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LOST.

—●—
A DRAMA

IN FOUR ACTS,

—BY—

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DAWSON A. BLANCHARD.

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LOST.

ACT I.—An Intelligence Office—A Den.

ACT II.—Public Park—The Widow's Home.

ACT III.—The Fairmount Residence.

ACT IV.—A Prison—The Rescue.

CHARACTERS.

1. JACK HANLY the Unknown.
2. JAMES STANDISH..... a gentleman.
3. MR. SQUIRES of the Intelligence Office.
4. MR. FAIRMOUNT a rich old man.
5. BILL CROOKSHANKS..... a low character.
6. SAM..... a hunch back.
7. OFFICER DICK.. Policeman.
8. KATE THORNHILL..... a dutiful daughter.
9. MRS. THORNHILL Kate's mother.
10. MRS. FAIRMOUNT..... the rich man's wife.
Captain of police, turnkey, servant and pedestrians.

LOST.

A DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS.

SYNOPSIS.

This play is founded on an incident in real life. Mrs. Thornhill, a respectable widow, and her daughter Kate have come to live in —— a large city. It is immaterial to designate the place.

They are strangers, very poor, and unused to work. The daughter, a guileless girl, is forced by their necessities to go out and seek employment. She applies for a situation at an intelligence office, and Mr. Squires, a kind hearted old man, is moved with pity for her and finds her a place. Mr. Standish, the confidential clerk of the establishment to which Kate is sent, falls in love with her. He is the nephew of a rich lady, whose husband, Mr. Fairmount, accidentally discovers he has relatives near at hand. Kate comes in contact with Jack Hanly, a fashionable looking gent (with aliases), who succeeds in winning her confidence—and she, in an unguarded moment, makes him a promise, which she afterwards fulfills, greatly to her sorrow.

A plot to rob the house of Mr. Fairmount is frustrated by a half-witted lad (Sam), and Jack Hanly takes refuge in Bill Crookshanks' den. Kate disappears simultaneously. A search is made for her, and by a singular combination of events, she is traced to the den and rescued. Her jailor, Jack Hanly, is captured, and to escape punishment kills himself.

ACT I.

SCENE 1—*An Intelligence Office.*

Mr. Squires. (A bald-headed man, cutting a quill.) Dear me, how my eye-sight is failing! I must put on my specks to do this thing properly! Plague take the fly! (Brushing it away.) It will rest on my noddle! (Fighting the fly). If it wasn't for the looks of the thing, I would wear a wig, just out of spite. Ah! I see you, you rascal. (Makes a dash at the fly and upsets the inkstand.) There now! I've done it up brown! (Taking up a sheet of paper, all smeared with ink.) Oh no! It's all black. (Throws the paper away and wipes off the table.) Well—what a worry this life is anyhow! Where are my specks? (Looks around for them, and examines his pockets.) Hang it, if I haven't left them at home. Oh my eyes! What shall I do? (Sits down disconsolately and puts his hand up to his brow.) Why, bless me! Here they are—just where they ought to be! That fly! Where is he? That fly has quite upset me—no, the inkstand I meant. (Adjusts his glasses on.) Well, its all in a life time! (Seemingly amused.)

Kate. (Enters at that moment, timidly.) Good morning sir! This is an intelligence office—is it not?

Squires. (Has risen, and is very polite.) Yes, miss! What can I do for you?

Kate. I came to apply for a situation. Can you help me, sir?

Squires. That depends, my young lady. Have you ever engaged yourself before?

Kate. No, sir! But I am very anxious to do something to help mother.

Squires. To be sure you are, dearie! Come in and tell me all about it. Oh, you need not be afraid to trust an old man! Sit down and tell me what service you would like best. (He looks over his records.)

Kate. Thank you, sir! I scarcely know what I am fitted for. Cannot you kindly advise me?

Squires. Well, now, that was nicely spoken! Let me see! I will call out a number of vacancies I have here, and you can indicate to me which is the right one, if anything should happen to suit you. To begin—Teacher! Governess! Lady's maid! Nurse! Cook! Seamstress! Store clerk!--

Kate. Store clerk! That will suit me, I think, sir! Can you secure it for me? I would like to try that!

Squires. Wait a bit! I will see. (Turns over the leaves of his record book.) Such places are always in demand! (Pausing.) I find there is nothing in that line to-day. But I could recommend you as a governess, if you like it—only, you will have to go out of the city!

Kate. I would like it sir—but I cannot leave mother. She would be alone in this great city!

Squires. That's too bad! (Reflecting.) Ah! I have something for you after all. I had almost forgotten it! (Fumbles in his pocket and produces a card.) Yes—here it is! This card was handed to me this morning by Mr. Standish. He is the confidential clerk and business man of the large firm of Sparks Bros. You know the place? Well—it's a dry goods establishment, and they want a young lady to look after the ribbon department. Of course, references are required. Now, how's that?

Kate. Oh, sir! I am so thankful to you. (She begins to cry.) But I cannot offer any reference—we are strangers here. (Still crying.) If you will only help me!--

Squires. Well, don't cry! I didn't say I wouldn't! You know I can recommend you myself. You have no one else to care for you but a mother? (Kate signifies assent.) Well, I will care for you some. I will be like a father—no, I beg pardon! I couldn't, you know, I am unmarried yet! I had better say, like a brother to you! No—that won't do either! I am too old to be your brother. Ahem! What shall I say? Oh, I can be your uncle! That's better! (Rubbing his hands with satisfaction.) Or, you can be my ward! How's that? I know Mr. Standish will be glad of it! Yes—you take this card to him with my endorsement and it will be all right. So now the matter is settled, eh! (Again rubbing his hands with satisfaction.)

Kate. (Seizes his hands.) Oh, sir, you are indeed kind to me! May heaven bless you for it!

Squires. Well, child! it isn't much to do after all, and I am glad to do it for you. Go now and see Mr. Standish yourself without delay, as he may have applied in other quarters. And if you succeed, let me hear from you again. Good luck to you—Good bye—good luck—good bye. (As he is speaking he is urging her to go—and has dispatched her before she could say a word, much to his delight—and still rubbing his hands.)

(Laughing.) How I did hustle her out! By George! She must think me rude! I couldn't help it, and didn't want to see her crying any more. I don't know whether she looked prettier in her tears or her smiles! By George! She brings back to me a tender recollection. Death took her from me, and I have lived since a single and lonely man! (Sighing.) Well, here's a chance to do some good! Here's a poor and defenseless girl asking for protection, and I will do all in my power to help her—

Good gracious! I forgot to ask her name! I haven't got her address either! By George! A nice mess I've made of it. My ward too—ahem! (Straightening himself up.) Oh, never mind! I know where I sent her. I will ask Mr. Standish!-- No, I won't, either!-- Ask Mr. Standish my ward's name! Ahem! After sending her to him on my own recommendation! Oh no, that will never do! I would be putting my foot into it deeper, and making myself simply ridiculous. I see no remedy for it, except to wait patiently for her return. I am sure she will come back again to see her—her sponsor—Ahem! (Straightening up.) All in good time, sir! All in good time. (Rubbing his hands with satisfaction.) Ah! here's another caller!

Hanly. (Enters with a nonchalant air.) This is an intelligence office, I believe?

Squires. Yes, sir. (Looking at him critically.)

Hanly. I want a situation. What have you to offer?

Squires. It very much depends on your capacity, sir!

Hanly. Oh, I have the capacity for anything! The compensation is the only object.

Squires. Indeed! And how can I serve you?

Hanly. By helping me to get a living in the easiest possible manner. I suppose I have given you the cue now.

Squires. I am not sure of that. Please state your business!

Hanly. I said I wanted a situation. What have you got?

Squires. (Turning over the records reluctantly.) If you want to work, I can furnish you a place as coachman--

Hanly. (Peremptorily.) That wont do!

Squires. Waiter!— Gardener!— Runner!—

Hanly. Runner! What is that?

Squires. One who runs after business for another. In this case it is a hotel runner who is wanted.

Hanly. Well, I think that will suit me very well. The board and lodging is, of course, included in the pay?

Squires. I do not know the conditions. That is left with the employer. I am required only to exact references.

Hanly. Give me the address. I will see to the rest.

Squires. No, sir! That is not the way we do business here. If I give you the address, it would presume that I have accepted references. There is a fee to pay, also.

Hanly. Oh, as for that I can easily settle that matter. (Puts his hand in his pocket.) How much is it?

Squires. I cannot accept any money until I know who you are.

Hanly. (Appears puzzled.) Isn't my personal appearance good enough for you?

Squires. Business is business, sir! Appearances are not always taken as guarantees. I am responsible to my clients.

Hanly. Well, I see you don't mean business. I will go elsewhere. (Walks away in a supercilious manner.) By-bye!

Squires. (Looks after him in an amused way.) That's what I call cheek—impudence! He don't mean to do anything that's honest. I'll bet that fellow is a rogue. (Appears abstracted.) It does seem to me there is something in common between the two who have just been here. Can it be possible? Oh no! I must be mistaken! It is absurd to think so. Why, the girl told me she had none but a mother in this wide world! And she looked as pure and innocent as a new born babe. Bah! It is only fancy. Such things will often happen, in a manner we cannot explain. Why should I think there was anything in common between this beauti-

ful girl and the idle vagabond who has just left me! (Scratching his head as if perplexed.) It isn't worth a second thought after reflection. They are as different as night and day. But, somehow, it struck me all of a sudden. (He walks around fretfully.) There is nothing--nothing to justify the thought.

(At this moment Mr. and Mrs. Fairmount, an old and stout couple, come in suddenly and appear astonished.)

Mr. Fairmount. Hello, Squires! What's the matter with you? You look like a man who is rehearsing a speech. What's the occasion, man?

Squires. Good morning! Good morning, madam! No, not so bad as that, Mr. Fairmount. I was a little perplexed just now, at finding two persons of opposite sex, wholly unknown to each other, and as dissimilar as two human beings can possibly be, having some peculiar affinity between them. It worried me considerably for a moment, and I was trying to understand how such things could happen. Please be seated, ma'am!

Mr. Fairmount. Is that so, Squires? Well, it is a singular coincidence, that I was just now startled by a strange apparition! Let me explain. Many years ago I had a sister, who married against my wishes. A short while afterward she became a widow, and was left with one child, a boy, whom I have never seen. She married again—I never knew her second husband's name—and disappeared entirely from sight. I have never been able to trace her up. She may be dead; but the recollection of my poor sister was suddenly revived by meeting a man just now, who bore the marks of resemblance to her. Had I been able to speak at once, I could have satisfied myself on that point. He soon disappeared from sight, and the opportunity was lost. But as it may have been only a passing fancy, I quickly dismissed the thought from my mind. Your singular remark brought up the subject again. But that is not talking business. We came here for another purpose. We want to engage you to do us a particular service.

Squires. I am glad of it! What can it be?

Mr. Fairmount. We have no children of our own, Squires! James Standish, my wife's nephew, is too proud and independent to be patronized by me. He holds a very useful and

promising position in business—but I would have liked to have given him a profession. The young man declines my offer. It's without any disparagement to him, you know, that I say so—

Mrs. Fairmount. James is a great favorite with us, Mr. Squires. But, as Mr. Fairmount says, he is a little proud and independent—that's all! We don't think any less of him for that.

Mr. Fairmount. Oh no! We rather admire the young man's pluck.

Squires. To be sure! It's not often now-a-days, that we meet with such stuff in a young man. I know the gentleman well—and Sparks Bros. have learned to appreciate him too.

Mr. Fairmount. That's true! But we would like to have him wholly ours. I see no chance at present to have it so. We have determined therefore, to have *somebody* with us—and our choice is now for a young girl.

Mrs. Fairmount. A nice young girl, Mr. Squires! Somebody we can pet.

Mr. Fairmount. Yes—somebody we can pet. Tell him, honey, what she must be, and all that.

Mrs. Fairmount. We want a likely young person, sir! I would like to have her tall and slender—I do hate a fat girl! I would prefer a blonde to a brunette; but that does not matter so much, if she be amiable and fairly accomplished.

Mr. Fairmount. Yes—all that is necessary. Our nephew is a frequent visitor at our house, and we would like somebody to help us entertain him.

Squires. (Smiling.) Oh, I see!

Mrs. Fairmount. You must be very particular about her figure, Mr. Squires.

Mr. Fairmount. Somebody we can pet you know, Squires!

Mrs. Fairmount. We don't mind having her very pretty, Mr. Squires!

(They rise to go, and Squires is scratching his head.)

Squires. (Perplexed.) Yes ma'am! I understand! I will try.

Mr. Fairmount. It's a home always, for the right one, Squires!

Squires. A rare chance, sir! A rare chance!

Mr. Fairmount. Let us hear from you as soon as possible, Squires!

(They are walking out, apparently satisfied.)

Squires. Certainly. I will not leave a stone unturned.

Mrs. Fairmount. Somebody we can pet, Mr. Squires!

Mr. Fairmount. Yes—somebody we can pet, Squires!
Good day!

(They go; Squires has bowed them out.)

Squires. (Bewildered.) Great God! What have I bargained to do? A more difficult task I never undertook before. How shall I go about it? Where shall I find this delicate creature—"Somebody we can pet, Squires." Oh Lord! Oh Lord! * * * * By George! A happy thought! My ward! Ahem! (Straightening up.) She might be the very one! But she may have been accepted by Mr. Standish. If so, how can I get her from him? Here I am now, between two fires. By George! It is rather remarkable that I should have sent her to the nephew, and now want her for the uncle! If the old gentleman could see my—my ward—ahem! (straightening up again,) there certainly would be some hair-pulling between them. These things have come upon me so suddenly, that I begin to feel I am getting tangled up somehow. Well, I shan't hurry about the matter. In the meantime, I will have seen Miss—— Dang it, If I haven't forgotten the name! Ahem! Ahem! Now, how could I address her a communication on that subject? I couldn't direct it to *my ward*. That would never do. Poor girl! I wish it could fall to her lot to be placed in such good hands—with such good people. Yes—if I can manage it, my child, I will surely do it for you. I will befriend you to the fullest extent of my power: and *she*, who is in heaven, will visit me in my dreams again, and give to me her smile of approval.

(He takes his hat and walks out, when scene changes.)

NOTE—The folds will close, representing the front of a street with buildings, to enable shifting of scenery in rear.

Kate. (Appears, examining the card received.) I think I must be in the neighborhood of that store! (Looks round.) Yes, there it is over yonder. (Pointing to an invisible place.)

How my heart beats! I must not appear foolish—but I am so dreadfully frightened! (She appears agitated.) I do not think I can hide my agitation, but I must go nevertheless, and make an effort for poor mama's sake. I wonder if Mr. Standish is a cross man? Oh, how I wish it was all over! How I wish that good old man was here to lean upon. He is surely a friend, and may God bless him for his kindness. I must go quickly, before my courage fails me. It will not do to loiter round here. Perhaps I have been noticed already. But, suppose I fail to get the place—shall I tell mother of my ill-luck? I fear if she knew it she would not let me try again, and then would have to bear our burden alone. I will make the effort, and may Heaven help me to success. (She walks off resolutely, but drops her handkerchief.) Exit.

Hanly. (Has been looking at her at a distance, and as she disappears, advances quickly and picks up the handkerchief.) Ah! I'm in luck! (Examines it.) Damn it, no! It aint worth a copper for material, and there isn't a cent tied up in either corner! Now, why couldn't it have been a lace handkerchief—something valuable, that I could have disposed of? I'm hard up and *must* make a raise before night. (Looks after Kate.) There she goes—has stopped and gone in. Suppose I follow her and see what's up? Here's a chance to speak to the girl! I will go right to her and return the handkerchief. Something may turn up for me yet! (He walks away rapidly, just as Mr. and Mrs. Fairmount appear.)

Mrs. Fairmount. (Blowing.) We ought to be—close by—to the place, Dad! I wish we were there. I'm almost out—of breath.

Mr. Fairmount. (Helping her on.) Yes honey—it only wants a few steps more. (Looking forward with evident alarm.) My God! Here comes a mad horseman! Quick! Out of the way, or we will be run over!! (He rushes forward, toward the exit, with both hands raised, as if to ward off the coming danger.) Stop! Stop! For God's sake stop! (With these exclamations he shelters Mrs. Fairmount, who has followed close behind him—and at the same moment Hanly rushes by, almost upsetting the old lady, who disappears with her husband, and screaming very loud. She has dropped her purse in the encounter, and Hanly returns quickly and picks it up.)

Hanly. By heavens! it's a full purse! Just what I needed! Thanks, Mr. horseman! I was dead broke—and in trying to kill the old lady you have saved me! (He chuckles.) Well, I was honest awhile ago with the girl, and now I'm rewarded for it! (He hides it carefully in his breast pocket.) It's nice to have plenty of money! Jack, old boy, you must practice economy! Luck like this is not met with every day. The old saying ought to be "Economy is the best policy."— Hello! Here comes a peeler. I think I will make myself scarce.

Exit.

Officer Dick. (Walking hurriedly.) That was a narrow escape for the old lady, anyhow—I wish I could catch the damned horse breaker! I'd put him in pasture for six months!

Mr. Fairmount. (Appears, breathless.) Officer! Did you find—a purse—laying around here?

Officer Dick. No, sir. Have you lost your purse?

Mr. Fairmount. My wife—dropped hers a while ago. (Still breathless.) She was—almost—scared—to death!—

Officer Dick. By that runaway horse?

Mr. Fairmount. (Recovering himself.) Yes, it might have terminated more seriously than the loss of the purse.

Officer Dick. Did you lose much, sir?

Mr. Fairmount. A poor man might think so. But I would give twice as much to have that horseman in limbo, for forty-eight hours, or more!

Officer Dick. He would get six months, sir, if I had my way. If I can find him out, I will make an affidavit against him, and let you know, sir!

Mr. Fairmount. Do so, Officer! You will be properly rewarded. (He goes back, and the officer salutes him with great deference.)

Exit.

Officer Dick. That's a rich man, I'm sure. Lives near the park. (Nodding.) Yes, that's him. He can stand the loss—but, I wonder who got the purse? If I had been a few minutes sooner I would have been the lucky one. Well, I can make something out of the affidavit—but not by standing here. So, here goes!

Exit.

SCENE 2. (Folds open.) *A den. A low groggery, kept by a man of repulsive appearance. A hideous looking lad is crouching with fear in the corner of the room. The man is eating.*

Crookshanks. Get out of that corner, yer dirty snivellin rat. What are yer shakin for? Yer want yer breakfast, does yer? Well, take that, (throws a dry, hard biscuit at him,) yer ugly cur, and let's hear what yer been doin' all the mornin'?

Sam. (Trembling and eating the crumb.) Wharf!

Crookshanks. Bin on the wharf, have yer? What did yer get? Speak out, afore I murder yer!

Sam. Nothin'!

Crookshanks. Nothin' is it? Thar's plenty to get, yer dirty scoundrel; but yer gettin' too lazy to pick it up. Come back here another day without some bait, and I'll break yer bock, yer sneakin rat! Get yer bucket and brush, and scour the house from top to bottom, if you want to live another day! Yer had enough to eat, yer hungry dog? Quick! or I'll break every bone in yer body. (He makes a fierce lunge at him, and Sam dodges and runs away.)

Hanly. (Appears.) Hello, Crook! What's up now? Poundin the cub as usual? (Laughs.) That boy keeps your temper up!

Crookshanks. Dog blast him! He aint worth his salt!

Hanly. That's what the matter. He gets too much salt! Don't you think you salt him too much?

Crookshanks. Yes, and I'll pepper him too, afore I'm done with him! What have you to say about it, anyhow?

Hanly. Only this:—Did you ever try a square meal with the chap?

Crookshanks. (Irritably.) Now, Jack! That's enough chin music from you. How do yer make a livin'—eh?

Hanly. (Unabashed.) Like a gentleman, sir! Like a gentleman! No work, and big pay!

Crookshanks. Like a gentleman—yes! (Mockingly.) Where did you get that there rig? How did you get it—eh?

Hanly. Well Crook, I had some luck! And as my tailor had the clothes already made for me, all I had to do was to

step into them, *and pay* for them. (Struts about the floor.)
Do you see ?

Crookshanks. Well, you are a lucky cuss, anyhow! (Half angrily.) How do yer find the lush ?

Hanly. Easily enough! I have *always* money to spare. (Displays the purse.) I can get more from where this comes. How do you like that ? (Saucily.)

Crookshanks. (Enviously.) Yer think yerself a masher; don't yer ?

Hanly. Well, Crook—don't I look like one ? I made another fine mash not long ago! (Struts about.)

Crookshanks. Why don't yer help me to something delicate too ? I've done yer many a good turn.

Hanly. Why—what in the world would *you* do with a woman, Crook ? (Apparently amused.) Feed her on crumbs ?

Crookshanks. To hell wid yer! (Angrily.) If I aint got good looks, I've got the lush—and yer know it too!

Hanly. Well how much will you give for a pretty girl ? Now, that's business.

Crookshanks. (Eagerly.) Name yer price, and I'll pay it.

Hanly. See here—are you in earnest ? I'm ready to strike a bargain with you.

Crookshanks. Of course I'm in earnest. I'll pay yer well for the girl!

Hanly. (Looks round cautiously.) Well, Crook—I've got just the thing for you. I'll take no pay from you. But I will need your help in a little job that will pay us both handsomely. It takes two to carry it through.

Crookshanks. Yer wants ter put my neck in a halter; does yer ?

Hanly. No—it's a safe job! And it will produce a rich harvest. Where there's no risk, there's no gain, you know.

Crookshanks. I'm no slouch. I know that well enough. But yer a dare devil, Jack, and yer bound to bite the dust some day. (At that moment Sam's head is seen projecting from behind the counter, where he has concealed himself in the attitude of listener.)

Hanly. I'll *never die* in a prison, Crook; that's one consolation. Even if my weapons should fail, I carry a powder on my person that will end life without a struggle. No prison

bars will ever hold me. (Laughs contentedly.) Come, what do you say? Will you give me a hand, or not?

Crookshanks. (Looks around furtively.) I will join you, Jack, if yer promise to get me the gal. Without that, no go.

Hanly. You are woman-struck, Crook. But I will keep my word with you. Is it a bargain? (Offers his hand.)

Crookshanks. It's a bargain. (Takes his hand with a shake.) When will yer get her? When will yer bring her to me?

Hanly. That's easy enough to do. Now listen. The girl I mean to turn over to your tender mercy, is a late acquaintance of mine. She's as pretty as a pink, and I've got a kind of hold upon her, which I will of course use to my advantage.

Crookshanks. How did yer get a hold upon her?

Hanly. It's a funny story; but I will tell it to you. (Sam's head is seen again.) I did the girl a service by mere chance, and that led to an acquaintance. I met her again; not by chance, you can well understand, as far as I was concerned, and I gave her my name. From that moment she seemed to have taken such an interest in me, that I began to think she mistook me for some-one else. But I was too prudent to question her about it—and she never afterward tried to avoid me, but seemed rather well pleased always to see me.

Crookshanks. Yer give her yer name, yer say—but not the right one, I'll bet!

Hanly. You are mistaken! I did give her the right one. What had I to fear from a poor and innocent girl like her? She has just been cut loose from her mother's apron strings.

Crookshanks. What about her kin-folks?

Hanly. She has none. Her mother is her only friend.

Crookshanks. I like that. So much the better—no one to interfere. What hold have yer got though?

Hanly. I was coming to that. After awhile I got to know the girl quite well—and one day, as I was walking by her side for a few minutes, she asked me for my history. By heavens, sir—it almost knocked me off my pins (laughs,) and I hated to lie to her—but I did—and so well did I do it, that she promised me if ever I fell sick, or got into trouble, she would come to me and help me out, if I sent for her. *If I sent for*

her—mind that. Do you see now, how the thing can be worked? I must use strategy—that's all.

Crookshanks. (Quickly.) What's that?

Hanly. To use strategy, means to set a trap. Do you understand? When I get her here, how will you keep her? I will leave the place at once.

Crookshanks. If she kicks, I'll lock her up—that's all.

Hanly. Well, I guess she will be as good as buried alive in this house.

Crookshanks. Yer bet! (Chuckling.) Now tell us about yer job.

Hanly. Yes—it's about time. There's a fortune in it. Now listen. (He looks round again. Sam's head is seen again.) The man who dropped this purse, is the owner of a palace near the park. Old man—old lady—big house—plenty of wealth. A regular bonanza.

Crookshanks. A what?

Hanly. Oh, I mean—a big haul! Is that plain enough?

Crookshanks. Well, why don't yer talk English all the time?

Hanly. If it pans out well, I will be rich. (Joyfully.)

Crookshanks. Don't leave me out, please! How about the gal—eh?

Hanly. Oh, it's settled already, that you are to have her.

Crookshanks. But as yer talkin' about goin away, I wants it done afore I puts my hands to yer little game.

Hanly. By the Gods, sir!—can't you trust me? I will be ready to-morrow night, and if you are going to be my man, say so, and I will have the girl here the next day.

Crookshanks. Well, yer needn't get yer dander up, anyhow. I said I would help yer, and my word is as good as yers.

Hanly. All right, Crook! Don't push me too hard, if you want the thing to turn out well. I promise you *it will* be done. Have you got the tools?

Crookshanks. Yes—everything. What's the hour? Where's the place?

Hanly. Meet me to-morrow night, in the park, at the fountain, when the clock strikes twelve—I will be there.

(Sam slides back at that moment from behind the counter and disappears.)

Crookshanks. All right—I will be there too. Don't show up here again until it's all over. Give me a wide berth.

Hanly. I understand. Now, Crook, it's all arranged. Tomorrow night, and a fortune is ours. (They shake hands again, and Hanly goes towards the door.)

Crookshanks. I'll be on hand. Good luck to yer? (Hanly exits.) A devil of a feller he is! But I know I can trust him. Many's the scrape he's been in afore, but he's too sharp to be caught—and I think old Crook can take care of hisself too. (Chuckles.) Where is that dirty rat all this time? (Calls Sam in a loud tone.) Sam! You Sam! Where in the tarnation are yer? Sam appears, looking frightened.) Where have yer been sir? What have yer been doin, yer snivellin dog? (Catches him by the collar and shakes him.) Are yer asleep, yer varmint?

Sam. Scrubbin!

Crookshanks. Yer a liar! Yer bin asleep, yer lazy dog! Where's my whip? I'll wake yer up! (He rushes to the counter, and gets a long lash, and cracks it furiously over the boy's head. Sam falls on his knees and raises his hands supplicatingly. Crookshanks dances around him furiously with the whip.)

Curtain.

ACT II.

SCENE 1. *Public Park, and view of the Fairmount residence in the distance. A fountain in the centre of grounds. The hour is supposed to be after sunset. People are passing through the park. Kate comes on the scene and stops.*

Kate. (Looking around nervously.) How late it is getting! Everybody is leaving the park, and I will soon be alone. I must not tarry here long, lest Mother should grow anxious about me. What can Mr. Hanly be wanting with me? (She walks about, as if undecided what to do.) This is a strange request of his, to meet him here this evening! Oh, if I were only sure he was my lost brother, how gladly would I fly to Mother, to tell her I had found her truant boy! But, I fear

it cannot be so—it is so long ago. Perhaps I am doing wrong by the concealment of my friendship for this man. But I do pity him! He has told me such a sad story of himself—and he says he has no other friend on earth, but me! Poor man! For the sake of the lost one, I will be kind to him. (At this moment Hanly appears.)

Hanly. (Approaching.) Ah! Miss Thornhill—how kind of you to come! I hope I have not kept you waiting long!

Kate. It is getting late, sir, and I beg of you to speak fast, as I cannot stay much longer.

Hanly. I will not detain you long. Miss Thornhill, I am going away, and I wished to take leave of you. You have been always so kind to me, that I thought I would appear ungrateful to go away without saying good bye.

Kate. I am sorry you are going, Mr. Hanly—but I suppose you will better your fortunes by doing so! Perhaps I may hear of you again?

Hanly. Yes—I hope so. I have flattering prospects elsewhere, and I hope to return some day, and find you looking as bright and happy as you are now.

(At this moment Sam's head is seen raising itself from behind the fountain. He looks on attentively.)

Kate. Thanks—thanks! I am grateful for your kind wishes. Now that you are going away, you will not mind my asking you a question. I hope it will not seem impertinent.

Hanly. Ask anything you please. I too, wish to ask a question. Say on, Miss Thornhill, I will answer you.

Kate. I wish to know—(Hesitates.) Cannot you think whether you have any relatives living?

Hanly. I never knew but my father and mother, and—they are both—dead! (Seemingly affected.)

Kate. What have *you* to ask me, Mr. Hanly? I wish always to be your friend.

Hanly. You once made me a promise. Do you remember now what it was? (He pauses for a reply. She appears puzzled.) I am glad you have not had any occasion to fulfill it—but, as it may happen to me—I mean that misfortune may overtake me some day, and I will then feel the want of a friend.

Kate. Oh, I understand you! Yes, I did promise to come to you if you were overcome by sickness or trouble, and needed my friendly services. (Offering her hand.) Mr. Hanly! God will shield you from harm—trust in Him—He is our kind Father!

Hanly. I know now you were sincere in what you promised to do for me. But, as I leave you so soon—I know I will not see you again, for a long time at least—Good bye, Miss Thornhill! Farewell, kind friend!

Kate. Good bye, sir—and God bless you! (She turns from him and darts away.—Exit.) (He remains still on the spot, smiles significantly and lights a cigar.)

Hanly. It's all right, I think! I played my part well! A deuced fine girl she is—too fine for that rascal, Crook. I ought to have her myself, by heavens! But, my word is given to the fellow, and there is no getting out of it. * * * Damn it, I must have money, *money*, MONEY! *That's my love!* With my pockets full of money, I will yet be able to find another Kate Thornhill. (He disappears, and Standish comes on the scene, looking backwards and peering through the darkness.)

Standish. Could it have been she? Impossible—I must have seen her in spirit only; or it was, perhaps, an optical illusion. Surely, Kate must be at home before this? She left me an hour ago. (Sam comes out from his concealment and creeps up behind the speaker. Standish turns around suddenly, and Sam scampers off.—Exit.)

Ah! What monster was that? Did he intend to do mischief? Who knows? He may have wanted to waylay the girl, and but for my timely interference, might have done so. If that was Kate I saw but a moment ago, she has had a narrow escape, and I must warn her never to pass through this lonely park at night. What could she have been doing here at this late hour? (He appears perplexed.) I do not understand it. * * * She has a secret to tell me, she says—a family secret, which she is not, as yet, prepared to divulge. What can it be? It seems to have worried her very much of late, and I fear I have done wrong not to insist upon knowing it. This world is full of base intrigue, and there cannot be too many safeguards placed around a lonely girl. I love her, and it is my right and duty to protect her. Ah, Kate, my be-

loved! Will it soon be my good fortune to call you wife? Dear girl! You are too tender a flower to be dependent on self-exertion, and exposed to the vicissitudes of this rude life. I will not delay it longer. On my return to the city—I will not be absent two days at the furthest—I will speak to Mrs. Thornhill. I have Kate's permission to do so.
* * My aunt! How will she receive the announcement? I cannot say. Mr. Fairmount, I am sure, will rejoice at my determination; for I have often heard him say he approved of early marriages. I am almost tempted, now that I am on my way to see them, to speak about it to-night. But no—on reflection, I had better defer it until I come back. The hour is late, and I will only have time to say good night and good bye to them. (He walks off in the direction of the Fairmount residence and enters.)

Sam. (Peeps out from the fountain.) T'other one know'd her. That one (pointing towards Standish) know'd her too. (Shakes his head knowingly.) Crook's comin'. (Shakes his fist at some imaginary person.) I'll fix him. (Gesticulates fiercely, as if beating somebody.) He gives me nothin' to eat—He's not my uncle—he beats me—he makes me steal—*he wants to kill me!!* (He shivers while talking, and finishes with choked words.) I's so hungry! I's *so tired*. (He hears footsteps, and conceals himself quickly again.)

Hanly. (Appears.) It's rather too soon for Crook to be here, but I reckon he will be on time. I don't mind this job to-night, because there is money in it—but—hang it, if I like it about the girl. I am weakening on that point fast, and I wish the thing was over. If he don't show up promptly, I'll give the job up, and let the girl go. She looked so good and trusting— Hang me, if it aint like tearing my gizzard out, to give her over in that man's power. (He appears excited.) Pshaw! What am I talking about? Haven't I got to have money? Can I get along without money? The devil—no! I gave my word to do it, and it's got to be done now. Hang me for a fool, if I don't go right through with the whole business. No girl is going to interfere with my prospects, if I know myself. What is she to me, anyhow? Nothing but a passing acquaintance. And why should I have any feelings about the matter? (He seats himself, and is smoking.) I never had a sister or a wife—none but a mother; and she is

dead long ago. No one cares for me. I am hated and despised. (He rises excitedly.) I must have money, *money*, and a plenty of it—and there it is, right before me, staring me in the face. Yes, I will keep my word with Crook, if he helps me to do this thing. I will send her a message to-morrow, that will place her in my power. Now, for another turn, to see that the coast is clear. (He saunters off leisurely.—Exit.) (Sam comes out from his lair.)

Sam. It's a watchman to-night. (He looks around carefully, and listens attentively.) I'll fix him to-night! (He hears footsteps.) He's comin. (Shakes his fist fiercely.) Crook—comin—watch him! (He conceals himself.)

Crookshanks. (Appears, looking cautiously around.) I'm no slouch—but hang me, if I don't take a look fust, afore I say, go ahead! (He walks around, and listens for footsteps.) No one around—all right! It looks stormy to-night, but so much the better—it makes it safer for us. (Lightning flashes must be occasionally seen, and a roar of thunder heard, as if distant at first.) I hope this storm won't bust too sudden like. I don't like this lightning! (He looks uncomfortable, and appears uneasy.) It will soon be twelve o'clock, and Jack will be here. I will wait for him over there, in the shadow. I'll see him fust, afore he sees me. (He glides off. Exit.)

Hanly. (Appears suddenly.) What's that? I thought I heard footsteps! Why, in the devil, don't he show up? There's twelve striking now. I wonder if he will go back on me? If he does, I'll smother him in his hole! (Fiercely.) This is a fine night for work, and nothing ought to keep him back. (The bell has finished striking, and he listens with evident impatience. The flashes of lightning are more frequent, and the roar of thunder louder. Crookshanks appears and gives a signal of warning to Hanly, with his finger, and approaches.)

Crookshanks. Hush! I heard the peeler's rattle, not far from here. Put on your disguise, and wait a bit! (They both put on false beards.)

Hanly. There's not a particle of danger, with a night like this. Everything is in our favor. Turn off that gas—we need no light. (Crookshanks puts out the public light.) Have you got the tools? You know I always carry mine! (He displays a pistol, and conceals it again.)

Crookshanks. Yes, I have all that we need. (He takes out a small lantern from his pocket, and lights it.) Here—yer take the lantern, and throw the light on, while I pick the lock. Are yer ready? No use to wait longer!

Hanly. Yes—come on! It's an easy job, and I guess, will be a paying one. (They advance cautiously toward the Fairmount residence. The lightning is flashing steadily. They approach the house, a portion of which is exposed from the rear of the stage. They stop to listen, and then are seen as if at work like *burglars*. * * * Suddenly, a loud and prolonged *whistle* is heard from Sam's quarter in the fountain. The burglars scamper away, and run forward. A peal of thunder is heard.)

Hanly. Run for your life! We are betrayed!

Crookshanks. Go the other way! Don't follow me!

(They separate, and run in different directions.) Exeunt.

Sam. (Appears, looking jubilant.) I's a watchman to-night! (He is examining the whistle he blew, when suddenly, he is seized by the neck, and finds himself a prisoner to policeman Dick. He hides the whistle.)

Officer Dick. Who blew that whistle, you rascal? What are you doing here, in such a night? (Shaking Sam.)

Sam. (Appears very much frightened.) I's a watchman to-night!

Officer Dick. You are what? A watchman! Well, that takes the cake! What are you doing here, fool?

Sam. (Eagerly.) Look! Look! Look over there! (The officer appears astonished—looks, but sees nothing.)

Officer Dick. Look at what? What are you giving us? Come now, (jerking him,) and show me what it is! There's something in the wind to-night, I'll bet! (Sam is shaking with fear, and the officer drags him over in the direction pointed out by Sam.)

Officer Dick. Hello! What is this? A lantern, by the holies! And here's a chisel, on this door step! Aha, my boy! You must know something about this. (They have returned to the front of the stage.) Out with it, or I'll make short work of you! Who was over there, trying to break into that house?

Sam. (Shivering.) Two! One, this way; t'other one that way! (Pointing in opposite directions.)

Officer Dick. And why didn't you run too?

Sam. I's a watchman to-night! (Looking happy.)

Officer Dick. That fellow is a darned idiot. I think I had better take him in anyhow. If I catch the thieves, he will be able perhaps to identify them, unless he be short of memory. Come along, old fellow! (Takes him by the collar.) I'm going to give you quarters for to-night. If it is a prison, I guess, from the looks of you, you will find them good enough—better than sleeping out in the storm to-night. (They move along together, Sam appearing less frightened. The lightning is still flashing.) Move along, fast! [Exeunt.]

NOTE—This scene is shut off by drawing the forward folds together, to prepare for change of scenery in rear. A roadway is represented.

Hanly. (Appears, looking wild and careworn.) This is a quiet place. I will stop here. * * * Dan'n last night's storm! It came near being the death of me! I wonder if any one was bold enough to hound me? A nice looking hoodlum I am now! (Looking down at himself, all bespattered with mud.) Well—it was the only sure thing to do, to escape capture! We were evidently seen by a policeman, but my disguise, I hope, will prevent identification. Now, the surest thing to do, is to go right back, and find out what the police know. Yes—and I have to keep my word with Crookshanks. It is easy enough to have her intercepted as she leaves her house—and if she be made of the stuff I take her for, the plan is bound to succeed. If Crookshanks gets the girl, I'll make him pay for a new suit of clothes. I'm not going to be left in the lurch, if I know myself. * * * Whew! (He shivers, as if cold.) How cold I am getting! That wetting will do me some damage, I am afraid! When I get back to Crook's, if he don't treat me like a gentleman, I'll—— (He goes, shaking his head ominously.) [Exit.]

SCENE 2. (The folds open.) *Interior of a poor cottage.*

Mrs. Thornhill. (Sitting alone, and sewing.) How strange of Kate, to (looking at a photo.) ask to see this picture! Even if he were alive, he would not look like this picture now! What can be in Kate's mind, to talk about her bro-

ther at all? She knows him not, and he is totally unconscious that he ever had a sister—a sister that a king might be proud of! Yes—my Kate is a noble girl, and I thank God truly, that he has spared her to me. How cheerfully she has entered upon her life of toil! And not a complaint—not even a single murmur from her, the dear child; because, with her, *duty* is paramount to all things! Ah me! Why is Jack not here, to be a guardian to this lonely girl? She needs the protecting care of father or brother—but, alas! she has neither. (Looks at the picture, and seems suddenly startled.) Heavens! *To-day*, twenty years ago, he left his home, to become a wanderer! How strange, the sad recollection should have come about in this manner! (There is a knock at the door, and she opens it to admit Mr. Squires. He walks in.)

Squires. Is this the widow Thornhill's house? (Deferentially.)

Mrs. Thornhill. Yes, sir!

Squires. Glad to hear it, ma'am! My name is Squires! Perhaps you have heard of me before?

Mrs. Thornhill. (With less formality.) Pray, be seated, sir! Of course I have heard of you, through Kate, whom you befriended so much!

Squires. Don't mention it, ma'am! Your daughter is a lovely girl, and I am too glad I was able to be of service to her. I suppose, ma'am, she is satisfied with her place?

Mrs. Thornhill. Quite so! I have never heard her express herself otherwise.

Squires. Ah, so much the better. (Rubbing his hands.)

Mrs. Thornhill. I have intended, Mr. Squires, to call at your office, myself, to thank you for the great service rendered to us. But—

Squires. Don't mention it, ma'am. I thought I would call around myself, to see you. And how is my little Kate, this morning?

Mrs. Thornhill. Oh, very well, indeed, sir! She has gone to work, as usual.

Squires. Then I have missed her both ways. I stopped at the store, before coming here, and she was not there.

Mrs. Thornhill. You were, perhaps, a little early, but she

left here at the usual time. I am sure she would have been glad to see you. Kate has a grateful heart, sir!

Squires. Don't mention it, ma'am! You miss her, no doubt, during these long hours?

Mrs. Thornhill. It would not be natural for me to say, I did not. As we are alone in the world, we are all to each other.

Squires. To be sure! I understand. You could not be parted, under any consideration!

Mrs. Thornhill. I hope there will never be any necessity for it. It would kill me, sir, to part with my child. (Mrs. Thornhill rises from her seat, to close the door, which was left open.)

Squires. (Aside.) In that case, I will not mention the subject here. (Sitting near the table, he picks up the photograph, and looks at it. Mrs. Thornhill has seated herself again.) I think I've seen this face before! Who may this be, ma'am?

Mrs. Thornhill. My son, sir, who has been lost to me for many years! You are a friend to us, and I am willing to tell you more. This picture, after having lain aside for many years, was unexpectedly brought to light last evening, at Kate's request. She had dreamed of her brother, and wished to see his picture. They are only half brother and sister, and have never seen each other. When this was taken, he was, as you see, a mere lad. Kate was yet unborn. He left home without a word of farewell, and I have never seen or heard of him since. (She wipes away her tears.)

Squires. He must be dead. But, I thought for an instant, I had seen that face before. We see though, strange likenesses often among strangers. You are blessed, ma'am, in having the daughter you have. I am alone in the world. I take, therefore, an especial interest in her welfare.

Mrs. Thornhill. Oh, sir! You are indeed very kind, and I thank you for it.

Squires. Don't mention it, ma'am! (He takes his hat and rises to go.) With your permission, I will call again to see you!

Mrs. Thornhill. Do so, Mr. Squires. We are total strangers here, and I will be glad to have you come again. Good morning, sir! (He bows repeatedly, and goes.) Exit Squires.

What a kind old gentleman he is! I am sure Kate did not over-praise him for his kindness of heart! But, why should he have called at this hour of the morning? Perhaps, as he takes such an interest in Kate, he was alarmed at not finding her at the store, and therefore, came here to enquire about her. But, if he will only persist, he will find her at the present moment, and as usual, like a true soldier, at her post. Indeed, for punctuality and reliability, none can excel her. My Kate is *truly* worthy of the interest which not only Mr. Squires takes in her, but also of Mr. Standish's favor. How rejoiced I am, that my dear girl is making friends, and paving the way to better times for us. Ah! what hardships have we not gone through together?—But, my thoughts must not dwell on such matters. This mantle must be delivered forthwith! We have our rent to pay to-morrow, and Kate's little earnings must not be touched, yet awhile. (She has bustled around, while talking to herself, made up her parcel and put on her bonnet, preparatory to going out. Taking up the *picture* and looking at it again, she says;) If you had lived, and been as good a son as she is a daughter, this earth would have been to me a real paradise. Better though, you should be dead, than have proved recreant to your manhood! (With a deep sigh, she puts away the picture in the table drawer, and goes out with her parcel.)

Curtain.

ACT III.

FAIRMOUNT MANSION.

SCENE 1. *The Fairmount couple at home—Examining a large bundle of letters on the table in drawing room.*

Mrs. Fairmount. Lord bless me! What are you going to do with all those letters? Seems to me, you've robbed the Post Office! I never saw so many letters! What are you going to do, Dad?

Fairmount. (Laughing.) It does look like I had robbed the Post Office—don't it, honey? Well, I reckon you'll have to help me out of the scrape, won't you?

Mrs. Fairmount. Indeed, I won't! This is all unnecessary trouble. Mr. Squires told you he would find the girl, but you would advertise. Now, you've got your hands full. (A servant enters with another large bundle of letters.) Good gracious me! More letters! When is this thing going to stop? Oh, Dad, Dad! You've got yourself in a nice mess! (He looks disconsolate.)

Fairmount. Well now—it ceases to be funny! (He sits down.)

Mrs. Fairmount. I never saw anything funny in it, at all! Where will your eyes be, when you get through—if you ever do? Oh no, Dad! I don't want to go blind, yet awhile. What will you do?

Fairmount. I'll hire a secretary. Hang me, if I don't!

Mrs. Fairmount. Will one be sufficient? See here! This is only one quarter of the letters you are going to get.

Fairmount. The deuce it is! Why, I never thought a simple advertisement like that would bring out so many people at once. Can there be so many homeless girls in this city? I am quite anxious now to dive into this correspondence, and see who all these people are.

Mrs. Fairmount. Better wait until James comes. He will advise us what to do!

Fairmount. That's a happy thought! James will be here to-day, and I will ask him to be my secretary.

Mrs. Fairmount. Nonsense, Dad! You know James cannot spare the time for anything like that.

Fairmount. I am not so sure of that. Your nephew is always very accommodating, and I think this a good opportunity to invite him into our confidence. Might he not take an interest in the matter. Ah! There's the bell. I am sure it is he. I mean to introduce the subject right away. Come in, James! We are just talking about you. Talk of angels, they say—and they are sure to show up. (Takes Standish cordially by the hand.) Indeed, that's so—eh?

Mrs. Fairmount. Don't mind him, Jamesie. He is full of jokes.

Standish. (Has advanced and kissed his aunt on the forehead.) All right, Auntie! We cannot be hurt with pleasant words. But, laying all jokes aside, what is this mass of letters I see before me?

Fairmount. I will need a secretary. Don't you think so?

Mrs. Fairmount. Do help him out of that scrape!

Standish. What scrape is it? What is it all about?

Fairmount. Those are—my—correspondents!

Mrs. Fairmount. And more to hear from!

Standish. Good heavens! Why have you so many correspondents?

Fairmount. Oh, I forgot you didn't know anything about it.

Mrs. Fairmount. Well, why don't you tell him? There's nothing to hinder.

Standish. I am all attention. Is there anything wrong?

Fairmount. Oh no—nothing, except as to quantity!

Standish. I can't say that I am yet enlightened.

Fairmount. Well—it was all brought about by an advertisement. Read one of them, and you will, doubtless, understand. (Hands him a letter.)

Standish. Since I have your permission to do so, (tearing open the letter,) I will see what this one contains. * * * (Reads aloud.) "In answer to your advertisement, I beg leave to offer myself as lady's companion, believing my personal appearance, character and so forth, will prove satisfactory"—and so forth. Oh, I see! You have advertised for a young lady companion—and these are answers to your advertisement!

Fairmount. Just so! What do you propose, Jamesie, to help me out? That's more writing than I'll ever be able to get through with. I am dizzy thinking about it.

Standish. There's nothing to worry about, sir. But if you had consulted me a little earlier, I think I could have— (He hesitates.)

Mrs. Fairmount. What, Jamesie? Could you have done it some other way?

Standish. I mean—I could have advised some other and easier method, Auntie. Uncle, you are making a mountain

out of a mole! There is no necessity to answer each and every one of these letters. If you have a mind to read them all—

Fairmount. What? Read them all? No! Oh no, sir! Not if I know myself! I couldn't think of it!

Mrs. Fairmount. Think of something else, Jamesie—Uncle couldn't, if he would.

Standish. (Amused.) I was not done speaking, Auntie. I made no such proposition. I do not propose to make Uncle do anything.

Fairmount. But, something must be done! I am in honor bound to those people! I cannot think of letting the thing go by default!

Standish. I made no such proposition, either. Hear me out, please, and you will soon get at my meaning. (The couple appear very attentive.) In order not to be misunderstood, I will use the pronoun, we—

Fairmount. Yes—don't say *you* again. I wish rather to be ignored.

Standish. After the letters are read, *we* may select one, or more, to be answered. It would otherwise be an endless task: and besides, there is no moral obligation imposed on any one, to answer letters evoked by an advertisement.

Fairmount. (Eagerly.) I think you are right, Jamesie! You are a business man, and I know I can rely on your judgment in the matter. Shall *we* begin work at once?

Standish. I am willing—but the result, I fear, will be mere guess work. Why did you not ask for photographs from your correspondents? (Jocularly.) You might have been able to start a picture gallery.

Fairmount. I never thought of that! By George, that's a capital idea! It would have been the easiest way of doing the thing. Just think! I would have had occupation to last me ever so long, and could have become an expert physiognomist. Well, two heads are always better than one, even if the other is a sheep head! (Laughs heartily.)

Mrs. Fairmount. Is the matter settled between you? (Rising to go.)

Standish. Yes, Auntie— We will try your method first, and if it does not succeed, I may have something else to suggest. Now for work— By the by, Auntie! Any objections

to my smoking here? I would enjoy a cigar this morning ever so much!

Mrs. Fairmount. To be sure you may! You are at liberty to do as you like in this house, Nephew. Mr. Fairmount and I jointly wish that you consider this your home. Light your cigar, and I will send you some refreshment. (She goes out, and Standish lights his cigar.)

Fairmount. By George—I forgot!— You need writing materials, don't you? Well, while your aunt, my boy, is looking up a bottle of wine, I will look up a bottle of ink—eh?

Standish. Of course—anything you like. I am subject to your orders at present—so make the most of it! (The old gentleman has gone out, laughing, while Standish is talking.) Yes—I know I am welcome here! But, how thankful I would be, if Kate were welcome too! Here it is—they have advertised for a young lady, and I am wishing for a home at the same moment for my darling girl. Why not speak to them about her? Would I meet with a refusal? No? But would they not attribute a selfish motive to me? I must take time to reflect—and to do so, I will advise my aunt to delay her choice as long as possible. This chance must not be lost for Kate. There is nothing I will not promise them, if they will only give her the shelter of this roof. (He walks about nervously, while speaking and smoking.) How can it be done?

Squires. (Enters unexpectedly.) Why, Mr. Standish! I did not expect to find you here. I heard you had gone out of town. I called to see Mr. Fairmount on business that may, perhaps, interest you!

Standish. I returned this morning. If your business will interest me, I am glad to be here!

Squires. And I am glad to be able to consult you, even before speaking to Mr. Fairmount.

Standish. Say on quickly, as he will soon be here.

Squires. I am requested to find a suitable lady as a companion for your aunt.

Standish. (Startled.) Ah—very well! I am interested!

Squires. But you may disapprove, sir. The young lady I have in view, is at present under your authority. (Standish looks inquiringly.) I refer to Miss Kate Thornhill.

Standish. (Eagerly.) I am rejoiced to hear it, sir! Say on!

Squires. (Rubbing his hands.) Thanks! The main difficulty is now removed; because, I feared you might raise objections. But there is still another difficulty—the mother! She will never part with her.

Standish. (Reflectively.) I think, even that difficulty may be overcome. I will gladly co-operate with you, Mr. Squires, in advancing the interest of your friend.

Squires. Yes, sir! I take a special interest in the young lady, and I wish to make her as happy as I can do it.

Standish. (Seizes Squires by the hand.) Sir! You have placed me under very great obligations to you. I had the same thought in my mind; to mention Kate's name to my aunt, but refrained from doing so for certain reasons, which were not satisfactory to myself. Your advocacy of her interest dispels my doubts, and leads on to a consummation devoutly wished for by me. I must not conceal from you, Mr. Squires, that I too, take more than a friendly interest in your protegee. Miss Thornhill's interest is dearer to me than I can tell you!

Squires. I am too happy to hear you say so! She has now another and better friend than I can ever prove to be. There can be no objections to my introducing the subject forthwith?

Standish. None whatever. I will appear disinterested, but if needs be, will come to your assistance. They are coming. (Mr. Fairmount enters, with a large bottle of ink in one hand, and a bundle of stationery in the other.)

Fairmount. Ah, Squires—you here? My impatience got the better of me, man, and I advertised. Look here, what a correspondence I have! (He places the articles on the table.)

Squires. (Rubbing his hands.) Oh, what a bother you have given yourself. I think I have settled the matter for you already.

Fairmount. How so, my friend? Why, James, our work is, perhaps, ended. Let's hear what Squires has to report!

Standish. I hope we can burn up all this rubbish. Mr. Squires, we are eager to hear from you! (Mrs. Fairmount enters at this moment.) Come, Auntie— This is intended for you, expressly. Mr. Squires is about to make an an-

nouncement, which particularly interests you. (Mrs. Fairmount sits down.)

Squires. (Bows to the lady.) Yes, ma'am! I was about to announce the fact, that I had found the young lady for you.

Mrs. Fairmount. Tall, graceful, and a blonde, perhaps? (Mr. Squires nods assent.) Oh, I am so thankful to you! Now sir, see how hasty you were! (To Mr. Fairmount.)

Fairmount. So I was! So I was! Well, Squires, tell us who she is?

Squires. (Rubbing his hands with satisfaction.) A young lady, whom I have the honor of calling *my protege*. Mr. Standish knows her well. (The couple look at Standish.)

Standish. Yes, it is true. I am happy to be able to corroborate that statement. The young lady is a particular friend of mine also, and, I am sure, Auntie, will satisfy you in every respect. Mr. Squires has served you well.

Mrs. Fairmount. Well, if she be a particular friend of yours, Jamesie, and a protege of Mr. Squires, that settles the matter. Why did you not speak of her before?

Standish. For the obvious reason, that I knew nothing of what was going on, until to-day. (Servant enters and whispers to Mr. Fairmount.)

Fairmount. Tell him to come in. (Exit servant.) An officer of the police wishes to see me. Do you know that two nights ago, burglars attempted to get into this house?

Squires. Is it possible?

Standish. And how were they foiled?

Fairmount. (Laughing.) Oh, they were scared away before forcing an entrance! It was a terrible stormy night, and perhaps the thunder and lightning saved us. However, the policeman will enlighten us. (Enter policeman.) Good morning, officer! What have you to report? Any clew to the robbers?

Officer Dick. No, sir! I am sorry to say, I can find no traces of the robbers!

Fairmount. Well, I am not sorry for it, as the poor devils got nothing from me. Better drop the case, officer!

Officer Dick. And what about the boy that's locked up?

Fairmount. Yes, yes! I had forgotten him. Turn him loose, officer! It's no use to punish the boy for what he knows nothing about.

Officer Dick. Won't you have him committed, as a suspicious character?

Fairmount. By no means! I understood you to say, the lad is half-witted! Well, he deserves some sympathy from us.

Standish. I would like to investigate that matter. If you have no objection, officer, I will accompany you back to the jail, and see the prisoner.

Officer Dick. Certainly, sir! You have the right to do so.

Squires. I think Mr. Standish will do well to investigate. It often happens that the criminal will confess to one what he thinks he is bound to conceal from the law officer.

Officer Dick. That's true, sir! But, I don't believe there is anything to be got out of this prisoner. Some cases are right puzzling. There is one reported at headquarters to-day, that will put our detectives on their mettle, I reckon.

Fairmount. What is it, officer? Another burglary?

Officer Dick. Worse than that, sir! It's a case of kidnapping!

Fairmount. What? Right here, in this large city? It is astonishing, what crimes will be committed! What are the particulars? Are you allowed to tell?

Officer Dick. The matter is quiet yet. But, I don't mind telling it here. It's a young lady that's kidnapped. (Servant enters while the officer is speaking, and speaks in an undertone to Mr. Standish, who appears startled.)

Standish. Excuse me for a moment. I am wanted at the door. (He hurries out, followed by the servant.)—Exeunt.

Fairmount. (Laughing mockingly.) A young lady kidnapped! Run away, I guess—*eloped!* Is that the word, Squires?

Squires. It's more likely to be, sir! Investigation will prove it to be so. It's a problem to me, how such things can happen. (While Squires is uttering the last words, Standish returns, accompanied by a lady in deep mourning and closely veiled.)

Standish. (Agitated.) Uncle, I have invited this lady in. Oh, sir! She has announced something to me, which, if true, will break my heart. How long has she been missing, Mrs. Thornhill? (In broken tones.)

Mrs. Thornhill. (Raises her veil, deeply agitated—is about

to reply, when Mr. Fairmount, with an exclamation, rushes to her with outstretched arms.)

Fairmount. Oh Kate, my sister! (Joyfully.) Have I found you at last? Thank God for this! How came you here! What ails you, Sister? (All present seem astonished and mystified.)

Mrs. Thornhill. (In tears.) Yes, Brother! It is I. Help me! (She falls on her knees before Mr. Fairmount.) Help me to find my child! Save her, save her, *save her!*

Mrs. Fairmount. (Approaches the kneeler quickly, and raises her up.) I am your brother's wife. Believe me—everything will be done to recover your child. I know that God will protect her. Come, Sister—leave these gentlemen to deliberate, and they will soon find means to help you. (Mr. and Mrs. Fairmount, place each an arm around the sister, and retire.)

Fairmount. Yes, Sister! Not a stone will be left unturned.
Exeunt.

Standish. (Excitedly.) Come, gentlemen! There is not a moment to lose! Officer! The lady who is missing is *my* cousin! If money will find her, you will have your share of it! That boy I must now see! (Placing his hand to his brow.) There is a mysterious link in my mind, connecting this prisoner with my cousin! How it is, I cannot explain! I must see the prisoner! I must see the prisoner! (Mr. Fairmount has returned hurriedly.) Come, Uncle, to the jail! God save my cousin! (They hurry out after him.)

Curtain.

ACT IV.

SCENE 1. *Prison scene represented.*

Captain. (Speaks to turnkey.) Has Officer Dick returned yet from Mr. Fairmounts?

Turnkey. No, sir! I reckon he can't make anything out of the case. Anything about the missing girl, Captain?

Capt. No, not yet! It's going to be another difficult case

to follow up. The reward offered is good, but where's the clue?

Turnkey. The poor mother is pretty nigh run crazy!

Capt. Yes—it's a hard case to lose a girl in that way. Even if she is found, what a wreck will be left of her! If she was my child, I would wish her dead! (Enter Officer Dick, followed by Standish, Mr. Fairmount and Squires.)

Officer Dick. Captain, these gentlemen have come with me to see the prisoner I locked up here t'other night!

Capt. I have no objections. Get the prisoner. (Turnkey exit.) There isn't much to be made out of the lad, sir!

Standish. The attempted burglary is past our consideration. We come for another purpose. Mr. Fairmount has no desire to prosecute the boy, but I have associated him, in my mind, with the disappearance of the young lady. I may as well tell you, Captain, that she is a near relative of mine, and we have determined to find her, *dead or alive!*

Capt. I understand. You think you may get a clue by seeing the prisoner. I will be only too glad, gentlemen, to assist you. I regard this as a most mysterious affair.

Fairmount. Yes, it is a dark and mysterious affair, and if money will serve to unravel it, it will be spent liberally. I hope, sir, that you will render us all the assistance in your power. (Enter turnkey with Sam. An iron gate is represented in the rear of the stage, through which the prisoner has issued, and the clanging of a heavy chain is heard as the gate is opened.)

Standish. Boy! I have seen you before! Where was it? (Standish appears confused, and Sam frightened.) Where was it I saw this creature? It is yet fresh in my memory! Uncle! I saw him not long ago. I am sure it is within the past few days. Let me think! Ah, yes, I have it now. It was in the park! Yes—in the park, the very night I thought I saw Kate there. It is he! We have a clue! (All seem interested, and Standish appears agitated. He takes out his purse, and offers Sam some silver.) Here is some money for you. Take it, and do not be afraid. We will not harm you. If you answer my questions I will get you out of here, and give you some good clothes. (Sam takes the money, but looks as if he would run away.) Now, tell me—Do you know me? Have you ever seen me before?

Sam. (Looks inquisitively.) Yes—

Standish. (Joyfully.) I thought so! I am right! Where did you see me? Where did you see me? (Sam looks scared.) Don't be scared, boy—I am your friend! There is some more money for you. Now, tell me where you saw me?.

Sam. (Looks around suspiciously.) Park—

Standish. (Eagerly.) Did you see any one else there that night? Did you see a lady there, just before you saw me?

Sam. Yes— (In a whisper.)

Standish. We are coming to it. Now boy—who did she speak to? (Sam shivers all over, and looks terrified.) Tell us! No one will harm you. Was it a man?

Sam. Yes— (He begins to whimper.)

Standish. (Much agitated.) Do you know him? Can you find him?

Sam. (Moves uneasily about.) Le'me go! Le'me go!

Standish. Gentlemen, our clue is here! The prisoner is laboring under some great fear of this unknown, and it is time wasted, to dally with him any longer. There is no question in my mind, that the man who spoke—to her—in the park— (he seems choked while speaking the words,) knows where she is. The prisoner here knows him; but, if coerced to speak, might lead us astray. What can you suggest, Captain! For God's sake, use your skill here. I am almost hopeless. (Standish appears disconsolate. Sits down on a bench, and buries his face in his hands.)

Capt. Do not despair, sir! I am more hopeful than ever. I believe, like you, that the prisoner knows the man, but is afraid to tell us more. You were right in your conjecture, and your identification of the boy has afforded me a valuable point to work upon. My plan of action is made up. We have nothing more to do, than to trace him up to his lair: (pointing to Sam,) and if the puzzle is not solved at once, I am greatly mistaken. (He gets ready to go out.)

Standish. (Despairingly.) Lose no time, sir. Let no expense or trouble deter you from carrying out your purpose! The lady is dearer to me than life—but if any harm has befallen her, better we should find—her—dead—than alive. I will remain here—until I hear from you. (He appears disconsolate.)

Capt. Very well, sir. In less than an hour, I hope to be able to send for you. Officer Dick, take charge of the prisoner, and follow me! Exeunt.

(Standish, Mr. Fairmount and Squires are left with the turnkey. Mr. Fairmount and Squires go to the iron gate with the turnkey, who opens it for their inspection.)

Standish. (Aside.) Yes, it was she I saw that night in the park! But, why was she there? Could it have been a voluntary flight? Oh no, no, no! It cannot be! My Kate is too pure, too innocent to have thus fallen. She has been the victim of a most foul plot (fiercely,) and I do wrong to harbor a single doubtful thought against her. Uncle! (Mr. Fairmount approaches him.) You can be of no further use here. You had better return home, and tell Mrs. Thornhill what we have done. Tell her there is hope, and that I will not give up the chase until our Kate is found!

Fairmount. Yes, I will go back to my sister, with your words, James, to soothe her bruised heart! My fortune is offered as a ransom for my niece. How strange it is, Squires, that you were about to introduce her to me as a stranger! Poor girl! God help her!

Squires. Yes, I say, God help her, and—amen!

(Mr. Fairmount goes and turnkey disappears.)

Be patient, Mr. Standish! All will turn out well yet! That boy's confession has given us a clue that is bound to be fruitful in the end, and Kate's innocence and virtue will surely be her safeguard.

Standish. The latter part of your speech I cannot doubt, if brutal force has not worked her ruin. How thankful I am that I should have gone through the park that night! But for that circumstance, all would be lost!

Squires. It was providential! But, even more so—that you should have seen the boy—and identified him here!

Standish. Yes, I take it so.

Squires. But, how came it Mrs. Thornhill sought you at her brother's house, unconscious, as she was, of his identity?

Standish. By mere chance. She called first at my place of business, and was directed to go to my uncle's house, without knowing who he was. During my short acquaintance with Kate and her mother, we had not as yet exchanged

our family histories—therefore, we remained, until now, in perfect ignorance of each other's identity. Had you not sent Kate to me in the first instance, we would have never known of this relationship.

Squires. These are wonderful happenings! Stranger things, I do not think, ever happen in this life!

Officer Dick. (Enters precipitately.) Hurrah! We are on the track! The boy is identified, and is well known by the harbor police! He inhabits a place—a low groggery—kept by a fellow who is now under suspicion by the police. We have surrounded the place to prevent any one escaping. The Captain has sent for you. Come on, sir, if you want to join in the sport!

Standish. (Excitedly.) Yes, by heavens, I will go and be the first in the fray! Come on, officer! to the rescue! (He rushes wildly out, followed by the officer. Squires looks disconsolate.)

Squires. Well done! He went like a streak of lightning! I was not invited to the dance, but dog blast him if I don't go too! *To the rescue!* Exit.

NOTE—Folds are quickly drawn together, to represent a street, and to prepare for change of scenery in rear.

(Mrs. Thornhill comes on the scene from one side of the stage, and is met by Mr. Squires, coming from the other side hurriedly.)

Squires. Good gracious, Mrs. Thornhill! Is it you? We have good news, dear madam. The police are on the track; and I feel certain we will have our Kate with us, in a short while.

Mrs. Thornhill. (Apparently very much agitated.) Thank God for what you tell me, sir! I could not remain quiet, while the search was going on—and I rushed from my brother's house, I knew not whither—

Squires. Come with me then. We are just in time. I know you are brave, and your presence will add fresh energy to the efforts of your friends. See! There they go—I have not lost sight of them for one moment. We have but to follow in their tracks. (Pointing in a certain direction. They disappear quickly together.)—Exeunt.

NOTE—Scene changes. The folds open again.

SCENE 2. The den. *Hanly and Crookshanks in conference.*

Hanly. Well—I've kept my word with you. What are you going to do for me, now! (He drinks from a bottle.)

Crookshanks. Do for yer? The devil take yer anyhow, for yer imperdence! Haven't yer got bread and meat, and drink too?

Hanly. Do you call *that* pay for the prize I've given you? Look at my clothes. Don't you think I need a new suit? (Drinks.)

Crookshanks. To hell with yer and yer clothes! I'm not yer tailor!

Hanly. No—but I want some money! You made all by the bargain with me. I've got nothing, and I mean to have something! I mean to be paid for my services, and no fooling about it. Do you hear, Crook? (Drinks.)

Crookshanks. I say! I want no quarrel with yer. There's trouble enough around us here. Ever since the damned fizzle the other night I've shut the place up, and not a nickle has come to me. Yer had yer feed all the same, and the devil take me if I know what yer mean by such talk! Aint yer satisfied wid yer hiding place?

Hanly. No! I want to leave the place. I want to quit the town.

Crookshanks. Well—find yer way out. I've done enough for yer.

Hanly. (Rising from his seat ferociously.) No you haven't! If you don't give me the money I ask for, I'll turn the girl loose!

Crookshanks. No yer won't! Yer das'nt do it for the police.

Hanly. I say, Crookshanks! My blood is up. Don't banter me any more. By heavens, you've got to give me money, or I'll take the girl myself! Do you hear that?

Crookshanks. Yer will not. She's my property, and afore you do that, I'll turn her loose myself, and turn states evidence besides. Do *yer* hear that?

Hanly. (Takes another long drink—looks at Crookshanks ferociously, and examines the doors, to see if they are fastened.) Will you give me some money, Crook? I will not ask it again. (He sits down while speaking, and concealed by the table, draws a knife with a long blade.)

Crookshanks. Yer drunk! Go to bed and sleep it off, and I'll talk to yer later! (*Crookshanks turns his back for a moment towards the counter, and Hanly springs upon him and drags him to the floor. Placing his knees upon his breast, he raises the knife, as if about to strike, clutching him also by the throat.*) Help—help!— Mercy!

Hanly. Now you vagabond, I've got you where you wanted to get me! You wanted me to go to sleep—for what?

Crookshanks. (*Tries to get up, and chokes under Hanly's powerful grip.*) Help, help! (*Inaudibly.*) Murder!

Hanly. Take that, you scoundrel! (*He plunges the knife into his body, and holding him down for a moment, loosens his grip and rises to his feet, looking down at the murdered man. Crookshanks tries to raise himself, and falls with a groan. A moment after Hanly wipes the knife on the dead man's clothes, and returns it to his pocket.*) Now lie, (*hic*) I'll look for booty next—and (*hic*) for beauty—afterwards—(*hic.*) (*Staggering, he opens an inside door and disappears.*)

NOTE—Scene changes. The folds are closed, to enable shifting of scenery in rear. *A street is represented.* Dilapidated front of house.

Capt. (*Speaks to Standish.*) This is the house, sir. It appears to be securely closed. But, I have it from the inmates of the house beyond, that there are people in there. We shall first knock for admittance, and if not answered, the only remedy left is to force an entrance.

Standish. Certainly— Let us proceed at once. (*Standish knocks, and the Captain knocks, Officer Dick standing near them.*)

Capt. There is no answer. Officer Dick, break the lock! (*The lock is broken and the door thrown open. They enter. A voice is heard—"There has been murder here."* Folds open—scene changes.)

SCENE 3. *Kate alone in a room, with a bed, table and chair.*

Kate. (*In tears.*) Oh, God—why am I kept here? Why am I held a prisoner in this house? What have I done to deserve such a fate? Will no one come to rescue me? For my poor brother's sake, whose name *he* bore, I trusted him, and was beguiled to this place! Oh, why did I not confide in my mother, before taking this fatal step? Two days have

passed away, and have seemed a life-time to me! Oh God have *pity* on me! (Having seated herself, she drops her head upon the table and is still for a moment. She suddenly rises to her feet, and seems like one mad.) Will he try to do me harm? (In a whisper.) It is—(Kate shivers,) for that I am shut up, and I—understand! I must not sleep—I cannot sleep! (She looks terrified.) I will walk the floor until I fall—to rise—no more! (Choking with emotion.) It is wrong to wish for death—yes, I know it is sinful—but, (falling on her knees, with her back to the door,) my God! take me quickly from this life—if—they—be—cruel—to me! (She is praying silently, with eyes heavenward, when the door is opened noiselessly, and Hanly appears. He makes a few steps forward, and seems afraid of the kneeling figure. Suddenly Kate is aroused, and seeing him, is startled.) Oh, sir! Have pity on me!

Hanly. I see your food is untasted! Why haven't you eaten? (Looking at the bed.) And not slept either!

Kate. Oh, sir! I can neither eat nor sleep, if I am kept here! (He makes a step towards her.) Do not touch me, unless you wish to kill me!! Let me go hence! I have never done you harm! I came here, as I thought, to— I came to do an honest act—— Mr. Hanly, I had a brother once, who left his home, never to return. His name was Jack Hanly too—I thought you might be him, who is lost to me—and I wished to be kind to you! (Prayerfully.)

Hanly. (Desperately.) If you were my sister, I would kill myself for bringing you here— I have no mother or sister. I am alone in the world!

Kate. But, you may some day, have a wife—a daughter too, who may need protection, as I do now. For her sake, save me, and God will bless you in this life!

Hanly. If I unbar this door and set you free, will you fly with me? (He moves towards her.)

Kate. (Shrinking back.) Oh, sir, do not ask me that! I could not love you as you wish! My heart is given to another! But, I will be your friend, as I have always been! I will be your sister, if you will call me so!

Hanly. (Impatiently.) That's all folly! I want something else!

Kate. (Deprecatingly.) I will give you all my earnings, all my savings, if it is money you want!

Hanly. I want neither your money nor your jewels! I want— (He looks at her meaningly.) Will you fly with me?

Kate. (Piteously.) Oh, no, no, no! For God's sake, for pity sake, let me go! I am a poor, defenceless girl, crying to you for mercy—for that mercy which you will expect from heaven some day! (Kneeling.)

Hanly. (Roughly.) Be quiet! (He puts his hand into his pocket, and nervously jerks it out, and in doing so drops his knife. It falls near Kate. She seizes upon it, and rising to her feet, opens the glittering blade.) Give me that knife!

Kate. (Has retreated backward to the wall. Her hair has fallen down over her shoulders, and fire darts from her eyes.) (Hoarsely.) Never! Keep your distance, sir! If you attempt to take it from me, I will plunge it into my heart! I know I cannot fight you—but God has given me this knife as a means of escape from your power! You have basely deceived me, and *I will defend myself!!*

Hanly. (For a moment is amazed. He looks at her hard, as if to devine her thoughts. She remains immovable and defiant, looking at him fixedly.) (Aside.) Damn it! I believe she would! (At that moment, a great noise is heard in the house. Hanly springs to the door and fastens it. He appears alarmed, and listens—Kate is listening too. (Aside.) What can it be? It sounds like the breaking of a door! Have I been tracked to this place? Well—I have still a weapon to defend myself. (He takes out his pistol from his pocket.) It is well loaded, and will kill! (With a demoniac laugh.) They have discovered the dead man, and I will swing!—No! Never! I will not be taken alive! (At that moment, a heavy knock is heard at the door of the chamber—and a voice is heard—“Open the door.”— Hanly retreats to the opposite side of the room, in a corner, and in passing Kate, threatens her with his weapon.) If you make a noise, I will send a bullet through your head! (Her eyes are fixed upon the door. It is shaken hard, and the voice is heard again—“Open the door, or it will be forced in.”— Kate looks eager. Hanly is defiant, and all is still— Suddenly, the door is given a heavy blow, and is thrown open. Standish, followed by the Captain, Officer Dick, Squires and

Mrs. Thornhill rush in. The men are staggered at seeing a pistol levelled at them. The mother looks quickly towards her daughter, and then at Hanly.)

Mrs. Thornhill. (In an agonizing voice.) Oh, God! What do I see? Kate, my daughter! Oh, Jack! *It is your sister!* (She falls on her knees, and covers her face with her hands. Hanly looks aghast, and lowers his weapon.)

Kate. (Despairingly.) Mother! I am innocent! (Turning beseechingly towards Standish.) Oh, James! Do you not believe me? See! This knife! It would have weltered in my blood, ere dishonor had overtaken me! (She staggers, as if about to swoon, and Standish catches her in his arms.)

Standish. Kate! I do believe you! (While holding Kate, he orders the arrest of Hanly.) Officer, do your duty! (The officers make a forward movement—but again are stopped by Hanly's pistol.)

Hanly. Stop, where you are! and hear me! You are here to arrest me, on what charge?

Capt. On the charge of murder, and kidnapping! I demand your surrender! There is no escape!

Hanly. A prison life, perhaps the gallows, is to be my portion! I *will not* have it so! Mother—I believed you dead! *She*, I have never known as a sister! I am hated and despised, and hunted like a beast! Life has no charms for me! To live with shackles on my limbs—never again to see the light of day! No! I *will not* have it so! To you, I have always been lost; and to the world, I will forever be lost! Mother! Sister! Farewell! Officers! (with a demoniac laugh.) *Do your duty!* (Raising the weapon to his head, he fires, and staggering forward, falls at his mother's feet.)

Mrs. Thornhill. (Screams.) My son—my son! (Bending over him.) Lost! Lost! (Tableau.) Curtain.



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