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SWORDS DRAWN

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A Romantic Play

IN FOUR ACTS

BY

J. M. EDGAR HART



THE CORNHILL COMPANY
BOSTON

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DEDICATED TO
THE MASTER MIND, MR. DAVID BELASCO
WHOSE DRAMATIC PUPIL I EVER HOPE
TO REMAIN

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Dear Mr. Hart:

Mr. Roeder has given me
your letter asking if you may
dedicate your book to me.

Of course, I shall be proud
and grateful with best wishes.

Dec. 11th 1848. Faithfully,
David Belasco.

ACT I

SWORDS DRAWN

ACT I

Monday, December 3rd, 1688.

Before Curtain Rise, MADAME SANTONI is heard singing in the drawing-room off Right to the accompaniment of a harpsichord, cello, a harp, flute and violin, the following couplet of a song. (Music to the words has been written in order to secure the desired effect.)

SIGNORA SANTONI (*singing*):

“Lover of flowers, of bosk and glade,
Wandering through a dusky vale;
Where the trees thickest o’er-hung the brook,
Just as the day waned into night
And shadows crept apace —
There sought I to linger, muse and dream —
Lo! from the mist that steeped the mountain side,
Rose an angel, sylph-like form,
As on church naves abide.
And as mortals do saints revere:
Adore and dare not speak —
So lisp’d I the pray’r —
That spirits ’lone hear. . . .

Madame Santoni sustains the high last note of the couplet, then follows the applause of the guests, and as the musicians play the prelude of the refrain, the CURTAIN slowly rises.

Throughout the act, except when there is singing or some special musical number, there should be heard faintly a constant hum of voices, as of a room full of guests.

DISCOVERED: SIR ANTHONY LOVELACE and SIR RICHARD DIGWIG. *Sir Anthony is a sentimentalist; he is thin and has the countenance of a poet. He is about fifty years of age. Sir Richard is the very opposite; short, portly and his face is ruddy and fat. Sir Anthony is seated Right of the chess table Center, his elbow on the table, his chin in the palm of his hand, his eyes raised to the ceiling, dreamily listening to the song, — oblivious of the game of chess before him. Sir Richard stands across the room from him, Left 2, his back to the fire-place, his feet wide-spread, his hands clasped behind, observing his sentimental friend with a broad smile.*

As the curtain rises, Signora Santoni sings the refrain:

“I dream I press thee — goddess sweet!
 Thou yielding in my arms,
 Thy heart and halting lips
 Meshed 'tween a kiss and kiss —

Sir Anthony closes his eyes in rapturous ecstasy and sighs softly: the smile expands on Sir Richard's face. He chuckles softly to himself.

Uninterruptedly, the song continues:

“I dream thou lovest me —
 I dream — yet am awake!
 I dream of love —
 I want your love. . . .
 To dream for aye and e'er. . . .
 To dream — to dream —”

The voice of the singer ends, as it were, in a sigh — the soft strains of the instruments continue for a bar or two

longer; *Sir Anthony, his eyes still closed, retains the same attitude. Follows loud applause of the guests.*

SIR RICHARD (*immediately after the guests applaud, with heel of his shoe kicking the fire-tongs, causing a rattling sound that startles Sir Anthony out of his reverie*): Pray come to earth, Sir Dreamer! and play!

SIR ANTHONY (*sighing with regret as he lowers his head to study the game*): Ah, a beautiful song, Sir Richard — stirring m' soul till I felt five-and-twenty again.

SIR RICHARD: Egad! (*With a chuckle*) Your memory should be better informed.

SIR ANTHONY (*studying the game, shaking his head dolefully*): Ah, sadly so — sadly so — (*He moves a pawn.*) (*Music of the instruments off Right.*)

SIR RICHARD (*approaching the table and replacing the pawn*): Cannot you tell black from white, Sir Anthony?

SIR ANTHONY (*with profuse apology*): In truth — in truth! (*He studies the game an instant, then suddenly looking up, with a suave expression*) I fear this music has distracted me — What say you to postponing the game till later?

SIR RICHARD: 'T were better so if you are still under the spell. (*Shoves chair up to table and circling about chess table, he fills himself a goblet of wine.*)

SIR ANTHONY (*rising and also filling himself a goblet of wine*): Ah, a beautiful song, Sir Richard, is "Love's Mastery" —

SIR RICHARD: Ha! (*Exclamation of laughter.*) A man at your age should have done with love. (*Grimaces the word*) Bah! (*Drinks.*)

SIR ANTHONY: Not till I have done with life! (*Raising his goblet and becoming declamatory — drawling sadly upon the interjection "Oh"*):

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“Oh — let me *live* and let me *love!*
 And with the joys of living, blend —
 The joys of loving to the end!”

SIR RICHARD (*laughing*): Egad! — You recite poetry as some sing at a funeral!

(*He raises his goblet to him*): Here's to your own end then; so you may grow wings — (*flops his arms*) and flop everlastingly with the angels to your soul's content. (*He chuckles and drinks.*)

SIR ANTHONY: Not so fast — merely five-and-fifty, and my friends assure me I am still well preserved.

SIR RICHARD: Aye! as a herring: dry, short and lean —

SIR ANTHONY (*with conciliatory smile*): A disrespectful simile that my friends would resent.

SIR RICHARD: *Not* if my table supplied them with better wine.

SIR ANTHONY: Sir Richard is welcome to my entire cellar, if it will make him as kind.

SIR RICHARD: Ha! If I partook of your cellar, I should then be inebriated and, like the rest, not be accountable for what I said.

SIR ANTHONY: 'Twere better so than being sober and so unkind —

SIR RICHARD: 'Twere better so to make you think yourself otherwise than ye are!

(*He takes his arm and tries to make his meaning clear*)
 Ye see, Sir Anthony, the devil of sentiment lurks in every bottle, and *then* man is apt to prove as consummate a liar as the spirit he takes in.

(*Enter LADY RUSSMORE (ALICE) from Left 3 E.*)

(*Lady Russmore (Alice) is the embodiment of perfect, gentle, lovable womanhood. Sometimes, even when happiest — the tears spring to her eyes. The heart predominates*

in her. She is about twenty-five years of age. At the onset of the play she is in a buoyant, happy frame of mind — until apprized of her brother's return. (The moment she enters Left 3 E, Sir Anthony's eyes fall upon her. He abruptly leaves his friend's arm and gallantly goes to her.)

SIR ANTHONY: Ah — Lady Russmore!

(Lady Russmore extends him her left hand in greeting.)

LADY RUSSMORE: Sir Anthony — *(extending her other hand to Sir Richard)* and Sir Richard —

SIR ANTHONY *(bending low over her hand)*: Your ladyship—

SIR RICHARD *(as he takes her other hand)*: We rejoice at seeing your ladyship.

SIR ANTHONY *(taking the words from his friend's lips)*: — and in such excellent spirits and health.

ALICE *(with smiling acknowledgment)*: But how fares it with you, gentlemen?

SIR ANTHONY: Oh, excellently with me — but *ill* with Sir Richard.

SIR RICHARD: Egad! the *ill* is in his throat — *not* in my anatomy. — I'm in the pink of health!

ALICE: In truth — I notice you have a good color.

SIR ANTHONY *(laughing at the dig which his friend got)*: Oo-oo! He! — He! —

LADY RUSSMORE: I am in search of Miss Scarsdale. Have either of you seen her?

SIR RICHARD: I much regret —

SIR ANTHONY *(again taking the words away from him)*: Er — I perceived her — strolling out into the park — *(points U. L. C. E.)* more than half an hour ago.

SIR RICHARD: Ha! — Depend upon Sir Anthony Lovelace never failing to see a pretty girl pass.

ALICE: 'Tis a sure proof his eyes are still young, Sir Richard.

SIR ANTHONY (*laughing again at this fresh sally*): Oo-oo!
He! — He! —

LADY RUSSMORE: But I am digressing. Lord Russmore has been discussing politics ever since we arrived — Shall I claim your escort to find Miss Scarsdale or her mother?

Delighted!	SIR ANTHONY	}	(<i>Simultaneously</i>)
Honored:	SIR RICHARD		

(From their respective places both had turned half way about and now stood on either side of her, each one offering his arm to her — but Sir A., holding his out curved more conspicuously than Sir R., in the attitude of comic French gallantry.)

ALICE (*laughing*): Really, gentlemen — your spontaneity gives me much embarrassment. Think you not 't were very comic to appear thus doubly attended?

SIR ANTHONY (*maintaining the same attitude of body*): I pray Lady Russmore notice that *my* arm is the proper one to accept — being undeniably the *right* one.

SIR RICHARD: I' faith — Lady Russmore — if the justice of his argument is in that arm: methinks 'tis too *crooked* to be trusted. (*Alludes to the manner in which Sir Anthony holds out his right arm, loop-fashion to her.*)

SIR ANTHONY (*drawing erect*): 'T is much less *bent* upon mischief than your too ready speech!

ALICE: Oh, pray let me not remain and cause dissension between you. (*Turning at exit Right 3*) Adieu! —

(Exit Alice Right 3 E.)

SIR ANTHONY (*shifting his eyes from Sir Richard who is laughing at him — starting after her*): Lady Russmore! — I protest of this little fat man!

(Exit Right 3 E.)

SIR RICHARD (*starting after his friend*): What now? You thin-edge-keg-waddle-whoop? (*Exit Right 3 E.*)

(*A slight pause, during which the music off Right is heard. Suddenly the door U. L. C. slowly opens. This door opens directly on the park; a path and shrubberies beyond its threshold. JOSEPHINE SCARSDALE cautiously enters; following her to the threshold, appears LUCY. Lucy, Miss Scarsdale's tiring maid, stops barely inside the door, awaiting her mistress' instructions. Josephine Scarsdale is about nineteen or twenty years of age, fair, intellectual looking, sympathetic and pretty. Lucy, her maid, is about sixteen or seventeen. She is very frail; one of those natures whose devotion and desire to serve seem to be a cause for lack of physical strength.*)

(*When Josephine has assured herself that the room is deserted, after glancing at the clock, right of the park door, she steps again toward Lucy.*)

JOSEPHINE: Now return to your post quickly. You remember his description? When he comes, give him the pass word "Elves do I seek." — He will trust you. Show him the way — but mind: He must not come in until I am alone in this room — must remain in hiding until I, myself, open to him this door.

LUCY: Yes, miss. (*She turns to go.*)

JOSEPHINE: And — er, Lucy. Afterwards (*Xing to Left 3 she drops the portiere, masking the door completely*) guard this door: Maman will look after the other — (*she points to Right 3*) the moment she sees me drop the curtain.

LUCY: Yes, Miss.

(*Exit Lucy into the park, closing the door.*)

(*Josephine steps to the entrance of the conservatory U. C. and drops the two curtains, masking the entrance completely. Then she comes down to the settee Right C., and, after*

depositing the silk scarf around her shoulders upon the back of it, she sits.)

JOSEPHINE (*glancing at the clock again before sitting down*):
Ten o'clock: In half an hour now! — My very heart misgives me. (*Taking a folded letter from the bosom of her dress, she starts to read.*)

“Dear Josephine: — Convinced that I can ask any service from you, I shall present myself at your house this evening. I fully realize that were anyone among your guests to discover my presence, immediate arrest would follow. But if you and Lady Scarsdale will help me, I am confident I can deceive them all. Note brief instructions and let Peter bring me your answer.”

(Her eyes wander down the page and over on the other side, murmuring rapidly the contents to herself. Lastly, she raises her voice sufficiently to be understood, saying):

“Expect me promptly at ten-thirty o'clock.”

(She begins to fold the letter.) I wonder if Alice has yet arrived?

(As she is on the point of rising to go and ascertain, enters Alice Right 3 E.)

Oh, Alice. — *(She goes to her and they kiss each other.)*

I was on the point of looking for you.

ALICE (*Lady Russmore*): And I have been searching the house for you, everywhere, dear.

JOSEPHINE (*coming down to the settee with her*): Have you been here long?

ALICE: Nearly half an hour I should judge.

JOSEPHINE: I'm sorry — I had something very urgent to attend to — but you've seen maman and of course she's told you.

ALICE: Lady Scarsdale said that you had a surprise in store for me.

JOSEPHINE (*Rising and stepping up stage, dropping the heavy curtain before the window's recess U. R.*): One moment — and we will speak of that. (*Coming back, while Alice goes toward the chess table and idly examines the game.*) Is your husband here?

ALICE: I left him in the library arguing politics with His Grace the Bishop Orsini — I have grown so weary of hearing politics discussed that I have positively come to yearn for a bal-masque of some sort — if only to forget for a single hour that there is such a thing as a war going on at present.

JOSEPHINE (*seated on settee Right C.*): Then you've — you've likewise ceased to concern yourself with your brother's possible return to England?

ALICE: Oh, altogether! (*She returns to the settee slowly.*) And I meant to tell you: I received a letter from him this week — brought over from Holland: saying that to his utter disappointment William of Orange had detailed him, almost at the last hour, on a mission to France — thus preventing his coming over to England with the army of invasion.

JOSEPHINE (*puzzled*): You received such a letter?

ALICE: Why, yes; why do you doubt it? (*Mistaking the look on Josephine's face for one of disappointment*) Because it disappoints you? Ah, to me — 't was infinite relief. I should have been in prey to constant anxiety. Remember that my husband is devoted to the King; Milton serves William of Orange. As such they are bitter foes. Even Lord Russmore remarked upon my sudden change of spirits that day. — You know he has never met Milton and knows little about his life abroad; somehow, to safeguard him, lest he might return, I've always kept Lord Russmore in ignorance of everything concerning him.

JOSEPHINE (*anxiously reflecting*): But, still, in the event of his having risked to come back — what should have been your own attitude toward him?

ALICE: He is my brother — this means part of self. — I hope that my husband should not have judged me too harshly then for protecting a life as dear to me as his own. (*Josephine rises and Xes Left, ponderingly.*)

JOSEPHINE: I see —

ALICE: Do you know that it nearly broke my heart, seven years ago, when we parted in Holland? I was leaving him alone in exile. . . . to return here and wed Lord Russmore. To my brother I owed years of devotion, of care, of protection; ever since we had gone forth into exile; to Lord Russmore I owed my recall from banishment: During our short acquaintance in Paris I had learned to love him. I hesitated between two loves. Each laying claim to me. Brooding over this, I grew ill. One day a letter came from Hugo; Milton learned my secret. He insisted I should accept Lord Russmore; and if there was *an-y-thing* which could possible have endeared him still more to me — it was the very unselfishness which he displayed then!

(*Suddenly, impulsively dispelling the mood; becoming cheerful again and rising*) But there, dear, we shall be talking politics next, again! Everlasting conflicts and politics! Let us discuss something else — or seek fresh diversion in the drawing room —

JOSEPHINE (*detaining her hands*): One moment, Alice. You forget maman said I had something to tell you — (*She goes and resumes her seat.*)

(*MUSIC STOPS in the drawing room off Right.*)

ALICE: Oh, yes; the surprise! (*She goes to the settee and sits.*) How unlike a woman to forget. (*She laughs, then eagerly*) What is it?

JOSEPHINE (*with seriousness, looking at her fixedly*): Why — I don't know now as I should tell you —
 (*Alice draws back with an "Oh!" of playful disappointment*) — only — only that the person who sent me this, (*touches letter hid in the bosom of her dress*) absolutely insists — and because I trust him —

ALICE (*arching her brows, smiling*): Oh! there's a *him* in the surprise.

JOSEPHINE (*reflecting — ceasing to look at her*): Suppose that the letter which came from Holland this week should purposely have been written to mislead you and Lord Russmore, as the case might be — into believing Milton still in foreign land?

ALICE (*a look of apprehension coming to her face*): You mean — ?

JOSEPHINE: That your brother is very shrewd and very cautious —

(*Alice is about to speak — Josephine pursues.*)

Had I known that you dreaded his return to such an extent, I should not have invited you here tonight; but now, since you *are* here — I've enough to frighten me as 't is — you *must* be put on your guard —

ALICE (*rising*): Then he — ?

JOSEPHINE (*likewise rising*): Yes! — Milton is in England, and he is coming here tonight! . . .

ALICE (*realizing her worst fears, carrying her hands up to her temples, as if stunned, she murmurs with despair*):
 Oh — my God! . . .

JOSEPHINE (*herself deeply affected*): Oh — Alice — don't! —
 (*Alice, right of the chess table, sinks into a chair, weeping quietly.*)

(*After a pause.*)

I did not wish to consent to his coming either — But *maman*, who hates the King — overruled all my fears. *Now* I'm even more afraid than you are.

ALICE: Oh, but why did you not send for me and consult me first? —

JOSEPHINE: I know — I should have done that — But I didn't think — He's coming here incognito to seize information regarding the movements of the King's troops tomorrow;

(Alice raises her head and glares at Josephine.)

This means Milton should soon be free again — and also wanting to see him — I easily yielded —

ALICE *(rising)*: To seize information. . . . And here you let him come — here! surrounded by enemies! under the very eyes of my husband, — where I must watch over myself —

JOSEPHINE: You mean that I should have refused?

ALICE *(vehement)*: By all available means, yes! Oh, but it is not too late! No, Josephine, you *must* disobey your mother! . . . you cannot — you must *not* receive him here this night! On no account! Why, it is, as it were, as if I pleaded for his life from you: It could have but one result? — here in a house full of Loyalists! Supposing he were detected; could you bear to think yourself in a measure responsible? No! — It must not be! If you truly love him, you cannot permit this mad venture of his! — It is preposterous! . . .

JOSEPHINE *(deeply impressed — her head averted)*: You are right. . . . I felt it was perhaps wrong. . . . *(Facing Alice, with resolve)* I will disobey maman!

ALICE: Oh, thank you! thank you!

JOSEPHINE: He will come at half past ten: I was to admit him through that door — *(points to U. L. C. E.)*

ALICE: We must then arrange a way to anticipate his coming.

JOSEPHINE: Lucy is out at the gate, waiting for him to come. John can take a note out to her. She'll deliver it. *(She goes to desk cabinet Right 2.)*

ALICE: Exactly! and, tomorrow, I'll send a courier to the Prince begging him curb his prowess, or else send him back to Holland —

JOSEPHINE: Back to Holland?

ALICE (*coming to her and placing her arms about her*): Ah, dearie — Some day you will thank me for having preserved his life for you — I beseech you, dear, write at once.

JOSEPHINE: Very well — (*sits*). Tell John to come to me.

ALICE: (*she first kisses her, and then, starting off toward Left 3*): Immediately. . . .

(*She exits rapidly, drying her eyes and endeavoring to compose herself, lest she encounter anyone.*)

JOSEPHINE (*after a moment of hesitation — sighing, also composing herself, begins to write*): “At the — very last — moment — I find it — necessary — to —
(*Enter ROBERT COURTNEY Right 3 E.*)

(*Robert Courtney is a man of about thirty years of age. He is dressed in the newest and richest fashion, withal he has the deportment, carriage and manner of a court fop. In build he is tall and lanky. His hair is red, and his cold, blue eyes are fringed with the lightest-colored lashes, giving them the appearance of possessing none — to his eyes of being beady, and to his eyelids of being swollen.*)

ROBERT (*seeing Josephine the instant he enters, merely glancing at her as he passes and proceeds down*): Ah — discovered at last, m' fair cousin. (*He proceeds across the room, playing with the lace of his sleeve.*)

JOSEPHINE (*for an instant anxious about the letter which she is writing — not looking at him*): You wish to speak to me?

ROBERT: Yes — (*Same bantering, smiling manner throughout. As he reaches the arm-chair Left C., sitting on the*

arm, facing her.) What think you — er . . . of my friend? (*The smile is inviting.*)

JOSEPHINE (*resuming her message*): Whom — Lord Middleton?

ROBERT: Yes.

JOSEPHINE: Why — a very pleasant sort of person — it seems.

ROBERT: *Seems, eh? — only seems?* (*The smile is ever more so inviting.*)

JOSEPHINE (*without pausing in her writing*): What would you have me say? — Gush at first acquaintance?

ROBERT (*rising*): Heaven forbid!

(*Advances leisurely across stage.*) I feared lest you found him *too* pleasant. (*A few steps below her, playfully folding his arms.*) Mark! I will let no man rob me of thee! (*His playfulness has the tone of assurance.*)

JOSEPHINE (*looking at him*): Forsooth! — My cousin seems to have acquired a very indisputable claim.

ROBERT (*same play*): Through mine eyes: the day I first came to London and they first rested upon thee — Or, if thou wilt, — by right of love, if by no other — Because I love and desire thee, cousin!

JOSEPHINE (*raising her hands in the air in mock despair, turning her back to him and resuming her writing*): Heaven help the sex! if that decide every girl's fate.

ROBERT: It were a happy one, if all were as lovable as thou.

JOSEPHINE (*raising her left hand up, with a gesture of impatience*): Now, Robert, pray leave me alone and in peace to finish this letter. Besides, (*she turns suddenly and faces him*) I may as well tell you frankly that your protestations of love do not in the least deceive me. My dowry, you're aware, is considerable: one of the estates is half mine and one half yours; by marrying

me you would assume its title; as it is, you are only plain Robert Courtnay; ergo, what you covet is principally to acquire this title — not myself. You see, I'm not your dupe. (*Turning her back upon him*) I've been wishing for a long time to tell you I was not the simpleton you took me for.

ROBERT (*who has been listening to her smilingly, pretending not to take her seriously*): H'n! h'n! h'n! h'n! . . . (*Going down stage, heaving a deep sigh*) Thorny alas is the fairest rose: hence the more pains to pluck it. But a truce to jesting! Come — can you not delay this letter a while?

JOSEPHINE: I do not wish to.

ROBERT: I've promised Middleton to find you. Surely we owe the Secretary of State *some* consideration, by virtue of his exalted position?

JOSEPHINE (*stopping in the perusal of her message*): For my part, I deny having the slightest consideration either for his position or for him — which, by the way, is neither meant to encourage your own suit nor to please *you*!

ROBERT (*laughingly strolling toward Right 3*): I' faith! your roguish ways, cousin, have the sparkle of wine, which makes the gulp the more delectable. (*Then at door, sighing comically with regret, looking at her*) H'n — So be it — I'll report to Middleton. Will you come when you have a mind to?

JOSEPHINE (*paying no attention to him*): Yes.

ROBERT: I'll say you are presently engaged.

(*Josephine, rising with a sigh of weariness, does not answer him. She walks slowly toward the chair Right of chess table.*)

(*Robert pauses a second awaiting an answer, fidgets, sighs grimly, and exits softly laughing.*)

JOSEPHINE (*glancing over her shoulder and seeing that he is gone*): Thank heaven to be rid of him!

(*She returns to the desk to add something to the message in her hand.*)

(*MUSIC — Harp, flute, cello, violin — is started off Right, a sort of slow movement ballad.*)

(*Enter JOHN — a middle-aged valet, with a quiet mien and trustworthy countenance — from Left 3 E.*)

JOHN: You summoned me, Miss?

JOSEPHINE: Yes, John; — one moment. (*She starts to fold the message.*)

JOHN: Lady Russmore requested me to say that she would remain in the library until you came, Miss.

JOSEPHINE (*Going to him*): Very well. — I wish you to go to Lucy with this —

(*At that precise instant, the sharp noise, as of a ring tapping against a pane of glass in the conservatory is heard. Josephine turns in the direction of the sound without giving John the message. She starts toward the conservatory. The sound is repeated a second time. Josephine parts the curtains sufficiently to look through. Her back is turned to the servant. The instant she looks through the curtains she draws erect and catches her breath. Quickly commanding herself, she turns indifferently to the servant, coming down stage idly at the same time.*)

Why, it's Lucy in the conservatory after all. You may go, John.

JOHN: Yes, Miss. (*He starts for the exit Left 3.*)

JOSEPHINE (*Turning C., calls toward the conservatory*): Lucy —

(*Exit servant as she walks leisurely to Right C. The instant the servant has gone, she returns breathlessly toward the conservatory and parts the curtains sufficiently to look through.*)

Oh, it is he! waiting to be admitted! — What shall I do? Receive him? No. But I can't let him stay out there? If I should go out to him? — no, I couldn't trust myself: he'd convince me despite what Alice said — Oh, if she were only here to go to him herself. But no, she mightn't be as sensible as I am to talk to him. (*She returns to the curtains and gives another look.*) I must receive him — he'll understand better from me what risk he runs in remaining. Yes, that's better. Besides I shall have seen him. I can't help it, I *want* to see him.

(*After glancing off Left 3 E., she crosses the stage rapidly toward Right 3.*)

Just the same, he's so much ahead of time, if I break my word to Alice, it's his fault!

(*This is said as she glances at the clock on her way Right, then before dropping the curtain of Right 3, speaking to someone off stage in quick, excited, gladsome tones*) Yes, yes, maman — Don't come in too soon! — (*She proceeds toward the park door — after a cautious glance about the room, she swings the door U. L. C. open and steps back a little ways.*)

(*A few moments later, appears from off Right, coming to the threshold, SIR MILTON LANTENAY.*)

(*Sir Milton Lantenay is a young man of soldierly bearing. He is about twenty-seven years of age; his countenance denotes great frankness and intellect; strength and resolve combine there until it inspires perfect confidence. In contrast to his physical strength and bearing, his manner is gentle and kind. He is the sort of man who has learnt his lesson of life through his own experiences and suffering.*)

(*Closing the door, he comes down to her — who awaits him, and without a word takes her into his arms in a*

prolonged embrace — about them, all is still, except for the strains of music that float in from the drawing-room.)

MILTON (*Releasing her, holding her at arms' length — his voice intense with feeling — but prudently subdued.*)
 There — for prudence's sake let me rather look at you! Four years since we've seen each other! Think of it! — yet the same one whom I knew at the Hotel de Nevers in Paris — not in the least changed!

JOSEPHINE: But, taller, Milton.

MILTON: Yes; — and, possibly, still more beautiful! Ah, Josephine, how I have hungered for this! — Still, all the dreary years of separation seem as forgotten in the joy of seeing you again! . . . I was afraid, dear, lest Lady Scarsdale refuse to let me come this night!

JOSEPHINE (*stepping up to the park door and closing the little grill in the lattice, that has been open since the rise of the curtain*): Maman approves of it — but as to my sanction —

MILTON: I run not the least danger: Languenoc, who brought you my letter, awaits me with my men concealed about the park — Peter, too, outside the gate. At the least source of alarm, I'll depart; and once astride, I defy anyone to overtake me.

(Josephine meanwhile closes and locks the door — Left 3. This may be done before he enters. He takes her hands)

The world's a game of chance; to gain, one must risk: I shall be richer tonight!

JOSEPHINE (*looking at him; apprehensively*): Ah — tonight!

MILTON (*buoyant, optimistic*): Tonight, Josephine, is a rare occasion! I serve the Prince and behold you! In ten days from tonight, my word on it, William of Orange will be king of England.

JOSEPHINE: But James is as confident as you are of repulsing the Invader!

MILTON (*with cheerful assurance*): If I secure the wanted information this night, the pick of his army will be in William's hands tomorrow!

JOSEPHINE: But, still, as long as James is king, you risk losing your life: the very name you bear is hateful to him. Will it not mean the Block, if anyone discovers you are in England and you are caught?

MILTON: First of all it means *you* and welcome to my birth-land, if I live! and I *will* live for these! there never was fairer goal to spur man's intent! Ah, be as confident as I am! And, besides, mark! I was only a boy when banished; therefore recognition is impossible. I know no one: Not even the man who espoused my sister. Is she here?

JOSEPHINE: Yes, in the library. And 't is against her wishes I've received you; *now*, if you persist to stay, I know not how to face her.

MILTON: I fancied she would not understand — that is why I insisted she should come here — that I might dispel her fears. But later. First — object of my coming first! Is Lord Middleton, the king's Secretary of State, here?

JOSEPHINE: Lord Middleton, — yes?

MILTON: I learnt by chance that he would be and resolved upon the occasion to discover the movements of a body of the King's troops. My name therefore, to everyone here, is Sieur Raoul d'Orsay — Sieur Raoul d'Orsay. Here is a letter from your uncle, Lord Argyle, introducing me as such. It safeguards your responsibility, and you know nought of me. The French side with the King, so a Frenchman's name serves me best. Sieur Raoul d'Orsay, a votre service.

(He mimics a Frenchman, bowing as he speaks the last sentence.)

JOSEPHINE: But, Milton, were Lord Middleton after all to suspect?

MILTON: Depend upon me to prevent him. Trust me as you love me, Josephine.

JOSEPHINE: Ah, misjudge me not, if my heart misgives me; for 't is a proof of love; I hesitate only because I love you.

MILTON: Then, because you do love me, let your faith, unswerving, prove the source of my strength and cunning this night! the stanchion of my every hope. The thought of possessing you, constantly as it is before me, lends fresh vigor to all my efforts, becomes my strongest incentive to fight! To fight and to struggle! — to struggle, girl! — until we conquer! — so that in the hour of victory, with hearts jubilant over the task achieved, — I may say to you: “Josephine, I love you . . . be — my wife. . . .

(He draws her slowly into his arms.)

(LADY SCARSDALE, while they are still in embrace, pokes her head through the curtain of Right 3 E.)

LADY SCARSDALE *(playfully)*: Sorry to disturb you, children!

(Josephine blushing breaks away from Milton's arms and covers her face a second with her hands good-naturedly.)

JOSEPHINE: Oh, maman!

(Enter Lady Scarsdale. Milton brightly goes to her encounter.)

(MUSIC: bright, spirited is started off Right.)

(Lady Scarsdale is a very refined, genial, kindly and handsome matronly woman.)

LADY SCARSDALE *(extending both hands to Milton in wel-*

come): This selfish girl might have left me out there, playing the sentinel all night!

(Josephine goes to Right 3, remaining near the door to keep watch.)

MILTON *(warmly pressing her hands)*: Lady Scarsdale — How happy I am to see you!

LADY SCARSDALE: Very fortunate you are: *(Casting a meaning glance in her daughter's direction)* I feared you might not under the circumstances.

MILTON *(smilingly)*: Always according to the intruder's desirability.

LADY SCARSDALE: You dear boy. — *(Then, becoming serious)* But about this mission, Milton — tell me! Is it not a very venturesome one?

MILTON: *Not* if I may count upon your cooperation.

LADY SCARSDALE: Ah, *that* you can depend upon — with heart and mind. You and I were the victims of a same wrong: James foully induced his brother Charles II to take your father's and my husband's lives on Tower Hill. I've not forgotten *that*!

MILTON: Nor has Prince William: 'T will knock loudest at his heart the day he is King of England!

JOSEPHINE *(brusquely leaving her position by Right 3, approaching her mother)*: Maman — someone's coming! *(She goes to Center table and takes up Milton's letter of introduction.)*

MILTON *(lowering his voice and quickly addressing Lady Scarsdale)*: My name is Sieur Raoul d'Orsay. Sieur Raoul d'Orsay.

(Josephine hands her mother Lord Argyle's letter; she then Xes to Left 3 and unlocks that door. Milton points to letter which Josephine has remitted her.)

My letter of introduction from your brother, Lord Argyle.

(*Lady Scarsdale casts her eyes over it. After opening the door Left 3, Josephine descends the stage and sits in the arm-chair idly fanning herself.*)

(*Simultaneously the voice of Robert Courtnay is heard as he lifts the curtain of Right 3, for Signora Santoni to enter.*)

ROBERT (*as he holds the curtain aloft for her to enter*): Your voice is perfectly ravishing, Signora Santoni: You sing yourself into your listeners' hearts!

(*Signora Santoni is a voluptuous, genial Italian woman—prima donna-like.*)

SIGNORA SANTONI (*touching him with the point of her fan as she enters*): Oh, fie, Mr. Courtnay — You are a consummate courtier. (*To Lady Scarsdale, coming to her*) Flattery is a sin taught at court; ask your nephew absent himself from it.

LADY SCARSDALE: Methinks it has taught him a true ear, Signora.

SIGNORA SANTONI: Nay — if it is as bad as his tongue. (*Robert laughs.*)

LADY SCARSDALE: Signora Santoni, permit me to present to you *Sieur d'Orsay* — a stranger in our midst. (*Milton bows.*)

My nephew, Robert Courtnay.

(*Milton inclines his head graciously; Robert stiffly. Robert proceeds toward Josephine, curiously examining Milton as he walks down.*)

Signora Santoni must perforce favor us again for *Sieur d'Orsay's* benefit.

MILTON (*who has adopted the manner; now adopting the tone of a Frenchman*): Eete eeze a pleasure I dare not for to 'ope.

SIGNORA SANTONI: The more readily granted then, Monsieur. *Sieur d'Orsay* is fond of music?

MILTON: Ah! — Like a true Frenchman, Madame!

SIGNORA SANTONI (*sniffing the air with delight*): The odour of mignonettes, Lady Scarsdale?

LADY SCARSDALE (*stepping to the conservatory, fastening one curtain, leaving a half masked entrance*): They grow profusely in my little garden. Let me gather you some.

SIGNORA SANTONI (*entering the conservatory, followed by Lady Scarsdale*): Oh, thank you.

(*Milton follows them within, remaining in view beyond the entrance. The two ladies are out of sight.*)

(*Robert Courtnay, who, standing back of Josephine's chair, has been meanwhile studying Milton, now turns his attention to his cousin — speaking over her head.*)

ROBERT (*with assumed, quiet, indifference*): Who is this Frenchman, cousin?

JOSEPHINE: Maman just informed you: Sieur Raoul d'Orsay.

ROBERT (*half to himself, again glancing toward the conservatory*): Strange — I've never heard of him.

JOSEPHINE (*already on the alert. But same, dry, impassive tones*): Because you've never been in France.

ROBERT: Made you his acquaintance there?

JOSEPHINE (*deliberate — careful of her answer*): I don't think Sieur d'Orsay was in Paris at the time.

ROBERT: Who introduced him here?

(*Josephine's eyebrows draw into a slight frown.*)

JOSEPHINE (*still looking ahead — quietly*): He presented a letter of introduction from Lord Argyle, of whom he is an intimate friend.

ROBERT (*with a sudden arch of the brow, as if light was making itself in his mind. Josephine is unawares of this*): Forsooth! (*Then smiling serenely*) Then — he is the — at-the-time nameless, so-called "Gentleman of

France" whom I overheard our uncle praising in accord with you one day?

JOSEPHINE (*rising and facing him*): Robert! what is this idle talk about?

ROBERT: Oh, nothing. Nothing. . . . (*He strolls down and halts D. L. C. idly playing with the lace of his sleeve, speaks on the way*) Only, I recollect observing then the strange enthusiasm you manifested in so entire a stranger.

(*Milton, by this time, has disappeared from view within the conservatory.*)

JOSEPHINE (*sharply*): What do you mean?

ROBERT (*same calm smile, turning and facing her*): Simply this — that I will quarrel with any man who presumes to cross me — in love or in politics, cousin.

JOSEPHINE (*with sufficient evidence of vexation — under her breath to him*): Then, let me tell you in turn, sir! that your pretensions are becoming utterly insufferable — and that if you really care for me, you're adopting the wrong means to convince me of it. *Sieur d'Orsay* is our guest, and as such is entitled to our courtesy. If you presume to offend him, *maman* will never forgive you! First you suspect Lord Middleton, and then this stranger! you're positively stupid, Robert — and stupidity is a trait I detest! Tomorrow, when you have recovered your wits, I may consent to prove to you how absurd you are! For the present I wish to be left in peace, sir! (*She returns to her seat*) And mind that you *do* leave me!

(*Robert remains a second longer where he stood, grinning— then abruptly he starts to X the stage Right.*)

LADY SCARSDALE (*calling softly from within the conservatory*): Josephine, dear.

JOSEPHINE (*rising*): Yes, *maman*.

LADY SCARSDALE (*appearing at the entrance, arranging a bunch of mignonettes*): Will you go request Lord Russmore and his wife to come and join us? (*Without waiting for an answer she returns into the conservatory.*) (*Josephine remains perplexed a mere instant, but feeling that her cousin's eyes are upon her, smiling at her, as it were, for her recent admonition, she tosses her head up coldly and ignoring him completely, mounts up stage and exits Left 3.*)

ROBERT (*laughing softly and grimly, as she thus makes her exit! H'n! h'n! h'n! h'n! . . . After her exit, casting his eyes to the floor, then suddenly upwards, reflecting, strolling toward Center*): Tomorrow, eh? . . . (*He pauses Center, and turns his head and body sufficiently around to study Milton who is again partly seen within the conservatory.*) Same features! — the chin, the brows, and high forehead. I was conscious of the resemblance instantly! Josephine avers that she has met him tonight for the first time, and yet — has a small picture painted of him hung in her room; is unaware that I have seen this precious miniature — wondering whom the fellow might be. (*He starts Right again, smiling grimly.*) Tomorrow, eh? . . . (*He mounts toward the desk cabinet that stands below Right 3 E*) H'n! h'n! h'n! h'n! . . . By m' sword no! I'll probe the mystery tonight!

(*He picks up a book from the top of the cabinet, opens it to suggest he is reading it, at the same time casting a furtive glance toward the conservatory, then, facing the desk cabinet, he turns a little hand-painted mirror, set on a tiny easel, so that it shall reflect directly to him everyone in the conservatory. Apparently reading his book, but looking over the pages, he observes them. All this is done rapidly and simultaneously as Lady Scarsdale laughs within the conservatory.*)

LADY SCARSDALE (*coming to the entrance, laughing softly, amused at the manner in which Milton portrays the Frenchman*): Ha! ha! Pray, *Sieur d'Orsay* — to the nature of each gift, conform your expressions of gratitude. (*As she passes out, Milton holding the curtain for her*) A single stem of mignonette is assuredly merest trifle.

MILTON (*following her into the room*): Geeve anyt'ing to a Frenchman — an' 'ee will t'ank you vary much. (*Raising the stem to his nose and inhaling with affectation*) M'm — I adore ze mignonettes!

(*Lady Scarsdale smilingly proceeds down to the mantel and arranges her flowers in a vase on the mantel. Signora Santoni has followed them to the entrance of the conservatory, also arranging a bunch of mignonettes.*)

SIGNORA SANTONI (*coming down and also inhaling their perfume*): They are delicious!

(*She perceives His Grace the BISHOP ORSINI entering Left 3.*)

(*His Grace Bishop Orsini is a holy man of about fifty years of age, portly and possessed of a fatherly, good-natured countenance. He is Italian.*)

(*Nodding in greeting to Him*) Bouna sera allor sua Eccellenza! (“Good evening, your Grace.”)

HIS GRACE (*advancing without seeing Lady Scarsdale*): Saluto alla Signora Santoni! (“Greeting — Signora Santoni.”) (*Then shaking his finger reprovngly — serio-comic, marching up to her*) Daughter — daughter — more and more do I hear that thy songs are a source of unrest to all those who with ears and a human heart are blest!

SIGNORA SANTONI (*with mock penitence*): Alas, then, Padre, what manner of abstinence again will your Grace impose, or penance decree?

HIS GRACE: Marry, Signora, that you shall sing again — this night — this time for me!

(Lady Scarsdale laughs. He perceives her and nods in a friendly way.)

(Enter Lord Russmore simultaneously, Left 3. Lady Scarsdale sees him.)

(Lord Russmore is about 35 years of age. His manner is reposeful, courteous, affable, and withal dignified. His hair is brown, his face firm, yet kindly; his forehead broad, suggestive of frankness withal of determination.)

LADY SCARSDALE: *(going to him)*: Greeting m' lord. *(Robert has strolled into the conservatory.)*

LORD RUSSMORE: Again good evening, Lady Scarsdale.

LADY SCARSDALE: Lord Russmore, permit me to present to you Sieur d'Orsay. Sieur d'Orsay, Lord Russmore.

LORD RUSSMORE *(extending Milton his hand)*: France is a national ally. — To meet one of her sons is a pleasure.

MILTON *(smiling and at the same time observing the man who is his brother-in-law)*: Dat eeeze trrue English welcome, mee lord.

LORD RUSSMORE *(addressing Lady Scarsdale)*: I fear we shall have to make an untimely exit, Lady Scarsdale; but I have found Lady Russmore, in the company of your daughter, slightly indisposed.

LADY SCARSDALE: Oh, I'm sure it is nothing more than the migraine of which she complained when she arrived. Leave her to me — I will see what I can do to relieve her.

(CELLO SOLO — with accompaniment — is started off Right.)

SIGNORA SANTONI: Ah! — Meatore's new creation. *(After listening a second longer)* We ought not to miss it. —

(His Grace steps a trifle Right — listening to the music.)

(Robert comes away from the conservatory and strolls idly

toward the table Center. Milton gradually winds his way into the conservatory during the ensuing.)

LADY SCARSDALE: And think of it, m' lord, afterwards Signora Santoni will sing again for us. You mustn't desert us.

LORD RUSSMORE: We shall certainly remain to hear Signora Santoni.

SIGNORA SANTONI: You do me great honour, m' lord.

LADY SCARSDALE (*addressing Robert who is going toward the conservatory — disposed to follow Milton there*): Robert!

(Then, as he stops, addressing the Bishop) Your Grace, my nephew will escort you to the drawing room and introduce you to our friends. If you please, Robert. (He conceals his feelings; she smiles casually, as if her request hid no definite objective: to keep him away. He steps to the exit Right 3.)

HIS GRACE: Thank you, Lady Scarsdale.

(Robert holds the curtain for him to pass out.)

(Exeunt both.)

LORD RUSSMORE: Pray accept my arm, Signora.

(Signora Santoni does so, nodding graciously.)

LADY SCARSDALE (*going to the bell-rope, near the clock U. C., before ringing*): I will join you anon, my lord, together with Alice. *(She pulls the bell-rope.)*

LORD RUSSMORE: If you will — thank you, Lady Scarsdale.

(He exits after the Signora. A brief pause during which Lady Scarsdale goes to the park door and drops the latch — locking it — and sees that the grill is shut. Milton comes out of the conservatory.)

LADY SCARSDALE (*to Milton who goes to Right 3, and looks off a second*): Alice has let her husband see that she's distressed.

MILTON (*leaving the door*): We must contrive to reassure her.

JOSEPHINE (*entering Left 3*): Maman —

LADY SCARSDALE: Well — ?

JOSEPHINE: Alice is terribly upset — And she's determined that you shall go, Milton. She wishes to see you at once.

MILTON: I'll come.

LADY SCARSDALE (*stretching out her arm, stopping him. To Josephine*): Where is she?

JOSEPHINE: Waiting in my boudoir.

LADY SCARSDALE: Bring her here — 't is safer.

(*Exit Josephine Left 3.*)

(*To Milton, who proceeds toward the park door, as she goes to Right 3.*) Besides, methinks you will need me here with you — as a moral prop, to bring her to her senses. (*She looks off Right, a second or two. Milton raises the latch of the park door and, opening it, steps out, closing the door two thirds after him. Enter John from Left 3.*)

JOHN: Your ladyship rang?

LADY SCARSDALE (*coming to the desk cabinet — opening it and seeing that a piece of parchment, ink, quill-pen and sand box are in readiness:*) Yes, John. Order more wine served in the drawing room. My oldest vintage for Lord Middleton's cup — and see to it that it is never left empty. (*She mounts toward the conservatory*) You understand?

JOHN: (*crossing toward Right 3 E.*): Perfectly.

LADY SCARSDALE (*preparing to let down the curtain at the conservatory, which she fastened up previously, earlier in the act*): Shut the door at the other end of the corridor — Let no one through until I come.

(*John pauses before the exit to nod affirmatively.*)

(*Exit John Right 3.*)

(Clock U. L. C. strikes the half hour after ten. Lady Scarsdale speaks as if it were to herself while arranging the curtains so that the entrance to the conservatory is completely masked) If I'm not mistaken, more's to be feared from Alice's attitude than from the Secretary of State.

(Going to the window curtain, lifting it to make sure that the window is closed, then draping the curtain so that it completely masks.) However, we must bring her to reason.

JOSEPHINE (re-appearing Left 3 — to her mother): Can she come in?

LADY SCARSDALE: Yes; — (She looks for Milton and sees him through the opening of the door.)

JOSEPHINE (meanwhile): All right, Alice. (Leaving the door, she comes down a little. Lady Scarsdale takes a position awaiting her near the center table, Right of it. Milton slips quietly in as Alice enters Left 3, passing below him, not noticing him. He quietly closes the door back of him and remains on the step, in the casement, retaining hold of the latch.)

ALICE (as she enters, quickly Xing to Center, then, glancing about and not having seen Milton, addressing Lady Scarsdale): Lady Scarsdale — This is frightful! Josephine should never have let him enter. — Where is he now?

(By this time, Milton has slipped indoors, as above described.)

LADY SCARSDALE (coming to her Center, taking hold of her hands): Alice — I want you to see him! but first you must be calm, dear!

ALICE (releasing her hands): Calm? — (She comes down stage Left of Center, pressing one hand to her forehead, laughing softly, hysterically for a moment or two, and

then, miserably) I was so confident he was still abroad — now, oh! — (*Makes a gesture of despair; then advancing to below table, left of same, facing Lady Scarsdale*) — Why did he write he was being sent on to France? and make me believe —

LADY SCARSDALE (*coming to Right of table*): Because he well knew your loving heart, which might have betrayed the fear you entertained of his coming —

ALICE: Oh, but he shouldn't have deceived me! —

(*She suddenly hears the muffled sound of applause of the guests as Meatore's cello comes to an end. She Xes to Right Center, front of the settee, facing in the direction of the drawing room*) And now he is here — here to spy on Middleton, of all men!

LADY SCARSDALE (*a trifle down Center, addressing her*):
Alice —

ALICE (*facing her — left turn so as not to see Milton as yet*): And here you let him be! (*Indicating toward off Right*) In the midst of James' partisans: Each man a foe —

(*Milton leaves the doorway and slowly advances till above Center table.*)

— just like so many hounds who will end by scenting their prey. . . (*Slightly facing Right*) Oh, 'tis beyond daring! (*Turning to Lady S. again*) I must see him at once! —

(*As Milton left the casement of the park door, Josephine mounted up stage to replace the latch. She replaces the latch, creating a clicking sound, just as the last word passes Alice's lips — this clicking sound causes Alice to look in that direction — In doing so, she finds herself face to face with Milton, who immediately addresses her.*)

MILTON (*speaking firmly and quietly, as she utters the last word, and the dropping of the latch makes her perceive*

him): Alice — To place you on your guard, lest unprepared you had chanced to encounter me elsewhere, 't was I who insisted that we should meet here to-night! (*With a total change of manner — slowly coming to her, his voice now tender, vibrating with subdued emotion*) — Oh, my sister! . . . Seven years since I've seen *you!* Good God! what it has cost me — With but rare and scant news of you — And now . . . here . . . you are . . .

ALICE (*without moving or altering her position; her voice likewise subdued and tremulous*): Aye — but . . . here . . . *you* are — bent upon accomplishing your utter ruin!

MILTON: On the contrary — *not* mine, but the king's!

ALICE (*drawing erect and interrupting him*): Oh, I know. — I can well see that you are fighting-mad; but I beseech you — enough that you are in England — at least, at least abandon your mad projects here tonight — and leave at once!

MILTON: No —

ALICE: You will *not*?

MILTON: No, Alice.

LADY SCARSDALE: Alice, listen to reason; too much's at stake in the fulfilment of Milton's duty here!

ALICE: And what if that duty costs him his head, Lady Scarsdale?

MILTON: As I live it shall not, Alice!

ALICE: Oh, you will both end by driving me frantic!

(*She Xes Left — Lady Scarsdale profits of this to go to Right 3 and glance off, then shut the door.*)

Duty! Duty! Duty! (*Turning to her brother*) Milton, every woman that has a heart shudders at the word *duty*, born of the mind of man. — In these times, to her, 't is like a monster without feelings! My husband,

like *you*, is the soul of duty! He is here! And yet, *because* of duty, though you are his kinsman, he would order your arrest, if he came to suspect; because he serves the *King* —

MILTON: And I the Prince whom he hates!

ALICE: So — don't you see? . . . O Milton, I beg of you not to attempt to spy on Middleton — Even to enter the drawing-room is fraught with danger!

LADY SCARSDALE: But, my dear, no one in England *knows* Milton, omitting ourselves and Lord Argyle.

ALICE (*She Xes to Josephine*): No matter!

MILTON: Not even your husband!

ALICE (*to Josephine*): I beg of you, dear — help me prevail upon him!

JOSEPHINE: I cannot, Alice; it was wrong of me a while ago to have weakened; now, I'm resolved evermore to help him.

LADY SCARSDALE (*who meanwhile has gone to Right 3 again, opened the door and glanced off — returning*): My dear Alice — once and for all, pray receive the assurance from me that Milton runs not the slightest danger here this night!

ALICE (*hopelessly*): — I see — 't is of no avail to argue — *You* are both in league with him — *you* who mayhap do not care as *I* do. . . . Milton, it breaks my heart — to think that *you* will not heed me. . . .

(*Semi-tearfully and semi-laughter*) H'n! h'n! h'n! . . .

I who should feel so joyous at seeing you again, and who can only tremble and feel anguish — God be merciful. . . . (*She sits in the armchair Left Center.*)

MILTON: God *is* merciful to you and I this night! For if my mission here turns to good account — *ours*, tomorrow, the preponderance over James' army — Ah, be of good cheer, sister!

ALICE: Be of good cheer . . . (*She laughs grimly*) H'n!
h'n! h'n! h'n! . . . If I saw you walking headlong
toward some precipice — think you I could make merry?

MILTON: But these are mere fanciful words and imaginings.

ALICE: No, they are not; but a keener perception of the
danger attending your presence here.

MILTON (*firmly and decisively*): Alice — Never, ere this,
have I spoken harshly to you. You compel me. The
danger to me here this night — is yourself!

(*Alice suddenly glares at him.*)

Nay, hear me through — When you and I were ban-
ished and we drifted into Holland, penniless exiles,
William of Orange gave us welcome — took me into
his service, honored us as our birth deserved; the day
his army landed at Torbay, someone whom he could
trust implicitly was needed to undertake a difficult
task, I seized this means — and from ulterior motives
— to prove to him my gratitude. Through seventeen
years of exile, Alice, have I waited for this opportunity
of avenging the memory of our father. *Now* the mo-
ment's at hand! *His* last kiss was wafted to *you*, as he
went to meet his doom; but *his last words* he spoke to
me — *his son!* . . . He died a martyr — And his
murder cries out to the blood in you as well as to the
blood in me! To them who suffered most, first retri-
bution in justice is due! What you and I have lost,
alas, in the better part, is forever lost; the dead may
not be restored; but the *living*, who, in bloody pack,
by foul means stole their lives away, shall still answer
the living! *That* is why I am here! And *that* is why *you*
must not thwart me! . . .

LADY SCARSDALE: Alice dear — through the same crafti-
ness of James — to secure his own ends — the Block
on Tower Hill was still red and warm with my hus-

band's blood when your father, in turn, laid down his head upon it. — For seventeen years, I have worn the mask that has insured me immunity; you, Alice, his daughter, will you now show less fortitude than I in wearing it for a little while?

JOSEPHINE (*kneeling the other side of Alice*): Maman is right! — and Milton pins all his faith to this night's achievement — 't is a means that we may soon belong to each other. Won't you help us? You do wish me to become your sister — do you not?

ALICE (*drawing her close to her*): Oh, yes! yes!

JOSEPHINE: And you'll be brave and be sure not to betray him?

ALICE (*rising*): Lady Scarsdale — what is it that you all exact of me?

(*A sudden noise as of some one trying to open the park door, followed by a discreet rapping, is heard.*)

LADY SCARSDALE: Sh! —

(*She leaves Right 3; Josephine goes to take her place, opening the door and remaining by the curtain on guard. Simultaneously the applause of the guests is heard as the encore of Meatore's cello solo comes to an end. Milton approaches his sister, whose gaze has reverted to the park door.*)

MILTON (*taking both her hands, lowering his voice*): That you steel your heart, for my sake — granting me the double share in meting out His Majesty's dues! —

ALICE: Promise that you will be careful.

MILTON: I promise —

LADY SCARSDALE (*who by this time has opened the slightest bit the small grill in the lattice of the park door, and peered outside a second — now closing it*) 'Tis well. 'Tis only Lucy.

(*She raises the latch and Lucy enters.*)

JOSEPHINE (*leaving Right 3 at the same time*): Milton — someone is stepping out of the drawing-room.

MILTON: Let's pretend to play this game.

(*He sits one side and Josephine the other, of the chess table.*)

LADY SCARSDALE (*as Lucy closes the door and replaces the latch*): Take John's place in the hall — abiding there till I ring.

(*Lucy nods and exits Left 3. Lady Scarsdale steps to Alice and takes her arm*) Come, dear —

(*Simultaneously, the curtain Right 3 is pushed aside and Lord Russmore enters.*)

MILTON (*simultaneously with Lord Russmore's entrance — resuming his French*): Je vois — Dee knight attack me dee queen.

(*Both appear engrossed in the game.*)

LADY SCARSDALE (*walking with Alice to Lord Russmore's encounter*): Behold, my lord — my restoratives have had good effect.

LORD RUSSMORE: I'm very happy to hear it. How are you feeling now, dear?

ALICE (*affecting a bright smile*): Oh, much relieved, Hugo! (*Milton and Josephine raise their heads a second and exchange glances.*)

LORD RUSSMORE: Signora Santoni is to sing, and I have promised that we should defer our departure until afterwards.

LADY SCARSDALE: We were just on the point of joining you.

ALICE: I will lead the way.

(*She proceeds to Right 3. Lord Russmore offers his arm to Lady Scarsdale. They follow.*)

MILTON: I weil mak' de good bishop interfere for de Queen against ze bold knight! (*He plays.*)

LADY SCARSDALE (*before making her exit, over her shoulder to her daughter*): Are you not coming?

(*This is meant for Milton as well.*)

JOSEPHINE (*quickly*): But one move more — we'll follow you.

(*Exeunt Lord Russmore, Lady Scarsdale and Alice.*)

(*As they make their exit — the orchestra begins the prelude to Signora Santoni's song — off Right.*)

(*The following scene between Milton and Josephine should be played quietly and become pleasing through its simplicity.*)

(*When the room is once more deserted and while the music is being played preluding the song, Milton and Josephine look at each other from across the chess-board.*)

MILTON (*with simplicity*): How wondrous a fellow-player you're proving to be.

JOSEPHINE (*with modest simplicity*): That is not strange.

Yet, at the onset, my heart almost failed me.

(*The song begins off Right.*)

MILTON (*rising, slowly*): And now — ?

JOSEPHINE (*as she also rises*): My heart's altogether in the part I'm assigned to play.

MILTON (*meeting her above the table*): Would that I had leave now to express all that is in *my* heart for you.

JOSEPHINE: Once our side has won — you may, Milton.

MILTON: But until then — ?

JOSEPHINE: We'll keep our troth: our souls merged in hope o' the outcome.

MILTON: Let me then redouble efforts soon to possess you!

JOSEPHINE (*coy, simple*): I'm most humbly willing.—

To begin with, we'll now proceed to meet His Majesty's friends.

MILTON (*extending his hand to her*): Come!

JOSEPHINE (*as she gives him her hand*): Do you remember, four years ago?

SONG OF THE SIGNORA

“Connaissez-vous mon Isabelle?

Au front si doux, aux yeux si beaux!

La blonde enfant que l'on appelle

La Charmeuse d'oiseaux!

Elle a dix ans, c'est une rose,

Un vrai bouton de mon jardin!

C'est une fleur à peine éclosé,

Qui me naquit un beau matin!

Il faut la voir, il faut l'entendre —

Ah, gazouiller, la chère enfant;

Et de sa voix si pure et si tendre

Chanter, inviter les oiseaux!

(*Trill.*) Oh-ho! oh-ho! oh-ho! oh-ho! oh-ho! . . .

C'est Isabelle qui vous appelle!

Venez manger petits oiseaux!

C'est Isabelle qui vous appelle!

Venez chanter mes chers oiseaux! . . .”

(*Repeat ad lib. to end during Robert's soliloquy.*)

MILTON (*smilingly*): At that time you staked all to lose by me.

JOSEPHINE: And now you have all but won for me.

MILTON (*raising her hands to his lips*): Heaven realize my hope of the future for you!

JOSEPHINE: Heaven will hear you tonight — And when you are in there, — (*Points Right*) — think — think constantly, so it may guide you, that you hear me saying:

MILTON: What?

JOSEPHINE (*looking up into his face*): I love you, Milton. As much as you should like to be loved by the woman whom you loved best of all.

MILTON (*his arm encircling her waist, looking down fondly into her face*): That is a great deal!

JOSEPHINE: Far less still than I love you. (*With playful coyness*) Is it still insufficient?

MILTON: Nay! But more than I can ever reward you for — (*He draws her in fond embrace — not kissing her, their heads close to one another on each other's shoulder.*) (*The proximity of the curtains, Right 3 E and the one masking the window U. R., creates an opportunity for one to introduce himself, unperceived, back of each drapery, thereby reaching the window recess. At the precise moment when Milton silently embraces Josephine, the spectators become aware that a figure is slipping back of the curtains, till it eventually reaches the window recess. The lovers are unaware of the intrusion, for the purpose of eavesdropping.*)

(*Parting the curtain with one hand, Right 3, leading her off with the other.*)

Come! . . . (*Exeunt Right 3.*)

(*A pause, during which the song continues to be heard.*)

(*Suddenly Robert Courtnay comes out from behind the curtain at the window. He comes out Left of it, retaining hold of the curtain, his eyes riveted upon the door — Right 3. A sardonic smile is on his lips.*)

ROBERT (*grimly*): Ye gods! — Can the devil have given me a spy as well as a rival to deal with?

(*Coming down stage. Grimly*) H'n! h'n! h'n! h'n! If so 't is well. (*Sneaky*) I'll satisfy my grudge in serving the King! (*Plotting*) After the man's out of the way, lest I expose her for abetting an enemy of His Majesty, Josephine will be most amenable — for her mother's sake then, if contrary to her own expectations. (*Looking toward the desk cabinet, going to same and examining, finding nothing of any use.*) I wonder to whom was she

writing? (*Leaving the desk cabinet*) I must contrive to pay a little visit upstairs to her secretary. (*He proceeds Left, reflecting, laughing grimly*) H'n! h'n! h'n! h'n! . . . a pure-blooded Frenchman, eh?

(*End of Signora's song during this speech.*)

One who expresses himself crudely in our presence, — yet can speak as pure English as I've ever heard. . . .

(*Prolonged applause of the guests after the song — then general hum of conversation.*)

Sieur d'Orsay, eh? H'n! h'n! — Bah! — a name for the circumstance! I'll unravel this mystery though and *to-night*, my shrewd cousin — *not to-morrow!* . . .

(*Boisterous laughter is heard off of Sir Richard and Sir Anthony, as they come along the corridor leading to Right 3. Robert mounts U. L. C., then as they enter and come down he Xes up stage and exits Right 3, unperceived by them.*)

SIR ANTHONY (*as he enters arm-in-arm with Sir Richard, disengaging his own and proceeding down to his chair Right of chess table*): A knavish trick — a knavish trick! . . . None other than Sir Richard could have thought of it!

SIR RICHARD (*above chess table, filling himself a goblet of wine, laughing*): No other way — no other way, Sir Anthony. You see: a bit o' scandal is all engrossing to some old women, and our worse-halves would never have allowed us to return to our little chess game, had I not provided them with something preferable to ourselves to peck at!

SIR ANTHONY (*sighing dolefully*): Ah — what a pity that women do not *grow young* instead of *old*.

SIR RICHARD (*setting two goblets on the table, resuming his chair Left of table*): A plague on you, Sir Anthony! Would you have a man, who married a lady of *twenty*,

have a wife, at *thirty-and nine* crawling on the floor with a bib?

SIR ANTHONY (*smiling broadly*): Your arithmetic is certainly astounding.

SIR RICHARD (*holding his cup before his lips, starting to giggle, as he conceives a picture of his friend with a baby-wife*): Fancy my old friend Lovelace — in his night-cap and bare feet, his wife in his arms, cutting her teeth all over again! (*He rocks back in his chair, laughing boisterously.*)

SIR ANTHONY (*Grown suddenly serious*): The game — the game, Sir Richard! I'm in the mood —

SIR RICHARD: 'Twas your turn to play.

SIR ANTHONY: In truth — I do not recognize the board.

SIR RICHARD (*after a gulp of wine — again giggling*): Fancy yourself in the gloaming, each night, rocking Lady Lovelace to sleep — (*He starts to rock and sing, mimicking*) "Do — do — do — do! Fiddle-dee-dee! Clo-s-se yur eyes, my darlint. Fur the bogey-man's comin' around. . . ." (*He resumes drinking, chuckling.*)

SIR ANTHONY (*setting his own untouched cup before Sir Richard*): Here! have some more wine to make you sober.

(*Sir Richard unceremoniously accepts it and passes his own empty one to Sir Anthony.*)

SIR RICHARD (*raising the full goblet in the air*): Drink! Drink! to the realization of your wish, my bald-headed friend!

SIR ANTHONY (*with a show of petty temper — pushing the empty cup away*): Now, pray thee, Sir Richard — at least — at least! respect my grey hair!

SIR RICHARD: If you'll prove to me there's any left 'neath your wig to inspire such. (*Raising his goblet in*

the air — his voice at the same time) Here's to the fertility of your scalp!

(He arrests Sir Anthony's hand in mid-air, who is in the act of moving a pawn.)

Look out! you're playing one of my own men—!

SIR ANTHONY *(slightly exasperated — shaking his wrist free. A trifle peevish)*: It all comes of your tittle-tattle!

SIR RICHARD: It all comes of your listening too much and thinking too little!

(He drinks. Sir Anthony picks up another pawn, holds it in mid-air hesitatingly, then shaking his head, sets it back where it was. Sir Richard, observing him from across the rim of his goblet, giggles.)

Like a cat — on wet ground — doesn't dare move — *(He takes a gulp of wine which he swallows with difficulty. Then, while his friend does his utmost to concentrate on the game, observing him, he titters.)*

(With good-natured sarcasm) Sir Anthony Love-lace — Zounds your mother must have had a vein of humor to christen a Love-lace an Anthony?

SIR ANTHONY: Pray — drink if you will — but leave me and the women *alone!*

SIR RICHARD: Alone? Not if I can ever prevent it — you old libertine!

(Enter LADY DIGWIG, followed by LADY ANTHONY from Right 3 E.)

(Lady Digwig is old — with a bull-dog neck, hard, stout, and short. Lady Anthony is old, hard, snappy as a snuff box, prim and thin.)

(Perceiving their husbands, Lady Digwig advances to Center. Lady Anthony stops half way. Neither Sir Richard nor Sir Anthony are aware of their presence until Lady Digwig speaks; then Sir Anthony ignores his own wife's presence, until, in turn, she addresses him.)

LADY DIGWIG (*indignant — arching her brows*): Sir Richard — I am going! (*She walks to above Left Center and stops to wait for him.*)

SIR RICHARD (*reverting his eyes to Sir Anthony, as she starts on her X, speaking under his breath*): Oh, Lord — why hast Thou punished me so! (*He starts slowly to rise.*)

SIR ANTHONY (*with head bowed, looking at Sir Richard through his eyebrows*): The Lord chasteneth him whom He loveth.

(*Lady Anthony starts to the Center.*)

SIR RICHARD (*Pushing his chair close to the table — mutters back to Sir A.*): Then — He greatly loveth married men! (*He starts up.*)

LADY ANTHONY (*snappily*): Sir Anthony!
(*He starts.*)

I am going also! . . .

SIR ANTHONY (*rising, with great docility.*)

Ye-es, my love. . . .

(*He joins his wife. The four start toward Left 3, and walk off, like a funeral.*)

(*As they disappear, enter Josephine — Right 3. She is brightly excited. She goes straight to the bell-rope U. L. C. and pulls it. As she does so enters Alice from Right 3, also cheerfully excited — both meet.*)

ALICE: Oh, I'm so glad it's all over! I feel all worn out — from sheer tension — watching him!

JOSEPHINE: You behaved splendidly!

ALICE: No, I've been very stupid to fear. It's positively amazing. He's so master of himself. Did you observe how he led and changed the conversation at wish?

JOSEPHINE: Milton is very wonderful!

ALICE (*embracing her*): You plucky darling! I've not been half as courageous as you have —

(*Enter Milton leisurely Right 3; the instant he sees that*

only the two women are there, he dashes quickly toward the escritoire of the desk cabinet, where everything is in readiness.)

MILTON (*jubilant—going toward the escritoire*): 'Tis done—
(*He starts to write.*)

ALICE and JOSEPHINE (*almost in the same breath—both going toward him*):

ALICE: Well—?

JOSEPHINE: Tell us—?

MILTON (*continuing to cipher up his message on one of the parchment pieces of paper*): Thanks to Lady Scarsdale's manoeuvres and good wine—
(*Josephine steps to Right 3, to watch off and listen at the same time.*)

Middleton was not *half* the shrewd man I deemed him to be. Ran into my net as innocently as a fish!

(*Enter Lucy Left 3.*)

(*Josephine leaves Right 3 and Alice takes her place.*)

LUCY: You rang for me, Miss?

JOSEPHINE: Yes.

(*Then to Milton who is folding the message.*)

I answer for Lucy as for myself!

MILTON (*Xing toward Lucy*): Oh, Lucy and I have already made acquaintance. (*Remitting her the message*) You will find Peter—the old man with the organ—outside the gate. To his query, give him the same pass-word "Elves do I seek"—Tell him to play, the moment he's despatched Languenoc with this—to inform me.

(*She takes the paper and tucks it inside her blouse.*)

(*Josephine raises the latch from the park door.*)

LUCY (*turning to go*): Play to inform you—yes.

(*She exits. Josephine closes the door and opens the little grill— that the sound of Peter's organ may be heard.*)

MILTON (*advancing toward Alice, who comes to meet him*):

At last! the deed is done!

(*Josephine starts across stage to assume Alice's place near Right 3.*)

ALICE: Oh, I'm so happy — for both your sakes! (*To Milton*) I've been a horrid coward — but I promise to try . . . only, you must depart now; I've no more pretext to offer Lord Russmore to remain and I wish to return home knowing you safely away from here.

MILTON: Merely time to bid Lady Scarsdale and Josephine farewell — and I will go, Alice.

ALICE: Thank you!

MILTON (*leading her down stage*): Dear, dear sister! —

You little realize what this message means — and I'd fain send you home with the very sense of conviction now within me — that the day of our victory is now assured. Think of it! Free to visit you at your home to renew the old ties! Tell me something about yourself: Your boy; he is now over five years, isn't he? How I should like to see him! to perch him on my shoulder and trot him along, or play see-saw — as I used to do with you once; only, then, you frequently suddenly slipped off your end and let me bump.

(*Alice laughs at the recollections.*)

JOSEPHINE (*cheerfully approaching them from Right 3*):

Your husband and maman are coming this way.

ALICE (*quickly embracing Milton*): Good night, dear — God protect you!

MILTON (*he resumes his seat Right of table*): Shall we resume the game?

(*Josephine quickly sits. Alice stands above table watching them. At this moment, as it were to warn those in the room of their approach — Lady Scarsdale laugh off Right 3.*)

LADY SCARSDALE (*laughingly — coming through the corridor that leads to Right 3*): Ha! ha! ha! And judging from all this gayety, my lord, one could imagine every soul without a single care? —

LORD RUSSMORE (*as he appears and holds the curtain aloft for her to enter*): In sooth — when the times are so oppressive, a diversion of this kind is singularly refreshing —

LADY SCARSDALE (*having entered and taking back his arm*): To say the least — I feared it would be in-apropos. (*To Josephine*) Again at the chess-board? (*To Lord Russmore*) My daughter is insatiable.

ALICE (*approaching them*): I have been playing chaperone.

MILTON (*risen — politely*): Mademoiselle eeze a wonderful player.

(*Josephine laughs. He picks a few chess-men lying off the board, on his side.*)

Look! I have none!

(*He drops them on the table again.*)

LORD RUSSMORE (*Lady Scarsdale on his left arm — offering his right hand genially to Milton*): Good night, Sieur d'Orsay. Let us have the pleasure of your company sometime.

MILTON (*stepping to him and pressing his hand warmly*): Eete will be a grreat pleasure, mee Lord Russmore.

JOSEPHINE (*who has risen and approached Alice, addressing Milton*): Sieur d'Orsay — it is your turn to play: Will you excuse me for a few moments?

(*Milton bows. Lord Russmore and Lady S. start for Left 3.*)

— I will accompany you to the door, Alice. (*She takes her arm.*)

(*Lord Russmore and Lady Scarsdale exeunt Left 3. Alice and Josephine start to follow, but the moment they are*

well out of the room, Alice stops and turns to Milton, speaking to him cautiously, hardly above a whisper.)

ALICE: Do not come to our house, Milton!

MILTON (*shaking his head negatively. Smiling*): Have no fear, sister.

(Alice starts for Left 3.)

JOSEPHINE (*backing toward Alice at the entrance — Left 3*): Stay here. I shall come back to say “good-night” — the instant Alice goes.

MILTON: Yes.

JOSEPHINE and ALICE (*arm in arm at Left 3, before exiting — whispering happily to Milton, one after the other, Josephine speaking first*):

JOSEPHINE: Au revoir —

ALICE: Good night —

(They back themselves out Left 3.)

MILTON (*as they exit thus*): Good-night! —

(Suddenly the distant sound of Peter's organ is heard. Milton shifts his eyes toward the park door and listens a mere instant.)

(His face lighting up still more happily) The message is now on its way to William's camp.

(He pushes his chair close to the chess table and walks leisurely toward the park door. He opens the park door after unlocking it and stepping to the threshold, stands still, listening, looking into the night.)

(Advancing toward the park door, appears Robert Courtnay.)

ROBERT (*ingratiatingly — approaching the threshold, as Milton backs off the step indoors*): Good evening, Sieur d'Orsay.

MILTON (*puzzled for a second*): Mr. — Courtnay, I believe?

ROBERT (*stepping inside, extending Milton his hand*): Yes.

(*Retaining Milton's hand*) My aunt left me in the drawing-room to supervise the entertainment; it appeared in the end superfluous — so I decided to walk out and breathe the air.

MILTON: Yes?

ROBERT: I'm most hapy to find you alone. I have been wishing all evening to make your acquaintance, (*Saying which he comes leisurely down to above chess table and starts to fill two goblets*) but unfortunately my aunt claimed some service or other from me incessantly.

MILTON (*instinctively suspicious of the man — but concealing this feeling under a suave and polite demeanor, comes down leisurely*): Zat eeze vary kind from you, Mr. Courtnay. I was waiting 'eere for Lady Scarsdale to return for to say goode night.

ROBERT: Not going — surely?

MILTON: I have travel far to-day —

ROBERT (*indicating the clock*): Oh, but 'tis not even eleven yet. (*He fills the second goblet*) My aunt tells me you are Lord Argyle's friend — I have the deepest affection for him: hence, a desire to become yours, Sieur d'Orsay.

MILTON (*who is strolling Left, aside to himself*): What's his motive? (*He turns. Pleasantly*) Mr. Courtnay eeze vary kind.

ROBERT (*offering him one of the goblets*): Come, Monsieur — let us drink to better acquaintance. Nothing like a sprinkle of wine to make good-fellowship ripen.

MILTON (*who has accepted the goblet*): Zee English gener-allee cultivate eete wit' ale.

ROBERT: Except when their cellars provide a better beverage. (*Right of chess table*) You play chess, Sieur d'Orsay?

MILTON: A leetle.

ROBERT: I' faith let us finish this game and measure skill.
(*He draws his chair Right of table.*)

MILTON (*depositing his goblet, untouched, upon the table Left*): I fear I cannot remain, Monsieur Courtnay: Lady Scarsdale —

ROBERT (*sitting down*): Oh, we can cease when she returns. 'Twill take no more than three moves. Come, be seated! *You* a Frenchman, *I* an Englishman. By my troth! we'll play the King's fortunes and pitch battle!

MILTON: Pardon — ("*Pardon*" said as in French) ze King of France eeze a friend *not* an advarsaree?

ROBERT (*bantering all through*): True! the title fits the Orange Prince. So be it! — you'll play his men — and we'll make this game one of prophecy.

MILTON: But a French man eeze an ally — an' cannot 'elp de Prince to —

ROBERT: Nay; here 'tis but in jest. There! I move! . . . (*Milton sits, concealing his unwillingness to do so*) And now, the better your play — the more ignominious Prince William's defeat!

(*Milton studies the game a second, then he quietly moves a pawn.*)

Ah — skillful move! (*He plays.*) Here, then — for His Consumptive Highness — May the devil take him!

(*Milton shoots a rapid glance at Robert, then lowering his gaze as quickly, he moves a rook.*)

H'n! h'n! h'n! h'n! Clever! (*Studying the game — grimly smiling*) I' faith! this most degenerated Prince hath enlisted the services of a wondrous tactician! (*He lifts a pawn, holds it still a second in mid-air, then brings it down with a little thud; as it were decisively attacking*) This, then, again — for the blackguard!

(*Milton remains impassive, now and then surreptitiously observing Courtnay, endeavoring to read his mind.*)

MILTON (*relaxing his face into a broad smile and looking Robert straight in the face*): Eete was a feint, Monsieur Courtnay.

(*He moves one of his men and removes one of Courtnay's. Robert laughs ironically; Milton laughs good-naturedly.*)

ROBERT: True! — like all the Prince's manoeuvres! (*Then, suddenly, leaning forward over the chess-board with a sardonic, nagging banter*) Six men yester-eve called William a bastard before one of his own supporters — and, by my oath! the fellow laughed with the rest! (*He leans back laughingly.*)

MILTON (*quietly — composedly*): Ze fellow was a coward, Monsieur Courtnay.

ROBERT: But think! *one man against six!*

MILTON (*same play*): Eete does not mattare — one man against a dozen.

ROBERT (*playing surprise*): What? Would *you* have quarrelled with so many?

MILTON (*looking him straight in the face, but refraining to evince any open antagonism or resentment in the least*): *Eef* in *my* presence and of *my* King — *foi d'honneur*, Mr. Courtnay! I would 'ave endure a thousand deaths radther than swallow dat insult!

ROBERT (*once more leaning forward, as far as he can toward Milton with a confidential smile*): Well, then — since I am addressing a *friend* and no *foe* — I confess 't was I who called Prince William a bastard!

(*The sardonic smile expands as he continues to look Milton in the face some time longer. Milton remains still as a rock, regarding him blankly. Finally Robert leans back laughing boisterously.*)

H'n! h'n! h'n! h'n!

MILTON (*composedly, as if nothing were*): Eete eeze Monsieur's turn for to play. —

ROBERT (*seated nonchalantly back in his chair, regarding Milton with the same grim smile, speaking with biting satire*): Verily, Monsieur is surpassingly clever — What with m'king sorely pressed (*Mere indication of the index toward the board*) and mine opponent proof 'gainst all device — the Prince hath the better of the argument. (*Rising*) Nay, I'faith, 't is wasting the hour! Come, Sieur d'Orsay, I've a better sport to propose for the settlement! Drain your cup in a toast with me! (*He raises his goblet.*)

To the fortunes of war and health of King James the Second!

(*Milton does not take up his cup.*)

What? . . . Monsieur hesitates?

MILTON: I do not wish for to dis-oblige — but a Frenchman drinks but to one monarch —

ROBERT: Oh, but, then, Monsieur is not French! H'n! h'n! h'n! (*Haughtily he steps away, laughing satirically, as he speaks the preceding line. He turns at the end of same to surprise Milton looking at him frowningly. He continues with the same sneer*) Pray deem me not so your dupe! Nay — h'n! h'n! h'n! h'n! (*This as he approaches the table again and picks up Milton's goblet, extending it to him*) And yet, forsooth, if Sieur d'Orsay will but drink the toast proposed — albeit, I shall believe that he's not an Orange dog! (*Approaching a step to him with the goblet still extended*) Come, Sir Knight! prove to whom your allegiance! . . .

(*Milton folds his arms and regards him quietly.*)

Aha! — Sieur d'Orsay will not drink!

(*He drops the cup sharply on the table.*)

MILTON (*dry, deliberate, and in a firm low tone of voice*):

Enough innuendoes, Courtnay! What is your purpose?

ROBERT (*exultingly*): Bravo! — At last Monsieur's disposed to cast off the mask!

MILTON (*same firm, low voice but with greater stress*): I ask *what* is your purpose!

ROBERT: To learn your true identity — resolved to make you confess — (*He taps the hilt of his sword*) by the achievement of m' sword — if necessary! —

MILTON: And after that?

ROBERT: I' faith! methinks I'll take your head to the king and barter it for his favor. He *exults* in the death of an Orangeman!

(*Both men glare at each other.*)

MILTON: Courtnay — you may rue this hour! (*Between his teeth.*)

ROBERT (*meaningly*): Let him who outlives it *judge!*
(*He bruskiy unsheathes his sword.*)

MILTON (*stepping away and snatching up his hat*): Nay! — I'll begone! (*He turns to X toward park door.*)

ROBERT (*quickly stepping across his path*): Stay!
(*Milton stops. His hat in his left hand he lays his right upon the hilt of his sword. Robert continues sneering sardonically.*)

Monsieur risked much to come here to pay his court to my cousin — and I suspect to spy as well! Now's the reckoning! Myself determined to espouse her, I welcome the pretext which Monsieur's allegiance to William furnishes me to slay him!

MILTON (*coldly — retreating before Robert's advance*): 'T will not be easy — I warn you — (*He unsheathes his own sword.*)

ROBERT (*stopping short a moment, leaning forward, bending his sword — the point of the blade resting upon the floor —*

laughing boastingly): H'n! h'n! h'n! h'n! Sieur d'Orsay has not lived in London, else he'd speak less lightly of m' sword! (*He advances again.*)

MILTON (*stepping off table Center, Robert Left of it*): Not in a lady's house! I'll give you satisfaction outside! (*He turns to go toward the park door.*)

ROBERT (*quickly anticipating him, interposing himself, running up to the park door, kicking it to close it, immediately then advancing, facing Milton again*): Nay! — I trust you not!

(*Here he kicks the door, Milton discards his hat — it falls below the Center table. Robert continues to speak, advancing toward Milton, the latter engaging his blade and retreating diagonally down stage, close to the Right of Center table.*)

(*The following dialogue runs through the ensuing fight.*)

MILTON (*angered at the suddenness of Robert's attack — parrying his thrust*): You're forcing this upon me, Courtnay!

ROBERT: 'T is thus we urge cowards to fight!

(*Milton has caught sight of the park door being shoved open by one of his own men outside; only the arm of the man is perceptible and it as quickly withdraws from sight. Milton breaks into a soft laugh. He thereupon endeavors with many a deviating step — to deceive Robert as to his intention — to turn him around and himself be up stage to back toward the park exit.*)

(*Robert makes a vicious lunge which Milton parries, stepping aside and laughing confidently.*)

ROBERT: Ah! — Wonders! — Sieur d'Orsay knows how to fence, too!

(*Milton backs below the settee, and leads him up stage back of same, thus gaining his point. As he passes back of the settee, he gathers with his left hand the silk scarf*

which Josephine placed on the settee's back at the beginning of the act — continuing to fight, he gathers up this scarf into a big bunch in his hand.)

MILTON: More schools than one!

ROBERT: Then the more pretentious fools!

(By this time Milton has started to back across stage to Left toward the park door. Robert, quick to divine his motive, immediately describes a circle below him, so as to interpose himself again — only, kept on the alert as he is fighting — he has not glanced toward the door, to see that it is partly open.)

(Starting to circle below Milton) Nay! — Trickery will not avail you! You'll remain to fight and to confess your full purpose here! Come! — your answer — spy! (He thrusts wildly at Milton who is driving him toward the park door.)

Dog of Orange! — I'll call all here present to unloosen your tongue and dispose you to —

(The last words remain unspoken; by the lock-trick, — well known to wrestlers — making use of the scarf all in a bunch in his left hand — Milton pokes that hand straight to Robert's face, and over his mouth. — Robert raises his free left hand to Milton's chest, in order to push him away. — Milton, dropping his sword, quickly catches hold of this hand by the wrist, brings it down, causing Robert's elbow to bend, bringing the arm back of Robert — now, with the arm bent in this way, by forcing it upward, Robert's body is forced gradually to wheel about — Right. Meanwhile Milton's hand that covers his mouth more and more encircles his head, as it turns around — Right. As soon as Courtnay's back is nearly turned to him — Milton jerks Robert's head backward, and shoving him forward, pins him prone against the wall Right of the casement of the park door. This is done in lightning style, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

MILTON (*as he dashes the hand with the scarf at Courtnay's face*): By heavens! . . . (*Then as he pins him to the wall*) Damn you — for this witless threat! (*Quickly calling, intensely under his breath toward the park opening*) Brayton — Murray — Blondin! . . .

(*Instantly enter the room — first BRAYTON, then MURRAY, then BLONDIN in rapid succession — a fourth member, ROCK, a boyish-looking lad appears and remains in front of the threshold — Blondin at once goes to the candelabra Right, and extinguishes it — Rock steps indoors and partly closes the door.*)

(*Brayton is a burly individual — after the swash-buckler's type. Murray is thick-boned — broad and hard as nails. Blondin is thick-set — and so-called on account of his light hair and almost whitish eyebrows. All are rough looking and determined.*)

(*As Brayton easily wrenches the sword out of Robert's hand*) Is there likely interference out there?

MURRAY: Several guests have come out — (*He blows the candles — Rock partly closes the door — as above described.*)

BLONDIN (*taking a piece of twisted leather from his own girt*): They're roaming about the moat!

MILTON: Murray and you on guard here at the doors — Rock outside!

(*Rock disappears outside, partly closing the door, Blondin tosses the piece of twisted leather to Brayton, starts for Left 3, looks off and remains on guard. Brayton tosses Robert's sword away — Murray picks it up and starts on his way to Right 3, where he looks off and remains on guard.*)

(*To Brayton, while both descend a trifle down with Robert between them, and Brayton starts to fasten his hands together by means of the piece of twisted leather.*)

But for this expedient — the knave was about to shout to those here!

BLONDIN: Why have interdicted us a door, till you called, master, — so set 'tween us and your peril?

BRAYTON: Raphael himself couldn't have stood out there as we did — abiding to come in and grapple with the devil?

MURRAY (*at Right 3*): This door hath a key — *He exhibits the key — inquiringly for instructions.*)

MILTON: Make her fast.

BLONDIN (*taking off his neck-cloth — tearing off a thick long strip from same — coming to Milton and giving it to him*): Here's for a gag, Master. (*He returns to Left 3.*) (*Robert makes a sudden lurch forward to free himself from Milton's hold.*)

BRAYTON (*grappling with him while Milton retains his hold*): Aye — Merry there — m'lamb! — every man his turn — and give the devil his dues! . . .
(*They start to gag him.—*)

BLONDIN: A cursed loyalist! — we'll carry him off and hang him!

BRAYTON: Marry — he should dangle, Master!

MURRAY (*having locked Right 3, coming down to the settee — throwing Robert's sword there and blowing out all the candles, from the candelabra back of the settee*): We'll swing him up here in the park, under the very nose of the cursed king's minions in there! —

MILTON (*imposing them silence*): Nay! — Fellows — this is a friend's house! —
(*He turns to holding on to Robert — while Brayton stoops and fastens his ankles together with a bit of cord taken from his girt.*)

You hear, Courtney? and yet I would fain see you live. Because your blood's kindred to theirs whose

guest I am — in that measure am I loath to see you murdered — and have the blood of their kinsman on my hands.

(Blondin and Murray appear disappointed. Having blown the candles — Murray goes to the conservatory entrance, and now that there is no longer light back of him — parts the curtains sufficiently to observe outside — through the panes of glass at the rear of the conservatory, off Left. Milton, meanwhile, continuing to address Robert.)

But mark me well — for this!

(Erect, while Brayton is fastening his ankles together — looking Milton straight in the eyes; the gag between his lips and fastened back of his head; his arms fastened back of him.)

'T is true I came hither bent on seeking to win your cousin's favour — true I am not French — I am English, I attest — but if you think there's more in the deed than I've declared — except that every loyalist is not my friend — and you dare soever involve Lady or Miss Scarsdale in this to advance your own suit; I swear before God! that although you were at the earth's furthest end — I'd seek after you there — then I should not spare you, Courtnay!

(As Brayton rises, he addresses the men — the latter acting promptly as he gives the orders)

Everyone now withdraw! — to horse! One of you outside to lead me to mine! Summon Languenoc! Alone I'll take charge of our erring knight!

(Murray brings him the key of Right 3. Blondin opens the park door. He steps outside to Rock — the latter is afterwards seen running off Left. Murray exits, and Brayton last. Music is started in the drawing-room; very faintly, this time only the harpsichord, flute and harp. Only the small candelabra on the wine table, above the

chess table, is still left burning. The room is correspondingly dark.)

MILTON (*While the men make their exit, starting to drag Robert toward the conservatory entrance*): Come, Courtnay — thou wilt rest in the midst o' roses . . . May they be as devoid of thorns as I am of malice toward thee! (*He disappears dragging the form of Courtnay through the curtains in semi-obscurity of the room.*) (*By this time all the men are outside and have disappeared except Brayton, whose shoulder — back turned to the audience — is still perceptible, outside right of the casement of the door.*)

(A pause, during which only the faint strains of the music reach the room.)

BRAYTON (*Suddenly stepping forward, in full view of the opening — addressing someone off Left*): Whom do you seek?

LUCY (*appearing in view*): Elves do I seek.

BRAYTON: Pass! (*She enters simultaneously as Milton comes out of the conservatory. He approaches her near U. L. C.*)

MILTON (*with a gesture for her not to speak*): Sh! — (*Then cautiously to her so that Robert may not hear*) at once go to Lady Scarsdale. (*He points Left 3.*) Say that her nephew having threatened exposure, my men and I have garroted him. He lies there. — (*He points the conservatory*) Say that they must pretend to know nought of this affair. To both I am still *Sieur d'Orsay* — met for the first time. Say all this to them, then return here. — It were best that no one but you should set him to freedom. Enter there — as it were by accident — suggest surprise and display ignorance of ought thou knowest — understand?

LUCY: Yes.

MILTON: No one must enter this room till he's released.

Here's the key of the other door. Go first.

LUCY: At once. (*She starts for Left 3.*)

MILTON (*stepping to her*): And — pray —

(*She stops and turns.*)

To-morrow morn, one of the men will be by the postern gate — pass him word that all is well — (*He extends his hand to her.*) I thank you, Lucy —

(*She takes his hand — with cheerful appreciation — and nodding, she exits Left 3.*)

(*Milton immediately goes after his hat and sword — speaking the while, his eyes toward the conservatory.*)

Mayhap it were wiser to have taken him along? but nay; his fanaticism had provoked such as accompany me to swing him in mid-air ere daybreak!

(*Clock starts to chime the eleventh hour. Milton steps above the center table and blowing a few more lights out, continues uninterruptedly.*) Thou wouldst have been too much a charge, Courtnay — As 'tis, I'll match a better strategy and woman's wits to dispose you judge me less vindicatively in the future. —

(*Having sheathed his sword, on the way to make his exit, he stops in a line with Left 3 — his eyes remain a second in that direction — his thoughts with Alice and Josephine. The clock chimes its eleventh stroke; he glances at it and marches to the threshold. As he stands in the opening, adjusting his hat firmly with both hands, Brayton passes before him and strolls off Left — a slight pause, and Milton follows him briskly.*)

(*In turn the curtains of the conservatory seem to be moving — then, finally — Robert, standing up contrives to slip through between them — losing his balance, he reels against the Right arch — carrying the curtain fully open on that side. Moonlight streams into the room through this*

opening; also through the open park door. The glow of the fire-place, this flood of moonlight and the light from the couple of tapers still burning on the center table contribute the sole lighting of the room.)

(After reeling against the frame of the conservatory Right, Robert braces himself up and seeing his sword on the settee — manages to jump forward once — then, by means of a chair, and finally, and by any device, reaches the settee. Taking up the sword with both hands back of him he succeeds in inserting its point in the cord that holds his feet together — he drives the point into the floor — the cord becomes severed. Dropping his sword and Xing the stage, tugging at the fetters at his wrists — his gaze falls upon the burning candles. He goes there and holding his hands up, back of him, lets the flame of the candle lick the cord — until it ignites it. This can be carried out in the following manner — While in the conservatory the knot is untied and both ends are held one in each hand — an additional piece of fibre — easy to ignite and flame out — is placed in one of the hands. This piece of fibre once ignited — it is easy for Courtnay to free his hands. — Once his hands are free, he quickly slips off the gag from his head. He simultaneously hears the door open Left 3, and wheels about.)

(Enter Lucy. As she sees his form in the semi-obscurity, she gives a slight ejaculation of fright.)

LUCY (after partly recovering her composure): Who is it?

ROBERT: Robert Courtnay. (Then composing his voice — as if nothing out of the ordinary had happened) Where is my cousin?

LUCY: My lady has gone to her room, sir —

ROBERT: Pray go to her and say I still hope she'll come down and speak with Lord Middleton ere he leaves.

LUCY: Yes, sir. (She exits quickly Left 3.)

ROBERT: I will watch you — my fair cousin.— (*He starts to light up all the tapers with one that he plucks out of the candelabra Center*) and ferret you out, d'Orsay! (*Stopping on the way to the settee to light the candelabra there— looking at the gag and cord in his left hand — laughing bitterly, with injured pride*): H'n! h'n! h'n! h'n! . . . Gad! . . .

(*With sardonic laughter he starts to light up the tapers Right Center — slowly the curtain descends.*)

CURTAIN

ACT II

ACT II

THE FOLLOWING EVENING, AT LORD RUSSMORE'S HOUSE,
IN WEST KENSINGTON

Scene — THE LAWN IN FRONT OF LORD RUSSMORE'S
HOUSE.

Time — NEARLY SEVEN O'CLOCK IN THE EVENING.

At Rise of Curtain: Alice is discovered — wearing a riding-habit of plush, or velvet, of a dry-leaf green color, and a large hat, with an ample plume gracefully tilted to one side. She is seated in a rustic arm-chair Center, her left elbow resting upon the arm of the chair, idly stirring up the fallen leaves at her feet with the riding-whip in her hand.

Lord Russmore is standing a few feet away from her, leaning nonchalantly against the rustic table that surrounds the huge tree Left Center, smoking his long pipe and thoughtfully observing his wife.

Now and then, throughout the scene, a few leaves flutter from the trees to the ground.

LORD RUSSMORE (*after blowing out a thin, long cloud of smoke, speaking softly — the tempo at the start of the act is slow and quiet*): Are you not going for your habitual ride, Alice?

ALICE (*turning her head in his direction an instant and smiling graciously*): No —

LORD RUSSMORE: Are you expecting anyone?

(*He replaces the pipe in his mouth.*)

ALICE (*shaking her head negatively*): No, m'lord — (*Then*

rising and walking slowly toward the rustic bench Right Center, striking the leaves on the ground with her whip as she walks) Unless Josephine, who, last night, said she *might* come.

LORD RUSSMORE (*after emptying the barrel of his pipe against the palm of his hand, leaving it beside the jar of tobacco, on the rustic table, strolls toward her, and sits on the arm of the rustic chair which she has just vacated, facing her*): Alice — do you know I have been seriously concerned about you of late?

ALICE (*arching her brows in playful surprise, sitting down on the rustic bench*): About me, m'lord?

LORD RUSSMORE: Yes; I find you changed, dear.

ALICE (*smiling, affecting incredulity*): I — changed, Hugo?

LORD RUSSMORE: Perhaps I do not express it very clearly.

I mean that at times, I have found you looking — well: so depressed — then, by turn, in excellent mood; and, withal, at times, exceedingly nervous: in the state such as you are to-night, for instance.

ALICE (*smiling and attempting to remonstrate*): M'lord —

LORD RUSSMORE (*continuing uninterrupted*): — You always assure me that you are not ill, and yet, at the same time, your manner betrays unmistakable symptoms of over-wrought nerves.

ALICE (*same playful manner*): Oh, pray, m'lord — cease.

LORD RUSSMORE (*going up and reclining on the arm of the rustic bench, beside her*): Now — Alice — what is it, dear?

ALICE (*affecting unconcern, smilingly shaking her head, looking down on the ground before her*): I'm sure the ailment of which you speak exists but in your fancy, m'lord —

LORD RUSSMORE: No, it does not, Alice. I've never wished to dwell on the subject before, but *now* I'm determined not to accept an evasion for an answer. There

must be some reason for your condition, and you can give it to me if you wish it.

ALICE (*same manner*): Must I?

LORD RUSSMORE: Please. — This week, His Majesty orders me away to Chichester and the neighboring towns.

ALICE (*with a show of surprise*): To what purpose, my lord?

LORD RUSSMORE (*smilingly, with semi-derision*): An idle one: To study the situation there probably from the middle of this week on to the following Wednesday. (*With increasing amusement*) This in order that His Majesty may hold daily sessions of his Council, meanwhile, in peace, without me.

ALICE: Sessions of the Council without you?

LORD RUSSMORE: Aye! — for it seems my bellicose spirit might oppose the negotiations they intend to promulgate. — The pretext does not deceive me. But the King commands, and I shall obey. — However, enough that I shall fret over this, and I wish my mind relieved in its concern for you. I see that you are not well — and I want to know the reason. — Won't you confide in me?

ALICE (*evasively*): In truth, I would — but suppose the reason were — a question — which I should dread to have you answer.

LORD RUSSMORE: Then, rely upon my discretion and consideration to answer. — What is it, Alice?

ALICE: Well — (*She rises, reflecting. A pause, and then, laughing softly, she proceeds down stage, away from him.*) Ah — I'm afraid you will laugh at my absurdity. At times I almost think myself stupid; but I suppose it's just like a woman's heart — (*Aside, as she moves still further away — I must again mislead him*) —

LORD RUSSMORE: Well, Alice?

ALICE (*circling back toward him*): Promise me that you shan't laugh —

(*He shakes his head negatively.*)

Well —

(*She stands, pausingly beside him toying with the lace of his collar. Presently, she winds one arm about his shoulder and speaks, as it were, with intense feeling*)

— Pledge me your word that you shan't go and fight for the king — that such is not your purpose in going to Chichester — I've been dreading to hear of it every day!

LORD RUSSMORE (*Regarding her with astonishment — rising*): Well — ! upon my faith. And it is this? — Of all the fancies! (*He moves away, unable to repress his laughter — then he faces her again*) And you have been tormenting yourself with such notions? Egad! if it were anyone but you saying this, I should sincerely believe that person indulging in sarcasm.

ALICE (*poutingly*): There — you see, Hugo — I knew you would laugh. You make me almost regret that I told you — except that you have not reassured me as yet.

LORD RUSSMORE (*coming up to her — taking her hands. Speaking with amusement*): Well — be this the cause: You can now dispel all anxiety. (*He finally lets go her hands and clasps his own behind him, speaking, humorously, satirically.*) His Majesty will not let me depart neither from London, nor from his person; except when my absence becomes desirable, by the fact that I might defeat some further negotiations, instituted in behalf of peace. . . . Each time then, I shall be sent on to Chichester, I know, but during the war, have no fear, my destination will never be the battle-ground — Never!

ALICE: Oh, I'm so relieved. His Majesty is such a sensible man!

LORD RUSSMORE: I quite disagree with you.

ALICE (*turning. With playful remonstrance*): Oh, m'lord — lèse Majesté . . .

LORD RUSSMORE: Oh! as to his good sense, I agree — Only I meant, he did not consult —

ALICE: Your own poor one?

LORD RUSSMORE: If so you wish to call it. (*Then becoming thoughtful*) But it is this, Alice: The forced inaction of the very men who are truly devoted to him and have been at all times public figures by his side, now presents a very pitiable and demoralizing spectacle to the people who had faith in them. Meanwhile, William is gaining a number of followers. The most zealous among these employ every means to influence the weak: circulating his literature, or the false report of some exploit. Why, just judge from this: It was rumored this afternoon that ten thousand of the King's best soldiers had surrendered to William. Ten thousand men — mark me well — at a single stroke. Can you even conceive the possibility of it?

ALICE (*who, her back turned to him, has manifested her joy at the tidings — now turning composedly and facing him*): But — supposing the report were true —

LORD RUSSMORE (*with a wave of the hand. Moving away*): Utterly impossible!

(*While he is not looking, Alice claps her hands with childish glee. She resumes her look of indifference as he turns and faces her again.*)

— Nevertheless — incredible though it was — there were scores who believed it. Ah, Alice, would that I were permitted to take the field with a handful of the men I know — But nay, His Majesty enjoins me to

stay near him; and my sword must dangle at my side through the streets: a mere toy for the populace to gape at!

ALICE: Oh — I know — you would have preferred wielding it instead of the pen. But does *even* a *King's* favour justify such zeal, m' lord?

LORD RUSSMORE (*who has been strolling about with growing animation*): It much less excuses cowardice. (*Halt-ing*) Think of it, dear: men whom he has befriended are daily deserting his standards and flocking to those of the Orange Prince. Could I still entertain *one* single claim to your respect if *I* proved as base as they? Nay! Consequently, as long as James wields England's sceptre he is my *King* — and, as such, to devote my sword to his service appears to me my sacred as well as my imperative duty! — In fact, the only duty which does not admit of any other consideration whatsoever! (*His words convince Alice that he would not even spare Milton. — Idly strolling toward the huge tree, she turns in front of the rustic table — Left Center.*)

ALICE: I fear that a woman's heart fails to comprehend the meaning of the word "duty" in that sense and to such an extent, m' lord. (*Her voice is sad — gentle and without reproach.*)

LORD RUSSMORE (*simply and with kindness*): Not when you stop to consider, Alice, how deeply indebted I am to him. Then, too, dear, it was he who on the advent of my journey to France, seven years ago, where I had met you, granted me on my return your recall from exile.

ALICE: That was only partly repairing an injustice, m' lord. I cannot love the King the more for that.

LORD RUSSMORE (*realizing his error*): Of course not — you couldn't — I know you could not now, on any

account: The wrong was unfortunately irreparable. But what I really wished to say, for my part, is this: That in granting me the favor of your recall — in that one act alone, irrespective of all others, His Majesty bestowed upon me the favor which I still value most to this day: the possession of your dear self, Alice — the best and gentlest in womankind! — For we *have* been happy, — have we not? —

ALICE: Oh, yes; we *have*, Hugo — (*She returns his ardour, leaning against him and pressing the hand which retains hers*) — And I hope, for my part, you are never disenchanted, m'lord.

LORD RUSSMORE (*affectionately — drawing her closer to him and laughing*): Ho! ho! ho! — How could this ever be! . . .

(*At that precise moment, Henry, the five-year old son of Lord and Lady Russmore, who has run out on the balcony over the portico, speaks to his father. He is a lovable little fellow, with a frank, bright face, and golden hair. He pokes his little arms through the bars of the railing, extending his hands as he speaks.*)

HENRY: Papa —

(*Mary, his governess — a kindly, matronly woman of fifty — comes out after him.*)

LORD RUSSMORE: Yes, my son — papa will go in instantly.

(*Mary leads the child back indoors. Lord Russmore starts for the steps to the house, addressing his wife.*)

I promised our son to teach him a new trick with his blocks. Will you excuse me, dear?

ALICE (*after nodding a smiling assent*): Are you going to Whitehall to-night?

LORD RUSSMORE (*before entering, turning at the top of the steps*): Yes, presently — But I am first to inquire at

Sir Andrews to learn definitely where his Majesty desires us to assemble.

(He enters the house.)

(The red glow of the setting sun, upon the trees of the park Right, and the garden Left, has gradually ere this disappeared, and the evening shades have very slowly begun to fall.)

(Upon Lord Russmore's exit, a belfry-bell in the neighborhood begins to toll seven o'clock, with a long, dismal, reverberating stroke.)

(Alice, meanwhile, walks meditatively Left.)

ALICE *(after he has gone in, suddenly raising her head, speaking with suppressed delight)*: Ten thousand men captured by William's troops:

(Second stroke of the Bell.)

And what Hugo proclaims an unlikely feat of arms is my brother's own exploit!

(Third stroke of the Bell.)

Oh, I begin to fear I'm turning out now even worse a rebel

(Fourth stroke of the Bell)

than I was before my marriage. —*(She approaches the fence D. L.)* I wonder what can be preventing Josephine?

(Fifth stroke of Bell.)

She said she would come, last evening.

(Sixth stroke of the Bell.)

(Alice looks down the road, toward off Right.)

(Simultaneously enter Leyburn and two other men, from along the road L. I. They proceed across the stage toward R. I., without remarking her presence: the wall of the garden Left shielding her from sight, as they come on and pass toward the right.)

(Alice indifferently observes them as they walk at an even pace along the roadway.)

(*Seventh stroke of the Bell as the three men enter L. I.*)
 (*Leyburn and the other two men are wrapped in long, trailing black cloaks — the sombre hats partly hiding their features.*)

LEYBURN (*as he reaches about half way across, walking down stage ahead of the others, pointing ahead to them in the distance*): 'T is called the "Cross-Road-Inn." There'll be eight of us there! — (*They exit off R. I. E.*)
 (*As they cease talking, Alice stops looking at them, and her eyes lifted toward the house, idly mounts, diagonally up stage.*)

(*A mere second after the exit of the three men, Peter appears on the scene, backing on from R. I. E., looking after the three retreating figures, his cap in his hands, as if he had but extended it to them for alms. Peter is an old man, grey-reddish haired, and carrying a small barbaric pipe-organ on his back. He stops a few steps away from the entrance, and then quickly reverts his eyes toward the house. Upon perceiving Alice, who has reached about half way across stage, — with a vitality totally unexpected in one seemingly as old, he approaches the fence — about D. R. C.*)

PETER (*leaning over the rail and calling in low suppressed tones*): Your ladyship . . . your lady —

(*Alice turns and sees him half motioning a letter to her.*)

ALICE (*instantly coming down and then suddenly recognizing him*): Peter! . . . Is it you?—

(*She gives a cautious glance toward the house. Her voice, also suppressed and low, vibrates with gladness.*)

PETER: Old Pete — aye! your ladyship. Your old-time, faithful servant, turned musician for the nonce!

ALICE: And in such disguise. —

PETER: 'T is the dressing of the part I play. I precede the master whither he goes, reconnoitering and playing

on my instrument to indicate to him that the way or the place is safe.

ALICE: Dear old Peter! — And my brother, at this moment, where is he?

PETER (*nodding off Right*): At the “Cross-Road-Inn” — I bear this letter from Miss Scarsdale — Begging your ladyship’s leave, she is the bonniest —

ALICE: Aye; but, Peter, Lord Russmore is indoors: He must n’t surprise us conversing.

PETER (*swinging his instrument upon his back*): And I may not tarry, your ladyship: Whither the Master goes, there do I ever precede him, and wherever he is, there must I be on the lookout —

(*Cap in hand he backs away to Left, and raising his eyes, glancing at Heaven*) — But God grant the old days back soon again. — (*He turns about, putting on his cap, and proceeds toward L. I.*) Good-night, your Ladyship . . . (*His voice is low; his expression is happy.*)

ALICE (*very softly, wafting the words after him*): — Good-night! . . . (*She comes to the left of the gate-way Center, at the railing and watches him off.*) — To think of him thus accoutered — (*Then with genuineness.*) The dear, old soul! Such as he always lay down their lives for those whom they love and serve. — (*She looks after him a moment longer and then drops her eyes to the letter which she has, meanwhile, mechanically unsealed. She gives a cautious glance toward the house, before reading it.*) “Alice — I am going to meet him to-night, at the “Cross-Road-Inn.” Peter is escorting me there with Lucy. Afterwards, I will immediately come to your house, and I shall have something of great importance to communicate to you. *He* leaves London to-night, for several days. Wait for me — Josephine.” — (*From now on, the stage gradually grows darker.*)

The "Cross-Road-Inn"—If I only dared:—'tis so near. . . .

(She is interrupted in her deliberation by the sound of her husband's voice.)

LORD RUSSMORE *(coming out of the house and turning around at the top of the steps, addressing himself to his son within)*: Good-night, my boy —

(As he turns to descend, he perceives Alice with the note still in her hand.)

Is this a message for me?

ALICE: This? — Oh, no! *(She begins quickly to tear it; then, at the same time, affecting a cheerful manner)*

Er, — shall I expect you home early? —

LORD RUSSMORE *(placing his arm about her waist and walking slowly toward the gate D. C.)* I fear it will again be an all-night conference, Alice. I would therefore recommend that you retire early and not wait for me. *(Stopping before the gate)* I want my wife to become soon her real, former self again. —

ALICE *(smilingly)*: But I am my real self, — always, Hugo.

LORD RUSSMORE: Oh, no, you are not. Look at your nervous fingers tearing up this paper. Do they not indicate a serious condition? —

ALICE *(crumpling the pieces in her hand, enforcing herself to laugh)*: I fear you are a wretched alarmist, m'lord.

LORD RUSSMORE *(scrutinizing her face, with affection)*: Ah, fain would I mistrust my eyes, Alice. —

ALICE *(playfully, slightly drawing away, knowing from the nature of his gaze that he will presently kiss her)*: You can, m'lord — else, they'll find pretext to keep His Majesty waiting. —

LORD RUSSMORE *(laughingly)*: Very likely — *(He opens the gate Center. He then steps back and kisses her.)* Good-night! . . .

(He swings through the gate and starts rapidly Left.)

ALICE: Good-night! —

(He raises his hat to her, nodding smilingly in response, as he is about to walk off L. I., down the roadway.)

ALICE *(after looking in his direction an instant, heaving a sigh)*: Ah, what would I not give to be able to trust him with the simple truth — *(She reverts her eyes to the right and re-opens the gate Center.)* The “Cross-Road-Inn” . . . I wonder if I dare now — *(Again she looks the way her husband departed and deliberates)* But he said he would not return till morning — and so . . . *(As she once more turns her eyes Right, disposed to go, she sees Josephine who has entered R. I., and who, after casting a furtive glance over her shoulder, comes rapidly to her in a state of panic.)*

JOSEPHINE: Oh, Alice! — Alice! . . .

ALICE *(to her encounter)*: Josephine — why, dearie, what is it? —

(Josephine passes by her and goes rapidly toward the Left of stage and looks off a second.)

JOSEPHINE: Oh, I don't know — *(She comes back to Alice — they meet near the gateway Center.)* Only — after Peter had left us, Lucy and I went toward the indicated Inn — We found a score of men about to surround it. Lucy, quick-witted, ran in to give warning.— Left alone, I became terrified and came hither, hoping still to find Peter: he must alarm the men. . . .

ALICE: He went away after giving me your letter: But then, these men, whom you saw, may be Milton's own?

JOSEPHINE: Nay — I heard one of them say: “Dead or alive — take him! he's a cursed yellow spy!”

ALICE *(brusquely facing Right, looking in the direction of the Inn)*: Oh! . . .

JOSEPHINE: What can we do? . . .

ALICE *(facing her and quickly entering the gate)*: Do? —

(*She starts toward the house*) Arm ourselves and go to his aid — Even represent that he's Lord Russmore's brother, on the way, if necessary to gain assistance!

JOSEPHINE (*following her up to the Center, speaking as Alice exits into the house*): Ah, make haste, Alice! — (*Then, she turns about and comes down to the fence rail again.*) — Oh, if Robert has ought to do with this ambush, let him beware! —

(*Three shots are heard, muffled, and in the distance, in quick succession. Josephine stifles a cry. She leans over the railing, looking off — Right, in suspense. A brief pause.*)

— They've begun attack on the Inn; they will try to force an entrance . . . Ah, provided he can only hold out till we reach there —

(*A distant clamor is heard of "Surrender," "In the name of the King open," etc.*)

— But when they've battered down the doors: Oh, may God help him then! If this be Robert's work, he will give no mercy . . . Oh, *why* does n't Alice come! . . . (*The light in Alice's room is lit, at the second story, near the balcony. As Josephine proceeds quickly toward the house, to go and hasten Alice; as she reaches the foot of the steps, a single shot resounds, in the nearer vicinity than the three former ones. The light in Alice's room is simultaneously put out. At the sound of the report, Josephine turns about at the foot of the steps, and stares Left in momentary suspense.*)

That report was nearer. . . .

(*Coming quickly down to the railing.*) Then, he must have escaped and they are pursuing him! . . . (*On her way down, she turns again impatiently toward the house, murmuring*) — Alice. . . .

(*Instantly, while her back is thus turned, enters from*

R. I. E. without his coat, in shirt sleeves, panting for breath, running with a halting step, at the same time delving with one hand into the opening of his shirt and extracting a package of papers — Milton Lantenay.)

MILTON (*his sword in his right hand, and the package of documents in the left, his eyes upon Josephine, running to the Center and resting one hand on the stone post of the gateway, calling to her as he comes on*): Josephine . . . Josephine —

JOSEPHINE (*turning about and coming down to him*): Milton! . . .

MILTON (*half faint, supporting himself on the gate post, speaking brokenly*): Conceal these papers . . . My life — they may take — But these . . . they must not! . . .

JOSEPHINE: Oh, Milton — are you hurt? . . .
(*She passes out of the gate.*)

MILTON (*clasping his right arm with his left*): Nay —

JOSEPHINE (*on the instant, catching sight of Alice coming out*): Alice —

ALICE (*seeing the two — hurriedly coming down, dropping the two pistols on the rustic table on the way*): Milton — It is you . . .

MILTON (*raising his head — half bitterly*): Aye —
(*Josephine takes a few steps Right, looking off.*)

JOSEPHINE (*to Alice*): Hide him, Alice — I hear them coming —

ALICE (*taking hold of him*): In the garden — quick! — I pledge to see you safe, Milton. . . .

MILTON (*weak, resisting, apprehensively, for her sake*): Wait! — is not Lord Russmore home? —

ALICE: Nay — He's away for the night. . . .
(*They mount toward Left & E.*)

JOSEPHINE (*Resolutely, to herself*): Oh, I will warn Alice

of what occurred last night — (*As she goes to extreme Right to watch*) She must be put on her guard 'gainst my scurvy cousin! . . .

MILTON (*to Alice, as he stands near the entrance to the garden Left 2*): Josephine has my papers — Save them — they mean everything to our cause — I . . .

JOSEPHINE (*leaving her position and coming back through the gateway*): Away, Milton — I see them coming. . . .
(*Exit Milton; Alice comes down instantly.*)

ALICE (*bringing Josephine down, till both stand in the open gateway*): Now! to foil them, dearie . . . Do as I do — Look the way he went and turn not about!
(*Josephine imitates Alice, intently looking Left down the roadway; Alice standing in the Center of the gate opening, Josephine inside, leaning over the railing.*)

(*They have barely assumed this position, when the tramp of feet announces the approach of the pursuers.*)

ALICE (*cautiously, under her breath*): Don't look, dearie, save this way! . . .

(*Leyburn, at the head of several men, appears R. I.*)

(*Moonlight now very gradually begins to light up the scene.*) (*Upon perceiving the forms of the two women, Leyburn stops abruptly at the entrance, and spreads his arms cross-wise to arrest the others, close behind him. Alice, at this moment, knowing them to be within earshot, addresses Josephine, raising her voice as it were under excitement, but without ceasing to look Left.*)

(*Oh, 'tis surely some fugitive! — wounded. Noticed you? . . .*)

LEYBURN: Hark ye! 'tis the right track! — Follow hence!
(*The men all start rapidly across; some armed with swords, others with muskets.*)

ALICE-JOSEPHINE (*at the sound of Leyburn's voice, and the men starting across — appearing to be greatly startled*)

— *stepping back with alarm as they pass; Josephine taking the cue from Alice*): Oh! . . .

(They come back to the railing as the men disappear Left.)

(A pause of waiting till the sound of their feet has diminished.)

JOSEPHINE *(clutching Alice's arm as the latter turns)*: Oh, Alice, Alice — how resourceful!

ALICE *(starting up)*: Ah, there is yet a possibility of their returning!

JOSEPHINE: I'll keep watch!

(Milton simultaneously comes out Left 2. Alice goes to him. The stage gradually grows lighter; the branches and the leaves cast their shadows in the moonlight. On his entrance Left 2, Milton sways toward the floral pedestal which stands in line with the garden entrance, a few steps away from it. He braces his right arm, fully extended against the flower-urn on top of the pedestal. He speaks haltingly, a sort of nervous titter, at times, dividing his sentences.)

MILTON: Alice — I had no intention . . . of coming here — I took what way I could — I shouldn't have risked involving you. . . .

(He compresses his right arm with his left; his sword is still in his right hand) Only they'd deprived me of the use — of my arm. . . .

ALICE *(for the first time seeing the blood that stains the white sleeve)*: — You are wounded . . .

MILTON: The shot of a bad marksman.

JOSEPHINE *(leaving her position by the railing, and coming up)*: Oh, Milton — This is dreadful! — Is he badly hurt? —

ALICE: Josephine, dear, you mustn't take your eyes off the road!

(*Josephine at once returns to her post. Alice prepares to tear up his sleeve as far as the elbow.*)

MILTON: Nothing more than a flesh wound — I think —
(*He tries to assist Alice.*)

ALICE: Nay, let me! it's bleeding profusely, and you're weak from loss of blood — Support yourself on me —

MILTON: Nay, I'll rest too heavily — Wait. . . .

(*He steps to below the opening — Left 2, and braces his left arm, fully extended, against the garden wall, Alice follows him there*): — H'n! H'n! H'n! H'n! . . . I'm mostly weak from exertion. . . . First, — it took all my strength to disarm two men that had entered the Inn — then, all the speed I could command to rush out and evade the rest — till I could draw the pack after me . . . so that Lucy . . . should escape —

JOSEPHINE: Where is she now, Milton?

MILTON: Gone to inform the men. . . . They'd but turned in and gone to sleep when I left — I was loath to rouse them —

ALICE: Watch the road carefully, dear, either way — lest they appear.

JOSEPHINE: All is still and I perceive no one.

MILTON (*smiling grimly*): Bless me, your house is the least likely harbour — where either friend or foe will think I've taken refuge. . . . However, the men should be notified; the security of my papers must be assured. They comprise the full record of my mission — had they fallen into their hands, a number of lives had paid the penalty.

ALICE: The instant Lucy comes, Milton, — Josephine will send her back to direct your men hither.

JOSEPHINE: Oh, Alice, she'll not in the least think I've come here; she'll surmise I've gone straightways home.

MILTON: And tarrying here, the while I stay, you both

incur danger. . . . When you've finished dressing my arm, Alice, I will go.

ALICE: Nay, *that* you shall not do. — In your present state, why, 'twere foolhardy; you shall remain here till I otherwise so decide.

JOSEPHINE: I, myself, will go and apprise his men, Alice.

MILTON: Nay, Josephine, stay — I cannot let you both assume all this risk —

ALICE: Going to the "Shallow-Brook-Tavern" entails not the slightest risk to anyone else but you. Yes, go, dearie — but through the other gate: (*She indicates Right 3.*) It's the shorter way — right between the houses, until you reach the road at the rear: the "Tavern" is a short distance to the right. —

MILTON: Josephine, I beg —

ALICE: Nay, sir, you may not even remonstrate.

JOSEPHINE: Here are the documents; 'twere best you kept them now.

(*Alice takes the packet. Milton takes it from her. Alice goes down to the railing to glance down the road, Right and Left.*)

— Rely on me to despatch your men hither — Meanwhile, Milton, tell Alice why you assigned me rendezvous to-night — I may not return here, but send me immediate word of your safety at my house.

(*She moves nearer to him. He lays his left hand upon her shoulder at arm's length. Alice, seeing them thus occupied, raises her over garment and tears a broad strip off her petticoat.*)

Good night . . .

(*With his left arm Milton gathers her close to him and kisses her.*)

MILTON: God bless you! . . . (*He releases her.*)

ALICE (*tearing the piece from her petticoat into strips,*

strolling toward the angle, where the fence-rail and the garden-wall meet Left): Come over here, Milton — (*Josephine moves away toward Right & E.*) — that I may attend to you and watch at the same time: You will keep your eyes in the opposite direction.

JOSEPHINE (*turning at the massive gate Right &*): Ah, Alice, see that he obeys you!

ALICE: Have no fear, dearie.

JOSEPHINE (*as she passes out and then disappears rapidly off U. R.*): Fare you will! . . .

MILTON (*who has not moved from where he stood, when he and Josephine parted, looking after her*): In all this world, there is no woman that I can compare — in courage and unselfishness — to her; . . . (*He reverts his eyes toward Alice*) — and to you, Alice, who made my escape possible.

ALICE: Don't talk, sir! Raise your arm.

MILTON (*raising his arm and at the same time casting a glance toward the house*): Pray, why elect to stand here in full view of the house, where the servants perchance shall espy us?

ALICE: The servants are at their evening meal — where you may see the light shining through the casement. (*She makes a slight gesture, indicating the house beyond the huge iron fence Right.*) Here we can better watch for your men to come. (*Suddenly brightening up at the thought*) But tell me, Milton; about His Majesty's ten thousand soldiers — Lord Russmore said it was a stupid fabrication — and I could hardly repress my utter joy at the tidings. —

MILTON (*as she begins slowly to bandage his arm*): There were no bounds to mine, sister: the King's Council is in a rage — and five thousand Louis have been offered for the capture of him who sold, as 't is believed, the

information to William. — Alas, Middleton, so then in his cups, will never suspect that he was the betrayer. — To-night, I return to William's camp to render full account of my mission; and I go convinced that every barrier must now eventually fall, that's set athwart the Prince's on-coming.

ALICE: Ah, Heaven will that it be so! (*Then, as she takes a fresh strip from the railing of the fence*) And why was it you assigned rendezvous to Josephine?

(*She tears the strip in her hands into narrower ones, to make a sort of taping with which to fasten the first bandage securely to the arm.*)

MILTON: In the interest of *your* happiness. To-morrow, or the following day, Lord Russmore journeys forth to Chichester.

ALICE: Yes — ?

MILTON: Returning the following Wednesday, his arrival will be acted upon as a signal by a number of William's supporters, residing in London, who, on the evening of Lord Russmore's return, *will*, under some pretext or other, gain admittance into the house of each leader of the King's faction. They will set upon each one of these men and have them deported secretly to William's camp.

ALICE: Then, you mean — ?

MILTON: That by such means — the King, on the morrow, will find himself isolated and at the mercy of his Parliament. Lord Russmore, Alice, is unfortunately among those designated for arrest.

ALICE: Oh, Milton, no! . . .

MILTON: Aye; but because he is your husband, and you love him — I give you assurance no harm shall come to him.

ALICE: Oh, but you surely do not *know* him. He would

never give himself up: to his last breath he would fight!

MILTON: I know — be out-numbered and cut to pieces.

But I intend he shall run no such peril.

ALICE: Oh, then you know a way to prevent it?

MILTON: Which is what I desired Josephine to come and explain: — Day after to-morrow, upon reaching William's camp, I shall ask him for some writ, bearing his hand and seal, protecting Lord Russmore against such an attempt. I shall afterwards travel North, but in ample time before Lord Russmore's return, on my way to Reading; I will come through London again, to deliver you this document.

ALICE: Thank you — thank you! — But then, why should you not go directly to these men?

MILTON: Because it were impossible to learn accurately whom they are; themselves members of a secret order, their selection was made by drawn lots — and even the Prince shall not know to whom befell the several tasks. Therefore, his mandatory message must be delivered to you, and yourself, in turn, present it to whomsoever shall seek admittance on that evening: In short, next Tuesday afternoon, at about 3 o'clock, I shall present myself here to deliver you this paper.

ALICE: But, Milton, what if Lord Russmore should happen to return a day earlier from Chichester?

MILTON: It matters not, since he has invited me to call — but it matters much to you, and everything to us: The safeguarding of our plot, as contained in the Prince's order, will be at stake — and that William may rest assured it can fall into no other hands but yours, I must perforce pledge him to come here in person and deliver it. —

ALICE: Ah, indeed, 'tis meet that you should.

MILTON. Under these conditions, knowing his affection for you, I can promise you his aid.

ALICE: Oh, and just think! you are striving to protect the life of one who would not spare yours, came you to grief in the discharge of your *own* duty — Oh, it hurts me —

MILTON: Nay, — (*He suddenly draws erect, as the sound of Peter's instrument is heard in the far off distance*) Listen, Alice! . . . 'T is Peter playing: — by this means he speaks to me and the men, through a code of airs.

ALICE (*coming well down, leaning over the railing, and looking off Left*): What does it signify, Milton?

(*The overture of an air changes abruptly to another air.*)

MILTON (*as the overture ends*): "I am watching." (*Then, as the abrupt change to another air occurs*) "Relief now on its way."

ALICE: He means your men?

MILTON (*turning about and facing Right 3, through which Josephine went to apprise them*): Aye. —

ALICE (*mounting toward the rustic table, glancing toward the servants' quarters at the same time, picking up her hat and turning to him again*): Come you then into the house — where you can abide till they 'rive — and I will cleanse the blood from your arm. —

MILTON (*going toward Right 3, to look off — U. R.*): Nay, Alice, lest in not seeing me here, they go elsewhere; conjecturing that I am gone. — But stay! —

(*The instrument in the distance has suddenly changed air: one that is now slow and weird. Milton steps slightly back toward Center, listening.*)

— Peter is now playing "Conceal yourself — Enemy." (*He feels for the package of records, mechanically, and afterwards takes them out, from within the opening of*

his shirt.) I will again trust these unto your keeping —
(He gives them to her, then turns, looking around Right)
 — whilst, hereabout, I seek some other cover — both
 on the alert, Alice, till the men come. —

ALICE (*doubtfully*): Hereabouts, — nowhere else shall
 you find shelter as safe as in the house, Milton, —
(She darts down to railing and looks off — Right and Left.
She comes up again.) — that I may provide you with
 a coat too: disguised, you may afterwards speed on
 your way. *(As she comes up)* But in the state you are,
 your pursuers would be *sure* to recognize you —
(Back to the rustic table, as she picks up the pistols there.)
 — Come . . . *(She starts violently, as she sees the dim*
form of someone running across the garden offstage
toward Left & E.) But look you! — *(She backs toward*
him, below Center.)

MILTON (*stepping to her*): Where? —

(Peter's music continues weirdly all this time.)

(Rustle of the trees; leaves fall.)

ALICE (*in like, subdued tones*): There! — there! . . .

(Backing toward him, as she reaches him, she touches
him with her left hand and levels her pistol with the right.)

MILTON (*advancing Left, above her, past her*): 'T is
 Rock. . . .

ALICE (*a step down, addressing Milton, at the same time*
aiming at Left & E.): Friend or foe?

MILTON (*down to her*): A friend — Hold! . . .

(He sets his hand upon her wrist, bringing down the
pistol.)

(Rock is a lad of about fourteen years of age. He has the
appearance of a rustic, but is possessed of rare keenness;
he is fleet as an arrow and agile as a cat.)

ROCK (*breathlessly, off Left & E.*): Master! . . . *(Then as he*
passes in, through Left & E.) Master! *(Cap in hand,*

past the flower-urn, he leans upon it) Away hence with me! else be ye a-hiding.— With intent o' surrounding ye, a score or more o' cut-throats o'errun the high-ways. . . .

(He simultaneously darts down to the railing to glance off Left.) They be a seekin' for ye! . . .

MILTON: Where are the men?

ROCK *(twisting around, looking Right, then coming up)*: Making their way hither, round about, this side o' the river, till well within the foe's line: taking to the tree-tops, I saw them as I passed o'erhead. Now I be informing Peter I am with ye! — *(At Left 2 he gives a strident, prolonged whistle, off, in three different keys.)*

ALICE *(who has gone down to the railing to look off, as Rock came up, — now, in turn, coming up and proceeding toward the house, speaking whilst Rock signals Peter)*: I'll go first indoors to prepare for your coming in —

(She pauses a mere second to glance toward the servants' quarters off U. R.) — whilst the servants are still at their meal — to elude pursuit, you will come and assume a disguise. —

(She enters.)

(At the second key of the whistle, Peter abruptly stops playing; at the third key, he starts a new air.)

ROCK: Peter be now a-telling the men. — *(Rock again runs down to the railing to look off.)*

MILTON: Is Languenoc with them?

ROCK: Aye, and hath vowed to eat out the heart of him whose pistol sought after the heart o' ye, Master.

MILTON: Nay; except it be a question of life, let no one provoke an affray at this house and thereby compromise Lady Russmore —

ROCK *(meanwhile intently looking Left)*: Master, I be

now detecting two men advancing; one with a lighted fagot-stick examining the footprints along the way.

ALICE (*at this moment coming out, coming down a couple of steps*): Come in now, Milton; All's perfectly safe.—

MILTON: Remain you here, on guard, Rock — Give signal when the men have arrived and we can all depart. But, above all, caution them to hazard no fight whilst here. . . .

(*He turns toward Alice, and mounts up as far as the foot of the steps*) Ah, Alice, I trust you never have cause to regret your solicitude this night; I should never forgive myself for having ventured hither, before this house —

ALICE (*pressing the package of his records between both her hands*): 'Twas purely in the hope of saving these, you came — and I am glad: Come in —

(*She takes his hand. He mounts up into the recess of the portico. She gives a glance back at Rock, watching by the railing, then enters, closing the portico door after them.*)

(*A slight pause, then Rock slowly backs away from the railing, diagonally up stage, keeping the road Left in sight.*)

ROCK: Marry, if the man with the fagot stick hath a motive as heinous as the face which his light doth show, 't were well to learn his namesake —

(*He goes over to the entrance Left 2, looks off a second then darts directly toward the huge tree Left Center, quickly ascends it and conceals himself high in the foliage — Several leaves fall in his ascension, then all is still, except for the music of Peter, which, still in the far-off distance, is felt sensibly approaching.*)

(*After a slight pause, Robert Courtney, draped in a long, sombre cloak, his hat so adjusted as to conceal his features,*

appears, stealthily, quietly L. I. He comes as far as the corner of the garden wall, and, his right hand, braced against it, peers cautiously around at the house and in the enclosure. As he reaches this position, Leyburn follows him on, carrying a good size piece of branch, ignited in guise of a torch. He carries it in his left hand, trailing it, and examining the ground. Robert extends his left arm out across Leyburn's path, as he, himself, peers around the corner of the wall. Leyburn rises erect and holds his fire-brand aloof Left.)

ROBERT (*speaking over his shoulder, his eyes toward the house, addressing Leyburn in modulated, angry tones, between his teeth*): Stay where thou art! — ne'er a track more shalt thou find, than there were men at thy heels: thou and they are a pack of blunderers, to have even let him suspect thy designs ere *I* arrived — much less have attacked him —

LEYBURN (*cringingly*): But 't was that he was alone, and the occasion seemed rarely opportune. —

ROBERT: Aye, how much so — thou hast convincing proof now! — Put out thy brand!

(Leyburn stamps out the fire of his torch.)

Where didst thou last lose sight of him?

LEYBURN (*indicating over Robert's shoulder toward the bending of the road off R. I.*): Around yon turning, Master Courtnay.

ROBERT: And her ladyship stood where? Proceed to show me.

(The casement at the second story of the house, near the balcony, becomes suddenly lighted, and an undefined shadow passes across the drawn blind.)

LEYBURN (*coming forward*): In yon gateway. —

COURTNAY (*passing him, at the same time observing the lighted window. Speaking over his shoulder, as both are*

facing Right): And with whom? (*He advances to past the Center gateway, so as to keep the foliage of the tree between himself and the window.*)

LEYBURN (*following him to Left of the gateway. Meekly*): I did not know. —

ROBERT (*who is now facing Left, speaking with contemptuous sarcasm and mimicry*): And Lady Russmore stood here, and said as you came within earshot “’T is no doubt some fugitive” — and thou didst not have the wit to put two and two together: that if she saw him, she must have recognized him, and if recognized him: sheltered him — *not* have thus been musing unconcernedly about her brother?

LEYBURN (*exhibiting surprise*): Her brother? —

ROBERT (*bending over the railing — and examining the ground for an indice*): Aye: my cousin hath a miniature of him. Determined to again examine it, — (*He looks steadily at the window*) I resigned myself to wait till she left the house with her mother this evening: his name was full written across the back. (*Turning to Leyburn, who has followed his example, and is examining around*) Thou didst serve me well in discovering his whereabouts: but ill in not notifying me sooner.

LEYBURN (*pointing to the post Left of Center gateway*): Look you, Master Courtnay! —

ROBERT: Which is the proof of my reasoning: the print of a bleeding hand. He was wounded: Lady Russmore has given him shelter.

LEYBURN: What must we do, Master Courtnay?

ROBERT: *That* is the problem: If Lord Russmore’s indoors and is cognizant of his wife’s action, we cannot enter: He is all-powerful with the king, and I will risk to compromise with *no man* for this spy! We’ll therefore seize him after he leaves. Thou hast a poor wit,

Leyburn, but mark me well: If he slip through thy fingers again, — thy brother, now in prison, may rot in his cell ere I raise my hand to secure his freedom.

LEYBURN (*meekly*): Oh, say not so, Master Courtnay: — I'll do my very best to serve thee.

ROBERT: See to it! — (*Indicating Left*) Bid thy men crawl under the hedges along the road — Post two men at the rear of this house. I will look after yonder bridge. (*He suggests off Right.*) Thyself station where thou wilt; muster more men if thou choose, but let no one, *leaving* pass unchallenged — See to it! . . .

LEYBURN (*who has started already to back off Left*): Aye at once, Master Courtnay. — (*So saying, he turns and disappears Left.*)

(*Robert gives a glance at the house, as he wheels about to the right, at the same time mechanically withdrawing the gag from his pocket that was placed on him the previous evening. His pace becomes slower as he looks at it.*)

ROBERT (*looking at the gag, dangling in his left hand*): Egad! I swear thou wilt wear thine own gag, Lantenay! — h'n! h'n! (*He turns facing the house abruptly, as he reaches the end of the railing and stands half concealed in front of the tall, iron, massive fence, clutching same with his left hand.*) I'll stretch such a cordon about thee — that even thy *spirit* may not break past it! . . . (*Gloatingly*) Five thousand Louis offered for thy capture; and with m'lord Russmore in Chichester: 't will be an *easy* hanging — h'n! h'n! h'n! h'n! . . . (*Darkly drawing erect, exultant*) To-night — we settle score, Lantenay. — To-night! . . . (*The last is in voice that is suppressed*) h'n! h'n! h'n! h'n! . . . (*Laughing, he turns about and walks off rapidly R. I.*)

(*Peter's playing in the distance, now stops.*)

(*A pause after Courtnay's exit, during which we become*

aware that Rock is shifting his position in the tree, through the leaves that drop from same to the ground. Suddenly a man — the first of Milton's body-guard — appears, halting a second in the opening Left 2, looking in the direction which Robert took. At a glance, making sure he is gone, he steals down toward the railing, alongside the garden-wall, to observe. Rock, upon perceiving him, makes a brusque movement in the foliage of the tree and whistles twice, softly, toward the lighted window, where he has seen Lady Russmore's shadow cast against the blind. Hearing the familiar whistle, the man at the railing turns, facing up stage — as Rock starts to tumble down the tree. Simultaneously, the light in Alice's room is extinguished.)

(Precisely at that moment when Rock tumbles down the tree, Languenoc, followed by Blondin and another man, waft into sight, through Left 2. The last man to enter runs toward Right 3 to mount guard at that exit, whilst Blondin comes in, then returns to Left 2, likewise to watch.)

(The men represent for the most part, a rough and uncouth appearance. Nothing in their attire should indicate to which faction they belong. Languenoc, Brayton, Murray and Blondin bear a closer resemblance to the swashbuckler type. Languenoc is a trifle less rough looking than the others, but all give the impression of leading a hard, ruthless life. Brayton is a powerful, burly-looking individual; Murray is querulous and wiry; Blondin is thick-set and blond.)

LANGUENOC (recognizing Rock, even ere he passes through Left 2): Lad! — Whe - re is he? . . .

(The man already at the railing, now turns facing the road and looks off Right and Left.)

(Care should be exercised in subduing the voice, yet without decreasing its intensity.)

ROCK (*as he tumbles down and prepares to start toward the railing*): Where the light hath gone out, in yon chamber —

(*He starts down, when he is halted by Brayton who wafts in through Right 3, followed by two other men.*)

BRAYTON (*low, tremulous, immense voice; the moment he sees Rock, as he bursts in*): Whe-re — be he in hid-ing? . . .

ROCK (*pausing on his course just long enough to indicate window*): Where yon casement opens! (*He proceeds D. R. to watch.*)

BLONDIN (*at this point, addressing those up stage, in low, nocturnal tones*): All's well . . .

(*Milton simultaneously appears in the casement of the darkened room.*)

LANGUENOC: Master — come ye down: We'll wedge our way through, though the fiends o' hell contended! —

MILTON: Hold — Where is Miss Scarsdale?

BLONDIN (*stepping forward from the entrance Left 2*): With her maid, safe, at the Tavern.

BRAYTON: Master, I rankle with fire and brimstone; *unleash* me against the scullions!

(*Murray has wafted in Right 3, followed by two more men.*)

MURRAY (*standing below left of the stoop*): Aye! and to me — I pri' thee allot — two scores o' their heads to cr-r-r-r-op!

MILTON: Nay, 't were much time lost and little gained i' the onslaught — a mettle on your prowess, till I and you are away from here.

BRAYTON (*coming down stage. Disconsolate, and in low sepulchral tones*): — And I who'd hoped to heap a monument to the king with their carcasses —
(*He looks fiercely about.*)

MILTON: Languenoc — see that Miss Scarsdale is safely conducted home. Have my horse brought to the rear: We meet at the “Quadrangle” to-night! Order the men under covert. Unless provoked to it, nary a sign o’ life! I shall come down presently. (*He closes the window, draws down the blind, and the light is again made in the room.*)

LANGUENOC (*stepping down to Center*): Harken to me, Fellows! False is he to his oath who conforms not to my dictates — Rock, attend to the master’s horse! Crompton, hence to Mistress Scarsdale. Brayton — Murray — to the rear to seize the two men they propose to station there! — (*He goes down to the railing, as one of the men on guard at the angle of the wall and railing signals to him, indicating that he distinguishes someone in the distance off Left.*)

BRAYTON (*starting for Right 3, followed by Murray*): Marry — that pleases me: — ’tis inaction I despise mostly. . . .

LANGUENOC (*after cautiously glancing off Left, coming up again*): Half o’ ye in yon garden; (*Points Left 2.*) — your eyes and ears open — but nary a sign. The rest o’ ye over there! (*He points Right 3.*)

BLONDIN (*leaving the angle — Left Xing toward Right 3, as he passes Languenoc, motioning Left*): Two of ’em. . . .

(*Languenoc looks the way Blondin motions. All make their exit, he alone is left. He glances at the window again, then reverting his eyes Left, once more, keeping his gaze in that direction, he slowly makes for Right 3. He exits, drawing the massive gate almost closed after him; he hides back of the iron post.*)

(*The disposition of the men has been effected rapidly; the men acting while the next order is given. The instant*

the order was given, Rock darted across the lawn, and disappeared off Right 3; Crompton also exits Right 3; Murray and Brayton exit Left 2; One half of the men exit Left 2; Blondin and the rest Right 3. All become hidden, and there's nary a sign of life.)

(As the last two divisions made their exit, the night breeze again stirs the tree — softly, and leaves drop to the ground all through the successive silence and pause.)

(After a slight pause, Lord Russmore and Sir Andrews enter upon the scene from Left I. Both walk slowly on, at an even pace, their eyes cast to the ground, their hands clasped behind their back — except Sir Andrews, who supports himself upon a short, heavy cane — apparently both lost in deep reflection. Sir Andrews is a patriarchal looking man, with thick locks of curly, gray white hair. Both advance in this manner, until Lord Russmore glances up toward the house and rests his hand upon the gate Center.)

LORD RUSSMORE: I had informed my wife I should remain away all night: I could not foresee His Majesty's indisposition. —

SIR ANDREWS (*halting past Lord Russmore, turning and raising his head from the ground*): Verily, this constant nose bleeding of His Majesty greatly alarms me.

LORD RUSSMORE: Ah, if His Majesty would only permit us to act; — methinks his health would soon improve, through a goodly measure of our acts.

(He parts the gate open) Will you not rest a moment and smoke a pipe, Sir Andrews?

SIR ANDREWS: No, thank ye, my lord — I am going straightways to bed — 't is so seldom we can, these days — (*Raising his cane and pointing off Left*) I still perceive the knave loitering on the road, who so inspected us.

LORD RUSSMORE: I liked not his looks. I will ask his reasons, if he comes by.

SIR ANDREWS (*turning about and going Right*): Good-night, my lord. —

LORD RUSSMORE (*touching his hat in response — entering the gateway*): Good-night, Sir Andrews —

(*Sir Andrews proceeds Right, and exits. Lord Russsmore proceeds toward the rustic table that surrounds the tree, looking up at the lighted window. As he about reaches the rustic table, the window's light goes out suddenly.*)

H'n! Alice shall be agreeably surprised to see me returned so early.

(*On reaching the table, he picks up his pipe and starts to light it.*)

(*As Lord Russsmore now stands, facing down stage, lighting his pipe, Languenoc slowly, slightly pushes the iron gate Right 3, open, pistol in hand, ready to aim at Lord Russsmore, and forbid him to enter the house. However, Lord Russsmore, after lighting his pipe, slowly strolls down to the railing again to look off — Left, in the distance, after the man that is lurking there. He stands so that the huge tree Left Center is directly placed between him and the portico, at the top of the steps. Standing by the railing, Lord Russsmore, smoking tranquilly, blows out two long trails of smoke. At the second puff of smoke, the door of the portico cautiously opened, and from the shadow within, Alice looks out.*)

ALICE (*failing to see her husband, turning to the inner door*):

Come out now — Everything's quiet. —

(*Milton steps out of the house into the portico, his back barely inside the threshold of the outer door as he turns around to his sister. He wears a long black cape, and is carefully muffled in its high collar.*)

(*At the sound of his wife's hushed tone of voice, Lord*

Rusmore slowly removes the pipe from his mouth and his head slowly turns around. The forms of Alice and Milton are only half discernible within the portico. As Alice spoke, Languenoc passed his hand through the iron bars of the gate, levelling his pistol at Lord Rusmore.

MILTON (*as he steps below Alice, within the portico; speaking even before Lord Rusmore has fully turned his head around*): God bless you for your love; and till you behold me here again next Tuesday at three o'clock, be of good cheer — (*He backs out, drawing the door closed after him, saying reverently*) Good-night! —

LANGUENOC (*the instant Milton appears outside, uttering a warning call, hissing the sound more than voicing it*): Master! . . . (*He at the same time opens wide the gate.*) (*At his appearance, Lord Rusmore remains rooted where he stands — At Languenoc's warning call, he takes a step back, unsheathing his sword.*)

(*Milton, upon hearing Languenoc's call and seeing him push open the gate for his egress, without waiting to ascertain the cause, leaps off the Right of the steps and passes through. Lord Rusmore, nonplussed for the instant, the next moment dashes up toward Right 3. The gate quickly slams back and the iron rod, on the other side, is shot into place, locking it.*)

LORD RUSSMORE (*after one futile effort to open it*): Cursed be the bolt!! . . . (*He drops his sword and, hoisting himself on the tip of his toes, passing both arms through the bars, he succeeds to dislodge the rod. Rapidly then picking up his sword and opening the gate, he swerves through, and between the houses, in pursuit — off U. R.*)

(*As Lord Rusmore disappears, the sound of horses' hoofs, moving rapidly away, is heard*

(*The door on top of the portico opens and Alice comes out*

on the balcony. She stands by the railing Right, intently listening. The sound of hoofs continues to be heard.)

ALICE (*with happy relief*): Heaven be praised! He is safely on his way. . . .

(She looks about for signs of anyone — A breath of wind rustles through the trees, and a few leaves fall. Seeing no one about, Alice returns indoor, closing the balcony door. The light goes out behind the lattice of this door.)

(A slight pause, during which the sound of hoofs diminishes.)

(Now, in turn, the men that were concealed off Right, in the bushes, on Languenoc's side, — cautiously come through the iron gate Right 3, and, stooping as they run start Left across the lawn toward the garden entrance Left 2. As the last man, Blondin, starts across, Peter appears bare-headed, wiping his forehead with a red piece of cloth L. I.)

BLONDIN (*halting mid-way in his course, lowering his voice and hailing Peter*): Peter! Go ye not that way: else ye wish ter challenge the devil. Come ye with us!

PETER (*quickly entering the gate Center*): And the master?

BLONDIN: Made good his escape! (*Helping Peter off*)
There's a hole out o' mischief this way!

(They exeunt Left 2.)

(The sound of hoofs has died away by now. Again a breath of wind rustles through the trees — the leaves fall. The light in Alice's room is put out and the house is temporarily dark. The sound of the wind is soft, but dismal; such as where pines grow in a forest and murmur weirdly even on a fine day.)

(Lord Russmore now returns. He slowly passes through the gate, Right 3, retaining hold of it and partly supporting himself. Utterly dejected, his sword limp by his

side, he pauses and his weight closes the gate. Leaning heavily against it, his head sunk between his shoulders, he raises his hand and brushes it across his forehead, as if to alleviate the suffering of his mind, — his eyes the while cast to the ground before him. Suddenly light is made back of the two ground windows of the house, and the darkness outside is made lighter. As it were conscious of this and his thoughts gradually centering upon his wife, indoors, Lord Russmore slowly raises his head, his face transitiving from pain to anger, from dejection to resolve. His hand gradually clutches the pommel of his sword — and, drawing erect, swinging his hat on — he starts for the steps with a firm step. His hand rests a few moments on the knob of the portico door; then, resolutely he enters, shutting the door quietly after him. A soft swish of the wind — leaves fall and the curtain slowly descends.)

CURTAIN

ACT II — SCENE II

THE FAMILY DRAWING-ROOM, WITHIN LORD RUSSMORE'S HOUSE. JUST BEFORE THE LATTER ENTERS.

Discovered, at rise of curtain, HENRY, seated on the hearth-rug, in front of the fire-place, occupied in constructing a castle out of wooden blocks; and Alice entering from Right I., and crossing to Left Center, where she empties the fragments of Josephine's letter out of one of her gauntlets into the palm of her hand. Henry's childish form is silhouetted against the ruddy glow in the grate, the latter illumining his little face, and tinging his golden hair with red.

ALICE (*as she crosses*): Isn't my darling getting tired?

(For sole answer, Henry shakes his head from side to side negatively, after a child's fashion when his whole mind's absorbed.)

(Alice crosses to the fire-place with the fragments of Josephine's letter and pinch by pinch drops it into the grate — watching it burn.)

(Suddenly and noiselessly the door Left I opens and Lord Russmore crosses the threshold. Alice does not see him; he stops and watches her in her occupation. His brows are knit and every line of his face suggests the coming storm.)

HENRY (first to catch sight of his father — pointing with pride at the incomplete castle): Papa, loo' —

(Alice drops the last fragments and turns.)

ALICE (quickly suppressing her surprise): Why . . . Hugo. — (She contrives to smile happily, and goes to his encounter.)

(He closes the door with a jerk.)

LORD RUSSMORE (dryly): Yes — (And, ignoring her movement of welcome passes her, and proceeds to the settee, U. R., speaking as he goes up) — Send the child away! . . .

ALICE (remains where she stood, mechanically following him with her eyes. He deposits his cape and hat on settee.)
(With the prescience of evil): What — has happened?

LORD RUSSMORE: I shall inform you when the child has gone. (This is said without looking at her, proceeding toward the window U. C. where he remains with his back turned to the room, his hands clasped behind him.)

ALICE (reverting her eyes from her husband to Henry — going toward the latter and addressing him, her voice tremulous): Darling — Papa wishes to speak to maman — Come, darling. . . .

HENRY (looking up and then rising with docility): Wi' —
maman? —

ALICE: Yes, my darling. Baby can come back to play in a little while.

HENRY (*as his mother leads him fondly toward the door*):
Leedle w'ile? —

ALICE: Yes, my sweetheart — Go find Mary. — (*Stooping and kissing him at the door*) You dear darling! . . .
(*Exit Henry R. I. E., to look for Mary. Alice closes the door, then coming forward, speaks eagerly.*)

Now, Hugo, — what is it? — What has happened? —

LORD RUSSMORE (*turning an infuriated countenance to her. Coming forward*): You! . . . you! . . . (*Halting and glaring at her.*) That you should even ask me! . . .

ALICE: I don't know what you mean?

LORD RUSSMORE: *This then!* — that upon returning home unexpectedly, I surprise my wife in the embrace of another!

ALICE (*starting to half realize the situation, and the reason for his action and words*): Oh, no-no-no-no! . . . It isn't so! . . .

LORD RUSSMORE: I saw with my own eyes, Madam!

ALICE: But still — you mustn't believe me capable —
(*A sudden look of apprehension comes to her face.*) —
Oh, my God! you say you saw! — Oh, then — you must have . . . Hugo! *what is it you have done?* . . .

LORD RUSSMORE: Oh, be re-assured, Madam, if that alone concerns you: lovers like thieves do not face punishment, who can still resort to flight!

ALICE: M'lord! — can I believe that you speak such words to me?

LORD RUSSMORE: *Who else* should they be spoken to, Madam? *Who else* but you so far forgot decency and honor as to commit the act of a wanton!

ALICE: Hugo! — Don't you dare! don't you dare! You have not the *right!* . . .

LORD RUSSMORE: *Right?* — When I can thus account for your strange moods of the last month — and your state of nervousness, *to-night*, in anticipation of this meeting?

ALICE: Oh, it is too — too horrible! . . .

LORD RUSSMORE (*uninterruptedly*): Then, that letter which you tore at my departure — your inquiries then as to when I should return — evidently that same letter being destroyed at my entrance! My coming home; the light in your room — (*This sudden thought transfigures him. He glares at her. A short pause, then in low, suppressed tones*) Tell me! — He was there! . . .

(*Alice becomes still as marble, staring at him as if hypnotized — Suddenly she breaks the spell; at first, weakly; then, forcefully.*)

ALICE (*weakly*): No — no! . . . (*Vehemently*) No! No! —

LORD RUSSMORE: He was there! (*Same suppressed tones; but positive.*)

(*With clenched hands, advancing threateningly toward her*) Why don't you deny it! . . . (*Forcefully.*)

ALICE (*recoiling tremblingly — joining her hands in appeal*): Hugo!

LORD RUSSMORE (*pressing his hands to his temples, turning away*): God! . . .

ALICE (*appealingly — toward him*): Ah, m'lord; nothing of this — nothing that you *think* is true! . . . Nothing! — not even that letter was from him —

LORD RUSSMORE (*sharply — turning upon her*): Who from then?

ALICE: It was from — (*She stops abruptly, afraid to even risk compromising Josephine*) — Oh, I'm afraid to even tell you that — But it proves nothing!

LORD RUSSMORE: Proves *nothing*?

ALICE: Oh, you cannot possibly think such monstrosity

of me, Hugo? It is too unfair . . . too unjust. . . .

(*With pathos*) If you have really *cared* for me, m'lord — you cannot now entertain such thoughts of me? . . .

LORD RUSSMORE: We love inasmuch as we respect,
Madam: no *more!* No *less!*

ALICE: Oh, Hugo — *How* can you —

LORD RUSSMORE: You choose to make appeal to these sentiments in me which in love's purest sense I bore you — and yet: *not one word* in vindication of yourself — indifferent to my pain and humiliation! — Hither I have come, hoping 'gainst hope — despite even the proofs presented to my own eyes — that you would assert your innocence; at *least* advance some likely plea — but, instead, your one palpable thought, your sole concern *remains* to shield this thief of my good name! —

ALICE: Oh, Heaven give me strength! —

LORD RUSSMORE (*uninterruptedly*): Obviously, then — *his* safety is of more account to you than *my* honor — but nonetheless — *honor* still means *ev-e-rything* to me! and the man who has outraged it must now reckon with me!! . . .

ALICE (*with increasing alarm*): What will you *do?*

LORD RUSSMORE: *Do?* — *If* my equal, *fight* him! — *If not!* Have him scourged and shot, as he deserves! . . .

ALICE: But he escaped — You failed to recognize him? . . .

LORD RUSSMORE: Aye! — But *you* are here to inform me!

ALICE (*wildly, recoiling from him*): Oh, no-no-no! . . .
you will not force me to do that! . . .

LORD RUSSMORE: My *fixed* resolve, Madame!

ALICE: No-no! — but you must *not*, Hugo . . . you must not. . . .

(*With pathos. He stands glaring at her.*)

Oh, what is it I must say to move you. . . .

(*She kneels. The moonlight that streams in the room, through the window U. Center, reaches to where she is kneeling.*)

See . . . I implore you . . . on my knees — If you only knew . . . M'lord . . . Oh, — I'm so frightened, Hugo . . . I cannot *think* . . . But I can't . . . I can't! — I don't dare to. . . . Because, — because it's for your sake that I cannot. . . . Won't you believe that? It's for your sake — Won't you trust me? —

LORD RUSSMORE: I distrust all motives that have for object to shield him. — I want the *truth!* ruse can nowise justify what I *saw!* —

ALICE: But listen! listen, Hugo! — even admitting, on the one hand, that you have reason to think as you do, but still contending on the other, that what I say and claim *is* true; that even higher a motive than my present duty to you, m'lord — than obedience to your command — forces me to remain silent —

LORD RUSSMORE: Then, I do say this to you, in turn: that you have not the *right* to withhold your confidence from me and that it is my prerogative to *exact* it from you!

ALICE: Merciful Heaven — what shall I do? . . . Alas, I can not tell you anything, Hugo — not even defend myself. . . . For pity's sake, then — Can you not see? . . .

LORD RUSSMORE: Enough of this, Madam! First of all, I demand that you reveal his name! —

ALICE: Nay! nay! — you will drive me mad.

LORD RUSSMORE: Tell me his name!

ALICE: Oh, I'm afraid of you . . . Why are you so pitiless? . . . Already, anger has made you blind to aught I have been to you — to all I now suffer. . . . But I must — I *must*, still keep silent, and I *will* still

do what I deem is right! — Aye! rather will I submit to anything you say — do *anything*: save in this: because I cannot! — Do you not see I can't speak? and I will *not*! because . . . I cannot, Hugo . . . I can not . . . I can . . . not . . . Hugo . . . I can . . . not . . .

(She cries, burying her face in her hands.)

LORD RUSSMORE: Then you leave me no other alternative but to compel you! *(He goes to the bellrope Left, and pulls it: a distant bell is heard.)*

So be it! . . .

(He returns to the Center.)

I am your husband, and command your obedience — I overheard this man's words — to expect him next Tuesday afternoon, during my absence: Unless you consent to furnish me his name and address, that I may seek him ere then — on that day, mark you! I shall compel you to decoy him into my presence.

ALICE *(staring at him. With smothered exclamation)*:
Oh! . . .

LORD RUSSMORE: — In the meantime, keeping you closely confined.

(His tone is icy and matter-of-fact.)

ALICE: Hugo —

LORD RUSSMORE: — Afterwards — when I have satisfied my honor — you and I shall separate forever; nevermore to enter this house.

ALICE: Oh, it is too . . . too . . . cruel. . . .

LORD RUSSMORE: — You can prevent this meeting taking place here and spare yourself the ordeal of being present, by revealing his name to me.

ALICE: Alas! . . . that is impossible . . . impossible, Hugo. . . . Ah, at least, at least! . . . give me time to think . . . to think! . . .

LORD RUSSMORE: I will grant you till the stroke of the hour to reflect, Madam. . . .

(There is an audible knock heard at door Right 3.)

— Come in.

(Alice at once averts her face toward the fire-place, approaching same.)

(Enter Fobs: a middle-aged servant, valet to Lord Russmore.)

FOBS: Your lordship rang for me?

LORD RUSSMORE: Fobs, see that every door is made fast for the night — afterwards bring all the keys to me in my study.

(Fobs proceeds to Left I. E. and exits. After his exit, Lord Russmore steps to the door and shuts it. Alice has broken into a nervous, hysterical laughter.)

ALICE *(as her husband goes and shuts the door)*: H'n-h'n-h'n-h'n-h'n — Oh, have no fear that I shall try to escape, m'lord: be *these* precautionary measures against me . . .

LORD RUSSMORE: I shall not trust you until you have yielded — *(He goes to Left 3, E., locks the door and retains the key.)* Furthermore, that you may hold conversation and communicate with no one — you shall not even leave this room till you've reached your decision.

ALICE: Oh, that you should be so altered tow'rd me, m'lord . . .

(She sobs.)

LORD RUSSMORE: Upon the stroke of the hour I shall re-enter this room, hoping to find you more disposed to yield to my wishes: In the meantime, consider that I am determined not to be trifled with, and that *submission* on your part is the only means whereby you can gain *some* clemency afterwards!!!

(He averts his eyes brusksly away from her and exits Right 3, closing the door quietly after him. Alice, her gaze following his exit, gradually collapses into a weak discouraged state.)

ALICE (*weakly*): Oh, my God . . . what am I to do? . . . Heaven help me . . . (*Pathetically*) He's so convinced I've sinned 'gainst honor — and will be so determined . . . so unjust . . . I can't betray my poor brother to exonerate myself? — (*Starting, as the thought occurs to her*) And his threat to confine me till next Tuesday! . . . Oh, just Heaven no! . . . I mustn't let him! — *That* would ruin all! And that paper which Milton is to bring: were Hugo to seize it — it would lead to the discovery of the plot — Oh, no, no! . . . (*With simple pathos*) And he is coming here to save Hugo's life — (*This with a glance toward Right 3, E.*) — Oh, I must not remain here! . . . (*She goes to the Virginal for her hat and gauntlets*) I must escape! . . . But where? . . . where? . . . I can't think . . . But I must — (*With sudden inspiration.*) Ah, yes! ! . . . To Margaret — my old nurse, in Surrey — I can go to Lord Argyle, and he'll see me escorted there this very night! . . . (*Puts on her hat*) Then Hugo knows nothing of her, and while there I can communicate with Josephine to warn Milton 'gainst his coming here! . . . (*She goes toward the window U. C. while drawing on her gauntlets.*) — Provided I can only take my horse out unobserved — (*She peers out and returns toward the desk Left 2*) All's dark in the stable! . . . (*As she comes to the desk and takes a small purse from the drawer*) The servants have retired: I shall escape through the basement — He will (*Glance Right 3 E.*) never think of that . . . (*She comes to table, takes her riding whip and proceeds toward Right I. E.*) Yes — it is the only way — Heaven

grant that I succeed! . . . (*She tries to open the door. It resists her efforts.*) (*Faint with discouragement.*) 'Tis locked — Oh, n-n-n-n-no! — Heavens! What shall I do? — What is to become of me — (*Xes to Center, looking toward Left I. E.*) If I only dared to appeal to Fobs; — nay — that were futile as well — But I cannot remain here — I shan't be able to bear it; ah, I must escape — I must! I must! (*Looking wildly for some place of issue.*) God! I shall grow wild!!

(*Suddenly the rattle, as of the turning of the door knob is heard Right I. E. Alice stops in suspense. Simultaneously with repeated rattle of the door knob, Henry's little voice is heard calling.*)

HENRY: Maman — Baby wan' tle come in!

ALICE (*with joyous inspiration*): Henry! — (*Then going to the door quickly, pulling on the knob so as to facilitate for him the sliding of the bolt.*) Henry — darling — Open the door for Maman! — push the bolt out, my sweetheart — Can baby do so?

HENRY: N-no!

ALICE (*pathetically*): Try — try, my darling — Try, my sweetheart — try —

(*The door suddenly opens. Alice utters a stifled exclamation of joy.*)

Ah! —

(*She picks him up after closing the door again.*) You blessed sweetheart! — Kiss Maman good bye —

HENRY: Maman goin'?

ALICE (*smothering him with kisses*): Yes, my dear. Baby be a good boy and love papa, and Maman will bring him nice playthings. (*She lets him down Center.*)

HENRY: Playtlings?

ALICE (*going to door*): I must not tarry — Oh, how shall I

bear this separation! (*At door Right I., blowing him a kiss*) Good bye, my sweetheart.

(*He kisses his little hand to her as she exits. He then proceeds to the hearth and resumes the completion of his castle.*)

(*A slight pause — then the belfry bell heard in the previous scene, strikes the first stroke of the hour. After the second stroke the voice of Mary is heard calling off Right I. E.*)

MARY: Oh, Master Henry — Pray where art thou, Master Henry?

(*Third bell stroke as Mary enters Right I. E.*)

My lady bid me come put thee to bed — 't is unusually late for thee to be up.

HENRY (*plaintive reluctance*): N-no!

MARY: Eh, and at once! The sandman will soon be a-comin'!

(*Fifth stroke of the bell; enter Lord Russmore Right 3 E. He stops upon realizing the absence of Alice and the presence of Henry and the servant.*)

LORD RUSSMORE (*advancing to the Center of the room*): Where is Lady Russmore, Mary?

MARY: My lady went up to her room. She ordered a strong herb potion prepared and brought up, as she suffered from acute headache.

FOBS (*who has meanwhile entered Left I. E.*): Here are all the keys, m'lord.

LORD RUSSMORE (*to Fobs*): Has anyone gone out?

FOBS: No, m'lord.

LORD RUSSMORE: Mary — you are positive that her ladyship went upstairs?

MARY: Yes, my lord.

LORD RUSSMORE: Then go pray tell her to come down to me here.

(*Mary inclines her head, and exits Right I. E.*)

FOBS: Anything further m' lord?

(Henry, meanwhile, has come over to his father, and clinging to him with one arm, indicates proudly his completed castle with the other. The castle — quite tall, stands in relief against the red glow of the fire-place.)

HENRY: Loo'! — Loo' — papa! — bably blilt his cassel.

LORD RUSSMORE *(looking toward the castle, pressing the child to him at the same time — After a slight pause, addressing the servant, without detaching his eyes from the castle, simply)*: Fobs — lead the child upstairs. — Go, Henry.

(The servant comes and takes Henry's hand.)

HENRY *(looking inquiringly at the servant as he is being led)*:
Wi' Flobs?

FOBS *(quietly)*: Yes, Master Henry.

(They exeunt Right I. E. Lord Russmore looks after them as they exeunt — then after a slight pause.)

LORD RUSSMORE: My poor little chap — *(He reverts his eyes again toward the castle.)* Yes — you have built your first castle; but even as you built it your castle was being demolished — that castle of a higher sort: *your home* — and not even love of you — my little son, stayed the hand that destroyed it —

(Chilled at heart, sad, despondent, his head finally droops and he stands immobile, frowning, staring at the floor before him. — Pause.)

CURTAIN

ACT III

ACT III

Scene — INTERIOR OF THE MODEST COTTAGE INHABITED
BY JOHN AND MARGARET RAYNES IN SURREY.

Time — TUESDAY MORNING, SIX DAYS LATER. DECEMBER ELEVENTH.

Log fire in old-fashioned stone hearth, U. L. C. The kettle hanging directly over the brazier beside the gridiron, by means of a chain, is spouting steam and murmuring shrilly. Realistic breakfast cooking. The furniture of the room is heavy, primitive and plain. Everything is very neat and tidy. On each side of the hearth a few cooking utensils are hung. Also a couple of copper pans, well polished, though denoting frequent use. A small curtain stretches across the lower half of the window U. R. Through the upper half part of the window the trees are perceived. For the present, they are but dimly seen as through a dense fog.

Discovered: attired in the peasant's dress and cap, white hood of the period, MARGARET RAYNES, a middle-aged very stout, matronly woman with a round, ruddy, kind face. She is bustling about, setting the table and preparing breakfast for Lady Russmore.

MARGARET (*as the curtain rises, setting the pitcher of milk upon the table, stepping back and, with her arms arched upon her hips, contemplating the setting with satisfaction*): There! — trim as I kin make it. (*Her gaze goes to a knife that is spotted. She picks it up and starts to rub the spot off the blade with the reverse of her apron.*) But my lady won't touch a morsel. Weeps and walks the floor

the whole night long. (*Replaces the knife and goes up to the fire-place, drying her eyes, on the way, with her apron.*)

I daresay 't is those evil bodied tyrants again persecutin' the poor bairn. (*Taking the teapot from the grid-iron and returning to the table*) May the just saints bring her relief! And woe to their wicked heads!

(*She wipes the bottom of the teapot and lays it down, and proceeds toward a sort of sideboard Left 2. As she starts, the noise as of a door opening and shutting off Right is heard. Margaret walks more slowly toward the sideboard keeping her eyes in the direction of the door Right I., as it were expecting someone to appear. Reaching the sideboard, she opens the drawer and takes out from among a great many other things, a silver spoon, carefully wrapped up in a piece of white cloth. Eyes still toward Right I., as she unwraps the spoon. Enter her husband, JOHN RAYNES. At his appearance, Margaret arches her arms above her hips, facing him, and disposed to scold.*)

(*John Raynes is an odd-looking, good-natured, a trifle oldish sort of an individual of medium height. He is not stout but more wiry, and the hair on the top of his head is very spare — thinning down to almost baldness in the center of the top, but quite full and curly at the sides and at the back. The color of his hair is sandy red and grey. His face is ruddy, his nose stubbed and tilted, his mouth large and smiling, his eyes small, blinking and merry.*)

(*Exhale*)

Well!

JOHN (*throwing his hat upon a chair, jovial and rubbing his hands*): Well, wife — here I be at last.

MARGARET (*same frowning attitude*): And in goodly time, Master Raynes! (*Her scoldings always make John laugh.*)

JOHN (*good-natured, impassive, rubbing his hands*): He! he! he! he! — Now don't ye scold, wife. The mare got hurt and I had ter put her up at the "Cock" overnight and ter walk her home this mornin'.

MARGARET: A like excuse, ter set yer wife and my lady a-frettin' an' a-worryin' all night over ye. (*She puts the cloth into the sideboard and comes down to the table with the spoon.*)

JOHN: Now, now, Maggie — it was nobody's fault but the fog, which made Mary Jane mistake a hole fur solid ground — and stumble.

MARGARET (*placing the spoon at Alice's place*): 'T is well the accident took place before ye got to the tavern; else I'd be a-thinkin' 'twas the *load* that made her stumble. (*She goes to sideboard and closes the drawer.*)

JOHN: He! he! he! he! he!

MARGARET (*returning*): But what of my lady's errand?

JOHN (*nosing curiously at the fire-place*): The young miss was out, Maggie. So I gave her ladyship's message to Lady Scarsdale. (*He raises the cover of a pan to see what's cooking in it.*) But how's she feelin' today, wife?

MARGARET (*fussing above table, her back to him*): Enough to turn a body's head. Has been walkin' the floor the whole night — till I could count her steps in my sleep.

JOHN: An' what think ye is the real cause, Maggie?

MARGARET (*going to hearth and elbowing him out of the way*) Well—s'posin' I *did* know? It's not fur me ter satisfy an inquisitive mind.

JOHN (*good-naturedly leaving the fire-place, and coming down to the table, chuckling to himself as he comes down*): D'ye think I'm curious, Maggie?

(*She empties the water from the boiling potatoes.*)

Well, ye haven't been fully appreciatin' yer husband all these years, darlint. (*Having picked up a knife, he*

starts to slice himself a couple of pieces of bread from the loaf.) He's the last tommy cat in the wurrd, thot would poke his nose in superior folks' cups. (*He digs up a piece of butter with his bread knife, and starts to butter up the two chunks of bread.*) Ye used ter say at the castle, I was over fond of her ladyship. Well, maybe I'm still more over fond of her *now* that she's sufferin', poor soul. I've not been abed here the whole week, a-runnin' the country hither and thither fur her. I be'n't complainin' — fur ye can be cocksure, Maggie, thot I'd walk ter Jerusalem ter bring her back the smiles of her bonny young days agin!

MARGARET (*coming down to him and, after wiping her lips with her apron, smacking a kiss on the cheek of John, which is nearest to her*): There! Ye're a good man, John, and yer Maggie's proud o' ye.

JOHN (*undisturbed, chuckling to himself, tranquilly continuing to butter his bread*): He! he! he! Reminds me, wife — ye haven't done this fur a whole month.

MARGARET: *Well* — I be not inclined ter kiss folks that don't ask fur them.

JOHN (*raising his knife and quietly shaking it at her*): He! he! he! he! yer apt ter be sorry now ye spoke, Maggie.

MARGARET (*her eyes suddenly falling upon the loaf of bread which John has cut out of shape*): Good saints! Look at that bread!

JOHN (*looking at the misshapen loaf, then at the chunk in his hand*): Well — what's the matter with it? Ye baked it, did n't ye?

MARGARET (*bawling the words in mimicry after him*): “Ye baked it, did n't ye?” (*With sharp anger*) What does it look like?

JOHN (*looking at the piece in his hand, turning it around, then inquiringly at her*): Well — 'tain't cake, is it?

MARGARET (*again mimics him*): "'Tain't cake, is it?"
(*She wrenches the knife away from him*) This, Master Raynes, is decent folks' way to cut bread!

(*Then simpering as she repairs the damages done to the loaf.*)

M'm — My lady's breakfast that I'd tried make look so dainty — and ye come and spoil it all. (*With sudden explosive, petty temper*) What else d'ye want?

JOHN (*smiling imperturbably*): Well — it's all accordin' to what ye can spare.

MARGARET: Take these eggs. They're too cold now for my lady, and be off!

JOHN (*greedily taking the plate of eggs from the table*): Oo-oo! Thank ye! My chickens, yer just the ones I coveted.

MARGARET (*as she sees him go with the plate*): But not the plate — not the plate! (*Reaching him she takes hold of it.*) My best plate!

JOHN (*with some show of impatience*): Ye don't expect me to carry eggs in my hands, do ye?

MARGARET (*dumping the eggs into a wooden or brown earthen plate, taken from the kitchen table Right 2*): There — and be gone! My lady's nerves ain't fit to stand a busybody around!

JOHN (*recovering his good humor*): Come along, my chickens. (*Going for his hat*) We'll go to the henery — before Mrs. Raynes tells us to go to the devil. I guess, anyway, this is a bad place fur yees ter roost. (*Stopping at the door and addressing them confidentially*) Yer see, Mrs. Raynes expected her husband home last night, who did n't turn in — so she's cross as two sticks this mornin'. (*He casts a furtive glance at her — then shakes his head and exits Right I.*)

MARGARET (*setting the table in order again, and repairing*

the looks of the butter cake with a knife): And the butter — lookin' as if been pitched into the plate like so much dough. — Creatin' all this rumpus to annoy my lady. (Enter Alice U. L. E. She still wears her riding skirt, but instead of the bodice she has donned a loose jacket which Margaret has lent her.)

ALICE (*coming down toward the table Center*): Good morning, Margaret.

(Alice is very sad, and her face portrays a strain she has undergone during the last five days.)

MARGARET (*with an attempted courtsey*): Good morning! — Is my lady rested?

ALICE (*sitting Left of breakfast table, resting her elbow on the edge and leaning her forehead in the palm of her hand*):

Oh my — no — What day is to-day, Margaret?

MARGARET: Tuesday, my lady.

ALICE (*musin' to herself*): This afternoon, then, that Milton will come to my house.

(To Margaret) Has John returned, Margaret?

MARGARET: Yes, my lady.

ALICE: And my letter?

MARGARET: Seein' Miss Scarsdale was out he gave it to her ladyship.

ALICE: That was right. Josephine should then be here at noon, eh, Margaret?

(Alice, by degrees, becomes animated and nervous. Her voice is tremulous.)

MARGARET (*with a glance toward the window*): Unless the fog delay her, my lady.

ALICE: Oh, let us hope that it will not. If it does, I must start out alone with John, Margaret. It is the only means I still have to warn my brother in time. *(She goes to look out of window.)*

MARGARET (*with simple entreaty*): Won't my lady eat some breakfast?

ALICE: I don't think I can, Margaret.

MARGARET: My lady ought to try in order to keep up her strength.

ALICE (*resuming her seat before her plate — tremulously*): Yes, I suppose I ought to. I should also rely on Lady Scarsdale helping us. (*She picks up her fork.*)

Dear Margaret — (*She lets her fork drop*) But I'm afraid I can't eat — (*She looks up at Margaret across the table and her eyes fill with tears*) I can't, Margaret — my heart's too full — I can't eat —

(*She bows her head into her hand.*)

MARGARET (*coming around the table, standing above her, endeavoring to comfort her*): There — My lady must not lose courage.

ALICE (*with effort*): No, I must not. (*Suddenly raising her face, looking at Margaret*) How many days have I been here now, Margaret?

MARGARET: Six days, my lady. (*She Xes toward the hearth, drying her eyes.*)

ALICE (*seated sideways, Right, elbow upon the edge of the table, thumping her cheek nervously with her closed Right hand*): Ah, yes — six long — weary days — without anyone — away from my child. — He must have missed his mother — don't you think?

MARGARET (*at hearth*): Indeed, my lady.

ALICE: Oh, if I were a man — or knew one whom I could trust — a woman is so helpless.

MARGARET (*coming down to the table, and setting a dish before her, cheerfully calling her attention to it*): There, my lady. *Fresh* from the hen this morning!

ALICE (*absently*): So thoughtful of her — I mean of you. — Oh, please forgive me; I don't know what I'm say-

ing. But I really haven't any appetite, Margaret. — I'm so sorry you went to such trouble. You still prepare things just as you used to for me at the castle. (*Looking up at her with pathos*) But have such days really existed, Margaret?

MARGARET: To be sure they have; and surely they'll come back again for, as the Kirk says: "Sorrows are like clouds that cannot rest *always* twixt the sun and the clear Miller's pond." (*Places cup beside her.*) Here—my lady must eat, if only to preserve her strength.

ALICE: You are right. Indeed, it's wrong to let myself weaken this way. I'll try to eat — Is this tea strong, Margaret?

MARGARET: Yes, my lady. (*Standing across the table Right, she places a plate in front of her.*) And toasts as crisp as I could make them.

ALICE: Thanks. How faithfully you have remembered my old fads. (*Breaking a piece of toast*) And where did you get the jacket I have on?

MARGARET: 'T is the same your mother presented me at your christening, my lady.

ALICE: Just fancy — (*She munches a piece of toast, and makes vain efforts to swallow it.*)

MARGARET (*seeing her eyes gradually filling with tears*): Drink a little tea, my lady.

(*Alice extends her hand for the cup, trembling, but then, suddenly breaking down, she turns her head away and shifting sideways upon her chair she sobs.*)

ALICE: I can't eat, Margaret — it's no use — I can't — (*Again Margaret comes above her and tries to console her.*)

MARGARET: There — there — my lady must not let her courage desert her.

ALICE: Oh, but you don't know, Margaret. Grave danger's threatening my brother — and my husband also. Whichever way I look, I can only see the one or the other's peril. If I am not at home this afternoon — this evening my husband will be arrested, and forfeit his own life before he surrenders. If I return and cross the threshold of my house, I will be made the means to decoy and imperil Milton. I have tried every means to locate his whereabouts. I have failed. Lord Argyle could have helped me — but on the night when he took me here, he also was fearful of arrest, and has since vanished. I find myself here alone, isolated. I've sent John scurrying after every clue to reach Milton — Josephine, too, has failed. Even William sent her word that he knew not where he was. When I arrived, I had six days before me to act — *Now* I have only till this afternoon, and the thought is driving me mad, Margaret! — Mad! — Mad! —

(She moves away, pressing her temples between her hands, under the strain of intense agony of mind.)

MARGARET (*following her Left, placing her arm about her, trying to soothe her*): Don't! Don't! my lady — a-frettin' and worryin' yourself so will not avail.

ALICE (*sobbing, her head on her arm upon the top of the sideboard*): I know — I know —

MARGARET: Surely the patron saints will yet send some timely means to prevent harm coming to Sir Milton and to his lordship.

ALICE: If I could only think out a way — think of some plan — but it's to-day —

MARGARET: The more reason, for their sakes, why my lady should sustain her strength — the better to think out the way.

ALICE: Yes, for their sake I should. And when Josephine

comes we must arrive at some plan. Milton must be warned. Desperate though the chances be: if it takes Josephine and I alone to go bar his approaching my house!

MARGARET: John will accompany you.

(Enter John excitedly R. I.)

JOHN: Beg pardon, wife — but a gentleman has arrived — inquiring for your ladyship. *(He closes the door, and stands rolling his hat in his hands.)*

ALICE: Inquiring for me?

JOHN: Aye. I said I was new to the place. “I don’t know as there be anyone in the house by the name your lordship mentions” says I, “but I’ll go in and inquire.”

ALICE: Who is he?

JOHN: As far as I kin make ’im out, he be a stranger.

MARGARET: Ye asked not after his name?

JOHN: Aye, and so I did, wife. “Mention that I come from Miss Scarsdale,” says he.

ALICE: Who can it be?

JOHN: Your ladyship can see him through yon window. *(Points U. R.)*

MARGARET: Possibly a messenger from Miss Scarsdale, my lady.

(Alice has gone to the window and raised a tiny corner of the curtain, looking off.)

ALICE *(drawing away)*: No. Impossible! — Whomever sides with the King is to be shunned. — What can this mean?

JOHN: Maybe I kin offer a little suggestion.

MARGARET *(checking his presumption)*: Master Raynes! Keep it till you be asked!

(John cannot repress a smile — lowers his eyes and rolls his hat. Heedless of both, Alice has been reflecting.)

ALICE *(arguing with herself)*: And yet — how comes he to

know I am here? Unless Josephine has told him — and if so must have trusted him — mayhap for some reason sent him on ahead of her. — You are positive you heard him say that Miss Scarsdale sent him?

JOHN: Aye, your ladyship

ALICE: Then I can't be mistaken. He's surely been sent to my assistance.

MARGARET: He be stepping off his horse, my lady.

(At window.)

ALICE: Show him in, John.

(John exits R. I.)

Margaret, if I divine rightly, this is the end of my trials.

MARGARET: Just as I said, my lady — the just saints would be sure to send some timely means —

ALICE: Ah, heaven be praised if it's so. Mayhap he brings news of my brother — and Josephine has succeeded in reaching him. At any rate *she* has sent him.

MARGARET: Yes, my lady.

ALICE: How can we doubt it when Lady Scarsdale, her daughter and Lord Argyle alone, knew that I was here. He's Lady Scarsdale's nephew, so what's more plausible than they have sent him.

MARGARET: Indeed, my lady, 'tis most fortunate.

ALICE: *(growing more and more joyfully excited)*: Anyway, being a man, he will be so much more resourceful than I.

(Robert passes the window, preceded by John.)

MARGARET: Here he comes, my lady.

ALICE: We must be very cautious, though.

(John opens the door U. R. C.)

JOHN: If you please — this way in your lor'ship.

(Enter Robert Courtnay, cool, deliberate, self-possessed. John exits, closing the door after him. He next passes beyond the window off Right.)

(Margaret draws forth a chair. Robert declines it as he comes down toward Alice Left Center.)

ROBERT *(quietly)*: No doubt, Lady Russmore is surprised to see me, but I needn't assure her —

ALICE *(interrupting him)*: One moment, Mr. Courtnay, first I wish to know which is your side; the King's or the Prince's side?

ROBERT *(at ease, smiling slightly)*: I make but one answer to that, Lady Russmore — *(He closes his eyes an instant to collect his thoughts, but without pause)* Like Clarendon, I declare religious principles to be above those of loyalty. My religious beliefs are, unfortunately, at variance with the King's — *(Smiling, with a slight arch of the brows)* I leave the conclusions to you.

ALICE: But you forget, Mr. Courtnay, that in these dreadful times one is compelled to mistrust *even a friend*.

ROBERT *(after casting a glance at Margaret)*: May I speak freely, Lady Russmore?

ALICE: Yes, without reserve. Margaret is my old nurse. She has all my confidence.

(Margaret makes protestation to withdraw.)

No — I wish you to remain.

ROBERT: Permit me to return to you your missive to my cousin. In it you recount the number of efforts made to reach your brother, enjoining her in the end to come to you — that together, you may resolve upon some last plan to save the situation. I have participated in my cousin's endeavors to find your brother, Lady Russmore. From the general tone of your message, my cousin grew apprehensive lest new complications had set in. In sum, impatient, from sheer anxiety, she begged me to ride on ahead, present her letter as credentials, and place myself at your service.

ALICE (*looking fixedly at him*): A trust upon which life depends, is serious matter, Mr. Courtnay. Misplaced confidence in this instance would hold me responsible. Ought I then to feel *sure* that I can trust you?

ROBERT: Consider at whose request I have come —

ALICE: Oh, I know —

ROBERT: And who else but my cousin could have directed me to where you were, Lady Russmore?

ALICE: Still, I am a woman, Mr. Courtnay, and, like a woman, timid, so you must forgive me if I hesitate to yield information upon which so much depends.

ROBERT: If I prove conclusively to Lady Russmore that it was in my power to have betrayed and caused her brother's arrest days ago, but did not do so, owing to the bond of sympathy existing between us — as between him and Lord Argyle, for example — would Lady Russmore longer hesitate to believe me?

ALICE: No, no. I would not! Give me such a proof and I will *trust* you.

ROBERT: Learn then that I was aware, Monday week ago, on the evening of my aunt's house party, that Sieur Raoul d'Orsay was, in reality, Sir Milton Lantanay.

ALICE: You — knew — that?

ROBERT (*smiling serenely*): And yet did not betray him. After you had gone that night, I was let into the secret. I may even quote to you the letter which he sent to Josephine, asking leave to come, in which he insisted that you should be present — so as to place you on your guard —

ALICE (*taking hold of his hand*): Oh yes, I *can* trust you. Josephine never told me.

ROBERT: For want of an opportunity. From Lady Russmore's manner at my entrance it was easy at once to conclude that she had no knowledge of my conduct in

this respect. Let us hope that we may still avoid a disaster!

ALICE: And God reward you for your kindness! Won't you be seated? (*Robert nods acceptance, and sits Right of table. She sits Left.*)

ROBERT: Let us briefly sum up the situation. In the first place our principal aim is to give Sir Milton warning.

ALICE: And prevent him from going to our house, yes.

ROBERT (*noting in his mind*): To your house — exactly. You feel sure that he will go there?

ALICE: Without doubt — for in failing to do so he would abandon me to face dreadful circumstances.

ROBERT: How?

ALICE: I cannot tell you.

ROBERT: At what time did you expect his visit?

ALICE: He said he would come at about three o'clock this afternoon. Lord Russmore overheard this, and is sure to set a trap for him.

ROBERT: A trap? (*Then correcting himself*) Most likely.

ALICE: So, he must be prevented.

ROBERT: Pardon me, Lady Russmore, if I seem to follow you imperfectly — but, beyond the fact that you have left your house and have secluded yourself here — I have only my own deductions to base judgment upon as to why this was compulsory. My cousin was somewhat reticent as to your reasons — grave as they must be — for having left London. Before I can decide what steps had better be taken, I must ask you more fully to enlighten me, — I —

ALICE: You wish to know what compelled me to desert my home?

ROBERT: My desire to assist excuses my inquisitiveness.

ALICE: I will tell you. It is well that you should understand the true situation.

ROBERT: Thank you.

ALICE: Lord Russmore unexpectedly came home last Tuesday evening and surprised Milton and myself in embrace, just as the latter was leaving the house. You well know Lord Russmore's temper — 'tis the dread of the court. My brother escaped without so much as being recognized, but I was left to face my husband's anger. He accused me of — well — infidelity —

ROBERT: Inconceivable!

ALICE: Aye! and little blame to him. He had sufficient grounds for his suspicions. But it was so different. Finally, rather than betray a secret as dear to me as my own life, and be made the means to decoy my brother into his presence on his subsequent visit — I was left no alternative except to run away.

ROBERT (*rising, pacing, half closing his eyes, biting his under-lip*): I see — I see —

ALICE: Have you seen my husband, Mr. Courtnay?

ROBERT: The day after you disappeared. I have since ascertained that to all friendly inquiry after your welfare, he maintains that you are still at home and all is well.

ALICE: Oh, he is shrewd! And Milton is certain to have made the same inquiry and believes I am still there.

ROBERT: Undoubtedly — and that all is well. Is Lord Russmore not aware that Sieur Raoul d'Orsay and Sir Milton are one and same?

ALICE: No. They had never met previous to that evening at your house.

ROBERT: Why not have risked telling him the truth?

ALICE: He might have deemed it his duty to have had Milton arrested. Besides, there was another reason — which I may not impart even to you — and so much depended upon it, I could not have assumed the least risk.

ROBERT: True — being, so to speak, the right hand of his Majesty, he would never have spared a foe — even his kinsman. Neither side shows mercy! — Lady Russmore, no time must be lost in action.

ALICE: What do you propose to do?

ROBERT: I will depart for London at once.

ALICE: Alone — without us?

ROBERT: Better and safer for all concerned that I cope alone with the situation. Since the appointment's for three o'clock, and granted that Sir Milton thinks himself sufficiently secure to present himself at your house — believing you still there, and that's all serene in your household affairs — it follows that we must apprehend him: to do so, 'tis urgent to lose no time in reaching London ahead of him, to be on the watch.

ALICE: Forsooth! for the fog is like to retard you greatly!

ROBERT: I go at once! Er — pray my cousin remain here with you — till I send you word! — I'll muster a number of trusty fellows sufficient to patrol every road leading to your house.

ALICE: Yes, I see! Oh, how shall we ever thank you enough?

ROBERT: Say no more about it. But meantime, promise you'll rest at peace and know that he'll not escape our vigilance!

ALICE: Thank you! Thank you! And you'll accompany him back here at once?

ROBERT: Aye!

ALICE: I pray you, say nothing to him of my husband's accusation. He's so hotheaded, he'd take a notion to resent it.

ROBERT: I'll not inform him. Fare you well!

ALICE: Fare you well!

(Exit Courtney U. R. C. E. A second later he passes rapidly beyond window U. R.)

(*The moment he is gone Alice gives vent to her joyousness.*)

(*With joyous transport*) Margaret, at last! The situation is saved — is saved! Margaret!

MARGARET (*with similar transport*): Ye — yes — my lady!

ALICE: Do you conceive it at all! Mr. Courtnay will escort him here — then we shall all go back together. I will save my husband, and all will be well once more. Oh, I'm so happy!

MARGARET: Yes! The good saints sent a means — as I said — to my lady!

ALICE: Oh, we'll burn all the candles we can find in the house to them, Margaret! It's such a relief — such infinite relief! I'm so happy! (*With tinge of pathos*) I — don't know *what* to do —

MARGARET (*inspired*): Eat your breakfast, my lady.

ALICE: To be sure, I'll eat my breakfast. (*She goes to table.*) Never fear, I will eat now, Margaret. Before I could n't — really I could not, Margaret. (*She sits Left of table.*)

MARGARET (*other side of table*): I will cook you other eggs.

ALICE: No, no — these will do nicely, thanks!

MARGARET: But they're all cold.

ALICE: Never mind! Cold eggs can't matter now — I'm happy! And these hard toasts I so relish! (*She bites off several mouthfuls with a crunging noise*): Oh, I'm just ravenous!

(*She picks up her cup of tea.*)

MARGARET: Let me warm up your tea a bit, my lady.

ALICE (*speaking with her mouth full*): I know it's perfectly delicious as it is! (*She swallows a large gulp of tea to help down the food, and then, as soon as she can manage, begins to rattle on*) Do you know, Margaret, I just feel like a little child, I'm so relieved, so happy now. I

could just have hugged Mr. Courtnay! And wasn't it perfectly clever of him to think of collecting a lot of men to patrol all the highways.

(Descriptive gesture of the hand.) I can see them from here, promenading themselves here and there, every one of them on the watch. Mr. Courtnay would make a splendid general! He's Miss Scarsdale's cousin. You've never seen Miss Scarsdale, Margaret, have you?

MARGARET *(offering her the butter plate)*: No, never, my lady.

ALICE *(taking a piece of butter)*: Well — *(She hurries to swallow more toast, aided by a fresh sip of tea)*: she's Milton's sweetheart — and she's devoted to him — and, besides, she's beautiful and sweet, gentle and good, clever and brave, kind and lovable — Ah, Margaret, nothing like happiness to make one feel at peace with the whole world! — Where is John? I want to thank him, too. I shall never be able to do enough for you both, after this — Oh! there goes my tea! *(Accidentally she has upset her cup of tea.)*

MARGARET: Wait, my lady! *(She takes a white cloth from the kitchen table Right 2, returns Center, and soaks in the tea from the table cloth.)*

ALICE: Oh, I'm so nervous. I — I suppose it's because the pain is gone. Oh, how I suffered, Margaret. I know now that hearts do not break; they only ache, Margaret. *(More and more slowly, with increasing tremor)* and mine — ached — and ached —

(The reaction setting in, her elbows upon the table, pressing her face between her hands): Oh, it has been terrible. — *(She weeps quietly.)*

MARGARET: Nay, nay — my lady must n't weep any more.

ALICE *(rising, walking down stage, drying her eyes)*: Please

don't mind me. These tears do not hurt. They do me good. (*She slowly turns and forces herself to smile through her tears — Nervously*) Ha! ha! what a cry-baby you must think I am. But there — (*She makes an effort at being cheerful*) I won't do so again — (*With increasing cheerfulness*) I'll try to laugh instead. Yes, for I want to laugh now and be merry.— (*With smiling touch of pathos*) It's the first time in so many days, Margaret.

MARGARET: Merry an' it is!

(*Enter Josephine quickly R. I. E. She wears a riding habit.*)

ALICE (*rushing to her*): Josephine!

JOSEPHINE: Alice! I'm so glad to see you!

ALICE: I'm glad to see you too! Have you come all alone?

JOSEPHINE: I dismissed our man servant after fording the river, as he had to be back and I knew the way.

ALICE: Anyhow you're here.

JOSEPHINE: Aye, but — you — Oh, Alice, isn't it altogether perfectly dreadful?

ALICE: Why no, dearie —

JOSEPHINE: Then, you've had news of Milton?

ALICE: No, but there's nothing further to apprehend now. Mr. Courtnay has been here and has gone to warn him.

JOSEPHINE: To — warn *him*? — Who?

ALICE (*during the following speech Alice, who has Josephine's hat in her hand, goes to deposit it Left, speaking rapidly*): Milton, of course. (*She moves away, speaking brightly and rapidly.*) He's just left, and is going to muster up several men who will patrol the highways and simply surround Milton as he approaches our house. (*Coming back*) It is fortunate you sent him ahead — it gives him more time.

JOSEPHINE (*who has been glaring at her — recovering the faculty of speech*): But Alice — I did not send him!

ALICE (*stopping short, repeating slowly after her — not yet realizing the full significance of Josephine's words*): You — did — not — send him?

JOSEPHINE (*trembling with suspense*): Why no!

ALICE (*her voice gradually beginning to quiver*): How then came he to know I was here?

JOSEPHINE: I don't know; possibly traced back your messenger.

ALICE (*her alarm increasing*): But — he — brought me back my letter to you. Here! (*She presents her the letter with trembling hands. Letter was on table near her.*)

JOSEPHINE: I cannot understand it! He must have stolen it! He's Milton's bitter enemy!

ALICE (*half reeling, with a moan of despair*): Oh, my God!

JOSEPHINE (*wildly, with utter dismay*): Oh, what is it you have done? *What* have you told him?

MARGARET (*joining her hands*): Merciful heaven!

ALICE (*with a wail of despair*): Alas! — Ev-e-ry-thing! — Ev-e-ry-thing!

JOSEPHINE: Oh, Alice!

MARGARET: My poor, unfortunate lady!

ALICE: Oh, the coward! The coward! (*Transitting gradually from despair to anger*): And all the time, while he was cross-questioning me, he was laughing. Well, we'll see — he laughs best who laughs last!

JOSEPHINE: What can we *do*?

ALICE: *Do*? Start immediately on his tracks!

JOSEPHINE: Aye! and reach London before him!

ALICE: Margaret, fetch my waist. (*She begins to remove the jacket she is wearing.*)

JOSEPHINE: Where's my hat?

ALICE: There!

(Josephine goes and gets it.)

Oh, the arch-fiend! Well! We'll see! My blood is roused now — I'm full of fight!

(Margaret returns on the run with the waist.)

MARGARET: Here's your waist, my lady.

ALICE: Help me, Josephine! We must hurry. He has half an hour's start on us. Margaret, tell John to saddle my horse — and one for himself, too, to accompany us! I don't care what happens now — husband or no husband! king or no king! They're all a lot of sanguinary fiends!

(Josephine is helping her.)

MARGARET *(who meanwhile has opened the window, leaning out and calling off Right, at the top of her lungs):* Ja-ahn! *(Uttered in two notes, the last climbing up to a falsetto range, after the fashion of a yodle.)* Hurry! On yer life, man!! Saddle my lady's horse — an' yer own too!!

JOSEPHINE *(to Margaret, speaking above Alice's shoulder, fastening the latter's waist):* And mine also.

MARGARET *(shouting again):* An' Miss Scarsdale's, also.

ALICE: Margaret! My hat and my purse!

(Every time that Margaret starts on the run to execute these orders — being extremely stout and heavy — her feet make a sort of thump, thump noise on the floor.)

MARGARET *(starting across stage for U. L. E., without closing the window):* Yes — *(She already breathes heavily from sheer exertion.)*

ALICE: And to think that he's related to *you!*

JOSEPHINE: Don't mind! I despise him as much as you do!

ALICE: The traitor!

JOSEPHINE: I meant to put you on your guard the evening

I was expected at your house, after meeting Milton at the "Cross-Road-Inn," but when I came — you know under what circumstances — it went out of my mind. He tried to kill Milton at our house the night you were there, after you'd gone.

ALICE: Oh! the liar and hypocrite! And he was rejoicing all the time to find you hadn't told me! And he made use of it to gain my confidence.

MARGARET (*always running, enters from U. L. E. She is puffing*): The hat and purse — my lady!

ALICE: My gauntlets are on my table in my room, dearie. (*Josephine starts for U. L. E.*)

My whip, too!

(*To Margaret*)

Hold this! (*She tries to press the purse in the nurse's hand in order to put on her hat, but both are so excited and nervous that the purse ends by dropping to the floor. Margaret picks it up. Alice starts to put on her hat.*)

My poor brain is on fire! Isn't it horrible, Margaret — now isn't it? That there should exist in the world men so unprincipled as to take advantage of a woman as helpless as myself?

MARGARET (*softly weeping, shaking her head with pity for Alice*): Oh, my lady —

ALICE: Don't waste a tear yet, Margaret — wait till you hear! I was never more determined in my life than in the present undertaking! — Ask John to take his blunderbuss along. I may have use for it!

JOSEPHINE (*entering rapidly from U. L. E.*): Your gauntlets and whip, Alice.

MARGARET (*once more running and calling off through the window, this time not so loud, as John is presumably nearer*): Ja-ahn, get yer blunderbuss! My lady says so!

ALICE (*receiving the gauntlets from Josephine*): Thanks.
 (*She starts to put them on.*) I'm going to make things hot
 when we reach London! You'll see!

JOHN (*off Right, responding to his wife from the distance*):
 All right — wife!

ALICE: We can muster men as well as *he* — and before his
 men seize Milton, I'll *kill* Mr. Courtney!

JOSEPHINE: I wish you would! Hurry, Alice, the horses
 are ready!

(*Have one horse, if possible, seen in the foggy atmosphere
 outside, beyond the window. Josephine opens U. R. C.
 door and exits off Right. She is seen later hoisting herself
 into saddle.*)

ALICE (*taking up her whip from the table*): Yes, yes! Good-
 bye, Margaret.

MARGARET (*who has been all this while weeping*): Oh, my
 lady — I'm afraid, —
 (*Josephine disappears from view on horseback.*)

ALICE (*edging back toward the door of exit*): Now don't
you worry over me, dear old nurse!

MARGARET (*following her to the threshold, reluctant to let
 go of her hand*): I will implore God every moment for
 you!

ALICE (*in doorway*): Nay, but more for my brother. Pray
 that I arrive in time, Margaret, before Robert Court-
 nay reaches him.

JOSEPHINE (*once more coming in view before the window for
 a mere second*): Alice! Come!
 (*Again she disappears.*)

ALICE: Yes! (*Then quickly to Margaret, embracing her a
 second*) Fare you well! (*She starts off Right.*)

MARGARET (*in the doorway, a trifle outside*): God speed my
 lady!
 (*Possibly the same horse used by Josephine can now back*

slightly in view, as Alice mounts it. After Alice has mounted her horse and disappeared.)

Good bye, John! Watch ye well over her ladyship!

(Another slight pause and then as if they were all moving away together.)

Fare you well —

(Another pause. Then she waves her hand as if they were too far already to hear her voice. She remains still against the frame of the door, watching them gradually gallop away. — The curtain comes down quietly, with Margaret still gazing steadily afar, a lone figure on the scene.)

CURTAIN

ACT IV

ACT IV.

Scene — LORD RUSSMORE'S STUDY, TUESDAY AFTERNOON, DEC. 11TH, 1688. AT RISE OF CURTAIN, IT IS NEARLY THREE O'CLOCK. THE WALLS OF THIS ROOM ARE OF A LIGHT GRAY COLOR, FINISHED WITH GOLD; HERE AND THERE, A PANEL OF TAPESTRY. THE CURTAINS AT THE TWO WINDOWS UP STAGE ARE ALSO OF A SOFT GRAY COLOR. THE WHOLE EFFECT IS COLD. THE FURNITURE IS SOFT-GREENISH-GRAY AND MASSIVE.

Directly up center, there is a book-case, three or four feet high, with closing doors. Rows of books are perceived through the glass. On the top of this book-case, two candelabra on each end, and a dark-wood, heavily-carved casket in the center. Hanging above the book-case, a large oil painting representing Lord Russmore's father. It is quite sombre, but for the face which stands out white, austere and proud, and bears out traits of resemblance to the son. A few steps down stage from the book-cases a large rectangular writing table — an arm-chair stand: between it and the book-case. On this writing table: pieces of parchment, a sand-box, ink, quill, an immense red book with a gold tassel to it, a small steel hoop, half an inch of same cut off at one place — in guise of a gong. It is suspended to two uprights and one horizontal little pole; a small steel rod, to strike the sound with, leans against the hoop. U. R. and U. L., respectively, stiff straight-back settees, set obliquely R. C. a heavy arm-chair; one with a tall back to it.

Left 2, a second book-case, this time without doors to it. On top of this book-case, two medium size antiques — Roman urns: in the center, an antique gold cup with carved garlands of vine leaves and grapes wound around from stem to rim — the rim of this cup is dented and broken here and there. Hanging above the book-case, a large oil painting of the Queen of England. Chairs on either side of the book-cases (Left 2, and U. C.) with straight tall back, set flat against the wall. Similar chairs D. Right, and D. Left. Doors: Right 1 and Right 3, Left 1 and Left 3 — Right 2 a mantel and fire-place. Fresh logs are in the grate, but no fire is lighted. On top of the mantel, two small gold candelabra at each end: in the center, a casket of carved ivory over the mantel, like drop of blood on the wall, and in the colorless surroundings hangs an oil painting of His Majesty, James II, in purple-red royal garments. The oil paintings of the King and Queen should be of similar size; the one of Lord Russmore's father should be larger. Two pair of trailing curtains — soft grey color — to the respective windows U. L. C. and U. R. C. One of the panes of U. R. C. window is set in a separate casing, to form a ventilator that swings open on hinges and is fastened by means of a little latch. Through the windows, the exterior in front of the house, as represented in Act II, Scene I, is dimly perceived. The fog, however, has lifted, but the day is dismal and gloomy. — It gradually clears and brightens up as the act progresses, until, finally, the sun shines brightly at the end. Lord Russmore's cape, hat, sword and belt repose on the settee U. Left.

Discovered, at rise of curtain, Lord Russmore, seated before the writing table, absorbed at work; Fobs, the valet, stands before the book-case Left 2, quietly assorting and arranging the books on the shelf, once in a while wiping

away dust from one of them. *Mary, the child's governess, is seated in the tall arm-chair Right C., a folio of colored pictures in her lap, showing these to Henry who stands beside her.*

A pause after curtain rises, then the same belfry-bell heard in Act II, Scenes I and II, is heard striking 3 o'clock. During Intermission, preceding this act, the orchestra may play "Alice Where Art Thou." Any curtain music should cease as the curtain rises, so as to permit the scratching noise of Lord Russmore's pen, as it runs over the parchment, to be heard.

LORD RUSSMORE (*speaking only after a pause, and the three strokes of the belfry have died away — quietly, without so much as raising his head or interrupting his writing*): Fobs —

(A short pause.)

MARY (*turning to a new picture, addressing Fobs softly, who hasn't heard*): Fobs. — (*She nods her head slightly in Lord Russmore's direction.*)

FOBS (*drawn out of his reverie*): Oh. (*He approaches Lord Russmore.*) I beg pardon, m' lord.

LORD RUSSMORE (*quietly speaking, without looking up*): Close the window.

(Fobs inclines his head. He closes the window U. L. C. and arranges the curtains.)

HENRY (*suddenly looking up inquiringly at Mary*): W'ale is mamma, — eh, Maly?

MARY (*trying to divert him, affecting not to have heard, quickly turning to the next picture*): Look! Look! Master Henry — The nice bow-wow! (*She indicates it.*)

HENRY (*plaintively*): I wan' tle go loo' w'ale is mamma.

MARY (*closing the folio and lifting him into her arms*): No, no, Master Henry.

HENRY (*weeping quietly*): I wan' mamma! . . .

(*Mary pillows his little head against her, and starts to rock him, endeavoring to soothe him.*)

MARY: Now now — not now, Master Henry; Bye and Bye: mama will surely come. (*She rocks him singing*) La! la! . . . La! la! . . . Master Henry must n't cry — Mary cannot bear it. . . . (*She hums her song half tearfully herself*) La! la! . . . la! la! . . .

(*During the latter part of this, Lord Russmore has stopped writing, looking at them. He now rises and quietly approaches Mary and the child.*)

LORD RUSSMORE (*after a pause, standing beside them*): Is the child unwell, Mary?

MARY (*continuing to sing and rock Henry*): Only since yesterday has he taken these spells, m'lord. (*Hums* La! la! . . . (*Then proceeding almost to sing the lines*) The greater part of last night he lay awake crying and calling for his mamma . . . (*Hums*) Ah-ha—ah-ha— Now he's again asking for her ladyship. . . . (*Hums. All this time not looking at Lord Russmore*) M'm! M'm! . . . La! — la!

LORD RUSSMORE (*with reserve, though with visible pain*): Let me have him a while.

(*Mary rises.*)

He's sleepy.

(*He takes Henry into his arms.*) Come, my little man, with papa! . . . (*He kisses him fondly.*)

HENRY (*feverishly rubbing his eyes and nose with his little closed hand*): Henly wan' tel go to mamma.

LORD RUSSMORE: Yes, of course — you see . . . (*He stops abruptly, remembering the servants' presence.*) We'll go and talk it all over by ourselves. (*Going toward Left I.*) —Papa will take good care of his little son. (*He stops as he reaches the exit*) Fobs — it is three

o'clock now; either you or Mary attend the door. Carry out my instructions. And one of you inform me whilst the other admits any caller. (*This is said over his shoulder, facing front to them.*)

FOBS: Yes, m'lord.

(*Lord Russmore stoops over the childish form in his arms, and exits embracing his son.*)

(*Fobs closes the door after Lord Russmore. Mary, meanwhile, picks up the picture folio from the floor, and goes to deposit it on table above mantel.*)

(*Addressing Mary in quiet remonstrative tones*) Why have told 'is lordship about the child's cryin' spells, Mary? (*Shaking his head disapprovingly, mounting to resume his work*) It doesn't 'elp matters a bit.

MARY (*simply*): I just couldn't 'elp it, Fobs. Seeing the poor bairn crying all night, an' me not knowin' what to say, was enough to turn a body's head. Our dear mistress away, an' no means of learnin' why, whither, or where she went.

FOBS (*assorting the books, sadly shaking his head*): The more reason why you shouldn't hev given 'is Lordship added pain. Maybe he cannot 'elp 'imself: He's been a good master to you and me, Mary.

MARY: I know. (*Sighing*) All this mystery betokens some great trial we know not wot of. What think you can have happened?

FOBS: One cannot tell. In these dreadful days 'tis enough if one kin call one's soul 'is own.

MARY: I shall never understand it. And Sir Andrews who yesternoon brought a score o' men here for his lordship to hire.

FOBS (*flourishing his book in indication*): And them scurryin' hither and thither about the premises since this mornin' — Jacob says they're now lyin' about in

wait, an' they will step in an' arrest this caller his lordship expects.

MARY: Surely some State offender.

FOBS: But then, what *I* cannot make out is why this man will come 'ere askin' to see her ladyship? Yesternoon, after the men had gone, his lordship says to me: "Fobs," says he, "to-morrow, about three o'clock, should any visitor come askin' to see Lady Russmore, admit him and say she is at home; should he ask after me — say that I am still in Chichester: immediately h-inform me."

MARY: And his lordship spoke the same words to me. It must be this has to do with our lady's absence somehow.

FOBS: Jacob says 't was rumored late last night — the Queen and her child had fled to France. (*He pauses abruptly in his work upon hearing the front door bell ring.*) There! . . .

MARY: Go and open. (*She goes to window to look cautiously out between the curtains.*)

FOBS (*starting quickly for Left 3.*) I wonder if it can be —

MARY (*as Fobs exits, looking out*): Likely 'tis Lady Scarsdale; 'tis her usual hour to come and visit the child since her ladyship's away.

(*She arranges the curtains. Enter Lady Scarsdale Left 3 E.*)

LADY SCARSDALE (*Xing to the writing table and depositing a small package, greeting Mary with a pleasant nod on the way*): Fobs said I should find you in here. (*She starts to undo the package that she has brought.*)

MARY: Good afternoon, your ladyship.

LADY SCARSDALE: This morning I purchased a little novelty for Henry. A French toy to amuse him.

(*She produces from the box a Jumping-Jack painted in French Pierrot coloring.*)

MARY: Oh, indeed, your ladyship, it *will* delight him.

LADY SCARSDALE (*setting it to motion by pulling the strings*)
Isn't it amusing? (*Laying it in the box*) How is the dear baby to-day?

MARY: Last night 't was pitiful — he lay awake the whole night long crying for his mother, and no way to console him. (*She takes the wrappings of the box, and puts them in fire-place under the logs.*)

LADY SCARSDALE: The poor, dear little man.

MARY: In the end I cried myself 't was so sad.

LADY SCARSDALE: I can understand. You love your mistress very dearly.

MARY: Oh! . . . (*Expressive of "a great great deal."*)

LADY SCARSDALE: And I imagine you would do a great deal, if you knew, in some way or other, that you could make her very happy.

MARY: Indeed I would —

LADY SCARSDALE: Mary — you say that her dear child cries demanding her; what if it should be in your power to help me bring her to this dear little heart again?

MARY: *I* could do this, your ladyship?

LADY SCARSDALE: Would you hesitate?

MARY: Indeed no, your ladyship. But how is this to be done?

LADY SCARSDALE: On my way here to-day, I resolved to trust you with a secret. Are you capable of keeping my confidence — even from Lord Russmore? If I pledge you in the end to restore happiness to this house?

MARY: Oh, please rely upon me. —

LADY SCARSDALE: Yes; for I'm sure that I can trust you. My plan may fail; it may succeed, it largely depends

upon us — at any rate, no harm will come of it to try.
Where is Lord Russmore?

MARY: He left the room a while ago with the child.

LADY SCARSDALE: Does Fobs alone answer the door,
Mary?

MARY: Either Fobs or myself, when I'm not attending
the child.

LADY SCARSDALE: You must then contrive to relieve him,
otherwise remain outside in front of the house — with
the child if possible. Can you do this?

MARY: Easily.

LADY SCARSDALE: Now, pay attention carefully, Mary,
if you betray my trust, you will ruin your master and
mistress irretrievably.

MARY: Your ladyship knows full well I shall not do so.

LADY SCARSDALE: I believe you. Listen! When you see
a gentleman presenting himself this afternoon — wait
not till he speaks, but ask him outright if he is Sieur
d'Orsay.

MARY (*repeating*): Sieur d'Orsay?

LADY SCARSDALE: Sieur d'Orsay. Insist on it! And if he
answers yes — say to him that Lady Scarsdale is here
awaiting him to receive the message which he carries.
That he must come straightways to me.

MARY: I understand, — but —

LADY SCARSDALE: Mary, I wish you to trust me, even
though I cannot tell you more; but if you do this,
probably to-night, or to-morrow, your mistress will be
here and herself thank you for the service you'll have
rendered her and your master as well, unbeknown to
him, this day.

MARY: Depend upon me! When must I start?

LADY SCARSDALE: At once! Without delay!

(*Mary starts.*)

Take this toy! (*She goes and gets it and meets Mary half way*) It furnishes you an excuse to relieve Lord Russmore of the care of the child. (*Accompanying her toward L. I. E.*) Remember, *Sieur d'Orsay*. (*She stops about Left C.*)

MARY (*on her way to L. I. E.*): *Sieur d'Orsay*.

LADY SCARSDALE: And, *Mary*. (*Mary stops.*) If my daughter should come here, be sure to do whatever she asks of you.

MARY: Aye.

LADY SCARSDALE: *Sieur d'Orsay*.

MARY: *Sieur d'Orsay*. (*At doorway*) Bless me, if I don't feel as it were, my mistress was here already! (*Brushing a tear away with the reverse of her hand, she exits L. I. E.*)

LADY SCARSDALE (*who has mounted up stage — on her way toward both windows*): Now, provided my little stratagem works out till the end, and I succeed in extricating Milton from here, (*she sets the curtains of U. R. C. and U. L. C. windows far apart*) — for the time being, — the situation will be materially changed. (*As she opens the ventilator and puts a last touch to the curtains*) This way I can gain a better view of the outside. (*She comes down stage.*)

(*Enter Lord Russmore L. I. E.*)

LORD RUSSMORE: Good afternoon.

LADY SCARSDALE (*to his encounter*): Good afternoon.

LORD RUSSMORE (*as he shakes her hand and retains it*): Faithful from first to last to come daily and cheer us up. (*He lets go her hand.*)

LADY SCARSDALE: Some people have so little to do, my lord, so much time to themselves, that 'tis no great credit if they devote a little of it to others.

LORD RUSSMORE (*shaking his head negatively, as he steps*

toward the arm-chair Right C.): Misrepresentations of your golden acts will only serve to lend them fresh lustre. This instance, for example. (*As he draws the chair a little up stage in invitation for her to sit down*) Lady Scarsdale, I thank you for taking the trouble to bring my little son a new toy. A very ingenious one. I placed it in his hand.

(*Lady Scarsdale has gone to the arm-chair, Lord Russmore Xes to the mantel, remaining standing by same.*)

LADY SCARSDALE (*sitting down*): How is the darling boy to-day?

LORD RUSSMORE: For the present he is fast asleep. I sang him one of Alice's songs. He was accustomed to hear her sing it before retiring.

LADY SCARSDALE: This, naturally, soon lulled him to sleep.

LORD RUSSMORE: Yes. (*After a brief pause*) I have been hoping that in time he may grow to miss her less; that is, if it is not too much to ask of you — to come here once a day for some time yet — to help me.

LADY SCARSDALE: Oh, I am glad to hear you speak so; until four days ago, you would not yield to my suggestion of doing this.

LORD RUSSMORE: I could not comprehend until then that your perseverance to call here came solely from your own great kindness of heart. Pride blinded me.

LADY SCARSDALE: Lastly you confided your misfortune to me. It made it easier for me to help you bear it.

LORD RUSSMORE: Yes. — I think the blow was so great that to a degree it made me numb — insensible, as it were, to kindness as well as to any additional pain. — At first, the mental anguish nearly drove me frantic! Now, I'm cold and collected: one part of me is dead — that part of me where my heart existed . . . The love

that I bore my child and the love that I bore her only differed in sense, but each filled a complete heart in me. That made two hearts whose every throb I felt with unspeakable pride and joyousness. Now, of the two, only one remains: the other died and changed to gall, instilling murderous thoughts against him that deprived me of its life. Constantly before me is the spectacle of their infamy. I cannot escape; always it recurs to my mind; to blot him out of the picture I must perforce seize this thief of her good name; in the rest I shall then aim to become resigned — time will teach me — perhaps — who knows. . . .

(He remains still absorbed in thought. Lady Scarsdale is the first to break the scene by rising and slowly Xing left. He becomes conscious of her movement, and also comes out of his meditation.)

LADY SCARSDALE: You are confident that he will keep his appointment to come this afternoon, m'lord?

LORD RUSSMORE: I have no reason not to hope so. Unless — *(He looks toward the windows.)*

LADY SCARSDALE: Unless they are together, you mean.

LORD RUSSMORE *(reaching the windows, he draws the curtains together, taking some precaution to keep out of view from the outside)*: Pardon me, if I draw the curtains: some passer-by might chance to espy me. Will you remain to take tea?

LADY SCARSDALE: No, my lord; I sent Josephine on an errand to a poor woman in distress; I should be home when she returns. By the way, I asked *Sieur d'Orsay* to stop here and escort me home on his way; I hope you'll not deem my asking him to call here a liberty.

LORD RUSSMORE: Not in the least. *(He strikes the steel hoop on the writing-table. Afterwards he sits facing same.)* How is *Sieur d'Orsay*? I have not seen him since —

I recollect;—(*takes up pen*) we spoke to each other the day of Lady Russmore's disappearance — no, it was the following morning — the day I supposedly left for Chichester. Pray excuse me if I write. We met on the way to the palace.

(*Enter Fobs Left 3 E.*)

Fobs, despatch Jacob to Quigsby to learn if ought has occurred — wait till he returns and bring me word.

Fobs: Yes, m'lord.

(*Exit Right 3.*)

LADY SCARSDALE (*who has divined the truth, but has mastered herself quickly*): Have you someone out there watching, my lord?

LORD RUSSMORE: Several men. (*He resumes his writing, she goes to the window.*)

You will not see them; they're in hiding. I've left nothing to chance —

(*Standing above him, Lady Scarsdale glares.*)

LADY SCARSDALE: But how will you know the culprit — if he's nabbed before he enters the house and asks for — ?

LORD RUSSMORE: Everyone will be allowed to call at this house unmolested, but none to depart and pass without a word from me.

(*Lady Scarsdale appears somewhat relieved.*)

On the other hand, anyone seen lurking or loitering about, approaching this house without entering it in the end, will be stopped and afterwards examined by me. —

LADY SCARSDALE: Indeed you could not have taken more thorough precautions — I hope the wretch *is* taken! (*The last line is said as she comes down stage and a flicker of a smile comes to her lips.*)

LORD RUSSMORE: He will be if he comes here! (*Having risen, he comes to her.*) Considering that you and Sieur

d'Orsay will be leaving together — 't were well to provide you with this order to the men who are watching.
(*She takes the permit.*)

LADY SCARSDALE: Thank you. (*Then with paper in hand, laughing a little*) To be frank, I was about to demand a dozen such. I feel so timid. So glad we happened to talk about it. For, imagine *Sieur d'Orsay*, for instance, seeing anyone barring our way, or being rude to me: Goodness! fancy him becoming excited and pouring out his indignation in French to them —

LORD RUSSMORE: True, that should have produced a crisis.

LADY SCARSDALE (*mounting up stage*): And if anything had happened to him, oh, my daughter would never have forgiven me. — (*She turns front, her back against the front of the writing table.*) There! . . . I knew I should end by doing it!

LORD RUSSMORE: What?

LADY SCARSDALE: I've committed a breach of confidence. I've betrayed her secret.

LORD RUSSMORE: Have you? (*Tumbling*) Oh! (*He crosses to the mantel to lower down the cover of the ivory casket which is raised.*) I thought it was Mr. Court-nay who was in favor.

LADY SCARSDALE: Oh, Robert is easily accounted for — (*She suddenly hears, as it were, voices off Left. She turns sharply towards Left 3, and while Russmore is Xing to the mantel, ascertaining this first, she Xes to Left 3, E, continuing to speak*) — he's attracted by her dowry. (*She parts the door quickly a little and as rapidly withdraws and seems seized with great agitation*) Lately he's been insanely jealous of *Sieur d'Orsay*.
(*Meanwhile she comes further down stage, speaking and, at the same time, trying to think out how to meet an emer-*

gency. *Lord Russmore, after taking up the casket and glancing inside and touching the contents, places it back on the mantel.*)

Josephine has great trouble in keeping them apart.

(She suddenly gets an inspiration and approaches Left I.) I think I hear the child crying —

(Simultaneously enters Mary Left 3 E.)

LORD RUSSMORE *(shifting his eyes from Lady Scarsdale to Mary)*: What is it, Mary?

LADY SCARSDALE *(as Mary looks at her)*: Is it someone for me?

MARY: *Sieur d'Orsay to see Lady Scarsdale.*

LORD RUSSMORE: 'Tis well. Admit him. *(To Lady Scarsdale while Mary departs)* Pray receive him in here, whilst I look after the child. *(Saying which he crosses to Left I. E.)* You'll remain till I return? — Pray do.

LADY SCARSDALE: Certainly.

LORD RUSSMORE: As soon as Fobs is here, Mary can relieve me.

(Lady Scarsdale nods assentingly — Exit Lord Russmore Left I. E.)

LADY SCARSDALE *(changing manner the instant Lord Russmore is out)*: Phew! . . . I nearly lost my head, he took me so by surprise! *(Said on way to Right 3 E., her eyes turned in the direction of Left 3 E.)* I never thought of his being admitted by Mary without first ringing! *(She casts a quick glance off Right 3 to see that Fobs is not returning and closes back the door. As she starts toward Left 3, enters Milton. She quickly raises her finger to her lips enjoining him silence, crosses him and closes the door — Left 3. They turn simultaneously, facing each other.)*

(Her voice subdued, with intensity and speaking rapidly)

Quick! Give me the paper that you bring Alice!

You're in the lion's lair! With spies swarming the premises — outside! Here's a pass to get us through!

MILTON (*one hand inside his doublet, taking the pass with the other*): Where's Alice?

LADY SCARSDALE: Don't ask any questions — but give me the paper — there's no time! Lord Russmore may step into the room any moment!

(*She steps down stage, her eyes focused on Left I. E. He follows her down, taking the paper out from inside his coat.*)

MILTON (*above her right shoulder*): Then he is not in Chichester?

LADY SCARSDALE (*still her eyes focused on Left I. E.*): No; he doubled back on his steps at nightfall the day he went and has since been hiding here! (*She snatches the paper from his hand, but keeps on looking at Left I. E.*) I made pretense I was waiting for you — *Sieur d'Orsay* — to escort me home on your way. Is this it? (*Meaning the mandate.*)

MILTON: Yes; but one word more — where is Alice?

LADY SCARSDALE: Ran away rather than betray you.

Never fear, I shall be here to-night to present this paper.

MILTON: Then Russmore who, the next day, led me to believe —

LADY SCARSDALE: He deceived you like everyone else. The important thing is that we get away. I promised we would remain till he returned. He knows nothing — so resume your French. When we leave I will tell you everything! (*She takes a sudden step toward the door Left, then quickly warning Milton.*) Sh! . . . (*She crosses to Right C., and sits while Milton steps up stage, placing Lord Russmore's order to pass inside his coat.*)

LORD RUSSMORE (*heard as he opens the door*): Here we

are! . . . (*He enters leading the child in front of him into the room*) Now demonstrate to Lady Scarsdale how well you can manipulate it. (*Urging the child forward, as he raises his head and perceives Milton.*)

HENRY (*Xing to Lady Scarsdale, making the toy wiggle*):
Loo! . . . (*He is greatly amused.*)

LORD RUSSMORE (*genially to Milton*): Ah—Sieur d'Orsay.
Welcome!

MILTON (*effusively pressing his hand*): T'ank you, mee
Lord Russmore!
(*Lady Scarsdale laughs, chiming in with the child's amusement.*)

HENRY: Mamma blought Henly nice playtling. (*He manipulates it afresh.*)

LADY SCARSDALE (*fondly taking him up in her lap*):
Mamma brought him nice plaything—Just listen to
him.

HENRY: Loo'! (*He manipulates it and laughs.*)

MILTON (*Xing to them*): An' dis eeze your leetle son—
mee lord?

LORD RUSSMORE (*remaining where he stood*): Yes, Sieur
d'Orsay.

MILTON (*fondly placing his hand upon his golden head*):
A nize leetle man.

(*Enters Mary quietly Left 2 E. She comes down Left of stage slowly.*)

He eeze 'ow old, mee lord?

HENRY (*quickly*): Flive years!

(*Lady Scarsdale laughs and hugs him.*)

MILTON: Five? H'n! h'n! h'n! . . .

(*Lady Scarsdale first catches sight of Mary and releases the child.*)

LADY SCARSDALE: What is it, Mary?

MARY: Miss Scarsdale has just come and wishes to see
your ladyship.

LADY SCARSDALE (*rising*): Certainly!

LORD RUSSMORE: Why not ask her to come in?

MARY: She would not, m' lord, as she has been riding and is covered with dust.

LADY SCARSDALE: The poor darling must be tired out! — Will you excuse me?

(*Lord Russmore nods — Milton bows.*)

(*Lady Scarsdale turns at door.*)

I will see if I cannot coax her to come in, Sieur d'Orsay.

MILTON: Please — ah yes! . . .

(*Exit Lady Scarsdale Left 3 E.*)

LORD RUSSMORE (*to Milton, as the latter approaches Henry and stands back of him*): Lady Scarsdale has a very big heart, Sieur d'Orsay.

MILTON (*his hands resting each side of the child's shoulders*):

True, mee lord — and Miss, her daughter, has a vary beautiful soul! (*His gaze becomes uplifted.*)

(*Lord Russmore looks at him and cannot help smiling at his fervour.*)

LORD RUSSMORE: Both remarkable women!

HENRY: Loo' ! (*He pulls the strings of the toy violently, the latter goes into antics.*)

MILTON: Ah! . . . (*He sits in the arm-chair and draws the child near him*) — a funnee pantin!

(*The word pronounced as it is in French.*)

HENRY: Mamma blought Henly playthling.

MILTON: Yes? — ah-ha! . . .

(*To Lord Russmore*) Pardon, mee lord — I' ave not ask yet 'ow eeze Lady Russmore?

(*Pardon is said as in French.*)

LORD RUSSMORE: Quite well, thank you. She is away at present.

MILTON: Oh, I am sorree — (*He turns his attention immediately to the child, smiling to him.*)

HENRY (*more and more enthusiastic, and making the toy wriggle frantically*): Loo'! Loo'! . . . (*He laughs the while.*)

MILTON (*laughing*): Yes — (*He lifts him up on his knees*)
Come an' seet 'eere.

LORD RUSSMORE: You're fond of children, Sieur d'Orsay?

MILTON: Ah — to "distraction," mee lord!

(*"Distraction" is said as in French.*)

I've a leetle nephew, mee lord; ze same age as your leetle son.

(*To Henry*) You are lak' my leetle nephew. (*Pointing out with his finger playfully*) ze hair — ze eyes — yes, nose — altogethारे lak 'im! (*He gives him a fond playful hug*) I love 'im vary, vary much — often I would lak' for to go an' play wit' 'im, but I cannot — always I mus' go a-way.

HENRY: Mamma glone away too?

MILTON: Mamma mus' miss you vary much!

HENRY: Mamma kliss Henly goo-bye an' say Henly mus' be goo' boy.

MILTON: Dat eeze rright!

HENRY: An' Henly love papa, and mamma bling Henly nice playtling: Loo'!

(*He shows the toy without working it. Lord Russmore has stood by the while, still and not betraying his own feelings.*)

(*Enter Lady Scarsdale — Left 3 E.*)

MILTON (*as Henry shows him the toy, as above described*):
Ah-ha! . . .

LADY SCARSDALE (*as she opens the door and enters*): They will excuse you, dearie.

JOSEPHINE (*still off stage, entering*): But I look a sight!
(*Henry is first to turn his head in their direction. He slips off Milton's lap as Josephine enters. Milton rises.*)

LADY SCARSDALE: They all know that you rode on an errand for me.

JOSEPHINE (*coming down first to Lord Russmore*): Good afternoon, my lord. I am glad to see you safely returned from Chichester.

HENRY (*running to her*): Loo' !

JOSEPHINE (*bending the knee and embracing him*): Oh, you darling!

LADY SCARSDALE: My daughter hesitated to come in, particularly on your account, *Sieur d'Orsay*!

JOSEPHINE (*rising*): Sh! *maman*. (*Then Xing to Sir Milton*) I was all mussed up — You took me by surprise — I did not expect finding *you* here.

MILTON (*taking her hand, with French gallantry*): A most happy "*rencontre*," *mademoiselle*, for mee.
(*"Rencontre" said as in French.*)

JOSEPHINE (*to Lady Scarsdale*): *Sir Andrews* told me you were here, *maman*; I stopped there on my way.
(*To Lord Russmore*) The whole city is in uproar. Everywhere one hears the rumor that His Majesty has fled to France.

LORD RUSSMORE: His Majesty —

JOSEPHINE: Preceded by the Queen and her child.

LORD RUSSMORE: Impossible.

LADY SCARSDALE: One hears so many rumors. (*She looks significantly at Milton.*)

MILTON: *Mon Dieu* — an' 'earing so manee, one eeze slow to believe!

LORD RUSSMORE: Depend upon it, again this time, 'tis one more attempt of William to demoralize the people. The trick will fail. Besides, I should have been one of the first informed, had anything happened.

JOSEPHINE: But everyone believes you still in Chichester.

LORD RUSSMORE: Sir Andrews *knows* I am here.

JOSEPHINE: He was starting out to discover whence originated the rumor when I left.

MILTON: I 'ave a rendez-vous at zee palace an' I weil send you full "information," mee lord.

(*"Information" said as in French.*)

LORD RUSSMORE (*taking his hand offered in leave-taking*): Thank you — Not that I am interested in such concoctions, — but more curious as to who spread the news.

LADY SCARSDALE: Sieur d'Orsay, it is agreed that you shall escort my daughter home instead of me. I have decided to remain to tea, my lord, since Josephine found me here.

(*Milton approaches Josephine.*)

(*Josephine whispers to Milton to give her Lord Russmore's permit.*)

LORD RUSSMORE: Thank you.

LADY SCARSDALE: I have provided my daughter with the order which you gave me. (*Josephine has it in her hand by this time.*)

LORD RUSSMORE (*to Josephine*): If you should prefer, I will send one of the men along with you. (*He catches sight of Lady Scarsdale shaking her head negatively at him, as much as saying "Don't, They wish to be alone."*)

JOSEPHINE (*meanwhile*): This will suffice, thank you.

LORD RUSSMORE: Oh, yes, of course — I see . . . (*He goes, smilingly to L. I. E.*) I will accompany you as far as the door.)

(*Opening L. I. E., and turning inquiringly*) Your horse is in the rear?

JOSEPHINE: Yes. Au revoir, maman. (*She passes out.*)

LADY SCARSDALE (*nodding to her in response as she passes*)

out, then, addressing Milton who is *Xing* toward the exit): *Au revoir, Sieur d'Orsay.*

MILTON (*with a gallant bow at door*): *Adieu — Madame.*
(*Exit Milton.*)

LORD RUSSMORE: *Won't you come along?*

LADY SCARSDALE (*standing by Henry's side*): *Henry and I are going out in the park, my lord.*

LORD RUSSMORE: *Excuse me then. (He exits L. I., closing the door. Lady Scarsdale nods to him as he exits.)*

LADY SCARSDALE (*with elation, the moment he is gone*): *Heavens! who could have believed it? So far, my little stratagem has succeeded! Now, provided the news which Josephine brings is confirmed — (Picking the child up in her arms) Oh, my darling! my darling! you will see your mother again! You have the most plucky, the most courageous mother that ever lived! (She smothers him with kisses, walking about the room, then when near R. I. E.) Come! We'll also keep watch in the park!*

(*Exit Lady Scarsdale quickly R. I. E. with Henry in her arms.*)

(*A mere second's wait and Fobs enters rapidly, followed by MASTER QUIGSBY of the King's soldiery. They enter Right 3, E., Fobs very excited, and walking rapidly, Quigsby very slowly and sluggish. He's very warm and exhausted.*) (*Quigsby is extremely portly, a pompous sort of an individual, arrogant to his inferiors. His eyes fairly bulge out of his fat, round, ruddy face. He fans himself with his hat as he enters.*)

FOBS (*half crossing the room toward Left 3 E., then coming back on his steps*): *But one moment, Master Quigsby — his lordship is hereabouts — (Stepping down to the arm-chair, he drags it a couple of feet up stage, wheeling it so that it faces Left.) But pray be seated! (He starts*

off again, but again returns on his steps.) And let me take your hat. (*He takes it.*) Maybe you would like a cup o' wine to restore ye a little?

(The more flustered and polite Fobs appears, the more at ease and patronizing is Quigsby.)

QUIGSBY: Thank ye, Master Fobs, but oi niver imboibe whoilst oi'm purformin' mee duty!

FOPS (*starting off with Quigsby's hat*): I sometimes do! It 'elps! (*He turns again.*) I meant no offense.

QUIGSBY (*clearing his throat, coming down toward the chair*): Howiver — seein' as yur so keen ("kane") about it, oi'll accipt afturr oi've seen ("sane") his lor'ship. (*Enter Mary Left 3, E., as Quigsby is about to sit. He stands up again.*)

MARY: What is it, Fobs?

FOPS (*going U. R. and placing Quigsby's hat on the settee*): Where is his lordship?

MARY: In the rear — seeing Miss Scarsdale off. What's amiss?

FOPS (*more and more excited, on his way rapidly toward Left I. E.*) The knave his lordship h'expected to call 'as been caught! (*He returns a few steps again toward Center.*) H'excuse me, Master Quigsby. (*He turns to Mary*) Mistress Brown — this is Master Quigsby of the King's Soldiery. (*A few steps away and a few steps back again toward Quigsby.*) Mistress Brown will entertain ye whilst I inform his lordship. (*He starts off Left I., returns abruptly again at door.*) H'excuse me —
(*He exits Left I.*)

MARY: And have you truly caught him?

QUIGSBY (*important, with a lofty air*): Aye, Mistress — an' as *ragin'* a miscreant as iver bawled out oaths and curses.

(*Enter Lord Russmore Left I. E., followed by Fobs.*)

LORD RUSSMORE: Well, Quigsby. You've arrested someone?

QUIGSBY (*now become greatly deferential*): Aye, yur lor'ship.

LORD RUSSMORE: What took place? Where is he?

QUIGSBY: Under guard insoide the deserted meetin' house thot stands near the road, on the other soide of yur lor'ship's park.

FOBS: He was first spied upon the high road, m'lord —

QUIGSBY (*finishing the sentence begun by Fobs*): Roidin' breakneck our way — at about —

FOBS (*continuing Quigsby's thought*): — Not more than a quarter of an hour ago.

LORD RUSSMORE (*front of his writing table*): Fobs — let Quigsby tell it his own way.

FOBS: Yes, — m'lord.

QUIGSBY: He halted in front o' the meetin'-house and aftur lookin' kirfully about, an' there bein' no one in soight, as he thought, he took his horse back o' the house and hid it in the bushes.

LORD RUSSMORE: What happened then?

QUIGSBY: Thin he started off on foot toward this house.
(*Front door bell is heard.*)

LORD RUSSMORE (*to Mary*): See who this is!
(*To Quigsby*) Proceed!

(*Exit Mary Left 3, E.*)

QUIGSBY: Reachin' the end o' the wall on the road, he peered kirfully round it — siveral toimes at the house; each toime makin' sure thot no one was about.

(*Lord Russmore begins to pace back and forth up stage.*)

Thin he turned back and, cloimbin' the wall, got into the park.

(*Lord Russmore stops and hears Quigsby out.*)

We followed. Behoind the house, he spoid the horse,

the same thot a young loidy rode up here upon; in a twinklin' he was leadin' the beast away. "The scurvy thief expicts company," say we to one another—"else he is after changin' his mount." Howiver, one of us slips into the park and pretinds to be wurkin'—"Good day, yur worship," says our man to him as he comes by. "Are ye one of the household?" he asks. "Aye," says our man. "Is Lord Russmore at home," he asks agin. "Nay, his lor'ship's in Chichester." "Thank ye," says he, an' he flips him a gold coin. Here 'tis.

(He gives it to Lord Russmore who examines it.)

(Enters Mary simultaneously Left 3. Her face is radiant by contrast to the sombre faces in the scene.)

MARY: Sir Andrews to see you, m'lord.

LORD RUSSMORE *(without turning)*: Ask him to kindly walk in. *(He returns the coin to Quigsby.)* What is the prisoner's name?

QUIGSBY: He refused to answer. As he was tyin' the horse nixt to his own, we surrounded him. Thin, devancin' the rist oi stood behoind him. "Thou thief!" quote I—"explain why thou lurkest about and has stolen this horse."—"None o' thy business, blockhead!" says he—"Thou wilt then come answer to him whose business 'tis!" says I—"I will see thee in hell first!" says he: and thereupon he discharges his pistol full at me.

FOBS: In the nick o' time Jacob threw a stump at him—it hit his arm—

QUIGSBY: Aye, and was it Jacob that threw the stump?

FOBS: Aye. An' afterwards brought back the stolen horse.

QUIGSBY: Marry—there's small chance of missing me—an' but for thot stump—

LORD RUSSMORE (*impatiently, ceasing to pace the floor*):

Finish — what followed then?

QUIGSBY: Thin all the rist of us came out o' hiding and fell on him to a man!

LORD RUSSMORE: In sum, you arrested him?

QUIGSBY: Well — not exactly arristed. Marry, he was a demon — an' we had nigh the worst of it, when a chance blow on top o' his head dropt 'im unconscious. He loies there since in the house recoverin' his senses. Oi thocht best to inform yur lor'ship moise!f!

LORD RUSSMORE: Very well!

(*He simultaneously sees Sir Andrews entering Left 3. He goes to him. Mary, a second later, follows Sir Andrews in. Mary's face is radiant with joy which she tries to hide. She winds her way down stage after a while and manages to exit R. I. E. unnoticed.*)

Most opportune, my good friend. (*Pressing Sir Andrews' hand then, afterwards, indicating Quigsby.*) This good man has made an arrest — and I have every indication to believe that if the prisoner be not the arch villain himself, at least he is connected somehow, or is in conspiracy with him. Fobs! accompany Mr. Quigsby.

(*Fobs goes quickly for Quigsby's hat.*)

See to it that your prisoner revives, Quigsby! Afterwards detain him and bring him hither!

(*Quigsby bows and follows Fobs out Right 3 E.*)

SIR ANDREWS: Do you ignore who the prisoner is, my lord?

LORD RUSSMORE: So far he has not divulged his identity; we'll soon find it out, once he's brought here!

SIR ANDREWS: But supposing that this man was merely after the one whom you expected?

LORD RUSSMORE: For what purpose? What's his reason?

No. His actions alone denote he only sought to insure his personal safety. He was caught lurking, his movements smacking of suspicion! My good Sir Andrews, there was deeper plotting in the outrage than was possible for us to conceive at first. However, we'll soon get at the root of this entire affair now!

SIR ANDREWS: Aye, and so you shall — I have been to Whitehall, my lord.

LORD RUSSMORE: Oh yes, and you have come to tell me the news? Forgive me, this deplorable business has so preyed upon my mind of late — Why, I have not even offered you a chair.

SIR ANDREWS: I prefer standing — thank you. (*Taking Lord Russmore's hand in his*) You have been very severely tried of late, my lord.

LORD RUSSMORE: Oh, but I am now getting on passably well, Sir Andrews — and with Lady Scarsdale's good help. But pray — you have been to Whitehall, you say — tell me how fares his Majesty? (*Smiling bitterly*) 'Twas thought I had too much influence over him, so they urged an apparent estrangement to exist between us. Fancy this! But nevertheless, in my heart, I feel the king still reposes all trust in me! For he knows that I serve him unselfishly — unselfishly! Sir Andrews — and even to the extent of consenting for his policy's welfare to be publicly dismissed and sent on to Chichester — *There* was the test!

SIR ANDREWS: My dear, true, loyal friend. Sit down and let us talk matters over.

LORD RUSSMORE: Yes, Sir Andrews. I always value your advice. (*He brings a chair to center and indicates the arm-chair to his friend*) And once my wretched household affairs are more settled, you and I will go together to the palace. (*Sits.*) How is His Majesty?

SIR ANDREWS: That is one of the subjects I came here especially to speak about. (*Leaning forward in his chair toward Lord Russmore*) His Majesty — (*Lastly taking hold of Lord Russmore's hand*) Hugo, my dear staunch friend — he prepared for very deplorable news — (*His voice quivers with emotion, born of feelings of loyalty.*)

LORD RUSSMORE: His Majesty is unwell?

SIR ANDREWS: Have no news reached you as to what has occurred?

LORD RUSSMORE: None except those that you have brought me. I've held no other communication with the outside now for several days. I've been a total recluse.

SIR ANDREWS: But to-day Miss Scarsdale told you — (*Lord Russmore glares at his friend an instant. Sir Andrews' head droops, tears filling his eyes. Lord Russmore rises. He passes his hand across his forehead and slightly reels, gazing at the stooping figure before him.*)

(*Speaking tremulously, with his head lowered, after a pause*) The queen and her child fled to France last night. His Majesty followed them on the way to exile — to-day.

LORD RUSSMORE (*scarcely audible*): Who told — you?

SIR ANDREWS: The Lord Chamberlain himself —

(*Lord Russmore slowly faces the portrait of the King, Right 2, and gazes a long time at it with emotion. Sir Andrews raises his head, sees him and also rises.*)

LORD RUSSMORE (*after awhile, addressing the portrait of the King*): Oh — you should not have deserted us — Your Majesty —

SIR ANDREWS (*sadly and quietly*): His enemies were yours, my lord — they forced him to go —

LORD RUSSMORE (*slowly turning, squinting his eyes, as the truth of the situation dawns upon him*): I—see—profiting of the time when I was no longer there — they — (*Gradually becoming more and more animated.*) Now I comprehend their full motive in urging the policy of a seeming estrangement. In inducing me to consent to being dismissed and sent on to Chichester — *God Almighty!* (*With abandon to vehement rage*) And I believed them! Believed that it would win back to His Majesty's standards scores of Dissenters — and all the time they were mocking me! *Me!* — And I was sot enough to believe! Here I've stayed, faithful to my pledge not to appear in London ere to-day — whilst they, meanwhile — *By the God above!* I will yet foil their damnable tricks! Drive the lie back at their crafty heads! We'll convene the Council and send couriers after who will bring back the King! (*He starts for settee U. R.*)

SIR ANDREWS: 'Tis too late, my lord — already the Council has seceded, and William is hailed Ruler!

LORD RUSSMORE (*coming down with his hat, cape, sword and belt, which he deposits upon the chair Center*): No matter!! All will yet be saved when His Majesty's brought back! (*He starts by putting on his sword and belt.*)

SIR ANDREWS: My lord, the city's in a ferment. 'Tis worth your life than to attempt to do this!

LORD RUSSMORE: And a nation's destiny is worth any man's life! Think you the rabble intimidates me? A pack of weaklings! Minions — every one! (*Having buckled his sword on, he picks up his cape.*) We'll proceed first to Whitehall — you'll accompany me —

SIR ANDREWS: I will not accompany you, my lord.
(*Lord Russmore, in the act of tying his cape, stops.*)

LORD RUSSMORE (*after looking at his friend a second — resuming to fasten his cape on*): Then I shall go alone!

SIR ANDREWS: But first you will hear me — then, neither you shall go —

LORD RUSSMORE (*after taking up his hat*): Why not?

SIR ANDREWS: Because you will grant the uselessness of your project.

LORD RUSSMORE: How so?

SIR ANDREWS: You will not be able to convene the Council — And the King has already embarked for France: But above all, you have not the right to go and sacrifice your life — to immolate yourself — when your child has first claim to your protection *here!*

(*Lord Russmore remains stock still, listening. Sir Andrews, noting that speaking of his child has had the wanted effect, continues immediately to speak.*)

Oh, I am not less animated by sentiments of loyalty than you are in the present crisis, my courageous friend — but I concede our defeat: The last page of the drama is written — a new era has begun; your little son needs you now more than ever. He has a sacred right to your care — at his tender age, he cannot speak for himself — so your old friend here pleads with you in his behalf — And I say to you, remain here. Stand by him . . . 'T is God's will — don't risk leaving him *alone* . . . Fatherless. . . .

(*Slowly the large plumed hat in Lord Russmore's hand slips to the floor.*)

Bring yourself, if you can, to think of that —

(*Lord Russmore sinks down to the chair Center, the picture of discouragement. He should sit so as to face Left, and a trifle up stage.*)

(*Sir Andrews quietly goes to Right I. and noiselessly opens door. Mary appears on the threshold. Sir Andrews*

facing up stage, Mary facing down stage, he leans his head sideways to her and whispers some instructions. She nods affirmatively and quickly withdraws. Sir Andrews steps up to the mantel and observes the dejected attitude of his friend. Lord Russmore now gradually comes out of his sad meditations, and, rising, he slowly walks up stage until he stands below his table, his back to the audience. He unfastens his cape, lays it on the table and then starts to unfasten his sword belt. Enter Henry Right I., led in by Lady Scarsdale. Sir Andrews warningly raises his finger to his lips. He steps toward the child and takes his hand, leading him toward his father, at the same time bending down and whispering something in his ear, pointing to Lord Russmore. He leaves the child half way up and takes a position by the bookcase Left 2. Lady Scarsdale comes a trifle up by the mantel Right 2.)

HENRY (*left of Russmore*): Henly wan' tle kiss papa.

LORD RUSSMORE (*leaving his sword on the table and turning, lifting Henry into his arms*): Oh, my little chap, yes! . . .
(*He kisses him*) And papa is going to remain to stand by his little son! . . .

LADY SCARSDALE (*stepping to Right C.*) Courage, my lord, — I have heard the news.

LORD RUSSMORE (*grimly — with bitterness — coming forward*): H'n! h'n! h'n! isn't it incredible? Undone in everything that I held precious on earth — except my little son — in barely eight days' time. Fate has been very harsh to you, my boy: a broken home and your father's ended career — your lot: from where I must begin again to build — for you.

HENRY (*brightly*): Henly see mamma —

LORD RUSSMORE: Nay — mamma will nevermore return; mamma has deserted us, and the King has deserted us — so you and I will ever be alone —

SIR ANDREWS (*coming forward*): My lord, if you recollect, when you yielded to my entreaties several days ago and told me of your wife's desertion, I maintained a doubtful attitude as to whether such a thing were even admissible — I had known her so long and so well — Now, I must confess that despite the proofs which you then presented, despite them all I have right along and still now entertain the same views: that you have been mistaken.

(*Sharply, Lord Russmore stares at him — he slowly lets Henry slip down to the ground.*)

You and I were to have been arrested this night, each in our respective home, and, together, with every member of his Majesty's Council, were to have been carried off to William's camp. (*He receives the mandate from Lady Scarsdale's hand and hands it to Lord Russmore.*) Here is a mandate from William, granting you immunity, which Lady Russmore was to present to-night to any intruder, under the guise of a friend, seeking to arrest you.

LORD RUSSMORE (*to Sir Andrews*): But how come you to know aught of this?

SIR ANDREWS: I will proceed in order: The knave whom Quigsby has caught is Robert Courtnay — come hither to seize the person whom your wife expected at three o'clock this afternoon.

LORD RUSSMORE: I still do not follow you.

SIR ANDREWS: Lady Russmore, having pledged her word to safeguard William's plot in exchange for securing this means of protecting you, ran away rather than endanger the safety of this messenger.

LORD RUSSMORE: Lady Scarsdale, this mandate was in your hands. Was it Alice who sent it you? You *know* where she is?

LADY SCARSDALE: My dear Hugo, have patience. We have all been plotting for your sake.

LORD RUSSMORE: Sir Andrews, tell me — do you know who was the man who — on that night —

SIR ANDREWS: Sieur Raoul d'Orsay, my lord.

LADY SCARSDALE: He who is engaged to my daughter.

LORD RUSSMORE (*more and more confused*): Sieur d'Orsay? (*To Lady Scarsdale*) But I still less understand — after what you know —

LADY SCARSDALE: Oh, my poor Hugo — prepare yourself for joyful news. The same spoke of the wheel is not always nearest the ground and, unexpectedly, at times, through a sudden rift in the clouds, the sun will shine. In compensation for all your trials, great happiness is yours once more. Alice was never unfaithful to you, but, her heart, full of love, was equally courageous —

LORD RUSSMORE: Not unfaithful?

LADY SCARSDALE: Sieur d'Orsay is not really Sieur d'Orsay.

LORD RUSSMORE: Who then?

SIR ANDREWS: Sir Milton Lantanay.

LORD RUSSMORE (*failing to connect the name for the moment*): Lantanay?

LADY SCARSDALE: Yes — your wife's brother.

LORD RUSSMORE (*looking at her, then the whole truth dawning upon him*): It was he? — then — I see — I see! — Alice! *where is she?*

(*Alice appears simultaneously in doorway Right I. Henry sees her and runs from Lady Scarsdale's side to his mother's side. Lord Russmore remains rooted to where he stands.*)

HENRY: Mamma — mamma!

(*She presses the child, up stage, closely to her side, the while not removing her eyes away from her husband.*)

ALICE (*smiling serenely, coming to him, speaking sweetly and quietly*): Hugo —

LORD RUSSMORE (*at arm's length, after regarding her awhile*): My wife! — I dare not ask you for forgiveness — except — look! — I took good care of him — and Lady Scarsdale came every day and helped me.

ALICE: Hugo — our little son has told me all about it.

LORD RUSSMORE: I've been cruelly unjust —

ALICE: Nay, I never blamed you.

LORD RUSSMORE: You've grown so pale, I've made you suffer.

ALICE: If so, I don't remember or think of anything now — save that I'm so happy I could shriek it aloud — You dear, great, big blunt Hugo. If you had not loved me as you did, you would n't have been half as indignant. But wait! (*She runs to Right I., and calls off*) Milton!

LORD RUSSMORE (*Xing to Sir Andrews and warmly taking his hand*): Sir Andrews — we have been friends for many years, yet I have never recognized you were one more so than now, after what you have done for me and mine this day.

ALICE (*as Milton and Josephine enter Right I.*): Hugo — this is Milton. There are no longer two sides now — you should meet as brothers.
(*Josephine Xes to her mother. Henry follows Alice wherever she goes.*)

LORD RUSSMORE (*taking Milton's hand*): Sir Milton, you sought to save my life. I am one of the vanquished and poor to repay you —

MILTON: My lord, to-morrow Alice will be able to ask William anything that she wishes for you—
(*Enter Fobs Right 3.*)

FOPS: The prisoner is here, m'lord.

SIR ANDREWS (*hastily*): Tell him to go to the devil —
(*Apologetically*) Pray excuse me.

FOPS (*seeing Alice — with joyful surprise*): Your ladyship!

ALICE (*brightly*): Keep the prisoner waiting, Fobs.

JOSEPHINE: We'll have him exiled, Alice, unless he gives good assurance to mend his ways.

MILTON: Lady Scarsdale, your daughter and myself cannot agree to determine the day of our marriage. We have decided to compromise and leave it to you.

LADY SCARSDALE: When do you think it should properly take place, Alice?

ALICE: I will question them both separately and make known my decision.

MILTON and JOSEPHINE (*simultaneously*): When? (*They sharply look at each other — their eagerness makes everyone laugh.*)

ALICE: To-morrow —

(*To Lord Russmore*) To-day, I owe myself to you, — my husband!



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