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DRAMATIC WORKS OF ROBERT MARSHALL.

The Duke of Killicrankie

A FARCICAL ROMANCE IN THREE ACTS

BY

ROBERT MARSHALL.

PRICE ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE NET.

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ROBERT MARSHALL

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By ROBERT MARSHALL.

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THE DUKE OF KILLICRANKIE

First produced at the Criterion Theatre on January 20, 1904, under the management of Messrs. Frohman and Chudleigh, with the following cast:—

IAN DOUGLAS MACBAYNE . . .	<i>Mr. Graham Brown.</i>
(Duke of Killierankie.)	
MR. HENRY PITT-WELBY, M.P. . .	<i>Mr. Weedon Grossmith.</i>
MR. AMBROSE HICKS.	<i>Mr. Grenville.</i>
ALEXANDER MACBAYNE . . .	<i>Mr. Kelt.</i>
(Caretaker at Crag-o'-North.)	
BUTLER	<i>Mr. Cooper.</i>
FOOTMAN	<i>Mr. Fenton.</i>
THE COUNTESS OF PANGBOURNE.	<i>Miss Helen Rous.</i>
THE LADY HENRIETTA ADDISON	<i>Miss Eva Moore.</i>
(Her Daughter.)	
MRS. MULHOLLAND	<i>Miss Marie Illington.</i>
MRS. MACBAYNE	<i>Miss Florence Harwood.</i>
(Housekeeper at Crag-o'-North.)	

SCENERY

ACT I.

SCENE.—The Library at Glencoe House, Park Lane.

ACT II.

SCENE.—Crag-o'-North, Fortronald, N.B.

ACT III.

SCENE.—The Gateway, Crag-o'-North.

PERIOD.—To-day.

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THE DUKE OF KILLICRANKIE

ACT I.

SCENE.—*The library at Glencoe House, Park Lane.*

The room is in white Jacobean panelling, the hangings, carpets and furniture in two soft shades of green. Bookcases line the walls, and, above them, one or two old pictures. Above the bookcase at the back c. hangs a picture representing Crag-o'-North, one of the DUKE'S seats in Scotland. This must be clearly visible to the audience, and it represents an old castle built upon a precipitous crag, somewhat like the Castle of St. Michael's Mount. To the R. a door; beyond it R. a circular window with couch. Windows L.C., all the windows being of stained glass. L a fireplace, above it, a few steps lead to a corridor. The steps have portières on either side. L. above fireplace, a table with spirits, cigarettes, soda water, etc. L. C. a couch. R., a writing table. One or two old silver bowls filled with tea-roses. A few old bronzes.

It is 1 a.m. on a night late in July, and a "small and

early" is coming to a close. Faint sounds of waltz music are heard as if beyond corridor L.

(The curtain having risen, MRS. MULHOLLAND enters L. flushed and impetuously. She is a handsome woman of thirty, wearing many diamonds and rather over-dressed, but in the height of the fashion. She is followed nervously by HENRY PITT-WELBY, a well-bred looking man of thirty-five, with an innocent, expressionless face. He is immaculately dressed in evening clothes, with white waistcoat, gloves and buttonhole. MRS. MULHOLLAND turns after entering, sees she is followed by WELBY, and sits R. of table L.)

WELBY. No one here, eh?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. And a very good thing too. (rises and crosses to sofa R., sits on L. end of it)

WELBY. I'm not as keen on dancing as I used to be. (crosses R. above piano)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I'm glad to hear it.

WELBY. Really? Why? (sits on R. end of sofa)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Because perhaps in the future I shall not find you at houses that I go to. (rises and sits L. of table R. C.)

WELBY. I'm sorry. (moves to L. end of sofa)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. So am I. (fans herself vigorously)

WELBY. Er—am I right in thinking you've something on your mind?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*ceases fanning herself*) Are you ever right in what you think?

WELBY. I've always admired you.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. To be right in one instance doesn't constitute a habit. (*repeats fanning bus.*)

WELBY. You're worried. (*rises, goes up to window and opens it*) I see it in your fan.

(*She closes fan with a snap.*)

You have a difficulty in getting a sufficient rush of cool air.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. That's not surprising.

(*He comes down to above table R. C., sits.*)

To me you have the effect of the newly-discovered "radium."

WELBY. Then I ought to be an agreeable companion in the winter months. (*laughs*)

(*She turns and glares at him.*)

(*rises*) However, as this is July—it's only civil to leave you.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. No, don't go yet.

(*He stops.*)

I've something to say to you. Do you think it is fair to me that you should constantly dog my steps, dine where I dine, dance where I dance, and so on?

WELBY. We know the same set of people. (*takes a step or two towards her*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. That makes it all the more

painful, since everybody knows that our engagement is broken off.

WELBY. That was your fault.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes, I'm thankful to say it was.

WELBY. You never even gave me a reason. You never answered my letters of protest. To-night is the first time you've even looked at me.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I had a very good reason.

WELBY. Had you?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes. (*rises and moves to sofa, sits on R. end of it*) I found out that your sole idea was to marry money.

WELBY. (*moves to below table R. C.*) That was quite a minor consideration. I can't stop loving a woman merely because she's rich. That's no deterrent to me. (*makes a movement to sit on sofa*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*places cushion to prevent him*) You had given me to understand you were a man of property.

WELBY. So I am.

(*Above bus. with cushion repeated.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes, property so heavily mortgaged that the income from letting your place in Yorkshire doesn't even pay the interest.

WELBY. I know. Sickening, isn't it? (*leans against table R.C.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. So that you hadn't even a home to give me if I had married you.

WELBY. If you had married me, I needn't have left the place. (*moves up c.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Exactly. In fact, I was to pay the piper.

WELBY. Only because I loved you. (*crosses R. above piano and comes down R. of sofa*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Bah!

WELBY. Had I known that your affection couldn't stand the test of my pecuniary embarrassments—a condition which many of the world's greatest heroes have experienced——

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Don't be ridiculous! (*angrily*) I was very fond of you, and you know it.

WELBY. Well then, Amy—— (*leans towards her, resting on arm of couch*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Amy!

WELBY. (*recoils, then sits on arm of sofa*) I'm sorry. Being used to Christian names for over a year, I forgot for the moment.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Then was it fair to give out to everybody that I had thrown you over because you were a poor man?

WELBY. But you've just admitted it.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. No. I said it was because you wilfully misled me. (*rises and moves up c.*) And people are so sorry for you that some of your friends have even cut me. Only to-night Lady Pangbourne and her daughter Henrietta cut me dead in the most barefaced way.

WELBY. Yes! (*rises and moves to R. C.*) You see, Lady Pangbourne is my godmother.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Not that I mind in the least. Her father was only a missionary.

WELBY. No, no, you wrong him. He was a colonial bishop.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I don't see the difference. (*sits in armchair L. C.*)

(*He leans on back of it.*)

However, all that's neither here nor there. As it seems we are doomed to meet each other in London and elsewhere, I propose that we should treat each other as ordinary acquaintances.

WELBY. I know. A bow, a smile and we pass on ; the world little dreaming that two souls are drifting further apart. (*crosses to chair L. of table R. C. and sits*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes, that sort of thing. Ever since poor Alfred died—— (*dabs her eyes with handkerchief*)

(*He sniffs in sympathy.*)

my motto has been, "Once a widow, always cautious." I've a good deal to contend against. For I know that many people turn up their noses at me, simply because the money he left me was made in glue.

WELBY. Oh, come, surely not.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. But they do. I admit I wish he had made it by almost anything else. Glue is so difficult to forget, so hard to get away from.

WELBY. Yes. I see what you mean.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*rises and moves to c.*) Another thing I want to suggest is, that, as far as possible, perhaps you won't go where you know I shall be. For instance, I'm going to Goodwood with the Haredales.

WELBY. That's awkward, so am I.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Very well, then, (*crossing down r.*) you deprive me of the pleasure.

WELBY. (*rises and follows her*) No, no, not for the world. I'll go in the crowd.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. But why on earth do you want to go at all? (*turning to him*)

WELBY. I've got a horse running.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Has it a chance of winning.

WELBY. None.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Then you needn't go.

WELBY. I never thought of that.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*turns away to l.*) Later on I go to Cowes.

WELBY. Then of course I can't.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Were you going?

WELBY. Yes, on the doctor's recommendation.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*coming to him*) But you're not ill?

WELBY. Insomnia. Ever since you broke things off I've scarcely slept a wink.

(*He tries to take her hand, she repulses him—he goes up c.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I never saw you looking better. However, if that's the case, I'll give up Cowes. (*crosses R. to below sofa*)

WELBY. No, no, I won't hear of it. I'll give it up. (*comes down to above chair L. of table R. C.*) I can go to Brighton and take morphia tabloids.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes, the air of Brighton is excellent. But if you find it doesn't suit you, send me a wire and I'll leave Cowes.

WELBY. That is good of you.

(*Voices heard off.*)

LADY PANGBOURNE. (*off*) Come along, Henrietta, we must find Ian.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. That's Lady Pangbourne's voice. I don't propose to give her the chance of cutting me 'gain—I'm going. (*crosses to R. of table L.*)

(LADY PANGBOURNE and LADY HENRIETTA enter L.)

LADY PANGBOURNE is a grand dame of sixty, white-haired and distinguished. LADY HENRIETTA is a charming and graceful woman of twenty-six. LADY PANGBOURNE comes to L. of table L. She stares a MRS. MULHOLLAND, as does LADY HENRIETTA, who is above table)

WELBY. I'll come with you. (*backs towards door*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*crosses to him as she speaks*)
No. Please stay where you are. Good-night.

WELBY. (*goes to door and holds it open—bows as she goes out*) Good-night.

(*Exit MRS. MULHOLLAND R.*)

(LADY HENRIETTA *laughs and goes above piano.*)

LADY PANGBOURNE. We thought we should find Ian here.

WELBY. (*comes to R. C. to meet her*) No. I fancy he's speeding the parting guest.

LADY PANGBOURNE. Ah! Quite the pleasantest moment at one's own party. That was Mrs. Mulholland, wasn't it? I didn't know that you were on terms again with the odious woman.

WELBY. Would you mind not calling her "odious?"

LADY PANGBOURNE. But isn't she? (*sits in arm-chair L. C.*) Even in the days of your engagement, when for your sake I gave her an occasional frigid bow or an icy smile, she never seemed to me to be—even in the most elastic sense of the word—a lady.

WELBY. She has been presented. And in any case I love her still. It's very painful to hear her spoken of as "odious." (*he turns to LADY HENRIETTA, who comes to above chair R. C.*) It's as much as to say I'm no judge of a future wife. What?

LADY HENRIETTA. You don't really care for her, Harry?

WELBY. Most certainly I do. So much so, that I'm a perfect martyr to insomnia.

LADY HENRIETTA. It's a very odd thing that each

of the five or six women with whom you've been desperately in love has been worth at the very least £10,000 a year.

WELBY. Mere coincidence. They're the people one meets.

LADY PANGBOURNE. She wears her diamonds so badly. To-night she seemed to me an exuberant imitation of a chandelier at Versailles.

(*He goes up L. C. LADY HENRIETTA moves down to sofa.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Mother, don't! Harry feels it. The reason I dislike her is that I happen to know that she tells everybody that I am angling to marry Ian Killicrankie. So to-night I merely stared at her. (*sits on sofa*)

WELBY. (*down to above table R. C.*) She didn't see you. She's short-sighted. Only a moment ago she asked me why you weren't here to-night.

LADY PANGBOURNE. You are very ingenuous, Harry. Too much so for your age.

(*A clock strikes two. She rises.*)

Two o'clock! Go and find Ian, and tell him we want to say good-night.

WELBY. Here?

LADY PANGBOURNE. Yes.

WELBY. (*crosses above LADY PANGBOURNE to above table L. He turns back to LADY PANGBOURNE to speak*) You won't go on talking about Mrs. Mulholland when I'm gone, will you?

LADY PANGBOURNE. No, Harry, she shall have her deserts; we'll ignore her.

WELBY. I don't think that's quite nice of you. I really must ask you to—however—yes—

(Exit L.)

LADY PANGBOURNE. (*crosses to chair R. C.*) Well, dear?

LADY HENRIETTA. Well?

LADY PANGBOURNE. Has Ian been talking to you to-night?

LADY HENRIETTA. We danced one dance.

LADY PANGBOURNE. And did he venture again?

LADY HENRIETTA. No. I kept him at arm's length—metaphorically.

LADY PANGBOURNE. I wish I understood you, Henrietta. (*sits L of table R. C.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Is it so difficult?

LADY PANGBOURNE. I want you to think of your future.

LADY HENRIETTA. Why? I believe in living for the present: the future is "x"—an unknown quantity.

LADY PANGBOURNE. But it has to be faced, dear. And what you do now should be with a view to bien-être and comfort in middle age and after. Ah! if you only knew—that is the time to provide for, the days when romance and longing have passed away, and we have to make the best of material things. You like Ian, don't you?

LADY HENRIETTA. We're very good friends.

LADY PANGBOURNE. And, though, of course, it doesn't matter to a girl in your shoes, still it's something to marry a duke.

LADY HENRIETTA. It's such an American habit. We ought to have "protection" in duchesses. America nowadays dumps them all over Europe.

LADY PANGBOURNE. Oh, come—a few are English.

LADY HENRIETTA. And, in point of physical size, of great weight in the country. (*rises and crosses to l. c.*) Anyhow, I'm not going to marry Ian.

LADY PANGBOURNE. No, I suppose not. I could never hope that you would be guided by me. Daughters were very different in my young days. As your father will tell you, I was a great beauty thirty years ago.

LADY HENRIETTA. I think every one's mother has been that. But you married father because you loved him?

LADY PANGBOURNE. I compelled myself to love him. But to do that I had to suppress the great romance of my life.

LADY HENRIETTA. What romance?

LADY PANGBOURNE. He was an Italian artist.

LADY HENRIETTA. Poor mother. I never knew.

LADY PANGBOURNE. The blow was lessened on finding that he was only a variety artist, and that his special line was travelling about with a performing bear. On that discovery I married your father

almost cheerfully, and I think I may say that my spirits have improved annually ever since.

(DUKE'S voice heard off. Enter L. followed by WELBY the DUKE OF KILLICRANKIE. He is a good-looking, genial, devil-may-care man of thirty-five, extremely well groomed and dressed; light, easy and familiar in manner, but never at the expense of good breeding. DUKE crosses to C., speaking as he moves. WELBY goes to above armchair L. C.)

DUKE. So here you are! Capital!

(LADY HENRIETTA joins WELBY.)

(to above chair R. C.) D'you know I thought you had slipped quietly away, and I felt shockingly hurt, I did really.

LADY PANGBOURNE. Well, it's quite time we were gone. (moves down R. a little) I'm sure everybody else has.

DUKE. Yes, that's what's so delightful. Now we shall have a quiet little supper all to ourselves. Harry, take——

(WELBY offers his arm to LADY HENRIETTA. When DUKE says "Lady Pangbourne," WELBY moves reluctantly to her and offers his arm.)

Lady Pangbourne into the little supper room, and we'll follow—I want to show Lady Henrietta an Elizabethian loving-cup that I picked up at a sale.

LADY PANGBOURNE. But isn't it too late?

DUKE. Not a bit. The morning is young.

LADY PANGBOURNE. A quarter of an hour then—no more. (*takes WELBY'S arm, and they cross L., speaking as they go*) Luckily I had almost no dinner.

WELBY. Neither had I. Can't eat, can't sleep.

LADY PANGBOURNE. I thought your appetite at dinner was marvellous.

WELBY. I keep up appearances, that's all.

(*Exeunt L. WELBY and LADY PANGBOURNE.*)

DUKE. (*takes rose from R. end of mantel and moves to LADY HENRIETTA, who is above chair L. C.*) You would like to see the loving-cup, wouldn't you?

LADY HENRIETTA. If you wish me to.

DUKE. I don't know that I do. I might if I thought we could both drink from it. (*goes to mantel and takes rose from L. end of it.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Thanks. I've just had some hock cup. (*crosses to piano*)

(*He shakes drops from roses, which are supposed to touch LADY HENRIETTA. He apologizes—moving to her.*)

DUKE. Did you know this was my birthday?

LADY HENRIETTA. No!

DUKE. Yes.

LADY HENRIETTA. Is it?

DUKE. Yes, and by way of celebrating it, I want you to be good-natured and let me propose to you again. (*he dries roses with handkerchief and gives them to her*)

LADY HENRIETTA. For the fifth time?

DUKE. The fourth.

LADY HENRIETTA. Is it. One loses count.

DUKE. Yes. I've only asked you three times in the last eighteen months. (*moves to above piano*)

LADY HENRIETTA. And have you anything new to plead? So few entertainments stand repetition four times. I had hoped you would grow out of loving me. Is there any chance of that? (*places roses on piano*)

DUKE. None whatever. And even if there were I shouldn't be so *gauche* as to admit it.

LADY HENRIETTA. Yet you are always perfectly cheerful.

DUKE. That's because I could never hope that you would eventually accept me if I worried you by constantly playing the despondent lover. It would bore you.

LADY HENRIETTA. Horribly! (*sits on piano stool*)

DUKE. (*crosses to chair R. C. and leans on back of it*) But don't think because I am talking lightly and laughingly now that I am not serious.

(*She begins to play piano.*)

There are times when I'm alone, when the whole world is you, and nothing else has any meaning. And then—well, then—you could never guess what I pass through, and I shall never tell you. But I know I become suddenly another being in every sense and thought.

LADY HENRIETTA. Ian—please! (*stops playing and looks up at him*)

DUKE. That—you see—is the despondent lover I told you you wouldn't like it. So let us go back and I'll tell you what I really want to say to-night, (*returns to above piano*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes. That's much better. (*she begins to play again*)

DUKE. So far as I remember my three former proposals were, more or less, appeals to your heart, and so on.

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes.

DUKE. Well, to-night I want to make an appeal to your head.

LADY HENRIETTA. Oh, a change of tactics.

DUKE. Yes. I want you to think of me for the moment as an investment.

LADY HENRIETTA. I see. What they call in the City a gilt-edged security.

DUKE. Yes, but one that would pay very big dividends—

LADY HENRIETTA. Oh, Ian!

DUKE. Honestly, I wouldn't suggest that you should marry for mere material advantages, if I thought there was the remotest chance of your ever being in love with any one.

LADY HENRIETTA. Perhaps I am. (*stops playing and rises*)

DUKE. No, no. That word "perhaps" is my point. You can no more mistake love than you can measles. It's overwhelming.

LADY HENRIETTA. But quite curable. (*crosses to above chair L. C.*)

DUKE. No! (*moves to above chair R. C.*) There it differs from all other sicknesses. You don't want to be cured. You resent any attempt at cure, you cultivate and excite the disorder, you revel in fresh symptoms. (*leans his arm on back of chair*) Everything in life gets out of focus, one is only conscious of an exquisite madness, and you dream of wonderful gleaming horizons, that slip further away the harder you race to them.

(*She crosses to below table R. C.*)

Tell me, don't you see something strange and beautiful in the fact that apparently for no particular reason I worship the very ground you tread on?

LADY HENRIETTA. (*picking up handglass from table and looks at herself in it*) I see nothing strange in it. It seems to me most natural. (*replaces glass, picks up pack of patience cards and sits on sofa*)

DUKE. What I mean is—this really isn't rudeness, it's only candour—there are other women as attractive as you are, others as clever, others as good—why is it, then, that notwithstanding that, you are everything in the world to me? (*moves chair from L. of table so as to face her, and sits*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Because I have one gift that apparently has been denied to the others.

DUKE. What gift?

LADY HENRIETTA. Too much sense to rush into

your arms merely because you hold them out. That is so new an experience for you that you are entranced.

DUKE. Very likely. I shouldn't wonder. I never thought of that. I admit that women have spoilt me. Often when I have said at a meal, merely, "Will you pass the salt, please," I have seen them look as if some unexpressed passion lay behind my words.

LADY HENRIETTA. I really almost wish I could love you.

DUKE. Do you?

LADY HENRIETTA. It would make mother so happy.

DUKE. D'you know, frankly, I can't see why you find it so difficult; I should have thought it would come to you quite naturally.

LADY HENRIETTA. You feel that not to love you is a form of eccentricity?

DUKE. Almost worse than that. It seems to me flying in the face of Providence. What is it that's wrong with me?

(LADY HENRIETTA *puts down cards, rises and crosses to L. C. He turns to her.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. It would take too long to tell, but you're too vague, too indefinite. You never carry things through. And in every woman, even after many seasons, there is something of the school-girl left. She may never have loved, yet her ideal is always dimly before her. Part of my ideal is strength.

persistence, and if you don't mind my saying so, you are a butterfly.

DUKE. I should have thought I'd done a good deal one way and another.

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes. One way and another. That's the trouble. You started your career with politics, and might have held office in time. That was thrown over. Then you went out to the War, and did splendidly. You were going to raise a regiment of your own, when you suddenly got tired of soldiering. You came back to England, and started a newspaper. A few months ago, you electrified everybody by giving out that you were in sympathy with Socialism.

DUKE. So I am.

LADY HENRIETTA. (*going to him*) Then isn't it rather weak of you to remain a duke?

DUKE. I don't think so.

(*She goes up L. C. He rises and follows her R. C.*)

One can't help being a duke. Even if I called myself Mr. Killicrankie, the sixpenny papers wouldn't have it. If I walk in the Park, they say so in three lines, and the paper has an enormous sale.

(*She crosses to above table R. C.*)

But I can't help feeling that I belong to the most vulgar section of humanity. (*crosses to chair L. C. and sits on arm of it*)

LADY HENRIETTA. That is easy to say.

DUKE. Really, I'd rather not say it. But do you

think we're good sorts? We hunt, shoot, eat so much that we become mere predatory animals, too tired and too fed up to think.

LADY HENRIETTA. That may be for the best.

DUKE. Very likely. For we're not offensively intelligent. We take degrees, and forget promptly all we learnt. If you asked me now whether a rhombus were a measure of verse or a building in the Forum, I couldn't tell you. In knowledge of life, in wit, in conversation, we can't approach the attainments of a Bond Street hairdresser.

LADY HENRIETTA. Oh well, it's too late to argue on social ethics, and I must be going.

(She moves down to sofa and picks up her gloves. He rises and crosses to above table R. C. and picks up her fan from piano)

DUKE. Then I suppose we return to former conditions? No hope and that sort of thing?

LADY HENRIETTA. I'm afraid so. I wish it could be otherwise, for it's quite true that I like you better than any other friend I have. And if I may, I'll always be a ——

DUKE. Not a sister, please.

LADY HENRIETTA. No—a true friend.

DUKE. Thanks. One gets so tired of the sister who marries somebody else's brother.

(Enter L., LADY PANGBOURNE with cloak on, and WELBY. They are followed by a footman carrying LADY HENRIETTA'S cloak. LADY PANGBOURNE

crosses to c., speaking as she goes. WELBY moves to above table L. FOOTMAN remains in doorway L.)

LADY PANGBOURNE. I said a quarter of an hour, Henrietta, and I've ordered the carriage. You must go home supperless.

DUKE. Oh, come—another quarter of an hour.

LADY HENRIETTA. No, really—mother's tired, and I'm quite ready.

(LADY HENRIETTA crosses L., and joins WELBY.

DUKE moves down R. a little. LADY PANGBOURNE goes to him. While DUKE and LADY PANGBOURNE are talking, WELBY signals to FOOTMAN to give him LADY HENRIETTA'S cloak. FOOTMAN does so, and crosses R. up stage and exit R.I.E. WELBY puts on LADY HENRIETTA'S cloak.)

LADY PANGBOURNE. What have you been talking about? Something very engrossing, surely.

DUKE. Yes. I've been describing to Lady Henrietta one of my castles in Spain.

LADY PANGBOURNE. I didn't know you had property there.

DUKE. Oh, yes. Quite a big place. When Henrietta marries me I hope to see you there.

LADY PANGBOURNE. That will be too delightful. I'm told it's a wonderful climate. But has she given you any encouragement?

DUKE. Oh, dear me, no! Everything is over between us, for the time being. We've just settled

that. But I shall begin again presently, on new lines.

LADY PANGBOURNE. My poor Ian!

(*Enter R. a FOOTMAN, followed by a BUTLER. FOOTMAN remains in doorway. BUTLER to above sofa.*)

BUTLER. Your ladyship's carriage.

(*BUTLER, during following dialogue, closes window and piano, and crosses L. to spirit stand, where he arranges decanters, etc.*)

LADY PANGBOURNE. Then come along, Henrietta; good-night, Harry. (*bows to WELBY, who returns it coldly*) Good-night, Ian. (*shakes hands with DUKE*)

DUKE. Good-night.

LADY PANGBOURNE. A delightful little party.

(*Exit R.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Good-night, Harry. (*shakes WELBY'S hand, gives IAN her hand, then crosses him and turns back for fan*)

DUKE. (*gives her fan*) I am going to vacillate no more.

LADY HENRIETTA. That's right.

DUKE. Remember—it was your own advice.

LADY HENRIETTA. I won't forget.

DUKE. I am sure you won't. You will have every reason to remember.

(*Exeunt DUKE and LADY HENRIETTA, followed by FOOTMAN.*)

WELBY. (*to BUTLER*) Give me some whisky and soda. (*moves down C., humming tune*)

BUTLER. Yes, sir. (*fills glass for WELBY*)

WELBY. Strange woman, Amy. (*turns back to table again humming*) Has everybody gone? (*sits in armchair L. C.*)

BUTLER. Yes, sir. (*handing whisky and soda on tray*) Whisky and soda, sir.

WELBY. Thank you. (*takes it and drinks*)

(*Exit BUTLER.*)

(*Enter R. the DUKE.*)

DUKE. Harry, the strain's too great. (*crosses to spirit table L.*)

WELBY. What strain?

DUKE. You wouldn't understand. (*pours himself out a whisky and soda*) You haven't the delicacy of fibre. Your fibre is to mine as a hempen rope is to a violin string: when the winds of enchantment are playing you merely flap about. When they touch me I'm an Æolian harp, and I thrill back to them.

WELBY. Do I never thrill?

DUKE. Only to the main chance. (*drinks*)

WELBY. Of what?

DUKE. Cash down generally. (*he moves to C.*)

WELBY. At this hour of night it's a little unkind to remind me that I owe you money.

DUKE. That wasn't my idea. (*comes down L. to below table*) That's nothing. I neither know nor care what you owe me. But I am utterly, hopelessly wretched.

WELBY. I told you not to eat iced truffles.

DUKE. I didn't. I wish I had. No. It's my heart that's wrong.

WELBY. Then give up smoking.

DUKE. Fool! (*puts glass down on table*)

WELBY. Well, birds of a feather flock together—and here we are.

DUKE. (*crosses to above chair R. C.*) Seriously, Harry, I am at my wits' end.

WELBY. What, Henrietta?

DUKE. Henrietta? Lady Henrietta, if you don't mind.

WELBY. It's always darkest before dawn.

DUKE. (*angrily*) Dark, dawn; I wasn't talking about daybreak.

WELBY. Don't excite yourself, my dear fellow. You think I don't feel things as you do, but you're wrong. Look at Amy.

DUKE. Amy?

WELBY. Mrs. Mulholland, if you don't mind.

DUKE. She doesn't interest me. (*moves down R. and then turns back and walks up C.*)

WELBY. Possibly not. But to me she is the centre of all interest.

DUKE. And capital?

WELBY. What?

DUKE. Nothing.

WELBY. I suppose to you she seems commonplace. But to me her sterling worth——

DUKE. Or worth sterling?

WELBY. What?

DUKE. Nothing. (*comes down to the side of WELBY'S chair*) Look here, I'm not talking about Mrs. Mulholland—I'm talking about myself.

WELBY. That is obvious to the meanest capacity.

DUKE. Don't let us nag at each other, Harry. I dare say you have emotions—of a sort; emotions that seem important to a not very profound intelligence.

WELBY. You're always gibing at my mental capacity. Yet I'm a Member of the House of Commons.

DUKE. Am I to congratulate the nation on that?

WELBY. I don't know. I suppose you credit us as a body with intelligence.

DUKE. I'm not so sure. You give us no public indication to go by. Your chief wisdom seems to be that you never listen to each other's speeches. However, as I said, don't let us nag at each other. (*gets small chair from above table R. C. and places it beside WELBY'S and sits*) To-night has brought me to a crisis, and quite seriously I want you to help me.

WELBY. How?

DUKE. I want you as far as possible to understand the frame of mind I'm in. You see me every day apparently an ordinary humdrum being.

WELBY. Yes. You're much like other people. Perhaps you talk a little more than most.

DUKE. Yet all the time I am consumed and tortured by the passion that has come to me.

WELBY. Humph!

DUKE. I'm not joking. I'm telling you absolute truth. (*rises and puts one knee on chair facing audience*) For two years I have tried by every imaginable strategy to induce her to marry me. And I have failed—utterly. To-night I saw the hopelessness of it more clearly than ever before.

WELBY. Time, my dear Ian, time, the great healer——

DUKE. (*replaces chair above table R. C.*) For Heaven's sake, Harry, don't ladle out Exeter Hall chestnuts.

WELBY. Well, what do you want me to say?

DUKE. Nothing. (*crosses L. above WELBY*)

WELBY. Got a cigar?

(DUKE takes box of cigars from spirit stand and places it open on table beside WELBY, and then goes up to window. WELBY smells cigar, looks at label on box, throws cigar back in box and closes lid. DUKE then comes down C.)

DUKE. What I want you to grasp is the reason why the agony I suffer has passed beyond all bearing. Look at my life—born with a golden spoon in my mouth, and with strawberry leaves in my hair, what chance had I? The inevitable has happened. Ever since I succeeded at seventeen I've had to breathe the atmosphere that is generated by £100,000 a year and a fifteenth century peerage. (*moves down R.*) My lightest whim gratified, my smallest wish anticipated, my very vices applauded. (*turns back to*

WELBY, *sees his eyes closed, rushes up to him and shakes his arm*) Confound you, you're asleep!

WELBY. (*opening his eyes*) Asleep—never! I simply can't sleep if there's a noise going on. What were you talking about?

DUKE. About my life. Can you conceive one more demoralizing, more grossly self-centred? I've only had to hold out my hand for the fruits of the earth to drop into it. We struggle, no climbing, mark you, the fruit has simply dropped. I take a degree at Oxford, how?—Heaven only knows. I command a squadron in the Life Guards—I win the Derby—I run a newspaper—I see active service—I win the fifth prize in *The Times* competition—many women have loved me——

WELBY. Are you sure?

DUKE. You yourself are my authority. (*moves down R.*) You've told me so repeatedly, generally as a prelude to borrowing money.

WELBY. I'd forgotten.

DUKE. I've been choked and blinded and paralysed by what fools call the prizes of life. (*picks up cushion, flings it down angrily and sits on sofa*) Prizes of life! Why, man, they're millstones about the neck that drag one lower and lower. (*rises and rushes up to WELBY*) And I ask you, is it fair?

WELBY. It isn't fair that you should have all the prizes and I all the blanks, if that's what you mean?

DUKE. It's quite extraordinary that you must drag yourself in at every turn.

WELBY. I wish I had a few of your millstones.

DUKE. And what is the net result of it all? I am a pampered beast. A pampered beast——

WELBY. Yes, yes!

DUKE. What?

WELBY. No, no!

DUKE. —who loses all sense of proportion when anything is denied me. (*goes up to fireplace*) And when it comes to being cheated of the one great overwhelming passion of my life, can you wonder that I become an abnormal creature, (*comes down to L. of WELBY*) aren't you ready to overlook whatever I do to gain my end?

WELBY. And what may that be?

DUKE. I'm coming to that. It's there I want you to help me. So let us simmer down. I'm afraid we've been a little excited. (*crosses to above table L.*)

WELBY. Nothing to speak of.

DUKE. I'm perspiring. (*takes WELBY'S drink*)

WELBY. That's mine.

DUKE. (*putting it down*) I'm sorry. (*helps himself at table*)

WELBY. It's a hot night.

DUKE. Yes, stifling! I'll be all right in a moment (*crosses to window and opens it*) Anyhow, I'm glad I've blurted it out, even to you. I don't expect you to fully realize the chaos of my inner life. Your imagination is hardly sensitive enough for that. (*moves to above chair R. C.*) But it's better than talking to space.

WELBY. I enjoy listening to you ; it's like a tarantella. One never knows when you are going to stop.

DUKE. It relieves me.

WELBY. You know, everybody says I've been awfully slack of late.

DUKE. Yes. That's nothing ; you'll get over that
(crosses L. above WELBY)

WELBY. I hope so.

DUKE. The great thing is not to harp on it.

WELBY. You said something about my helping you.

DUKE. Yes.

WELBY. How ?

DUKE. I'll tell you. (he assures himself that door L. is closed and sits L. of table) Remember—we're tiled.

WELBY. Of course.

DUKE. There is a word in the English language that is derived from the Latin *ab* and *duco*.

WELBY. *Ab*—from ; *duco*—I lead.

DUKE. You surprise me, Harry, I'd no idea you were a scholar.

WELBY. I just missed my degree.

DUKE. The word I speak of is " abduction."

WELBY. I was going to say that.

DUKE. And to plunge *in medias res*, I'm going to abduct Lady Henrietta.

WELBY. What ? (rising very slowly and looking at DUKE in astonishment)

DUKE. Yes, that's right. Keep cool. Try to think it out.

WELBY. You are—going—to abduct——

DUKE. Yes, Lady Henrietta. Queer idea, isn't it?

WELBY. My dear Ian—— (*picks up his glass from table*)

DUKE. You take it very well, Harry.

WELBY. Ah, it's a dream. That's what it is. After all these weeks of insomnia, I'm asleep at last.

DUKE. No, old boy, you're wide awake. (*rises and slaps WELBY on shoulder*)

WELBY. Am I? (*drinking*)

DUKE. You don't drink in dreams, do you?

WELBY. Oh, don't I? I'm abstemious enough in real life, but in dreams—oh, by George!

DUKE. Yes, I suddenly thought of the scheme as I was saying good-bye to her to-night.

WELBY. You—really mean it?

DUKE. Yes.

WELBY. We're not living in the Middle Ages, you know.

DUKE. Obviously.

WELBY. And London isn't Venice, despite the rainfall. (*goes up c.*)

DUKE. (*kneels on chair L. C. back to audience*) My dear fellow, the thing's in a nutshell. Either I marry Lady Henrietta somehow, or I become a lunatic. Which do you advise?

WELBY. With a view to securing the greatest happiness of the greatest number, I should say, "Let Nature take her course."

DUKE. And I decline to act on your advice.
(*crosses down R.*)

WELBY. (*crosses to spirit stand*) That I anticipated. (*picks up and looks anxiously at the whisky decanter*)

DUKE. No, I haven't been drinking, or very little. I'll tell you the scheme. (*moves to C.*) You know my place in Inverness-shire, "Crag-o'-North"?

WELBY. No. You once asked me, but you forgot to enclose a railway ticket.

(WELBY *moves to below chair L. C.*)

DUKE. Well, there it is. (*goes up R. C., points to picture on wall*) An old feudal fortress, built on a sheer crag three hundred feet high, and absolutely impregnable even to-day. I only use it for a couple of weeks in the year for the grouse. (*comes down C.*) If I succeed in getting Lady Henrietta there—there she will stay until she agrees to marry me.

WELBY. And how do you propose to get her there?

DUKE. Easily. Her aunt, old Lady Glenfinlay, lives at a desolate spot forty miles from Crag-o'-North. And this is where you come in.

WELBY. Oh, do I?

DUKE. Yes. You go there and send an urgent wire in Lady Glenfinlay's name to Henrietta, begging her to come north without delay—illness of the old lady, of course.

WELBY. That's what I do, is it?

DUKE. That is the first thing. Henrietta complies at once and leaves London with her maid. Accidentally I meet her at Perth. The train there is in two parts, the front carriages go to Fortronald, our station, the back ones to Glenfinlay. I take care that she gets into the wrong carriage, and eventually—of course to our mutual surprise—we meet at Fortronald. I am overwhelmed at her misfortune, and offer her the hospitality of Crag-o'-North. There is nothing for it, no hotel near, and she accepts.

WELBY. Does she ?

DUKE. Of course.

WELBY. And where am I, when this is going on ?

DUKE. With me, in the train.

WELBY. In the wrong carriage ?

DUKE. No ! That is your natural propensity, but in this case you will be in the right one.

WELBY. But the whole scheme will compromise her hopelessly. (*comes down L.*)

DUKE. No, it won't. I've much too profound a respect for her. I shall have some one there to play chaperon and she will be treated as a queen.

WELBY. (*crosses R.*) My dear Ian, the whole business would be a shocking scandal, you would be ostracized.

DUKE. To me that isn't of the smallest moment. (*moves to above chair R. C.*) The point is, are you willing to help me ?

WELBY. No, no, I daren't do it. I'm too unlucky. (*goes to side of chair L. C.*)

DUKE. Unlucky, how? (*goes down R. to below sofa*)

WELBY. In everything. Whatever I embark in goes wrong. Do you know that I missed the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* at half price by a single day?

DUKE. Did you?

WELBY. I did, indeed. When I woke up on Saturday, the 19th, the last day, I thought it was Friday. Oh, it was cruel luck! I was so sick about it that I've given up taking in *The Times*. (*crosses down L.*)

DUKE. Your luck will change. (*comes to C.*) See me through this, and I won't forget it.

WELBY. I daren't, really I daren't. (*comes up to DUKE*)

DUKE. You wouldn't be responsible for what I do?

WELBY. I doubt if *you* are.

DUKE. Harry!

WELBY. No, I couldn't afford to risk it. People would drop me. And for years I've spent most of my life as the guest of dear old friends. (*sits in armchair L. C.*)

DUKE. I'll more than make good any financial loss you may incur in that way. (*comes close to WELBY'S chair*)

WELBY. Would you?

DUKE. Yes. I promise you that.

WELBY. In writing. With definite figures?

DUKE. Yes.

WELBY. Well, of course—we might go into that.

DUKE. Then let us meet to-morrow morning, and go into details.

WELBY. At eleven.

DUKE. At eleven. (*goes up R.*)

WELBY. (*as if suddenly struck by an idea*) Wait a moment. I've got it. (*thinking hard*) Yes—no—yes, I've got it. (*rises*)

DUKE. Got what? (*comes down to WELBY*)

WELBY. An extraordinary inspiration. I'll do it—on one condition.

DUKE. Well?

WELBY. That Amy—Mrs. Mulholland—be asked to Crag-o'-North as the chaperone.

DUKE. Mrs. Mulholland? Yes, I suppose she'd do.

WELBY. Do! Of course she would. And it would give me the very opportunity I've been waiting for. It would throw us together. (*crosses down L.*)

DUKE. The old story. Self, self, you can think of nothing else.

WELBY. I believe she'd marry me simply to avoid a scandal. (*comes back to DUKE*) You've no idea how nervous she is about her reputation.

DUKE. Naturally.

WELBY. What?

DUKE. Nothing. Let's have a look at Crag-o'-North.

(*They go up and each get on chairs on either side of the picture. DUKE on the L., WELBY on the R.*)

You'll see how the land lies.

WELBY. What an extraordinary place. Like Saint Michael's Mount.

DUKE. These would be Henrietta's rooms. Mrs. Mulholland can go to the Tower.

WELBY. The Tower? What, up there? She's not used to that sort of thing.

DUKE. Oh, she won't mind.

WELBY. I beg your pardon. Anyhow, I mind. Why shouldn't she have these?

DUKE. Because they're mine. We must occupy apartments in separate wings. That's your room—the armoury.

WELBY. An armoury?

DUKE. Yes, there's a camp bed in it.

WELBY. I never heard of any one sleeping in an armoury.

DUKE. My dear Harry, your views are a mere waste of breath, as things will be done entirely as I choose. The place is mine, the plan is mine, and you'll find that when my foot is on my native heath, I stand suggestions from no one—etc.

WELBY. I don't see why you and Lady Henrietta should have all the best rooms. Amy is a most sensitive woman. Now why shouldn't I have your rooms, so as to be near her in case of an alarm, or she could have the lower suite, and I—etc.

(These two speeches spoken volubly together.)

(Curtain commences to descend on the words "The plan is mine.")

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Crag-o'-North, Fortronald, N.B.* At the back, almost the whole width of the stage, is an embrasured recess with five windows, separated by Gothic stonework. The windows are lozenge-paned. Through them can be seen a distant view of mountain peak and heather moor. R. steps lead to a gallery that runs above the windows and down the L. On the L. a large ingle nook with log fire burning. Up stage on R. a corridor, supposed to lead off by the Entrance Hall. This can be screened off by portières. L. a door, L. C. a table is laid for five for supper. The room is lighted by old candelabras. Moonlight without. An old eight-day clock, some family portraits, stag's head, etc. The walls and woodwork are of plain oak without any carving, and the room has an air of comfort. The furniture is old and plain, but of good design. It is 10 p.m.

(As the curtain rises, ALEXANDER MACBAYNE, an elderly Highlander of about sixty, is at fireplace putting log on. At the sound of wheels MACBAYNE goes to window, opens it and looks out. He is in rather antiquated evening dress. MRS. MACBAYNE, his

wife, a woman of the same age, wearing a black silk dress, and a bunch of keys hanging from her waist-band, is decorating the supper table with heather.)

MACBAYNE. They're clattering into the courtyard.

(MRS. MACBAYNE goes up to window and stands L. of MACBAYNE, looking over his shoulder.)

MRS. MACBAYNE. Can ye see hoo many's there?

MACBAYNE. There's three mule carts and four folks on ponies.

MRS. MACBAYNE. It's the first time his Grace has come afore the 12th that I can mind. (*returns to L. of table*)

MACBAYNE. Aye! I canna understand it. (*comes down R. C. a little*) And givin' me orders to lay in provisions for two months. It's incomprehensible!

MRS. MACBAYNE. They were aye an eccentric family.

MACBAYNE. The aristocracy's no' what it used to be. They're gettin' kind o' mixed.

MRS. MACBAYNE. Ay! Sort of democratic.

MACBAYNE. (*at door*) Here they come.

(*Enter R., LADY HENRIETTA, followed by the DUKE and a MAID. LADY HENRIETTA goes to foot of stairs, MAID by window, DUKE crosses L. below window.*)

DUKE. Ah! Macbayne—and Mrs. Macbayne! How well you're looking!

MRS. MACBAYNE. Thank you, your Grace.

LADY HENRIETTA. What a quaint old place!

DUKE. Yes, isn't it? (*goes up to above table c.*)
But you would like to be shown to your rooms?

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes, please, if I may.

DUKE. They're through that corridor. Macbayne will show you.

(MACBAYNE *goes up steps and holds door open for*
LADY HENRIETTA.)

LADY HENRIETTA. I see.

(*Exit c., followed by MAID and MACBAYNE.*)

(DUKE *crosses to R. c. Enter MRS. MULHOLLAND, in travelling dress and hat, followed by MAID and WELBY in tweeds, breeches, etc. MRS. MULHOLLAND goes to L. of chair at foot of stairs. MAID in front of window, WELBY to R.*)

DUKE. Come along, Mrs. Mulholland! Welcome to Crag-o'-North.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. It seems a remarkable fortress.

DUKE. Yes; you'll see over it to-morrow. Mrs. Macbayne will show you your rooms.

(*Exit DUKE R.*)

MRS. MACBAYNE. They are at the end of that passage. Will I show ye them the noo?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. You can show my maid where they are.

MRS. MACBAYNE. Very guid, ma'am. I'll just dae that. (*To the MAID.*) Come with me.

(MAID *crosses L. below table—exeunt L.*)

(MRS. MULHOLLAND comes down R. of table, WELBY comes to R. of her. He tries to speak, she glares at him and moves to below table, then up L. of it to above it before saying "Supper for five." WELBY watches her anxiously.)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*looking at supper table*)
Supper for five! Where are the others?

WELBY. What others?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. The house party.

WELBY. I've ~~no~~ no idea. Probably coming to-morrow.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. To-morrow! Then if it hadn't been for the accident of Lady Henrietta turning up unaccountably at Fortronald, I should have been here alone with you two men?

WELBY. I suppose. It's not my doing, you know.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I'm not so sure. (*takes a step towards him*) You have a very guilty look. And how agreeable for me if it got about that I came here alone with you and the Duke.

WELBY. Really, I do think you're too anxious about your reputation.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Not at all. (*moves down L. of table to below it*) One's reputation is the result of caution. Why wasn't I told that you were to be here?

WELBY. I don't know. It isn't my party.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*taking a step or two towards WELBY*) Did you know that I was coming?

WELBY. I had a presentiment that you were.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. That means you knew. And who is the fifth? (*pointing to table*)

WELBY. I don't know. I'm afraid he hasn't arrived. I think his name is Harris.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. The husband of Mrs. Harris, no doubt. (*crosses to L. of table and sits*) And Lady Henrietta! Of all possible quartettes, could any be more ill-assorted? A five-mile drive from Fort-ronald, and she never opened her lips to me. I bowed to her in the dark, but she took absolutely no notice.

WELBY. But you say it was dark? (*sits R. of table*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. An ordinary woman can see quite clearly in the dark. In addition to which *she* has the advantage of being a cat.

WELBY. I'm sorry.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*begins to take off gloves*) When we got on our ponies and began to climb this awful crag, I said to her, "Charming, isn't it?" on which she gazed at me with frosty eyes, and said, "Are you talking to me?" This so exasperated me that I answered, "I never squander conversation. I was talking to my maid."

WELBY. And there it ended—what?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Practically. I thought I heard her mumble "Creature!" and I was on the point of a suitable response, when unfortunately my pony stumbled. That startled hers, it began to go up sideways, and we found ourselves jostling each

other. It was most painful—not being on terms to apologize to each other.

WELBY. I saw matters were strained. That's why I talked all the way.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*takes off veil and hat*) Yes ; saying mawkish things about the moonlight on the heather, and that soon we should be as eagles nested together in a rocky eyrie.

WELBY. It seemed to me a descriptive thing to say.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. What ! “Nested together !” It sounded most uncomfortable, and almost improper. (*rises and goes to fireplace*)

WELBY. I meant in separate nests. (*rises*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Then why not say so ?

WELBY. (*goes up to fireplace trying to pacify her*) Because I hoped you would understand that.

(*Enter DUKE R., comes to R. C. He and WELBY exchange glances expressive of the awkwardness of the situation.*)

DUKE. Well, here we are, safe and sound. I hope you didn't mind the ride up, Mrs. Mulholland ?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I enjoyed it immensely.

DUKE. That's right. And what a glorious night ! (*moves to below table*)

(*WELBY crosses to above table.*)

As Welby said, “Here we are, like so many eagles cooped up snugly together in our eyrie.” Quite a good way of putting it, isn't it ?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Excellent! So poetical.
(*moves down L. C.*)

WELBY. I said, "in our ey-ries"—plural, you know.

DUKE. Naturally, my dear Harry.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. This is the way to my rooms, isn't it? (*points off L.*)

(DUKE *crosses above her and stands by door.* WELBY *goes up to window.*)

DUKE. Yes. But don't think of changing, it's too late. We sup here, as the dining-room won't be ready till to-morrow. I hope you don't mind?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Not a bit! Isn't Lady Henrietta going to dress?

DUKE. She said something about a tea-gown.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Tea-gown! I'm glad of that. I've brought Cerise's latest in tea-gowns with a—however, you'll see for yourselves presently.

(*Exit R.*)

(WELBY *comes down R. of table and sits.* DUKE *goes to fire and stands with back to it.*)

WELBY. A nice business this is going to be.

DUKE. I hope so. I'm enjoying myself enormously.

WELBY. When are you going to tell Lady Henrietta that she's incarcerated?

DUKE. Hush, my dear Harry! (*looks about fearfully and comes down R. of WELBY*) Walls have

ears—in Scotland especially. I shall tell her after supper.

WELBY. Aren't you going to break it by degrees?

DUKE. Of course.

WELBY. How will you begin?

DUKE. With Pommery '92 at supper.

WELBY. Have you much of it?

DUKE. Six cases.

WELBY. Good!

(*Enter LADY HENRIETTA L. in travelling dress. WELBY rises and moves L. a little. DUKE turns up to greet LADY HENRIETTA. She comes down steps and crosses above table to fire.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Have I kept you waiting?

DUKE. No, no!

LADY HENRIETTA. Extraordinary thing my landing here, isn't it?

DUKE. Amazing!

(*WELBY moves towards door R., DUKE intercepts him and leads him up stage.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. I distinctly said to the guard at Perth, "Put me into a carriage that goes to Glenfinlay." You were talking to him at the time.

DUKE. Yes.

LADY HENRIETTA. You seemed to be tipping him as I came up.

DUKE. Was I?

(*DUKE pushes WELBY toward LADY HENRIETTA, she turns suddenly and he recoils.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Ought one always to tip guards at junctions?

WELBY. Always. It's the only way of arriving at where one wants to go to. Don't you?

LADY HENRIETTA. No. I never thought of it.

WELBY. Ah! That accounts for your going wrong. (*edges to R. of DUKE and then goes up to window*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Anyhow, it's no use worrying. Here I am. (*sits on seat by fire*)

DUKE. And here you stop. (*moves to chair above table*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes, till to-morrow.

(DUKE and WELBY exchange looks, indicating that she doesn't go "To-morrow.")

Are there many people staying with you?

DUKE. Only Mrs. Mulholland.

LADY HENRIETTA. Mrs. Mulholland is here—alone?

DUKE. (*moves to LADY HENRIETTA and speaks with embarrassment*) The others who were coming have wired that they can't be here until the 12th. Awkward, isn't it?

LADY HENRIETTA. Very. (*rises*) Of course she too will leave to-morrow.

DUKE. Oh no! She doesn't mind. Her reputation is so robust.

WELBY. (*comes down stage a little, R. C.*) I beg your pardon, Ian. It is nothing of the sort. I mean

that Amy—Mrs. Mulholland—is most rigid in matters of propriety. When I told her the others had failed us, she very nearly fainted.

LADY HENRIETTA. (*comes down L. and crosses below table to R. of it*) It's a little embarrassing. You see, I used to know her—slightly. Her husband made a fortune in glue, didn't he? (*sits R of table*)

WELBY. Yes. (*comes down to R. of her*) Wholesale, of course. She has been presented.

LADY HENRIETTA. Isn't it rather trying for you to be here together?

WELBY. I should think it is. It's like old times gone wrong.

LADY HENRIETTA. (*laughing*) Poor Harry! (*turns to DUKE*) I think perhaps I had better be re-introduced to her.

DUKE. Yes. *You* can do that, Harry.

WELBY. I don't know how she'll take it. I hear her coming. Look here, as host, hadn't you better do it?

DUKE. Right! Come along, Mrs. Mulholland!

(*Enter MRS. MULHOLLAND. DUKE moves a little to L. MRS. MULHOLLAND comes to L. C. LADY HENRIETTA rises.*)

By the way, do you know Lady Henrietta?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*vacantly*) Lady——?

DUKE. Lady Henrietta Addison.

LADY HENRIETTA. I think we used to know each other slightly.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Really? One meets so many people, doesn't one? (*goes up to fireplace*)

(DUKE *crosses to WELBY up R. C. They show that they feel the awkwardness of the situation.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Or am I mistaken?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*turning to LADY HENRIETTA*) I've no idea. I've such a shocking memory. (*turns and looks into fire*)

LADY HENRIETTA. I feel sure I'm wrong, and I congratulate you on not being the Mrs. Mulholland I remember. She was like a fly in amber. One wondered how she got there. (*sits R. of table*)

(WELBY *comes down R. C. DUKE crosses to MRS. MULHOLLAND above table.*)

WELBY. Wonderfully tranquil night, isn't it?

DUKE. Feeling tired?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Not a bit. It was delightful. My pony kept bumping against some one else's all the way. One of the maids, probably, judging from her seat.

(DUKE *and WELBY meet again up R. C.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. My pony, I think.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Oh no, really! It couldn't have been, I assure you. If you had only seen the creature.

(*Enter MACBAYNE and FOOTMAN R. MACBAYNE is carrying stand for BUTLER'S tray, which he places above door R. FOOTMAN has tray which he places*

on stand. DUKE and WELBY come down, LADY HENRIETTA rises. The tray contains 4 plates, 4 entrée dishes, a glass cloth, and 2 bottles of champagne.)

DUKE. Ah! here's supper. Will you sit there, Lady Henrietta?

(WELBY places chair R. of table for her. DUKE indicates chair above table L. for MRS. MULHOLLAND.)

(WELBY crosses below table and sits L. of it. FOOTMAN places chair from foot of stairs above table R. for DUKE. There is a pause.)

Now then!

(FOOTMAN places plates to LADY HENRIETTA, then to MRS. MULHOLLAND, then WELBY and DUKE. He then goes to tray, gets entrée dish, serves WELBY. Meanwhile MACBAYNE has been serving LADY HENRIETTA, MRS. MULHOLLAND and DUKE. They eat for a moment in silence.)

Four is quite the right number for supper, isn't it?

LADY HENRIETTA. Quite.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. It all depends. Sometimes even four is one too many.

WELBY. As, for example, when there are only three cutlets. *(laughs)* What? One short, you know.

LADY HENRIETTA. No, no. Mrs. Mulholland means that if—for instance—I were *not* here, she could say and do things that she can't very well while I am.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I'm afraid you misunderstand me. I am always exactly as you see me now.

LADY HENRIETTA. Oh, surely not! I can hardly believe that.

(FOOTMAN removes plates, taking first LADY HENRIETTA'S and DUKE'S, which he carries off R., then MRS. MULHOLLAND'S and WELBY'S. He remains off. Meanwhile MACBAYNE has poured champagne to (1) LADY HENRIETTA, (2) DUKE, (3) MRS. MULHOLLAND, (4) WELBY. He only puts a small quantity in WELBY'S glass, who holds it out to be refilled.)

WELBY. Have you been to the Academy?

MRS. MULHOLLAND (*vehemently*) No!

DUKE. Champagne? (*to change subject*) Yes. By the way, Lady Henrietta, when do you breakfast?

LADY HENRIETTA. Oh, nine o'clock, I think.

DUKE. And you, Mrs. Mulholland?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Ten.

DUKE. Harry?

WELBY. Ten.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Then may I change to eight?

DUKE. Of course.

(FOOTMAN re-enters with four plates. He and MACBAYNE serve second course in same manner as first.)

Personally, in the North I'm a sort of matutinal lark, and breakfast at seven. So, Macbayne, there will be breakfast for one at seven, eight, nine, and ten.

MACBAYNE. Yes, your Grace.

LADY HENRIETTA. Salt, please.

(Pause. DUKE and WELBY both offer salt ; she takes it from DUKE.)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Who is it that hasn't arrived ?

DUKE. Oh, you mean the vacant place ? He must have missed the train. His name is——

WELBY. Harris.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I didn't ask you ; I wanted to hear what the Duke would call him.

(BUTLER approaches table with champagne. DUKE takes bottle from him and refills MRS. MULHOLLAND'S glass.)

LADY HENRIETTA. Coming through the woods to-night, the scent of the trees was delicious. I suppose it comes from the glue of the pines ?

(WELBY kicks leg of table and indicates to LADY HENRIETTA in dumb show that glue is a sore subject with MRS. MULHOLLAND.)

DUKE. Yes. (he is now refilling LADY HENRIETTA'S glass) You mean the gum—the resin.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (bridling) “Glue” I think was the word used. Do let us speak of it as glue. I don't mind in the least, I assure you I don't.

LADY HENRIETTA. I meant the resin, of course.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. But please let us call it glue. I owe so much to glue, and one likes to be delicately reminded of it. (drinks)

(DUKE *is placing bottle, which is now nearly empty, in c. of table. WELBY seizes it and puts the remaining wine in his glass.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Really, Mrs. Mulholland, I hadn't the faintest intention of saying anything *mal-à-propos*.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I'm sure you hadn't. Mere force of habit.

(MACBAYNE *approaches with entrée dish, which he brings to MRS. MULHOLLAND.*)

DUKE. You're eating nothing. Do have some more of this.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Thanks, no. I dined in the train. If possible, I shall breakfast there to-morrow.

(MRS. MULHOLLAND *declines offered dish, which MACBAYNE takes to LADY HENRIETTA, who also refuses.*)

DUKE. Oh! But I hope you won't dream of leaving us. By the way, what d'you like to do after supper? I've brought a box with me that has almost every game in it. You play bridge, don't you? (*to LADY HENRIETTA*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Only with people I know well.

DUKE. (*to MRS. MULHOLLAND*) Do you?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Never with strangers.

DUKE. You do, of course, Harry?

WELBY. If you can get up four.

DUKE. I see. Nobody very keen, eh?

(WELBY *upsets glass of wine. MACBAYNE motions*

to FOOTMAN to wipe up wine which has gone on floor.
FOOTMAN does so and returns to tray.)

WELBY. Tut-tut! I've upset my wine. Never mind, I'll put some salt on it. There now! I've upset the salt! So over the shoulder for luck—what? (*throws salt over shoulder*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Oh! My eyes—my eyes!

WELBY. (*distressed*) I beg your pardon. Allow me. (*dusts Mrs. Mulholland with napkin*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I will *not* be dusted! How dare you?

WELBY. I'm sorry, really—yes—very sorry.

DUKE. Lady Henrietta, won't you have something more?

LADY HENRIETTA. No, thank you, nothing more.

(MACBAYNE removes LADY HENRIETTA'S and DUKE'S plates, which he places on tray. FOOTMAN does same with MRS. MULHOLLAND'S and WELBY'S. He then carries tray off R., MACBAYNE follows with stand.)

DUKE. Let me give you a cigarette?

LADY HENRIETTA. No, thank you.

DUKE. Mrs. Mulholland?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Please. (*takes cigarette and lights it*)

(*The MEN also smoke.*)

I don't smoke as a rule. But there are times when

one must do precisely what others don't, if only to make sure of doing the correct thing.

(During the whole supper scene there are awkward pauses, ominous coughs, etc., and general embarrassment.)

DUKE. Very jolly up here, isn't it?

ALL. Very.

LADY HENRIETTA. Are you going to shoot on the 12th, Ian?

DUKE. Yes, probably.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. What does the word "Ian" mean?

DUKE. It's my name.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Oh, really! I didn't know Christian names were bandied about in the Highlands.

DUKE. Henrietta and I have been boy and girl together.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Really? The same age! How interesting! *(she rises and moves to fireplace)*

(LADY HENRIETTA rises and goes to window and sits; as she goes up MACBAYNE enters and crosses above table and replaces WELBY'S chair above door L.

DUKE and WELBY, who have also risen)

DUKE. *(to WELBY)*, Take her away.

WELBY. What, now? Good heavens! This is awful! *(drinks champagne)* Couldn't you tell 'em both?

DUKE. No. Do as I tell you.

WELBY. All right, don't rush me.

(DUKE joins LADY HENRIETTA at window. WELBY goes up R. of table and above it to MRS MULHOLLAND at fire. As he does so FOOTMAN enters from R. and replaces DUKE'S chair at foot of stairs.)

(to MRS. MULHOLLAND) Ian wants me to show you the view from the tower.

DUKE. By moonlight, you know. It's really fine.

(MACBAYNE and FOOTMAN carry table off L. FOOTMAN lowers curtains in doorway L.)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I should like to see it.

WELBY. This is the way. I'll take you.

(He crosses to R. MRS. MULHOLLAND follows him to R. C.)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. You can show me where to go and then leave me.

WELBY. Don't be hard on me. If you only knew—it may be the last time you'll ever listen to me.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I hope so.

(She crosses him and exits R. He follows. FOOTMAN crosses R., placing LADY HENRIETTA'S chair down R. facing to L. He then lowers curtain in doorway R. and exits L.)

DUKE. (with a sigh of relief) Thank Heaven!
(crosses to fire and stands with back to it)

LADY HENRIETTA. For what? (crosses to chair C.)

DUKE. That she's gone.

LADY HENRIETTA. She's very exhausting, isn't she? I tried to be civil to her.

DUKE. (*doubtfully*) Yes. It was good of you.

LADY HENRIETTA. By the way, before I forget, what is the first train I can get for Glenfinlay to-morrow?

DUKE. I shouldn't worry about that.

LADY HENRIETTA. But I must know.

DUKE. No, not necessarily.

LADY HENRIETTA. What do you mean?

DUKE. It's just a little difficult to explain, but I'm not going to shirk it, I'm going to tell you. In the first place, it's a great pleasure to let you know that Lady Glenfinlay is as well as ever she was.

LADY HENRIETTA. How do you know?

DUKE. She was never ill.

LADY HENRIETTA. What nonsense! I got her telegram yesterday. (*sits c.*)

DUKE. I sent you that.

LADY HENRIETTA. You? I don't understand.

DUKE. The fact is—it's a shocking thing to own up to—you've been decoyed here.

LADY HENRIETTA. Ian!

DUKE. Yes. It's perfectly true. Alarming, isn't it? Decoyed here by me.

LADY HENRIETTA. Ian, do be sensible. What are you talking about?

DUKE. I sent the wire from Glenfinlay, and (*puffs cigarette*) here we are.

LADY HENRIETTA. (*rises and goes to him*) Is this really true, or is it your idea of a practical joke?

DUKE. I assure you it's true. But I should never be so ill-mannered as to bring you here merely as a joke. In point of fact, I'm desperately serious. Indirectly, I am acting on your advice.

LADY HENRIETTA. In what way?

DUKE. You told me that I had no strength, no determination of character. Persistence was one of the words you used. Well, I'm persisting now.

LADY HENRIETTA. In what?

DUKE. In my intention to marry you.

LADY HENRIETTA. My dear Ian, if you have dragged me here merely to re-open a subject that you know very well is closed, I have done with you. (*goes up steps*)

(*He goes to banister to stop her.*)

And after I leave you to-morrow I shall never discuss it again.

DUKE. Ah, yes! But I'm afraid you don't leave me to-morrow. Nor even on the next day. Here you remain until you see your way to marrying me.

(*She laughs scornfully, and goes to chair down R. and sits.*)

It's an unusual course, I admit, but the only one that seemed to me to come within the scope of your advice.

LADY HENRIETTA. You mean to keep me here a prisoner?

DUKE. Yes. That's the idea.

LADY HENRIETTA. You forget that Mrs. Mulholland goes to-morrow. You will hardly put me to the indignity of staying alone with you and Mr. Welby?

DUKE. My dear lady, I would never dream of such a thing. (*goes back to fire*) That is why Mrs. Mulholland will *not* go to-morrow.

LADY HENRIETTA. Then she is your accomplice?

DUKE. In a sense, but quite an unconscious one. She believes that she is on a friendly visit. (*looks into fire*)

LADY HENRIETTA. (*rises and goes to him*) Ian, look me in the face and tell me one of two things.

(*He turns to her.*)

Either that this is merely a clumsy and heartless joke, or that it is a hideous reality.

DUKE. Then, looking into your eyes and seeing in them all that I long for,

(*She turns away from him.*)

I tell you that it is a reality, though not, I hope, a hideous one.

LADY HENRIETTA. Very well. I go now—this moment. (*crosses to R. C.*)

DUKE. Where?

LADY HENRIETTA. Anywhere. The nearest cottage.

DUKE. But you can't. (*sits on seat by fire*) We are shut in for the night. There would only be a scene. And I can't imagine you making a scene.

LADY HENRIETTA. And why not, pray?

DUKE. Well—the repose of the Vere de Veres, and that sort of thing.

LADY HENRIETTA. To-morrow, at all events, I shall go.

DUKE. I don't think so. I shouldn't bet on it.

LADY HENRIETTA. (*crossing to DUKE*) You don't really suppose that you can keep me here against my will? If I choose to walk out of the castle to-morrow, would you put me to the humiliation of being stopped by your servants?

DUKE. Not for a moment. (*rises, throws away his cigarette, crosses to window and opens it. He beckons her to follow*)

(*She does so, slowly.*)

You know very well I should never take such a liberty. But let me show you how the land lies. There is only one means of egress and that is by the great gate of the courtyard. On every other side there is nothing but sheer cliff. And I keep the key of that gate. (*crosses to c.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. (*Looks out of window, and then turns to him with a laugh*) Really—this is—almost mediaeval. And I am to stay here a prisoner, and be made love to day by day by you!

DUKE. That's not quite fair. I've made mistakes in life, dozens of times; but I've never been guilty of a breach of hospitality.

(*She crosses to fire and sits; he follows her.*)

I shall not intrude on you in any way; least of all to

make love ; and you will find I've taken every possible care to keep you amused. I've ordered the hundred best books, so you will have no need for either poppy or mandragora. Then there is the box of games.

LADY HENRIETTA. To be played with you ?

DUKE. If you wish it. I want your visit to be a success, naturally. Then I have ordered all the leading journals and magazines, including the *Queen*, the *Lady's Field*, *The Lady*, *The Lady's Pictorial*, and such other papers as convey some idea of how your sex should be clad.

LADY HENRIETTA. We won't discuss these things.
(*rises and goes to chair c. and sits*)

DUKE. Don't misunderstand me. I wasn't thinking of the advertisements. A piano is coming tomorrow. You play extremely well, with perhaps a slight tendency to keep the loud pedal down from start to finish. I sing not badly. The evenings ought to pass pleasantly enough.

LADY HENRIETTA. (*rises and goes to him at first*)
Ian, it is all very well to be flippant and airy, but there are other things to be thought of. Surely you can't mean to keep me here by force, separated from my people, from—my mother.

DUKE. I wish you wouldn't put it like that. But it's no good, I have macadamized my heart. And I give you my word of honour that you will be as safe here as you would be in Exeter Hall. You'll find you'll settle down in a day or two.

LADY HENRIETTA. Settle down? To what? (*crosses to R. C.*) Do you imagine that I will tamely sit down and read dull novels, play at dominoes and cribbage, or slave at Grieg and Tschakwoski on the piano. (*turns to him*) With you in the background waiting for me to simper, "Ilan, I will marry you?"

DUKE. *That is what I hope to hear.*

LADY HENRIETTA. (*crossing to chair C.*) You realize that the whole affair will end in a huge scandal.

DUKE. Why should it? We're out of the world here.

(*She sits C., he comes to L. of her.*)

Besides, whenever you feel inclined, you can turn the whole imbroglio into a glorious romance.

LADY HENRIETTA. How?

DUKE. By saying, "I love you."

LADY HENRIETTA. I shall never say that.

DUKE. There's no hurry. D'you know, you're taking things very well?

LADY HENRIETTA. What? Because I don't shriek and make a scene?

DUKE. Yes. You're wonderfully calm and reasonable.

LADY HENRIETTA. My dear Ian, if one finds oneself face to face with a man who ought to be in a padded room, to be calm is one's only chance.

DUKE. Ah! Don't say that. Surely to love you is a proof of sanity.

LADY HENRIETTA. It is a lucid moment, that is all. (*rises and goes to fireplace*)

DUKE. (*follows*) You ought to look upon the whole episode as a prodigious compliment. What other man has paid you such homage as I have in decoying you here?

(*The voices of MRS. MULHOLLAND and WELBY are heard without.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Never! Never! Never! How dare you?

WELBY. Amy! For heaven's sake—it's not my doing.

LADY HENRIETTA. What is that?

DUKE. Your chaperon.

(*She rises and moves to chair at foot of stairs and sits.*
Enter MRS. MULHOLLAND excitedly, followed by WELBY R.)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. What is this terrible thing that I am told? Duke, I appeal to you—am I a prisoner or am I not?

DUKE. In a sense, I'm afraid you are.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Then I go at once. (*crosses down L.*) If I have to walk knee-deep through heather, bracken and thistles in my evening shoes.

DUKE. Harry has evidently explained things to you?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. He has told me of the most preposterous outrages I ever heard of. (*goes up*)

R. C.) I, Amelia Mulholland, decoyed here to chaperon a lady whom I have never seen, or if I have seen, have forgotten.

(She looks at LADY HENRIETTA, who goes to window and looks out.)

Do you know that I have an-uncle on the County Council?

DUKE. I didn't know it.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. What have I done that I should be lured into a trap of this sort?

WELBY. Exactly. That's what I want to know.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Then I promise you you'll know before very long. I met one of the highest officials on the Metropolitan Police a few weeks ago at lunch at the Trocadero, and I mean to send a wire at once to the Chief Constable, Scotland Yard. I will not be incarcerated, even by a Duke. I am a widow and this is a free country. *(goes to fireplace)*

(DUKE motions WELBY to go after her, he does so.)

LADY HENRIETTA. I think, Ian, if you will show us the consideration of leaving us——

DUKE. Of course. I want you to feel absolutely at home here. I'm sure, Mrs. Mulholland, my action seems to you unwarrantable and incomprehensible, but I hope in a day or two we shall settle down into the most harmonious of quartettes.

(He bows formally to LADY HENRIETTA and MRS.

MULHOLLAND *and exit very slowly with his hands clasped behind his back.*)

(LADY HENRIETTA *then comes down R. and lifts curtain to look after him. WELBY comes down C. MRS. MULHOLLAND down L. C., LADY HENRIETTA crosses C. above them.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Now, let us lay our heads together.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*to WELBY*) First of all,

(*She moves towards WELBY, who retreats R. a little.*

LADY HENRIETTA *goes to fire and sits.*)

I insist upon knowing why you allowed us to be trapped like this? Why didn't you warn us?

WELBY. I didn't dare—I'm in the same boat as you are. All I say is—don't upset it.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. And this is the man who says he loves me. I wish I could find the word that fitly describes you. The nearest I can get is "catspaw."

WELBY. Amy!

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Hush!

(*WELBY goes up C., LADY HENRIETTA rises and comes L. C. TO MRS. MULHOLLAND, who is C.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. I think we oughtn't to lose time. Something must be done. I'm so sorry we had little differences at supper, but I do think they ought to be set aside under the circumstances.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I quite agree. I confess I

was a little hurt when you and your mother cut me dead that night in town.

(WELBY comes down between them.)

WELBY. Yes, quite so.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. This is a private matter, Mr. Welby.

WELBY. My mistake! (*goes up to window*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Of course.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I was perfectly horrid at supper.

LADY HENRIETTA. So was I.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. It's very comforting to hear that. You know, I've been on the point of tears all the evening.

(WELBY comes down c.)

I felt instinctively that something was going to happen directly I saw that creature (*indicating WELBY*) smiling vacantly on the platform at Perth.

(LADY HENRIETTA crosses L., MRS. MULHOLLAND turns up a little, WELBY comes down.)

WELBY. I haven't smiled since—since the day you threw me over.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Oh, you smiled then, did you?

WELBY. Well, it wasn't a pleasant smile to see.

LADY HENRIETTA. (*to WELBY*) You'll help us, won't you?

WELBY. (*crosses R., lifts curtain, looks out and*

comes back to c.) If you promise not to tell Ian, I'll do what I can.

LADY HENRIETTA. We won't betray you—I promise you.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. “His honour rooted in dishonour stood.”

WELBY. I beg your pardon?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. The late Lord Tennyson.

(A long pause while they all try to think of a plan of escape. After pause, MRS. MULHOLLAND crosses below WELBY to LADY HENRIETTA, who is L.)

The only suggestion that I can make is that one of us must escape, and alarm the Government or whoever's responsible.

LADY HENRIETTA. Which of us?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Mr. Welby, of course, with a rope.

WELBY. I hardly think that's practicable.

LADY HENRIETTA. We could hold it over a window and you could slip down.

WELBY. Slip! That's just what would happen. Besides, there isn't a rope in the place.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. How do you know?

WELBY. Instinctively!

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Nonsense!

(MRS. MULHOLLAND sits c. Another pause, LADY HENRIETTA walks slowly down L. and turns back, when she gets up to MRS. MULHOLLAND, MRS. MULHOLLAND speaks.)

Wait a moment! Not more than thirty feet below my window is the top of an immensely high pine tree. (*turning to WELBY, who is c.*) Now, if you could leap on to that, and climb down—but no, I forgot—the room is mine.

LADY HENRIETTA. But while he is doing it, you could be with me.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes, of course I could. Very well, we'll try that. (*rises*)

WELBY. I hardly think I have the physique for a feat of that sort.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*moving to WELBY, who crosses below her to l. c.*) Do you mean that you're afraid?

WELBY. Yes, I do.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. What is the word that exactly describes you that I cannot remember?

WELBY. I should think it must be "acrobat."

LADY HENRIETTA. You know, I do think it would be difficult to catch the top of a pine tree at the rate he would be going. The leap would be easy enough.

WELBY. There's no difficulty about the actual leap. There's almost nothing I couldn't leap off. The thing is, where should I land?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Your head would offer the greatest resistance.

LADY HENRIETTA. Hush! Not so loud! He may hear.

(*WELBY sits c.* MRS. MULHOLLAND and LADY HENRI-

ETTA *bring chairs from R. and L. respectively, and sit on each side of WELBY.*)

WELBY. (*in a loud whisper*) By the laws of gravity, when I have fallen thirty feet, I should be travelling through the air at the rate of sixty feet a second. That would only allow of one-sixtieth of a second in which to clutch the top of the tree, assuming that I had been sufficiently lucky to travel in its direction.

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes! I'm afraid we must think of something else.

(*They all rise. MRS. MULHOLLAND and LADY HENRIETTA replace chairs. WELBY goes up C. LADY HENRIETTA crosses below him to window and looks out. MRS. MULHOLLAND then goes up R. C. between them.*)

Ah! Couldn't we secretly during the daytime tomorrow tear up our blankets into strips and join them? Then at night, with one end firmly secured round your waist, we would lower you as far as we possibly could.

WELBY. And then?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Let go, of course.

WELBY. What! In mid air? We can't have enough blankets to go round—I mean to go down.

(*They move down stage together. LADY HENRIETTA crosses above them to fireplace.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Firemen do that sort of thing

constantly. Why, the day after we were engaged, you took me to see the Fire Brigade rescuing people at the Exhibition at Earl's Court. And when I said, "How brave they are," you whispered, "Don't I wish I had the chance of rescuing you!" Perhaps you've forgotten that?

WELBY. No. I remember perfectly well. But we were engaged then. We're not now.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I believe you are simply listening to our plans in order to repeat everything we have said to the Duke.

(LADY HENRIETTA comes to L. of WELBY and touches his arm.)

WELBY. No, no, upon my honour. Besides, the only plans you have suggested appear to me to be attempts on my life.

(MRS. MULHOLLAND sits R. C. WELBY goes up to newel post and leans his elbow on it. LADY HENRIETTA goes back to fire, and sits. There is another long pause.)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Hush!

LADY HENRIETTA. Ah!

(LADY HENRIETTA speaks very sharply. WELBY is startled, his elbow slips off newel post.)

(rises) Suppose to-morrow we fill up stamped telegrams, attach stones to them and throw them over the gate, some one—possibly a tradesman or postman—would be sure to find them. (moves down L.)

WELBY. (*down c.*) A very good idea.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. You think so, because it involves no bodily risk to yourself. What sort of a knight-errant would you have been in mediaeval days?

WELBY. I've no idea.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Can you picture yourself tilting at a tourney?

WELBY. Not very clearly.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I can. And I see you insensible on the turf at the first onslaught.

WELBY. Possibly. That at least would be peace—with honour. But, look here, I've got an idea.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. At last!

LADY HENRIETTA. Nonsense!

WELBY. It's my turn. (*to LADY HENRIETTA*) Why shouldn't you appear to accept the inevitable and agree—as a temporary measure—to marry him?

LADY HENRIETTA. Why? Because I should feel that my promise was binding. (*turns to WELBY*)

(MRS. MULHOLLAND *rises.*)

WELBY. But you needn't. The law holds that a promise extracted by threat or violence is not binding. I *know* that. I was very nearly called to the Bar.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Very nearly called? What do you mean?

WELBY. That I just missed passing. And that is a point of law I particularly remember.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*to* LADY HENRIETTA) You know, it's not a bad idea. (*crosses above WELBY to chair L., sits*)

LADY HENRIETTA. But it would be so embarrassing. (*moving to WELBY*) You mean that I should actually become engaged to him?

WELBY. Merely as a strategic manoeuvre.

(LADY HENRIETTA *crosses him to R. C.*)

It can be broken off. Who knows that so well as I? (*He looks at MRS. MULHOLLAND, who shrugs her shoulders.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. But supposing I did what you suggest, don't you see—it's very difficult to express, but he might want to—well, *you* must know, you've both been engaged.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I have entirely forgotten what happened. I decline to remember.

WELBY. We—er—kissed each other.

(MRS. MULHOLLAND *expresses disgust.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Exactly. That is my difficulty. What am I to do if he expects that?

WELBY. It is over in a moment.

LADY HENRIETTA. That is not the point, unfortunately. As a mere physical effort, I believe I could do it. But it is the symbolism, the complete surrender it implies. (*sits R. C.*)

WELBY. Symbolism—surrender—there can't be time for all that in a mere kiss.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. No. (*rises and crosses to WELBY*) Your kisses never had any symbolism. They were most commonplace.

(*WELBY goes up and crosses to fire.*)

(*goes to LADY HENRIETTA*) I quite sympathize with what you feel, my dear—you don't mind my saying "dear," do you?

LADY HENRIETTA. Not a bit.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. It slipped out. The first kiss is, of course, a very grave undertaking, and the pleasure it gives is out of all proportion to what may happen afterwards. (*looks at WELBY*) If he suggests such a thing, look at him with a carefully considered expression of surprise, and say, "not to-night, dear."

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes, I might do that. I suppose other women have said that sort of thing?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*turning to c.*) In point of fact, Mr. Welby, when we became engaged, you didn't attempt to kiss me.

WELBY. How could I? (*comes down L. c.*) I proposed to you at the Queen's Hall during the Trauermarsch in "Götterdämmerung." I was carried away by the music.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I remember I could scarcely hear you for the trumpets.

WELBY. And I thought I was happy.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. So you were.

WELBY. Was I?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Of course. (*turns back to*
LADY HENRIETTA)

WELBY. Well—perhaps.

LADY HENRIETTA. There seems almost no alternative to what you suggest. I dare say I shall be able to carry it through. Then we could all get away to-morrow morning.

(*Mrs. Mulholland goes to window.*)

WELBY. (*crosses to* LADY HENRIETTA) Exactly. Well now, why not get it over at once.

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes—I may as well. You go and tell Ian that I want to see him.

WELBY. (*crosses R. below her and turns to speak*) And don't be afraid of a mere kiss. Thousands are exchanged daily between people of the highest reputation.

(*Exit R.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I'm so sorry for you, dear. (*comes down C.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. (*rises and crosses L.*) It's terrible, isn't it? Ian must be mad.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Of course he is, but he evidently loves you. How it would simplify matters if you could *really* love him. Then we should all be at rest.

LADY HENRIETTA. Oh, I've tried—indeed, I've tried. (*sits L.*) I don't believe (*beginning to cry*) that I shall ever care for any one.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. No more do I. (*also beginning to cry*) I mean any one else.

LADY HENRIETTA. It's all very, very, painful. Listen! (*rises*) He's coming.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Then I'll go. (*crosses L. below* LADY HENRIETTA)

LADY HENRIETTA. (*detaining her*) You'll be close at hand, won't you?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes, of course. Listening probably. Do you mind?

LADY HENRIETTA. No, I'd rather you listened.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. You might want me as a witness. I'll say whatever you wish me to.

(*Exit L.*)

(LADY HENRIETTA *goes up to window. Enter DUKE R., he comes to C.*)

DUKE. Well, is the council of war over?

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes.

DUKE. And what is the result?

LADY HENRIETTA. We are willing to capitulate. (*comes down to chair R. C.*)

DUKE. Capitulate? How?

LADY HENRIETTA. Ian, I will marry you.

DUKE. What?

LADY HENRIETTA. I will marry you.

DUKE. This is very sudden. Very delightful, but very sudden.

LADY HENRIETTA. It is—a little.

DUKE. I don't think I quite like it.

LADY HENRIETTA. I am sorry to hear that.

DUKE. It's so unexpected. Does it mean—no, it couldn't mean that.

LADY HENRIETTA. Mean what?

DUKE. That your eyes have been opened at last, and you realize that I am worth loving?

LADY HENRIETTA. I am ready to consider myself engaged to you.

DUKE. Is this your own idea?

LADY HENRIETTA. Not quite. Mr. Welby has been pointing out to me the advantage of marrying you, and I begin to see that he is right.

DUKE. I see. In fact, you're acting vicariously. You are merely Mr. Welby's medium. So you're ready to marry me without any feeling of love—in your heart.

LADY HENRIETTA. That wasn't part of the bargain. You said that here I was to remain until I consented to marry you. Well, I consent.

(She crosses L. below him—he follows her to L. C.)

DUKE. I want something more than that. It's all so volcanic. It disorganizes my plan of action. I was going to teach you to love me, gently, but firmly.

LADY HENRIETTA. I am saving you that trouble.

DUKE. But why? Why this sudden change of front? I don't want you to come to me as a martyr. Do you think I am a brute of that sort?

LADY HENRIETTA. Are we engaged, or are we not?

DUKE. Not yet. Not to-night. We haven't settled down yet.

LADY HENRIETTA. I ask you—are we engaged, or are we not? It's ridiculous that I should have to ask you such a question, but I must know.

DUKE. Then I think I had better say "no."
(*sits L. C. facing fire*).

LADY HENRIETTA. I think it's shameful of you. I yield to you, and in return you humiliate me beyond endurance. (*goes up L. to balustrade, leans on it*)

DUKE. I'm sorry.

LADY HENRIETTA. Oh, it's scandalous. (*turns o him*) Now what am I to tell the others? They know that I have agreed to marry you. We thought it out together. What am I to tell them? That you refuse?

DUKE. It is awkward, isn't it?

(*She sits at fireplace, he pauses, then rises and goes to her.*)

Oh, very well, then, it's getting late and I see you're tired. Let us consider ourselves engaged.

LADY HENRIETTA. Thank you, Ian.

DUKE. You are happy now?

LADY HENRIETTA. I am relieved.

DUKE. Then I suppose we ought to ratify the bargain with—— (*he takes her hand and tries to kiss her*)

LADY HENRIETTA. (*rises and runs to R. of chair L. C.*) Ian—not to-night, please.

DUKE. (*comes to L. of chair*) But really, I think it's almost necessary.

LADY HENRIETTA. Oh, surely not. After such a fatiguing evening, and the long railway journey.

DUKE. It's very unusual not to. (*rests one knee on chair, his hands on back of it*) I doubt if an engagement holds good without it.

LADY HENRIETTA. Then if it-must be, let us get it over.

DUKE. I think so. We shall both feel relieved.

(*The DUKE slowly and formally kisses her cheek.*

LADY HENRIETTA *starts from him, looks at him for a moment with agitation, then moves R. as if embarrassed.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. By the way, touching to-morrow? What train can I get for London?

DUKE. Oh! You're going to London?

LADY HENRIETTA. Of course. Being engaged, I presume I am no longer a prisoner. I must get a trousseau.

DUKE. I see. I never thought of that. But what guarantee have I that you mean to keep your promise?

LADY HENRIETTA. None. (*moving to him*) You must be like Montrose: "He either fears his fate too much, or his deserts are small. Who dares not put it to the touch, or gain or lose it all."

DUKE. I think there's a way of solving the problem.

LADY HENRIETTA. Is there? Very likely. Anyhow, we're engaged. Good-night. (*goes up steps*)

DUKE. (*moving down c. facing up to her*) One moment. Let us tell the others.

LADY HENRIETTA. They know already.

DUKE. Do they?

LADY HENRIETTA. They thought it out, not I.

DUKE. Still, I think we ought to tell them. (*calling*) Harry! Mrs. Mulholland!

VOICE. Coming—yes!

(*WELBY answers as if from a distance. MRS. MULHOLLAND appears loudly very near curtain. LADY HENRIETTA comes down from steps, crosses to fire and sits. DUKE follows*).

DUKE. You're not unhappy, are you—dear?

LADY HENRIETTA. I'm a little tired—dear.

(*Enter MRS. MULHOLLAND and WELBY. MRS. MULHOLLAND goes to l. c., l. of DUKE.*)

WELBY. You want us?

DUKE. Just for a moment.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Are we to congratulate you?

DUKE. Presently. I want you as witnesses.

LADY HENRIETTA. Witnesses—to what? (*rises*)

DUKE. To our marriage. We're in Scotland.

LADY HENRIETTA. Marriage! Now—this moment?

DUKE. Merely as a matter of form. We can be

married later with the orthodox flourish of trumpets at St. George's, Hanover Square.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Duke, I must really ask you to be reasonable. I never heard of a marriage at midnight. It couldn't be binding. No white veil, no bridesmaids, nothing. It's impossible. We're in tea-gowns. (*crosses down L.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. (*crosses to L. C.*) One moment. Don't let us have a scene. What is the form?

DUKE. Of marriage?

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*comes up to LADY HENRIETTA*) Dearest, what has come over you? No one in your set is ever married except by a bishop.

LADY HENRIETTA. I know what I'm doing.

(MRS. MULHOLLAND *down L. again.*)

Tell me the form of marriage.

DUKE. I shall say, "I, Ian Macbayne, take you, Henrietta Addison, as my wife."

LADY HENRIETTA. And I?

DUKE. "I, Henrietta Addison, take you, Ian Macbayne, as my husband."

LADY HENRIETTA. Very well; go on.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Good heavens! (*goes up to LADY HENRIETTA*) Think what you're doing. Oh, what a barbarous country to live in! (*goes to fire*)

WELBY. It must be clearly understood that I don't countenance this. I am here because I can't get away, but I am not present otherwise.

DUKE. Exactly; you are nobody.

WELBY. Nobody! What I say is this—you may marry like this if you please, but I, for one, will not consider it binding. (*goes up c.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. In the meantime I am waiting.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. If you're really bent on it, at least let us do what we can to make things seemly. (*takes up a bunch of heather which is on small table L., puts it in LADY HENRIETTA'S hand, and stands down L., back to audience*) There, you must have flowers of some sort.

DUKE. Are you ready?

LADY HENRIETTA. Quite.

DUKE. Then I take your hand—I, Ian Macbayne, take you, Henrietta Addison, as my wife.

(*Warns curtain*)

WELBY. (*comes down between them with hand upraised*). Stop! For Heaven's sake.

DUKE. (*angrily*) Is this your marriage or mine? (*goes up to foot of stairs*)

LADY HENRIETTA. And I, Henrietta Addison take you, Ian Macbayne, as my husband—under no consideration whatever. Good-night. (*she goes up stairs, throwing away heath as she goes*)

(*The three stand watching her, their backs to the foot-lights.*)

Let one of your turnkeys bring me coffee at seven.

DUKE. (*moves down R.*) Well, I'm —

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*turns to him*) Yes, so am I.

(*WELBY comes down c. between them.*)

DUKE. (*moving up to him*) Confound you! This is your doing.

WELBY. What?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*coming close to WELBY*) A nice muddle you've got us into.

WELBY. What?

DUKE. What the devil d'you mean by saying you wouldn't recognize the marriage?

WELBY. What?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. What business was it of yours, I should like to know.

WELBY. What?

DUKE. It was you who put her off, you ponderous ass.

WELBY. Was it?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Of course it was, and thanks to you the whole thing's failed.

WELBY. Look here, I can stand a good deal, because I generally have a good deal to stand——

DUKE. I might have known that to embark on this affair with such a ponderous owl as yourself to help me could only end in a hopeless muddle. Why in Heaven's name did you want to talk at all?—etc.

WELBY. But if you think you are going to ride rough-shod over one who, as a Member of Parliament, has a position to keep up, apart from self-respect, fair play and social standing— etc.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. What business had you to interfere at all? It wasn't your marriage, nobody asked your consent. Who on earth would dream of consulting you about anything? And here we are, prisoners again, thanks to you putting your oar in—etc.

(These last three speeches spoken together.)

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE.—*The courtyard of Crag-o'-North. On the L. walls of a turreted old house rise up to the flies from a rugged base of rock. Round the windows and eaves climb ivy and Virginian creeper. L. a Gothic doorway gives access from the house to the stage. Above it a projecting balcony in front of windows. On the R. the rock rises, and through it is cut a gateway with heavy gates of wrought iron. From this gateway on the R. to the house L., rises a parapet of rough stones, here and there overgrown with ivy. The back cloth represents a distant view of heather, moor and mountain peak. R. an old well.*

It is 5 p.m.

(As the curtain rises LADY HENRIETTA is seen sitting on the parapet, looking out to the moorland. MRS. MULHOLLAND is carrying a raised parasol, she crosses R., rattles gate, comes down R. to below well, sits and closes parasol before LADY HENRIETTA speaks. They both wear smart summer frocks.)

LADY HENRIETTA. The changing colours of the heather are wonderful—never the same. As the sun

falls they change from mauve to rose—from rose to purple. The peaks and valleys are a land of dreams.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Are they?

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes. Don't you feel it. Don't you feel a thrill at these soft grey distances that seem to be the threshold of some happy land of the future?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I want to go to London
(*rises and crosses up L.C., opening parasol*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes, I suppose I want that, too.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. We've been imprisoned a week now. A week is a great deal at my age. I'm getting very near the prime of life.

LADY HENRIETTA. Haven't you reached it yet?
(*rises*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. No. The prime of life is five years ahead of whatever you are. But I thought you hated everything about the place.

LADY HENRIETTA. I did at first. (*moves down to L. of well*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. You know I always suspect people when they find the world is growing beautiful.

(LADY HENRIETTA *stoops down, picks daisy which is growing beside well, she crosses R., below well, pulling petals of daisy off.* MRS. MULHOLLAND *moves to L. of well.*)

For instance, the day I became engaged to Mr. Welby, we happened to pass the Albert Memorial, and, for a

moment, it seemed to me quite attractive in a barbaric way. How do you account for that ?

LADY HENRIETTA. I can't.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. And yet it is simple enough. For some reason that I shall never understand, I loved the creature. So everything that day was a golden minaret in an enchanted city. Now, in your case—(*sits on well*)

LADY HENRIETTA. (*sits on grass below well*) Oh, it doesn't matter about my case. I'm trying to make the best of things, that's all ; and I confess I never dreamt the time here would pass so pleasantly.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. They've both behaved extremely well, I admit.

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes, haven't they ? The day we made a pretence of being ill, could anything have exceeded Ian's kindness ? I hated myself for the deceit of it. Do you know that he sat up all night in case I wanted anything ?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. So did Mr. Welby. He sat up—in a sense. But looking cautiously over the balustrade, I saw the creature asleep in a chair in the hall. Yet he says he suffers from insomnia. He doesn't look well asleep. Do you think he has an interesting face ?

LADY HENRIETTA. I'm not quite sure.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Nor am I. He's disappointing. He looks profound until he begins to speak. But there's something about him that overwhelms me. Why—Heaven only knows.

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes, Heaven knows so many things that we don't. Do you consider Ian good looking?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Extremely.

LADY HENRIETTA. So do I. It never struck me before—but I see it now. And he's wonderfully unselfish, isn't he?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I'm not so sure.

LADY HENRIETTA. I mean—granting, of course, that he had no right to decoy us here—he has done everything possible to make us happy—and I'm afraid he's succeeded.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes. As far as kidnapping can be made easy to the victims he has certainly done it. The week has passed quite agreeably.

LADY HENRIETTA. (*rises and crosses up L. C.*) It's rather a bore that we can't let them see how grateful we are.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes. One hates stifling emotion.

LADY HENRIETTA. Don't you feel an atmosphere of enchantment about the place? I do, I find myself day-dreaming, imagining strange romances under these old walls. (*comes to c.*) Last night, searching for a book, I came into the hall, there was only a faint rosy light from the fire, and in a brown study my eyes fell on the man in armour in the corner. For a moment I thought I saw Ian's face under the helmet—I gave a cry and called out "Ian"—imagine my embarrassment when I heard his voice and saw him step from behind the armour.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. What did he say ?

LADY HENRIETTA. He asked me why I was blushing.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Were you ?

LADY HENRIETTA. No. It was the light from the fire.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*suddenly rising*) Henrietta !

LADY HENRIETTA. What is it ?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Why—don't you see—I do, in a flash—you *are* in love with him.

LADY HENRIETTA. No, no, no, I'm not.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. My dear, it's come to you at last.

LADY HENRIETTA. No, no—you're wrong—I tell you. (*goes up c., back to audience*)

(MRS. MULHOLLAND *goes to her and touches her on shoulder.*)

How can I love him if I don't want to ?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. But you can't help it. That's the whole tragedy of love. Do you suppose I wanted to love Henry Welby ?

LADY HENRIETTA. Do you suppose I want to love Ian ?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. You may not want to, but you do.

LADY HENRIETTA. (*turning to MRS. MULHOLLAND*) How dare you say that ? I hate him !

(MRS. MULHOLLAND *laughs.*)

What right has he to keep us here in prison ?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. None, of course; but he evidently knows what he's about.

LADY HENRIETTA. So long as I am a prisoner, sooner than admit that I love him——

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Ah!

LADY HENRIETTA. Even if I did, which I don't—I'd die. Love him! (*crosses down R.*) Why, haven't you seen that for the last week I've tried to hurt his feelings in every conceivable way. And when I really pained him, it has filled me with joy. (*crossing to C., facing L.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*goes to her and puts her hand on her shoulders caressingly*) That's a very common phase of love. I know it well. You ask Mr. Welby. Oh! do love him! Then we can all go to London.

(*An old bell is rung at the gate.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. What's that?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*moving to R.*) I've no idea. I'll see. It's the postman.

(*LADY HENRIETTA joins her up R. C.*)

Thank Heaven, we shall get the London papers.

(*MACBAYNE enters L. from house, crosses to gate and opens it with key. He carefully re-locks gate, then*

MRS. MULHOLLAND speaks)

I wonder if our story has got into the Press.

LADY HENRIETTA. I shouldn't think so.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I'm not so sure. The morning after that terrible scene, when the Duke tried to

force you to marry him, Mr. Welby and I wrote out long statements of the whole case and threw them, with the money enclosed, on to the roadway below the cliff. We addressed one to the Home Secretary, one to the *Scotsman*, one to the *Times*, and one to my solicitor.

LADY HENRIETTA. I wish you hadn't.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Why?

LADY HENRIETTA. When it all comes out, imagine the scandal.

(*Enter MACBAYNE, leading in a POSTMAN.*)

MACBAYNE. Just come in here. (*locks gate*)

POSTMAN. His Grace must sign for the registered letter. (*gives parcel to MACBAYNE and moves down R.*)

MACBAYNE. I'll see to that. You wait where ye are.

(*Exit L. with a number of letters, papers, etc.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Dare I trust the postman with a letter to my mother?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. He has probably orders not to take any letters.

POSTMAN. (*moves below well to C. a little when MACBAYNE is out of sight*) Ladies!

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Well?

POSTMAN. I take it I am addressing Lady Henrietta Addison and Mrs. Mulholland?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes.

(*They move to L. C.*)

POSTMAN. Then don't be alarmed. (*comes up c., r. of them*) But—I am no postman. This is a disguise. I bribed the real man to let me carry the letters to-day. I am a special correspondent of the *Daily Post*.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Then you are a gentleman?

HICKS. Yes.

(LADY HENRIETTA *moves to l. a little*, MRS. MULHOLLAND *to r. He comes c. between them.*)

My name is Ambrose Hicks.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. And you wish to help us?

HICKS. Yes. One of your letters reached its destination. The London press is full of your case—you are famous.

LADY HENRIETTA. Infamous, you mean.

HICKS. That is a matter for your conscience to decide. But your portraits appeared in yesterday's issue. See, here they are. (*giving them newspaper*)

(LADY HENRIETTA *takes paper and crosses to him, she and MRS. MULHOLLAND go down r. MRS. MULHOLLAND sits on well. LADY HENRIETTA stands beside her looking at paper.*)

Now, what I want is a short interview and a snapshot. I have a camera with me.

(*He produces camera, and opens it. LADY HENRIETTA puts up arm to shield her face, MRS. MULHOLLAND raises parasol.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. I absolutely decline.

(*He closes camera.* MRS. MULHOLLAND *lowers parasol.*

I will not be dragged through the pages of a cheap London paper.

HICKS. (*indignantly*) It is a halfpenny paper, madam, but I deny that it is cheap.

(*He moves down L.* MRS. MULHOLLAND *rises and crosses C.* LADY HENRIETTA *is on her R.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*who has been reading paper eagerly*) But this is all wrong. It's terrible! Listen! (*Reading*) "Nor is the romance of the Duke and the abducted daughter of an earl the only love drama now being enacted at Crag-o'-North. It seems that Mrs. Mulholland, widow of the late 'Glue King,' having been deserted by her *fiancé*, a well known Member of Parliament, has run him to earth in the ancient stronghold. The repeated attempts of the unfortunate gentleman to escape have so far proved unsuccessful."

(LADY HENRIETTA *takes paper, goes to well and sits.*
MRS. MULHOLLAND *goes up R. C.*)

(*breaking down*) Oh! Oh! It's too cruel.

HICKS. Is the article inaccurate? (*moves to C.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Inaccurate? (*comes down R. C.*) It is he—not I—that has run me, not him, to earth.

HICKS. I'm sorry. But don't be distressed at a

mere journalistic error. Remember that the paragraph to-day wraps up the parcel of to-morrow.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. The whole story, as given here, is a tissue of misrepresentation.

HICKS. Then I feel for you very deeply. But errors will occur and, at least, you will find solace in the literary charm of the article. I know the author.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Who is he?

HICKS. I'm not at liberty to tell you. Our anonymity is almost as sacred to us as our salaries. Besides, sign an article and its weight is gone.

(LADY HENRIETTA goes up R. of well, to writing pad on parapet and writes note, having left paper on well.)

But he is a man who can clothe a bare fact with such wealth of imaginative detail——

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Padding, you mean.

HICKS. (*bowing*) Embellishment.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. The same thing, and I decline to have my life padded with either literary charm or imaginative detail—it's quite full enough as it is. If you knew the difficulty of a widow in maintaining a reputation, and at the same time enjoying the fleeting hours, you'd understand. (*moves to well and points to paper*) This article will ruin the work of years. Oh, why cannot a newspaper stick to the simple truth? (*sits on well*)

HICKS. The times are not ripe for that.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Why cannot it confine itself to bare facts?

HICKS. The public is so sensitive that a bare fact almost excites a national blush.

LADY HENRIETTA. (*who has been writing a note in pencil, comes down L. C.*) Hush! I think I hear their voices. We mustn't be seen talking to you. Go over there, but take this and post it to my mother. You'll see the address—210, Grosvenor Square. There's half a crown. (*puts coin in his hand and turns away to L.*)

HICKS. Forgive me, I cannot take money. The postage is one penny.

LADY HENRIETTA. Then owe me two and five-pence.

HICKS. I prefer to pay myself, for the stamp. (*goes to her and returns coin*) It is nothing; a line of my next article will reimburse me.

LADY HENRIETTA. I will not forget the service.

HICKS *raises his hat and crosses R. above well.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Tell me, dear, if they come, what are we to say to them?

LADY HENRIETTA. Nothing. Let us keep a cold, dignified silence. It's not such a strain on the mind as framing suitable abuse.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. But it is hard to repress indignation. The merest glimpse of Mr. Welby is a red rag to me.

LADY HENRIETTA. Try not to give way to it. (*crosses to MRS. MULHOLLAND, who is seated on well*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I'll try, but be prepared for failure.

(WELBY is heard off, singing.)

LADY HENRIETTA. Hush! Here they are.

(WELBY appears in doorway L.)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*in a whisper*) Look at him! You'd think butter wouldn't melt in his mouth.

(*She crosses L. as WELBY moves to C. He smiles at her, but she ignores him. Enter the DUKE L., crosses below MRS. MULHOLLAND to C. She drops down L. a little. WELBY is R. of her. LADY HENRIETTA is by well with paper. They are in rough shooting dress.*)

DUKE. (*gaily*) Well, what's to be the order of the day? Tea in half an hour, and then what do you say to a ride over the moor, or an hour's fishing in the Crag water? On parole, of course. (*to HICKS*) Just go inside, will you, postman, the letters will be ready presently.

HICKS. Yes, your Grace.

(*Crosses L. above them and exit L.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. (*with dignity and handing him paper*) Have you seen this?

DUKE. Yes, a moment ago. (*takes paper from her and crosses to below well*) A copy came with the other papers. I had hoped you would never see it. (*crumples paper and throws it away*)

LADY HENRIETTA. You must be satisfied now.
Our degradation is complete.

She crosses L. without waiting for his excuses. WELBY tries to speak to her, but she puts him aside. He turns away.)

DUKE. I'm sorry—more sorry than I can tell you.

(Exit LADY HENRIETTA.)

(DUKE goes to gate, lean his head on it, MRS. MULHOLLAND moves to WELBY, taps his shoulder.)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Gorgon!

WELBY. I beg your pardon!

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I said "Gorgon!" *(moves to L.)*

WELBY. Take care—even the worm will turn.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. *(stops and turns back to him)*
Ah, thank you, at last I have it. That is the word I have been trying to find. Worm!

(Exit L.)

WELBY. *(goes up to parapet)* Nice pass things have come to now.

DUKE. Yes. If I could only find out who has given us away, I'd make it hot for them.

(He says this very fiercely, frightening WELBY, who nearly falls over parapet. DUKE holds him back.)

Have you any idea?

WELBY. None—none whatever. *(rises and moves down c.)*

DUKE. (*comes down R. of him*) Anyhow, I'm going to bring matters to a head.

WELBY. I'm glad of that. I want to get out of Scotland. I've got a list here (*produces paper*) of the various names that Amy has called me during the last week. Listen (*reading*)—"Poltroon, amateur brigand, milk-sop, panther, gorgon, Don Juan, skeleton in the cupboard, and Baron Munchausen." I ask you, is that a fair description of me?

DUKE. Not all of it. (*crosses L.*)

WELBY. (*follows him*) I don't mind the Don Juan. It's in the blood of the Welbys. Ten years ago, when I was a lad of thirty—

DUKE. Quite so, Harry. I'm sure you were a man at whom mothers trembled. One can still see traces of it in—in your expression.

(*Crosses R. below well. WELBY follows.*)

But there are other things to discuss for the moment—everything has gone wrong—our adventure has become a scandal in the Press, the one thing I meant to avoid—and I propose a change of tactics.

WELBY. Do you? I've no fight left in me. I'm demoralized. (*sits on well*)

DUKE. The idea is this. We'll give them their freedom to-night. Indeed, I've already told Macbayne to start the maids packing up, and I've ordered the ponies and the 'bus.

WELBY. What?

DUKE. Yes, I mean it. We'll let them go. We'll

tell them that we no longer wish to marry them, that a week of seclusion with them has opened our eyes, and that we find they are not at all the ideal creatures we had imagined them to be.

WELBY. I am to say that—to Amy? (*rises*)

DUKE. Why not?

WELBY. Why not? Did you see her at the Albert Hall Fancy Dress Ball as Britannia?

DUKE. No!

WELBY. I thought you hadn't—it was a terrifying sight. (*moves to c.*)

DUKE. That's nothing. I think you'll find that when we throw them over they'll veer round. I've been watching them very closely, and anyhow—it's our last cartridge.

WELBY. You mean that if we, so to speak, throw them over, they would jump at us?

DUKE. Yes.

WELBY. It's a good idea, upon my soul it is. I should like to humiliate her just once, but, frankly, I funk it.

DUKE. Good heavens, you're a man, aren't you?

WELBY. No, no, I mean, yes, yes—it's not that. Now, if I could lock myself in that room (*pointing up to window*) and induce her to come here, where we are now, then I could parley to her from the window. What d'you think?

DUKE. I've no idea—I don't see that it matters. (*goes up R. C.*)

WELBY. What doesn't matter?

DUKE. (*comes down R. of WELBY—irritably*) You, or anything concerning you. If there's one thing maddens me more than another, it is that the moment we get together, you begin to talk about yourself. (*turns and goes up*)

WELBY. (*following him*) Do I? Do you know Mrs. Mulholland's description of you?

DUKE. No.

WELBY. She says you are a walking autobiography.

DUKE. She may say what she pleases.

WELBY. She does.

DUKE. (*looks off L. and then comes down L. of WELBY*) Here comes my lady. (*urging WELBY towards door L.*) You clear out. Go and tell Mrs. Mulholland that everything is over between you.

WELBY. What? At once?

DUKE. Yes. Now! (*passes WELBY across*) And if you get into trouble, do anything, sound the gong, and we'll come to your rescue.

WELBY. (*bracing himself*) Very well, I'll do it. But don't be surprised if you *do* hear the gong.

DUKE. Go away. There needn't be a scene; tell her gently, diplomatically. Don't wound her.

WELBY. My dear Ian, if it comes to wounding, believe me, it's five to one on Amy.

(*Exit dejectedly as—*)

(DUKE *hides in doorway—LADY HENRIETTA enters by the upper entrance L., moves towards door. When she sees DUKE, she turns away and paces in an exag-*

gerated manner across the stage, first across from L. to R. up stage, then diagonally from up R. to down L. As she starts to go up again, DUKE, imitating her step, comes down and meets her C.)

DUKE. So you won't let me take you to fish or ride, on parole?

LADY HENRIETTA. It's very good of you, but I would rather not be under any obligation whatever to you. (*crosses R. below DUKE in the same way*) And I can get exercise here, in this—the prison yard. (*goes up R.*)

DUKE. May I smoke? (*takes out cigarette case and opens it*)

LADY HENRIETTA. No! (*crosses L. up stage*) Warders on duty are not allowed to smoke.

DUKE. As you please.

LADY HENRIETTA. On second thoughts you may There is less chance of your talking.

(DUKE *closes case, she comes down to L. of him. He is C.*)

DUKE. I wanted to smoke because I've things to say that are both humiliating and sad.

LADY HENRIETTA. Humiliating—of course—to me.

DUKE. No. I don't think that's quite fair. I've neither said nor done anything that could humiliate you. My offence has been that you were to me so rare—so wonderful—so beyond my reach by fair means—that I stole you. For I do ask

you to believe, in all sincerity, that on the day you arrived here, I loved you blindly—madly——

LADY HENRIETTA. And now?

DUKE. Well—now comes your happy release.
(*crosses to L. of well*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Release.

DUKE. Yes; you shall go home to-night.

LADY HENRIETTA. (*doubtfully*) How—good of you. But is there a train?

DUKE. Yes. If you leave here within an hour, you can catch the London express at Perth.

LADY HENRIETTA. But my things aren't packed.

DUKE. To-morrow then, if it suits you better; but the point is that I have realized what a wrong I have done you in bringing you here. I know now that you are right, that we are utterly unsuited to each other, that marriage would be unendurable.

LADY HENRIETTA. I'm glad you see that. I told you so, years ago, didn't I? (*moves to C.*)

DUKE. Yes. I admit it. Years ago; but my eyes hadn't been opened then.

LADY HENRIETTA. Really. And now that they are open, what do you see?

DUKE. I see one who is all that is good and beautiful, one whose friendship I shall always claim and be proud of, but one whom I would never dare to marry.

LADY HENRIETTA. Then I have actually cured you of loving me?

DUKE. You have, indeed! (*moves to above well*)

LADY HENRIETTA. I'm glad, Ian!

DUKE. Yes, isn't it a relief. And you did it all so cleverly—so painlessly.

LADY HENRIETTA. Did I? (*moves to below well and sits*)

DUKE. I mean that in the week we've spent together, you've shown me yourself—your inmost self—so naturally, so ingenuously, that the vision my imagination had made almost real, gradually faded away, and I saw you at last as you are.

LADY HENRIETTA. Isn't that—just a little—hard?

DUKE. No, no. (*comes down R. of well*) Don't mistake me. I mean, that instead of finding you the weak, commonplace, womanly woman, who might possibly some day have cared for me, I find you so immeasurably strong and even grand of mind, so utterly above me in all things, that I have not the vanity to wish to be worthy of you.

LADY HENRIETTA. It all sounds as if I were rather horrid.

DUKE. Not for a moment. It only means that in realizing the beauty and strength of your soul, I have found my level at last.

LADY HENRIETTA. (*turns her head away*) If I'm so objectionably perfect, I ought never to be a duchess.

DUKE. I think you might.

(*She looks up at him.*)

But not mine. You see, as one grows older one begins to be dependent on creature comforts. You must

marry some one who has still enthusiasm and hope, one who is brave and fearless—a sort of gambler in love——

LADY HENRIETTA. You needn't go on. I don't believe I'm quite such a lottery as that.

(A gong sounds.)

What's that?

DUKE. Nothing. What were you saying?

LADY HENRIETTA. I wish you'd tell me how it was that you first lost your illusion.

WELBY. *(coming for a moment to the doorway)*
It's all right.

(DUKE crosses to L. C. and motions WELBY to go away.)

That was the gong for tea—I haven't begun yet.

(Exit.)

(DUKE turns back to LADY HENRIETTA, who is playing with well ropes.)

DUKE. How did I first lose the illusion? Well, it's a little difficult to explain pleasantly. You see, I first loved you as a woman, as a possible wife. Then, thrown together as we have been, a gradual change came over me. I began to admit that you were always right. I came to love you—as it were—with my head, not with my heart.

LADY HENRIETTA. I thought one loved with both.

DUKE. *(moves to L. of well)* Possibly some do. But I couldn't. So when I found that my first love for you, which was merely human, was ousted by the

second, which was intellectual, I realized that the one had killed the other. (*moves to above well*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Then love that is intelligent seems a waste of time.

DUKE. I think so.

LADY HENRIETTA. It's lucky for me that I didn't happen to fall in love with you during the last few days.

DUKE. Oh, I saw there was no chance of that. (*comes to L. of well*)

LADY HENRIETTA. But, supposing I had, and that I told you so, what would you have done?

DUKE. I should have felt bound to see it through. I should have married you; I come of a stock that has done even more than that. Our motto is "Courage."

LADY HENRIETTA. I wonder if you realize how cruel every word you are saying is to me. I feel like a butterfly crushed by a wheel.

(*She hides her face in her hands. He shows that he knows his plan has succeeded, and that he is sorry to pain her, but must see it through.*)

DUKE. But that's extraordinary. I should have thought that everything I've said ought to give you a glow of pride.

LADY HENRIETTA. It doesn't. I'm miserable. I wish I hadn't ruined your life.

DUKE. But, indeed—indeed you haven't. I never felt so normal in my life as I have these last few days.

LADY HENRIETTA. (*rises*) And you can honestly say that I haven't broken your heart?

DUKE. Honestly.

LADY HENRIETTA. You are sure?

DUKE. Well, my appetite is enormous. You saw me at lunch?

LADY HENRIETTA. Oh, how glad I am to hear that.

(*She crosses to c. below him, then up to parapet. He follows and stands R. of her.*)

I thought you were eating out of mere bravado. Now I shall leave you happy and contented. And I don't mind confessing, Ian, that the week here has been delightful. I shall miss watching the moon turn the purple heather to a ghostly silver; I shall miss the wonderful silence of the cool nights here; I shall miss (*looks up at him*) many things. But I want you to know that I forgive you, and am even glad of the trick you played us—since it has cured you of loving me.

(*Enter MRS. MULHOLLAND abruptly L. She crosses to L. C. DUKE moves to R. C.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Are you aware, my dear, that our things are being packed?

LADY HENRIETTA. Yes, I know.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. In fact, we are being turned out.

LADY HENRIETTA. But we've wanted that all along, you know.

(Exit LADY HENRIETTA, L. U. E.)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes, I grant you that. But what's the good of being set free when you've nowhere in particular to go to? What does it all mean?

DUKE. Hasn't Harry explained?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Explained? Not a word. As I came out I saw him cowering behind a man in armour in the Hall. *(moves to c.)*

DUKE. But he must tell you. *(crosses to door L.—calling)* Harry!

WELBY. *(without)* Yes?

DUKE. Come here.

WELBY. All right—I'm coming.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Duke, with all your faults, and you have many, I like you.

DUKE. Really?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes. And I'm going to tell you something.

DUKE. Well?

(MRS. MULHOLLAND goes up L., beckons DUKE to follow, and points off after LADY HENRIETTA.)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. That girl loves you. *(moves to c.)*

DUKE. *(with a gasp of delight)* What! *(instantly recovering himself)* Well, of course. How could she help it?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. *(moves down to well and sits)*

You know your way about. You knew what you were doing ?

DUKE. Did I ?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes. Don't tell me.

DUKE. I won't.

(*Enter WELBY L. Comes to L. C. DUKE comes down L. of him.*)

WELBY. What is it ?

DUKE. You're wanted.

WELBY. For what ?

DUKE. Mrs. Mulholland is going to tell you.
(*sotto voce to WELBY*) Go for her.

(*He gives WELBY a push towards MRS. MULHOLLAND. WELBY advances very hesitatingly to R. C., she remains seated.*)

(*Exit DUKE L.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. What have you to say ?

WELBY. I've a very painful duty to perform.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Why am I being packed off so suddenly ?

WELBY. I'll tell you. Do you know the meaning of the words, "fed up" ?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. It is a deplorable phrase, but I understand it.

WELBY. Very well. I'm fed up.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. With me ?

WELBY. No, no, I see your trap. If I said "yes," you'd call me "cannibal."

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Go on.

WELBY. (*producing paper*) Here is a list of epithets you have applied to me during the past week. (*reading out*) "Amateur brigand, panther, Don Juan, Baron Munchausen——"

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes, you needn't go on. Besides, you haven't told me why I am being packed off so suddenly.

WELBY. It is because at last you have worn me out. Instead of fanning the spark of love into the blaze of passion, you have trodden it out. And now we stand in the ashes.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Really? So that's the reason, is it?

WELBY. Yes. The effect you produce on me is that I want to rest.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. How interesting.

WELBY. When first we met at Homburg, I loved you honestly, devotedly. I was not well at the time. (*moves to L. C.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*rises and moves to C.*) And now? (*crosses above him to L. C.*)

WELBY. (*moves to R. C.*) Now, when you are near me, I have only one desire. It is to edge away.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. And how do you account for this sudden change of emotion?

WELBY. I think—you are too large for me.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I weigh precisely what I did at Homburg.

WELBY. I don't mean in physical size. That I

believe I could cope with. I mean that your personality is too large. What am I when you are near me? Nobody.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. But are you anybody when you're alone?

WELBY. Yes. I am at my best when I'm alone. You have never seen me alone—thinking.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Never! I grant you that. Nor have I ever seen the effects of your thinking.

WELBY. One effect was that I loved you. Ah! If you could have seen me night after night at Homberg, thinking out the problem, did I love you or did I not, you would know that my life has not been a continuous round of pleasure. (*crosses to well and sits*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. You couldn't make up your mind about me?

WELBY. Not then. I have now. I used to weary myself to extinction thrashing it out, till, tired and saddened, in the small hours I would spin a coin. "Heads you love her, tails you don't." But which ever way the coin fell, my depression was intense.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. A pretty story for a lover to tell.

WELBY. It was a very painful story, but life has nightmare that no man can control.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*crosses to well*) And do you mean to tell me that when we became engaged, you felt no love at all?

WELBY. After a struggle, I did. I tried hard to

be loyal. "Once officially engaged," I said to myself, "you have got to love her," and I succeeded.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Oh! (*sits*)

WELBY. I remember the very moment I realized it. I was dining alone at the Bachelors' with a bottle of Pommery '89. Then came a glass or two of '54 Cognac. Suddenly I felt that I loved you, and, in a moment the room was swimming round me. You will never know how moved I was. (*rises and crosses c.*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. By the waiters, I presume?

WELBY. Nothing of the kind. I left in a cab without any difficulty.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*rises and goes to him*) I should like to know one thing. Had I not been a rich woman, would you have proposed to me?

WELBY. That is hardly a fair question.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I insist on an answer.

WELBY. Then, I think—remember I haven't really had time to work it out—had you been poor I would not have given you the extra hardship of supporting me.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I admire you for saying that. It shows you are no coward, as I used to think you were. (*goes up R. c.*)

WELBY. Yes, I have a great deal of moral courage, but of physical, little. That is why I cannot marry you.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. That may be. You have got to do it, however.

WELBY. (*shows his delight*) What?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*comes down R. of WELBY*) Do you really imagine that having been the victim of a newspaper scandal, having been immured here with you for a week under most compromising circumstances, any other course is open to me? For the sake of the good name that it has been an almost hopeless struggle for me to keep, you have got to marry me. (*goes down R.*)

WELBY. Go it! I like that. Wild horses won't drag me to St. George's, Hanover Square.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. (*goes up to him*) Naturally. Horses in London are not, as a rule, wild. You will be driven in a hired brougham, for which I shall probably have to pay. (*moves to well*)

WELBY. How dare you! Never in my life have I been made love to so truculently.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I am not making love.

WELBY. Then I don't know what love-making is.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I'm quite sure you don't. (*sits on well*) Our marriage would be primarily one of convenience.

WELBY. What—on a tariff?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. A tariff?

WELBY. I mean, an allowance per annum, and that sort of thing.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. The lawyers will see to that.

WELBY. It's not that I care for money it itself—

MRS. MULHOLLAND. No, of course not.

(WELBY goes to well, takes off hat, and kneels on one knee.)

WELBY. Amy, I have been hard on you.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. You have been cruel to a degree, and wearing all the time (*points to his tie*) a tie pin that I gave you in happier days.

WELBY. I am sorry. (*rises*) And you really insist that we begin all over again?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Yes, I do.

WELBY. Very well. Then I'll go for a month to some health resort. (*walks feebly up stage and leans on parapet*)

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Why?

WELBY. I'm not as strong as I look.

(*Enter MACBAYNE, followed by two MAIDS, each carrying cloaks and dressing-bags. MACBAYNE crosses R., unlocks and opens gate. MRS. MULHOLLAND rises. Her MAID gives her her gloves and follows MACBAYNE and LADY HENRIETTA'S MAID off. Then enter DUKE. He comes R. C. to MRS. MULHOLLAND.*)

DUKE. The omnibus is waiting below. Your luggage will follow. So our Midsummer Night's dream is over?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Where is Lady Henrietta?

DUKE. She is coming. I wanted to drive over with you, but she won't hear of it.

MRS. MULHOLLAND. Well, then, good-bye. And

many thanks for a most delightful—— (*looks at WELBY, who is R. C. above them*) no, let me be honest, and thank you for one of the most painful experiences of my troubled life. Good-bye! (*gives him her hand*)

DUKE. Good-bye and good luck.

(*MRS. MULHOLLAND goes to below well and picks up parasol.*)

I hope we shall always be friends?

MRS. MULHOLLAND. I shall continue to bow to you.

(*She goes to gate. WELBY stands above it, his hat in his hand.*)

DUKE. Ah, your heart is in the right place!

(*Exit R. MRS. MULHOLLAND. She turns and looks at WELBY before she goes off.*)

(*He kisses his hand to her, replaces his hat, and crosses below well to DUKE, who is R. C.*)

WELBY. It's all right. I've crushed her. We're engaged again. (*shakes DUKE'S hand*) But, by Jove, it was a struggle.

(*Exit R., following MRS. MULHOLLAND.*)

(*Enter LADY HENRIETTA dressed for travelling. She comes to L. C. DUKE goes up R.*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Has Mrs. Mulholland gone?

DUKE. Yes. She is waiting for you below. The prison gates are open wide. (*points off through gates*)

LADY HENRIETTA. (*crosses to L. of well*) Yes. It feels quite odd, and even a little sad.

(DUKE comes down L. of her.)

Well, good-bye, Ian, you meant well, and all's well that ends well. And as a token that I forgive you, here is a sprig of white heather that I found the day you took us out on the moor on parole.

DUKE. I shall keep it always. (*puts it in button-hole*)

LADY HENRIETTA. Well, good-bye.

DUKE. Good-bye.

(*They shake hands.*)

And I'm sorry for all I've done.

LADY HENRIETTA. You needn't be. (*crosses slowly to gate and stops*) Good-bye.

DUKE. You've nothing else to say?

LADY HENRIETTA. No, have you?

DUKE. No.

(*They shake hands again, and LADY HENRIETTA goes slowly out R. The DUKE left alone, gives a disappointed shrug of the shoulder, and sighs. He then takes the white heather from his buttonhole, and presses it to his lips. As he does this, LADY HENRIETTA returns through gate, and sees his action. She gives an involuntary cry of joy. On this the DUKE turns sharply round, and sees her.*)

DUKE. What? Tired of your freedom already?

LADY HENRIETTA. (*coming to him, and very*

simply) Yes, Ian. Now that I am free to go, I mean to stay.

DUKE. (*taking her in his arms*) Dearest!

(*He kisses her, and as he does so, HICKS, still dressed as POSTMAN, comes through the door L., and, unseen by the others, takes a snapshot of them with his camera.*)

CURTAIN.



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