



Instead . . . buried her face in its folds.

THE LION AND
THE UNICORN

BY

RICHARD HARDING DAVIS

ILLUSTRATED BY

Howard Chandler Christy

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
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IN MEMORY OF
MANY HOT DAYS AND SOME HOT CORNERS
THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED TO
LIEUT.-COL. ARTHUR H. LEE, R.A.
BRITISH MILITARY ATTACHÉ WITH THE
UNITED STATES ARMY

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_ In this volume are included "Cinderella," "Miss Delamar's Understudy," "The Editor's Story," and "An Assisted Emigrant," heretofore published in the volume entitled "Cinderella and Other Stories."

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PRENTISS had a long lease on the house, and because it stood in Jermyn Street the upper floors were, as a matter of course, turned into lodgings for single gentlemen; and because Prentiss was a Florist to the Queen, he placed a lion and unicorn over his flower-shop, just in front of the middle window on the first floor. By stretching a little, each of them could see into the window just beyond him, and could hear all that was said inside; and such things as they saw and heard during the reign of Captain Carrington, who moved in at the same time they did! By day the table in the centre of the room was covered with maps, and the Captain sat with a box of pins, with different-colored flags wrapped around them, and amused himself by sticking them in the maps and measuring the spaces in between, swearing meanwhile to himself. It was a selfish amusement, but it appeared to be the Captain's only intellectual pursuit, for at night the maps were rolled up, and a green cloth was spread across the table, and there was much company and popping of soda-bottles,

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and little heaps of gold and silver were moved this way and that across the cloth. The smoke drifted out of the open windows, and the laughter of the Captain's guests rang out loudly in the empty street, so that the policeman halted and raised his eyes reprovingly to the lighted windows, and cabmen drew up beneath them and lay in wait, dozing on their folded arms, for the Captain's guests to depart. The Lion and the Unicorn were rather ashamed of the scandal of it, and they were glad when, one day, the Captain went away with his tin boxes and gun-cases piled high on a four-wheeler.

Prentiss stood on the sidewalk and said, "I wish you good luck, sir." And the Captain said, "I'm coming back a Major, Prentiss." But he never came back. And one day—the Lion remembered the day very well, for on that same day the newsboys ran up and down Jermyn Street shouting out the news of "a 'orrible disaster" to the British arms. It was then that a young lady came to the door in a hansom, and Prentiss went out to meet her and led her upstairs. They heard him unlock the Captain's door and say, "This is his room, miss," and after he had gone they watched her standing quite still by the centre-table. She stood there for a very long time looking slowly about her, and then she took a photograph of the Captain from the frame on the mantel and slipped

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it into her pocket, and when she went out again her veil was down, and she was crying. She must have given Prentiss as much as a sovereign, for he called her "Your ladyship," which he never did under a sovereign.

And she drove off, and they never saw her again either, nor could they hear the address she gave the cabman. But it was somewhere up St. John's Wood way.

After that the rooms were empty for some months, and the Lion and the Unicorn were forced to amuse themselves with the beautiful ladies and smart-looking men who came to Prentiss to buy flowers and "buttonholes," and the little round baskets of strawberries, and even the peaches at three shillings each, which looked so tempting as they lay in the window, wrapped up in cotton-wool, like jewels of great price.

Then Philip Carroll, the American gentleman, came, and they heard Prentiss telling him that those rooms had always let for five guineas a week, which they knew was not true; but they also knew that in the economy of nations there must always be a higher price for the rich American, or else why was he given that strange accent, except to betray him into the hands of the London shopkeeper, and the London cabby?

The American walked to the window toward

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the west, which was the window nearest the Lion, and looked out into the graveyard of St. James's Church, that stretched between their street and Piccadilly.

"You're lucky in having a bit of green to look out on," he said to Prentiss. "I'll take these rooms—at five guineas. That's more than they're worth, you know, but as I know it, too, your conscience needn't trouble you."

Then his eyes fell on the Lion, and he nodded to him gravely. "How do you do?" he said. "I'm coming to live with you for a little time. I have read about you and your friends over there. It is a hazard of new fortunes with me, your Majesty, so be kind to me, and if I win, I will put a new coat of paint on your shield and gild you all over again."

Prentiss smiled obsequiously at the American's pleasantry, but the new lodger only stared at him.

"He seemed a social gentleman," said the Unicorn, that night, when the Lion and he were talking it over. "Now the Captain, the whole time he was here, never gave us so much as a look. This one says he has read of us."

"And why not?" growled the Lion. "I hope Prentiss heard what he said of our needing a new layer of gilt. It's disgraceful. You can see that Lion over Scarlett's, the butcher, as far as Regent

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Street, and Scarlett is only one of Salisbury's creations. He received his Letters-Patent only two years back. We date from Palmerston."

The lodger came up the street just at that moment, and stopped and looked up at the Lion and the Unicorn from the sidewalk, before he opened the door with his night-key. They heard him enter the room and feel on the mantel for his pipe, and a moment later he appeared at the Lion's window and leaned on the sill, looking down into the street below and blowing whiffs of smoke up into the warm night-air.

It was a night in June, and the pavements were dry under foot and the streets were filled with well-dressed people, going home from the play, and with groups of men in black and white, making their way to supper at the clubs. Hansoms of inky-black, with shining lamps inside and out, dashed noiselessly past on mysterious errands, chasing close on each other's heels on a mad race, each to its separate goal. From the cross streets rose the noises of early night, the rumble of the 'buses, the creaking of their brakes as they unlocked, the cries of the "extras," and the merging of thousands of human voices in a dull murmur. The great world of London was closing its shutters for the night and putting out the lights; and the new lodger from across the sea listened to it

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with his heart beating quickly, and laughed to stifle the touch of fear and homesickness that rose in him.

"I have seen a great play to-night," he said to the Lion, "nobly played by great players. What will they care for my poor wares? I see that I have been over-bold. But we cannot go back now—not yet."

He knocked the ashes out of his pipe, and nodded "good-night" to the great world beyond his window. "What fortunes lie with ye, ye lights of London town?" he quoted, smiling. And they heard him close the door of his bedroom, and lock it for the night.

The next morning he bought many geraniums from Prentiss and placed them along the broad cornice that stretched across the front of the house over the shop-window. The flowers made a band of scarlet on either side of the Lion as brilliant as a Tommy's jacket.

"I am trying to propitiate the British Lion by placing flowers before his altar," the American said that morning to a visitor.

"The British public, you mean," said the visitor; "they are each likely to tear you to pieces."

"Yes, I have heard that the pit on the first night of a bad play is something awful," hazarded the American.

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"Wait and see," said the visitor.

"Thank you," said the American, meekly.

Everyone who came to the first floor front talked about a play. It seemed to be something of great moment to the American. It was only a bundle of leaves printed in red and black inks and bound in brown paper covers. There were two of them, and the American called them by different names: one was his comedy and one was his tragedy.

"They are both likely to be tragedies," the Lion heard one of the visitors say to another, as they drove away together. "Our young friend takes it too seriously."

The American spent most of his time by his desk at the window writing on little blue pads and tearing up what he wrote, or in reading over one of the plays to himself in a loud voice. In time the number of his visitors increased, and to some of these he would read his play; and after they had left him he was either depressed and silent or excited and jubilant. The Lion could always tell when he was happy because then he would go to the side table and pour himself out a drink and say, "Here's to me," but when he was depressed he would stand holding the glass in his hand, and finally pour the liquor back into the bottle again and say, "What's the use of that?"

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After he had been in London a month he wrote less and was more frequently abroad, sallying forth in beautiful raiment, and coming home by daylight.

And he gave suppers too, but they were less noisy than the Captain's had been, and the women who came to them were much more beautiful, and their voices when they spoke were sweet and low. Sometimes one of the women sang, and the men sat in silence while the people in the street below stopped to listen, and would say, "Why, that is So-and-So singing," and the Lion and the Unicorn wondered how they could know who it was when they could not see her.

The lodger's visitors came to see him at all hours. They seemed to regard his rooms as a club, where they could always come for a bite to eat or to write notes; and others treated it like a lawyer's office and asked advice on all manner of strange subjects. Sometimes the visitor wanted to know whether the American thought she ought to take £10 a week and go on tour, or stay in town and try to live on £8; or whether she should paint landscapes that would not sell, or race-horses that would; or whether Reggie really loved her and whether she really loved Reggie; or whether the new part in the piece at the Court was better than the old part at Terry's, and wasn't she getting too old to play "ingénues" anyway.

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The lodger seemed to be a general adviser, and smoked and listened with grave consideration, and the Unicorn thought his judgment was most sympathetic and sensible.

Of all the beautiful ladies who came to call on the lodger the one the Unicorn liked the best was the one who wanted to know whether she loved Reggie and whether Reggie loved her. She discussed this so interestingly while she consumed tea and thin slices of bread that the Unicorn almost lost his balance in leaning forward to listen. Her name was Marion Cavendish, and it was written over many photographs which stood in silver frames in the lodger's rooms. She used to make the tea herself, while the lodger sat and smoked; and she had a fascinating way of doubling the thin slices of bread into long strips and nibbling at them like a mouse at a piece of cheese. She had wonderful little teeth and Cupid's-bow lips, and she had a fashion of lifting her veil only high enough for one to see the two Cupid-bow lips. When she did that the American used to laugh, at nothing apparently, and say, "Oh, I guess Reggie loves you well enough."

"But do I love Reggie?" she would ask, sadly, with her teacup held poised in air.

"I am sure I hope not," the lodger would reply, and she would put down the veil quickly, as

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one would drop a curtain over a beautiful picture, and rise with great dignity and say, "If you talk like that I shall not come again."

She was sure that if she could only get some work to do her head would be filled with more important matters than whether Reggie loved her or not.

"But the managers seem inclined to cut their cavendish very fine just at present," she said. "If I don't get a part soon," she announced, "I shall ask Mitchell to put me down on the list for recitations at evening parties."

"That seems a desperate revenge," said the American; "and besides, I don't want you to get a part, because someone might be idiotic enough to take my comedy, and if he should, you must play *Nancy*."

"I would not ask for any salary if I could play *Nancy*," Miss Cavendish answered.

They spoke of a great many things, but their talk always ended by her saying that there must be someone with sufficient sense to see that his play was a great play, and by his saying that none but she must play *Nancy*.

The Lion preferred the tall girl with masses and folds of brown hair, who came from America to paint miniatures of the British aristocracy. Her name was Helen Cabot, and he liked her because



Consumed tea and thin slices of bread.

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she was so brave and fearless, and so determined to be independent of everyone, even of the lodger — especially of the lodger, who, it appeared, had known her very well at home. The lodger, they gathered, did not wish her to be independent of him, and the two Americans had many arguments and disputes about it, but she always said, "It does no good, Philip; it only hurts us both when you talk so. I care for nothing, and for no one but my art, and, poor as it is, it means everything to me, and you do not, and, of course, the man I am to marry, must." Then Carroll would talk, walking up and down, and looking very fierce and determined, and telling her how he loved her in such a way that it made her look even more proud and beautiful. And she would say more gently, "It is very fine to think that anyone can care for me like that, and very helpful. But unless I cared in the same way it would be wicked of me to marry you, and besides—" She would add very quickly to prevent his speaking again—"I don't want to marry you or anybody, and I never shall. I want to be free and to succeed in my work, just as you want to succeed in your work. So please never speak of this again." When she went away the lodger used to sit smoking in the big arm-chair and beat the arms with his hands, and he would pace up and down the room, while his work would

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lie untouched and his engagements pass forgotten.

Summer came and London was deserted, dull, and dusty, but the lodger stayed on in Jermyn Street. Helen Cabot had departed on a round of visits to country-houses in Scotland, where, as she wrote him, she was painting miniatures of her hosts and studying the game of golf. Miss Cavendish divided her days between the river and one of the West End theatres. She was playing a small part in a farce-comedy.

One day she came up from Cookham earlier than usual, looking very beautiful in a white boating-frock and a straw hat with a Leander ribbon. Her hands and arms were hard with dragging a punting-pole, and she was sunburnt and happy, and hungry for tea.

"Why don't you come down to Cookham and get out of this heat?" Miss Cavendish asked. "You need it; you look ill."

"I'd like to, but I can't," said Carroll. "The fact is, I paid in advance for these rooms, and if I lived anywhere else I'd be losing five guineas a week on them."

Miss Cavendish regarded him severely. She had never quite mastered his American humor.

"But—five guineas—why, that's nothing to you," she said. Something in the lodger's face made her pause. "You don't mean——"

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“Yes, I do,” said the lodger, smiling. “You see, I started in to lay siege to London without sufficient ammunition. London is a large town, and it didn’t fall as quickly as I thought it would. So I am economizing. Mr. Lockhart’s Coffee Rooms and I are no longer strangers.”

Miss Cavendish put down her cup of tea untasted and leaned toward him.

“Are you in earnest?” she asked. “For how long?”

“Oh, for the last month,” replied the lodger; “they are not at all bad—clean and wholesome and all that.”

“But the suppers you gave us, and this,” she cried, suddenly, waving her hands over the pretty tea-things, “and the cake and muffins?”

“My friends, at least,” said Carroll, “need not go to Lockhart’s.”

“And the Savoy?” asked Miss Cavendish, mournfully shaking her head.

“A dream of the past,” said Carroll, waving his pipe through the smoke. “Gatti’s? Yes, on special occasions; but for necessity the Chancellor’s, where one gets a piece of the prime roast beef of Old England, from Chicago, and potatoes for ninepence—a pot of bitter twopence-halfpenny, and a penny for the waiter. It’s most amusing on the whole. I am learning a little about

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London, and some things about myself. They are both most interesting subjects."

"Well, I don't like it," Miss Cavendish declared, helplessly. "When I think of those suppers and the flowers, I feel—I feel like a robber."

"Don't," begged Carroll. "I am really the most happy of men—that is, as the chap says in the play, I would be if I wasn't so damned miserable. But I owe no man a penny and I have assets—I have £80 to last me through the winter and two marvellous plays; and I love, next to yourself, the most wonderful woman God ever made. That's enough."

"But I thought you made such a lot of money by writing?" asked Miss Cavendish.

"I do—that is, I could," answered Carroll, "if I wrote the things that sell; but I keep on writing plays that won't."

"And such plays!" exclaimed Marion, warmly; "and to think that they are going begging." She continued, indignantly, "I can't imagine what the managers do want."

"I know what they don't want," said the American. Miss Cavendish drummed impatiently on the tea-tray.

"I wish you wouldn't be so abject about it," she said. "If I were a man I'd make them take those plays."

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“How?” asked the American; “with a gun?”

“Well, I’d keep at it until they read them,” declared Marion. “I’d sit on their front steps all night and I’d follow them in cabs, and I’d lie in wait for them at the stage-door. I’d just make them take them.”

Carroll sighed and stared at the ceiling. “I guess I’ll give up and go home,” he said.

“Oh, yes, do, run away before you are beaten,” said Miss Cavendish, scornfully. “Why, you can’t go now. Everybody will be back in town soon, and there are a lot of new plays coming on, and some of them are sure to be failures, and that’s our chance. You rush in with your piece, and somebody may take it sooner than close the theatre.”

“I’m thinking of closing the theatre myself,” said Carroll. “What’s the use of my hanging on here?” he exclaimed. “It distresses Helen to know I am in London, feeling about her as I do—and the Lord only knows how it distresses me. And, maybe, if I went away,” he said, consciously, “she might miss me. She might see the difference.”

Miss Cavendish held herself erect and pressed her lips together with a severe smile. “If Helen Cabot doesn’t see the difference between you and the other men she knows now,” she said, “I doubt

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if she ever will. Besides—” she continued, and then hesitated.

“Well, go on,” urged Carroll.

“Well, I was only going to say,” she explained, “that leaving the girl alone never did the man any good unless he left her alone willingly. If she’s sure he still cares, it’s just the same to her where he is. He might as well stay on in London as go to South Africa. It won’t help him any. The difference comes when she finds he has stopped caring. Why, look at Reggie. He tried that. He went away for ever so long, but he kept writing me from wherever he went, so that he was perfectly miserable—and I went on enjoying myself. Then when he came back, he tried going about with his old friends again. He used to come to the theatre with them—oh, with such nice girls!—but he always stood in the back of the box and yawned and scowled—so I knew. And, anyway, he’d always spoil it all by leaving them and waiting at the stage entrance for me. But one day he got tired of the way I treated him and went off on a bicycle-tour with Lady Hacksher’s girls and some men from his regiment, and he was gone three weeks, and never sent me even a line; and I got so scared; I couldn’t sleep, and I stood it for three days more, and then I wired him to come back or I’d jump off London Bridge; and he came back

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that very night from Edinburgh on the express, and I was so glad to see him that I got confused, and in the general excitement I promised to marry him, so that's how it was with us."

"Yes," said the American, without enthusiasm; "but then I still care, and Helen knows I care."

"Doesn't she ever fancy that you might care for someone else? You have a lot of friends, you know."

"Yes, but she knows they are just that—friends," said the American.

Miss Cavendish stood up to go, and arranged her veil before the mirror above the fireplace.

"I come here very often to tea," she said.

"It's very kind of you," said Carroll. He was at the open window, looking down into the street for a cab.

"Well, no one knows I am engaged to Reggie," continued Miss Cavendish, "except you and Reggie, and he isn't so sure. *She* doesn't know it."

"Well?" said Carroll.

Miss Cavendish smiled a mischievous kindly smile at him from the mirror.

"Well?" she repeated, mockingly. Carroll stared at her and laughed. After a pause he said: "It's like a plot in a comedy. But I'm afraid I'm too serious for play-acting."

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“Yes, it is serious,” said Miss Cavendish. She seated herself again and regarded the American thoughtfully. “You are too good a man to be treated the way that girl is treating you, and no one knows it better than she does. She’ll change in time, but just now she thinks she wants to be independent. She’s in love with this picture-painting idea, and with the people she meets. It’s all new to her—the fuss they make over her and the titles, and the way she is asked about. We know she can’t paint. We know they only give her commissions because she’s so young and pretty, and American. She amuses them, that’s all. Well, that cannot last; she’ll find it out. She’s too clever a girl, and she is too fine a girl to be content with that long. Then—then she’ll come back to you. She feels now that she has both you and the others, and she’s making you wait; so wait and be cheerful. She’s worth waiting for; she’s young, that’s all. She’ll see the difference in time. But, in the meanwhile, it would hurry matters a bit if she thought she had to choose between the new friends and you.”

“She could still keep her friends and marry me,” said Carroll; “I have told her that a hundred times. She could still paint miniatures and marry me. But she won’t marry me.”

“She won’t marry you because she knows she

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can whenever she wants to," cried Marion. "Can't you see that? But if she thought you were going to marry someone else now?"

"She would be the first to congratulate me," said Carroll. He rose and walked to the fireplace, where he leaned with his arm on the mantel. There was a photograph of Helen Cabot near his hand, and he turned this toward him and stood for some time staring at it. "My dear Marion," he said at last, "I've known Helen ever since she was as young as that. Every year I've loved her more, and found new things in her to care for; now I love her more than any other man ever loved any other woman."

Miss Cavendish shook her head sympathetically.

"Yes, I know," she said; "that's the way Reggie loves me, too."

Carroll went on as though he had not heard her.

"There's a bench in St. James's Park," he said, "where we used to sit when she first came here, when she didn't know so many people. We used to go there in the morning and throw penny buns to the ducks. That's been my amusement this summer since you've all been away—sitting on that bench, feeding penny buns to the silly ducks—especially the black one, the one she used to like

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best. And I make pilgrimages to all the other places we ever visited together, and try to pretend she is with me. And I support the crossing sweeper at Lansdowne Passage because she once said she felt sorry for him. I do all the other absurd things that a man in love tortures himself by doing. But to what end? She knows how I care, and yet she won't see why we can't go on being friends as we once were. What's the use of it all?"

"She is young, I tell you," repeated Miss Cavendish, "and she's too sure of you. You've told her you care; now try making her think you don't care."

Carroll shook his head impatiently.

"I will not stoop to such tricks and pretence, Marion," he cried, impatiently. "All I have is my love for her; if I have to cheat and to trap her into caring, the whole thing would be degraded."

Miss Cavendish shrugged her shoulders and walked to the door. "Such amateurs!" she exclaimed, and banged the door after her.

Carroll never quite knew how he had come to make a confidante of Miss Cavendish. Helen and he had met her when they first arrived in London, and as she had acted for a season in the United States, she adopted the two Americans—and told

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Helen where to go for boots and hats, and advised Carroll about placing his plays. Helen soon made other friends, and deserted the artists with whom her work had first thrown her. She seemed to prefer the society of the people who bought her paintings, and who admired and made much of the painter. As she was very beautiful and at an age when she enjoyed everything in life keenly and eagerly, to give her pleasure was in itself a distinct pleasure; and the worldly tired people she met were considering their own entertainment quite as much as hers when they asked her to their dinners and dances, or to spend a week with them in the country. In her way, she was as independent as was Carroll in his, and as she was not in love, as he was, her life was not narrowed down to but one ideal. But she was not so young as to consider herself infallible, and she had one excellent friend on whom she was dependent for advice and to whose directions she submitted implicitly. This was Lady Gower, the only person to whom Helen had spoken of Carroll and of his great feeling for her. Lady Gower, immediately after her marriage, had been a conspicuous and brilliant figure in that set in London which works eighteen hours a day to keep itself amused, but after the death of her husband she had disappeared into the country as completely as though she had entered a con-

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vent, and after several years had then re-entered the world as a professional philanthropist. Her name was now associated entirely with Women's Leagues, with committees that presented petitions to Parliament, and with public meetings, at which she spoke with marvellous ease and effect. Her old friends said she had taken up this new pose as an outlet for her nervous energies, and as an effort to forget the man who alone had made life serious to her. Others knew her as an earnest woman, acting honestly for what she thought was right. Her success, all admitted, was due to her knowledge of the world and to her sense of humor, which taught her with whom to use her wealth and position, and when to demand what she wanted solely on the ground that the cause was just.

She had taken more than a fancy for Helen, and the position of the beautiful, motherless girl had appealed to her as one filled with dangers. When she grew to know Helen better, she recognized that these fears were quite unnecessary, and as she saw more of her she learned to care for her deeply. Helen had told her much of Carroll and of his double purpose in coming to London; of his brilliant work and his lack of success in having it recognized; and of his great and loyal devotion to her, and of his lack of success, not in having

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that recognized, but in her own inability to return it. Helen was proud that she had been able to make Carroll care for her as he did, and that there was anything about her which could inspire a man whom she admired so much to believe in her so absolutely and for so long a time. But what convinced her that the outcome for which he hoped was impossible, was the very fact that she could admire him, and see how fine and unselfish his love for her was, and yet remain untouched by it.

She had been telling Lady Gower one day of the care he had taken of her ever since she was fourteen years of age, and had quoted some of the friendly and loverlike acts he had performed in her service, until one day they had both found out that his attitude of the elder brother was no longer possible, and that he loved her in the old and only way. Lady Gower looked at her rather doubtfully and smiled.

“I wish you would bring him to see me, Helen,” she said; “I think I should like your friend very much. From what you tell me of him I doubt if you will find many such men waiting for you in this country. Our men marry for reasons of property, or they love blindly, and are exacting and selfish before and after they are married. I know, because so many women came to me when my

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husband was alive to ask how it was that I continued so happy in my married life."

"But I don't want to marry anyone," Helen remonstrated, gently. "American girls are not always thinking only of getting married."

"What I meant was this," said Lady Gower: "that, in my experience, I have heard of but few men who care in the way this young man seems to care for you. You say you do not love him; but if he had wanted to gain my interest, he could not have pleaded his cause better than you have done. He seems to see your faults and yet love you still, in spite of them—or on account of them. And I like the things he does for you. I like, for instance, his sending you the book of the moment every week for two years. That shows a most unswerving spirit of devotion. And the story of the broken bridge in the woods is a wonderful story. If I were a young girl, I could love a man for that alone. It was a beautiful thing to do."

Helen sat with her chin on her hands, deeply considering this new point of view.

"I thought it very foolish of him," she confessed, questioningly, "to take such a risk for such a little thing."

Lady Gower smiled down at her from the height of her many years.

"Wait," she said, dryly, "you are very young

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now—and very rich; everyone is crowding to give you pleasure, to show his admiration. You are a very fortunate girl. But later, these things which some man has done because he loved you, and which you call foolish, will grow large in your life, and shine out strongly, and when you are discouraged and alone, you will take them out, and the memory of them will make you proud and happy. They are the honors which women wear in secret.”

Helen came back to town in September, and for the first few days was so occupied in refurnishing her studio and in visiting the shops that she neglected to send Carroll word of her return. When she found that a whole week had passed without her having made any effort to see him, and appreciated how the fact would hurt her friend, she was filled with remorse, and drove at once in great haste to Jermyn Street, to announce her return in person. On the way she decided that she would soften the blow of her week of neglect by asking him to take her out to luncheon. This privilege she had once or twice accorded him, and she felt that the pleasure these excursions gave Carroll were worth the consternation they caused to Lady Gower.

The servant was uncertain whether Mr. Carroll was at home or not, but Helen was too intent

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upon making restitution to wait for the fact to be determined, and, running up the stairs, knocked sharply at the door of his study.

A voice bade her come in, and she entered, radiant and smiling her welcome. But Carroll was not there to receive it, and, instead, Marion Cavendish looked up at her from his desk, where she was busily writing. Helen paused with a surprised laugh, but Marion sprang up and hailed her gladly. They met half way across the room and kissed each other with the most friendly feeling.

Philip was out, Marion said, and she had just stepped in for a moment to write him a note. If Helen would excuse her, she would finish it, as she was late for rehearsal.

But she asked over her shoulder, with great interest, if Helen had passed a pleasant summer. She thought she had never seen her looking so well. Helen thought Miss Cavendish herself was looking very well also, but Marion said no; that she was too sunburnt, she would not be able to wear a dinner-dress for a month. There was a pause while Marion's quill scratched violently across Carroll's note-paper. Helen felt that in some way she was being treated as an intruder; or worse, as a guest. She did not sit down, it seemed impossible to do so, but she moved uncertainly about

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the room. She noted that there were many changes, it seemed more bare and empty; her picture was still on the writing-desk, but there were at least six new photographs of Marion. Marion herself had brought them to the room that morning, and had carefully arranged them in conspicuous places. But Helen could not know that. She thought there was an unnecessary amount of writing scribbled over the face of each.

Marion addressed her letter and wrote "Immediate" across the envelope, and placed it before the clock on the mantel-shelf. "You will find Philip looking very badly," she said, as she pulled on her gloves. "He has been in town all summer, working very hard—he has had no holiday at all. I don't think he's well. I have been a great deal worried about him," she added. Her face was bent over the buttons of her glove, and when she raised her blue eyes to Helen they were filled with serious concern.

"Really," Helen stammered, "I—I didn't know—in his letters he seemed very cheerful."

Marion shook her head and turned and stood looking thoughtfully out of the window. "He's in a very hard place," she began, abruptly, and then stopped as though she had thought better of what she intended to say. Helen tried to ask

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her to go on, but could not bring herself to do so. She wanted to get away.

"I tell him he ought to leave London," Marion began again; "he needs a change and a rest."

"I should think he might," Helen agreed, "after three months of this heat. He wrote me he intended going to Herne Bay or over to Ostend."

"Yes, he had meant to go," Marion answered. She spoke with the air of one who possessed the most intimate knowledge of Carroll's movements and plans, and change of plans. "But he couldn't," she added. "He couldn't afford it. Helen," she said, turning to the other girl, dramatically, "do you know—I believe that Philip is very poor."

Miss Cabot exclaimed, incredulously, "Poor!" She laughed. "Why, what do you mean?"

"I mean that he has no money," Marion answered, sharply. "These rooms represent nothing. He only keeps them on because he paid for them in advance. He's been living on three shillings a day. That's poor for him. He takes his meals at cabmen's shelters and at Lockhart's, and he's been doing so for a month."

Helen recalled with a guilty thrill the receipt of certain boxes of La France roses—cut long, in the American fashion—which had arrived within the last month at various country-houses. She felt indignant at herself, and miserable. Her indigna-

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tion was largely due to the recollection that she had given these flowers to her hostess to decorate the dinner-table.

She hated to ask this girl of things which she should have known better than anyone else. But she forced herself to do it. She felt she must know certainly and at once.

"How do you know this?" she asked. "Are you sure there is no mistake?"

"He told me himself," said Marion, "when he talked of letting the plays go and returning to America. He said he must go back; that his money was gone."

"He is gone to America!" Helen said, blankly.

"No, he wanted to go, but I wouldn't let him," Marion went on. "I told him that someone might take his play any day. And this third one he has written, the one he finished this summer in town, is the best of all, I think. It's a love-story. It's quite beautiful." She turned and arranged her veil at the glass, and as she did so, her eyes fell on the photographs of herself scattered over the mantel-piece, and she smiled slightly. But Helen did not see her—she was sitting down now, pulling at the books on the table. She was confused and disturbed by emotions which were quite strange to her, and when Marion bade her good-by she hardly noticed her departure. What im-

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pressed her most of all in what Marion had told her was, she was surprised to find, that Philip was going away. That she herself had frequently urged him to do so, for his own peace of mind, seemed now of no consequence. Now that he seriously contemplated it, she recognized that his absence meant to her a change in everything. She felt for the first time the peculiar place he held in her life. Even if she had seen him but seldom, the fact that he was within call had been more of a comfort and a necessity to her than she understood.

That he was poor, concerned her chiefly because she knew that, although this condition could only be but temporary, it would distress him not to have his friends around him, and to entertain them as he had been used to do. She wondered eagerly if she might offer to help him, but a second thought assured her that, for a man, that sort of help from a woman was impossible.

She resented the fact that Marion was deep in his confidence; that it was Marion who had told her of his changed condition and of his plans. It annoyed her so acutely that she could not remain in the room where she had seen her so complacently in possession. And after leaving a brief note for Philip, she went away. She stopped a hansom at the door, and told the man to drive along the Em-

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bankment—she wanted to be quite alone, and she felt she could see no one until she had thought it all out, and had analyzed the new feelings.

So for several hours she drove slowly up and down, sunk far back in the cushions of the cab, and staring with unseeing eyes at the white enamelled tariff and the black dash-board.

She assured herself that she was not jealous of Marion, because, in order to be jealous, she first would have to care for Philip in the very way she could not bring herself to do.

She decided that his interest in Marion hurt her, because it showed that Philip was not capable of remaining true to the one ideal of his life. She was sure that this explained her feelings—she was disappointed that he had not kept up to his own standard; that he was weak enough to turn aside from it for the first pretty pair of eyes. But she was too honest and too just to accept that diagnosis of her feelings as final—she knew there had been many pairs of eyes in America and in London, and that though Philip had seen them, he had not answered them when they spoke. No, she confessed frankly, she was hurt with herself for neglecting her old friend so selfishly and for so long a time; his love gave him claims on her consideration, at least, and she had forgotten that and him, and had run after strange gods and allowed others to come

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in and take her place, and to give him the sympathy and help which she should have been the first to offer, and which would have counted more when coming from her than from anyone else. She determined to make amends at once for her thoughtlessness and selfishness, and her brain was pleasantly occupied with plans and acts of kindness. It was a new entertainment, and she found she delighted in it. She directed the cabman to go to Solomons's, and from there sent Philip a bunch of flowers and a line saying that on the following day she was coming to take tea with him. She had a guilty feeling that he might consider her friendly advances more seriously than she meant them, but it was her pleasure to be reckless: her feelings were running riotously, and the sensation was so new that she refused to be circumspect or to consider consequences. Who could tell, she asked herself with a quick, frightened gasp, but that, after all, it might be that she was learning to care? From Solomons's she bade the man drive to the shop in Cranbourne Street where she was accustomed to purchase the materials she used in painting, and Fate, which uses strange agents to work out its ends, so directed it that the cabman stopped a few doors below this shop, and opposite one where jewelry and other personal effects were bought and sold. At any other time,

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or had she been in any other mood, what followed might not have occurred, but Fate, in the person of the cabman, arranged it so that the hour and the opportunity came together.

There were some old mezzotints in the window of the loan-shop, a string of coins and medals, a row of new French posters; and far down to the front a tray filled with gold and silver cigarette-cases and watches and rings. It occurred to Helen, who was still bent on making restitution for her neglect, that a cigarette-case would be more appropriate for a man than flowers, and more lasting. And she scanned the contents of the window with the eye of one who now saw in everything only something which might give Philip pleasure. The two objects of value in the tray upon which her eyes first fell were the gold seal-ring with which Philip had sealed his letters to her, and, lying next to it, his gold watch! There was something almost human in the way the ring and watch spoke to her from the past—in the way they appealed to her to rescue them from the surroundings to which they had been abandoned. She did not know what she meant to do with them nor how she could return them to Philip; but there was no question of doubt in her manner as she swept with a rush into the shop. There was no attempt, either, at bargaining in the way in which she pointed out to the

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young woman behind the counter the particular ring and watch she wanted. They had not been left as collateral, the young woman said; they had been sold outright.

"Then anyone can buy them?" Helen asked, eagerly. "They are for sale to the public—to anyone?"

The young woman made note of the customer's eagerness, but with an unmoved countenance.

"Yes, miss, they are for sale. The ring is four pounds and the watch twenty-five."

"Twenty-nine pounds!" Helen gasped.

That was more money than she had in the world, but the fact did not distress her, for she had a true artistic disregard for ready money, and the absence of it had never disturbed her. But now it assumed a sudden and alarming value. She had ten pounds in her purse and ten pounds at her studio—these were just enough to pay for a quarter's rent and the rates, and there was a hat and cloak in Bond Street which she certainly must have. Her only assets consisted of the possibility that someone might soon order a miniature, and to her mind that was sufficient. Someone always had ordered a miniature, and there was no reasonable doubt but that someone would do it again. For a moment she questioned if it would not be sufficient if she bought the ring and allowed the

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watch to remain. But she recognized that the ring meant more to her than the watch, while the latter, as an old heirloom which had been passed down to him from a great-grandfather, meant more to Philip. It was for Philip she was doing this, she reminded herself. She stood holding his possessions, one in each hand, and looking at the young woman blankly. She had no doubt in her mind that at least part of the money he had received for them had paid for the flowers he had sent to her in Scotland. The certainty of this left her no choice. She laid the ring and watch down and pulled the only ring she possessed from her own finger. It was a gift from Lady Gower. She had no doubt that it was of great value.

“Can you lend me some money on that?” she asked. It was the first time she had conducted a business transaction of this nature, and she felt as though she were engaging in a burglary.

“We don’t lend money, miss,” the girl said, “we buy outright. I can give you twenty-eight shillings for this,” she added.

“Twenty-eight shillings!” Helen gasped. “Why, it is worth—oh, ever so much more than that!”

“That is all it is worth to us,” the girl answered. She regarded the ring indifferently and laid it away from her on the counter. The action was final.

Helen’s hands rose slowly to her breast, where

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a pretty watch dangled from a bow-knot of crushed diamonds. It was her only possession, and she was very fond of it. It also was the gift of one of the several great ladies who had adopted her since her residence in London. Helen had painted a miniature of this particular great lady which had looked so beautiful that the pleasure which the original of the portrait derived from the thought that she still really looked as she did in the miniature was worth more to her than many diamonds.

But it was different with Helen, and no one could count what it cost her to tear away her one proud possession.

“What will you give me for this?” she asked, defiantly.

The girl’s eyes showed greater interest. “I can give you twenty pounds for that,” she said.

“Take it, please,” Helen begged, as though she feared if she kept it a moment longer she might not be able to make the sacrifice.

“That will be enough now,” she went on, taking out her ten-pound note. She put Lady Gower’s ring back upon her finger and picked up Philip’s ring and watch with the pleasure of one who has come into a great fortune. She turned back at the door.

“Oh,” she stammered, “in case anyone should inquire, you are not to say who bought these.”

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“No, miss, certainly not,” said the woman. Helen gave the direction to the cabman and, closing the doors of the hansom, sat looking down at the watch and the ring, as they lay in her lap. The thought that they had been his most valued possessions, which he had abandoned forever, and that they were now entirely hers, to do with as she liked, filled her with most intense delight and pleasure. She took up the heavy gold ring and placed it on the little finger of her left hand; it was much too large, and she removed it and balanced it for a moment doubtfully in the palm of her right hand. She was smiling, and her face was lit with shy and tender thoughts. She cast a quick glance to the left and right as though fearful that people passing in the street would observe her, and then slipped the ring over the fourth finger of her left hand. She gazed at it with a guilty smile, and then, covering it hastily with her other hand, leaned back, clasping it closely, and sat frowning far out before her with puzzled eyes.

To Carroll all roads led past Helen's studio, and during the summer, while she had been absent in Scotland, it was one of his sad pleasures to make a pilgrimage to her street and to pause opposite the house and look up at the empty windows of her rooms. It was during this daily exercise that he learned, through the arrival of her luggage, of

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her return to London, and when day followed day without her having shown any desire to see him or to tell him of her return, he denounced himself most bitterly as a fatuous fool.

At the end of the week he sat down and considered his case quite calmly. For three years he had loved this girl, deeply and tenderly. He had been lover, brother, friend, and guardian. During that time, even though she had accepted him in every capacity except as that of the prospective husband, she had never given him any real affection, nor sympathy, nor help; all she had done for him had been done without her knowledge or intent. To know her, to love her, and to scheme to give her pleasure had been its own reward, and the only one. For the last few months he had been living like a crossing sweeper in order to be able to stay in London until she came back to it, and that he might still send her the gifts he had always laid on her altar. He had not seen her in three months. Three months that had been to him a blank, except for his work—which, like all else that he did, was inspired and carried on for her. Now at last she had returned and had shown that, even as a friend, he was of so little account in her thoughts, of so little consequence in her life, that after this long absence she had no desire to learn of his welfare or to see him

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—she did not even give him the chance to see her. And so, placing these facts before him for the first time since he had loved her, he considered what was due to himself. “Was it good enough?” he asked. “Was it just that he should continue to wear out his soul and body for this girl who did not want what he had to give, who treated him less considerately than a man whom she met for the first time at dinner?” He felt he had reached the breaking-point; that the time had come when he must consider what he owed to himself. There could never be any other woman save Helen; but as it was not to be Helen, he could no longer, with self-respect, continue to proffer his love only to see it slighted and neglected. He was humble enough concerning himself, but of his love he was very proud. Other men could give her more in wealth or position, but no one could ever love her as he did. “He that hath more let him give,” he had often quoted to her defiantly, as though he were challenging the world, and now he felt he must evolve a make-shift world of his own—a world in which she was not his only spring of acts; he must begin all over again and keep his love secret and sacred until she understood it and wanted it. And if she should never want it he would at least have saved it from many rebuffs and insults.

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With this determination strong in him, the note Helen had left for him after her talk with Marion, and the flowers, and the note with them, saying she was coming to take tea on the morrow, failed to move him except to make him more bitter. He saw in them only a tardy recognition of her neglect—an effort to make up to him for thoughtlessness which, from her, hurt him worse than studied slight.

A new *régime* had begun, and he was determined to establish it firmly and to make it impossible for himself to retreat from it; and in the note in which he thanked Helen for the flowers and welcomed her to tea, he declared his ultimatum.

“You know how terribly I feel,” he wrote; “I don’t have to tell you that, but I cannot always go on dragging out my love and holding it up to excite your pity as beggars show their sores. I cannot always go on praying before your altar, cutting myself with knives and calling upon you to listen to me. You know that there is no one else but you, and that there never can be anyone but you, and that nothing is changed except that after this I am not going to urge and torment you. I shall wait as I have always waited—only now I shall wait in silence. You know just how little, in one way, I have to offer you, and you know

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just how much I have in love to offer you. It is now for you to speak—some day, or never. But you will have to speak first. You will never hear a word of love from me again. Why should you? You know it is always waiting for you. But if you should ever want it, you must come to me, and take off your hat and put it on my table and say, 'Philip, I have come to stay.' Whether you can ever do that or not can make no difference in my love for you. I shall love you always, as no man has ever loved a woman in this world, but it is you who must speak first; for me, the rest is silence."

The following morning as Helen was leaving the house she found this letter lying on the hall-table, and ran back with it to her rooms. A week before she would have let it lie on the table and read it on her return. She was conscious that this was what she would have done, and it pleased her to find that what concerned Philip was now to her the thing of greatest interest. She was pleased with her own eagerness—her own happiness was a welcome sign, and she was proud and glad that she was learning to care.

She read the letter with an anxious pride and pleasure in each word that was entirely new. Philip's recriminations did not hurt her, they were the sign that he cared; nor did his determination

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not to speak of his love to her hurt her, for she believed him when he said that he would always care. She read the letter twice, and then sat for some time considering the kind of letter Philip would have written had he known her secret—had he known that the ring he had abandoned was now upon her finger.

She rose and, crossing to a desk, placed the letter in a drawer, and then took it out again and reread the last page. When she had finished it she was smiling. For a moment she stood irresolute, and then, moving slowly toward the centre-table, cast a guilty look about her and, raising her hands, lifted her veil and half withdrew the pins that fastened her hat.

“Philip,” she began, in a frightened whisper, “I have—I have come to——”

The sentence ended in a cry of protest, and she rushed across the room as though she were running from herself. She was blushing violently.

“Never!” she cried, as she pulled open the door; “I could never do it—never!”

The following afternoon, when Helen was to come to tea, Carroll decided that he would receive her with all the old friendliness, but that he must be careful to subdue all emotion.

He was really deeply hurt at her treatment, and had it not been that she came on her own invita-

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tion he would not of his own accord have sought to see her. In consequence, he rather welcomed than otherwise the arrival of Marion Cavendish, who came a half-hour before Helen was expected, and who followed a hasty knock with a precipitate entrance.

"Sit down," she commanded, breathlessly, "and listen. I've been at rehearsal all day, or I'd have been here before you were awake." She seated herself nervously and nodded her head at Carroll in an excited and mysterious manner.

"What is it?" he asked. "Have you and Reggie——"

"Listen," Marion repeated. "Our fortunes are made; that is what's the matter—and I've made them. If you took half the interest in your work I do, you'd have made yours long ago. Last night," she began, impressively, "I went to a large supper at the Savoy, and I sat next to Charley Wimpole. He came in late, after everybody had finished, and I attacked him while he was eating his supper. He said he had been rehearsing 'Caste' after the performance; that they've put it on as a stop-gap on account of the failure of 'The Triflers,' and that he knew revivals were of no use; that he would give any sum for a good modern comedy. That was my cue, and I told him I knew of a better comedy than any he had pro-

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duced at his theatre in five years, and that it was going begging. He laughed, and asked where was he to find this wonderful comedy, and I said, 'It's been in your safe for the last two months and you haven't read it.' He said, 'Indeed, how do you know that?' and I said, 'Because if you'd read it, it wouldn't be in your safe, but on your stage.' So he asked me what the play was about, and I told him the plot and what sort of a part his was, and some of his scenes, and he began to take notice. He forgot his supper, and very soon he grew so interested that he turned his chair round and kept eying my supper-card to find out who I was, and at last remembered seeing me in 'The New Boy'—and a rotten part it was, too—but he remembered it, and he told me to go on and tell him more about your play. So I recited it, bit by bit, and he laughed in all the right places and got very much excited, and said finally that he would read it the first thing this morning." Marion paused, breathlessly. "Oh, yes, and he wrote your address on his cuff," she added, with the air of delivering a complete and convincing climax.

Carroll stared at her and pulled excitedly on his pipe.

"Oh, Marion!" he gasped, "suppose he should? He won't, though," he added, but eying her eagerly and inviting contradiction.

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"He will," she answered, stoutly, "if he reads it."

"The other managers read it," Carroll suggested, doubtfully.

"Yes, but what do they know?" Marion returned, loftily. "He knows. Charles Wimpole is the only intelligent actor-manager in London."

There was a sharp knock at the door, which Marion in her excitement had left ajar, and Prentiss threw it wide open with an impressive sweep, as though he were announcing royalty. "Mr. Charles Wimpole," he said.

The actor-manager stopped in the doorway bowing gracefully, his hat held before him and his hand on his stick as though it were resting on a foil. He had the face and carriage of a gallant of the days of Congreve, and he wore his modern frock-coat with as much distinction as if it were of silk and lace. He was evidently amused. "I couldn't help overhearing the last line," he said, smiling. "It gives me a good entrance."

Marion gazed at him blankly. "Oh," she gasped, "we—we—were just talking about you."

"If you hadn't mentioned my name," the actor said, "I should never have guessed it. And this is Mr. Carroll, I hope."

The great man was rather pleased with the situation. As he read it, it struck him as possessing

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strong dramatic possibilities: Carroll was the struggling author on the verge of starvation; Marion, his sweetheart, flying to him gave him hope; and he was the good fairy arriving in the nick of time to set everything right and to make the young people happy and prosperous. He rather fancied himself in the part of the good fairy, and as he seated himself he bowed to them both in a manner which was charmingly inclusive and confidential.

"Miss Cavendish, I imagine, has already warned you that you might expect a visit from me," he said, tentatively. Carroll nodded. He was too much concerned to interrupt.

"Then I need only tell you," Wimpole continued, "that I got up at an absurd hour this morning to read your play; that I did read it; that I like it immensely—and that if we can come to terms I shall produce it. I shall produce it at once, within a fortnight or three weeks."

Carroll was staring at him intently and continued doing so after Wimpole had finished speaking. The actor felt he had somehow missed his point, or that Carroll could not have understood him, and repeated, "I say I shall put it in rehearsal at once."

Carroll rose abruptly, and pushed back his chair. "I should be very glad," he murmured, and strode over to the window, where he stood with his back

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turned to his guests. Wimpole looked after him with a kindly smile and nodded his head appreciatively. He had produced even a greater effect than his lines seemed to warrant. When he spoke again, it was quite simply, and sincerely, and though he spoke for Carroll's benefit, he addressed himself to Marion.

"You were quite right last night," he said; "it is a most charming piece of work. I am really extremely grateful to you for bringing it to my notice." He rose, and going to Carroll, put his hand on his shoulder. "My boy," he said, "I congratulate you. I should like to be your age, and to have written that play. Come to my theatre to-morrow and we will talk terms. Talk it over first with your friends, so that I sha'n't rob you. Do you think you would prefer a lump sum now, and so be done with it altogether, or trust that the royalties may——"

"Royalties," prompted Marion, in an eager aside.

The men laughed. "Quite right," Wimpole assented, good-humoredly; "it's a poor sportsman who doesn't back his own horse. Well, then, until to-morrow."

"But," Carroll began, "one moment, please. I haven't thanked you."

"My dear boy," cried Wimpole, waving him

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away with his stick, "it is I who have to thank you."

"And—and there is a condition," Carroll said, "which goes with the play. It is that Miss Cavendish is to have the part of *Nancy*."

Wimpole looked serious and considered for a moment.

"*Nancy*," he said, "the girl who interferes—a very good part. I have cast Miss Maddox for it in my mind, but, of course, if the author insists——"

Marion, with her elbows on the table, clasped her hands appealingly before her.

"Oh, Mr. Wimpole!" she cried, "you owe me that, at least."

Carroll leaned over and took both of Marion's hands in one of his.

"It's all right," he said; "the author insists."

Wimpole waved his stick again as though it were the magic wand of the good fairy.

"You shall have it," he said. "I recall your performance in 'The New Boy' with pleasure. I take the play, and Miss Cavendish shall be cast for *Nancy*. We shall begin rehearsals at once. I hope you are a quick study."

"I'm letter-perfect now," laughed Marion.

Wimpole turned at the door and nodded to them. They were both so young, so eager, and

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so jubilant that he felt strangely old and out of it. "Good-by, then," he said.

"Good-by, sir," they both chorused. And Marion cried after him, "And thank you a thousand times."

He turned again and looked back at them, but in their rejoicing they had already forgotten him. "Bless you, my children," he said, smiling. As he was about to close the door a young girl came down the passage toward it, and as she was apparently going to Carroll's rooms, the actor left the door open behind him.

Neither Marion nor Carroll had noticed his final exit. They were both gazing at each other as though, could they find speech, they would ask if it were true.

"It's come at last, Marion," Philip said, with an uncertain voice.

"I could weep," cried Marion. "Philip," she exclaimed, "I would rather see that play succeed than any play ever written, and I would rather play that part in it than— Oh, Philip," she ended, "I'm so proud of you!" and rising, she threw her arms about his neck and sobbed on his shoulder.

Carroll raised one of her hands and kissed the tips of her fingers gently. "I owe it to you, Marion," he said—"all to you."

This was the tableau that was presented through

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the open door to Miss Helen Cabot, hurrying on her errand of restitution and good-will, and with Philip's ring and watch clasped in her hand. They had not heard her, nor did they see her at the door, so she drew back quickly and ran along the passage and down the stairs into the street.

She did not need now to analyze her feelings. They were only too evident. For she could translate what she had just seen as meaning only one thing—that she had considered Philip's love so lightly that she had not felt it passing away from her until her neglect had killed it—until it was too late. And now that it was too late she felt that without it her life could not go on. She tried to assure herself that only the fact that she had lost it made it seem invaluable, but this thought did not comfort her—she was not deceived by it, she knew that at last she cared for him deeply and entirely. In her distress she blamed herself bitterly, but she also blamed Philip no less bitterly for having failed to wait for her. "He might have known that I must love him in time," she repeated to herself again and again. She was so unhappy that her letter congratulating Philip on his good fortune in having his comedy accepted seemed to him cold and unfeeling, and as his success meant for him only what it meant to her, he was hurt and grievously disappointed.

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He accordingly turned the more readily to Marion, whose interests and enthusiasm at the rehearsals of the piece seemed in contrast most friendly and unselfish. He could not help but compare the attitude of the two girls at this time, when the failure or success of his best work was still undecided. He felt that as Helen took so little interest in his success he could not dare to trouble her with his anxieties concerning it, and she attributed his silence to his preoccupation and interest in Marion. So the two grew apart, each misunderstanding the other and each troubled in spirit at the other's indifference.

The first night of the play justified all that Marion and Wimpole had claimed for it, and was a great personal triumph for the new playwright. The audience was the typical first-night audience of the class which Charles Wimpole always commanded. It was brilliant, intelligent, and smart, and it came prepared to be pleased.

From one of the upper stage-boxes Helen and Lady Gower watched the successful progress of the play with an anxiety almost as keen as that of the author. To Helen it seemed as though the giving of these lines to the public—these lines which he had so often read to her, and altered to her liking—was a desecration. It seemed as though she were losing him indeed—as though

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he now belonged to these strange people, all of whom were laughing and applauding his words, from the German Princess in the Royal box to the straight-backed Tommy in the pit. Instead of the painted scene before her, she saw the birch-trees by the river at home, where he had first read her the speech to which they were now listening so intensely—the speech in which the hero tells the girl he loves her. She remembered that at the time she had thought how wonderful it would be if some day someone made such a speech to her—not Philip, but a man she loved. And now? If Philip would only make that speech to her now!

He came out at last, with Wimpole leading him, and bowed across a glaring barrier of lights at a misty but vociferous audience that was shouting the generous English bravo! and standing up to applaud. He raised his eyes to the box where Helen sat, and saw her staring down at the tumult, with her hands clasped under her chin. Her face was colorless, but lit with the excitement of the moment; and he saw that she was crying.

Lady Gower, from behind her, was clapping her hands delightedly.

“But, my dear Helen,” she remonstrated, breathlessly, “you never told me he was so good-looking.”



Saw her staring down at the tumult.

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"Yes," said Helen, rising abruptly, "he is—very good-looking."

She crossed the box to where her cloak was hanging, but instead of taking it down, buried her face in its folds.

"My dear child!" cried Lady Gower, in dismay. "What is it? The excitement has been too much for you."

"No, I am just happy," sobbed Helen. "I am just happy for him."

"We will go and tell him so, then," said Lady Gower. "I am sure he would like to hear it from you to-night."

Philip was standing in the centre of the stage, surrounded by many pretty ladies and elderly men. Wimpole was hovering over him as though he had claims upon him by the right of discovery.

But when Philip saw Helen, he pushed his way toward her eagerly and took her hand in both of his.

"I am so glad, Phil," she said. She felt it all so deeply that she was afraid to say more, but that meant so much to her that she was sure he would understand.

He had planned it very differently. For a year he had dreamed that, on the first night of his play, there would be a supper, and that he would rise and drink her health, and tell his friends and

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the world that she was the woman he loved, and that she had agreed to marry him, and that at last he was able, through the success of his play, to make her his wife.

And now they met in a crowd to shake hands, and she went her way with one of her grand ladies, and he was left among a group of chattering strangers. The great English playwright took him by the hand and in the hearing of all praised him gracefully and kindly. It did not matter to Philip whether the older playwright believed what he said or not; he knew it was generously meant.

"I envy you this," the great man was saying. "Don't lose any of it, stay and listen to all they have to say. You will never live through the first night of your first play but once."

"Yes, I hear them," said Philip, nervously; "they are all too kind. But I don't hear the voice I have been listening for," he added, in a whisper. The older man pressed his hand again quickly. "My dear boy," he said, "I am sorry."

"Thank you," Philip answered.

Within a week he had forgotten the great man's fine words of praise, but the clasp of his hand he cherished always.

Helen met Marion as she was leaving the stage-door and stopped to congratulate her on her suc-

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cess in the new part. Marion was radiant. To Helen she seemed obstreperously happy and jubilant.

“And, Marion,” Helen began, bravely, “I also want to congratulate you on something else. You—you—neither of you have told me yet,” she stammered, “but I am such an old friend of both that I will not be kept out of the secret.” At these words Marion’s air of triumphant gayety vanished; she regarded Helen’s troubled eyes closely and kindly.

“What secret, Helen?” she asked.

“I came to the door of Philip’s room the other day when you did not know I was there,” Helen answered, “and I could not help seeing how matters were. And I do congratulate you both—and wish you—oh, such happiness!” Without a word Marion dragged her back down the passage to her dressing-room, and closed the door.

“Now tell me what you mean,” she said.

“I am sorry if I discovered anything you didn’t want known yet,” said Helen, “but the door was open. Mr. Wimpole had just left you and had not shut it, and I could not help seeing.”

Marion interrupted her with an eager exclamation of enlightenment.

“Oh, you were there, then,” she cried. “And you?” she asked, eagerly—“you thought Phil

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cared for me—that we are engaged, and it hurt you; you are sorry? Tell me,” she demanded, “are you sorry?”

Helen drew back and stretched out her hand toward the door.

“How can you!” she exclaimed, indignantly. “You have no right.”

Marion stood between her and the door.

“I have every right,” she said, “to help my friends, and I want to help you and Philip. And, indeed, I do hope you *are* sorry. I hope you are miserable. And I’m glad you saw me kiss him. That was the first and the last time, and I did it because I was happy and glad for him; and because I love him, too, but not in the least in the way he loves you. No one ever loved anyone as he loves you. And it’s time you found it out. And if I have helped to make you find it out, I’m glad, and I don’t care how much I hurt you.”

“Marion!” exclaimed Helen, “what does it mean? Do you mean that you are not engaged; that——”

“Certainly not,” Marion answered. “I am going to marry Reggie. It is you that Philip loves, and I am very sorry for you that you don’t love him.”

Helen clasped Marion’s hands in both of hers.

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“But, Marion!” she cried, “I do, oh, I do!”

There was a thick yellow fog the next morning, and with it rain and a sticky, depressing dampness which crept through the window-panes, and which neither a fire nor blazing gas-jets could overcome.

Philip stood in front of the fireplace with the morning papers piled high on the centre-table and scattered over the room about him.

He had read them all, and he knew now what it was to wake up famous, but he could not taste it. Now that it had come it meant nothing, and that it was so complete a triumph only made it the harder. In his most optimistic dreams he had never imagined success so satisfying as the reality had proved to be; but in his dreams Helen had always held the chief part, and without her, success seemed only to mock him.

He wanted to lay it all before her, to say, “If you are pleased, I am happy. If you are satisfied, then I am content. It was done for you, and I am wholly yours, and all that I do is yours.” And, as though in answer to his thoughts, there was an instant knock at the door, and Helen entered the room and stood smiling at him across the table.

Her eyes were lit with excitement, and spoke with many emotions, and her cheeks were brilliant

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with color. He had never seen her look more beautiful.

“Why, Helen!” he exclaimed, “how good of you to come. Is there anything wrong? Is anything the matter?”

She tried to speak, but faltered, and smiled at him appealingly.

“What is it?” he asked in great concern.

Helen drew in her breath quickly, and at the same moment motioned him away—and he stepped back and stood watching her in much perplexity.

With her eyes fixed on his she raised her hands to her head, and her fingers fumbled with the knot of her veil. She pulled it loose, and then, with a sudden courage, lifted her hat proudly, as though it were a coronet, and placed it between them on his table.

“Philip,” she stammered, with the tears in her voice and eyes, “if you will let me—I have come to stay.”

The table was no longer between them. He caught her in his arms and kissed her face and her uncovered head again and again. From outside the rain beat drearily and the fog rolled through the street, but inside before the fire the two young people sat close together, asking eager questions or sitting in silence, staring at the flames with wondering, happy eyes.

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The Lion and the Unicorn saw them only once again. It was a month later when they stopped in front of the shop in a four-wheeler, with their baggage mixed on top of it, and steamer-labels pasted over every trunk.

“And, oh, Prentiss!” Carroll called from the cab-window. “I came near forgetting. I promised to gild the Lion and the Unicorn if I won out in London. So have it done, please, and send the bill to me. For I’ve won out all right.” And then he shut the door of the cab, and they drove away forever.

“Nice gal, that,” growled the Lion. “I always liked her. I am glad they’ve settled it at last.”

The Unicorn sighed sentimentally. “The other one’s worth two of her,” he said.

