

D R A M A
IN THREE ACTS.
FOUNDED ON EDMUND YATES'S NOVEL OF
“BLACK SHEEP.”

AND ARRANGED FOR THE STAGE BY
J. PALGRAVE SIMPSON,
AND
THE AUTHOR.

MEMBERS OF THE DRAMATIC AUTHORS' SOCIETY.

THOMAS HAILES LACY
89, STRAND, LONDON.

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First performed at the Royal Olympic Theatre, (under the management of Mr. B. Webster), on Saturday 25th April, 1868, a Drama, in Three Acts, founded on Edmund Yates's Novel of

THE BLACK SUEKY

Arranged for the Stage by J. Palgrave Simpson and the Author.

THE PIECE PRODUCED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF MR. HORACE WIGAN.

Machinery by Mr. T. STAINES. Properties by Mr. LIGHTFOOT. Dresses by Miss ANSELL.

THE MUSIC COMPOSED AND ARRANGED BY MR. EDWIN ELLIS.

STEWART ROUTH	Mr. CHARLES MATHEWS
MR. CARRUTHERS, of Poynings	MR. ADDISON
GEORGE DALLAS	MR. ASHLEY
PHILIP DEANE	MR. G. VINCENT
TATLOW	MR. HORACE WIGAN
JIM SWAIN	MR. ROUTH'S SERVANT
Mr. J. CLARKE.	MR. FRANKS

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HARRIET ROUTH
MRS. IRETON P. BEMBRIDGE
CLARE CARRUTHERS
ELLEN BROOKS MRS. CAULFIELD.

Mrs. CHARLES MATHEWS

Mrs. ST. HENRY

MISS LENNOX GREY

MISS SCHLAVEN

MARY ANNE

ACT 1.

STEWART ROUTH'S LODGINGS.

ACT 2.

THE PUBLIC GARDENS AND KURSAAL

AT HOMBURG.

ACT 3.

STEWART ROUTH'S HOUSE IN MAYFAIR.

TIME THE PRESENT.

“BLACK SHEEP.”

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Routh's Lodgings, d. in f. r.—French window, opening on balcony, l. c.—inner door r.—fireplace, l.—large and smaller tables, desk, writing materials, woman's work-box, &c., water bottle and glass. Furniture, rather poor and mean.* As the curtain rises, MARY ANN is discovered at door r. c., trying to keep out JIM SWAIN.

MARY. It's no good I tell you ! my orders is out !

JIM. Werry likely, Jemima Jane ! You're the new slavey, ain't you ? Ah ! I thought so ! you don't know me, but you will some of these days ! Give us a kiss !

MARY. Go along with your impudence. Who are you ?

JIM. Ah ! that's just it ! I ain't got a card about me, but you must excuse that ! My name's Jim Swain ! Strike a light, Jim, they calls me in Drury Lane ! and I'm a kind of odd boy in this house ; runs errands, fetches cabs, cleans boots, and makes myself agreeable to the lodgers generally, partic'lerly to Mr. and Mrs. Routh ; oh, ain't she a stunner, Mrs. Routh ? (sings) “She danced like a Fairy !”

MARY. Hush ! you mustn't make that noise ! you're a cool customer. Where do you live ?

JIM. With my granny, in the garret of the little house next door. I should like to dwell in a swell pallis, and have lots of lush, and grub, and nothing to do but to brush my whiskers : but that ain't for Joseph, nor for Jim either, for the matter of that ! (sings) “Not if I knows it.”

MARY. (L.) Hush, you young rascal, be quiet I say ! What's brought you here ?

JIM. (R.) Ah, you're quite right, Jemima Jane ! Business first, pleasure arterwards, as the man said when he ate his dinner before burying his wife ! Look 'ere, I've brought a note for Mrs. Routh from a literary gent, a friend of hers. Now don't tell more lies than you can't help, Jemima. Is she at home, or ain't she ?

MARY. Well, Mr. Routh's out, but Mrs. Routh is in her room. Where's the note ?

JIM. Here it is, Susannah ! (*gives it*) Where's that kiss ? No ! Werry well, I'll chalk it up to your account ! (MARY ANN knocks at D. R. and goes in) Dessay that's a good-looking gal when her face is clean. She's got too much to do in this house to give much time for washin' herself. I wouldn't like to be a lodgin'-house slavey ! (*sings*) "I'd sooner be a bird !" (*goes to window*) I'll just move this old flower-pot, now I've got the chance—I can creep out of our gutter and swing up to the balcony, and if this old buffer was only out of the way, I should see slap into this room. (*moves flower-pot*) That's it ! I like lookin' in here, and watchin' Mrs. Routh. (*comes down*) What a stunner she is ! so quiet and so soft spoken and kind. She only wants a pair of wings to be an angel ! He's a rum 'un he is ! One of your pleasant coves, too pleasant by half : I hates the sight of him ! (*sings*) "My dear boys, he ain't a pal o' mine !" I should think not indeed ! (*bell rings outside*) he's much too —

Enter MARY ANN, hurriedly, from D. R.

JIM. Hallo, Jemima, what's up ? anything broke ?

MARY. Don't you hear the bell ? (*bell again violently*) — MARY ANN exits D. in F.)

JIM. Hear it ! I should think so ! must be the Lord Mayor at least ! (*music.*)

Enter HARRIET ROUTH, D. R., with open note in her hand.

HARRIET. (*reads*) "I cannot come to you as early as I promised, as I have determined to go down to my mother's, and at any risk have an interview with her, and try to get from her the money to clear my debt to Routh !" Dated, Monday night ! Jim ! (*turns to him*) This note ought to have reached me earlier ; when did Mr. Dallas give it you ? (*sits.*)

JIM. Mr. Dallas didn't give it to me himself, mum, he left it with his landlady to give me ; and that old cat went

and forgot it, mum, and never sent for me till this morning!

HARRIET. You're sure of that, Jim?

JIM. Certain sure, mum! (*earnestly*) I say, Mrs. Routh, you don't think I'd tell *you* a lie! I'm a bad 'un I know! I ain't got time to go to the Sunday School like the other coves, and don't always speak what's quite correct, but I never told *you* a lie, mum, s'help me!

HARRIET. And when you received that note, you brought it straight here?

JIM. (*x's to fire*) Right straight off, mum! Didn't stop to over no posts, mum! didn't have no chuck farden, mum! Why, Mrs. Routh, mum, I should be a regular out and out bad 'un to deceive you, wot's been so kind to me, wot kept me from starvin' many a time, wot's been so good to Granny —

HARRIET. There, there, Jim, you're anything but a bad boy, and I always believe what you say to me. Indeed, there's only one thing in which I want to see an alteration in you!

JIM. (*quickly*) What's that, mum?

HARRIET. In your manner to Mr. Routh. It's never pleasant, sometimes it's not even respectful!

JIM. Well, mum, you know Mr. Routh is —

HARRIET. (*rising*) Silence, Jim, I won't hear a word against my husband. You think he's cross with you often, when he's only overwhelmed with business worries!

JIM. All right, mum, I'm dumb! (*aside*) Strike me lucky, if I know how she can put up with such a fellow! a regular duffer! (*music*) Hollo! that's his step on the stairs, I'd better hook it! (*aloud*) Good mornin', mum, I shall be close about if you want anything done. Good—(*as JIM gets to D. F., it is flung open by ROUTH.*)

ROUTH. What are you doing here, my young friend?

JIM. Just done wot I was doin', guv'nor; and now I'm going to step it! (*exit D. R. C. Music.* ROUTH, without speaking, takes off his hat and coat, and places them on a chair; in an abstracted manner, paces the room once or twice, his hands plunged in his pockets, his head bent on his breast, then seats himself at the desk, pushes some papers aside, and leans his head on his hand. HARRIET, who, in the meanwhile has been putting coal on the fire and sweeping the hearth, but always watching him, comes to him, stands behind his chair, and places her hand round his neck.)

HARRIET. Anything gone wrong, Stewart?

ROUTH. No, dear, why?

HARRIET. How did your dinner go off?

ROUTH. Oh, Flinders' dinner was jolly enough, only I was a little out of sorts, that's all.

HARRIET. You looked gloomy I thought, but if you say there's nothing, it's all right!

ROUTH. There's nothing more wrong than usual—a constant pressure for money!

HARRIET. (*sighing*) Ah, constant, indeed!

ROUTH. Yes, and at a climax just now! you see, since we decided that, before going in for this grand scheme—this Company which I am to start—I should give up gambling, so far as cards and dice are concerned, the money has been gradually dwindling. It will take £2,000 to float the Mining Company, and unless I get that by the end of the week, the bubble bursts and we are wrecked! (*X's to fire and back of her chair.*)

HARRIET. (*smiling*) Dear Stewart, how often have you said that; and how often have we sailed safely into harbour!

ROUTH. (*taking her hand*, Only through the pluck and steadiness of the pilot! What do you make of Deane, Harriet? (*comes R. of table, L., leaning on chair.*)

HARRIET. As regards himself, or as regards us?

ROUTH. Well, both, I cannot make him out, he's so confoundedly cool and so infernally sharp!

HARRIET. I regard him as a curious combination of the man of business with the man of pleasure, I don't know that we have ever met exactly the kind of person before. He is as calculating in his pleasures, as other men are in their business.

ROUTH. I hate the fellow!

HARRIET. That's dangerous, Stewart! you should not allow yourself to hate or like anyone in whom you are speculating; and you are speculating on Mr. Deane!

ROUTH. I should think so! It's from him I intended to get this £2,000!

HARRIET. Do you know I fancy I've made him out?

ROUTH. Have you, by Jove? Then you've done a clever thing, Harriet! clever even for you! For of all the close impenetrable fellows I ever met, Deane's the closest and the hardest; when I am with him I always feel as if he wanted to *do* me, and that he would succeed too! Though that's not easy. But he's as mean as a Scotch shopkeeper, as covetous as a Jew, and as wide-awake as a Yankee.

There's a coolness, and a constant air of avowed suspicion about him that drives me mad ! (*sits on table.*)

HARRIET. (L. of table) And you ought to have done with temper long ago ! How often have you told me, Stewart, that, to us, in our way of life, every man must be a puppet, prized in proportion to the readiness with which he dances to our pulling ? How does your account stand with him ?

ROUTH. My account ? ah ! there's the rub. Deane's so sharp, there's little to be done with him. He's a black-guard, I know, and a swindler ; as much of a swindler as I am, I believe. And yet there's a hardly-veiled insolence in his manner to me at times, for which I should like to blow his brains out.

HARRIET. Hush, Stewart ! read this letter from George Dallas. (*gives note.*)

ROUTH. Dallas ! ah, that's a very different sort of fellow. Reckless, extravagant, and dissipated enough, but with a good heart. (*reads*) “Get the money from his mother.” His mother ?

HARRIET. Yes ; didn't you know that his mother was married again to a wealthy old gentleman, who is so dreadfully respectable, that he won't permit his scapegrace stepson to enter his house.

ROUTH. (*sits*) Poor George, that's hard lines for him, and he's gone to try and get from the old lady the money I lent him to pay Deane. I'm sorry the poor fellow lost his money to him. Hang it, I'm such a bad fellow myself, so utterly a gone coon —

HARRIET. Stewart ! (*putting her hand on his mouth.*)

ROUTH. (*putting his arm round her*) I am, dear ; and every one thinks so but you. It comes ill from me to say so, but I am devilish sorry that Deane got the chance of cleaning Dallas out—I like the boy ; he's a stupid fool, but not half bad, and he didn't deserve such an ill turn of fortune.

HARRIET. (*coldly*) You can take comfort in remembering you helped Mr. Dallas.

ROUTH. You don't care about it, that's clear.

HARRIET. (*looking fondly at him*) No, Stewart, I care for nothing on earth but you. When I first saw you, stricken down by fever in the German hotel, I loved you ; when you married me I loved you. No, Stewart—no, I feel no interest elsewhere, and it is well. Shall we go into the accounts, Stewart ?

ROUTH. I suppose those bills must all be paid Harry ?

HARRIET. Yes, we must be punctual with our trades-people.

ROUTH. I've been looking over the bills. Hang it! they all seem to be mine.

HARRIET. You know, dear, I don't require much. With you it's a matter of business that you should be well dressed.

ROUTH. Ah! I might have known that you'd have some self-denying, sensible reason ready; but the puzzle to me is that you always *are* well dressed. By Jove! you are the neatest woman I know, and the prettiest. (*sits on corner of table, and looks at her*) And our scheming would be nothing without your clear head, though I think you've made a little mistake, for once in your life, in advising Dallas to go to his mother.

HARRIET. I told him he must get the money from her.

ROUTH. (*petulantly*) A mistake, Harry, a mistake! Getting the money means paying us—paying us means breaking with us. I've noticed his manner lately; and it is essential there should not be a rupture between us now.

HARRIET. George Dallas shall not dream of breaking with us. I'll take care of that, though I think you overrate his usefulness.

ROUTH. Do I? I flatter myself there is no man in London forced to gain his bread by his wits, who has a better eye for a tool than myself; and I tell you Harry, during all the time we have been leading this shifty life together, I've never found a tool so fitted to my hand as Dallas.

HARRIET. (*thoughtful*) His connection with the press is useful; and he's certainly very amenable.

ROUTH. Amenable! he's a deal more than that—he's devoted; you know whose doing that is, Harriet, and so do I. He's a bright young fellow, impressionable, as we all are—at his age; and though he's a loosefish, he's innately a gentleman. You are the only woman of refinement and education to whose society he has access, and as you have a sweet face, and an enormous power of will, it's not extraordinary that he should be completely under your influence.

HARRIET. Don't you overrate that same influence?

ROUTH. Not I! no man knows better how to appraise the value of his own goods, and you are my goods, are you not, Harry? and out and away the best of my goods.

HARRIET. (*half laughing, half anxious*) And you're never jealous, Stewart?

ROUTH. Jealous, Harry? not I, my love. I understand these things, and I understand you; and having perfect confidence in you, I stand by and watch the game.

HARRIET. (*sighing, and aside*) There's no love without jealousy. Who said that? I wonder whether it's true?

Enter MARY ANN, D. R. C., followed by DEANE.

MARY. Mr. Deane, sir; he would come up. I never see such manners. (*exit R. C.—Music.*)

(DEANE's costume is very loud and slangy—large thick over-coat, with fur cuffs and collar, and hood hanging behind; no cravat, but strip of ribbon under long limp turn-down collar. Large watch chain, with bunch of charms, and large diamond studs in his shirt. Speaks in Yankee twang, and his manner is bumptious and offensive; he walks to middle of stage, without removing his hat, and with arms a-kimbo.)

DEANE. Why, what the tarnation—as they say down West, is the meaning of this little game? I come here pretty smart often, don't I? I come in gen'ally right way, don't I? Why does that gal totin' up in front of me to-day, to see if you would see me now?

ROUTH. Some mistake, eh?

DEANE. Not a bit of it. Gal was all right, gal was! What I want to know is, what was up? was you a practisin' any of your little hankey-pankeys with the pasteboards? was you a bitin' in a double set of scrip of the new company, to do for your own riggin' of the market? or was it a little bit of quiet con-nubiality with the Mardam here, in which you didn't want to be disturbed?

ROUTH. Damn it, sir! (HARRIET, who is by him, touches him on the arm) You're a queer fellow, Deane. (*laughing*) The fact is, we've a new servant here, who didn't recognize you as l'ami de la maison, and so stood on the proprieties.

DEANE. (*X's, and sits on table*) Oh, that's it, eh? I don't know about the propri'ties, but when the gal knows more of me, she'll guess I'm one of them. Nothing improper about me—no loafin' rowdiness, such as some of your friends have. Pay my way as I go; ask no favours, and expect none. (*slaps his trousers pocket, and laughs sneeringly.*)

ROUTH. There, it's all right, sit down and have a glass of wine.

DEANE. (*sits L.*) No thank'ye; I've been liquorin' up in the city, where I've been doin' a little business, realisin'

some of them Lake Eries, and Michigans, as I told you on. Spankin' investments they were, and they've turned up trumps.

ROUTH. I hope you're in the hands of an honest broker; I could introduce you to one who—

DEANE. Thank'ye, I've a great man to broke for me, recommended to me from t'other side, by his cousin, who leads Wall-street, New York city. I gev him the writings last week, and this morning I trousered the dollars to the tune of 15,000 and odd, and here they are in this old pocket book, I reckon. (*pulling out pocket book.*)

ROUTH. (*starting*) You've sold out, so soon?

DEANE. (*taking out note*) I have so! Governor and Company of the Bank of England. I conclude that's all right, eh?

ROUTH. (*eagerly*) You'll bring some of that money to us in Tokenhouse Yard? You recollect the mining company I told you of? you recollect what I showed you?

DEANE. (*sneeringly*) Oh, yes; you could talk a coon's hind leg off, you could, Routh. But I shall just keep my dollars in my pocket book for a few days; Tokenhouse Yard can wait a little, can't it? just to see how things eventuate, you know.

ROUTH. (*aside*) I must have the money. (*aloud*) As you please, Deane, as you please. One thing is certain, you need no Mentor in your business, whatever you do in your pleasures.

DEANE. Flatter myself I need none in either. I'm known in all the cafés, hotels and eating houses as "the Yankee;" but you know I'm a Britisher. Look here now, talking of pleasures, come and sup with me to-night at Barton's, I've asked Paul Ward, and we'll have a night of it.

ROUTH. Paul Ward?

HARRIET. (*whispers*) He means George Dallas. Paul Ward is the name under which Dallas writes. (*x's to window.*)

ROUTH. (*aside*) I understand. (*aloud*) All right, Deane; to-night.

DEANE. To-night! (*x's to HARRIET, and speaks in an offensively familiar tone*) Sorry to take your husband away Mrs. Routh, but I'll make up for it some day. Perhaps you'll come and dine with me some day, Mrs. R., without R?

HARRIET. (*smiling*) Not I, Mr. Deane—you're by far too dangerous a man.

DEANE. Wal, that's so. That's not the first time that's been remarked by the sex. However, I must be off; I'll come and look you up to-night, Routh, and—

ROUTH. And you won't bring that money to the City?

DEANE. Not yet, I tell you! Legs and feet! you're so cussed hungry for that catawampus old company, you are! We'll talk 't over to-night at supper. Now adieu, Mrs. Routh. (*exit d. r. c.*—ROUTH seats himself at desk, and commences writing.)

HARRIET. (*approaching him*) That certainly is a most dreadful man, so coarse, so insolent, so—(*looks over him*) What are you doing Stewart?

ROUTH. (*still writing*) Five dollars to the pound, 15,000, £3,000. Drew it out to day, and has it about him in his pocket book! (*looks up*) He's grown very shy about Tokenhouse-yard, lately—hasn't been there for ten days—and I must have £2,000 by the end of the week or we are lost! Keep his dollars in his pocket for a few days, he said! I wonder if he could be got to play? I wonder whether—is it to-night he wants me to sup with him?

HARRIET. (*crossing to him*) To-night!

ROUTH. To-night! and I must have it by the end of the week, or—. Carries it about with him in his pocket book—and I sup with him to-night!

HARRIET. (*putting her arm round his neck*) Stewart! I know what thought you are busy with, but—

ROUTH. Do you, Harry? Then keep it to yourself, my girl, to yourself. We *must* have that money, Harry—in one way or another. We *must* have it.

HARRIET. Pause love! Reflect before you act! How often have you told me you would renounce this life of scheming—worse than scheming? How often have you promised me that you would retire to some quiet nook with such resources as were yours, and live a peaceful and a happy life?

ROUTH. (*impatiently*) Yes, yes, when the time comes.

HARRIET. Why not now? Can we not make that time?

ROUTH. We'll see, we'll see! When the company is afloat! When I have realised my gains. But what is this childish romance all of a sudden? It is too late Harry for such nonsense; and you know that you must sink or swim with me now. I can't alter my present kind of existence. It has become my second nature, and out of it I can never hope to move. Indeed I don't know that I would if I could—so

there's an end of the matter. (*knock*) Open the door !
(music. HARRIET goes to D. R. C. and admits GEORGE DALLAS.
He looks haggard and worn, splashed with mud and seedily
dressed, and wears a big blue pilot overcoat.)

DALLAS. Good evening, Mrs. Routh. How do Stewart ?
Behold the prodigal returned ! (*x's back of table.*)

ROUTH. And returned with his prodigal pockets filled, I
hope ?

HARRIET. You have succeeded, Mr. Dallas ?

DALLAS. I have come back richer than I went, Mrs.
Routh, by that elegant garment and no more ! (*takes off
coat and holds it up—HARRIET throws it on sofa.*)

ROUTH. Bowled out, eh ?

DALLAS. (*seated at fire*) Stumped, sir.

ROUTH. That's bad, Dallas.

DALLAS. Very bad, my dear fellow, but very true ! Look
here, I don't know what to do ! I don't, upon my soul.

HARRIET. You saw your mother ?

DALLAS. Oh, yes, I saw her—by stealth and in secret of
course ; for old Carruthers, my blessed step-father, is more
bitter against me than ever, and won't allow me to cross
his threshold. I suppose the old brute's additionally
savage because his own son, whom he intended to marry
his niece, the great heiress, went all to the bad, bolted,
and hasn't been heard of for years. However, I managed
to see the old lady, but I didn't get anything out of her
but a ten pound note.

ROUTH. (*whistles and walks to fire*) A ten pound note !

DALLAS. Yes, and I've only got the change out of that ;
for I was so horribly cold and shivering, she made me
promise to buy a great coat ; and I invested in that
garment. Pretty thing in witneys—isn't it, Mrs. Routh ?

ROUTH. And that's all you got out of your visit, George ?

DALLAS. All I actually got—but you must have patience,
old fellow, it will all come right. Though my mother's so
hard up for ready money at the moment, she's promised to
help me somehow.

ROUTH. A married woman's name is no good on a bill,
you know.

DALLAS. No, I don't mean in that way ; at all events,
she thinks she'll be able to let me have the money.

ROUTH. The deuce she will ! Well, I congratulate you,
my boy ! I may say I congratulate all of us for the matter
of that ! But it's rather unexpected, isn't it ? I thought

the chances of her bleeding that charming person, her husband, were very remote.

DALLAS. It isn't from him. I don't know where she's to get it. I only know she's to send over old Ellen, my former nurse and her confidante, to me this evening with such resources as she can scrape together!

ROUTH. Well, we mustn't be over particular whence the money comes as long as it does come; but, if not from Mr. Carruther's, whence does she get it?

DALLAS. I don't know—but she doesn't get it without some horrible self-sacrifice, you may depend upon that!

ROUTH. (*sits on table*) My dear George, Mrs. Carruther's case is not a singular one; we none of us get money without an extraordinary amount of self-sacrifice.

DALLAS. But, Routh, suppose when I do get the money it isn't enough, what's to be done then?

ROUTH. Never mind about *then*, *now* is the important matter. Remember every *then* is made up of *nows* and keep your mind easy. That's philosophy, as Mr. Squeers says. Your present business is to get the money.

a DALLAS. Exactly, for I know you want it, Stewart!

ROUTH. That's simply to say, I'm in my normal state—I always want money, my dear George.

DALLAS. How coolly Deane won mine, and what a green-horn I was to be sure. I wonder whether he'd have lost his own so coolly.

ROUTH. Not a doubt of it. He's an odd fellow, and a deuced unpleasant fellow to my mind—a low-lived loafer if ever there was one, but useful in his way. Dallas, every man has a weakness, *his* is to think himself a first-rate billiard player, while he's only fourth-rate. A man under that delusion is sure to lose his money to any one who plays better than he does; and I may as well be that man—don't you see?

DALLAS. I see perfectly, but I wish he had been equally mistaken in his notions of his card playing: it would have made a serious difference to me.

ROUTH. Never mind, old fellow, you shall have your revenge some day. Don't mind me for a minute, George, I've got some papers to look through. Harriet will talk to you. (*goes R. seats himself at desk busying himself with papers*)

HARRIET. (*coming to DALLAS*) I'm not sure that my society will be quite welcome to Mr. Dallas now?

DALLAS. Not welcome, Mrs. Routh, and why not? (*sits c.*)

HARRIET. Do you think I've not noticed the change in your manner, George Dallas—your constant air of abstraction—the way in which you answer at random and without thought?

DALLAS. You know I've been very much engaged of late—my newspaper work—this unfortunate gambling debt —

HARRIET. It is neither newspaper work or gambling which has caused this change, George. However, your confidence is your own, and if you don't choose to give it me — (turning away)

DALLAS. (following her) Stay, best of women. More than once I have been on the point of telling you—now you shall know all. (sits on sofa) Two months ago, when I went down to see my mother, I met, by accident, in the grounds of the house, my step-father's niece, Clara Carruthers!

HARRIET. The heiress?

DALLAS. The heiress! An accidental circumstance threw us into conversation. I found she had read the books I had read, and some which I had written; she knew the pictures I knew, the poems I fancied, and —

HARRIET. And, in short, you found you had a community of taste on every subject, which could lead but to one result.

DALLAS. You're laughing at me, Mrs. Routh. Now I see how right I was in having hitherto kept silent. (half rises)

HARRIET. I'm not laughing at you, George, on my honour. And does the young lady recognize in you the *bête noire* of her uncle—his step-son?

DALLAS. No, she only knows me as Paul Ward, the writer. She called me Mr. Ward when I saw her to-day?

HARRIET. You saw her to-day?

DALLAS. Yes, after I had seen my mother. She must have admired me in that precious coat! (pointing to it.)

HARRIET. And you are in love with this young lady, George?

DALLAS. In love with her? What would be the use of that? I, the outcast, the black sheep, spurned from the house, and compelled to seek interviews with my own mother in secret. Oh, if I could only once climb out of this slough of despond!—if I could only once clear myself from these wretched surroundings of gambling, swindling and vice —

ROUTH. (who has been listening, rises and comes down)

There, there's an end at last of these confounded accounts, George, old fellow, I'm dazed with writing, and I've got an appointment which I must go to at once. Would you mind putting all those papers on the desk into an envelope and sealing them up?

DALLAS. All right, Stewart! (*goes to table and settles papers.*)

ROUTH. (*aside to HARRIET*) Look out, Harry, I warned you of his notions of reforming; and now you hear for yourself.

HARRIET. It means nothing, Stewart.

ROUTH. That must be your care—he *must* be kept bound to us, and that can only be by your influence, so take care. (*aloud*) Now I must be off. Good night, George, good luck old boy. Adieu, Harry. (*kisses her*) Good bye, George! Faint heart never raised any money. (*exit door, R. c.*)

DALLAS. Stewart's as bright and cheery as ever!

HARRIET. (*with a half sigh*) Yes, considering the worries he has to go through, his spirits are wonderful, poor fellow. He was noticing by the way, George, that we hadn't seen much of you lately; and we don't like to lose our friends.

DALLAS. No one more readily owns the kindness received from you, than I, Mrs. Routh.

HARRIET. And you are not tired of the acquaintance, George?

DALLAS. Heaven knows not, as far as you are concerned; but your quick woman's sympathies will tell you, that when I think of Miss Carruthers and her position so far above mine, when I look at the purposeless and worse than purposeless life which I am leading now —

HARRIET. (*shuddering*) I understand George, I understand.

DEANE enters door R. c., DALLAS rises and leans against table.

HARRIET. Mr. Deane!

DEANE. That's so! How do, Paul Ward? How air you, sir? Mrs. Routh, I've just stepped in to fetch your husband to supper. I've been taking the knots out of my legs in a turn up town; and I've got an appetite which won't bear playin' with. So let Routh step along.

HARRIET. My husband has been compelled to go out on business. He will not be long.

DEANE. Husband's gone out, eh? When the cat's away—no need to finish the sentence. Paul Ward, sir, you air a lucky man

DALLAS. (*coolly*) I'm not happy enough to follow you, Mr. Deane.

DEANE. Wal, that may be, but still I shouldn't mind fol-lerin' you in such a chase as this. I love the sex, I do; and I find the sex love me: but here in England they absorb a power of dollars.

HARRIET. (*at window*) You're so rich, Mr. Deane, that it must be quite a pleasure to you to make presents.

DEANE. Wal yes, in a certain way. Except when I'm savin' my money, I find I'm never so happy as when I'm making presents to myself.

DALLAS. To yourself? Presents to yourself?

DEANE. Wal, yes, I don't know anybody as deserves presents better, at least from me. Look here, Mrs. Routh, at these diamond studs, now I call them first-class, nothing one horse about them. (*takes a glass of wine*.)

HARRIET. Yes, they are beautiful indeed. (*aside*) Where can Stewart be? My heart is beating so frightfully that I fear my agitation will be noticed. (*aloud*) I know you'll excuse me, Mr. Deane—I feel a little fatigued, and —

DEANE. Don't say another word about it, Mrs. Routh, go and rest yourself. I'll entertain Ward here till Routh comes in.

HARRIET. He's sure not to be long. (*aside*) Can this be a presentiment of evil! (*aloud*) And really I'm anything but well. Pray excuse me. (*exit R. D.*)

DEANE. What's become of that darned Routh? Our supper will be spoiled. (*x's to table and sits facing DALLAS*) Yes, of course, and you like Mrs. Routh so much, that you stop on here with these people, instead of, like the prodigal son, goin' home to your father, and succeedin' the old man in the business.

DALLAS. My father? I have no father.

DEANE. Haven't you though?

DALLAS. I have a mother.

DEANE. That's respectable. When air you going back to the old lady?

DALLAS. There's some one else to be consulted—my mother is married again—I have a step father.

DEANE. Scissors! and you and he have collided more than once, I suspect?

DALLAS. Collided? Do you mean come into collision?

DEANE. Expect I do.

DALLAS. I'm forbidden the house. I'm looked upon as a pest—a contamination.

DEANE. Wal, but the old gentleman wouldn't catch anything from you. They don't take contamination easy after fifty.

DALLAS. Oh, it's not for himself that Mr. Carruthers is afraid. (DEANE starts and rises) He's all right—he—what's the matter?

DEANE. Matter? Nothing. What name did you say?

DALLAS. Carruthers—Capel Carruthers—county family, down in Kent.

DEANE. (with an effort) Go ahead! Who then are you likely to hurt?

DALLAS. His niece, Clara Carruthers.

DEANE. And this niece—what is she like? Is she pretty?

DALLAS. Pretty? she's the prettiest girl in all England, and might be a duchess from the perfection of her style—and—

DEANE. Hallo here, pile on the wood, and tie the safety valve down with rope yarn. We air goin' ahead, we air, and mean to realise stakes, or bust.

DALLAS. Ah, you should see her—however, after all, she'll never be anything to me.

DEANE. I should think not indeed—heiresses don't go as cheap as that. And she's very pretty, Miss Clara?

DALLAS. What on earth makes you care to know?

DEANE. Nothing at all. I only care to know what's become of this darned Routh, and why he isn't here to his time? (pulls out watch) Look here, getting on for eleven now.

DALLAS. Why Deane, you've as many charms as a rich widow, or a railway director's daughter. What on earth is this big golden egg?

DEANE. What's that? Why that's a locket, that is, containing a photo—

DALLAS. Might one ask whose?

DEANE. One might ask, but two mightn't answer. No my friend Ward, you are not the only man as has a secret connected with the fair sex—you're not. This locket was given me by a lovely woman, and it contains her photo—she's got the ditto of it with mine.

DALLAS. And you won't let me see the lady's face?

DEANE. Not if I know it—you air a dangerous cuss, and— (loud knock, D.F.) Hallo, what's that?

Enter JIM SWAIN, door R. C.

Why, what on airth's this?

JIM. Don't ye flurry yourself in that way, or you'll bust, and what a go that would be; you should think of your precious family, you should.

DALLAS. Why, Jim! will you —?

JIM. No, I won't, sir, and that's all about it. I've brought a note from Mr. Routh, for Mr. Deane.

DEANE. Shell it out then, I'm Mr. Deane.

JIM. You are? Beg pardon, guv'nor, here's the dispatch. (*brings out peg top, pair of bones, etc., at last a note.*)

DEANE. Well, what more do you want?

JIM. I'm waitin' for the tanner you're going to give me for bringin' this letter. (DEANE makes an angry grimace, then reads note.)

DEANE. (*flinging down note*) Darned cuss. Come along, Ward, let's be off. (X's and touches him on shoulder.)

DALLAS. What's the matter? Is Routh not coming?

DEANE. No, he's defected, like a cussed skunk. Reglar riles me, that does, to be put in the hole for such a one horse concern as Mr. Routh.

DALLAS. Perhaps he couldn't come.

DEANE. Couldn't! that might do for some people, but won't no how with me. Mr. Routh wants more of me than I do of him, as I'll show him before long.

JIM. (*taking up DALLAS' coat*) That's a rum coat—country built, for a tanner—reglar reach me down style. (*looks inside*) Evans—Amherst, thought so, twig the slop, anywhere.

DALLAS. Leave my coat alone, Jim—what are you at?

JIM. Only feeling the nap. Nice coat, sir—not so nice as t'other gents, sir. Nice 'areskin coat yours, sir. Come from the Zoological Gardens, didn't it, sir? Sort of coat the Polar bears wear when its frosty?

DEANE. Leave that coat alone, can't you? Keep your hands off things that don't belong to you. You are a young imp, you are.

JIM. (*sings*) "Yankee doodle come to town." Why don't you speak through your nose, stranger? why don't—

HARRIET. (*enters d. r.*) You here Jim, and making all this noise?

JIM. Beg pardon mum, beg pardon, Mrs. Routh—didn't know you was so near, mum; brought a note from Mr. Routh for this furrin' gent.

HARRIET. (*to Deane*) A note for you? from my husband?

DEANE. Yes, Mrs. Routh, and a note that—wal—that reg'lar riles me, that's a fact. Your husband can't come to supper with me to night, as he'd promised.

HARRIET. (*aside*) Can't come to supper! what does he mean? (*aloud*) I'm sorry to hear that, Mr. Deane; you may depend upon it Stewart finds it really impossible, or—

DEANE. Impossible's a word that's not known t'other side of the water, Mrs. Routh; it's only to be found by you Britishers in that dictionary written by Walker. However, it can't be helped, I suppose; so come along (*takes his arm*) Paul Ward, we'll say good night to Mrs. Routh and slope.

DALLAS. Well Deane, I'm afraid I shall come in for a share of your reproach myself. I'm to meet a messenger who is coming from my mother on business of the utmost importance; and I cannot stop long.

DEANE. Oh, all right, don't mind me. Seems to me you're all too big swells to come out to supper; however, you can come to Barton's to liquor up, I suppose?

DALLAS. Of course I can, it's all in my way.

DEANE. (*sarcastically*) That's lucky, glad I've suggested something pleasant at last. (*storm outside, the window blows open*) What's that?

JIM. That's the wind, that is.

HARRIET. What a frightful night. (*looks out*) Dark and wet.

DEANE. Now if I wasn't in your celebrated London, where the police force is so splendid, and nobody is ever robbed, I'd be cheery about walking the streets with all this money about me. (*takes out pocket book*.)

DALLAS. You are a foolish fellow to run the risk.

DEANE. (*laughs*) Not I! I never go out at night without taking a friend or two with me.

HARRIET. (*excitedly*) A friend or two! where are they now?

DEANE. (*producing revolver*) Here, Mrs. Routh, let me introduce Colonel Colt and five of his children. This six-shooter is the best friend a man could have.

HARRIET. Yes, of course. (*aside*) The man's armed, oh Heavens! if—(*reels*.)

JIM. (*rushes to her*) What's the matter, Mrs. Routh? Look out you coves, she's going off in a fit, she's—

HARRIET. (*recovering*) Nonsense, Jim, it's nothing. I'm better now—I'm—

DEANE. Darn you, you young cuss, shovin' your oar in whar it warn't wanted ; let me kick him out, Mrs. Routh, before I go.

HARRIET. Oh, no, don't be angry with him, Mr. Deane, he means well, I know. Come Jim, it's getting late, you must go.

JIM. All right mum, I'm off; good night, mum. (*aside*) Regular rum start this, can't make it out. I'll keep my eye on these coves. (*exit D. R. C.*)—DALLAS gets coat.

DEANE. Wal, good night Mrs. Routh ; if it war accordin' to British etiquette, I'd ask you to come and liquor up with Ward and me, 'stead of your husband, who hasn't behaved right, but it ain't, so good night.

HARRIET. (*gives hat*) Good night Mr. Deane ; good night, George.

DALLAS. Good night Mrs. Routh ; I must see you the first thing in the morning, you and Routh.

HARRIET. (*aside*) As soon as you've seen your mother's messenger—any time, any time.

DEANE. Good night! you come along old hoss, and take care of me and my money. (*exit D. F.*)

HARRIET. Thank Heaven, they are gone at last! why did Stewart send that note? and say he could not sup with Deane? This money so urgently required! Is it possible he can contemplate —? No! I dare not think of that! We must have the money, he said, must have it! and how? an awful risk! (*puts down gas, goes to window and looks out—thunder*) The night is wild, the storm rages! Through-out all our trials, even when ruin stared us in the face, when poverty plucked us by the elbow, when all hope, save such hope as is cherished by the desperate, was lost to us, I have never felt such a sinking of the heart, such a terror of the soul as I feel now! How will it end? Oh, heavens, how will it end? (*knock*) What's that? How nervous I am! Come in.

Enter MARY ANN, door R. C.

MARY. Do you want anything more to-night, Mrs. Routh?

HARRIET. (*taking up her work, and pretending to be busy*) No, nothing thank you, Mary Ann, you are going to bed, is it so late?

MARY. Past twelve, mum, I've left the gas alight in the hall as Mr. Routh's not in yet. It's an awful night, mum, I'm afraid he'll get wet!

HARRIET. It is, indeed, a storm! Good night, Mary Ann!

MARY. Good night, Mrs. Routh ! (exit D. R. C.)

HARRIET. (*throwing down her work*) It is impossible for me to work, it is impossible for me to rest! all I can do is to hover round this window, and— Where did Deane propose to take George? To Barton's, the hotel close by, quite close. George wouldn't stop to supper, he will be leaving him soon then, and Deane will be alone—and Stewart? It is an awful risk! The night is so dark that I can distinguish nothing but the howling of the wind, and the patterning of the rain upon the pavement! What was that? I thought I heard a moan. It was only the sighing of the wind. (*she returns to chair, c.*) My nerves are playing tricks with me! Whatever happens I must be firm and cool, and able to advise and battle with it—whatever happens? What *should* happen? not the *worst!* I dare not think the *worst!* What's that? The latch key in the lock! His step on the stairs! 'Tis he! (*music.*)

Enter ROUTH, D. R. C., he is pale but calm, HARRIET rushes to meet him, stops as she is about to embrace him.

HARRIET. (*aside*) It is the *worst!* I see it in his face! (*to him in a low tone*) Have you succeeded?

ROUTH. I have succeeded!

HARRIET. You have the money?

ROUTH. (*showing DEANE's pocket-book*) I have the money!

HARRIET. That pocket-book! Go to the fire you must be very cold!

ROUTH. I am cold!

HARRIET. Let me take off your coat—it is wet! (*does so.*)

ROUTH. Likely enough! (*HARRIET looks at her hand, screams and drops coat*) What is it?

HARRIET. Nothing! (*goes to table, takes water bottle, and pours it over her fingers—both regard one another intently.*)

ROUTH. Come, Harry, you must be brave, you must! (*offers to embrace her.*)

HARRIET. (*avoiding him*) Not yet! not yet!

ROUTH. As you will! (*stoops to pick up coat.*)

HARRIET. Don't touch it! (*takes coat by end of sleeve, drags it across stage, and throws it into room R.*)

ROUTH. Harriet, you don't ask —

HARRIET. Hush! I ask nothing, want to know nothing! Let me think now what is to be done! (*knock.*)

ROUTH. What's that?

HARRIET. Hush! let me see. (*goes to window*) It is George

Dallas, he must come in—I'll throw him down the key.
(throws the key from the balcony) Now get to your room—he
mustn't see you!

ROUTH. *(aside)* She says nothing, but she knows all!

(exit R.) HARRIET with lamp opens D. F.

Enter DALLAS, door R. C.

DALLAS. It is awfully late, Mrs. Routh, but you told me
to come, you know. Is Stewart in? *(down R.)*

HARRIET. No, not yet!

DALLAS. You look ill—that boy Jem was right. What
is the matter?

HARRIET. *(sits c.)* Nothing, I am tired, that's all. Well,
did you meet the messenger? Did your mother send the
money?

DALLAS. No, not the money!

HARRIET. Not the money—what did she send?

DALLAS. Something quite as good I hope! *(aside)* How
odd and absent her manner is to-night. *(aloud)* What is it,
Mrs. Routh? I thought you were listening to something.

HARRIET. *(with forced laugh)* So I am—listening to you!
What have you got there?

DALLAS. *(taking out case)* A diamond bracelet, which I
am to sell to raise the money I want. Just let me take off
my wet coat! *(pulls it off and throws it on chair R. C.)* I should
not have had that protection for I left it behind me at
Barton's but I sent Jem Swain after it, he knew it and
brought it to me.

HARRIET. *(aside)* The coat! recognised by Jem Swain!
I must get rid of that! it may implicate George! poor
fellow! He was last seen with Deane—his life may be in
danger. The coat must be disposed of, and he must be
got away! Yes, for his sake as well as Stewart's safety.
These diamonds will be an excellent excuse! yes, it shall
be so. *(aloud)* These are very splendid and valuable
diamonds?

DALLAS. I don't like taking them from my mother. It
seems like a robbery, doesn't it?

HARRIET. *(starting)* What? George, these diamonds must
not be sold without proper precautions—they must be
broken up from the setting—that can be done at once, and
you must take them abroad to sell them!

DALLAS. Abroad?

HARRIET. Abroad! Family diamonds like these would
be recognised in England; and it is doubtful whether you
would find a respectable jeweller to buy them! you must

go to Amsterdam, you'll find an easy market for them there!

DALLAS. Amsterdam?

HARRIET. Yes, it is the common resort of persons who have diamonds to sell; and you would dispose of them there without suspicion or difficulty. You need only be gone a couple of days—see, there is the “Bradshaw”—look out for the hours of sailing of the Dutch steamers, while I see if I can't find something in my husband's dressing-case to break up the jewelry. (*she exits R. D., and unseen by DALLAS, takes his coat with her.*)

DALLAS. What a wonderful woman she is! How kind and always considerate for me! There's not her match in England!

Re-enter HARRIET, r. door with Routh's coat, which she places on chair in place of Dallas's.

HARRIET. (*aside*) So far! (*brings instruments to table*) Now to loosen the jewels! (*works at table, and turns up gas.*)

DALLAS. (*reading*) “Argus, for Rotterdam, 7 a.m.” to-morrow—no, this morning—not another boat till Thursday. After all I may as well go this morning, Mrs. Routh!

HARRIET. (*at work*) Come and help me, George. Sort the diamonds by themselves—leave the turquoisees in the gold!

DALLAS. (*at work*) You're a woman of wonderful resources Mrs. Routh; Stewart's a clever fellow, but he must owe a lot of his success to you.

HARRIET. So you admit—you, a man—that a man's success in life may be due to one whom you call the softer sex?

DALLAS. Pardon me, we say the better half. It were strange if a man were not the luckiest dog alive with you by his side! But I must not say too much or Routh will be jealous.

HARRIET. Ah, Stewart is not jealous!

DALLAS. He's not always an easy customer to deal with! By the way, I hope he'll make it up with Deane.

HARRIET. Why?

DALLAS. Deane was awfully angry about his not coming just now to Barton's—swore and went on so that all the people in the coffee-room stared at us!

HARRIET. (*aside*) They were seen together there—when George is gone, all trace is lost—there is a hope in that. (*aloud*) That will do, George, see whether the storm is past. (*DALLAS goes to window*) Well?

DALLAS. The clouds are clearing away and drift heavily over the moon. The storm is growling in the distance now.

HARRIET. (*aside*) The clouds clear away—the storm growls only in the distance—would it were so indeed! (*aloud*) After all you may have a fine passage to Rotterdam.

DALLAS. I think I shall, Mrs. Routh!

HARRIET. That's good! all is done now. (*she takes paper from drawer and tears it in half*) I'll wrap the diamonds in this—the turquoises and settings I will keep for you till you return. (*she wraps the rest in the other half, and puts in drawer, giving DALLAS the packet of diamonds*) There are the stones!

DALLAS. A thousand thanks for all your kindness! (*he looks at packet, and says aside*) and wrapped in a letter of our friend Deane's I declare. It makes them additionally interesting!

HARRIET. (*turns out gas*) Ah! how foolish of me! I have turned out the gas! As if I couldn't have waited till you had gone!

DALLAS. Never mind, I can find my way—you'll explain to Stewart all that has happened? Good night! (*he takes up ROUTH's coat and throws it over his arm*) I hope to see you before the end of the week. Good night. (*exit D. R. C.*)

HARRIET. Poor boy! poor boy! How wonderful! The very stones in the street seem to cry it out and yet he hasn't heard. At all events it's tided over; and he is safe! (*looks towards chamber*) But is he safe?

Enter ROUTH, D. R. C., with coat which he places on chair, approaches HARRIET, and touches her.

HARRIET. Ah!—You have heard —?

ROUTH. All! you have saved me!

HARRIET. So far! but it is only for a time! The man last seen with Deane will soon be far away—some pretext must be found to keep him away. (*JIM appears at window watching*) Hush, he has taken your coat, and his must now be disposed of. (*takes coat from chair, and goes towards D.*)

ROUTH. Where are you going?

HARRIET. To the river, to the bridge with this! (*she goes to D. F., returns and throws her arms round his neck.*)

ROUTH. Harriet, what is this? (*she sobs hysterically*) My brave girl! (*she kisses him, and totters towards C. D., just before reaching it, she turns and looks at him—distant*

lightning. JIM is seen in balcony. ROUTH sits at table, takes notes out of DEANE's pocket-book, places them in an envelope, and writes direction as the act drop falls.)

END OF ACT FIRST.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Public Gardens at Homburg—Façade of the Public Rooms behind, flanked by a terrace. Windows open on terrace. Steps descend to garden by three terraces, which lead from the rooms. Balustrades terminate the lowest terrace—trees on either side—orange trees in tubs—alleys—refreshment tables and chairs. Sunset, afterwards moonlight.*

MR. CARRUTHERS and CLARE seated at table R. C., groups at other tables—WAITERS moving about—VISITORS lounge about during scene, entering and leaving the public rooms at different ways. Band playing off stage.

CLARE. (R. C.) Now, uncle, this is the pleasantest portion of the day, to sit out here in this lovely garden, and take our coffee in the open air is real enjoyment. Surely Homburg is the nicest of all the German watering-places.

MR. C. (R. C.) I loathe and detest all foreign places and all foreign people, and all foreign ways and customs. (WAITER comes to table) What does the fellow want? Money, of course! How much?

CLARE. Five groschen, I think, uncle.

MR. C. Five groschen, what's that? Why don't the man say sixpence at once and have done with it. There you are. (WAITER bows and retires) What was I saying when that fellow interrupted me? Talk about manners, indeed! they've no more manners than hogs.

CLARE. (laughs) You were railing against foreign places, uncle.

MR. C. Ah, I loathe them all. To think that I, Capel Carruthers, of Poynings, in the county of Kent, J.P., and other dignities, should have a wife who chooses to be taken ill at the shooting season, of all times in the year, and that I should have to bring her to Homburg, where the waters have been recommended to her.

CLARE. Poor dear aunt, her illness was so sudden.

MR. C. (*indignant*) Poor dear aunt certainly, but poor dear uncle a little too, if you please! It really is most perverse of Mrs. Carruthers to be ill just at this time.

CLARE. But surely, dear uncle, it was not my aunt's fault that she was taken ill: it was rather her misfortune.

MR. C. (*testily*) I don't know, my dear. My experience teaches me that a woman's misfortune is generally her fault. It's confoundedly unfortunate just at this time, when, as a magistrate, I had a chance of coming under the notice of the Home Office. That murder case would have got me my deputy-lieutenancy.

CLARE. Oh, uncle, what a horrible notion!

MR. C. Horrible notion! Nothing of the sort. I suppose that's what your aunt felt. I was reading the *Times* to her: and I had just got to that part, where it said that the murderer wore a coat that had been purchased at Evans' the tailor's at our town of Amherst, when Mrs. Carruthers uttered a groan, fainted, and has never been herself since.

CLARE. Poor dear aunt, that dreadful business! (*drops her head on her breast*)

MR. C. Really, my dear Clare, this is a little too much, I suppose you are going to be ill now. What on earth is the matter with all the women?

CLARE. (*rousing*) I am quite well, uncle; you need be under no apprehension for me.

MR. C. I trust not, indeed. Enough without anything more to plague me. I have had troubles. To think of my son—a son of Mr. Carruthers, of Poynings—turning out a scamp, running away to America, and remaining there for years without letting us know anything about him.

SERVANT enters with letters and newspapers which he gives to

MR. CARRUTHERS and exits—*lamp-man lights the lamps before the rooms. Moonlight.*

News from England at last. Here, Clare, take the newspaper while I look through my letters. (*opens one, reads*) "London and County Bank, Liverpool Branch.—Dear Sir,—I beg to inform you Mr. Arthur Carruthers honoured your draft at sight July 10th." That's nearly six weeks ago. Why, Clare, Arthur has been in England and never come near us. That's unkind!

CLARE. Where can he have gone to, uncle?

MR. C. I can't imagine. Wait a minute, here's another from America. (*opens and reads*) "Perhaps you may obtain intelligence of your son from an American lady, a

Mrs. Ireton P. Bembridge, with whom he was very friendly in New York. This lady sailed a month since in the Scotia for England, *en route* for Paris and Germany.”

CLARE. That sounds promising, does it not?

MR. C. It does indeed, my dear. This lady is sure to come here. Americans think Germany means Homburg, Baden, and the Rhine. Ah, here's a letter from Tatlow, the detective, whom I am employing to track this silly boy. What does he say? (*reads*) “Dear Sir,—No trace of the party as yet. If Mr. A. C. has been in England he has changed his name for some purpose. As, however, I am on business on the continent of Europe, which at present I am at Amsterdam, having a little job on hand concerning the murder near the Strand, and as I may probably have to come to Homburg, I will do myself the honour of conferring with you personally on the subject.” A very clever man that—a very ——

CLARE. (*who has been reading newspaper, drops it*) Good heavens!

MR. C. What on earth's the matter now?

CLARE. I have been reading again of that horrid murder, uncle; and I hate to hear of it.

MR. C. Hate to hear of it? One of the most important crimes which could possibly — (*takes paper*) Where is it, my dear? Oh, I see! (*reads*) Hum! links of evidence becoming stronger — Coat of the young man who was last seen with the murdered man has been fished up out of the Thames, and has been recognised by those who saw the two together at Barton's Hotel — Maker's name—ah, that was known before — He was heard at the hotel to talk to his victim about money, and they left the house together — But little doubt can rest on the minds of impartial readers, &c. Very well managed by the police, I must say, very well managed.

CLARE. (*aside*) My doubts and fears are redoubled by this news. Could he be the murderer? He! impossible! and yet ——

MRS. B. (*speaks outside*) Oh, there is Mr. Carruthers, with Miss Clare.

Enter Mrs. Brooks with TATLOW, R.

MRS. B. My dearest mistress is asleep, sir—sleeping quite calmly. So I left her for a few moments to bring this person who was inquiring for you!

MR. C. Quite right, nurse, you have acted with your usual discretion. Well, Mr. Tatlow?

TATLOW. Evening, sir ! Got my letter all right ?

MR. C. Your communication was duly received.

TATLOW. Ah, come to hand, eh ? Don't trust the foreign posts much, though—deliver the letters when they've got nothing else to do, seems to me, and hate their thin paper. Well, sir, now about this missing gent. You don't happen to have a photo of him, do you ?

MR. C. No, I do not : but I expect the arrival here of an American lady with whom my son was very intimate in New York ; and she probably possesses some counterfeit resemblance of him in portraiture.

TATLOW. (*aside*) Wordy old gent, swallowed the dictionary kind of fellow. (*aloud*) Shouldn't wonder, sir, some gents is always a giving their *cartes* to ladies ; but we'll see. That other case where you and me was in is coming out pretty clear, sir !

MR. C. What, the Strand murder ?

TATLOW. That's it ! I think I know the man for that. I came upon his track at Amsterdam, where I picked up some evidence that ought to finish him.

MR. C. This is very interesting. You recollect when you first came to me at my country seat, I, as a magistrate, expressed my deep interest in the case. You shall tell me more. Let us walk this way. Clare, my dear, you had better go home. This way, Mr. Tatlow, this is a most important case, sir, a most important case.

(*exit* MR. CARRUTHERS and TATLOW, R.

CLARE. That man said the murder was coming out clear—clear against *him* does that mean ? In Heaven's name I trust not, the mere thought turns me faint !

MRS. B. (*observing her*) She is strangely agitated, can she suspect our grief ? (*aloud*) Miss Clare, my child, what is the matter, darling ?

CLARE. I can keep up no longer. Oh, nurse, I feel as if my heart would break !

MRS. B. My child, I am but a stupid old woman : but I have seen a good deal of the world ; and what is more to the purpose, I am very fond of you. Why not confide in me ?

CLARE. There's not much to tell. One morning, as I was riding through the park in front of our house, I saw a young man sketching. He entered into conversation—he was gentlemanly, clever, and agreeable. I saw him several times afterwards ; and there grew up a kind of flirtation between us—and now, oh nurse, from the description of

the man who is suspected of having committed this murder—of the coat he wore I feel sure it was he.

MRS. B. Ah, then you too, have the same terrible doubts as my poor mistress?

CLARE. As Mrs. Carruthers! why, what has she to do with it? What can interest her in the matter?

MRS. B. What has she to do with it? what can interest her? You don't know then who this young man is?

CLARE. Yes, I do, he told me his name!

MRS. B. And yet you ask what interest Mrs. Carruthers can take in the matter?

Enter GEORGE DALLAS, L.

Good heavens! Master George, you here?

CLARE. Paul Ward!

MRS. B. Paul Ward? no, George Dallas, my mistress's son.

DALLAS. (*coming forward*) Paul Ward and George Dallas both! Forgive me, Miss Carruthers, for having introduced myself to you only by my *nom de plume*, my literary pseudonym! I am George Dallas!

MRS. B. Is this the gentleman of whom you were speaking?

CLARE. It is.

MRS. B. But what has brought you here, Master George?

DALLAS. I have come here to see my mother: and see her I will, despite Mr. Carruthers and his commands! Besides, my friends the Rouths are here, and I have business with them.

MRS. B. Are Mr. and Mrs. Routh friends of yours, Master George?

DALLAS. Yes, and good friends. Routh, even when I was in his debt, sent me over money in notes to Amsterdam, to help me along. I've repaid the money; but I don't forget the obligation; and now Ellen, you must take me to my mother.

MRS. B. That is impossible, Master George.

DALLAS. Impossible, and why?

MRS. B. George Dallas, some weeks ago, a man was found murdered near the Strand, London, in a street leading to the river. The last person seen in the murdered man's company, wore a thick blue overcoat; it was noticed by the people that saw them together. George Dallas, that coat was bought and worn by *you*.

DALLAS. And you all believed that I was the murderer?

CLARE. No, George, no—I did not, could not, do not believe it.

DALLAS. Thanks for that assurance! (*turning to MRS. BROOKS*) And my mother thought I had committed this crime?

MRS. B. No George, she only feared it.

DALLAS. This is a horrible mystery. Who is the man who has been murdered? What was the motive?

CLARE. You will find the account in this newspaper, just arrived.

DALLAS. (*reads*) Good heavens! the man was Deane.

MRS. B. You know him then?

DALLAS. Know him? Yes. Oh, what a position to be placed in! This man, whose overcoat the waiter described in his evidence, there is not doubt was Deane. I begin to understand it all now; but who can have murdered him? and for what motive? I understand now why I was suspected. Nothing could have been more natural. However, I will at once communicate with the police in England, and make all clear. Now Ellen, more than ever I must see my mother. Under this misery of suspicion, my one gleam of comfort is that you did not suspect me, Miss Carruthers.

CLARE. I do not indeed, Mr. Dallas.

DALLAS. And tell me, I have no right to ask, I know; and yet I cannot help it—has the discovery that Paul Ward the writer is George Dallas, the profligate outcast, as you have always been taught to believe him, made no difference in your feelings?

CLARE. None.

DALLAS. Bless you Clare, for that word. It shall be the light in the dark cloud which seems overshadowing me.

MRS. B. Miss Clare, there is danger in every moment's delay. I will fetch you to my mistress, George, as soon as I have prepared her for your arrival, now.

(*exit MRS. BEMBRIDGE, and CLARE, R.*

DALLAS. Deane murdered! and general suspicion pointing to me as the murderer. It's too awful! I'll consult Mrs. Routh as to what is to be done; she has the clearest head, I know. What an extraordinary thing that she did not mention the murder when I saw her this morning. She must have heard of it, I suppose; that is most strange. (*sits himself. MRS. ROUTH enters L., goes up the terraces, and looks through window into public rooms.*)

HARRIET. Yes, there is Stewart at play again. In him

the spirit of gaming is irradicable, and now in our better fortune, he plays as eagerly as if we were poor. In our *better* fortune! ah, how much happier was I when we were poor. Who is that handsome woman to whom Stewart is speaking? How strangely he looks at her; and her bold black eyes flash again as she answers him. Who can she be? How Stewart bends over her as he speaks, and with what an air of coquetry she looks at him. Now they leave the table together—I—no—that would be absurd. To follow them would look as if I were jealous. (*coming down*) A change has come over Stewart—light, careless, and indolent, yet he paid attention to business, and was guided by my merest word; now, I speak to him in vain. I cannot get him to see his danger—George Dallas's arrival here is a blow, a blow which will fall on me; for Stewart will keep out of his way, of course, and not undertake the daily torture; but for me—I am tied to the stake and cannot escape. Ah, George! (*meeting DALLAS, who has risen*) What news of your mother?

DALLAS. Bad indeed, Mrs. Routh; my mother has been nearly killed by being obliged to suspect me of a dreadful crime.

HARRIET. (*aside*) He knows it then. (*aloud*) A dreadful crime! you, Mr. Dallas, what do you mean?

DALLAS. A murder has been committed, in which I would appear to have been implicated. I hardly know how to tell you, Mrs. Routh; the circumstances are so shocking, and so very strange. The man who has been murdered was Philip Deane.

HARRIET. And you accused of his murder? on what grounds?

DALLAS. I was the last person seen in his company, and the newspapers plainly point to me as the man.

HARRIET. What do you intend to do?

DALLAS. To do, Mrs. Routh? why return to England, communicate with the police, and clear up the mystery.

HARRIET. (*seated L.*) And you *can* do that?

DALLAS. Of course I can.

HARRIET. Take care, George, I am not so sure of that. Let us look at the case in all its bearings. You *were* with this man at Barton's hotel—you *did* leave the tavern in his company—you *did* wear the coat to which the waiter swears.

DALLAS. Yes, yes.

HARRIET. This wretched young man had money about him of which he boasted. You had *no* money: but on the

morning after the murder you left England hurriedly, without any hint of previous intention, and went to Amsterdam, where, under an assumed name, you offered certain valuable diamonds for sale. You will say those were your mothers!

DALLAS. No, that must never come out.

HARRIET. You would be forced to explain it. You must account for the diamonds you sold at Amsterdam, George, or who will believe they are not stolen from Deane?

DALLAS. I remember his studs and ring!

HARRIET. They would have been broken up, of course; and remember, George, they were unset diamonds you sold at Amsterdam.

DALLAS. This is too horrible! the net closes round me on every side; and yet I must tell what I know.

HARRIET. You had better keep quiet. That you should peril your own safety, drag your mother's name into police courts, arouse the anger and stab the pride of your step-father, and very probably be called upon to avow your relations with Miss Carruthers seems to me monstrous and irrational!

DALLAS. My mother and Clare!

HARRIET. Think of their names paraded in the papers! besides you can only give Justice negative assistance. You can't tell them who the criminal is, or give any information about Deane.

DALLAS. No, but then, you know, Routh can!

HARRIET. Ah! (*falls into chair.*)

DALLAS. You are overcome, Mrs. Routh! We've talked too much of this dreadful subject! There! I'll say no more about it! I'll not move in the matter!

HARRIET. You won't!

DALLAS. No. I'll defer to your better sense! you are the best of friends to me!

HARRIET. (*shudders*) Don't say that, George! (*aside*) Once more tided over! I must see Stewart, and put him on his guard! (*aloud*) Good bye for the present, George. I have business to—oh, stop! The gold setting of your mother's bracelet which you left with me on that—that dreadful night—I have carried in my desk ever since; and just now I put it in my pocket to give you. Here it is. (*gives packet*)

DALLAS. (*taking it*) Why it seems impossible for us to get out of this one subject! If I am not mistaken, this paper, in which this gold is wrapped, is in Deane's handwriting?

HARRIET. What! give it here! give it —

Enter MRS. BEMBRIDGE, from rooms behind, laughing, followed by ROUTH.

ROUTH. Stop! stop! you shall not stir without me, I swear!

HARRIET. Ah! Stewart and that woman together again!

MRS. BROOKS. (*entering r.*) Master George, I have arranged it all with my dear mistress! She is prepared to see you now—so come with me at once!

DALLAS. I will, nurse. Good bye, Mrs. Routh. (*she is intent watching ROUTH*) She doesn't hear me! never mind I shall soon see her again! (*exit DALLAS and MRS. BROOKS, r.*)

HARRIET. (*aside*) Stewart follows her like a shadow! (*aloud*) George, give me the —. Why, he is gone! Well, another time! Better I should be alone and unobserved. Ah, they are coming here.

(*goes behind foliage, l.*)

MRS. BEMB. (*descending steps*) The stifling heat of those rooms is too much for me! I was dying for fresh air! and yet I ought not to complain, for I have won!

ROUTH. Are you always so successful?

MRS. BEMB. Always! and in everything! I invariably play to win, but sometimes I care very little for the game, and tire in the winning! Will you fetch me a chair? (*ROUTH does*) Thanks, I am a little tired! (*they sit.*)

ROUTH. And so you are always successful? I believe that firmly. Indeed, how could you fail? I cannot fancy anything but triumph for such a Venus Victrix as you are!

MRS. BEMB. You say very pretty things; and you say them very well. But I think I'm a little tired of *them* among other things. You see I've heard so many, ever since I can remember!

ROUTH. You are not easily understood; but you are the most charming of enigmas!

MRS. BEMB. Again! (*holding up her hand laughingly.*)

ROUTH. Yes, again and again! How can I be silent when I am near you—and what can I say, but whisper my adoration of you? By heavens! you have completely turned my brain! I can think of nothing but you! The tone of your voice is ever ringing in my ears! The look of your eyes—the pose of your head are for ever mirrored on my mind! I'm infatuated about you, and I worship you!

MRS. BEMB. You are the wildest and most imprudent of admirers!

Enter MR. CARRUTHERS and TATLOW, R.

Don't you see some people coming this way?

MR. C. (*advances*) Mrs. Ireton Bembridge, I am informed. I am aware, madam, that, in thus addressing you unintroduced, I am deviating from the strict rules of etiquette; but I have pressing reasons for the step! The fact is, madam, I am Mr. Capel Carruthers, of Poynings, the father of Arthur Carruthers, with whom, I understand, you were intimately acquainted in New York?

MRS. BEMB. Oh, indeed! Yes, I knew Mr. Arthur Carruthers! he was good enough to admire me!

MR. C. He could not do otherwise, madam! but Mrs. Bembridge, can you give me any notion of Arthur's whereabouts? He was to have come to England two months since; but we have never seen him and can find no trace of him!

MRS. BEMB. Sorry, I can't help you! All I know is that Arthur promised to meet me in Paris, and afterwards come on to Homburg. He didn't show up in Paris; and I've heard no more of him!

MR. C. This is most unfortunate! I am sorry to intrude upon you further; but I am most anxious in this matter! Have you by chance any portrait of Arthur taken recently—a photograph, for instance? It might materially assist the researches of Inspector Tatlow, the eminent detective, who is engaged looking up Arthur. (*motions to TATLOW*.)

ROUTH. (*aside*) Tatlow, from Scotland-yard—the devil!

TATLOW. The same, sir, at your service, 'tain't often as I get as far away from home as this; but I'm working out another game, which has pretty near come to a head, and will burst into flower very shortly, I reckon!

ROUTH. Oh, indeed! another game? and what may that be?

TATLOW. Well, sir, not to put too fine a point on it—murder!

ROUTH. Murder! 'Gad, that is another game! Well, Mr. Tatlow, you are a wonderful man; and I cordially wish you success. (*holds out his hand*.)

TATLOW. Thank'ye sir, I'm all right; I shall have hold of the fellow soon, you'll see. (*shakes hands*) Now, ma'am, about this portrait?

MRS. BEMB. Well—really, I think I have a portrait somewhere; I don't know where—perhaps I've lost it.

TATLOW. Not likely to lose it mum, if you was that friends with the party, that you was going to meet him here.

MRS. BEMB. (*aside*) What a very horrid man! (*aloud*) Well, I don't know where it is. If I find it in my desk, or anywhere while I am here, I'll send it to your hotel.

MR. C. Madam, you will do me an infinite service. Come, Tatlow. (*exeunt R.*)

MRS. BEMB. Now I suppose that's what you'd call a specimen of an old English gentleman. Pompous old idiot! I have Arthur Carruthers' portrait in a locket on my watch chain at this moment, but I was not going to bow down to his high mightiness, and show it at once.

ROUTH. You have his photograph with you, what is he like?

MRS. BEMB. Very like a Yankee, and something like a Jew. Would you like to see him?

ROUTH. Yes; I should like to see the portrait of this man whom you love.

MRS. BEMB. Whom I love?

ROUTH. Yes; don't you make an appointment to meet him here, where you are alone, where everyone is noticed and speculated upon?

MRS. BEMB. How extremely preposterous you are. In the first place, my appointment with Arthur Carruthers means nothing. I am quite likely to break it, and go off to London, Vienna, or Timbuctoo, if the humour seizes me: and as to what people say, if I cared one straw, I should not allow you to walk with me, and talk as you do.

ROUTH. You are a wonderful woman.

MRS. BEMB. No; I'm only what you English call, plucky. All the men admire me, no matter what I do; and all the women hate me, for my beauty, which I perfectly appreciate. But it does not matter to me. I don't think I could be afraid of anything, or anyone.

ROUTH. Not of a man who really loved you, with all the force and passion of his heart?

MRS. BEMB. Certainly not. I don't believe in people loving with passion and force, and all that kind of thing. It's pretty to talk about on balconys, and it looks well on paper, but I don't believe it. Now see, I'll show you Arthur's likeness. (*takes a locket off her chain, similar to the one worn by DEANE, and hands it to him.*)

ROUTH. Now for this lady killer. (*opens it*) Perdition! 'tis he, as I live! and she is going to give this to the detective—I am lost!

MRS. BEMB. Muttering apart ! you horribly jealous man, are you still grizzling about poor Arthur ? There, give me my locket back again. (*he does so. She goes up c.*)

ROUTH. (*aside*) I must have that locket at any hazard. (*aloud*) Going, may I come with you ?

MRS. BEMB. Now? no, not now ; you shall be punished for your jealousy. Au revoir ! (*exits up steps and c. to L. It is now dark, a man has lighted the gas lamps across the terrace—rooms are illuminated.*)

HARRIET. (*enters L. 2 E.*) No one is near, I must warn Stewart at once.

ROUTH. I must follow you, my enchantress ; not merely because I hunger for you with such a passion as I never felt before, but I have now a more important game to play.

(*exit up steps, and c. to L.*)

HARRIET. He is gone. He cannot live out of that woman's presence ; he follows her like her shadow, and cares not what becomes of me. I am neglected, cast off, forsaken ! The caressed of society do not know how to love—I, who have renounced for him home, name, kindred ! however, can I shrink from him now? no, I must be by his side ; my brain must be steady and clear to direct him, as in the old days. Perhaps the very fact of the danger being so imminent, may bring us together again—may teach Stewart anew his need of me, my worth to him. (*MRS. BEMBRIDGE appears with ROUTH from c., they stop on the terrace, L. e.*)

MRS. BEMB. What a temper you have ; you are still jealous, I suppose ?

ROUTH. (*R. of her*) If I am, it is because I love you.

MRS. BEMB. You don't ask how many men have said that before, or how I have received their professions ?

ROUTH. Be sure of this, no man has ever loved you as I love you, or been so willing to stake so much on your love.

MRS. BEMB. (*aside*) He's horribly in earnest ; I begin to fear this man.

HARRIET. (*aside*) As I suspected. I must hear more. (*she is standing immediately under the terrace.—Full moon, light on the figures above.*)

ROUTH. How much I stake upon that love, you will never know—so be it ! I am ready ! I am willing ! But I must have your love in return.

HARRIET. My strength fails me ! (*clings to terrace.*)

ROUTH. Answer me now, for a crisis in my life has come, and I must know, without hesitation or delay how it is to

be dealt with ! Which is it? mere coquetry, a dangerous game with a man like me, or the deep love of a time, the devotion which will never swerve or falter ! the passion blotting out everything but itself ?

MRS. BEMB. I cannot answer you now ! I am unnerved ! more unnerved than I ever thought to be. Let me go now. I will see you again to-night !

HARRIET. She holds him at her will !

ROUTH. Give me that flower from your hair—take it out ! give it to me !

MRS. BEMB. Impertinent ! that you may show it and boast.

ROUTH. I will have it. (*tries to snatch it.*)

MRS. BEMB. No, you shall not, come, I'm not your slave yet ! (*takes the flower, and throws it from balcony, in the struggle, ROUTH abstracts the locket from her chain—HARRIET picks up the flower*) There now, you've got nothing for your boldness ! The flower is not yours—see, there is a woman below—she must have heard us. You have quite compromised me by your outrageous behaviour—I must quit you, and I forbid you to follow me ! in serious earnest, I forbid you !

(*exit Mrs. BEMBRIDGE, c. to L.*)

ROUTH. (*comes down*) So Arthur Carruthers whom they are seeking was Philip Deane. Devilish awkward ! and likely to lead to bad results ! at all events I've prevented Mr. Tatlow from seeing this—(*the locket*)—but what is to be done next ?

HARRIET. (*comes forward r.*) Stewart !

ROUTH. You here Harriet ! what does this mean ?

HARRIET. It is for me rather to ask that ! something has happened ! you are pale ! Tell me, Stewart, I know there is something wrong, tell me what it is !

ROUTH. Do you remember what you once said about the Hydra and its heads ?

HARRIET. I remember ! another head has sprung up and is menacing you.

ROUTH. Yes, this cursed thing is never to be escaped or forgotten, I believe ! Even you will scarcely see your way clear out of what has happened now ?

HARRIET. (*faintly*) Tell me —

ROUTH. (*places chair for her*) I have found out that the man we knew as Philip Deane—was Arthur Carruthers, George Dallas's cousin—the man whom they were inquiring about, whom they were expecting here. (HARRIET falls back on chair) Harriet, don't give way like this ! It's worse than anything I ever feared—it's awful, but don't give way.

HARRIET. I am not giving way! Trust me as you have done before! Now for action! we must leave this place at once!

ROUTH. Leave this place now?

HARRIET. To-morrow morning we must start. We have money now! Let us leave Europe behind us and let us go away from danger threatening us here, at once?

ROUTH. I cannot leave Homburg just now!

HARRIET. (aside) His passion for that woman will cost him his life! (aloud) Stewart be guided by me, let us fly from here at once!

ROUTH. I won't leave this place an hour earlier than I intended to leave it! What devil's in you, Harriet, to prompt you to exasperate me?

HARRIET. What devil's in *you* that's prompting you to your ruin? You speak idle words when you reproach me, Stewart! I am above and beyond reproach from you. I am as wicked a woman as ever lived; but I have been, and am to you what no good woman could be—so look to it, if you require me ill!

ROUTH. Whining again! there has been nothing but whining and reproaches lately; once for all—I will not go!

HARRIET. Stewart! you are blind and mad that you thus dally with your fate! Let us escape while we may: George Dallas is not our only danger. Remember Mr. Carruthers seeks his son!

ROUTH. By heavens, if you provoke me much more, I'll put Mr. Carruthers on to George Dallas's trail at once! In fact, I hardly think a better way out of the infernal mess could be found!

HARRIET. Stewart!

ROUTH. Listen to me, Harriet! I don't want George Dallas to come to any serious grief if I can help it, but if he threatens danger to me, he must clear the way, that's all. And this you may be sure of, if any one is to swing for Deane, it shall be Dallas not I!

HARRIET. (shudders) No, no; do not refuse to listen to me. Come away, to peace and safety!

ROUTH. Peace and safety! yes, and a life of poverty and you!

HARRIET. (falls on her knees) Stewart! my husband! my love! my life! my darling! don't mind me, say you'll go, only say you'll quit this place!

ROUTH. Stand off! I will not go! loose your hold on me. Curse you! loose your hold! (is about to strike her as GEORGE DALLAS enters hurriedly R. 2 E. ROUTH, with a total

change of manner, turns to and welcomes him with) Ah, George !

DALLAS. You here, Routh ! and Mrs. Routh ! I'm glad to find you for I am in great distress, and have much to say to you.

ROUTH. Say away, George, my boy ! you know if we *can* help you we will !

DALLAS. (R.) I know that of old. Now, look here—I have seen my mother. My old nurse, Ellen, contrived that for me ; the poor darling, is still suffering ; all my fault I fear ! While I was there, my step-father was engaged in the next room with a detective from London. We heard a long, bitter cry ; and old Ellen running in, told us that the detective had proved to Mr. Carruthers that his son Arthur Carruthers had been murdered. The detective had been engaged in the two cases it appears ; and a letter which had been written by the murdered man, and traced to the possession of the murderer had been recognised by Mr. Carruthers as his son's handwriting !

ROUTH. Do they suspect anyone as the murderer ?

DALLAS. They do, and talk of arresting him at once ! (HARRIET, L., starts—ROUTH motions her to be quiet) Nurse Ellen urged me to quit the house at once, unseen as I entered it, and I sought your advice. (he turns and looks off, R.)

HARRIET. (aside) Stewart ! the end is at hand ! Let us fly !

ROUTH. Silence, woman, would you implicate and destroy me !

HARRIET. I destroy you ?

ROUTH. Silence. (aloud) This is a sad blow for your stepfather, George—his pride will never recover it ! This is he, is it not, coming this way ?

Enter MR. CARRUTHERS, leaning on CLARE, R. 2 E. TATLOW enters on terrace observing.

CLARE. (R.) You must bear up, uncle, recollect you had not seen poor Arthur, for so long that —

MR. C. (R. C.) That has nothing to do with it, my dear ! The Carruthers of Poynings die in their beds as a rule ! There never has been one murdered before ! and it's a shock that will not easily be got over !

TATLOW. (C. at back—looking at GEORGE) That's my party, I think ! George Dallas ! (GEORGE starts) Thought so ! George Dallas, alias Paul Ward, I arrest you in the name of the Queen for the murder of Arthur Carruthers alias Philip Deane ! (VISITORS appear on terrace, among them MRS. BEMBRIDGE.)

HARRIET. (*aside to Routh, L.*) Stewart! now is our time
let us away this instant!

ROUTH. (*L. C. looking up at Mrs. BEMBRIDGE*) No!

(*tableau and*

END OF ACT SECOND.

A C T I I I.

SCENE.—Routh's drawing-room. French window, R.—
door L—door to dressing-room, L. 3 E. Handsome furniture
—writing materials and newspaper on table—Harriet's desk
and Routh's despatch-box.

HARRIET discovered, at chimney-piece, c.

Another day, and yet no progress to the wished for
end! Another day, and all the doubt and fear and dis-
quietude hanging round us! Another day finds us still in
London, living in luxury, when every moment is precious!
when first flight, then obscurity can alone save him! one
thing he is safe from now, his infatuation for that lovely
woman, for she was lovely! yes, I will own that! He is
separated from her now, and yet I don't know what he is
doing, where he goes, or with whom he spends his time.
I am in the dark, and the tide is rising. (*knock.*) Who's
there?

Enter JIM SWAIN, door L. 2 E.

JIM. Me, mum—said you'd be likely to be wanting me,
mum; don't like to think as you are in town, and me not
odd jobbing for you!

HARRIET. No doubt we shall find plenty for you to do,
Jim, those windows want cleaning for one thing!

JIM. All right, mum! (*goes to window R.—aside*) How ill
she do look—all white and drawed like—what's the good
of her going away to them furrin' baths and things if she's
to come back looking like that? What's she a-muttering
about? seems to have something on her mind!

HARRIET. (*reflecting*) Poor George!

JIM. (*aside*) What's that she says?

HARRIET. Poor George! he will be acquitted surely, but
if not! —

JIM. That's it! she knows her husband did it! and she's a hidin' of it and a kiverin' of it up! and it's a killin' her! poor dear! poor dear!

HARRIET. But if not! No, he shall be saved! First Stewart must be got into a place of safety and then—(*sits at table, r. c., takes up newspaper.*)

JIM. What's she up to with that paper? (*comes down on pretence of arranging things, tries to look over her shoulder, she hears him, and folds up paper—he goes back*) Now wot's in that paper I didn't ought to see!

HARRIET. Stewart remains so mysterious that I never know—I wonder whether the boy knows anything of his movements. Jim!

JIM. (*comes down c.*) Mum!

HARRIET. Have you seen Mr. Routh lately?

JIM. Yes, mum, night afore last!

HARRIET. Night before last? where?

JIM. (*aside*) Shall I tell her? yes I will. He's a breakin' her heart, that's wot he is, and he shan't do it while I can speak out!

HARRIET. Why don't you answer me?

JIM. Well, mum, I was doing poor Jack, callin' cabs and so on outside the 'Delphi, mum, and I seed Mr. Routh come out of the theatre!

HARRIET. Was he alone?

JIM. No, mum, he had an uncommon tip-top lady wi' him.

HARRIET. (*aside*) Could it be she? can she be in London? (*aloud*) Well, Jim, what was this lady like?

JIM. Reg'lar stunner, mum! great black eyes and hair! oh, my!

HARRIET. (*aside*) It must be she! here in London! and he always with her! she is the serpent twining round his heart, and leading him to his ruin! (*aloud*) Well, Jim, what more? (*laughs.*)

JIM. (*aside*) That's all gaff, her laughin'! she don't like it a bit, and yet I suppose I'm right to show her what a duffer he is! (*aloud*) Well, mum, they went away in a carriage, and I went away in it too—leastways I went behind, among the spikes.

HARRIET. And did you see where the carriage stopped?

JIM. I did, mum, at the lady's house, 4, Hallington-square, Brompton.

HARRIET. He is in the net! How to free him? I must see this woman myself—that is the only way! Suppose she

should refuse to see me? then I must lure her here on some pretext! it is a bold step, but it is the only one!

(goes to door L. 3 E.)

JIM. She's takin' on hawful!

HARRIET. There's no time to be lost! I'll go at once—Jim, you can clean those windows—I'm going out!

(exit door L. 3 E.)

JIM. What was in that 'ere paper, wot she did not want me to see—I wonder whether I can find it? (takes up paper) Let me see, it was this side she was a-lookin' Ah, "Strand Murder!" that's it! (reads) "And the prisoner, George Dallas, was fully committed on the charge of murdering Arthur Carruthers, alias Philip Deane." Hallo! this won't do—George Dallas is as innocent as a unborn babe! What can I do? there's nothing I wouldn't go through for *her*—but I can't see Mr. Dallas tucked up for this job, when I know t'other cove did it! I should be as bad as him! I dusn't speak, 'cos I might get into trouble myself and besides she'd hate me and cuss me for ever if I was to peach! What shall I do? suppose I was to write a line to that detective officer wot's about with old Carruthers—yes, that's my game! (sits at table, R. 2 E.) It's a good thing I went to the Ragged-School—where's a pen? oh, here's one, not much like the one's I'm used to write with—head swell coves write with feathers. "Honoured sir,—A party as writes you this ere knows a party wot knows all about that 'ere orrid murder near the Strand—that ere party knows as Mr. Dallas never went and done it, that ere party knowin' who did, 'cos why he seed it done, and this is his true davy, so help him, your honoured servent to command." I won't put no name, and then nobody won't be peached on. (folds note.)

Enter ROUTH, with a note, door L. 1 E.

Hallo! here's t'other cove! (hides note, and goes to window)

ROUTH. (reading note) At last! she will meet me in her carriage! she will let me know where! and after that meeting, my lady, we part no more—leave England behind us, and you are mine for ever. (observes JIM) Hallo! what are you doing there?

JIM. Only putting things straight, Mrs. Routh told me, sir.

Enter HARRIET, door L. 3 E., dressed to go out.

HARRIET. Quite right Jim; but you can go now, and come back in a few minutes.

JIM. All right mum. Good day mum. (aside) I'll just

step round and give this here confidential note of warning to Joe at the crossing, he'll take it to the Bobby's office.

(exit L.—ROUTH goes to despatch box, R.

HARRIET. Stewart! once more I ask you: how long are we to remain here in the jaws of danger?

ROUTH. And once more I reply—as long as I choose! What the devil business is it of yours?

HARRIET. You cannot keep your secret from me—whatever it is, I will find it out.

ROUTH. You will, will you?

HARRIET. Yes, for your own sake. The day of ruin is awfully near; and if you will not save yourself, I will save you, in spite of yourself.

ROUTH. What do you want of me?

HARRIET. Simply that you should trust me, as you did in the old days. Stewart, will you do this? if so, all will be well.

ROUTH. I'm sick of that cant. (*turns from her.*)

HARRIET. It is over. (*going to door.* L. 1 E.)

ROUTH. Where are you going?

HARRIET. Have you a right to ask? You have your secrets, I have mine. (*exit door L. 1 E.*)

ROUTH. Does she mean mischief? impossible! the worst accomplice a man can have is his wife—Women always have some infernal scruple lurking somewhere about them, and the consequences makes itself felt.

Enter JIM, door, L. 1 E.

Hallo, what do you want here again?

JIM. Come back to clean the windows, missus said so.

ROUTH. Ah, I forgot; there, get to your work. (JIM *cleans windows, but watches him*) She was useful once, wonderfully useful, but now she's only a dangerously sharp-witted and suspicious woman. She wearies me—she has ceased to be of any service to me. If I could only get rid of her for ever, what a relief it would be. (*with papers*) All's square here. I've realized all the securities, except such as I can easily take with me; and all's prepared for my departure to America. (*tearing up papers, which he throws into the waste basket.*)

JIM. What's he up to now? he's allus up to something.

ROUTH. (*taking out locket from box*) What's here? ah, the locket. I did that trick well. (*about to open it*) What was I doing? I have not the courage to look upon that man's face again. (*knock—lets locket fall on the ground*) Pshaw! fool that I am, I am getting nervous. Who's there?

Enter SERVANT, door, L. 1 E.

SERVANT. This note, sir,—just brought by hand, and marked immediate.

ROUTH. From her! (reads) "Meet her in half an hour, at the old spot in Kensington Gardens;" all her preparations are made, so are all mine. Is my portmanteau packed?

SERVANT. Yes, sir.

ROUTH. Put it in the hall.

SERVANT. Yes, sir.

ROUTH. Only these papers and notes to take with me, (pockets them) and then farewell to this cursed country for ever. Within half an hour, she said—then I've no time to spare. (exit hurriedly, door L. 1 E.)

JIM. He's off! What was that shining thing he dropped? That's it. (picks up locket) Hallo! what's this? why I thought I had it in my pocket. So I have, it's there sure enough—what I picked up that night—that awful night. (pulls out the other egg-locket) Why, they're exactly alike. (opens one dropped by Routh) Lord! why that's a portrait of the dead 'un—Deane, they called him and how like; and this other—(opens it) I remember her now—that stunnin' party as I saw coming out of the 'Delphi. Lor, how I wish I hadn't had nuffin' to do with it. How I wish I hadn't wrote that warning to the Bobbies; I'm sure to come to grief—I am, sartin sure. Here's somebody comin' Her step! (hides locket about him.)

HARRIET. (enters door L. 1 E.) You still here, Jim? Have you finished your work?

JIM. All but, mum.

HARRIET. You must leave the rest and go. I want to be alone.

JIM. If I could only tell her all. I wouldn't get her into no trouble—I'd die to serve her; if I could only let her know.

HARRIET. Come, be quick and go.

JIM. All right, mum. Oh lord, she's so good and kind, if I could only save her, but I can't—I can't. (exit door L. 1 E.)

HARRIET. At last, the moment is at hand when we shall know whether she will save him or not; yes, she—his divinity, his worship—she would not see me at her own house, but I have left a note so baited with mystery, that such a woman is sure to come at once. Ah, 'tis she.

Enter SERVANT, followed by MRS. BEMBRIDGE, door L. 1 E.

SERVANT. A lady, madam, to see you. (*exit L.*)

HARRIET. I am obliged to you for calling. Be seated, madam.

MRS. BEMB. I gather from this note, that you happen to know that I lost a locket at Homburg—you have it, perhaps?

HARRIET. No, I have not your locket, but you lost something else at Homburg; and as I have important matters on which I would speak to you, I have brought this flower to prove that you had better hear me, and that you must. It is there; the rose you took from your hair, and flung away, while you were listening to vows of love from Stewart Routh.

MRS. BEMB. What do you mean? Good Heavens! who are you?

HARRIET. I am Stewart Routh's wife.

MRS. BEMB. His wife!

HARRIET. Don't be frightened; I lured you here, not on my own account, but for another motive.

MRS. BEMB. And that is—

HARRIET. My husband's safety. Listen—when you flung that flower away, over the balcony of the Kursaal at Homburg, it fell at my feet, I was in the garden—I heard all he said to you. (MRS. BEMBRIDGE starts) Don't start—it was very pretty. I know it all by heart, every hesitation, every intonation, all the lying gamut from end to end.

MRS. BEMB. You heard all?

HARRIET. Everything. He told you he had never known what it was to love before—a lie! that no woman had ever entangled him—enthralled him—a lie! That the love he felt for so irresistible a woman as you—and I grant your beauty—was no sin, no dishonesty—all, a lie!

MRS. BEMB. This is horrible.

HARRIET. And this flimsy tale caught your fancy! It was so charming, to fill the vacant place in his dreary life; it was just the performance to catch the fancy of a woman like you, beautiful, vain, and empty.

MRS. BEMB. Spare me.

HARRIET. Not yet—that was all a lie! The truth I will now tell you, all, for his sake.

MRS. BEMB. Why?

HARRIET. Because he is in danger, and I must save him—

because I love him—*him!* not the bland lover you fancy him, but the cruel desperate man he is.

MRS. BEMB. Cruel and desperate?

HARRIET. He lives by preying on his fellow men. He has lived by such means for years—they are failing him now, and he has a new plan.

MRS. BEMB. And that is—

HARRIET. To get you and your fortune into his power. Do you understand?

MRS. BEMB. Scarcely.

HARRIET. Then I will put it more plainly. My husband, your lover, is in imminent danger. Flight alone can save him; but he will not fly, because he will not leave you.

MRS. BEMB. What has he done?

HARRIET. He has committed a—(*checks herself*) a robbery, and the police are on his track. If he has not left England by to-morrow it will be too late to save him from them; while you remain in England, he will not go. What is this I see in your face? you were going, and together, were you? Tell me instantly—(*grasps her arm*)—instantly!

MRS. BEMB. Don't—don't!

HARRIET. Do you think I would hurt you? Do you think I'd touch you with one finger? Tell me—where were you going, and when?

MRS. BEMB. On Saturday, to New York.

HARRIET. (*turns, and momentarily buries her face in her hands*) Thank you for the acknowledgement; now, you must leave England to-night—he must follow you, accompany you; if he's in safety, it is nothing to me—you can go by the tidal train this afternoon, and he can follow by to-night's mail; you will do this?

MRS. BEMB. I will, I will!

HARRIET. Do you know where he is now to be found?

MRS. BEMB. I was to meet him at this time, at Kensington Gardens, by Queen's Gate.

HARRIET. You must send him a letter by your servant, telling him of your change of plans, and the necessity of his following you to-night. Sit down at this table; I will tell you what to say. (MRS. BEMBRIDGE sits L. and writes—HARRIET dictates) "All is discovered, I cannot stay here—come to me at once to Amiens. I leave this afternoon, you must follow by the night's mail. If I do not see you to-morrow, I shall conclude you have given me up." That will do. (rings bell, SERVANT enters door, L. 1 E.) Give that note to Mrs. Bembridge's footman below, and tell him to

take it to Mr. Routh; he will know where to find him. (*exit Servant, L.*) Now you have but little time—go. (X's to door L.)

MRS. BEMB. One minute—I didn't quite know what I was doing, indeed I did not. I knew not he was married. Mrs. Routh, can you forgive me?

HARRIET. Forgive you! what do you mean? I care only for him—you are nothing to me.

MRS. BEMB. You scorn me; perhaps I deserve your scorn. I have been vain, frivolous, careless of my reputation, but not what you have thought me; I go—Stewart Routh shall be saved for your sake. He shall be lured to follow me, but he will never find me—we shall meet no more. (*exits door L. 1 E.*

HARRIET. (*falls on sofa exhausted*) The old tie of love is severed—the old bond of faith is broken. All is over between us, but he will be saved—spite of himself he must be saved.

CLARE. (*outside, L.*) I must see her!

HARRIET. Whose voice is that?

Enter CLARE and MISS BROOKS, door, L. 1 E.

Miss Carruthers! what do you want here?

CLARE. I scarcely know, I come to appeal to you. George Dallas's life is in danger, he declares you can prove his innocence, that you can save him, and I come to implore you to do so. Oh, save him, Mrs. Routh, save him!

HARRIET. (*agitated R. C.*) Was it Mr. Carruthers, the magistrate, who sent you here?

CLARE. No, my uncle knows nothing of my coming. He would have prohibited it. Oh, speak, Mrs. Routh, and save him.

HARRIET. (*aside*) Poor girl, she too suffers for the man she loves.

CLARE. You will save him.

HARRIET. George Dallas shall not suffer.

CLARE. You know, then, that he is not guilty?

HARRIET. I do!

CLARE. And you will say so at once? Come away and—

HARRIET. Patience, his innocence shall be proclaimed in time.

CLARE. Patience! Can I be patient when he is in danger?

HARRIET. I cannot speak now, Miss Carruthers; you must leave me for the present.

CLARE. But, Mrs. Routh! Ah, my uncle here!

Enter MR. CARRUTHERS, L., *in deep mourning.*

MR. C. I was rightly informed, then, and in defiance of my expressed wish, you have come to this house! It is not often that a Carruthers of Poynings suffers himself to be defied by his relatives.

CLARE. Uncle, I would save George Dallas.

MR. C. The murderer of my boy!

CLARE. No, he is innocent. This woman knows his innocence—she has confessed it.

MR. C. What does all this mean?

CLARE. Speak, Mrs. Routh, repeat what you just said.

HARRIET. (*wildly*) No, I will not speak! You are driving me mad amongst you! Miss Clare, Mr. Carruthers, I regret I cannot give you the information you require. Pardon me if I leave you. (*side wing*) Poor girl! but what is pity now to me? His safety stands above all safety and all truth. (*bows and exits to back room*)

MR. C. She give us any information! Of course not—a pack of stuff, Clare, that you have got into your head. Impossible that a man of my position in the county could make a mistake in a matter of this kind. I am shocked to find, Clare, that any member of my family could descend to the position of defending the murderer of my son. Come, let us leave this place at once. (*going*) What on earth is this?

Enter TATLOW, dragging in JIM SWAIN, L. 1 E.

TATLOW. This is one of the out and outest duffers living, Mr. Carruthers, this is. We couldn't get much out of him on the inquest, but we've had our eye on him ever since, and now—. I heard you were here, and took the liberty of coming up.

JIM. Well, what now? I ain't a duffer, bobby, I ain't.

TATLOW. All right, perhaps you didn't write this letter, saying somebody knows who did the murder. Perhaps I didn't take the lockets out of your pockets. Look at 'em, sir! (*hands them to MR. CARRUTHERS*)

MR. C. (*examines them*) My poor boy, and that American woman! Tell me what you do know, boy.

JIM. Well, gents, I'll tell you all I know about it. I was odd boy at Mrs. Routh's lodgings, and always in and out, livin' next door, and I recollect the night when Mr. Deane and Mr. Dallas came out of Mr. Routh's and went

to Barton's hotel and had a drain—leastways two or three from the time they stopped.

TATLOW. Get on!

JIM. I'm gettin' on, sir! When they come out quite friendly, Mr. Dallas was laughin' and he shook hands with the other gent who went away by himself! and I watched, and presently Mr. Routh came up.

TATLOW. Mr. Routh!

JIM. The werry same, and he began speaking to the other gent which had a big fur coat on, and they went away together up the street and I foller'd 'em, they was talkin' and talkin' and I knewed they was quarrellin' by the sneerin' way the fur-coated gent spoke, tho' they went arm-in-arm like two brothers. Well, when they got near the 'Delphi arches I got tired and didn't seem to care about follerin' them no more, and then suddenly I missed 'em and —

TATLOW. Come, now, you're ramblin', no gaff, don't try it on.

JIM. I ain't tryin' on no gaff. I was tired and sat down in a doorway, I must have fell asleep, for I don't remember any more till I heard some one pass by me very quick—I looked up and saw a man.

MR. C. One man, alone?

JIM. Yes, sir, alone. There was a narrow passage off the doorway where I was sittin' leadin' to the river. I thought the other gent might have gone down there and I went down the passage, and at the end of it was stones, and mud, and the river.

TATLOW. Well?

JIM. And oh, sir, there were blood on the edge of the stones, and footsteps in the mud where the water was a creepin' up, and there was no one there.

TATLOW. Why didn't you say this before?

JIM. 'Cos I thought I might get into trouble about that silver thing which I picked up, and 'cos I wouldn't do her no harm or give her a sorrow.

MR. C. Her—whom?

JIM. Her. (*points back*)

TATLOW. Mrs. Routh. (JIM nods)

MR. C. Then the man you saw hurrying away from the place was —

Enter HARRIET, L. 3 E.

TATLOW. Routh, for a hundred! I ought to have guessed that all along!

HARRIET. The blow has fallen at last! (*falls on sofa*)

JIM. (*runs to her*) I didn't peach, missis! Oh, dear Mrs. Routh, I didn't peach!

CLARA. Poor woman! (*going to her*)

MR. C. And in my blind hatred I have done the innocent wrong!

TATLOW. There's no time to be lost, sir! It's useless asking her where her husband is, but I'll set my men on, telegraph to all the ports, send to all the stations, and catch him if he tries to leave London by train. And I'll keep hold of this boy, we shall want him. Come along, young 'un.

JIM. Oh, forgive me, missis, I'd die rather than hurt you. You wasn't in it, I knowed that! I never wished to do you harm!

TATLOW. Come, come along.

JIM. (*screaming and sobbing*) Oh, forgive me! They would have it out of me! I kept the secret for your sake long! They wouldn't let me keep it any longer. It wasn't I! Forgive me! forgive me! (*exit TATLOW dragging JIM, L. 1 E.*)

CLARE. Mrs. Routh, if you knew how earnestly I feel for you.

HARRIET. Leave me! Leave me!

MR. C. We had better leave her now, my child. I must see to poor George's release, and do all in my power to make reparation for my cruel injustice. A Carruthers of Poynings must own his error as a gentleman! George's happiness shall be your future care. (*exeunt L.*

HARRIET. (*springing to her feet*) There is a chance yet. Stewart may have had time, he may be beyond their reach, but if he goes to the mail train he is lost; and I shall have destroyed him. I cannot bear this suspense—I will try and find him. (*takes up bonnet to go—ROUTH enters L. 1 E.—she screams*) Not gone!

ROUTH. What does this mean? I was in a cab going to the city, when the boy Jim Swain, broke away from someone, rushed before the horse at the risk of being run over, and screamed to me “all's up, they're arter you! It's for her sake,” and vanished.

HARRIET. (*rigidly calm*) Yes, all is over now. The house will be watched by this time—we cannot escape.

ROUTH. Is it known?

HARRIET. All, everything! Stewart, it was agreed between us once that if the worst came, you should have

the means of disposal of your own fate—the worst has come!

ROUTH. There is no chance—you're quite sure there is no chance?

HARRIET. I am quite sure. I always knew if this happened, there would be no chance.

ROUTH. I own my—I am sorry, Harriet.

HARRIET. Hush! no more; the past is dead, and I am dead with it.

ROUTH. But if—if—I must first know what is to become of you?

HARRIET. I think you ought to know, I shall live only as long as I know you are still living. (ROUTH grasps HARRIET'S hand, looks at her, and exits L. 3 E.)

Enter TATLOW, JIM SWAIN, DALLAS, CLARE, and MR. CARRUTHERS, L. 1 E.

TATLOW. Mrs. Routh, where is your husband? (HARRIET points to d. l., TATLOW enters room.)

HARRIET. (aside) Beyond the reach of all, I trust.

TATLOW. (re-entering) He has done me after all!

DALLAS. Escaped!

TATLOW. Dead! (HARRIET falls senseless—DALLAS leans over her, and shakes his head in sorrow. JIM SWAIN sobs over HARRIET's body. CLARE hides her head on DALLAS's shoulder—MR. CARRUTHERS at door. Slow Music.)

CURTAIN.

COSTUMES.

ROUTH.—*Act I:* Evening dress, white cravat. *Act II:* Fashionable morning dress of the period.

CARRUTHERS.—Black coat, drab trousers, high spotted linen cravat. *Act III:* Deep mourning.

DALLAS.—Gentleman's dress of the period, but worn and shabby, old boots, old hat, overcoat as described.

DEANE.—As described in the piece.

TATLOW.—Cutaway coat, grey trousers, sporting cravat, whiskers.

JIM SWAIN.—Street boy's ragged clothes, but not dirty.

HARRIET.—*Act I:* Drab stuff gown, plain cuffs and sleeves. *Act II:* Plain silk dress and simple bonnet.

MRS. BEMBRIDGE.—*Act II:* Extravagantly fashionable dress, rich lace handkerchief on head. *Act III:* Black velvet and black lace trimmings.

CLARE.—*Act II:* Quilt silk dress, pretty bonnet. *Act III:* Half mourning.