Eve. I'm not old who's sister?

Dick. Old Chipman's.

Eve. I never heard of him.

DICK. Well, that's odd, you know, because these are his "digs."

Eve. His "digs"?

DICK. Yes—er—where he hangs out, don't you know.

Eve. Oh, I'm not so horridly Colonial as not to know perfectly well what "digs" are—but these particular ones do not belong to Mr. Chipman.

DICK. Oh, really, you know—there's something awfully funny about this. I can't have been such an ass as to —— No, this is No. 7 Portman Square, isn't it?

Eve. It is.

DICK. Right oh,—now we're on the track. Please sit down; it looks so inhospitable standing up. (EVE., looking still rather doubtful, sits on chair L. of table C.; DICK on chair R. of table.) You see, I got back to-day from one of my little jaunts.

Eve. To the North Pole?

DICK. No, not quite so far this time, but when I went to my old lodgings, I found they'd let 'em. Bally nuisance, you know. I was used to the place, and hated to move. I tell you I was saying things, when just outside the door who should I run into but old Chipman, and when he heard about it, he said, "Why not share my 'digs' for a few days—I'm going out of town on business to-night, but here's my key. Go to No. 7 Portman Square, and make yourself at home." This is No. 7 Portman Square, and here I am.

Eve. Well, these are not Mr. Chipman's diggings.

DICK. Oh, but I say, you just said —

Eve. (interrupting). Did Mr. Chipman say which side of the Square his house was on?

DICK. No.

Eve. Well, you see there are two No. 7's on Portman Square—one on the east, and one on the west.

DICK. And this is ——?

Eve. The west.

DICK. And old Chipman is in the east?

Eve. Most probably.

DICK. Oh, I say you know—but the key fitted.

Eve. Keys sometimes do.

DICK. And these really are not Chipman's "digs"?

Eve. Certainly not—they belong to my brother, Mr.

John Thornton.

DICK. Phew! And—and there are two No. 7's—east and west! Really, you know, it's quite serious; that sort of thing should be suppressed by act of Parliament, or some one ought to write to the papers. It might cause a devil of a row in married families! (He sits shaking his head meditatively, Eve. regarding him with a queer expression; suddenly he looks up with a smile as if a bright idea had struck him.) By Jove! I say, do you know what this is?

Eve. What what is?

DICK. The whole thing—the east and west sevens, and the universal latch-key and all that. What would you call it?

Eve. A chapter of accidents.

DICK. Wrong—it's the Finger of Fate! (EVE. stares at him surprised.) Sounds awfully like Oppenheim or Charles Garvice, doesn't it, but I've known it and felt it ever since—

Eve. (almost exasperated). Known what—felt what—

ever since when?

DICK. Ever since that night we parted in the rain, I've known and felt that we should meet again. By Jove, that's poetry. I'm dropping into it—just like that Johnny in Dickens with the wooden leg. See what a jolly effect you are having on me—haven't you felt that way?

Eve. (shaking her head). No ----

DICK (disappointed). No? Then I must be a sort of clairvoyant or something of that sort without knowing it, don't you know—because I really have, every time I've thought about you—and that's been pretty often. Oh, do tell me everything that's happened since then, and how long you've been in England.

EVE. Well, there's not very much to tell. I came to

England about four years ago.

Dick. A year after we met.

EVE. Yes, because just a year after I lost my father and mother. (A slight pause.)

DICK (in a serious manner and speaking in a low

voice). I'm-I'm sorry-very sorry.

Eve. You remember my telling you about my father,

don't you?

DICK. Oh, rather—and the ranches and farms he owned through the Canadian West, where you used to spend your holidays. I remember it as if it were yesterday. I can almost feel the rain dripping down my back, almost see——

Eve. My hair coming out of curl—

DICK. Eh—it wasn't really?

Eve. Nobody but a man would ask that question. My brother was already here, entering a diplomatic career under Sir George Caxton, who was also chosen by my father as a trustee—so, the old ties being broken, I came to England.

DICK. And—er—how do you like it?

Eve. Oh, very much.

Dick. As well as Canada?

Eve. Oh, I can't tell—they're so different. You have things over here that we couldn't have—the beauties of age, the work of centuries—but to compensate, we have things that you couldn't have—the enthusiasm and freshness of youth.

DICK. By Jove, that's awfully well put, you know—but don't you find us—some of us—a little trying—some-

times?

Eve. Um—occasionally. You seem to me—some of

you—to worry unnecessarily over trifles.

DICK. Right, oh—that's another result of our being an old country. We settled most of our big social worries centuries ago—but it became a habit to worry about something—we're not happy without it—and so we had to take to the trifles.

Eve. I see.

DICK. That's the reason why people who don't understand us, when they read our Parliamentary debates, think we are having such awful rows. We're really not—we're just indulging our propensity for worrying. You'll get used to it in time.

Eve. Oh, I don't mind it much now—I've a sense of humor; but you've had "the story of my life"—what

about you?

DICK. Oh, nothing special. I've been wandering to and fro on the face of the earth-like-who was the Johnny?

Eve. The Devil, I believe.

Dick. By Jove—so it was. Eve. Seeking whom you may devour? DICK. Not exactly—just killing time. Eve. That doesn't sound very interesting.

DICK. Well, it's more interesting than you might ex-

pect—there are so many ways of committing the crime. Eve. (in a rather disappointed tone). And is that all you've been doing?

Dick. Um—yes—that is, systematically.

(The door-bell rings.)

Eve. (starting up). I expect that is my brother.

(She goes to door c. and opens it; LADY C. and SIR GEO. enter; they pause a moment in surprise at seeing Dick, who rises.)

SIR GEO. Where's Jack?

Eve. (slightly confused). He hasn't come back yet.

SIR GEO. Not come back yet?

LADY C. And you are talking with a strange man?

(She casts a look of horror at Eve., and crossing down to chair by desk L., sits.)

Eve. No, Aunt Venetia, he's not a stranger—he's an old acquaintance.

SIR GEO. I see, a friend of Jack's.

Eve. (embarrassed). No-no, he doesn't know Jack.

LADY C. Then he is —— DICK. I—I'm an accident.

LADY C. (glaring at him). An accident?

Dick. Yes, and accidents will happen, you know, in the best regulated families —

Eve. He's a friend of mine —

SIR GEO. Oh! (Looking at DICK rather doubtfully, A pause.) Introduce me.

Eve. Why, certainly. Lady Caxton, Sir George—allow me to present — (She pauses, and stands staring at the smiling Dick with a look of horror.) Why—I—I don't know your name —

LADY C. Good Heavens!

(She utters a half-stifled groan, and closes her eyes as if quite overcome.)

SIR GEO. (looking with disapproval at Eve.). Well, upon my word, Evelyn, this is most extraordinary.

DICK. Not at all when you know the circumstance.

SIR GEO. Well, at present I don't.

(Lady C. glances for a moment at Dick, and then shudders as if she anticipated horrible revelations.)

DICK. No, but I'm going to tell you—it's just like a jolly short story by Guy de Maupassant, or one of those other literary Johnnies.

(Lady C., on hearing the name of de Maupassant, looks troubled.)

LADY C. Evelyn, do you think that Jack has any salts of lavender in the place?

Eve. I'm afraid not, Aunt—why?

LADY C. I feel that I may need them.

SIR GEO. (sitting R. of table C.). Well, sir -

DICK. Yes, let's sit down—it's so much more homelike and comfortable. (He sits on sofa R.; Eve. L. of table.) Well, once upon a time—four years ago—I was travelling from Winnipeg to Edmonton in a Pullman, have you ever been in a Pullman?

SIR GEO. No, sir, I have not.

DICK. Well, you don't want to get the habit at your time of life, because if you want to undress, you've got to be an acrobat, and I don't think a man of your build could do it. Well, there I was—in my pajamas (LADY C. looks at him in consternation at the mention of the word), sleeping peacefully, when there was a bump and a jolt and a variety of unpleasant noises, and somebody said the bally train was on fire and we'd better get out.

LADY C. In your pajamas!

DICK. Yes, there wasn't time for a toilet. Well, with an Englishman's instinct, I grabbed my mackintosh and my umbrella, and, as they say in America, "I scooted." I found myself on the platform of a wayside station in a pouring rain-storm,—my only companion a young lady in a kimono.

Eve. That was me.

DICK. Yes, that was she.

LADY C. Evelyn, weren't you ashamed of yourself!

Eve. No, Aunty, only very uncomfortable.

DICK. You see, it was a very pretty kimono—one of those fluffy lacey things with bows all over it—but totally inadequate in a rain-storm.

LADY C. Totally inadequate at any time.

DICK. Well, you see I'm naturally of a bashful disposition—

LADY C. (sarcastically). Really?

SIR GEO. You don't say so!

DICK. Oh, yes—bashful and diffident—and I hated to speak to a lady without an introduction, but as the kimono was gradually becoming more and more—er—clinging, you know (LADY C. exhibits horror; SIR GEO. chuckles), my chivalry got the better of my bashfulness and I offered her the mackintosh.

Eve. I declined. Dick. I insisted.

Eve. I told him he would catch his death of rheumatism.

DICK. I asked her if she took a cold shower every morning ——

LADY C. Good Heavens! What are we coming to!

Eve. I said I didn't.

DICK. I said *I did*, therefore I was much more used to it than she was. She yielded and took the mackintosh, and we shared the umbrella between us, and till a relief train came we had one of the coziest little pow-wows you ever heard of.

EVE. But we never told each other our names.

DICK. That—that's just it, you know—under those circumstances you get so jolly intimate all at once that you don't bother about names——

(LADY C. rises, and casting a look of indignation at DICK and EVE., moves up to fireplace.)

SIR GEO. Well, the circumstances being altered now there being less rain and more wardrobe, I don't suppose you object to the formality of telling us who you are?

DICK. Oh, certainly not-delighted-Kent-Richard

Kent.

(Takes a card-case from pocket and hands a card to SIR GEO.)

SIR GEO. Not a son of the celebrated diplomatistthe late William Kent?

DICK (in a tone of resignation). Yes.

SIR GEO. You should be proud of the fact, sir.

DICK (in the same tone). That's what every one says.

SIR GEO. And aren't you?

DICK. Well, do you know, I've almost come to regard my paternity in the light of a misfortune.

SIR GEO. Misfortune — What the devil —

DICK. Oh, no reflections on the Dad; he was all right; but it's so destructive to one's individuality to go through life known only as the son of your father.

SIR GEO. And whose fault is that, sir?

DICK. Mine, I suppose.

SIR GEO. Exactly. As your father's son, scores of paths in life were opened to you that are closed to other men, if you had chosen to take them. But you didn'tyou chose to devote yourself—at least, I have heard so to a life of idleness. Why?

DICK. Because it seemed to me what I was best fitted for. Don't you believe in a chap's following his voca-

tion?

SIR GEO. Idleness isn't a vocation, sir.

DICK. Oh, I say-I don't know about that. I think it's a science. Anyhow, I'm afraid I've got the habit, and I shall be known all my life as the son of my father, unless—yes, by Jove, that might happen.
Eve. (who has been listening to this with interest).

What?

DICK. I might marry some day, and have a clever Johnny for a son.

SIR GEO. (emphatically; with a look of doubt). Pos-

sibly.

DICK. In that case, in my old age I'd be known as the father of my son.

(Eve. looks disappointed, and Sir Geo. rises, looking at Dick as if he thought him a born fool; the slam of an outside door is heard, then door c. opens and Jack enters, followed by Baron.)

JACK. Awfully sorry, Eve, but I couldn't—
Oh—— (Seeing Dick.) I beg your pardon—— (To Sir Geo.) A friend of yours?

SIR GEO. A friend of your sister's.

LADY C. An acquaintance.

Eve. (rising). A gentleman, Jack, who was once very kind to me in Canada—Mr. Richard Kent.

JACK. Oh, a son of ---

Dick. Exactly.

(They shake hands; the BARON crosses down to sideboard R. and lights a cigarette, eyeing DICK closely all the time with a curious expression.)

JACK. You met my sister in Canada?

Dick. Yes.

JACK. And renewed the acquaintance at the reception to-night?

Dick. Not exactly—we renewed the acquaintance

here.

JACK. Here? (Looking puzzled.)

DICK. Yes—you see I'm sharing digs with a chap at No. 7 Portman Square on the east side; didn't know there was a No. 7 on the west side, but the bally latch-key fitted, and I walked in, and as he'd told me to make myself at home, your sister found me comfortably asleep on the sofa—almost took me for a burglar.

LADY C. Do burglars generally go to sleep on the sofa? If so, even *they* are changing with the times.

JACK. Well, upon my word! Really, Sir George, in

some parts of London the system of numbering ought to be revised.

LADY C. (down L. c.). Why? It was good enough

for our fathers and mothers.

DICK. Well, it might be deucedly awkward for their sons and daughters some day—particularly in families where there are jealous wives and husbands, green-eyed monster and divorce courts, and all that sort of thing, don't you know.

(The Baron, who has all this time been scrutinizing Dick closely, steps forward.)

BARON. My dear Thornton, won't you introduce me—to—Mr.—er ——

JACK. Oh, I beg your pardon—Mr. Kent, the Baron Von Arnheim.

(Dick advances to R. and shakes hands with the Baron; Jack and Eve. go up to fireplace, and talk in dumb show; Jack seems to be excusing himself.)

BARON. Mr. Kent, a pleasure to meet you. I think I knew ——

DICK. My father? Of course you did—everybody knew Dad.

BARON. And you—have we not also met before?

(Dick sticks eye-glass in his eye, and surveys the Baron critically.)

DICK. I don't recollect.

BARON. No?

DICK. No.

BARON. And yet I feel sure I have seen you somewhere.

DICK. Oh, it's very likely, because I've been in such an awful lot of somewheres in my life. I'm like that Hebrew Johnny that Eugene Sue wrote about, who was a sort of Advance Agent for the Plague. I've travelled all over the face of the habitable globe, and to several places that weren't habitable.

BARON (looking rather relieved at DICK's apparent

stupidity). Ah, I have been a traveller myself—a chance meeting perhaps—but I never forget a face.

DICK. How ripping. I'm an awful duffer about faces, in fact, I'm an awful duffer about most things.

(Jack crosses down L. to speak to Lady C., who has again seated herself by desk L.; Dick strolls up to fireplace to speak to Eve., and Sir Geo. crosses to Baron, R.)

JACK. Oh, Lady Caxton, the Countess asked me to give you this note; she's afraid that she will be a day-later than she expected in coming to Thorncliffe.

(He holds out note to LADY C.)

Lady C. Thank you. (She takes it and speaks to the others.) Will you excuse me? (She takes the note from the envelope which she throws on desk, and reads letter; Jack crosses back to Eve., and as he does so, Dick leaves her and strolls down to back of desk l., putting eye-glass to eye.) George. (Sir Geo. advances c.) The Countess will not arrive till Wednesday—that is the day you come to us, Baron?

BARON. Yes.

(During this conversation DICK has been examining the envelope on the desk through his glass.)

SIR GEO. That will leave Lord Royallieu our only guest for Monday and Tuesday.

LADY C. We could invite —

SIR GEO. (interrupting). It will not be necessary. Lord Royallieu is unwell, and will be glad of two days' rest in the country. By the way, Jack, you'd better hold yourself in readiness to come down to us—his Lordship may want you.

JACK (his face lighting up with pleasure). I shall be

delighted, sir.

(DICK has picked up the envelope by this time, and is staring at it with an expression of admiration.)

DICK. I say, by Jove, you know—this is positively

ripping. (Every one turns and stares in astonishment at this outburst; a pause.) I beg your pardon, but I am a collector of crests, and this one on the envelope—an Iron Hand holding a single Black Eagle's Feather—and the motto—"Semper Solus"—it—it's awfully fetching. Whose is it?

LADY C. It is the crest of the Countess Von Holtz-

berg.

DICK. A single lady? LADY C. A widow.

DICK. Oh, really; then it isn't quite appropriate, is it? Because whatever she may be now, when there was a Count living they couldn't either of them have been "Always Alone," could they? (Every one stares at him as if they thought his remarks idiotic, but he appears quite unconcerned and speaks to LADY C.) I say, do you mind if I keep this?

LADY C. (with a glare of disapproval). You are wel-

come.

DICK (pocketing envelope). Thanks.

LADY C. I think it is about time we were going home, George—that is unless Evelyn desires any further interviews with her brother—or her friends.

(She glares at Dick, who, oblivious of the look, gazes at the envelope with interest.)

Eve. No, no, it's too late now. You'll come tomorrow morning, won't you, Jack?

JACK (impatiently). Yes, yes, I promise.

(He crosses to door c. and opens it.)

Lady C. Good-night, Baron. We will see Wednesday. Good-night, Mr.—er—Kent. you

BARON (bowing). Good-night, Lady Caxton.

DICK (suddenly waking up from his absorption in the crest). Good-night, Lady Caxton. Thanks awfully for this jolly crest.

(SIR GEO. borvs to BARON and DICK and exits with LADY C., door c.; JACK goes out with them; EVE. advances and extends her hand to Dick.)

Eve. Good-night, Mr. Kent. I'm awfully glad that chance threw us together again. Come round and see me some day, won't you?

DICK (shaking hands). Rather. Good-night, Mr.

Thornton.

Eve. Good-night, Baron. (The BARON bows goodnight, then turns to sideboard as Eve. goes to door, and mixes himself a whiskey and soda, all the time watching DICK in the mirror over sideboard; Eve. pauses at door c., which DICK holds open for her, and she turns to him with a mischievous smile.) By the way, Mr. Kent, I still have that mackintosh. What shall I do with it?

DICK. Keep it. You couldn't have a better souvenir of the owner—it's typical.

Eve. How?

DICK. It's nothing wonderful to look at, but it's a good friend for a rainy day. (She smiles at him and exits; he stands for a moment looking after her, apparently, but really watching the BARON in the glass, then he turns quickly.) Still trying to figure out where you met me? (BARON turns quickly, annoyed at being discovered.) It's awfully annoying, isn't it, old chap? I gave up trying that sort of thing years ago—it took up too much time. But you're cleverer than I am—keep at it. You'll get it some day.

(Dick takes out envelope from his pocket and stands contemplating the crest.)

BARON. You seem very much interested in the crest. DICK. Always am interested in crests. Got such a jolly one of my own. British bulldog rampant, which means on the rampage, don't you know, and the motto "Cave Canem"—"Beware of the dog." (Puts on hat jauntily.) Eh? What? Damned silly motto! Byebye. (Exit, door c. Baron looks after him puzzled.)

ACT II

SCENE 1.—A corner of SIR GEORGE CAXTON'S estate at Thorncliffe. See Scene Plot.

(The curtain rises on an empty stage, but out from the boughs of the willows on the bank at L. come heavy clouds of tobacco smoke; there is a pause for a few minutes, and then some one is heard whistling a French chanson off at L.; at once the clouds of tobacco smoke cease and float away in the distance; then Hogue enters down path L.; he is dressed in a velveteen jacket and rough walking suit, and wears an artistic looking necktie-altogether giving the idea of an artist travelling for business and pleasure combined; as he sees the sign-board with "Beware of the dog" upon it, he smiles to himself and nods, as if satisfied that he had reached his destination: he takes a peg of wood from his pocket, and leans against sign-board whittling it with a penknife, and whistling—the picture of idleness and very much the artist; the BARON enters, R. I E., and strolls carelessly along, smoking a cigarette; he sees Hogue at first glance, but pays no attention to him till he has strolled up to the gate and looked off and round on either side of him; then he comes down c. and signals to Hogue, who puts the peg of wood in his pocket and comes forward to the BARON, C., lifting his hat.)

Hogue. Bon jour, Monsieur le Baron.

BARON. Good-day. You had no difficulty in finding the place?

Hogue. Mais non, votre explication etait très precise. Baron. You needn't play the Frenchman to me unless you want to, you know.

Hogue. Pardon, it is so natural—and after all, French

is my native tongue—the only one I speak without an accent. Besides, it is so safe never to appear anything but a Frenchman.

Baron. I suppose it is, but German and English are

more familiar to me.

Hogue. At Monsieur le Baron's pleasure—but before others, if possible, the language I speak the best, the tongue I hate the most.

(With a vindictive expression.)

Baron (with a slight laugh). You have no love for

the land of your birth.

Hogue. Love! Bah! I spit upon her! (He makes a gesture of contempt.) I was born on French soil, educated in French schools, served as a French conscript, and speak the French tongue to one end—her destruction. Listen, Monsieur; in the days when France owned Alsace and Lorraine my grandfather, a German born and bred, lived there as a servant, despised and ill-treated, working for the Fatherland he loved, for the Fatherland which was to triumph; and that triumph was made possible by the information that he and others like him gave. But he was suspected, watched, betrayed and shot as a German spy. Then my father swore an oath of vengeance and dedicated his unborn child to its accomplishment. I am that child, whom men call French, but who hate France with an undying hatred. Voila! c'est tout—how can I best serve you?

BARON. You know that a crisis is impending in

Servia?

Hogue. Yes.

BARON. And that relations between Servia and Austria are strained almost to breaking point?

Hogue. Oui, c'est vrai.

BARON. That Russian money and Russian influence are backing Servia, but that the other powers, especially Great Britain, are anxious for peace. An interview takes place shortly at Vienna, between the British Ambassador and the Austrian Prime Minister. I have reason for thinking that private instructions to the Am-

bassador will go forward to-night, outlining the course he is to pursue. It is important that Austria and Germany know what those instructions are. I have reason to believe that the originals, or copies of the papers, will be in the hands of the Countess Von Holtzberg to-night. You must take them to Vienna and place them in the hands of the Austrian Prime Minister without delay. You know the Countess Von Holtzberg?

Hogue. Only by repute.

BARON. Meet me here at seven o'clock this evening, and I will give you a letter to her, and final instructions. Whatever she gives you, guard as you would your life—and deliver to none but the Prime Minister at Vienna.

Hogue. It shall be done.

BARON. Very well. We had better not risk being seen together more than possible. Till to-night ——

Hogue. At seven o'clock. Au revoir, Monsieur le Baron.

(Hogue exits up path L.; the Baron glances off up path R., and throwing aside his cigarette, walks up to the gate at back, as if waiting for some one; the Countess Von Holtzberg enters, a clever, keenfaced woman of about thirty, down path from R.; the Baron comes C. to meet her, lifting his hat.)

BARON. You managed to escape our host?

Countess. Not altogether. I started with him and Lady Caxton to view the estate, but we had not walked far when, as usual, Lady Caxton felt the need of a rest; she insisted on sitting down, and Sir George insisted on arguing with her, so I took the opportunity of strolling ahead, hoping I might meet you.

Baron. How is Lord Royallieu?

Countess. Still in bed—young Thornton has been sent for.

BARON. To carry the instructions to Vienna?

Countess. I think so.

Baron. You are not certain?

Countess. No, it is only guesswork—no one will speak definitely.

BARON. You have laid your plans?

Countess. I shall leave for London in an hour.

BARON. Just when Thornton is coming?

Countess. Yes, I should have no chance to work here; and if he sees me and says his adieux, he will be satisfied; but if he is going to Vienna and misses me, he will be disconsolate and obey my call to come to me in London and say good-bye.

BARON. Don't be too sure.

Countess. What do you mean?

BARON. Thornton has a tender conscience and an abnormal sense of duty. If Royallieu impresses him sufficiently with the importance of the documents he carries he may not take the risk of delay, even to meet you.

(The Countess sits on seat L. C., and looks rather coquettishly at the BARON.)

Countess. Don't you think you underrate my powers of fascination?

BARON. Not in the least; I could not be so ungallant; but I think you hardly understand the pig-headedness of an Englishman.

Countess. Perhaps not; but what better course do

you suggest?

BARON. If Mahomet will not go to the mountain, let the mountain come to Mahomet.

Countess. You mean?

BARON. That you must visit him at his rooms tonight—then he cannot avoid you; the fact that you trust yourself to him will appeal to his chivalry; the fact that you are under his roof will silence his tongue. The stage setting and atmosphere are perfect—it only remains for you to play your part, and such an experienced actress needs no stage direction from me. The game is in your hands.

Countess. In spite of his pig-headed loyalty? Remember your own words. Suppose I fail?

BARON. You must not fail—you cannot; there is always the last resort.

(He bends toward her and whispers.)

Countess. Yes. (Meditatively.) Always that. (Rising and walking slowly down to R. as if thinking, a worn expression on her face; the Baron watches her curiously; she turns on him suddenly.) Ernest, don't you ever get sick and tired of it all?

BARON. Of what?

Countess. Of this life, with its lies and trickery and deceit? (The Baron makes a gesture of protest.) Oh, I know what you are going to say—it is for the good of my country; but I sometimes wonder if, even to be true to one's country, one has the right to be so utterly false to oneself. When I play the game I am playing with young Thornton I despise myself.

BARON: And yet so many women play it for pleasure,

and from choice.

Countess. Then they are false to their sex. It's a rotten thing to do, say what you will, and you can't make it anything else but rotten. To take a boy's heart and squeeze it dry of love and hope and promise, and then fling it back to him with a laugh—to ruin his career and send him out into the world, old and bitter before his time, without faith in God—or woman.

BARON. Especially the latter. My dear Wanda, sentiment has always been your rock ahead; some day you

will be wrecked upon it.

Countess. I don't know that I care much how soon that day comes, for out of the wreckage I might find my true self. (The Baron shrugs his shoulders, and turns up stage; the Countess stands for a moment as if trying to control herself; then she turns to him, speaking in a matter-of-fact voice.) How are the papers to reach Vienna?

BARON (down L. c.). I will send a trusted messenger to the rooms; he will bring a letter from me.

COUNTESS. Might not a letter be dangerous if it fell into other hands?

BARON. What would you suggest?

Countess. Enclose in the envelope a single black feather—my crest. There can be no mistake then, and who but ourselves could understand?

BARON. Splendid! Wanda is herself again! Senti-

ment is dethroned, and reason reigns in its stead. By the way—the messenger will speak to you in French.

COUNTESS. In French?

George—life would be so much pleasanter if you'd only keep cool.

(LADY C. enters R., walking slowly and fanning herself; SIR GEO. follows, carrying a shawl or rug, a folding chair and a pillow; he looks very hot and irritable.)

SIR GEO. Keep cool! Good Lord! How do you expect any man to keep cool on such a day as this, loaded up like a field ambulance!

LADY C. You can put the things down if you want to, George, now that we have found the dear Countess.

I will take a little rest.

SIR GEO. What, again?

LADY C. (with a resigned air). My dear George, how often must I tell you that you are not married to a modern woman—the chair, please. (SIR GEO. places folding chair to R. of seat R. C.) In my young days girls were brought up to be girls, not athletes. Would you kindly spread the rug? (He spreads rug round her as she sits.) Thank you. We were taught that home was a woman's kingdom. The pillow at my back, George. (He places pillow.) Thank you—and we stayed in our kingdom—we didn't go running about all over the country just to exercise our muscles.

SIR GEO. Oh, rubbish! A woman is none the worse, wife or mother, because she stands on a pair of good strong legs, instead of getting weak at the ankles when

she walks twenty-five yards.

LADY C. (in a tone of protest). My dear George—remember, please—the Countess. When I was a girl we didn't talk about—such things—in mixed company.

SIR GEO. Oh, fudge! You couldn't walk or ride without legs, so what's the use ——

LADY C. George, dear, hadn't you better sit down

and rest? I am sure you'll have a rush of blood to the head if you don't. Would you like my fan?

(SIR GEO. glares at her as if trying to restrain a violent outburst in the presence of guests.)

SIR GEO. No, thank you. In my young days they bred up boys to be men—not dandies, who wilt if they see the sunshine.

(He turns up stage angrily, and joins the Baron, who is leaning against the gate; Lady C. shakes her head with an indulgent smile, such as one might use to a spoiled child, then she turns to the Countess, who comes down and sits on seat c. to her l.)

LADY C. I am so sorry, dear Countess, if I have curtailed your pleasure in viewing the estate by my old-fashioned ways, but I can't help it. There's my niece Evelyn, now; she rows and rides and swims and boxes just like a man. In my young days that would have been considered *almost* indelicate and wholly unfeminine. She is a Colonial, of course, and that accounts for a good many things; still it is trying to have an unfeminine niece.

SIR GEO. (down a little L. C.). God bless my soul, what nonsense! Evelyn is the most feminine thing that ever stepped in shoe leather. Ask the men.

ever stepped in shoe leather. Ask the men.

Lady C. I am not sure, George, that men are the best judges of what is truly feminine in a woman. That

decision should be left to their own sex.

SIR GEO. It's not a question of decision, but of common sense. You watch a score of young fellows dangling after a girl and you can wager she's feminine; it's the

feminine woman catches the man, every time.

LADY C. (with a sentimental simper). Perhaps you are right, George. I caught you. (SIR GEO. glares at her speechless, and then joins the BARON at the back; LADY C. turns to Countess.) Of course I'm sorry to have deprived my friends of pleasure.

Countess. Oh, pray don't speak of it, Lady Caxton.

LADY C. And you have to go so soon.

Countess. I am afraid so—within the hour.

Lady C. Dear, dear, dear-couldn't you wait a little

longer?

Countess. I think not. My uncle, the Count Von Szalras, has received important letters from Vienna on family business, and wishes to see me in London at once. I have ordered the motor to be ready as soon as we get back to the house.

Lady C. Aren't these family business matters tiresome? In my young days girls weren't bothered with such things—the men arranged them, and we just put our signatures to the documents. Couldn't your uncle do that for you? It would be so much nicer, and then you could see all over the estate.

Countess. I am afraid the matters I have to attend

to can't be simplified so easily.

Lady C. Ah, the good old times were better for women; they hadn't to think, then; but it is too bad—I did want you to see the waterfall—and you can see it, after all. (As if struck by a bright idea, she turns to the Baron, who has been talking to Sir Geo., c. at back.) Baron. (The Baron comes forward c.) Won't you take the dear Countess across the bridge and show her the waterfall? It is so pretty, and you've been there before. Then you can take the short cut back to the house, and we'll meet you there to say good-bye.

BARON. Charmed to be of service to you and the

Countess.

LADY C. (smiling). So obliged, Baron. I'd like to go myself, but I couldn't stand the climb over the rocks.

SIR GEO. (coming down R. C.). I'm sure I should be

pleased ----

Lady C. No, no, George, you mustn't go; I need your arm back to the house. Besides, the climbing isn't good for you either. You are overheated as it is, and I know your heart is weak. (SIR Geo. utters a "damn" underneath his breath, and walks away angrily to R.; the Countess rises, and smiles at the Baron as if glad to get the chance to finish her conversation with him.) I am sure you can trust the dear Baron to do the honors.

BARON (with an elaborate bow). I shall do my best to deserve the trust. At your service, Countess.

LADY C. Au revoir, Countess.

Countess. Au revoir, Lady Caxton—au revoir, Sir George.

(SIR GEO. bows, but seems too annoyed for words; the Countess and Baron go across the bridge R. and disappear among the trees; LADY C. gives a sigh, as if conscious that she had done her duty; she closes her eyes and leans back in her chair, fanning herself; SIR GEO. gives a glance of indignation at her, and strolls impatiently up to back and then down L.; as he gets left by end of bank he pauses and peers down at the ground, then, almost kneeling, he examines the ground with an angry expression.)

SIR GEO. Well, I'll be —

LADY C. (in a warning voice, without unclosing her eyes). George!

SIR GEO. Oh, d—n it, don't catch me up like that on every word I say. Just look at this.

Lady C. (still with closed eyes). What?

SIR GEO. (still on his knees, examining the ground). Some ragamuffin has been trespassing on my estate again. The footsteps run both ways-they come on from the path and then go back again.

Lady C. Well, George, dear, it's your own fault. SIR GEO. My fault—my——! It is my fault that there's not a poacher, beggar, tramp or tourist who wouldn't rather go out of his way to trespass on my estate than go on his way, and keep off it?

LADY C. Why don't you build a stone wall to keep

them off it?

SIR GEO. Because I don't want to build a stone wall. I won't build a stone wall. An Englishman shouldn't need a stone wall to protect his estates from depredations; he should be protected by the British Constitution.

LADY C. That's what Englishmen say about everything, but you'd find a little stone wall protection useful

sometimes.

SIR GEO. I stand upon my rights.

LADY C. (looking at him reproachfully). Well, you'd much better sit down. You are overheated and in a very bad temper, and it's not good for you; rest yourself there,—(pointing to seat R. C.) and count two hundred it has a very soothing effect on the nerves. (SIR GEO. glares at her speechless, blows and splutters as if trying to express his feelings, and finding the effort too much for him, he goes and sits down with his back to LADY C. on the foot of the steps leading to the bridge; LADY C. gives one glance at him, and then closes her eyes, fans herself placidly, and her lips move, counting one, two, three, etc., as if following out her own prescription; there is the sound of a loud yawn; SIR GEO. pays no attention to it, but LADY C. glances in the direction of the willow trees; there is a movement among the branches, and then a leg is kicked out from them, and over the bank; LADY C. stares at it dumfounded; then another leg follows, and she rises with a scream of terror, letting the rug fall to the ground.) George—George! (SIR GEO. rises and turns round; LADY C. flings herself in his arms as she crosses to him and points at the legs.) Look there—look!

SIR GEO. Well, if this doesn't beat the devil, I'll -

(He makes a move toward c., but Lady C. clings closer.)

LADY C. No, no, George, be calm—don't hurt him for my sake.

(Dick emerges from the branches and sits on the bank, an empty pipe in his mouth, blinking his eyes as he comes into the sunlight; he raises his cap to Sir Geo. and Lady C., who both recognize him; Lady C. assumes a look of disapproval and disgust, and ceases to cling to Sir Geo., who stares at Dick with an expression part anger, part astonishment.)

SIR GEO. Good God, sir! do you spend your whole life in getting into places where you have no business to be?

DICK. I say, you know—what have I done now?

SIR GEO. You are trespassing, sir—trespassing! DICK. Oh, yes, of course—that's the reason I am here.

SIR GEO. What's the reason you are here?

DICK. That—the sign—"Beware of the dog." (SIR GEO. stares at him, shaking his head as if completely non-plussed, and sinks helplessly on seat R. C.) That's right—let's be comfortable, and I'll explain. Won't you sit down, Lady Caxton? (Lady C., in a dignified manner, and as if she were doing it under protest, sits on chair again.) Right, oh! Now we are sociable. Well, you see, I'm stopping with a chap up at Cresswick Hill—Mr. Hardy—know him?

SIR GEO. We are—ahem—acquainted.

DICK. Yes, I didn't think you'd be much more than that.

SIR GEO. Why, sir?

DICK. Too much alike—both a little explosive, you know. (SIR GEO. looks indignant.) Well, he's a nice old Johnny, but he's lived a lot in India, and won't give up curry and red pepper,—suffers in consequence from gout and liver, and has to sleep a lot.

SIR GEO. Well, what in the name of Heaven —

Dick. Now do keep cool ——

SIR GEO. D—n it, sir, the next person who tells me to keep cool I'll—I'll— (Pauses as if at a loss to

find words.) Go on, go on ---

DICK. Well, don't interrupt me, then. You see, his sleeping such a lot makes it dull for his guests—no one to talk to—and even the servants are all of the same brand—liver, curry and sleep—and there's not even a cat or dog about the place to be sociable with—and I'm fond of cats and dogs, especially dogs—and there you are.

SIR GEO. There I am. Where the devil am I?

DICK. That's the answer.

SIR GEO. Whose answer—what answer? Oh, good Lord! (Putting his hand to his head.) Are you mad or am I?

DICK (cheerfully). Oh, I'm all right. You see, as I was strolling by the other day, I saw that—(pointing

to the sign) and I said to myself, by Jove, I'll go and see him!

SIR GEO. See-who?

Dick. The dog.

LADY C. Weren't you afraid of being bitten?

DICK. Oh, no. I'm like the poetical Johnny, Lord
Byron—"I am a friend to dogs." When I meet one, I
just say, "Halloa, Ponto," or Fido, or whatever he
looks like, and if he shows his teeth I say, "Now look here, old chappie, don't be foolish—I'm your pal, you know;" and I pat him on the head—and—and then it's all right, you know. Most dogs have a lot more sense than human beings.

LADY C. Mr. Kent-I must request you not to be

irreligious.

(SIR GEO. stares at DICK as if he thought him utterly hopeless.)

DICK. Sorry. Well, you see, I came looking for the dog this morning, and he wasn't here.

LADY C. Mr. Kent, I have often remonstrated with

my husband for his deceit—but there is no dog.

DICK. Oh, I say, you know, that's too bad. Why isn't there?

SIR GEO. Because there are so many fools come tramping over my grounds that I couldn't have it on my conscience to risk the dog's getting inoculated, and spreading hydrophobia. They haven't all got your winning ways with them. Well, having found that the dog wasn't receiving to-day, why did you wait?

DICK. Well, you see, I was hot and tired and awfully disappointed, so I thought I'd just stretch myself beneath the willows and have a quiet smoke—and then I dropped

off, you know.

SIR GEO. Dropped off?

DICK. Yes, off to sleep—and I had such a jolly rum dream—I thought that after all there was a dog here, you know, but he wasn't a watch dog.

SIR GEO. No?

LADY C. What kind of a dog was he?

Dick. A German poodle—and one of the trickiest

little devils you ever saw. I was trying to catch him when somebody woke me up by talking excitedly. (To SIR GEO.) That was you, wasn't it? SIR GEO. Probably.

DICK. Awfully sorry about the trespassing. And as there was no dog, there wasn't any need for it, so I'll take myself off. (He drops to the ground.) If you really do get a dog you'll let me know, won't you?

(Eve. and Jack enter from back L. Eve. sees Dick and advances to him, holding out her hand and smiling.)

Eve. Why, Mr. Kent, this is a pleasant surprise. How are you?

DICK. How are you? Awfully glad to see you.

JACK (nodding carelessly). How are you, Kent? (He crosses down and shakes hands with LADY C. and then with SIR GEO.) Just got in by the four fifteen. Eve met me at the station and we took the short cut across the fields. How's Lord Royallieu?

SIR GEO. Still in bed, but able to attend to business. He is anxious to see you. He may want you to leave

to-night.

JACK. I'm ready. Where is the Baron—and the Countess?

LADY C. Goodness me! I had forgotten all about the Countess.

JACK (anxiously). Has anything happened?

LADY C. (looking at her watch). She leaves for London by motor—in less than fifteen minutes; I should be at the house now to say good-bye.

JACK (disappointed). By Jove, that's too bad.

LADY C. Give me your arm, Jack, and let's hurry. (Taking JACK's arm.) Bring the things, George dear, won't you? (To Jack.) I know I shall suffer from the excitement, but duty to one's guests is duty. (Takes JACK's arm and turns toward path R.) And in my young days — (She stops short suddenly, and turns to DICK in an icy manner.) Oh—er—good-afternoon, Mr. Kent. (DICK bows.) In my young days, we were taught that duty was a watchword which —

(She goes off with JACK, her voice heard talking till it dies away in the distance; SIR GEO., with a sigh, gathers up folding chair and pillow, and then sees the rug lying on the ground where it has fallen; he gazes at it in a hopeless manner, and then begins to put down the load he has already, preparatory to picking it up; Eve. watches him with a smile.)

Eve. Don't bother about the rug, Uncle George; I'll

fold it up and bring it.

SIR GEO. Thanks, Eve, if you'll excuse me, I'll hurry on. I don't want to miss the Countess. Good-afternoon, Kent. If you are stopping long in the neighborhood look us up some time-can't ask you to-day-house upset with a sick guest-but-er-next week-glad to see you — (He hurries off path R.)
DICK. Er—thanks awfully.

(He stands looking at SIR GEO. with a comical expression of disappointment; Eve. regards him with a mischievous smile.)

Eve. You—you—don't seem very popular.

DICK. Not exactly. I feel like the little boy in the picture who went out into the garden and ate woolly worms—" Nobody loves me."

EVE. (after a quick and rather coquettish glance, as

she stoops to pick up the rug). Nobody?

DICK. Why, you don't mean to say that you ——?

Eve. (hastily). Oh, no, that would be rather sudden, wouldn't it? (He looks disappointed, and after a short pause Eve. continues.) But I-I-like you.

DICK. Do you? By Jove, that's ripping. I say, if

you'll only let me, I'd like to ----

Eve. (interrupting). Help me fold the rug? Thanks so much.

(She throws one end of the rug to him, and they stretch it out and begin to fold.)

DICK. Delighted—but that wasn't just what I was going to say.

EVE. No?

DICK. No, I was going to say that — (By this time they have come to the last fold, and are standing with their faces close together.) That—that— (Eve. looks frankly into his face, waiting, and he becomes embarrassed.) Really, you are one of the most charming girls I ever met.

Eve. Really?

DICK. Really. And if you'd let me, I'd like—to—be—your friend.

Eve. I thought that you were that already.

(Throwing rug over her L. arm.)

Dick. Am I?

Eve. Aren't you? (Holding out her hand to him.) DICK. Yes. (He clasps her hand warmly; she leaves her hand in his and looks earnestly into his face.) And you don't think like the others that I'm a good-for-nothing idiot?

Eve. No—but — (She pauses, slightly embarrassed, drops his hand and turns away.) As your friend,

do you want me to speak the truth?

Dick. Of course.

Eve. I'm afraid you've rather given them cause for what they think. You see most people—women especially—like men who do things. I like men who do things.

DICK. Do you? Well, how do you know I don't? Eve. (taken aback). I'm only judging by appearances. DICK. A very dangerous way to judge—sometimes.

EVE. (again looking earnestly into his face, and then turning away as if rather ashamed of herself). Perhaps it is.

DICK. It's the Johnnies that make the most show that generally get the most praise. Look at those lilies over there. (Pointing underneath the hedge.) They are flashy and brilliant, and everybody says—"How lovely," but no one gives a word of praise to a humble vegetable like—like the potato, that spends most of its time growing underground; but the potato is a fine thing for a steady diet—and very useful, if you're hungry.

Eve. I see. Then you are ——

DICK. A potato—exactly; and if some day you're hungry for a friend, you might find me useful—you might find then that I could do things.

Eve. I think you could.

DICK. Then if you need a friend, you'll trust me?

Eve. (after a slight pause). Yes. (She holds out her hand again, and he clasps it; they stand for a moment, looking straight at each other, and then she takes her hand away.) I must run back to the house now, or I'll be shocking Aunt Venetia's sense of propriety. I'll take the short cut across the bridge—good-bye.

(She crosses up to R. and ascends a few steps.)

DICK. Miss Thornton.

Eve. Yes.

(She pauses on steps; he moves up to her.)

DICK. I say, you know, in the olden days when ladies told their knights and troubadours and all those kinds of Johnnies that they—er—trusted them—they gave them a token—won't you give me one? (He points to some flowers she wears in her belt; Eve. takes a flower and gives it to him with a smile, and then runs quickly over the bridge and off at R.; he stands looking after her in admiration, and presses the flower to his lips.) Made in Canada!

(Lights slowly fade out as he stands there till the stage is left in darkness and the tableau curtain descends for a minute or so only, indicating a short lapse of time.)

SCENE 2.—The same. The curtain rises on a dark stage which is gradually lighted up with moonlight, falling particularly on the bridge, and slanting across to L. path.

(DICK comes quickly down the path L. followed by Barnes, a chauffeur.)

DICK. Have the car at the corner of Brockton Road in fifteen minutes—come across that path (pointing to

gate and to the R.), and let me know when it is ready. If I am in conversation with any one, wait till I speak to you.

Barnes. Very well, sir.

DICK. You have a revolver?

BARNES. Yes, sir.

DICK. You can use it if necessary?

BARNES. Yes, sir.

DICK. All right. I hope it may not be needed. In fifteen minutes.

(Barnes touches his hat and exits gate c., going off to R. at back; moonlight grows stronger; Dick turns to L. path, but instead of turning up it, goes on to platform behind bushes and conceals himself; Hogue enters quickly down path L.; he crosses to R. and stands looking off up path, but keeping well back in the shadow; sound of voices and laughter heard; Hogue goes quickly back to bridge, ascends steps and crosses bridge and disappears through trees to R.; the Baron, Sir Geo., and Jack enter down path R.; Jack carries a small travelling bag and light overcoat; they are all smoking.)

SIR GEO. How's the time?

JACK (looking at his watch). Just seven. We have a good twenty minutes, and it only takes ten to walk to the station.

BARON. I will not go any farther. I am sure you have some final words of instruction and advice for my friend Thornton, and a stranger might be de trop.

SIR GEO. You are very considerate, Baron.

BARON. Not at all. I will rest in the moonlight and finish my cigar, and then stroll quietly back to the house. We shall arrive there about the same time.

SIR GEO. Probably.

Baron. Bon voyage, Thornton. (He shakes hands with Jack.) I will keep the nest warm till you return. Jack. Thanks. Au revoir.

(JACK and SIR GEO. go off through gate c. and then to L.; the BARON strolls up to gate and leans on it,

smoking and watching them; then he strolls down c., whistling softly; Hogue comes quickly across the bridge to Baron, c.)

BARON (pointing to L., at back). Cut across that path to the station and catch the seven twenty for London. (Taking a letter from his pocket.) Take this letter—go to No. 7 Portman Square, ground floor apartment; ring twice, and you will be admitted; give this to the Countess Von Holtzberg. If there is any one with her, speak French, and if necessary, pretend you have mistaken the house; she will take the cue and instruct you what to do; if she gives you a package of papers, take them and start for Vienna at once, and place them in the hands of the Austrian Prime Minister without delay.

Hogue. I understand.

(He takes the letter, and turns toward gate c. As he places letter in his breast pocket, the BARON looks at his watch.)

BARON. Stop. You've plenty of time. On second thoughts, you'd better go by the main road. I don't want those two men who just passed to see you, and you might overtake them. Avoid the compartment one enters, or better still, travel second class. (DICK steals out from behind the bushes and up path L. and disappears, L.) Good-night.

(The Baron goes hastily up path R. Hogue starts toward path L.; Dick reënters L. and comes down slowly; Hogue pauses on seeing some one coming, and then walks forward in an unconcerned manner; Dick takes out a cigarette from case and puts it in his mouth, and feels for a match just as he and Hogue meet path L.)

DICK. Could you oblige me with a light? (Hogue hesitates for a moment, and then draws out a match case, and strikes a match; he holds it up to DICK who bends forward to light his cigarette, their faces almost touching in the light of the match; DICK stares straight into Hogue's eyes.) Ah, as I thought—Monsieur Paul Hogue.

(Hogue is evidently taken by surprise, but retains his self-control.)

Hogue. Pardon, Monsieur, vous avez tort. Dick (pretending not to understand). Eh? Hogue. You mistake—n'est ce pas? It is not my

name.

DICK. No? Under what alias are you travelling now? Am I speaking to Antoine Gerard, the government clerk who disappeared mysteriously three years ago together with some important papers—to Joseph Dufort, the Paris bookseller and issuer of seditious pamphlets to Sergeant La Fleur, who was drummed out of the French army, and only escaped death by the influence of those higher up who needed his services to—

(Hogue shrivels up before his questions, and loses his self-control as he looks at Dick in terror.)

Hogue (in a hoarse whisper). Who the devil are you? DICK. Quite immaterial, since I have shown you that I know who you are. And I want the letter given you just now by your patron.

Hogue. If you know my patron, why turn you not

your attentions to him?

DICK. Because the man higher up is harder to get, and I want to catch *him* red handed. The letter—quick! (Hogue makes a move to his hip pocket.) Keep your hand from your hip pocket-it's not there-in your breast — Quick!

(Hogue drops his hands to his side and assumes a defiant air, or tries to do so.)

Hogue. And suppose, Monsieur, that I refuse?

DICK. Then, much as I should hate to disturb the peace of Sir George's domains, I shall be under the painful necessity of shooting you and taking the letter afterward.

(Whips revolver from his pocket and covers Hogue.)

Hogue (in a trembling voice, and trying to control himself). You would not dare.

Dick. Why not?

Hogue. Because the shot would bring people to the

spot, and how would you account for my death?

DICK. Oh, by half a dozen lies if necessary; and you, being dead, couldn't contradict me; however I have only to tell the truth and expose your record, and any jury would bring it in justifiable homicide. The letter! (A train whistle is heard.) You've missed your train, so it's not much use to you. (He holds the revolver close to Hogue's heart; Hogue looks at him, rage and fear struggling in his face, but he sees that DICK means business; his hand goes slowly to his breast; he takes out the letter and places it in DICK's left hand; DICK takes it and puts it in his pocket.) Thanks.

Hogue. Can I go now?

DICK. No, I don't want you at large for a few hours, and I think ——

PATTON (speaking off L. at back). I heard voices—

this way, Sir George.

SIR GEO. (off L. at back). If I catch the ruffians, I'll —

DICK (raising his voice). Sir George—Sir George!

(Sir Geo. enters from L. at back followed by Patton; they come down to gate; Sir Geo. pauses on seeing Dick.)

SIR GEO. Good Lord! You again!

DICK. No, no, Sir George—I'm all right this time. I'm not trespassing—I'm catching a trespasser. He's a foreigner and it looks suspicious.

SIR GEO. A foreigner prowling around my estate at night! (To Hogue.) What the devil do you mean

by it?

Hogue. Mais non, Monsieur—je proteste.

SIR GEO. Talk English, can't you?

DICK. Yes, that's what I say; it's so much easier to understand.

Hogue. But I have it not, the English—or very

badly. I am an artist.

DICK. Then where are your sketch book and pencils? You can't be an artist without them, don't you know.

Hogue. I will explain ----

SIR GEO. You'll explain up at Thorncliffe where your explanation can be taken down in writing.

HOGUE. Monsieur, you have not the right ---

SIR GEO. Haven't I? You'll see what right I have. I am a Justice of the Peace, and I could put you in the lockup till morning if I wanted; but go quietly up to the house with my man, and I'll give you a chance to talk. Patton—

PATTON. Yes, sir.

SIR GEO. Take this—er—gentleman up to the house and look after him till I come.

PATTON. All right, sir.

(He advances and lays his hand on Hogue's arm.)

Hogue. Messieurs, once more I make the protest. SIR GEO. You go quietly up to the house if you know what's good for you.

DICK. Yes, don't make a bally ass of yourself, old

chap; it might be awkward.

(Looking at Hogue pointedly. Hogue glances at him in fury, but sees that he is powerless, so goes over to R. with PATTON.)

SIR GEO. (turning to DICK). Mr. Kent, I congratulate you—for once in your life you have done something useful.

DICK. Oh, thanks awfully. I'm so pleased that

you're pleased, don't you know.

SIR GEO. Come up to the house and have a whiskey and soda and a cigar, and watch me handle this fellow. I have an idea it will be interesting.

Dick. Oh, I say, that would be ripping, but I—I

can't.

SIR GEO. Why not?

DICK. I've got to motor to London. Told my chauffeur to have the car at Brockton Road in fifteen minutes. Ought to be there now.

SIR GEO. But I may want you as a witness.

Enter Barnes from back, R., behind hedge.

DICK. All right, Barnes; I'm coming.

(Moves up to gate.)

SIR GEO. But, sir, I ---

Hogue (struggling with Patton). Sir George—that man—do not trust him. I tell you he is a spy—a traitor. SIR GEO. (to DICK). Who the devil are you?

DICK. The son of my father. (At exit.) Drive like hell, Barnes.

(Rushes out at gate, c., and off with Barnes to R.; Hogue struggling and talking incoherently; Sir GEO. dumfounded.)

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE.—Same as Act I.

(The curtain rises on stage lighted only by moonlight and street lamp—reflection through window R. C. Then door C. opens and JACK enters with travelling bag and light overcoat; he switches on the lights and then exits door L.; a pause of some seconds, then the door-bell rings; he enters from door L. as if rather annoyed at being disturbed, and opens door, C.; the Countess enters; for a moment he looks pleased on seeing her, then during the first few sentences of the conversation his manner becomes embarrassed.)

JACK (in a tone of surprise). Countess! Countess. I am not intruding?

(With a coquettish, insinuating look.)

JACK. Oh, no, no—not that; but ——

Countess. Pardon me, my friend, but those few brief words at Thorncliffe—that pressure of the hand as my motor drove away, left my heart hungering for a real adieu, and — (Giving him a reproachful glance, and then coming down R. C.) You said you would not come to see me in London to say good-bye.

JACK. I said I could not.

Countess. I thought that love could always find a way. (She sits on sofa R. C.; he stands beside her embarrassed; she puts out her hand and takes his.) My love has, heedless of what the world, my world—might say. I did not pause to think or count the cost—I came. (A pause.) Tack, aren't you glad to see me?

(A pause.) Jack, aren't you glad to see me?

JACK. You know I am; you know how terribly disappointed I was to find you leaving Thorncliffe just when I arrived—to lose the chance of even only a few mo-

ments alone. (She rises and draws closer to him as he speaks, looking up into his face.) How I hated to say good-bye with others there, while all the while ——
Countess (interrupting). And yet—you could not

come? Why?

JACK. Because my duty to those I serve left me no

time—no choice. Even now ——

Countess (turning away from him angrily). Bah! You English! What are you made of? You stand in the presence of the woman you love and talk of duty ----

JACK. Yes.

Countess. You measure out your tender farewells with your eyes on the minute hand of your watch, and you call that love. (JACK stands, half angry, half dejected, his face clouded.) When do you go?

IACK. Very shortly.

Countess. How long will you be gone?

TACK. I cannot tell.

Countess. You mean you will not. JACK. If you choose—I will not. Countess. Where are you going?

IACK. That also is the secret of those who send me. Countess. The secret! (She bursts into a derisive laugh.) Are you so foolish—do you know so little of the ways of diplomacy as to suppose your mission a secret? It is known to half the embassies in London.

JACK. That is not my affair—they have not heard of

it through me.

Countess. You are going to Vienna. JACK. If you know, why do you ask me?

Countess. Because—because — (She crosses L. as if thinking, and then turning suddenly, she goes up to him c.) Jack, it was not only to say farewell that I came to you to-night; I came to beg a favor. Will youwill you grant it?

JACK. I must first know what it is. Countess. Does love ask questions?

JACK. Duty does.

Countess. Ah, duty—duty! Always the cry of duty! JACK (looking at his watch). The time is going quickly.

Countess (suddenly). Those papers you are carrying to Vienna-let me see them.

JACK. Are you mad?

Countess. Almost—when I think of what they may mean to you and to me.

JACK (surprised). To us? Countess. Yes. I know more than you think—more than you know. A crisis is impending that may plunge the whole of Europe into war, and set the men of your race and the men of mine against each other—the lust of blood in their hearts and souls-and sacrifice our love on the altar of their hate. I have influence and power you do not dream of. One glance at those papers and I may be able to avert it all-for my sake-for the sake of the country you love.

JACK. Stop! There are some things I could not forgive—even to you—

(The Countess goes to him and puts her hands on his shoulder, looking up into his face.)

Countess. Jack, Jack, listen to me-do as I ask, and you shall name your own reward. The man who saves all that is dearest to me can ask nothing that I will not give-barriers of caste and race shall be broken down. Ĭ—I ——

(He grasps her hands by the wrists and removes them from his shoulders as he looks sternly into her face; she seems to realize that she is playing a losing game and the words die on her lips; there is a pause.)

JACK (in a low voice, but with tremendous firmness). Men of the British Empire do not betray their country.

(He drops her hands and turns to go; she throws herself on her knees before him and clings to him.)

Countess. Jack—Jack—you must not go—I will not let you go. The messenger who carries those papers is in deadly peril. I have no right to warn you, but I do not place duty before love, and I tell you you are going to certain danger—perhaps to—death.

JACK. And you would have the man you love a coward as well as a traitor? I do not want such love. Good-bye.

(He frees himself from her grasp, and exits door L.; she rises to her feet and stands for a moment looking after him with an expression of baffled rage; then with a look of determination, she crosses quickly to the sideboard, and taking a phial from her breast she drops some of its contents into a wine glass, glancing over her shoulder at door L.; she replaces the phial in her breast and goes toward door i.; she pauses and speaks in a low voice, as if half choked with sobs.)

Countess. Jack—Jack! (Jack appears at door L.) Forgive me, dear. I didn't understand. When a woman loves, she is apt to think only of the one she loves, and what he means to her. Men are different—wiser—stronger—better, perhaps; I am sorry, Jack. Good-bye.

(She holds out her hand.)

JACK. Wanda!

(He goes to her and takes her hand, his anger gone, his heart touched, and stands looking at her too full of emotion for words; she withdraws her hand gently from his, and crosses over to sideboard; she fills the wine glass into which she put the drops and another one from a decanter of wine, then she turns to him.)

Countess. Before I go, Jack, a toast to the happiness we once dreamed might be ours, and a kindly thought to the lonely future when we must both try and—forget.

JACK (going over to her and taking her in his arms). Wanda, Wanda, why must we part—why must we spend a lifetime trying to forget? Your forebodings may be only morbid fears. Love conquers most things—let us wait and hope.

Countess. No, no—it was folly always. Just the

toast, and then good-bye.

(He releases her from his embrace, and stands dejected; she takes up the glass into which she put the drops and hands it to him, taking the other glass herself; looking wistfully into each other's eyes they drink in silence, and put their glasses down on the sideboard; then Wanda turns to him, lifting her face to his; carried away by his passion, he seizes her in his arms and, crushing her to him, kisses her.)

JACK. Wanda, I—I can't let you go; I can't let it all end like this.

Countess. Better so, dear; time will heal the wound. (He lets her go and turns from her to c.; a pause; he takes a few uncertain steps as if giddy, and passes his hand across his face, leaning against the table, c., for support. The Countess simulates anxiety.) Jack, dear, what's the matter—

JACK (speaking in a rather thick voice). Eh? Oh, nothing—nothing. I've been overdoing it a bit lately, I guess; and then this—this sort of thing upsets a fellow.

Î'm—I'm all right.

(He makes a step toward the sofa, lurches and staggers; she goes up to him and supports him, and leads him down to sofa, R. C.; he sits down putting his hand to his head.)

Countess. Lie down and rest. Jack. No, no—I've got to go. I must go.

(He tries to rise.)

Countess (her hand on his shoulder). When must you go?

JACK. In less than half—an—hour—in — God! I

can't think ——

Countess. Rest for a few minutes. I will watch and call you.

JACK (staring at her in a stupid way, but rather doubt-

fully). You?

Countess (bending down and kissing him). Yes. Can't you trust me, Jack?

JACK. Yes, yes-of course-it-it's awfully-good of you-after what I said,-I-I'm sorry-you won't forget to-to-

(He sinks back on the sofa, and she covers him with a rug; he falls into a stupor or sleep, and she stands looking at him for a moment with a curious expression, then she bends over him and rapidly searches in all his pockets, an anxious look on her face; then she smiles as she takes from his inner vest pocket a thin leather despatch case, and draws from it a large envelope, sealed with three seals; she carries it over to desk L. and sits; taking a flat paper knife from the desk and passing it under one of the seals, she opens it and an end of the envelope; then she takes out some papers, looks at them anxiously, draws from her dress a small cipher code book, and, glancing from it to the paper, evidently reads one or two words to find out by aid of cipher if they are what she wants; then she thrusts the paper into her breast, takes from the desk several sheets of blank paper, folds them in the same shape as the ones she has removed and places them in the envelope; she lights a small candle, melts some sealing wax and makes the seal fast again; then she puts it into the despatch case, goes over to the sofa and places it and the fake papers in JACK's inside vest pocket as before; then she stands looking down at him, her breath coming in quick gasps; the door-bell, c., rings twice; she looks at the sleeping man to see what effect it has on him, and as he does not move, she goes quickly to door, c., and opens it; DICK is seen standing outside in the hall, bowing to her.)

Madame la Comtesse Von Holtzberg? Countess. Oui, Monsieur.

DICK. Puis—j'—entres? Countess. Oui, Monsieur. (DICK enters the room; the Countess puts her finger to her lips and points to JACK.) Mais prenez garde.

(Dick glances quickly at JACK; his being there is

evidently a surprise to him, but except for a momentary glance of his eyes, he controls himself and speaks with a smile.)

DICK. Il dorme bien.

Countess. Oui-très bien.

DICK. Est—ce—que je parlerai Francais? Countess. S'il vous plait—mais je prefere.

DICK. At the pleasure of Madame la Comtesse. I speak not the English or German well, mais je comprends perfaitment. (He takes letter from breast pocket and hands it to her.) From Monsieur le Baron.

(The Countess opens the envelope, and takes out a black feather, after glancing at Jack to make sure he is sleeping.)

COUNTESS. I welcome you, Monsieur—sit down. (DICK sits R. of table, Countess, L.; she draws papers from her dress.) The Baron has given you full instructions?

Dick. Oui, Madame.

Countess. You know what these are—(holding up the papers) and what they mean to us—to the cause? There is no need for me—

DICK. There is no need, Madame.

(The Countess rises, crosses to desk L., takes out a large envelope and puts the papers into it; then she goes back to the table.)

Countess. I have put no address on the envelope.

DICK. It is safer so.

Countess. You understand?

DICK. I understand; and I assure Madame la Comtesse they shall reach in safety the hands for which they are intended. (He takes the papers from her and puts them in his breast pocket; JACK, on the sofa, stirs.) He wakes. (He rises.) I go.

Countess. Not yet; let him go first. Into that room—(pointing to door R.) and wait till he is gone.

(DICK looks at her with a puzzled expression.)

DICK. He goes —? COUNTESS. To Vienna,

DICK. Mais pourquois? He has not the papers. Countess (significantly). He has some papers. DICK (comprehending). Ah—a change.

Countess. Yes; and after a long journey, who can

tell when the change was made?

DICK (bowing low to the Countess). Madame, yous êtes magnifique. When Nature make you a woman, she rob the world of a great leader.

(JACK makes a more definite movement as if trying to shake off the stupor; the Countess points once more to door, R., and DICK goes quickly out; the Countess crosses to sideboard, takes another phial from her dress, and drops some of its contents into a wine glass; then fills glass up with soda; then she crosses back to the sofa and shakes JACK by the shoulder.)

Countess. Jack—Jack! (He stirs in his sleep, opens his eyes in a drowsy manner and, assisted by her, sits up, a dazed expression on his face.) Jack-it is time to go! JACK (slowly). Time to go?

Countess. Yes. (Rather anxiously.) Don't you

remember?

JACK (repeating her words almost mechanically). Remember? What?

· Countess. That you were ill—tired, and worn out and that I said I would watch while you rested and call you?

JACK (in the same tone of voice). Ill—tired— Countess. Drink this and it will clear your head.

(JACK takes the glass from her hand, drinks the contents feverishly and shudders slightly as if it had a strange taste; he closes his eyes for a moment after handing back the glass, and when he opens them again, the drowsy look is gone; the Countess places the glass on the table; JACK glances with a startled look at his watch.)

JACK. Half-past eight! My God! And the train-

Countess. The train for Dover does not leave till nine; you have plenty of time.

JACK. The train for Dover? How did you know? (Looking at her suspiciously.) Did I ——

Countess. No, you did not betray a secret. guessed—don't you recollect?

JACK. Yes, yes—I recollect. (A pause; then he gets to his feet by an effort of will.) Well, I must be off now. Countess. Rest a little longer; let me get your coat

and bag.

(She presses him gently back on the sofa; he looks at her a moment and then seizes her hand.)

JACK. How-how good you are to me, Wanda; and I-I said - (He stops short suddenly in a broken manner and presses her hand to his lips.) Forgive me.

Countess. Don't let us talk about that now.

JACK. No, no-there's not time now; but when I come back — (The Countess draws gently away and exits into room L.; JACK sits leaning his head on his hand and stares straight before him as if trying to piece events together; then a look of fear comes into his face and he starts and presses his hand to his breast; then he thrusts his hand into his pocket and brings out case; he takes out envelope and glances at it; puts it back in case, and then in pocket, a look of relief on his face as his lips form the words—"Thank God"; as he replaces the envelope, the Countess enters door, L., carrying cap, overcoat and travelling bag; she comes c. and putting cap and bag on table c. helps him on with his coat.) Thank you. (She puts bag and cap in his hand.) Good-bye, Wanda. (He turns toward the door c., pauses as if still a little dazed, and passes his hand across his face.) I wonder what bowled me over like that? I think my heart must be a bit queer.

Countess. Hadn't you better hurry, Jack? JACK (pulling himself together). Yes—that's right. Good-bye. I won't ask you to kiss me—I couldn't after all I said—but when I come back—— (He breaks off suddenly.) Good-bye.

(He exits quickly, door c. The Countess goes to door and stands listening, then the outside door slams; she stands for a moment, a strange expression on her face; then she comes down c. and calls.)

Countess. Monsieur.

(Dick enters from door R.; the Countess, scarcely paying any attention to him, walks up to the fire-place; she stands with her back to Dick for a moment in silence, then she leans her arms on the mantel and buries her face on them, her body shaken with silent sobs; Dick watches her with a curious expression.)

Dick. Madame is ill?

Countess. No. (Raising her head slowly.) Only tired—only heart-sick—only—— (She recovers herself and turns to him almost defiantly.) I don't suppose a man could understand.

DICK. Possibly not—les hommes sont très stupides. Yet some men——

(The Countess speaks as if the nervous strain had been too much for her, and almost against her will she had to confide in some one.)

COUNTESS. Have you ever played for high stakes—striven for some great prize—put your whole heart and soul into the striving, and then, when the game was won and the prize in your grasp, wished to God that you had lost?

(Dick regards her curiously, and then speaks after a pause.)

DICK. Yes, I think I understand; par example, in the "sport" of which these English are so fond, I have stalked a deer for hours, waded through water, lain perdu in the damp and cold—my grand passion, my one ambition, the lust to kill—then, voila!—the lucky shot is fired, and I have stood by the deer and looked at the wistful terror in its dying eyes, and wished that I had missed.

(As he speaks, the Countess listens with parted lips and heaving breast; she shudders slightly when he has finished, and turns from him, speaking in a low voice.)

Countess. Yes, that is it—you—understand.

DICK. Ah, Madame, such weakness is allowed to

sport—not to diplomacy.

Countess (with an effort). You are right, and we are wasting precious time. You—you will not speak of this to the Baron; he would think it foolish.

Madame need have no fear—the next time I Dick. meet Monsieur le Baron there will be more important subjects for conversation than the amiable weakness of a charming lady. (The Countess bows her thanks.) As you say, the time is passing; Monsieur Thornton is well on his wav—you have no more instructions?

Countess. No, you have all that you need from the Baron. You have possession of the papers—you know to whom they are to be delivered, and the importance

of the issue that hangs upon them.

DICK. Madame may rest assured that no one realizes their importance more than I do.

Countess. That is all then. Bon voyage, Monsieur. DICK. Merci, Madame.

(The door outside slams; both start and listen; then the door handle is turned.)

The door is not locked. Countess.

(She moves toward it but before she can reach it it is opened, and Eve., pale and excited, enters; she starts with surprise for a moment on seeing the Countess, but is evidently too much engrossed with her own business to go into details as to why she is there; she turns to Dick, who stands for a moment dumfounded.)

EVE. Where is my brother?

(Dick, trying to think out the situation, does not answer; the Countess replies instantly.)

Countess. He left not ten minutes ago.

Eve. Thank God!

COUNTESS. You did not wish to see him?

EVE. No, no—only to know that he had gone. (Turning to Dick.) Mr. Kent—— (The Countess stares at Dick as she hears Eve. address him, so that Dick gets no chance to signal Eve., and can only assume a look of blank astonishment.) I have come to tell you that you are in danger—that you are suspected, falsely accused—of—

DICK (trying to stem the torrent of her words). Mais, Mademoiselle, I understand not—it is—très charmant that you interest yourself in me—one whom you do not know.

Eve. Not know you! You—who only a few hours ago asked me to call you friend—to trust you! Why should you deny it—why are you speaking with that accent?

Countess. Miss Thornton, who is this man?

DICK. Madame la Comtesse, Mademoiselle knows not—it is a mistake; she suffers from what you call—it—an hallucination——

Eve. You say that? Dick—— (The word slips from her almost involuntarily.) Are you mad? (She pauses suddenly with a startled expression and looks from Dick to the Countess.) What are you doing here in my brother's room—alone—with that woman? (She shrinks back with a look of horror, and a cry.) Is it possible that you are what they say—a spy!

Countess. A spy? Who says that?

Eve. The Baron—the Frenchman—my uncle, Sir George Caxton—they say he has designs upon my brother—designs on England; and I, believing and trusting him, came to warn him of his danger. But now—

(The Countess is puzzled and at a loss what to believe; she turns to Dick, interrupting Eve., and trying to give him a cue.)

Countess. Monsieur, what explanation have you to offer?

DICK (dropping into his natural voice). Oh, a whole lot—only I haven't time to make them now. I shall miss that train—

Countess. Miss Thornton, I believe you are right. This man had designs on your brother and on me, whom he has tricked and deceived. He must not go now—he must wait here for the verdict of the Baron—of——

DICK. I'm awfully sorry, but I shall have to postpone

the pleasure—some other day, delighted.

(He moves toward door c.)

Countess (to Eve.). Lock that door, please.

(EVE., who is near the door, steps back to lock it.)

DICK. Miss Thornton, don't do anything you'll be sorry for. I know it's an infernal muddle and looks black for me, but I still ask you to trust me, and hear my explanation later. This is not a time for words, but for action. You said once you'd like to see me do things—stand out of the way and give me a chance to do them.

(Eve. hesitates and Dick moves nearer the door; there is a loud slam of the outer door heard, a tramping of feet and a ring at the bell, then Sir Geo.'s voice is heard in a grumbling tone.)

SIR GEO. Damn the people who don't keep their halls properly lighted.

Dick. Too late.

(He crosses down R., Eve. following him, puzzled and half frightened; the Countess moves up toward door c.)

Eve. Dick, what have I done?

DICK. Pulled out the linch pin and upset the whole apple-cart, I'm afraid.

Eve. I—I can't understand.

DICK. Of course you can't—and don't look so blue over it; I'm not dead yet. (He leans closer to her as the Countess opens the door, c., speaking in a low voice.) Only stick to me and trust me, for Jack's sake—it may mean life and death to him.

(The Countess has opened the door and Sir Geo., Hogue and Patton are discovered standing in the hall; they enter, and the first thing Sir Geo. sees is Eve.; he stops with a look of horror.)

SIR GEO. Evelyn, how the devil did you come here? Eve. On the same train as you, only my taxi travelled faster.

SIR GEO. Why did you come?

Eve. To warn Mr. Kent of the things that were being said of him at Thorncliffe, and of your intention to arrest him.

SIR GEO. Good Lord! What is the world coming to? How dare you—how ——

Eve. He's my friend, and I won't have him trapped;

he's a right to a fighting chance.

SIR GEO. Fighting chance! By Gad, if he's what I suspect, it's small chance he'll get from me or a Court of Justice either. (*Turning to Dick.*) Well, sir, what have you got to say?

DICK. It's not fit for the ladies' ears.

SIR GEO. This is no time for joking, sir.

DICK. I was never farther from joking in my life.

SIR GEO. I've some questions to ask you.

DICK. Right, oh—only be quick. I've a train to catch at nine. I've just ten minutes, remember—I can't give you a second longer.

(He looks at his watch.)

SIR GEO. You'll give me just as long as I choose. Sit down. (DICK crosses and sits L. of table; SIR GEO. R.; HOGUE, pale and nervous, on couch R. C.; the COUNTESS on chair by desk, L.; EVE. goes up and stands by fireplace; PATTON stands on guard near door, C.) Less than two hours ago you assisted in the arrest of this gentleman (pointing to HOGUE) on my estate, for trespassing.

DICK. Quite true, and you were pleased to commend me for having done at least one useful act in my life.

SIR GEO. You intimated that he was a foreigner and a suspicious character.

DICK. And you promptly shared my suspicions.

SIR GEO. Don't interrupt. I asked you to come to the house and assist as a witness at his examination. You declined on the ground that you had an important motor trip to make to London.

Dick. Well, I've made it.

SIR GEO. Your remarks are superfluous, sir. On taking Mr. Lenoir — (*Turning to Hogue.*) That is correct, I believe?

Hogue (moistening his lips nervously). Oui, Mon-

sieur.

Dick. I beg your pardon—you said?

SIR GEO. Lenoir. DICK. Thank you.

(He takes out his note-book and makes a note, and gives a quizzical glance at Hogue as much as to say he had another alias to add to his list.)

SIR GEO. On taking Mr. Lenoir to the house, I found he had a slight acquaintance with the Baron. He told his story to him in French, and the Baron was kind enough to translate it into English. Judge of my horror when I found that you, the son of a British diplomatist—a so-called English gentleman—had held up this man you accused of trespassing with threats of violence, and committed highway robbery by taking from him a letter entrusted to him by a friend—for what purpose, you and Heaven alone know.

DICK. And neither of us will tell—at present.

(The Countess start's and frowns as if thinking deeply.)

SIR GEO. You don't deny it?

DICK. Of course not—why should I? Truth is one of my outstanding virtues.

SIR GEO. (angrily). We'll see about that, sir. This

letter ——

Countess. A letter?

SIR GEO. Yes, Countess.

COUNTESS. Sir George, I believe I can throw some light upon this matter.

SIR GEO. Indeed?

Countess. Only a few minutes ago this gentleman, Mr.—er——

DICK. Kent.

Countess. Mr. Kent—came to me, representing himself to be a Frenchman with only a partial knowledge of the English language. He brought a letter of introduction from a friend of mine——

Hogue (picking up his cue). It is ze same, it is ze

same—my lettaire was for Madame la Comtesse——

SIR GEO. Ah, this is most important evidence.

DICK. Most important. Let the Countess produce the letter.

(The Countess stares at him dumfounded, realizing that he has turned the tables upon her.)

SIR GEO. Have you any objections, Countess?

Countess (taken aback for a moment). Is—is it necessary?

SIR GEO. It would expedite matters; it would be

almost conclusive.

Countess (having had time to think). But, Sir George, you remember my telling Lady Caxton this morning that my uncle, the Count Von Szalras, had received important papers from Vienna on private family matters?

SIR GEO. Yes.

Countess. The letter concerns them. Under the circumstances——

SIR GEO. I understand—under the circumstances, I respect your delicacy; it may not be needed. What happened then?

Countess. The letter informed me that the bearer, an old friend, was leaving for Vienna to-night by the nine

o'clock train.

DICK. Yes, and if you'll pardon me for interrupting, it's getting deucedly near train time. (Looks at his watch.) Only six minutes left.

SIR GEO. I'm afraid, sir, you'll miss that train.

DICK. Oh, I don't think so-I'm a regular nailer at

catching trains, you know.

SIR GEO. Exceptions prove the rule. You won't go till you've answered my questions. Continue, Countess.

Countess. It told me to give into his hands some important family documents, which I had taken home to sign, as by that means they would reach Vienna sooner than by regular post.

SIR GEO. And you gave them?

Countess. Yes.

Hogue. Voleur—robber!

SIR GEO. (to DICK). What the devil do you want

with the Countess' private papers?

DICK. Under the circumstances, Sir George, I must ask you to respect my delicacy—for family reasons I can't tell you; and if I could, I haven't got the time—five minutes now.

SIR GEO. In five minutes you'll find yourself in the hands of the police if you don't answer my questions.

DICK. Oh, I wouldn't do anything rash if I were you. Eve. (coming down from back L. c., where she has been watching and listening). Uncle—

SIR GEO. Don't you interfere.

Eve. I will interfere; can't you see ----

SIR GEO. Mind your own business.

Eve. This is my business. Can't you see there is something wrong here—something strange?

SIR GEO. By George, I should think there was-

something devilish strange!

Eve. Then why don't you cross-question other people beside Mr. Kent?

SIR GEO. I was under the impression I was doing so. Eve. No, you're not—you're just letting them tell their story, and taking all they say for gospel. Why don't you ask the Countess what she is doing in my brother's room during his absence?

DICK. And why she carries her family papers round with her wherever she goes, as if she were on the lookout

for a special messenger.

Eve. Down at Thorncliffe you said that Mr. Kent had some designs on Jack.

SIR GEO. I didn't; it was the Baron said that.

Eve. You agreed with the Baron, and he hasn't even seen Jack—have you, Mr. Kent?

Dick. Well, no, that is, not to speak of—you see ——

Countess (anxious to stop him, and assuming an air of virtuous indignation). Sir George, I demand to be heard.

SIR GEO. Certainly, Countess, certainly. (To Eve. and DICK indignantly.) If you'll only hold your tongues

and listen, the Countess will explain.

DICK. Well, she'll have to hurry up if you want anything more from me. I don't wish to be impolite to a lady, but time and trains wait for no man, you know. Three minutes left.

SIR GEO. You'll not go till you've answered my ques-

tions.

DICK. Say, do you know, you've got an awfully annoying way of repeating yourself? You've said something like that two or three times already; it's getting on my nerves.

SIR GEO. I'm likely to get on your nerves a good deal more before I've done with you. You were saying,

Countess ——

Countess. What I would rather leave unsaid—what you, as a diplomat, will understand that I have scarcely the right to say—but I learned—knowing my relations with Count Von Szalras, you can surmise how—that Mr. Thornton was in danger—great danger—from whom I did not then know, but I can guess now. (She casts a meaning glance at DICK.) I had been your guest—I was his friend; what could I do but warn him? His duties kept him from coming to me—I had to come to him.

SIR GEO. My dear Countess, you have my warmest thanks.

DICK. But why did you bring the family papers along?

Countess. I was taking them home from the

Embassy.

Eve. And why did Mr. Kent bring his letter of introduction here? How did he know that he would find you at my brother's apartment?

Countess. That I will leave to Mr. Kent to explain. Dick. Well, I haven't got time, you know—only two minutes left; but I'll only be gone three or four days,

and when I come back I'll stand the whole party a jolly little dinner at the Ritz or the Savoy, and we can straighten it all out in a friendly little pow-wow. What?

(SIR GEO. and the others rise.)

SIR GEO. Confound your impudence, sir—with all this mass of suspicion and circumstantial evidence against you, do you think for one minute I'd let you leave this room till you've answered my questions?

Dick. There you go again.

SIR GEO. (emphatically). Answered my questions,

and restored the Countess her papers.

DICK. What's the Countess want her papers for? I gave my word they should be delivered into the hands they were intended for, and I'll keep my word. Why worry?

SIR GEO. Your word? Who the devil trusts your

word?

Eve. (coming forward c.). I do, Uncle.

SIR GEO. You hold your tongue. Hogue. He is a thief—a robber!

Countess (crossing to Sir Geo., c.). Sir George, I demand my papers back at once.

DICK (his watch in his hand). Only one minute left,

you know.

SIR GEO. (crossing down to DICK). Yes, sir, one minute left before I telephone for the police. (The Countess and Hogue stand anxiously together, R. C., near sofa; DICK and SIR GEO., L. C.; EVE. at back near C.) Patton, guard that door—knock him down if he attempts to leave the room. (Patton draws closer to the door.) I give you a last chance—will you or will you not explain your part in the events of the past two hours, and give the Countess back her papers. Answer me in plain English.

DICK. In plain English then—I'll be d——d if I do. Time's up. (Closing his watch and putting it back in his pocket.) I'm off —— (He moves up stage L. C.)

SIR GEO. Patton! (He crosses quickly to 'phone on

SIR GEO. Patton! (He crosses quickly to 'phone on desk and takes up receiver.) Quick—quick—give me Police Headquarters.

(Dick rushes toward the door; Patton springs for him, but Dick dodges him and knocks him down; then springing to the switch he presses the button, switches off the lights and leaves the room in darkness; he rushes off through door c.; scuffling, shouting, etc., heard; noise of key turned in the lock; then the slam of outer door, and noise of motor engine heard outside window; Sir Geo. stumbles to the switch and switches on the lights, discovering Hogue crouched on sofa r. c., pale and terrorstricken; Countess standing beside him defiantly; Eve. near desk l., a rather triumphant smile on her face; Patton sits on the floor at back c., rubbing his head; Sir Geo. turns handle of door c. and finds it locked; he shakes the handle and beats on door with his fists in impotent rage, shouting "Police—Police"; the Countess springs to window r. c., throwing it open and leaning out.)

DICK (speaking outside the window). Drive like the devil, Barnes—we've got to make Charing Cross by nine!

CURTAIN

ACT IV

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SCENE.—Same as Act I. Time, about four days later. Afternoon.

(The curtain rises on an empty stage; the door-bell rings; Eve. enters from door L. and crossing to door C. opens it; Sir Geo. and Lady C. enter; Lady C. casts a look of disapproval at Eve., and, without a word, sweeps down to sofa R. and sits.)

Eve. Good-afternoon, Aunty. (LADY C. pays no attention to her; Eve. goes up to SIR Geo. and kisses him.) How are you, Uncle George?

(SIR GEO. clears his throat in a rather embarrassed fashion, glancing at LADY C.)

SIR GEO. Ahem! My dear Evelyn, your aunt and I have called to have a serious talk with you.

Eve. (with a look of comical horror). Again? On

the same subject?

SIR GEO. (nodding, rather resignedly). Yes.

Eve. Don't you think we thrashed all that out thor-

oughly the last time?

LADY C. I do not know what you and your uncle have thrashed out, I only know that I have a last word to say on the subject.

Eve. Another?

LADY C. And then the matter is closed forever.

EVE. (with a relieved expression). Oh, well, let's get it over then.

LADY C. Am I to understand that you still persist in your intention of occupying these rooms—alone?

Eve. My brother's rooms? Yes—till his return.

LADY C. And are you aware that another man besides your brother has a key to these rooms?

Eve. Yes—that is exactly the reason I am stopping.

LADY C. (in a tone of horror). Evelyn!

Eve. After the strange happenings of last Monday—you'll allow they were strange.

SIR GEO. Strange! Good Heavens! They were

weird.

Eve. I agree with you. Well, after the weird happenings of last Monday, without seeing or speaking to any of us, the Baron packed up his belongings, sent you a hastily scribbled note that he had been called away on important business, and departed.

LADY C. I can quite understand why.

Eve. Can you?

LADY C. Yes. He had no doubt heard from his friend, Mr. Hogue, of the extraordinary events which had taken place, and not wishing to be further connected with anything so unpleasant, he, with a delicacy which is characteristic of him, took the quietest way out of the dilemma. I think he was very wise.

Eve. I am not questioning his wisdom; but why did

he not return his latch-key?

LADY C. Perhaps he forgot it.

Eve. At the time of his departure?—perhaps; for more than three days since, it seems hardly possible; however, that is my reason for wishing to remain here, and till Jack comes back or the key is returned—here I stay.

Sir Geo. My dear Evelyn ——

LADY C. Have you no respect for the family honor? Eve. A great deal—that's why I'm stopping. I am afraid it may be in danger—but not through me. LADY C. What do you mean?

Lady C. What do you mean? Eve. I do not trust the Baron.

LADY C. Nonsense! The Baron is the soul of courtesy and good breeding. If you want to distrust any one, distrust *your friend*, Mr. Kent, who, by the way, has also a latch-key to these apartments. If the family honor has an enemy, mark my words, he is the man.

SIR GEO. Now look here, Evelyn-once and for

all ----

Eve. (raising her hand to stop him). Once and for all, Uncle George, it's no use to argue. Till I was

twenty-one you were my guardian—you are still my father's trustee and my honored friend and adviser, but I am a free agent, and when it comes to a case of duty, I shall act according to my own reason.

LADY C. Very well then, George, I shall speak my final word. If Evelyn persists in this highly improper

conduct, from now on I wash my hands of her.

Eve. Very well, Aunty, consider the washing done, the towel supplied, and your fingers dried and "comfy"—and let us get on to more interesting matters. (LADY C. stares at Eve., speechless with indignation, takes salts bottle from her bag and sniffs it at intervals.) Have you

heard any news of Jack?

SIR GEO. Not a word. In spite of my warning, the police let that fellow Kent slip through their fingers. I laid a complaint at headquarters, but they seemed quite indifferent; then I appealed to Lord Royallieu, told him of my anxiety about Jack, and asked for news; he shook his head enigmatically, said there was no very definite news of Jack, but not to worry—and that he would investigate the police affair. Then he took a pinch of snuff and told me to be calm!

LADY C. And very good advice, too—that is what

I am always telling you, George.

SIR GEO. (in a burst of indignation). Confound you and Lord Royallieu both—mind your own business. I'm an Englishman with a Constitutional right to the use of my own temper within the limits of the law, and I'm d——d if I'll keep calm if I don't want to!

(He rises and crosses angrily down to L.; the door C. is suddenly opened, and Jack appears at it; his dress is disordered and untidy, his face unshaven and haggard; he pauses in the door, looking around wildly; the others all turn to him, Lady C. and Eve. rising, and exclaim together "Jack!" Then Eve. and Sir Geo. go up to him.)

Eve. Jack, dear, what has happened?

SIR GEO. Jack, my boy — (JACK comes down with uncertain steps to chair R. of table and sinks into it as if exhausted; Eve. follows him down; SIR GEO. goes

down L. of table; LADY C. R. C.) Jack, you have come from Vienna?

JACK. Yes.

SIR GEO. And the papers—you took them there in safety?

JACK. I thought so. SIR GEO. Thought so?

JACK. I took the package Lord Royallieu gave me and which never, to my knowledge, was out of my possession from the time I left Thorncliffe till I placed it in the hands of our Ambassador at Vienna; but when he opened the package, the papers were—blank.

Eve.
LADY C. Blank!

(SIR GEO. sinks into a chair L. of table; LADY C. sinks on sofa R. C. Eve. stands behind Jack's chair, a look of horror on her face.)

SIR GEO. Good God! You came straight from Thorncliffe here?

JACK. Yes.

SIR GEO. You spoke to no one on the train?

JACK. To no one.

SIR GEO. You can swear to that?

JACK. Yes; there was only one man in the compartment with me—a laborer—and he left at the first station beyond Thorncliffe; after that I was alone.

SIR GEO. From Victoria you drove straight to these

rooms?

JACK. Yes.

Eve. When you arrived, was the Countess here?

JACK (looking up at her with a startled expression).

Eve. When did she come?

JACK. How do you know ----

Eve. Never mind how—we know that she was here. How did she come?

JACK (reluctantly). A few minutes after—when I was packing my valise.

Eve. Why?

JACK (with an effort). She wanted to say good-bye. At Thorncliffe she had asked me to call on her before I left London, but afraid of delay, I refused—so she came to me.

SIR GEO. She was here with you—alone?

JACK. Yes. (LADY C. exhibits consternation.)
Eve. You are quite sure that she could not have

tampered with the papers?

JACK. Good God! What are you thinking of? Of course not. I tell you they never left the inside pocket of my vest or the despatch case from Thorncliffe to Vienna.

SIR GEO. You are sure of that?

(There is a pause; JACK seems to struggle with himself, and then speaks with an effort.)

JACK. Quite sure.

Eve. Why did you hesitate?

IACK. Because I wanted to make certain I was telling the truth. (Turning quickly to SIR GEO. as if to change the subject.) You are sure the papers given me at Thorncliffe were the genuine thing?

SIR GEO. Do you think Royallieu is in his dotage to

send you on a fool's errand like that?

IACK. But—how—how—

SIR GEO. How-how? Some one must have taken them; you must have slept.

JACK. I never closed my eyes between Charing Cross

and Vienna.

SIR GEO. But how the devil did it happen? Papers

don't change without the aid of human hands.

JACK. I don't know—I don't know; I've thought and thought till I've almost gone mad, but I can't understand. (A pause.)

SIR GEO. (slowly). What did they say over there?

JACK. Not much—it's not their way. They questioned me closely, and then dismissed me to another room. I stayed there two hours—suffering torments. Then they sent for me. They told me to take the next train for London and report the loss to Lord Royallieu, and see if I could get any trace of the papers.

SIR GEO. That's d—d funny; you'd have thought

they'd have kept you for investigation.

JACK (eagerly, as if catching at a straw). Yes, but they didn't; they let me go—that showed they still trusted me, don't you think so?

SIR GEO. I don't know what to think; it's an infernal

muddle-my head's in a whirl.

Eve. Have you been to Lord Royallieu? JACK. Not yet—I—I came here first.

Eve. Why?

JACK. Because—I—I can't tell why. I was hoping against hope—I thought—oh, I don't know what I thought, only that here—

EVE. Here is the only place the papers could possibly have changed hands. Jack, you're keeping something

back.

JACK. I'm not—what do you mean? Oh, for God's sake don't torture me. (He rises and makes a move toward door c. then stops.) I'm going to Royallieu's now. Where's the Baron?

SIR GEO. Called away on important business—packed

up and left the morning after you went.

Eve. And took his latch-key with him. Since then I've been stopping here.

JACK. You?

LADY C. Yes, contrary to the advice of her friends and relatives, and in defiance of all known laws of propriety.

JACK. And why did you do this?

Eve. In case some one of importance might call and find you out.

JACK (eagerly). There—there—has been no one

here?

Eve. No one. (Looking at him earnestly.) Were you expecting some one?

JACK. No, no—I only asked.

(He goes up to door c.)

LADY C. One moment. Evelyn and Sir George are strangely forgetful of important facts. Have you seen anything of Mr. Kent?

JACK (puzzled). Kent-Kent — (As if he had forgotten the name.) Oh, that silly ass - (As if remembering.) No.

SIR GEO. And you didn't see him here—in this room,

before you left for Vienna?

JACK (down a little c.). Certainly not. What on earth should he be doing here?

LADY C. He might have made another mistake in the

numbers.

SIR GEO. We have reason to suspect Mr. Kent of being a foreign spy.

JACK. What rot! He hasn't got brains enough.

Eve. I'm not sure that he hasn't got more brains than

you think, but I don't believe he is a spy.

JACK. Well, it's no use talking. I haven't set eyes on him since the day at Thorncliffe. I'm off to Royallieu's.

(He moves dejectedly to door c.; Eve. follows him and lays her hands on his shoulders, looking earnestly up into his face.)

Eve. And then?

JACK. God knows. It's ruin and disgrace anyway—

a bullet in my head would be the best end of it all.

Eve. No, Jack, not that — (With deep emotion, but very quietly.) That would be a coward's way out of it—and you're not a coward. Promise me, not that. (A pause.) Your word of honor, Jack.

JACK. Very well—it doesn't much matter;—I promise. Eve. God bless you, dear. (She throws her arms around his neck and kisses him, then speaks to him almost in a whisper.) Don't give up hope—after the night comes morning.

(JACK exits quickly at door C.)

SIR GEO. (sinking in chair L. of table). Well, I'll' be -----

Lady C. George! Sir Geo. Well, it's enough to make a saint swear and I'm no saint!

LADY C. (with an air of gentle resignation). No.

SIR GEO. What the devil can have become of those papers!

LADY C. The explanation is very simple.

SIR GEO. (staring at her, with a gasp). Oh, is it? Then perhaps you'll kindly enlighten my ignorance.

LADY C. Certainly. (With an air of finality.) Mr.

Kent.

EVE. (coming c.). What do you mean?

LADY C. He took them.

Eve. But how?

Lady C. My dear Evelyn, I am not versed in the ways of crime, nor do I pretend to understand the workings of the criminal mind; I am not dealing in theories, I am merely stating facts.

SIR GEO. Facts? Good Lord! Facts! Why, you haven't got a fact that couldn't be torn to pieces in a

minute in any court.

Lady C. (looking him over, contemptuously). My dear George, for a diplomatist you are singularly lacking in intelligence, which unfortunately I am powerless to supply.

(SIR GEO. stares at her in speechless indignation, unable to express his feelings.)

Eve. Well, I'm not a diplomatist, and I have no facts or theories—only a woman's instinct, sharpened by the danger of those she loves—and I tell you the Countess and the Baron are at the bottom of this.

Lady C. Preposterous! Except for her indiscretion in visiting Jack's rooms, the Countess is one of the most charming women I ever met; as for the Baron—well——(She shrugs her shoulders with a hopeless gesture, as if it were impossible to make them understand.) Oh,

what's the use of talking?

SIR GEO. My dear Evelyn, you are altogether wrong. I know I objected to Jack's intimacy with them, but that was merely a matter of policy on account of his position. Why, the Count Von Szalras, the Countess' uncle, is one of the most prominent men in the Austrian Embassy, and the Baron came to us with unimpeachable letters of in-

troduction. These people are not the stuff spies are made of.

Eve. That's just where I differ with you—I think they are. The Baron laughs at you for being afraid of the British bogey of the foreign spy, and he is right—because you are frightened only at the bogey, and pursue the shadow. You waste time looking for the spy of romance with a slouch hat and a dark lantern, while all the while the real article sits at your dinner tables, dances at your balls, smiles in your face, wins your confidence, and then betrays you.

SIR GEO. And what about your Mr. Kent—who poses one moment as an English fop, and the next as a

Frenchman? Doesn't that look rather fishy?

Eve. I am holding no brief for my Mr. Kent, as you call him, only, again—my woman's instinct tells me to trust him.

(A ring at door-bell c.; Eve. goes to door and opens it and discovers Dick standing in the hall, smiling; Sir Geo. and Lady C. glare at him; Lady C. turns her back on him; Sir Geo. rises and goes a little L.)

DICK (in a cheerful tone). Halloa, everybody.

SIR GEO. (in a low grumbling tone). Talk of the devil—

(He goes up to fireplace; DICK advances into room.)

DICK. Jolly lucky to find you all here. Just got back and dropped in on chance; thought we might fix up that little dinner at the Savoy.

SIR GEO. Confound it, sir, do you remember what

happened the last time we met?

DICK. Oh, rather—beastly muddle, wasn't it? Everybody at cross purposes and ragging everybody else unmercifully. Awfully sorry I hadn't time to explain things, but now—

SIR GEO. Damn your impudence! Do you know

you're liable to arrest for assault and battery?

DICK. Oh, by Jove, yes—that was too bad. That poor Johnny of a servant—hope I didn't hurt him much;

but it was his own fault—would get in my way, you know, and I had to catch that train.

SIR GEO. Lucky for you, sir, the police didn't catch

you.

DICK. I should say so. Awfully fine force, the police, you know—but slow.

SIR GEO. Perhaps it may not be too late yet.

DICK. Oh, but it's all right now. When you hear my explanation you won't want to arrest me.

SIR GEO. I'm not so sure of that.

DICK. Oh, but I am. I'm going to give you the

surprise of your life.

LADY C. George, this atmosphere of intrigue is getting on my nerves. I feel myself breathing in conspiracy and gunpowder plots. I need fresh air—I will await you in the motor below.

(She moves toward door c.; DICK very politely holds the door open for her, bowing; she draws aside her skirts as if unwilling to touch him, and sweeps past and out into the hall; DICK closes the door behind her and comes back into c. of room.)

SIR GEO. Well, sir?

DICK. Well—er—let's sit down; it's so much more sociable. (Eve. sits on sofa R. C. with an air of suppressed excitement; SIR GEO. with an air of indignant resignation L. of table; DICK sits R. of table.) Right, oh! Now in the first place, where is Thornton?

SIR GEO. What the devil has he got to do with your

explanations?

DICK. Oh, lots. He's, as it were, the pivot of the whole concern.

Eve. (excited). Jack?

DICK. Of course—he's the storm centre, so to speak, of our little tempest.

SIR GEO. Say, do you know what you are talking

about?

DICK. Oh, rather.

SIR GEO. Well, I don't.

DICK. Not now, but you will by and by, if you'll only be patient and keep calm.

SIR GEO. (with a growl of fury). Hell!

(He rises and walks angrily up to fireplace.)

DICK. Well, to come back to the starting point, where's Thornton?

SIR GEO. What business is that of yours?

Eve. Oh, Uncle, why waste time? What difference does it make? (To Dick.) He's gone to Lord Royallieu's.

DICK. Too bad—hoped I'd catch him first. It would have made it so much easier.

SIR GEO. Made what easier?—who easier?—oh, good Lord, I'm going crazy!

(He paces up and down excitedly.)

DICK. Made him easier, if you like—easier in his mind, you know. He must be awfully worried about those papers.

Eve. What papers?

DICK. The papers he was to have taken to Vienna, but didn't, you know.

SIR GEO. (to Eve., in a triumphant tone). What did

I tell you? What did I tell you?

DICK. Well, what did you tell her? Something interesting?

SIR GEO. I said you knew all about those papers. DICK. Why, of course—that's what I'm here for.

SIR GEO. (sitting opposite DICK L. of table). Then, sir, since you are such a well of information, where are the papers now?

Dick. In Vienna.

SIR GEO. Who has them?

DICK. Our Ambassador. He got them in plenty of time to cram for his interview with the Austrian Johnny, and it went off splendidly—and there you are.

(Complacently, as if the matter were now quite settled.)

SIR GEO. Who took the papers to Vienna?

DICK. I did.

SIR GEO. Where did you get them?

DICK. From the Countess.

Eve. Ah, what did I tell you?

SIR GEO. And where the devil did she get them?

DICK. Ah, thereby hangs a tale, the details of which you must get from my young friend Thornton. I never pry into a lady's private affairs. And, by the way, talking of Thornton, don't you think you might run your motor over to Royallieu's? Even though things are all right, the poor boy must be having a pretty hard time—and you might comfort him and soothe Royallieu.

SIR GEO. But what the devil am I to say?

DICK. Oh, just tell Royallieu you've been talking to me.

SIR GEO. To you! Young man, in the name of all that's infernal, who and what are you? For years every one has looked on you as an idler who never did a stroke of work in his life—as a fool who never had an idea in

his head; and now ——

DICK. You're beginning to think I'm not such a fool as I look? My dear Sir George, haven't you lived long enough in the diplomatic world to know that it pays to play the fool sometimes—that he is often used as a bait to catch wiser men? For years I have been serving my country as a "fool," while the world has known me only as "my father's son." The Secret Service discovered my capacity for being a "fool" and paid me for using it. Think it over, Sir George, while you are driving to Lord Royallieu's.

(SIR GEO. sits staring at him dumfounded, and then rises in a dazed manner.)

SIR GEO. I give it up. In my young days diplomacy was a profession; it is nothing now but a d——d melodrama. (He crosses slowly up to door c. DICK and EVE. rise; DICK crosses down L.) Coming, Eve?

Dick. Oh, I say, Sir George—I must ask you to leave

Miss Thornton here for a little while longer.

SIR GEO. With you?

DICK. Yes.

SIR GEO. Alone! My wife will have a fit.

DICK. Lady Caxton will have to control her feelings. She mustn't interfere with my stage management.

SIR GEO. Stage management! What are you going

to do now?

DICK. Play the last act of the melodrama; I haven't squelched the villain yet.

SIR GEO. But what do you want her for?
DICK. The rôle of heroine. It's a short act—you can

come for her in less than half an hour.

SIR GEO. Have it your own way. I'm through with diplomacy. I'll take to country life and raising prize vegetables.

(He exits, door c. Dick crosses to door and calls after him.)

DICK. You might tell Thornton I'd like to see him some time soon, will you?

(The outside door slams; Dick comes back into room; he and Eve. stand looking at each other; then she goes to him c., half shyly, and stands with downcast eyes.)

Eve. Mr. Kent.

DICK. You called me Dick the other night, you know. Eve. Well, then, Dick—speaking of vegetables, I—I think the potato is sprouting wonderfully.

(DICK looks at her with admiration.)

DICK. By Jove, you know, you really are one of the nicest girls I ever met.

Eve. And I want to thank you with all my heart for

what you've done for Jack; I can never repay you.

DICK. Oh, yes you can, right now-more than repay me. Er-will you kiss me? (Eve. hesitates a moment, and then raises her face to his; he bends down and kisses her.) Thank you! You know you really are the very

Eve. (interrupting). Dick —

DICK. Yes?

Eve. Last Monday night, when things looked so black for you—being what you are, and knowing what you did,

why didn't you clear yourself then?

DICK. Let's sit down and be sociable. (He takes her by the hand and leads her to sofa R. c. and they sit.) In the first place; I didn't want to give Jack away and make matters appear any worse than they were; and he had been a bit of a fool, you know, made so, like many a wiser man before him, by a bad woman; and in the second place, I didn't want to give myself away and show the Baron and Countess my trump cards till I could catch them red-handed and before witnesses; and that's what I think I'm going to do now.

Eve. Now?

DICK. I told Sir George I wanted you for the heroine of my little drama. Are you willing to play the part?

Eve. Yes, Dick, if you think I can.

Dick. Rather.

Eve. I'm ready then.

DICK. Even if it should involve some danger?

Eve. I like a spice of danger. I was brought up that

way.

DICK (in admiration). Were you? Really, you know, you are the very nicest — Would you again? (She holds up her face and he kisses her.) Thank you. And now to give you stage directions. If any one rings the bell, go at once into that room. (Pointing to door L.) Take this note-book and pencil with you (taking book and pencil from his pocket and handing them to her) and make notes of all you hear.

Eve. Is that all?

DICK. No, one thing more. No matter what happens—in whatever danger I may be—you must not come out or speak till I tell you. Do you promise?

EVE. (after a pause, holding out her hand). Yes.

(He stands holding her hand and looking at her admiringly, then he leaves her and goes quickly to window R. C. and looks out, keeping well behind the curtain.)

DICK. Just as I thought-my friends have been

watching me; now they are going to act. You needn't wait for the bell—get into the room now. (Eve. moves up to door L.) Evelyn. (She stops; he goes to her and bends toward her.) Before you go—would you again? (She lifts her face and he kisses her.) Thank you.

(She exits quickly, door L.; he smiles as if well pleased; he crosses to window R. C. again, and keeping well behind the curtain, looks out; then he comes down to sideboard, takes a cigarette and lights it; door-bell C. rings; he goes up to door C. and opens it; the Countess enters; on seeing Dick, she stops with pretended surprise.)

Countess. I beg your pardon—is Miss Thornton in? Dick. No.

Countess. No? (With an inflection of surprise.) I met Lady Caxton in her motor, and she informed me that she had left her here.

DICK. So she did, with Sir George; but he is gone, and knowing the Caxton sense of propriety, you didn't suppose they would leave her here with me—alone.

Countess. Well, to be perfectly candid, I didn't think they'd leave you here alone either with or without her. You were scarcely in their good books last Monday.

DICK. By Jove, I should say not; but I'm all right now—they've changed their minds about me.

Countess. Indeed! Dick. Absolutely.

Countess. How nice for you. Well, my visit to Miss Thornton was from a selfish motive. I forgot to give some important directions to my dressmaker, and I wanted to use the 'phone. Though she is out, may I still trespass on her kindness?

DICK. I'm sure she'd be delighted—the 'phone is at

your service, Countess.

Countess. Thank you. (As she crosses to table L. she casts a swift watchful glance around the room, sits at desk and takes up the receiver. Dick strolls up to fireplace L. C., and stands with his back to it, regarding her closely, and smoking—a curious expression on his

face.) Give me Regent 1560. Are you there—is that you, Madame? Countess Von Holtzberg speaking—that dress of mine I spoke of—it is ready—yes—now—send for it at once—you understand. Thank you—goodafternoon. (She hangs up receiver and turns toward door c.) I am much obliged.

DICK. Don't mention it, Countess.

(She pauses half-way to the door and faces Dick.)

Countess. Did you have a pleasant trip to Vienna?

DICK. Ripping.

Countess. And you delivered your papers in safety? Dick. Oh, rather. I kept my word to you to the letter, and placed them in the hands of those for whom they were intended, and I am taking a reply back to those for whom it is intended. I should have been on my way now if it hadn't been for your charming and unexpected visit:

(A look of triumph comes into the Countess' face for a moment, but she controls herself at once and speaks carelessly.)

Countess. Really. (A pause.) You played a clever game that night, Mr.——

DICK. Kent. Awfully good of you to say so-but I

think you flatter me.

COUNTESS. I assure you I am perfectly sincere. I admired your skill so much (*she draws nearer to door* C.) that I hope some day we may play against each other

again.

DICK. Oh, I'm sure we shall—some day. (The outer door slams.) And I shouldn't be surprised if it were very soon—and this time, I think, it will be four-handed—or three—and a dummy. (A key is heard turning in lock, door c.; the Countess steps quickly to door c. and opens it; the Baron enters, followed by Hogue; he casts a quick glance at the Countess, who nods her head.) Four handed. (He comes down L. c.) How are you, Baron; awfully glad to see you and Mr.—what's the latest—eh? Lenoir, drop in in this friendly manner. Thornton's out, but I'll try my best to do the honors.

BARON. Mr. Kent, I am here for a purpose.

DICK. You don't say so? How awfully jolly. Being a purposeless Johnny myself, I always appreciate that sort of thing in other people—tremendously.

BARON. I have several things to say to you. Sit

down.

Dick. My idea exactly—so much more sociable.

BARON. Hogue, guard the door.

(The Countess sits on sofa R. C.)

DICK (sitting L. of table). Make a better job of it than Patton did, won't you, Hogue? (Hogue casts a look of hatred at DICK, but is evidently worried. To BARON.) Fire away.

BARON. Those papers which you have just left at Vienna, and which you obtained possession of by under-

hand trickery —

DICK. Oh, I say, you know, isn't that rather like the pot calling the kettle black?

BARON. Will you please listen to me—I am in earnest, and I am in a hurry.

DICK. All right, old chap—sorry I interrupted.

BARON. Those papers were of the greatest importance to the government of my country and the government of Austria. The Countess, Hogue and myself were commissioned to obtain possession of them; we had almost succeeded when ——

DICK. When I took a hand and trumped your long suit. Awfully sorry, but those papers were of importance to my government too.

BARON. We risked our liberty—perhaps our lives—for nothing, and we lost prestige with those who

trusted us.

DICK. So no one can blame you for feeling peevish, can they?

BARON. However, all is not lost yet.

DICK. No-really?

Baron. There is a reply to those papers—more important, perhaps, even than they were. If we can hand copies of that to the ministers at Berlin and Vienna, we shall be restored to favor.

DICK. And do you think you can do it?

BARON. I think so. DICK. How ripping!

BARON. Our agents have followed you ever since you left Vienna. (With a sudden change of tone.) Those papers are in your possession. (DICK makes a half start, as if taken unawares, and then appears to recover himself with an effort; there is a pause.) Do you deny it?

(DICK, embarrassed, remains silent.)

Countess. It would be foolish to do so, since Mr. Kent has already confided in me that he has them.

(A pause.)

BARON. Well?

DICK. Not much good lying after that, is there? besides, I'm such a truthful Johnny anyhow, I'd be sure to make a mess of it. Yes—I have the answer.

BARON. Then will you kindly hand it over to me?

(DICK remains motionless.) At once.

DICK. And if I refuse?

Baron (whipping a revolver from his pocket and covering Dick). I'll play the game you threatened to play on Hogue-shoot you first, and take the papers afterward. Hogue, lock that door.

(Without taking his eyes from Dick, he takes latchkey from his pocket and gives it to Hogue, who locks

DICK. Now don't you think, Baron, that that would be rather foolish? The shot might rouse the neighbors, and I'm too well known to disappear easily. The people who are waiting for these papers would ask questions. (He touches his hand to his breast involuntarily and the BARON'S eyes gleam with anticipation.) And altogether you might get yourself into a very unpleasant position, because in England we hang for murder, and we don't waste much time at the trial, either.

BARON. When it comes to—what the Americans call a "show down"—I am used to taking desperate chances.

The papers—or I shoot.

DICK. All right—you've got me. I agree; only before I give up may I ask one question?

BARON. Yes, if you'll be quick —

DICK. I'll be quicker if you'll point that damned thing at the ceiling—it's getting on my nerves. (The BARON elevates the barrel of the revolver slightly.) Thanks. In asking me to hand over to you these papers you are fully aware that they are of strictly private nature, addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and that I am in the service of the British Government?

Baron. Fully.

DICK. Yet you still force me, with threats of violence,

to betray my trust and give them up to you?

BARON. Yes, and you'll find the threat a reality if you don't give them up at once.

(A slight pause; Dick gives a sort of helpless look round the room and speaks in a dejected tone.)

Dick. All right—you win.

(He takes a large envelope from his pocket, sealed with three seals, and hands it to the Baron; then he rises and walks dejectedly to fireplace at back; the Baron drops his revolver on the table beside him, and with nervous fingers begins tearing open the envelope.)

BARON (to the Countess). The code-book—quick. (The Countess takes book from her dress and hands it to him; she stands beside him leaning over his shoulder; Hogue steps down a little from the door, eager to see what is happening, all of them for a time oblivious of Dick, who quietly draws a revolver and covers them; the BARON takes papers from envelope and hastily turns them over; as he does so, a blank expression comes into his face and that of the Countess, which changes to one of baffled rage.) These papers are blank—— (He turns on Dick to find himself covered by the revolver.) What the devil does this mean?

DICK. That the Countess taught me the game, and I am an apt pupil—what? I placed the real papers in Lord Royallieu's hands two hours ago. (The BARON

makes a move to pick up his revolver; Hogue shrinks in terror against the door.) No, don't touch that, please—I'll take it. (He advances covering the Baron with his revolver, and picks up the other one.) To paraphrase the saying of some philosophical Johnny—"two revolvers are better than one";—also the code-book, please. (Holding out his hand.) You won't have any further use for it. (The Baron takes code-book from the Countess and reluctantly hands it over.) Thank you.

Countess. But why—why—

DICK. Why did I let you go to the trouble of forcing me to give you an envelope containing—nothing? Because I wanted to catch you in a trap. The night you drugged and robbed the man who loved you I was powerless, because I had no witnesses to your guilt; but now, every word you have said has been recorded against you-and your own tongues have declared that you are spies and traitors. Miss Thornton — (Eve. enters from door L., pale and excited, but controlling herself admirably, note-book and pencil in hand.) There is my witness. I think, Countess, I take the odd trick. (There is a tap heard at door c.; DICK turns his revolver on Hogue.) Open that door, please. (Hogue unlocks the door, and a DETECTIVE and a POLICEMAN are seen standing in the hall; DICK points to HOGUE and the BARON.) Your prisoners. (The DETECTIVE and POLICEMAN arrest Hogue and the Baron, and slip handcuffs on them; then they move toward door c.) Baron. (They stop a moment.) The night you first met me here you thought you knew my face; you were right. I met you years ago when I was a lad with my father in Vienna and Berlin. The smooth-faced boy meant nothing to you-he was beneath your notice; but he wasn't quite the angel child he looked—even then he had begun to learn your record. The knowledge has since proved useful and let this affair teach you the truth of two proverbs: "Never judge by appearances"—and a man "is not always such a fool as he looks." Good-night.

(The Baron and Hogue are led out, Hogue in terror, the Baron sullen and defiant, and the door is closed;

the Countess stands looking at Dick in a sullen, defiant manner, and then speaks.)

Countess. What is to be my fate?

(A pause, Dick regarding her curiously.)

DICK. Countess, we Englishmen have a foolish prejudice against crushing a woman, if we can help it; besides, I don't want to hurt the feelings of your worthy uncle, the Count Von Szalras—only I advise you that your visits to him cease. I feel sure the air of Vienna is much more healthy to you. Leave England to-night—others may not prove so lenient.

(The Countess moves slowly up to door c.; Eve. goes up and sits in chair by fireplace L. c., gazing into fire.)

Countess. Mr. Kent—you are generous. We would not have shown the same mercy.

DICK (cheerfully). Of course not—but then you're—

well, different.

COUNTESS. Yes, we're different—and I sometimes wonder if—but there—it's too late to learn a new code of life. I must stick to the old one—my country first and above all, and for her all things are lawful. There is not one action of the past that I regret, except—Jack.

DICK (softly). Ah!

Countess. Even to serve one's country one should not betray an honest love or break a true heart; and it's dangerous to play with edged tools—you cut your own hands. I—I am sorry, and in the future—"always alone"—I shall be sorrier still. (A pause.) Couldn't you tell him that?

DICK. Don't you think it would be better to say nothing? To let him learn to despise and forget—the follies

of youth?

(She looks at him for a moment, and then slowly bows her head.)

Countess. Perhaps you are right.

(She goes slowly out at door c.; Eve. sighs.)

Eve. Poor Countess.

DICK. You pity her?

Eve. Yes. Dick. Well, I'm not sure that I don't pity her myself. Married to an old reprobate and brought up under the shadow of that bally black feather and that morbid motto-it doesn't seem as if she'd had half a chance, does it?

Eve. (shaking her head sadly). No. Dick (in a meditative manner). "Always Alone." Do you know, there are more people in the world than you'd think possible who are always, or mostly always, alone? I've been a lonely sort of Johnny myself in the past.

(Eve. rises, comes down behind him and lays her hand on his shoulder, speaking a little shyly.)

Eve. But you won't be in the future—will you, Dick?

(DICK turns to her quickly.)

DICK. You mean that — (EVE. gives a quick nod of her head, and then turns away shyly; he takes her in his arms.) Really, you know, you are the very nicest — (Slam of door outside is heard, and then the handle of the inside door turns; DICK releases EVE. and she moves down L. C.) Oh, damn!

(The door opens, and JACK rushes into the room; he seizes DICK by the hand and shakes it enthusiasticall v.)

JACK. My dear Kent, I—I don't know what to say to you.

DICK. Then don't say it, old chap.

JACK. I owe it to you that I am not a disgraced and ruined man. Oh, Eve-he's just splendid. (Crossing to her L. C.) Don't you think so?

Eve. (smiling up in his face). I do indeed, Jack, just

splendid.

(She turns up to fireplace L.; DICK crosses down to R. C. in a fidgety manner.)

JACK (crossing over to him). Why, Lord Royallieu hardly said a thing to me—just a bit of a lecture and a reprimand;—and I thought my career was over.

DICK. Not a bit of it, dear boy—only they may remove you to another branch of the service; you are a bit

too susceptible for a King's Messenger.

JACK. And it's all your doing—you needn't deny it. Oh, I can never repay you.

(Dick seizes him by the arm, and after a hasty glance over his shoulder at Eve., speaks in a low voice.)

DICK. Yes you can, if you want to, right now. JACK. How—how? Anything in the world—

DICK (leading him to door R.). Go into that room and for heaven's sake stay there till I call you.

JACK (looking at him). You—you don't mean —

DICK. Yes I do. Get out!

JACK (wringing DICK's hand). God bless you.

(He hurries out through door R., closing it behind him; DICK turns toward Eve. with an assumption of ease; she comes down to him c.)

Eve. Dick—do you like me as a heroine?

DICK. Rather! Do you like potatoes?

Eve. Rather. I'm a confirmed vegetarian.

DICK. Really, you know, you are the very nicest girl —

(Taking her in his arms and kissing her; enter Sir Geo., door c. He pauses and gazes at Eve. and Dick dumfounded.)

SIR GEO. What the devil do you think you're doing now?

DICK (drawing Eve. closer to him and kissing her). Tightening the bonds of the Empire.

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