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# “A DEAD PAST.”

—AN—

ORIGINAL DRAMA IN 4 ACTS.



WRITTEN BY

WALTER REYNOLDS.



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## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

DOUGLAS, LORD DYNEVOR.

COLONEL SIR BRETON OSBORNE.

LORD ARTHUR RIVERDALE.

COUNT LEON BONAPARTE FRITOUT.

BINGS, AN OLD FAMILY SERVANT.

ADOLPHUS, A NEW FAMILY SERVANT.

MERTON, A USEFUL FAMILY SERVANT.

JENKYNS, A GOVERNMENT SERVANT.

LADY SYBIL RIVERDALE.

SADIE SANDUSKY.

MAGARET KILSYTH.

MISS RASP, A BUSTLING SERVANT.

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## ACT I.

The Dynevor Woods in Autumn. Stage covered with fallen leaves, tree trunk, &c., &c.

Discovered. Bings, Adolphus and Merton.

Merton and Bings are completing the setting of a lunch which is partly laid. Adolphus is in a gorgeous livery, standing rigidly, upright and stiff. When Bings orders him to a duty, he passes the directions to Merton, who carries them out.

*Adolph (to Merton).* Here! another plate!

*Merton (lays plate).*

*Bings (with his hand to his ear).* Eh?

*Adolph.* I—aw—said—another plate.

*Bings.* Late, yes, they *are very* late, two o'clock they were to get here; never mind, it's a cold lunch, so it won't spoil.

*Adolph.* How many—aw—are to partake?

*Bings (with ear biz).* Eh?

*Adolph (loudly).* How many persons will there be to lunch?

*Bings.* Punch! No, there was no punch ordered. There's plenty of wines tho', of course.

*Adolph.* Oh! it's really altogether beneath one's dignity to bawl into the ear of an old idiot like this, but what is a gentleman to do. (*Calls very loudly*), How many are going to sit down?

*Merton (is handing out a roast duck from basket and is passing it to Adolph who is not noticing.)*

*Bings (pointing to the duck).* A bit brown. Oh, yes, but His Lordship likes his poultry so.

*Merton (thinks Adolph has the duck, and lets it fall on ground).*

*Adolph.* Clumsy ass! (*takes stage with dignity R*).

*Bings (hurriedly picking up duck and crossing to Adolph).* Do you see what you have done? The duck is all over grit.

*Adolph.* No—aw—it's the grit is all over the duck.

*Bings.* Bad luck! I should think it was. Get me a napkin.

*Adolph (going towards basket).* Really, my life is not worth having with this old imbecile. I must speak to His Lordship about it.

*Bings.* Did ever any one see such careless boobies. A nice state this is in to place before ladies and gentlemen. Come on with that cloth.

*Adolph (instructs Merton to get cloth).* There's one twisted round those glasses, unwind it.

*Bings.* Can't find it. Then, confound you, for a stupid jack-napes. Why, I could get thro' the work quicker without you.

Well, what the eye don't see, the heart doesn't grieve for—(*hesitates, then wipes duck clean with the tail of his coat, polishes it with his sleeve and places it on dish. C.*)

*Adolph.* It's all set now. Really, I'm quite fatigued with so much exertion. (*To Merton.*) Open me a dry monopole. (*Merton does so, popping cork.*)

*Bings.* (*turning from spread, not having seen this.*) Ah! they're coming now. I heard a shot. (*Sees Adolph drinking.*) Well, upon my soul, that's good.

*Adolph.* Yes, it's a fair brand, but I think I prefer Mumm, Extra Dry. I must speak to His Lordship about it.

### Enter Count Fritout.

*Count.* Ha, gentlemen, comment ca va! (*To Adolph.*) If you vil permettez moi, I vil join you.

*Adolph.* (*Ordering Merton to pour a glass for Count.*)

*Count.* (*Drinks.*) Ha! Bon, bon, as good as a French vine, as vas evare patriqu e out of English gooseberries. (*Xs.*) Ah! Monsieur Bings, ca va bien?

*Bings.* (*Automatically with hand to ear*) Oui, oui.

*Count.* You have choisit un place bien charmant, for ze lunch.

*Bings.* Punch, non, oui, oui.

*Count.* Zey are coming, I am yere avant coureur. Is everysing ready?

*Bings.* Oui, oui.

*Count.* For 2 ladies and 3 gentlemen.

*Bings.* Oui, oui.

*Count.* Vat is dis, toujours oui, oui?

*Bings.* Oui, oui.

*Count.* M. Bings, do you make your chokes on me?

*Bings.* Oui, oui.

*Count.* Zen I tell you zat you forget your place, prenez garde, do you take me for un fool?

*Bings.* Oui, oui.

*Count.* Sacre non, I vil not shall suffer it, M. Bings. Je suis un Conte Francais, Le Conte Fritout, and it is not parceque I haves poverty, that you shall mettre sur moi vos insultes, if you insult me, vous me donnerez satisfaction, do you hear?

*Bings.* Hear, oh, oui, oui.

*Count.* (*In rage*) Vat you von Engleesh donkey jackass.

*Bings.* Oui, oui.

*Count.* (*In great rage, would almost strike him.*)

*Adolph.* (*Strolls down haughtily and points to his ear.*)

*Count.* Vat is dis? (*Burlesquing ear bus.*)

*Adolph.* The old ass is deaf.

*Count.* Deaf! Vat you call him ear vas broke and shut up? Oh, Je vous prie ten mille pardons, oh cher mon Bings. You pardon me?

*Bings.* Oui, oui.

*Count.* Oh, you are noble, like all ze brave Engleesh. (*Embraces him*) Oh, mon cher ami.

*Bings.* (*Struggling free in amazement*) What fearful fools these foreigners are, I believe he takes me for a woman. (*looking off*) Ah! places, here they come, now, bustle, look lively, (*servants stand back ready to wait at table.*)

**Enter Colonel Breton Osborne, Lord Riverdale and Sadie Sandusky.**

*Sadie.* Well, this is real sweet, a perfect Paradise. I must admit that in the matter of rural scenery you English do beat we Americans. Our landscapes seem to be still in the unfinished state when compared to your's, which have had all the last touches of nature and art lavished on them.

*Col.* There's nothing in them but monotony and dulness, even beauty attenuated becomes tiresome.

*Count.* Oh! *comme vous etes ungalant to ze ladies, colonel.*

*Col.* Oh, female beauty is always fresh and charming.

*Sadie.* Very kind of you to admit so much of our poor grateful sex, but where's Lord Dynevor?

*Col.* Where I expected to find him when I got here this morning, where he *always* is. By *her* side.

*Sadie.* Her side, whose?

*Col.* Lady Sybil's.

*Sadie.* Ha, ha, ha. So that's the way the wind blows. Colonel, Sir Breton Osborne, I know what brought you up from London this morning.

*Col.* Indeed, what?

*Sadie.* You are jealous of Lord Douglas Dynevor.

*Col.* You don't know so much about Douglas Dynevor as I do, or you would see that I had no cause to give house room to the green eyed monster on his account; beside, you flatter him.

*Sadie.* Oh, I don't see that, for my part, if I were prospecting for a husband, there isn't a gentleman in Great Britain whom I should prefer to His Lordship.

*River (ade)* I was afraid she didn't care a straw about me.

*Col.* You may easily hook him.

*Sadie.* Hook him! Don't speak of His Lordship as tho' he were a mackerel.

*Col.* I mean because he has very little else beside his title. He is as poor as his curate.

*Sadie.* Poor, bah! That's where you English cut such miserable figures in our eyes, because a man doesn't happen to possess a million or two, you give him the perpetual cold shoulder and make him feel as tho' his poverty was a crime. Now, on our side, we don't ask what is the condition of a man's banking account, but we dig right into his character, and if his balance there is found to be on the right side of the books, why, we hold out a hand to him quite satisfied as long as he can call himself an honest man.

**Enter Lord Dynevor and Lady Sybil.**

*Dyn.* The noblest of all titles, and one that no sovereign on earth can confer upon an aristocratic rogue.

*Count.* Bravo! Bravissimo. Vive Legalite Fraternalite.

*Col. (ade to Sadie)* I told you they were together.

*Sadie.* I told you you were jealous.

*Dyn.* Ah, Sir Breton, you here? I didn't expect to see you.

*Col.* No, I suppose not; but I'm here all the same. (*Crossing to Lady Sybil and offering hand*) How dy'e do, Lady Sibyl. (*She bows.*)

*Dyn.* I believe we're a little behind time.

*Sybil.* Yes; but the walk here was so delightful that we must be excused.

*River.* What matters! Time was made for slaves.

*Count.* Yes, for married ones, to zem it is eternity.

*Omnes.* (Laugh.)

*Sybil.* Oh, what a wicked speech!

*Dyn.* One would think the Count spoke from experience; but come, let's sit down and fall too.

*Count.* Yes, ze cold lunch vil be hot bake in ze sun else—

*Dyn.* Conducts Lady Sybil to place. *River* with *Sadie.* Seats himself at head C, the other gentlemen on ground R and L.) Ah, Bings, another knife and fork, we didn't expect the colonel, you know.

*Col.* That's twice already you've reminded me of the fact.

*Dyn.* Is it? I beg your pardon; I'm very sorry.

*Sadie.* I don't believe you are one bit sorry, and you should never pretend to what you don't feel.

*Col.* Ah, in that *society*, course has its inconveniences sometimes.

*Sadie.* Yes, it has; but I was reared in the lumber region of the Far West where we don't dress up our words in 18-button kid gloves, and I don't think it would do *society* much harm in the long run if it were to adopt some of our say-what-you-think kind of principles.

*Col.* Ah, you American ladies *affect* this fashion of plain speaking towards our old-world codes and institutions, but with the most charming inconsistency, you continue to come within their circle and set your caps at the very objects for which you profess the most contempt, standing with your lumber-made fortunes in your hands ready to barter them against the first title which is forced by poverty to the exchange.

*Sadie.* No, Sir Breton, not the first.

*Col.* No?

*Sadie.* No, for you boast a title yourself.

*Col.* You are complimentary.

*Sadie.* Am I? then I beg your pardon; I didn't mean to be.

*Col.* Plain spoken, too.

*Sadie.* We American ladies *affect* the fashion.

*Dyn.* I'm afraid the air has made your wits as keen as your appetites. Come, eat and subdue them both. (They feed.)

*River.* You deserved that, Osborne, for being so surly and synical.

*Sadie.* Jealous people always are.

*River.* Well, after all, jealousy is natural, and there's one quality it inspires for which I respect it, and that's pluck.

*Sadie.* Do you admire pluck!

*River.* I do, because I'm such an awful coward. I'd rather face a cannon than a woman.

*Sadie.* But you have often faced one.

*River.* No—at least, not a loaded one.

*Count.* Vat, a loaded voman?

*River.* No; a cannon, of course.

*Count.* For myself, I have face many vomen and many cannon, and viz all respect, I prefer ze cannon at all times.

*Sadie.* You monster!

*Sybil.* Has your experience of the weaker sex been so very unfortunate, Count?

*Count.* Weaker sex? Zat is a mistake. A voman is always, sometimes ten times so strong as a man, always.

*Sybil.* In what way, Count?

*Count.* In a married way.



*River.* Strange talk that, from a bachelor.

*Count.* *Moi, un bachelor! Mon dieu, if I only vas. I vould give ten years of my existance to be once more times un bachelor again, but it is no use. I vas marry in France vare ze laws of marriage are ze most pitiless in ze world. Zere ven a man and voman are prononcè man and wife, a legal chain is forge about zem which neither insult nor crime can break asunder, and which binds zem mercilessly till death.*

*River.* Then there has been a Countess Fritout?

*Count.* Has been? *Mon dieu! Zere is, my Lord.*

*River.* Indeed, and where is the lady.

*Count.* I not know, and I not care. When she did know vere I vas, she lead me ze dog s life. One day ze chain snap broken; I ran myself loose from her, and I care not vezer she be in Jericho or Egypt

*Sadie* How much better we do these things on our side of the pond. If two people get married with us, they can take each other on trial, as it were, and if their incompatibilities become too troublesome, they can appeal to the law, which, like a wise guardian, frees them from their yoke, and both can go their own road again. A little duck, if you please. (*Merton gets it.*)

*Dyn.* The Americans are right, too, for there can be no justification for a law which sometimes degrades a woman in a life-long servitude to a brutal savage, or chains her whole existence to a drunken wretch.

*Count.* Ah, bon! Mais ven ze leg is in ze ozer boot? When it is ze voman zat is—

*Sadie.* The woman! Oh, women, never do anything wrong; at least not in the States.

*Count.* Vel, Je suppose it is not every woman zat make zere husband so miserable as mine make me.

*Col.* I don't know. Lord Dynevor, I believe, is another terrible example; and that's why he speaks so enthusiastically, I suppose.

*Count.* Vat! has my Lord Dynevor been unfortunate as well?

*Dyn.* (*evading question.*) Excuse me, Count; you are not eating; some chicken, Lady Sybil. Bings, Chateau Lafitte. (*Adolph orders Merton.*)

*Bings.* (*ear bus.*) Beg pardon, my Lord?

*Dyn.* Some wine. The ladies would like a little Lafitte.

*Bings.* Cold to the ladies' feet. Oh, Adolphus, bring a rug.

*Omens.* (*laugh.*)

*Dyn.* Poor Bings. I'm always forgetting his infirmity.

*Col.* Why don't you pension off the old fossil.

*Sybil.* Oh! His Lordship could not part with poor old Mr. Bings; he has been in the family all his life.

*Col.* (*ade.*) How her face brightens with the slightest touch of interest to him or his. (*Ald.*) Oh, I'm not surprised that Dynevor expresses himself so forcibly on the divorce question.

*Count.* Vraiment, why?

*River.* Oh, come, Osborne; I say, suppose we change the subject; this one is very dry.

*Col.* What; do you shirk it then, as well as he?

*Sybil.* Suppose we talk about trade.

*Sadie.* Ah! there, I'm at home. In trade, the American beats all creation. His flag flies in every corner of every land.

*Lyn.* But is hardly ever seen upon the sea.

*Sadie.* Eh?

*Dyn.* Oh, it's true! when he wants to cross the ocean he has to get a foreign-built ship to carry him.

*Sadie.* Well, you may be right in that, but in politics—

*Dyn.* Oh, politics he leaves entirely to the Irish.

*Sadie.* Well, then, in love.

*Dyn.* Ah, there, I confess you corner me.

*Sadie.* I should think I did. Yes, sir; at any rate, we've got love and marriage down to a fine point in the States. Given-a-ball, masculine meets feminine—introduced, exchange glances, she droops her eyes, he sighs a sigh, both palpitate some in the region of the diaphragm. Good evening; call in again. He calls next day. Good morning; moves his sentiments; she seconds the motion, resolution carried, parson visited consummation, marriage, live happy ever after.

*Col.* Or at least, until the divorce court sets them at liberty to recommence the routine. But, there, so long as a woman can render some sort of esteem to her husband, and he can provide her with all the luxuries that modern life has rendered indispensable, love is a superfluity.

*Sadie.* A superfluity—love is a myth. I heard a great deal about it when I was at school in Boston, but I've never had any proofs of its existence.

*River.* You cold-blooded little woman, never?

*Sadie.* Never.

*River.* But you'd like to have it proved to you, wouldn't you?

*Sadie.* Oh, yes; if it was real love; but the so-called samples of the article which have been submitted to me up till now have been as dull and stupid as New England Sundays, and lots of Yankee girls have assured me they would rather any day have a Vanity Fair, or a pick-me-up at Delmonico's, than five minutes of that excessively, boring institution of society called a spoon.

*River.* Ah, they're wicked, those Yankee girls, and don't know what love is; that's my belief.

*Count.* Take care, prenez garde; I vas once in love.

*Sadie.* What, with your wife?

*Count.* Oh, non, non; not for un moment.

*Sadie.* I thought that was too much to expect of any Frenchman.

*Omnes.* (Laugh.)

*River.* Now, I plead guilty to being sentimental, and I can conceive no greater happiness than being eternally in love with one's wife.

*Dyn.* Nor I, and living a life that should be one long poem set to the happy melody of the wedding bells.

*Col.* Yes, the theory sounds pretty, not to say lackadaisical, but the practice doesn't obtain nowadays.

*River.* Nowadays are bad days. All the honest qualities of our human nature are laughed down.

*Dyn.* The outcome of our lightning civilization, which has enlarged our brains and contracted our hearts.

*Count.* And ruined our stomachs.

*Sadie.* That's true of us, for every American is a dyspeptic.

*Dyn.* Then how can one expect to be in love when one has indigestion?

*Sadie.* Oh, we get heartburn, which is the American equivalent.

*Sybil.* It's a shame to joke upon a sacred subject. I have been taught to regard marriage as the holiest of all human sacraments,

and to hold those who become united for money or convenience as guilty of the worst of blasphemies.

*Dyn.* And so they are, and richly deserve all the misery that such a course entails upon them.

*River.* For my part, I would rather marry a peasant who really loved me, than a Princess if she did not.

*Col.* Ah! Riverdale, you are positively too good to be at large. You ought to be on exhibition in a glass case, labelled: "The Animated Virtues."

*Sadie.* And you, Colonel, might be locked up in an iron cage, with the notice: "Beware! the animal inside is spiteful," painted on the bars. (*Eating piece of duck.*) Oh! oh! oh! (*Holds her mouth.*)

*River.* My dear Miss Sandusky, what is the matter?

*Sadie.* The duck!

*Omnes and servants.* The duck!

*Sadie.* (*Putting serviette to her mouth and withdrawing it.*) There, is it one of my teeth?

*River.* (*Taking it and examining it.*) No, it's a big bit of gravel, I think. (*Holding it up.*)

*Bings.* (*Shaking his fist at Adolphus.*) You villain! (*To Sadie.*) It's an English wild duck, Miss, and they feed on pebbles. (*Threatening Adolph.*)

*Sadie.* Well, Bings, I'm an American bird, and I don't.

(*Bings takes away her plate, and in his rage, not knowing what to do with the bit of duck, at last throws it at Merton, who bobs; it hits Adolphus, who retires to wipe his face, with ultra dignified rage.*)

*Adolph.* Vulgar brute, to treat a gentleman like that, and before ladies, too. I must speak to His Lordship about it.

*River.* Have something else Miss Sandusky?

*Sadie.* No; thank you; I'm not hungry anymore, but you might telegraph for a dentist.

*Col.* (*Has been drinking very freely during scene and now becomes loud when speaking*) Never mind, Miss Sandusky, a broken tooth is not so bad as a broken heart, and that is what I hear Dynevor's wife died of.

*Omnes.* Lord Dynevor's wife?

*Sybil.* Lord Dynevor's wife?

*Col.* What, have none of you ever heard the story of his marriage? So he's been keeping dark, eh? Oh, well, it's all past and gone now; so I'll relate it.

*Dyn.* (*Visibly angered.*) You need not, Sir Breton, unless you think it absolutely necessary.

*Col.* Oh it'll pass the time. Here, you cad, give me some more wine. (*Adolph orders servant, who passes Col. wine.* When the troops were ordered for service in India, Dynevor and I were in the same regiment, and as we quelled those Oriental niggers in less than no time, we fellows had nothing to do but to get into mischief, which you may be sure we did with all the industry peculiar to the British soldier. But the cream joke of the mess was Dynevor's falling in love with a black-eyed English girl he saw at the Corinthian in Calcutta

*Dyn.* Do you feel bound to go on with the story, or will you be satisfied with the amusement it has already caused?

*River.* Pray consider His Lordship's feelings, Osborne.

*Col.* Oh, give me some more wine, (*Adolph and Merton bus.*), we've no business with feelings in this age. Well the black eyes

were too much for him, and when the regiment was called home, Dynevor got leave, stayed behind in Paris, and by jingo, he married her under the French code, going thro' both ceremonies, the civil and the religious. Well, of course, we chaffed him unmercifully, and served him right too, for any man who is fool enough to marry a woman he knows nothing about, simply because she has a dainty figure and a pair of cunning eyes and lips, deserves all ——

*River.* (*Has risen and is taking Sadie off on his arm.*)

*Col.* Here, Riverdale, old man, stop and hear it out.

*River.* Excuse me, (*going*) Miss Sandusky, I will bring you back when Sir Breton has finished his very entertaining story. (*Exit with Sadie.*)

*Count.* Lady Sybil, vil you ze honor do me? (*Offering her his arm.*)

*Sybil.* Thank you, Count, but I will remain to hear Sir Breton Osborne's apology for the insult he has put upon our host.

*Count.* Bon bon, and he vil make it sapristi!

*Col.* Apology! For what? The story is true, and if Lord Dynevor wishes you to believe, Lady Sybil, that it is not, I consider it my duty to undeceive you.

*Dyn.* Lady Sybil, will you do me the favor of accepting the Count's escort and leaving me with Sir Breton?

*Sybil.* Thanks, no, for if Col. Osborne wishes me to believe that he is a gentleman, I consider it my duty to undeceive him.

*Count.* Bravo! A true spirit Engleesh lady (*going.* *At Col.*) A bad spirit Engleesh dog. (*Exit*)

*Dyn.* Col. Osborne, you are not on the list of my invited guests. Why are you here?

*Col.* I am here in the character of friend to Lady Sybil.

*Dyn.* I have yet to learn that she regards you as such.

*Col.* Whether she does or not, I will convince her of my sincerity, by preventing her from being dragged blindfolded into a matrimonial alliance with——

*Dyn.* Be careful, Col. Osborne, I warn you my patience has it's limits.

*Col.* So has mine, and I warn you that Lady Sybil shall thoroughly understand her position and yours.

*Sybil.* Thank you, Col. Osborne, but I am fully capable of looking after my own interests, and even were I not, you would certainly not be the person I should apply to to protect them (*gives her arm to Dyn.*). Will you kindly see me to the hall, my Lord?

*Dyn.* (*Referring pointedly to Lady Sybil's action.*) I trust, Sir Breton Osborne, you now fully understand my position and your own. (*Going at wing, turns.*) Good day! (*Exit with L. S.*)

*Col.* Cad! Prig! Conceited fool! He always had the advantage over me. In our school days, he had the luck of everything. From India he came out covered with honors, while I wasn't even mentioned, and now, he thinks to run away with the only woman who ever fired my soul with anything like a real passion and whose money would pull me through my cursed difficulties. But she's too pretty and too rich to be lost without a struggle, and if hard hitting will win the fight he shan't complain of the lightness of my blows. That Yankee girl was right, I am madly jealous of him, and when I see him looking into her beautiful face as tho' his eyes were reading her very soul, I feel that I could do for him (*pause*). He shan't have her. By Heaven, he shan't.

(*The servants have cleared away the lunch during the Col.'s speech. Adolph returns.*)

*Adolph.* (*Tapping Col. on the shoulder.*) In your usual bad temper, Governor.

*Col.* What is that to you?

*Adolph.* Oh come, don't be cross, but tell me what's the matter?

*Col.* Nothing that you can mend, so get out.

*Adolph.* Stuff, I've the instincts of a gentleman and can sympathize with all you're feeling now. You love Lady Sybil—

*Col.* Silence, you vagabond!

*Adolph.* Oh, that's very rude, and likewise a reflection on yourself, for you keep my company.

*Col.* Well, just now, I'd rather have your room.

*Adolph.* You always were an ungrateful beast, but you are particularly so now, for you owe me thanks at least for having let you know so quickly that Lady Sybil was here and that your rival was laying siege to her heart.

*Col.* I can see all this without you're telling, besides I don't want to be seen talking with you. So go.

*Adolph.* I will, but I must take advantage of your visit to bleed you of another £10 note. I'm hard up.

*Col.* And so am I.

*Adolph.* Yes, that's the old story. Don't keep me waiting; it isn't gentlemanlike.

*Col.* Isn't it enough that you get double wages; one from your master and one from me—that you will never cease to rob me?

*Adolph.* Rob! Hark, at the pot calling the kettle black. Rob! Robbery is no worse than cheating at cards. Why, one word from me and you'd be cashiered from your regiment to-morrow; so, hand over the money.

*Col.* Well, I suppose I must. (*Hands note.*)

*Adolph.* I suppose so too. As Artemus said, you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours; but if you don't scratch fair, why, I must speak to his Lordship about it. (*Exit.*)

*Col.* To think that I should be at the mercy of a low-lived cur like that, who was my body servant in the regiment. He found out too much about me, so I must put up with him.

### Enter very cautiously at back, Margaret.

*Marg.* (*looking round.*) This must be the place. They told me at the house he was at luncheon in the woods. Ah, perhaps this gentleman—

*Col.* (*turns, seeing Marg., starts in amazement.*) Great heaven!

*Marg.* What is the matter? I trust I have not frightened you?

*Col.* Yes; no; that is, I was buried in thought, and not supposing any one to be near me, I must confess to being a little startled when I turned at seeing you.

*Marg.* I didn't know there was anything about me to inspire alarm.

*Col.* Oh, no; on the contrary, everything to charm. How very extraordinary. I never saw anything like it in all my life.

*Marg.* Like what?

*Col.* Oh, I beg your pardon. I was thinking aloud. (*Pause.*) You remind me so strongly of a lady I once knew that I could almost swear she had risen from the grave and was now standing before me.

*Marg.* I have indeed been very near to death, but thanks to a wonderful constitution, I am still above ground.

*Col.* I am amazed! I thought myself proof against all surprises, but the astonishment the sight of your face and form have caused me has roused even me from the impassability of years. Might I ask your name?

*Marg.* Oh, yes; I am called Marguerite; that is, I am when I am in France.

*Col.* Marguerite! Ye Gods! And your surname?

*Marg.* My surname is—(looking off.) Ah, there he is; that is the person I have come to seek. Bonjour, Monsieur. (*Exit.*)

*Col.* Stay one moment, Madame; the fate of two men depends upon your answer. She does not heed me, but runs like a hare after some one who is also running in the direction of the hall. Who has she seen? What does she want? Can it be *she* herself? No, impossible; and yet, oh, if I could but be sure. I will be sure. (*Calls.*) Madame, madame. (*Exit, calling after her.*)

### Enter Sadie and Lord Riverdale.

*Sadie.* Oh, yes, you may smoke, if you like.

*River.* I like, but do you?

*Sadie.* Like! But you will be shocked.

*River.* With you? I couldn't be.

*Sadie.* Well, then, I—smoke—myself!

*River.* No, do you? Then have a cigarette. (*Offering one from case.*) (*He smokes.*)

*Sadie.* No, thanks; it's a vice I only indulge in private. It always punishes me, too, and I don't like it; but, like a number of other young ladies, I pretend I do.

*River.* Why?

*Sadie.* Because, it's "the thing." Oh, what a hollow sham "the thing" is

*River.* Do you think so?

*Sadie.* I do. Society altogether is a huge falsehood—a pretence, a merciless, ridiculous nineteenth century idolatrous mockery.

*River.* With we English, yes.

*Sadie.* Oh, with we Americans, as well. We have an aristocracy on our side.

*River.* Have you?

*Sadie.* Oh, yes; a privileged class that governs with money.

*River.* Filthy lucre.

*Sadie.* To which we bow just as low as you. Dimes and dollars are our Dukes and Duchesses.

*River.* You expressed very different sentiments when speaking to Col. Osborne just now.

*Sadie.* Ah, that was because he wanted taking down a peg or two.

*River.* Admitting that, I still thought your people only acknowledged the nobility of right and merit.

*Sadie.* We make a pretence of doing so, I know; but in the States, as everywhere else, merit with an empty pocket gets considerably left, I assure you. No sir; it's greenbacks lords it over all—our railroads, our telegraphs, our lands, our everything.

*River.* I've been told all men were equal under your flag.

*Sadie.* A pleasant delusion, that is all; for you can see any day a poor wretch who has stolen a loaf for his hungry wife and children get twelve months, while thimblerrigging office-holders, who have

appropriated millions ride through the streets in carriages, the cost of which has actually been paid out of the very money the poor wretch in jail has contributed in the shape of taxes.

*River.* (*Pause, smoking.*) I like you.

*Sadie.* Do you? Why?

*River.* Because you've got such an uncommon lot of common sense.

*Sadie.* Have I?

*River.* Yes, and common sense is so uncommon.

*Sadie.* So it is.

*River.* Now, I'm very common, but I've very little sense.

*Sadie.* Oh, I don't know that.

*River.* That's because you don't know me.

*Sadie.* Oh, yes, I do; I've studied you.

*River.* That exercise didn't take you long, for I'm very superficial. My outside, which is Poole's the tailor, is the best of me; as for my heart, very small; my soul, very smaller; and my brain, very smallest compatible with existence outside of a lunatic asylum.

*Sadie.* It was a fair average heart that gave that poor widow woman a £5 note yesterday, and a very passable soul that visited the poor little girl who is down with the fever.

*River.* How did you know that?

*Sadie.* Widow women have grateful tongues and I have ears.

*River.* Widow women have noisy millclacks.

*Sadie.* Oh, come, you needn't be ashamed of being found out in a good action, it's not the first time I've caught you either, and I've come to the conclusion, that, take you altogether, you're a pretty good fellow, altho' you have got a title.

*River.* I'll apologize for the title if it offends you, or better still, I'll share it with you.

*Sadie.* Eh?

*River.* Will you take it, fair halves?

*Sadie.* Oh, my lord, you've taken my breath away.

*River.* Have I? then take it back again. (*Kisses her.*)

*Sadie.* Oh! oh! that's not the thing.

*River.* Isn't it?

*Sadie.* Oh! not at all.

*River.* But like everything else that's outside the hollow sham—it's very jolly.

*Sadie.* (*Archly*) Real sweet.

*River.* And symbolical, as well.

*Sadie.* Of what?

*River.* The good feeling between Great Britain

*Sadie.* And the United States of America.

*River.* Yes.

*Sadie.* Of which both nations are so proud.

*River.* And which both hope will never be disturbed.

*Sadie.* Never!

*River.* Then shall we renew the friendly assurances.

*Sadie.* As often as the representatives of both countries

*River.* Feel that they like it.

*Sadie.* Yes.

*River.* (*Kisses her and exeunt.*)

**Enter Lady Sybil and Lord Dynevor.**

*Dgn.* (*Speaking as he enters.*) I would not have spoken yet, but for that man's insulting inuendoes, but Lady Sybil, if you will let

me, I will tell you all, and you shall be my judge. When I was ordered with my regiment to India I was but a lad, and rushed into the fighting, as I did all else, with the raw inexperience of youth. At the close of the war, I met a woman in Calcutta who exercised what I now regard as an incredible fascination over me. It would be useless for me to attempt to excuse myself in your eyes, suffice it that I was inveigled into a marriage with her. It was but a few short weeks after I had made her my wife in Paris that I discovered how fearfully I had been duped. She was an accomplished adventuress who had seized upon me for my supposed money and my title. To live with her was impossible, for having accomplished her end, she threw off all restraint and openly disgraced me every hour. In despair I settled a sum of money on her and induced her, after a terrible and degrading scene, to leave the city, and live under her maiden name, discarding that which my title gave her. I sold out my commission and wandered aimlessly about the world, tormented constantly by the spectre of my folly and disgrace, and at length returned to England a broken man. When I met you, Lady Sybil, all the horror of my situation recurred with tenfold force, for to see you was to love you, madly, passionately, and hopelessly. I tried to avoid you, to drag myself away from your presence, but it seemed as tho' I were tearing my very heartstrings asunder. My passion terrified me, and almost drove me mad, for it was a crime to love you. I had a wife who was not a wife, for our souls were not united and she herself was somewhere away in the world, I knew not where. But to-day, this very hour, the news has come of the poor creature's miserable death in a gambling hell in Paris. Osborne must have heard of it before I did myself. I pity her from my soul, indeed, indeed I do, yet if you could conceive of half the torture I have endured while chained to her by those pitiless bonds which the axe of death alone can sever, you, too, might perhaps, find some spark of pity in your heart for such a miserable man as I have been.

*Sybil.* I would, I would, indeed, I would.

*Dyn.* Oh, if then, a life of devotion in the future could expiate the wretched past, and help you to forget what I once was, now that I am free.

*Sybil.* Free!—

*Dyn.* Yes. Free to look into your eyes without reading in their depths a mute reproach—free to hold your hand in mine without remorse, free to ask you if you can love and will take one with such a wretched past as mine to be your companion on the road of life. Sybil, can you? will you?

*Sybil.* I can, I will, if only for pity for the suffering you have so nobly borne. Take me, and I will so devote myself to your future that your past shall be nothing to you henceforth than a dreadful dream from which you have awaked to the reality of my love.

*Dyn.* Then you do really love me?

*Sybil.* I do, I do, with all my heart and soul! (*Embrace.*)

**Enter at picture Col. Osborne, Riverdale and Sadie arm in arm**

*Col.* (*Choking with rage.*) I understand now why I was not an invited guest, but by Heaven—

*Dyn.* Col. Osborne, I warn you—

*River.* Come, Osborne, you have had too much wine.

*Col.* Riverdale, I can settle my differences with Lord Dynevor without your Lordship's interference.



*Dyn.* I beg you will spare me further insult from your violence before Lady Sybil Riverdale who is now my promised wife.

*Sadie.* Your affianced wife, oh I'm real glad.

*Col.* Wife! No, by Heaven, she shall never be your wife! Not if I can help it.

*Sybil.* My Lord, come away (*to Dyn.*)

*Col.* No, he shall not stir till I have done with him.

*Dyn.* Col. Osborne, were it not for the presence of these ladies—

*Col.* Ladies, oh I'm not afraid of them, nor do I need, like you, to make use of their presence as a shield for cowardice.

*Dyn.* By Heaven!—

*Sybil.* (*Restraining him.*) Lord Douglas, let me beg of you—

*Col.* Yes, hold him, Lady Sybil, and let him crawl off like a whipped hound.

*Sybil.* Coward! (*Releasing him.*)

*Col.* But if you go, I will still follow, and never leave you until I have convinced you that he will serve you as he did his first victim, who has just died in Paris of a broken heart, and that you will be chaining yourself for life to a titled blackguard!

*Dyn.* (*Fells him at a blow.*)

**Enter Bings, Adolphus, Merton.**

**Picture.**

## ACT II.

**Chamber in Dynevor Hall.**

**Discovered. Miss Rasp, Adolphus and Bings.**

**Adolphus seated in chair R. Bings in chair L.**

*Rasp.* (*Dusting, etc.*) As usual, you see Mr. Bings, I have to do the work myself, for to leave it to those good-for-nothing lazy parlor maids is to leave it undone. (*Dusting Adolph's chair.*)

*Adolph.* (*Rising.*) That old crocodile is a horrible nuisance. There is positively no peace in the house for a gentleman of my highly nervous temperament.

*Rasp.* (*Eyeing him contemptuously.*) What are you standing there for like a figure in a wax works (*imitates his ridiculously upright attitude.*) What's the matter with your backbone; won't it bend?

*Adolph.* My bearing, Madame, is the result of my military education. When I was an officer's gentleman, I was the most upright man in the British army.

*Rasp.* Upright! oh, get out; you must have swallowed a corporal's bayonet.

*Adolph.* Miss Rasp, you are positively pussional, aw, painfully so. I must speak to his Lordship about it.

*Rasp.* Mr. Adolphus, you are positively a fool, but there what could be expected from a man with a name like Adolphus?

*Adolph.* Or from a woman with a cognomen like Rasp? It positively grates like a cinder in the teeth.

*Rasp.* I'll thank you to remember who you are talking to (*dusting very hastily and getting angry*), and if it comes to that, what right have you here at all? (*Threatening him with duster.*)

*Adolph.* Right! I am Lord Dynevor's favorite gentleman, and I am here waiting for his pleasure as soon as he shall arrive.

*Rasp.* Well, you will please wait for my pleasure in your own part of the house, which is the servant's hall, until he does arrive.

*Adolph.* I, aw, do not take my orders from you.

*Rasp.* You don't?

*Adolph.* No; but from your betters.

*Rasp.* My betters, you puppy! please to understand that I have been in this family all my life.

*Adolph.* Then the sooner you leave it the better for the family.

*Rasp.* Oh! oh! what! you image! you conceited essence of frills and flunkeyism! take that! (*Striking him with duster, he does not wince under the blows, nor change his attitude as he goes towards D. C. When there, he turns, seizes the duster from Rasp with mock regal dignity and throws it at her feet.*)

*Adolph.* An Henglishman never knows when he is beat, but this is really too awful, and I must speak to his Lordship about it. (*Exit majestically.*)

*Rasp.* (*Rushing down, pulling Bings out of his chair and pulling him round to face her.*) Did you ever see the like? The cad! to put me in such a temper (*loudly*) oh! I could kill him; I declare he's made me go goose-flesh all down by back.

*Bings.* (*Ear bus.*) Eh! my Lord and Lady got back? All right then, bustle, bustle. (*Going C.*)

*Rasp.* Well, was ever a poor woman surrounded with such a lot of idiots? What with that stick of horseradish that's just gone out, and this deaf old oyster, I'm nearly driven out of my mind. How ever His Lordship can tolerate them about him I don't understand.

*Bings.* Well, Miss Rasp, come along, what's the use of standing here while her Ladyship may be waiting to give you some commands

*Rasp.* Come here.

*Bings.* (*Ear bus.*) Eh?

*Rasp.* (*Very loudly.*) Come here. (*Fetching him down.*)

*Bings.* Can't hear? No, my hearing is not so good as it was, I know

*Rasp.* (*Bawling in his ear.*) They've not got back yet.

*Bings.* Oh! I beg your pardon, then; sit down again.

*Rasp.* (*They sit.*) Well, I really think I must, for these two men are a little too much for me. What is a man like that good for in this world, anyway? That's what I want to know.

*Bings.* Do you know, Miss Rasp, I've been thinking that ever since his Lordship got married the second time.—

*Rasp.* Yes, there is another piece of stupidity. I should have thought he'd had enough of marriage after the life of misery he led with that horrid woman. I'm sure those weeks we were in Paris he went thro' enough to turn him grey. I used to think the men were bad, but she beat everything I ever saw. When a man is

really bad, he's bad; but when a woman is wicked, she's the very—ahem! I'm not usually a cruel woman, Mr. Bings, but when I heard that creature was dead, I cried for joy. Just to think that our brave boy that I nursed myself should have linked his life and the title of our old house to such a wretch as she. Well, if there is a hot place down there, (*pointing to floor*) she's as warm as she could hope to be.

*Bings.* I can't hear a blessed word you're saying, but I quite agree with you all the same.

**Enter Adolph, showing on Col. Osborne.**

*Col.* Take my hat.

*Adolph.* (*Taking hat.*) I will, (*ade.*) but if I hadn't got to keep up appearances, you should take mine instead.

*Col.* What time are they expected?

*Adolph.* They have telegraphed they will be home to dinner. (*Exit.*)

*Col.* Ah, Bings, Lord and Lady Dynevor not yet got back?

*Bings.* (*Ear bus.*) Eh? (*Going up*)

*Col.* Your master and mistress not got home to-day?

*Bings.* Me! going away? Yes, if you're going to stop, I am. (*Exit.*)

*Col.* (*Bowing politely to Rasp. she turns her back on him.*) At any rate, Miss Rasp will not deny me the pleasure of her society?

*Rasp.* No, you can't frighten me out of the room, like those cowards of men.

*Col.* You don't seem to hold a very high opinion of me.

*Rasp.* I've heard too much about you.

*Col.* But I've never done you any harm.

*Rasp.* No, but I've a terrible dislike of snakes, even though I've never been stung, and understand this, Colonel Osborne, the whole household is not at home when you call. Those are our orders and I hope I need not explain the moral.

*Col.* I perfectly understand, but I'm here on business; to pay a debt, in fact, I owe your master.

*Rasp.* It's a bad debt, then, I'll be bound.

*Col.* And so he returns to-day from a six months' honeymoon of unalloyed happiness. Eh?

*Rasp.* Yes, but not half what he deserves.

*Col.* No, I believe he is a very good young man and he ought to be happy in his second marriage, if only to compensate him for the disgrace of his first.

*Rasp.* Sir Breton Osborne, it is not my place to discuss my master's affairs, and so please quit the subject; and, as in the absence of Her Ladyship I am the sole mistress here, I'll thank you to leave the house at the same time.

*Col.* Much as I should like to respect your wishes, Miss Rasp, I'm afraid I cannot, for my business with Lord Dynevor is so pressing and my interest in his welfare so profound, that neither can wait a moment longer than that in which His Lordship returns with his beautiful bride.

*Rasp.* Oh, very well; but I'll deprive you of the satisfaction of witnessing the unhappiness the sight of your face would cause them at the moment of their home-coming, for I'll warn His Lordship that you are here, and then I expect your patience will be well used up before you catch a glimpse of them.

*Col.* Miss Rasp, my patience is inexhaustible.

*Rasp.* And so is your impertinence. (*Going C.*)

*Col.* Oh, go to the deuce!

*Rasp.* And you go to the d— Oh! (*Screams.*) Ugh! (*Exit.*)

*Col.* A fine specimen of the genus termagant, that. The servants evidently run riot over this establishment. Shall I wait here till they come, or—I know the house from top to bottom. It would be a good joke to sell that old she-dragon. I will—I'll wander through the corridors and choose my own time. Ah! it was a bad day for you, Lady Sybil, when you rejected my love; a worse for you, Lord Dynevor, when you struck that blow; but the worst hour for you both is yet to come before I leave this house today. (*Exit.*)

### Enter River. and Sadie. (Evening Dinner Dress.)

*River.* We're evidently in advance of time.

*Sadie.* Yes, arrival of first happy couple too soon to meet second happy couple. Never mind, dinner isn't till 7, so we can amuse ourselves till then.

*River.* How?

*Sadie.* I don't know.

*River.* Talk?

*Sadie.* No.

*River.* What then?

*Sadie.* Spoon.

*River.* Ah, I thought you used to vote that institution a bore.

*Sadie.* Oh, that was six months ago, before we were married. (*Toying with his face.*)

*River.* So matrimony has converted you and you prefer five minutes' connubiality to a Vanity Fair, or even a pick-me-up at Delmonico's?

*Sadie.* Much. (*Kisses him.*) That's the best pick-me-up I know of, and just to fancy, we've had six months of it already.

*River.* And we're not tired yet.

*Sadie.* I've been Lady Sadie Riverdale 26 weeks.

*River.* And how do you like it as far as you've got?

*Sadie.* Um—fairly, tho' it was a great responsibility I took upon myself, for I find a husband is a terrible weight upon a woman's hands.

*River.* A terrible weight?

*Sadie.* Why, yes, of course; don't I have to watch you as tho' I were a hen and you a chicken, to see you don't catch cold or croup; or get run over, or some other dreadful thing?

*River.* It's something for you to do. Without these little domestic duties, time would hang heavily on your hands.

*Sadie.* Time, time's an old thief, he's stolen away half the hours of the day from us ever since we left the church, I've only lived 3 months in all the hundred and eighty-two days.

*River.* At that rate then, you'll die long before your time.

*Sadie.* Unless I should become a widow, and then ———

*River.* And then?

*Sadie.* Oh, don't be a goose.

*River.* No, don't let's either of us be geoses.

*Sadie.* (*Toying with his face.*) Arthur, I guess you ain't a bit sweet, real, right down matter of fact sweet.

*River.* Ain't I?

*Sadie.* I wonder whether *they* are as happy as we?

*River.* Well, to judge by their letters, I should say, connubial felicity is not with us, altogether a New York elevated railroad.

*Sadie.* A New York elevated railroad?

*River.* Yes, an absolute monopoly.

*Sadie.* No, for Sybil says Douglas is just the truest, noblest man that ever lived

*River.* Ah, she views him thro' a love-tinted telescope, but, for all that, Dynevor, take him altogether, is as decent a man as I ever knew.

*Sadie.* Decent, he's just as good as they make 'em.

*River.* I say Sadie, I shall be jealous.

*Sadie.* Oh you needn't be, for there was another of the same pattern turned out of nature's workshop at about the same time, and that was you. I knew you were an average sort of a fellow long ago, the old widow woman told me so, you know.

*River.* My thanks to the widdy.

*Sadie.* Oh, yes, and I've found out, too, that, an Englishman may have a title, and not necessarily be a snob, after all.

*River.* Thanks to your penetration this time.

*Sadie.* Oh, I mean like Col. Osborne, that soldier, or blackleg, or whatever he is. Just fancy, if poor Sybil had had the misfortune to be his wife, why, she would have died before this of sheer mortification. Do you know, when Douglas knocked him down that time, I could have kissed him.

*River.* What, Osborne?

*Sadie.* No, Dynevor of course. Only it wouldn't have been proper, not "the thing" you know.

*River.* Not exactly.

*Sadie.* Well, virtue is it's own reward, he will receive it in Heaven.

*River.* That's where he's been for the past 6 months.

*Sadie.* What a pity he should be coming back to earth so soon, this very day.

*River.* And that we've returned before him.

*Sadie.* Oh, never fear I mean to turn earth into Heaven, if you'll only let me.

*River.* Let you! I will do more, I will assist you with such industry that you shall think the millenium has arrived.

*Sadie.* No, it's too soon for that, the yankees ain't ready for it, but we can show each other that altho' our forefathers under George and Washington, had some little differences a hundred years ago, we their children, have benefited by their experience.

*River.* And are reaping the harvest of which they sowed the seeds, which have been nourished by a century of better understanding.

*Sadie.* And have ripened at last into an affection that shall be as lasting and eternal as the destiny of the two great English speaking nations.

*River.* Represented in this instance by myself as The Royal Standard, and you as

*Sadie.* The Stars and Stripes. Let's furl our banners.

*River.* We will. (*Embrace and exit.*)

### Enter Dynevor and Lady Sybil.

*Dyn.* Home at last, my darling, home at last.

*Sybil.* I'm so glad, so delighted. I almost feel as if I could cry.

*Dyn.* Cry, wife?

*Sybil.* Ah! we foolish women often express our happiness in tears. They are a necessary part of our existence.

*Dyn.* Are they!

*Sybil.* Yes, you great strong men have so many ways of liberating your exuberances

*Dyn.* But when my tender little wife is surcharged with happiness, she opens her beautiful eyes, the floodgates of her heart, and lets her joy flow from them in crystal drops as pure and lovely as her soul.

*Sybil.* I have not deserved to be so happy.

*Dyn.* You have deserved to be what, if I can make you so, you shall be, the happiest little wife that ever lived.

*Sybil.* I am, I am so, now.

*Dyn.* Pray heaven no cloud may ever darken the clear serenity of your life.

*Sybil.* Oh, that would be expecting too much; beside, shining days are made so much the brighter by comparison with the clouded ones.

*Dyn.* Maybe so; still, in the past six months, our days have been so very bright that I have begun to think our life might always be as clear and fair as those soft Italian skies we have just left behind us.

*Sybil.* Six months. Just fancy, I have been your wife for a whole half year. What a niggard Old Time is of his favors. It seems as tho' he had only given us half that space.

*Dyn.* So quickly does he steal our hours of joy; so slowly does he drag his way before us in our days of sorrow. (*Sighs.*)

*Sybil.* Oh, Douglas, what a sad speech. There's a cloud, you see, already. Ah! I know what brought it; my tears. Now, come; admit it was my tears and I will never cry again.

*Dyn.* No, my darling, it was only a passing thought.

*Sybil.* Of an old, unpleasant memory?

*Dyn.* Memory is a blank when I am by your side.

*Sybil.* That's a very pretty speech, but I am not such a little stupid as to think my presence will always exorcise it; so, as I must share your pains as well as joys, let me begin at once. What were you thinking? I will know. Now, come, you were thinking—

*Dyn.* How kind and thoughtful it was of you to refuse to go to Paris where, so many bitter moments of my life were spent.

*Sybil.* Oh! What a saint you make of me. You must leave that off, now that we are come home and are going to be an ordinary every-day couple, like the rest of the married people. You must take me down from that lofty pedestal you have had me perched upon for the last six months, and from this day forth—

*Dyn.* Keep you in my arms.

*Sybil.* Yes, in your dear embrace.

*Dyn.* (*Embracing her.*) Which shall forever be your sanctuary.

*Sybil.* My home of homes.

*Dyn.* Sybil, forgive me, if I cause you a moment's pain, but I have a terrible presentiment.

*Sybil.* Presentiment?

*Dyn.* That our happiness is too great to last.

*Sybil.* No, no, husband; don't speak like that; you make me tremble. What should happen? What could possibly arise to throw even a shadow across our lives?

*Dyn.* I cannot tell, but it seems to me, I know you will think me foolish; it seems to me, as tho' there were some where in this house, that is to be our home—the darkness of some evil presence which may at any moment cast its blight on you and me.

*Sybil.* Oh, Douglas, shake this feeling off; it is positively wicked to harbor such dark forebodings on the very day of our return; besides, let come what may, what grief or sorrow, what shock or pain, shall I not be always by your side? Trust me; you will find me no fair weather friend alone, but one who will stand closest when the clouds of trouble loom the blackest. For then, my great love shall envelope you around as with an armor, defying the worst that fate can do.

*Dyn.* My life! my soul! I shall never be worthy such a wife as you.

*Sybil.* Ah! I'm on the pedestal again. Don't, don't put me up there so high, but keep me here, here next your heart forever. (*Nestling to his heart.*) Come, there, the dark shadow has passed away.

### Enter Colonel Osborne.

*Dyn.* (*Rising, turns and sees him.*) No; I knew it was about me, and there it stands. (*Pointing to him.*)

*Sybil.* Colonel Osborne! (*Picture.*)

*Col.* Lady Dynevor! may I be allowed to congratulate you on your happy return! (*Offering hand.*)

*Dyn.* Lady Dynevor is about retiring to her room. You will excuse her. (*Leads her off.*) (*Turns angrily*) What do you want?

*Col.* That's scarcely the way to greet an old chum.

*Dyn.* Col. Osborne, if you have no actual business with me, you will excuse my joining Lady Dynevor.

*Col.* Plenty of time for her; she can wait, and perhaps when my business with you is concluded, she will want to be excused from joining you.

*Dyn.* Sir Breton Osborne, the last time I saw you, you escaped the chastisement you richly merited, because I could not descend to your level in the presence of the lady who is now my wife, but now that we are alone, no consideration will prevent my punishing any insult however slight to her or me.

*Col.* The last time I met you, you gave me a blow which caused me some inconvenience. I did not return it because I was a little stunned at the time from its effects, but my strongest characteristic is patience. I can wait. I have waited, and to-day, I am about to return that blow.

*Dyn.* What do you mean?

*Col.* When I recovered my senses that day in the woods, where you and your friends so kindly left me to the tender mercies of your menials, who by the way, have lost no opportunity of insulting me, I swore that I would never rest until I had returned the shame you put upon me with interest a thousand fold. Lord Douglas Dynevor, I have never violated an oath. You will find I have kept this one sacred.

*Dyn.* Colonel Osborne, if you do not at once leave my house, I will call the menials you speak of to assist your departure.

*Col.* Don't trouble them on my account. Just as soon as my business is completed I will go. I chose this day for carrying out my oath because I surmised, and, as it seems, correctly, that the apex of your married happiness would be reached at the moment of your coming home. I congratulate you from my heart upon your felicity, and as, in the true nobility of your soul, I know you have not a single joy you would not share with your wife, I take this supreme moment of your life to restore her to you.

*Dyn.* What!

*Col.* (*Going to door and bringing on Margaret Kilsyth.*) Allow me to present you to Lady Douglas Dynevor, *nee* Margaret Kilsyth!

*Dyn.* God of Heaven! My wife!!

*Col.* Yes, the other is your mistress!!!

*Dyn.* (*Goes to strike Col., who faces him exultingly; then, after pause, as tho' his strength had left him, he staggers and falls with a cry to the sofa.*)

*Col.* You hit me on the body! I have struck you to the soul!! (*Exit.*)

(*A long pause, during which Margaret seats herself with the utmost nonchalance.*)

*Dyn.* Oh, Sybil! Sybil! my poor innocent Sybil! What shall we do? What shall we do? (*Rises furiously.*) And can it be you? (*Pause.*) Come here. (*She moves toward him.*) Show me your hands! (*She holds them out.*) Your face! (*She raises it, avoiding his direct gaze.*) Turn, turn, and if you dare, look me in the eyes. (*She hesitates. He seizes her by the hand and twists her round to face him.*) If you are she whom I made my wife, let my tortured soul receive assurance of the truth. Look me in the eyes. (*She does so with a great effort, then stares defiance at him.*) Now let me hear your voice.

*Marg.* Listen to it, and let its tones sink deep into your heart.

*Dyn.* They do, they do! They burn like hot irons into my brain. But stay, I have received a shock; perhaps the chaos that is here (*touching temple*) is but its natural effect, and for the moment dulls my vision and distorts my sense of hearing. Maybe I am but wickedly deceived.

*Marg.* Lay not that flattering unction to your soul.

*Dyn.* (*Pause.*) What is your name?

*Marg.* Margaret Dynevor.

*Dyn.* What are you?

*Marg.* Your lawful and only wife.

*Dyn.* Where did I first meet you?

*Marg.* At the Corinthian, in Calcutta.

*Dyn.* In what place did I marry you?

*Marg.* In the Cathedral of Notre Dame, in Paris.

*Dyn.* Do you know aught else but this which you speak of with such parrot-like facility which can convince me that the woman I made my wife in Paris is not now six feet beneath the ground in the Cemetery of Pere la Chaise?

*Marg.* Force me into a court of law to prove it, you shall be convinced.

*Dyn.* Why, do I speak as tho' I believed your wretched story? You talk of proof so glibly. Prove to me that you are what you say you are, my wife!



*Marg.* Look at my face.

*Dyn.* I will. (*Does so.*)

*Marg.* Search deep; read it thro' and thro'.

*Dyn.* I do.

*Marg.* What have you read?

*Dyn.* Heaven help me. I do not know.

*Marg.* Then I will tell you. You have read in the features of my face the conviction which I see has settled on your own; that the true Lady Douglas Dynevor has come home.

*Dyn.* It is impossible. I have seen the certificate of her death, given at the inquest at the Paris morgue.

*Marg.* Ha! ha! ha! The authorities of the gay city made a trifling error. The autopsy you speak of was held on the body of my poor foolish cousin.

*Dyn.* Cousin?

*Marg.* Who had the misfortune to die suddenly in Madame Celestine's gambling hell, in the Rue Garonne.

*Dyn.* But it was her name, Margaret Kilsyth.

*Marg.* Yes, I know; the coincidence is an extraordinary one, but it is easily explained. My mother was one of twins, who, strangely enough, married two brothers on the same day. Both bore children within a week of each other. Both infants were baptized Margaret, and of course, Kilsyth.

*Dyn.* You never told me this.

*Marg.* No; in the first days your passion so blinded you that during our honeymoon, which, by the way, lasted only six weeks and not six months, and after that, your rage, that you would not hear any reference to my antecedents. Do I not speak the truth?

*Dyn.* Alas! you do.

*Marg.* Then are you now convinced?

*Dyn.* No. My brain must be refusing me its function, and I believe that I am going mad. (*Takes stage*)

*Marg.* (*Sits.*) That's a very pretty artifice, but it won't improve your position; for even if you become a lunatic, my dear husband, my position and the benefits accruing from it, will be in no way affected.

*Dyn.* Then you have come to me for money?

*Marg.* Not that alone. Oh, no. I have come to live with you again.

*Dyn.* What! (*Like a tiger.*)

*Marg.* (*Coolly.*) Oh, yes. I can see you are just as amiable as ever. The animal within you is as unsubdued as when it tried to wreak its savageness on me; but I am no longer terrified at it, as I used to be; on the contrary, it amuses me; in fact, I came prepared for the worst. You see, I have brought with me the modern lady's companion, my old revolver. You may remember it. (*Producing it.*)

*Dyn.* Oh, Sybil, my wife, my queen! How can I save you from the clutches of this human monster?

*Marg.* Oh, don't distress yourself about Lady Sybil *Riverdale*; the poor dear girl, I've been told, has the most exalted notions of justice, and all that sort of thing, and she will realize at once that she cannot longer remain beneath the roof of your wife. Of course, she'll look at the matter as I should, or any sensible woman would, and make the best of it; if not, why—

*Dyn.* Silence!

*Marg.* But my dear Douglas—she—

*Dyn.* Not one word more. I will not suffer the holy purity of her soul to be sullied even by the breath of such a one as you.

*Marg.* Purity of soul in an English noble's mistress?

*Dyn.* (*Rushes frantically towards her as tho' to strangle her.*)

*Marg.* (*Raises pistol coolly and covers him.*) (Picture!) Ha! Ha! Ha! Now come, be reasonable, what is the use of our going over the same old ground. Why, this reminds me of the halcyon days of our early married life in Paris.

*Dyn.* (*Recovering after a pause.*) I gave you money and you promised you would never trouble me again.

*Marg.* A promise is easily made, and for the money that was just as easily spent. It was a large sum, too; it has taken me four years to circulate it; you have had four years of genuine liberty; you have't so much to grumble at, after all.

*Dyn.* Will money relieve me of your presence now?

*Marg.* No.

*Dyn.* Not another heavy sum?

*Marg.* Not the accumulated proceeds of your family estates.

*Dyn.* What, then, do you want?

*Marg.* Restitution.

*Dyn.* Aye, for the shame you have heaped on me.

*Marg.* Restitution of the title that is mine by right, and the consideration that is due me as your wife.

*Dyn.* And what is to become of her?

*Marg.* What do I care about her.

*Dyn.* Have you no heart at all?

*Marg.* I have an organ that serves me usefully in it's place, as the circulator of my blood.

*Dyn.* And does the terrible suffering that will fill the remainder of her life arouse it to no spark of pity?

*Marg.* No, I don't recognize my heart in any other capacity than that which I have mentioned.

*Dyn.* (*With clenched teeth.*) Then what do you intend to do?

*Marg.* To stay here, and when she comes, to tell her who and what I am.

*Dyn.* No, no, no, you could not do it, if you would, for the sake of mercy take up your pistol and lay me dead. No, I cannot believe you are so utterly inhuman. She must be spared the knowledge of the shame I have innocently brought upon her. Recall the days of your girlhood, the hours when you were free of harm, before the wickedness of the world had eaten into your young life and corroded it's simple nature. Go back in memory to those days when suffering insured your sympathy and pain your pity, when the purest of your joys were gained in comforting those whose weakness robbed them of the power to help themselves. Such scenes as these do come into every life; they must have lived in your's; then, let the heavenly memory of them spread their incense once again around your better self and soften it to some little pity for her who has never laid herself to sleep without first wafting a prayer to Heaven for the salvation of such unhappy ones as you and me.

*Marg.* (*Softening*) Do you know me so little as to fancy you can cheat me from my rights and purpose with mere words? You cannot move me.

*Dyn.* I can, I will, unless your heart be made of steel. She is so innocent of evil, so weak and trusting, a mere babe in this wilderness of guilt from which both you and I have borne so much. Could you, can you destroy so chaste a being at a blow, and condemn her to the unspeakable shame of thinking she has been no better than a roue's plaything? She has never harmed you, see, on my knees (*kneels*) I implore you to go away, to let your lips be sealed to her, so that she may remain, at least in her own, and in the world's esteem, an honorable woman. I ask no jot of mercy for myself, wreak the worst vengeance on my head your spite can fashion, but, oh, have compassion upon her, as you hope for pity from him who will call both you and I to an account for our miserable misdeeds.

*Marg.* (*Wiping tears*) Yes, I'll go, for I'm not all bad after all.

**Enter Col. (who watches.)**

And if you ever learn the truth, you will know that circumstances sometimes compel even such an one as I to seem more cursed than I am. Good Bye.

*Dyn.* Good Bye, I will make you rich again. Call at my banker's and you will find your goodness has been well repaid.

*Marg.* (*Dashing a tear doggedly away, then in previous callous manner*) Let it be a good round sum, for society does make such heavy demands on we ladies, now a-days.

*Dyn.* Never fear, but go now, for she might come and see you.

*Marg.* Good Bye, Douglas.

*Dyn.* (*Going down*) Good bye, and Heaven reward you. (*Falls in chair.*)

*Col.* (*To Marg.*) You are a weak fool.

*Marg.* I will go no further.

*Col.* You will do what I command you.

*Marg.* I will not.

*Col.* You shall. (*Drags her off C.*)

*Dyn Rising*) I must be accursed, but what matters for myself, she must be saved from the frightful consequences of my folly and disgrace. No time to waste in idle lamentation for a dead past, for she must be kept unspotted from the world. I cannot tell her the truth, and she must never learn it from any other lips. What shall I do, what shall I do?

**Enter River. and Sadie, announced by Adolph.**

*Adolph.* Lord and Lady Riverdale.

*River.* (*Shaking hands with him*) Ah, Dynevor, I'm delighted to see you again.

*Sadie,* (*Shaking hands*) And so am I, real glad.

*Adolph* Well, when an English nobleman marries a yankee lumber store, things is come to a pretty pass, the foundations of society is shook. What's to become of us gentlemen. I must speak to his lordship about it. (*Exit.*)

*Sadie.* And where's Sybil, the pet.

*Dyn.* You will find her in her room.

*Sadie.* Oh, I must go and hug her right away. (*Exit.*)

*River.* Douglas, old boy, what's the meaning of this long face? Why, I expected to find you wreathed in happy smiles.

*Dyn.* Riverdale, an hour ago I was the happiest man in Great Britain. Now, I am more miserable than the lowest wretch that crawls.

*River.* What has happened?

*Dyn.* I cannot tell you, old man, I cannot tell you.

*River.* Has my sister, Sybil—

*Dyn.* Your sister, Arthur, is the noblest woman that ever breathed.

### Enter Sadie and Sybil.

*Sadie.* There, do you hear that? You ought to be proud and happy.

*Sybil.* I am the proudest, happiest woman in the world. (*Embracing Dyn.*)

### Re-Enter Col.

*Col.* I am delighted to hear it.

*Omnès.* Colonel Osborne!

*Col.* And a friend; I will introduce her.

*Dyn.* No, no; for your soul's sake, man, have mercy!

*Col.* Mercy! Is it mercy to allow an English lady to suppose she is a Noble's wife, when she is nothing but his light o' love?

*Omnès.* What!

*Col.* Lady Sybil, some months ago I warned you that you would be Lord Dynevor's second victim, and that he would break your heart. I spoke the truth. He has deceived you; he has cheated us all, his first wife never died!

*Omnès.* Not dead!

*Col.* No, (*fetching on Marg.*) for Lady Douglas Dynevor now stands before you!

*Sybil.* (*To Dyn.*) Is this true?

*Dyn.* God help you, Sybil, for it is.

*Col.* Now, Douglas Dynevor, I have paid you, shame for shame!

(*Dyn. is about to rush on Colonel, when Sybil, who has been standing dazed, screams and falls to the ground between them.*)

### Act.

## ACT III.

### Same scene as Act II.

Enter Adolphus, L. 1 E., yawning, goes towards C.

*Adolph.* I must have overslept myself. Well, it's no wonder I should have been fatigued, for the shock that old feminine gave me quite upset my nerves. (*Is now at C.*)

Enter C. Miss Rasp, very hurriedly, cannons against him.

*Rasp.* Oh, there you are, you booby! Where have you been all this time. Eh? Eh?? Eh???

*Adolph.* If you'll give me time to collect myself, I'll endeavor to tell you.

*Rasp.* Endeavor to tell me, you useless nincompoop!

*Adolph.* Useless?

*Rasp.* Yes, useless, and the best proof of your utter uselessness is, that you have'nt been missed.

*Adolph.* Missed, from where?

*Rasp.* Why, from the house, while it has been turned topsy-turvy, and while her Ladyship has been stretched in a fainting fit that it has taken us an hour to bring her out of.

*Adolph.* Her Ladyship! A fainting fit. What has been the matter, then?

*Rasp.* How should I know? They never tell me anything here. The house might fall on top of me and I should never be told a word about it.

*Adolph.* But is Her Ladyship ill now?

*Rasp.* Ill now? You wouldn't expect her to be out on horseback in the Row two hours after receiving a shock that must have nearly killed her.

*Adolph.* Shock! Oh, do tell me all about it; it's a shame to keep a gentleman in suspense.

*Rasp.* Gentleman! Yes, just about as much of a gentleman as that one that's been here ever since they came home, and bringing strange women into the house, too. It's my belief he's at the bottom of all this trouble. He's vile enough for anything. He's got "bad lot" written all over his ugly face.

*Adolph.* Of whom are you speaking?

*Rasp.* Why, of Sir Corporal Osborne, of course. He always was pushing himself in where he wasn't wanted. What business had he here the very day they were to come home from their honeymoon? I knew the sight of him would make Lady Sybil ill. I told him so.

*Adolph.* Is he gone now?

*Rasp.* No, he is not, and it seems nothing short of the great Lisbon earthquake would make him go. He's sitting in the library, but he's got himself for company and that horrid woman, and he's told Bings that they're going to stop there till their Lordships sends for them.

*Adolph.* You astonish me.

*Rasp.* I don't wonder, but what am I standing here chattering like a magpie for with Her Ladyship only just getting well again, and perhaps wanting me all the time, for she won't let any of those foolish waiting maids do a hand's turn for her. Ah, I don't know what they'd do without me in this house, for I declare, I'm the life, the prop and the support of the whole building. (*Exit talking.*)

*Adolph.* What's my noble Colonel's game now, I wonder? And why hasn't he kept me informed! Is he in for more shenanekin with other people's paper, or is it some new scheme connected with this strange woman he has brought into the house to-day? Well, whichever it is, he musn't keep me in the dark. I'll go to the library—and—(*is going C*)

### Enter Col. C.

Oh, here you are; I was just coming to look you up.

*Col.* What for?

*Adolph.* Because it seems to me that I don't receive that share of your confidence which is due from one gentleman to another.

*Col.* One gentleman to another; please don't place yourself on a level with me.

*Adolph.* Oh, no; don't flatter yourself that I do, for altho' we're neither of us what could be strictly called chaste, upright, virtuous or honest, yet there are degrees even in rascality. I'm a rogue, I admit it; but you are—

*Col.* Well, what am I?

*Adolph.* A damn scoundrel!

*Col.* (*Threatening.*) Take care, you affected puppy.

*Adolph.* Oh! I'm not afraid; I may have a weak voice, but I've got a magnificent muscle.

*Col.* Well, well, what do you want?

*Adolph.* I want to know what's the new game you're playing?

*Col.* One in which you can't take a hand.

*Adolph.* Ah! That's from your point of view, but I look at matters in such a different light.

*Col.* Well, this is no place to tell you anything about it. These walls may have ears; but this much you may know: that I'm going to do a stroke to-night that will make my fortune.

*Adolph.* And mine as well of course.

*Col.* We'll settle that when the work is done.

*Adolph.* All right; and now about those cheques. You're quite sure we're all safe with them?

*Col.* Oh, yes, at any rate, nothing can be discovered to-day and to-morrow I shall be beyond danger, on the ocean.

*Adolph.* Oh, you will; then I shall take my ticket too.

*Col.* That we can arrange hereafter.

*Adolph.* But suppose he *should* find out to-day?

*Col.* Oh, no fear of that.

*Adolph.* Don't be too sure; there's been five in all for a thousand each. I cashed the last this very day for the thou. I gave you, and I tell you, the clerk looked at me as if he would eat me, and compared the signature with others for so long that I thought of making a bolt from the bank several times.

*Col.* You are always so confoundedly timid; that's what spoils you. Some day, you'll get into a mess, and if you do, after all the warnings I've given you, you'll have to get out of it yourself, as best you can.

*Adolph.* You always seem to overlook the fact that any trouble I get into will involve *you* as well.

*Col.* Oh, I can take care of myself; never fear. I have numberless ways of getting out of a difficulty.

*Adolph.* So had the fox with a hundred tricks, but he got caught at last.

*Col.* You're too big a goose to catch this fox.

*Adolph.* Oh, no; for I don't require the intelligence, even of a goose, to do it.

*Col.* What?

*Adolph.* The fox in this case has prepared his own trap.

*Col.* His own trap?

*Adol.* Yes, goose as I am, I could make you sentence yourself to 7 years without your once opening your lips.

*Col.* What do you mean?

*Adol.* I mean that I've got a letter of yours addressed to me from Paris, where you have been so busy for the last 6 months, in which you give yourself away entirely

*Col.* Hang you, so you have. I must have been drunk when I wrote it. Where do you keep it?

*Adol.* It never leaves this pocket. (*Tapping his breast.*)

*Col.* What will you take for it? I'll give you £1,000.

*Adol.* Ten thousand couldn't make it yours, for it's the only thing I have to keep you in your place. As long as I hold that letter I am the master and you—the man.

*Col (Taking his arm.)* Ah, well, my dear Adolphus, there'll never be any misunderstanding between us; we know each other so well.

*Adol. (Disengaging his arm and wiping his sleeve.)* No liberties, please, and pray don't place yourself on a level with me.

### Enter Marg.

*Marg.* I must speak to you, alone.

*Col. (To Adol.)* You hear? Alone.

*Adol.* Who is this person?

*Col.* A friend of mine, *of ours*; now go, there's a good fellow; I'll meet you to-night at the King's Head, as usual, and explain everything.

*Adol.* All right, only play me no tricks; because, if you do, remember what I have here, *(tapping his breast)* and I shall have to speak to His Lordship about it.

*Marg.* What is that man to you?

*Col.* A very useful person in his place. He has done us both good service, for it is through him that I have obtained the money necessary to establish you in your rights.

*Marg.* Colonel Osborne, an end to my rights. I renounce them, and I will go no further with you.

*Col.* Hey dey! what's the matter now?

*Marg.* The matter is that that poor lady's agony has aroused what little of the woman there is left in me, and I will torture her no more.

*Col.* So you've got an attack of qualms, I suppose?

*Marg.* I have, and I only hope they have not come too late. I promised Lord Dynevor two hours ago that I would leave him in peace. He will give me money to be rid of me. He should have been so by now but for your remorseless power over me.

*Col.* Give *you* money, and what about me who haven't a shilling in the world—that am worse than a beggar, with debts of lead weighing me down. I tell you, you must go on.

*Marg.* Must!

*Col.* Aye, must; if not, as surely as there is a treaty of extradition between France and Great Britain I will restore you to the government which is so anxiously awaiting your return to Paris.

*Marg.* Why did you follow me six months ago? I had no wish to be a party to your persecution of Lord Dynevor. Had you left me to myself when I returned to Paris, I should have been a better woman.

*Col.* You're very ungrateful to one who has induced you to make a fortune against your will.

*Marg.* And so you will have no mercy?

*Col.* Just as much mercy as you had for me when I was cheated out of my last franc in your gambling hell, in the Rue Garonne. Just as much mercy as you had for that poor wretch who on the night of the 13th of January was drugged in your saloon, robbed and afterwards pitched into the winter snow. I heard of no qualms then from the English adventuress, and I'll hear of none now. If I do I will introduce you in 24 hours to the prefect of the Seine.

*Marg.* You have me tightly in your grip, but, if ever I free myself, from that moment beware.

*Col.* But till that moment, you will kindly conduct yourself as becomes a person of your rank. I have arranged a meeting in this room, to discuss your interests, at nine o'clock. *(watch)* It wants

only a few minutes. I will conduct you back to the library, where you will please stop till I rejoin you with an account of what has taken place. Come. (*She follows him off doggedly.*)

**Enter Adolph, L. 1 E. (with letter, and an envelope, he looks off entrances very cautiously and returns to C. speaking thro' action.**

I managed to overhaul the mail as usual, but there was nothing that looked important except this with a Paris post mark. It looks like what I remember of the handwriting of that old French fool, Count Fritout, who disappeared so suddenly, by the way, the very same day as that woman who is here to-day turned up. That's funny. The colonel's orders were to investigate everything foreign that comes to hand, so here goes. (*reads*)

*Moncher, mi Lord Dynevor:*

*No doubt you are surprise at that I have absentee mineself from you so suddenness after ze lunch in ze woods 6 months ago, but I vas receive un grand fright from a woman I see zere zat day, vich make me run off to Paris Cependant, I shall have ze plaisir detre chez vous to-morrow, le demain, when I vil explain everysing, meantime I am, &c.*

*Leon Bonaparte Fritout.*

(*As soon as Adolph begins to read this letter Bings enters C. and cautiously advancing, looks over Adolph's shoulder while he is reading Adolph turns, and seeing Bings, hastily, and in great confusion places letter in envelope, and then in his breast pocket.*) (*Aside.*) He saw me. (*Aloud.*) Ah, Mr. Bings. (*Going L.*)

*Bings.* What right had you to open that letter?

*Adol.* Me, open a letter, me! (*Loudly.*)

*Bings.* See, yes I did see you reading a letter addressed to your master.

*Adol.* My dear Mr. Bings, you surely must be dreaming.

*Bings.* I can't hear what you're saying, but I'll thank you to hand it over to me at once.

*Adol.* But my dear Mr. Bings, you are mistaken.

*Bings.* You won't have it taken? Oh, then I'll call for assistance and have you searched.

*Adol.* What an indignity to put upon a gentleman.

*Bings.* I always thought you were a fraud, with your slow talk and your poker back, and now, I'm sure. How did you come by that letter which was in my mail bag?

*Adolph.* The postman left it with me.

*Bings.* I can't hear you, but I can see you're lying. So I'll give you one minute before I pull this bell, to hand me that letter, or to have you and your boxes searched and both bundled into the street; now choose. (*holding watch and bell pull.*)

*Adolph.* The confounded thing is as open as when I steamed it, he came on me so quickly, I hadn't time to seal it up again as I have always done before.

*Bings.* (*Consulting his watch*) You have only 30 seconds left.

*Adolph.* Well, I must put a bold face on it. There it is. (*hands it to Bings, having taken two letters from his pocket and become very confused in handling them, gives Bings first one and then the other, etc.*) I opened it, by mistake.



*Bings.* (*Putting it into his pocket without looking at it.*) Makes you shake; so it ought and now, I'm going to shake you off altogether. Your services in this family are dispensed with from to-day.

*Adolph.* Vulgar old idiot! (*Going up.*) If I could make him hear, I would give him a bit of my mind, but a gentleman can't bawl at an old ass like that.

*Bings.* Now pack up, and get out as soon as you can.

*Adolph.* I'm going, and I'm pleased to be released from your society.

*Bings.* No more chatter, you starched-up hypocrite, but go.

*Adolph.* Disgusting! But by jove, what shall I do? It isn't possible to let him turn me out. The Colonel has too much at stake, and so have I. I must get taken back. Mr. Bings!

*Bings.* I want nothing more to say to you.

*Adolph.* But I want to explain to you about the letter.

*Bings.* You'll behave better; I don't believe it; get out.

*Adolph.* But you must hear me, or you'll be sorry.

*Bings.* You're sorry? No apologies, but go.

*Adolph.* But I.

*Bings.* Oh, go to the devil! (*Scruffs and kicks him off.*)

**Enter Colonel, from D. R.**

**Sadie and River, from L. 1. E.**

**Dynevor, from D. L.**

*Col.* We are punctual, temps militaire, 9 precisely.

*Dyn.* Is Sybil, I mean, is her Ladyship recovered?

*River.* I do not see that my sister's condition can interest you, sir, after what has happened.

*Sadie.* (*Reproachfully.*) Oh, Arthur! (*To Dyn.*) No; but she is not so prostrate as she was. What she seems to wish for most, is to be able to leave this house, where, she says, she is suffocating.

*Dyn.* Poor girl! Poor girl! For what have I brought you home? unhappy that I am.

*Col.* I do not wonder Lady Sybil should be impatient to quit a place where she has been so brutally insulted.

*Dyn.* When your sympathy is required, sir, for Lady Sybil, you shall be informed; till then, you degrade her by the offer of it.

*Col.* It is safe to suppose she is feeling something like the degradation you put upon me in her presence six months ago. I loved her sir, as well as you.

*Dyn.* Peace! Your hollow protestations at such a moment are blasphemies of which only such a one as you could be guilty.

*Sadie.* What has she ever done to you that—

*Col.* I tell you; I loved her; she trampled on my passion. Even when I warned her of the fate this man has reduced her to, she treated me with scorn, rushing to his false embrace without a moment of remorse for dooming me to an eternity of misery.

*Sadie.* She could not force herself to love you

*Col.* It was enough that I loved her. She cast me off, and I swore to be revenged on her and on him who stole her from me,

*Dyn.* And is not your vengeance yet complete? Has it not been foul enough to bring satiety?

*Col.* When the world knows both she and you for what you are, and when your names have been dragged thro' the gutters of society, then, and not till then, will your punishment have been complete.

*Sadie.* Now, we'll baulk you of your vile gratification, for we will take her to the old home where I was born, where not a soul shall ever see the shame and suffering she will endure.

*Col.* Yes, take her to your lumber tract in the far West, and you shall read her story in the local journal on the very day of her arrival, and the finger of scorn shall be ready, waiting to mark her out as surely as tho' she were in the heart of the metropolis.

*Sadie.* What is to be done with this man? If he were in the lumber region of the West, I'd know how to deal with him.

*Col.* Indeed. How!

*Sadie.* Why, I'd get the vigilantes to give you twenty-four hours to quit, and if you wer'nt gone at the end of that time—

*Col.* Well?

*Sadie.* Why, then all the honest men of the district would help you out with a cowhide or a bit of a snake fence.

*Dyn.* 'Tis useless to argue with a stone, but if you have one spark of man left in you, let your revenge expend itself on me. Leave her at least in name, that which is a woman's greatest treasure. If you rob her of that, 'twere kinder far to take her life and all, for she would have nothing left to live for then. Oh, would to heaven I could be near to comfort her. It breaks my heart to be forbidden from her side.

*River.* Lord Dynevor, after what has passed, you will excuse me if I regard any protestations from you as I do those from Sir Breton Osborne, as slightly tinged with hypocrisy.

*Dyn.* Did that come from your heart, Riverdale? From you, who, but two short hours ago was my closest friend?

*River.* Your friend. No; I was your dupe, as was my poor wronged, miserable sister.

*Dyn.* Riverdale, as I hope for mercy, I am innocent of wilful wrong towards her.

*River.* Words cost but little.

*Dyn.* But I will prove them. Oh, Riverdale, you have known me many a year; have I ever said or done anything to make you believe me capable of so base a wrong to one I loved better than my life.

*River.* (Turns away in doubt.)

*Sadie.* (Turns him round again.) Arthur! (stamps.) Lord Riverdale! Say, what you think—

*River.* I don't know what I do think.

*Sadie.* Then I do. You think your old friend is just as true a man now as you believed him to be before this black-hearted specimen of humanity crossed his threshold two hours ago. (Gives Dyn. her hand.)

*Dyn.* Thank you, thank you, for her sake, thank you.

*Sadie.* (To River.) Now come, Arthur, I don't wan't to be cross with you for the first time, for you've a good soul, only you're so all-fired scared of showing it, but for once don't be ashamed to have the courage of your sentiments. Take him by the hand and don't let him feel so awful small before a mean potato-bug like that.

*River.* Your impulse is a good one, Sadie, but this is not the time to indulge it. When Lord Dynevor has cleared himself by irrefutable proof, it will be time enough for that.

*Sadie.* Proof, of course he will give us proof.

*Dyn.* I will, I will go to France immediately and bring back the certificate of the death of Margaret Kilsyth, together with every evidence necessary to show that I made your unhappy sister my wife honestly believing I was a free man.

*Sadie.* No need to go to France, my proof is hundreds of miles nearer home, it's right here in my heart, which tells me you are a man to be pitied and not abused.

*Col.* He will never prove away the shame that will cling around his victim to the last hour of her life. But what does he care? Has he not gratified his passion? My appearance with his wife has only hastened your sister's fall by a few weeks, for when he had tired of her as well, she would have been cast off as Lady Dynevor was, while he went in search of still more food to glut his insatiable appetite.

*Dyn.* Lord Riverdale, am I dreaming? Am I mad? or is it a fact that I, Douglas Dynevor, am standing here inactive, with you and your wife by my side, allowing that man to insult me as tho' I were the lowest wretch upon the earth? I must have fallen, indeed, from my old self, or I should—but why do I waste time in useless words. I came here to act. Whatever defence I have to make for myself must wait until her safety is assured. Her good name is paramount, and it must not be sullied by a single breath of slander.

*Col.* How will you prevent it?

*Dyn.* By closing your mouth.

*Col.* You will find that a difficult task.

*Dyn.* There is but one way to your heart and that is thro' your pocket. What is the price of your silence?

*Col.* I am not the only person to be consulted. Your wife, Lady Dynevor, has a tongue as well as I.

*Dyn.* Leave me to deal with her.

*Col.* She will have a deal to expect from your tender mercies. No, sir; she has constituted me the guardian of her rights, and I mean to see that she obtains them.

*Dyn.* Then how much will ensure your joint secrecy?

*Col.* Make an offer.

*Dyn.* Five thousand pounds.

*Sadie.* What, \$25,000? It's a wicked swindle. In the States he wouldn't get a cent. They would let him do his worst.

*Col.* Yes, I've been told that reputation is of little account in your country, Lady Riverdale, and that a diploma of respectability, like that of medicine, can be had for a mere song.

*Sadie.* Oh, I admit we've some tough examples on our side, but in all my experience over there I never came across a man so despicable as to be capable, like you, of making a few paltry dollars out of the misery of a helpless woman.

*River.* Sadie, my dear—

*Sadie.* Arthur, I can't help it. When I look at that man it sets my blood boiling, and if your society restrictions don't allow you to give him the plain English of what you feel, why I'll take care he remains under no delusions as to what I think about him so long as I can talk United States.

*Col.* We should come to a quicker settlement if Lady Riverdale would leave us to ourselves.

*Sadie.* Oh, oh; you want to turn me out, do you? No, sir; I'm fixed on this chair just as solid as a prairie-dog on his hunkers, and here I'm going to stick.

*Col.* Well, then, may I request that you will remain silent until you have something to say which is relevant to the business in hand.

*River.* Yes, *Sadie*, darling, the more you talk the longer we shall have to put up with the insult of his presence.

*Sadie.* Oh, will he go any the sooner for my keeping quiet? Then I won't even open my mouth again. (*Sits.*)

*Col.* Lord Riverdale, your last speech will cost you several thousands more than I had intended to ask you.

*Sadie.* (*Jumping up.*) What, is he going to ask you to pay him, too? Oh, I forgot! (*Sits.*)

*Col.* Immaterial who pays me, so I'm paid.

*River.* Well, then, out with it; how much do you want?

*Col.* Ah, that's sensible. For insults from Lord Dynevor, £5,000; for the crowning humiliation of a blow from the same individual, £10,000; for my expenses while in Paris looking up the true Lady Dynevor, and obtaining the proofs of her identity and marriage, £5,000; for my silence, £10,000; for Lady Dynevor's neutrality and forbearance, £20,000. Total to be paid before I leave the house, £50,000!

*Sadie.* What! \$250,000—a quarter of a million dollars! You'll never agree to it?

*River.* No, for we could not command such a sum of cash in hand. It would take some days to realize it.

*Dyn.* And this is your final resolve? Your mind is fixed?

*Col.* Irrevocably so.

*Dyn.* And nothing short of such a sum would influence you?

*Col.* Absolutely nothing. I will not take one shilling less. Pay it or face the consequences, which include the proclamation of Lady Sybil Riverdale as your mistress, and your own arrest for bigamy.

*Dyn.* And no appeal will move you from the execution of your dastardly purpose? Oh, I care not for myself, the disgrace of an arrest I would bear with cheerfulness if it would save her from any suffering, but she will be dragged down with me in my shame. Heaven help her! Heaven help her! (*Sits bowed in grief.*)

*Sadie.* Heaven's a very good stand-by, but a little slow at times; so suppose, I chip in. I've a good-sized fortune in my own right, but I can't put my hand down on a sum like that at two minutes' notice, nor yet two weeks. Lord Riverdale, how much can we manage together?

*River.* Not more than a few thousands in actual cash.

*Sadie.* Well, come here, and let's figure it out. (*Takes him up.*)

### Enter Bings (with Bank Book and Letters.)

*Bings.* Beg pardon, my Lord, but I ventured to disturb you to bring in your letters.

*Dyn.* Yes, put them down and go.

*Bings* (*Put them down all but one.*) I've often been blamed, my Lord, because I couldn't hear, but thank the Lord, I can see. Here's a letter, I advise you to read just as quickly as you can. (*Handing him that he got from Adol.*) Oh, yes, I see I'm intruding and I beg pardon for it, but when your Lordship has mastered

the contents of that epistle, you'll admit that tho' I may be deaf, yet damn me, I'm not blind. (*Exit.*)

*Col.* I must demand that there shall be no more interruptions to our business.

*Dyn.* (*Reading letter.*) No; you shall have strictly business now.

*Col.* Be quick, then, for my time is precious.

*Dyn.* (*Gets bank book and consults it.*) Are you then in a hurry to go?

*Col.* I shall wait until I am paid.

*Dyn.* Before you leave, you shall be paid in full.

*River.* Can you then raise the amount at once?

*Dyn.* I am just consulting my account. No; I cannot give a check for such a sum; it is impossible.

*Col.* I will take your bill for a third of the amount.

*Dyn.* Even then, I could not do it.

*River.* But we can manage something very considerable, can't we Sadie?

*Sadie.* Oh, yes, if we're obliged; not else, beside, is there no punishment in your country for blackmail?

*River.* Oh, yes, but unfortunately, he knows he is safe.

*Sadie.* Then we are entirely at this man's mercy.

*River.* Absolutely.

*Sadie.* Well, then, we must make the best of it. I'll give my check for £20,000.

*River.* And I mine for £10,000.

*Col.* Then make them out and be quick about it, too. (*They both go to desk and write checks.*) Now, sir, you are very much absorbed in study; do you forget that you have still to dispose of me?

*Dyn.* (*Very pointedly.*) I will dispose of you, at once.

*Col.* Then, give me a check.

*Dyn.* I am about to do so.

*Sadie.* (*Coming down L. of Dyn.*) Here is mine

*River.* (*Following*) And here is mine. (*They are passing them to Col. across Dynevor. Col. is about to take them greedily when Dynevor intercepts them in his hand, and holds them away from Col.*)

*Dyn.* One moment. There are certain little formalities to be gone thro' in all business transactions.

*Col.* (*With pocketbook open in his hand.*) What formalities?

*Dyn.* I will explain.

*Col.* Do.

*Dyn.* Kindly retain your money till you feel you are bound to pass it to the Colonel. (*Returning cheques to River and Sadie.*)

*Col.* What is the meaning of this jugglery!

*Dyn.* I am giving you a check.

*River.* Be careful, Lord Douglas. My sister, Lady Sybil, is the stake and you are dealing with a dangerous man

*Dyn.* I know it, but when I was in India I often settled several serpents in a day, to say nothing of other vermin. Here I have only to deal with one.

*Col.* By——

*Dyn.* D'n't talk, but listen. I think if I were to offer you half the sum you have demanded, you should think yourself well paid.

*Col.* I would not take one penny less if you were to talk for two days, so hand over the money and let me go.

*Sadie.* } Here's my share.  
*River.* }

*Dyn.* (*Putting them back as Col. goes to seize the checks.*) One moment longer. You are quite sure that if you were offered a *quarter* of the amount, you would not entertain the proposition?

*Col.* Not for an instant.

*Dyn.* Then the very lowest price of your kind forbearance towards Lady Sybil, her relatives and myself, is £50,000.

*Col.* It is, and if you delay the payment much longer, I shall raise it to £60,000.

*Sadie.* Oh, then, for goodness sake let's get rid of him. Here, take your money. (*Takes check from River and passes them both to Col., behind Dyn.*)

*Col.* (*Having eagerly snatched them from her, put them in his pocketbook, and into his pocket, and buttoned up his coat with enormous satisfaction.*) And now, sir, I'll trouble you for yours, and then—

*Dyn.* And then you will be satisfied that the bargain is fully carried out on *our* side?

*Col.* Yes.

*Dyn.* But what guarantee have we that it will be as faithfully observed on yours?

*Sadie.* Oh, yes. I never thought of that. Bind him down so that he can't wriggle away.

*Col.* Bind me down. Ha! ha! I have the money, for which, tho', I will give you a receipt.

*Dyn.* And what else?

*Col.* A guarantee in writing that I will keep silent.

*Dyn.* Thanks; but as you have, as you say, the money in your pocket, I want a guarantee that you will not break your guarantee.

*Col.* Oh, I give you my word of honor.

*Dyn.* *Your* word of honor!

*Sadie.* His word of honor! It would'nt fetch a nickel at a government auction of a condemned junk store.

*Col.* What more can you have?

*Dyn.* I will tell you. During my absence in the past six months, something has occurred of which I have only just been made aware. I was on the point of paying you a large sum of money. Before doing so, I deemed it wise to consult my bank book. The result of my examination is, I have discovered that my account at the London and County Bank has been drawn upon by means of forged cheques, and that I have been robbed of £5,000.

*Col.* Well, what do I want to know about this? Come to business.

*Dyn.* I will. Just now you buttoned your coat up very, very tightly over two checks for a considerable amount?

*Col.* I did.

*Dyn.* I will trouble you to unbutton and return those drafts to their drawers.

*Col.* What!

*Dyn.* I think I used understandable English.

*Col.* Do you think I'm a fool?

*Dyn.* I do, and I know you are a rogue.

*Col.* (*Going for him.*) You! ———

*Dyn.* (*Very coolly.*) Don't agitate yourself. You've tried those tactics before with very indifferent success.

*Col.* Lord Dynevor, (*in terrible rage*) if it were not for the presence of this lady—

*Dyn.* Lady? Oh, I have no need, like you, to make use of her presence as a shield for villainy.

*Col.* By Heaven! you shall prove your words.

*Dyn.* I will. A short time ago you saw my servant bring me in my mail. I'm sorry to say I was vexed with the poor old man. The next time I see him he shall receive my apology, for among my letters was one dated from Paris, which I will read to you. (*Reads letter.*)

"*My Dear Adolphus:*

*Thanks for your promptness, I received the last thousand a week ago, but the job I have in hand has turned out so expensively that I must have more money or failure may result; therefore, as you do not expect Dynevor home until the 18th there will be ample time for you to supply me with one more check from his book in the escritoire. This will make five in all, for a thousand each. It makes me laugh to think I have come to copy Dynevor's fist with such perfection that I can defy your master himself to recognize it from his own. Be prompt, and oblige*

*Yours in haste,*

*Breton Osborne, Col."*

*Col.* (*In a fearful fury.*) How did Bings become possessed of that?

### Enter Bings.

*Dyn.* I don't know, but here he is; ask him for yourself. (*Goes to desk and writes.*)

*Col.* (*To Bings, very loudly.*) From whom did you get that letter?

*Bings.* (*Ear bus.*) From Adolphus.

*Col.* Why did he give it you?

*Bings.* Because he had opened, by your orders, a letter addressed to my master from Count Fritout. I saw him do it, and when he saw me and saw that I saw him, he slipped it quickly in his pocket. I demanded it from him, and he was so excited—

*Dyn.* When he saw you and saw that you saw him—that

*Bings.* He got confused, and gave me that one in the place of the other. (*Goes up.*)

*Col.* Perdition seize him! I knew his blundering would ruin us. Here, I'll be satisfied with what I've got and go.

*Dyn.* (*Intercepting him.*) Stop, I'm not satisfied with what you've got, and you will please disgorge.

*Col.* Never!

*Dyn.* Bings, fetch a policeman. (*Bings goes C.*)

*Col.* No, stop, here you are. (*Gives back cheques.*) And now good day. (*Going.*)

*Dyn.* One moment longer, you said you would give me a guarantee in writing that you would be silent with regard to Lady Sybil and myself.

*Col.* That was when I had the money.

*Dyn.* Oh, you wouldn't let such a trifle as £30,000 affect your diploma of respectability, you know you gave me your word of honor.

*Col.* You would not take it then.

*Dyn.* Nor will I take it now, and that is why I have written something on this paper (*rising and coming down*) which you will be good enough to sign. (*reads*) *I, Colonel, Sir Breton Osborne, hereby confess that I have forged the name of Lord Douglas Dynevor to cheques on his account, at the London & County Bank, aggregu-*

ting 5 thousand pounds. Now you will sign your name in full in presence of we 4 witnesses.

*Col.* (*Thro' his teeth.*) Curse you all. (*signs*) There!

*Dyn.* Thanks, and now you will also append your autograph to this. (*reads*) On demand I promise to pay Douglas Dynevor, or order, £5,000.

*Col.* (*Signs.*) You have me now; but I'll be even with you yet.

*Dyn.* Bings will show you the door, but remember that the first word of slander from you of Lady Sybil will be the signal for the proclamation of Col. Sir Breton Osborne as a thief, and your own arrest for forgery.

*Col.* (*At C.*) Do you hear. I'll be level with you yet! (*Exit.*)

*Sadie.* He's gone, he's gone, you've beat him!

*Dyn.* And she is saved. Thank God! Thank God!

### Picture

**Sadie embraces River., and then Bings, with comic exuberance till curtain.**

## ACT IV.

The Lawn at Dynevor Hall. Outside the Conservatory.  
Moonlight.

**Disc'd. Lady Sybil on Rustic Seat**

**Rasp Arranging Pillows and Cloud around Her.**

*Rasp.* Your Ladyship is sure you won't catch cold?

*Sybil.* You are very kind, no.

*Rasp.* Shall I not bring you even a glass of wine?

*Sybil.* No; I thank you, nothing.

*Rasp.* But remember, your Ladyship is disobeying the doctor's orders, which were that you should be kept absolutely quiet and undisturbed until his next visit in the morning.

*Sybil.* Yes, I know, but doctors sometimes attach too much importance to trifling ailments. I am not ill; only a little faint, and the air is so soft, it will soon restore me.

*Rasp.* Then, there is nothing else I can do for your Ladyship?

*Sybil.* Thank you; no. (*Rasp is going.*) Yes you can tell me the time.

*Rasp.* It is nearly 10.

*Sybil.* Nearly 10. (*Sighs.*)

*Rasp.* (*At back.*) That woman has the courage of 6 miserable men. But of course, she has the blood of the Riverdales in her. Only a little faint, when she has received a shock that will last her as long as she lives. (*Exit.*)

*Sybil.* Nearly 10, and it was 7 o'clock when that woman came. Three hours! I seem to have lived three centuries.



## Enter Sadie.

*Sadie.* Oh, there you are; oh, my darling, it's kind o' rash sitting out here in the air; you will catch a chill and then ——

*Sybil.* I could not stay a moment longer in the house. I felt as tho' I were choking.

*Sadie.* Well, you needn't feel so any longer, for we've choked him.

*Sybil.* Him, who?

*Sadie.* Colonel Osborne, the villian!

*Sybil.* Is he still here?

*Sadie.* Oh, no he got his congè and you won't be troubled with him again, I guess. Why, my darling, would you believe it. He's a forger.

*Sybil.* A forger?

*Sadie.* Yes. He's been forging Lord Dynevov's name while he has been away, to the tune of £5,000, but he'll forge no more, for Dynevov exposed him and sent him yelping off like the miserable cur he is.

*Sybil.* Then what has happened?

*Sadie.* A revolution, and for once virtue is triumphant and villainy is the 'possum up a gum tree.

*Sybil.* Do you mean that the story about that woman, then, is not true?

*Sadie.* No; that seems unfortunately to be only too true; horribly true.

*Sybil.* Yes; I had forgot. He himself, confessed she was his wife. Oh, Sadie, Sadie! what shall I do?

*Sadie.* I guess I don't know exactly, but I wish I had you all over in the States, I'd have Dynevov and that creature divorced, and you and he up before a mayor who should make you man and wife again before that wretch Osborne had time to tell your story in the first lager beer saloon around the corner.

*Sybil.* There can be no such hope, for were he severed from her here, she would still be his wife by the laws of France, which admit of no separation but that of death.

*Sadie.* Then that law 's a stupid one, and the men that framed it were idiots. I wish they were all married to a dozen each of such women as she was. I guess at the next sitting of the House that law would be repealed.

*Sybil.* No, Sadie, there is no hope. Nothing can brighten my wretched future, nor blot out the mis-rable past. Nothing will ever restore me once again to the place I have lost in the world's esteem and in my own; nothing can give me back my once good name, or undo the shameful dishonor of my ruined life. (*Falls in tears on Sadie's neck.*)

*Sadie.* Come, cheer up, darling, walk a little; you are ill. Besides, don't fear, there are brighter days in store. When the clouds look the blackest, they have always a silver lining; let us try to look at them from their silver side. (*Exeunt, embracing.*)

## Enter Adolph.

*Adolph.* I waited at the King's Head a long while for the Colonel, for whom I got kicked out; there's no mincing the matter. I was kicked out. That's the worst of a gentleman being in the service of a low blackguard. Well, as honest men won't have me, I must put up with the unavoidable and fasten myself once again on to the Colonel. Ah, here he comes.

### Enter Col. and Marg.

*Marg.* You had better have taken my advice and let my business and me alone. You have been beaten and you have no money after all.

*Col.* I am only baulked, not beaten.

*Marg.* Still you have constituted yourself my business man only to achieve a failure in my affairs.

*Col.* Not altogether. There is a hope yet.

*Marg.* Pray, let me hear if it is as foolhardy as the others you have submitted.

*Col.* Foolhardy! Why, I have never carried an affair so near a successful issue in my life. I should have come out a glorious winner and have gratified my revenge as well, but for that idiot I employed to spy for me. (*Sees Adolph, who has just come down.*) You infernal—(*hits at him*).

*Adolph.* (*Parries the blow and holds his arm in his grip.*) You forgot the muscle. (*Throws him off.*) Moreover, you forget our relationship, that of brothers.

*Col.* Brothers!

*Adolph.* Yes, in rascality.

*Col.* You! (*threatening.*)

*Adolph.* Now, come, don't boil over any more, bank your fires, go slow. I made a blunder, I admit it, I ask pardon, What more can a gentleman do? But I've been kicked. I feel a natural desire to return the little attention. So give me a chance to retrieve my character.

*Col.* You shall have it. Go at once to the nearest magistrate. Take these instructions, (*handing him letter*) bring a detective back with you, and by the time you return I will be ready for him.

*Adol.* Good enough. I fly. I am in earnest in this business now, for I've been kicked, and if I don't give that kick back again, why, I'll give you leave to speak to His Lordship about it. (*Exit.*)

*Marg.* What do you want an officer for?

*Col.* For a last desperate attempt. In the settlement we made I am bound to silence, for if I speak I am in for seven years. But no such weight shuts down your lips. You were no party to the arrangement. Your terms are still to be exacted. If they would give me £50,000 for silence, they will even more quickly give it you; if not, when Adolphus returns we will bring them to their senses.

*Marg.* Once more I beg of you to give this up and let me go.

*Col.* For the last time I tell you, never! Ah, I see the two men. Come, I will arrange your course of action. (*Exit with her.*)

### Enter River. and Dynevor.

*Dyn.* But, my dear Riverdale, you shall have every proof that it is possible for a man to give.

*River.* How do you propose to make me believe that you had absolute proof of your wife's death, when your wife is at this moment a living woman?

*Dyn.* Riverdale, I am the victim of some horrible mistake. As you know, I went to Paris the very day I received the news. I identified the body of Margaret Kilsyth in the morgue, and for decency's sake I followed it to the grave, and with it, as I thought, I buried The Dead Past of my life forever.

*River.* And you never knew of the extraordinary resemblance between the cousins?

*Dyn.* Until to-day I never even knew of the existence of a second Margaret Kilsyth. I only lived with this woman six weeks.

*River.* I want to believe you, Dynevor.

*Dyn.* And you will, old fellow; you do, I know you do. Think back; have I ever done or even said anything in all my life that should make you doubt my honesty?

*River.* (*Pause.*) No, and by Jove I won't doubt it any longer; upon my soul I won't.

*Dyn.* Thank you, old fellow, thank you. (*Shakes hands.*) But, so that your doubts may never return, now come with me by the tidal train to-night and you shall verify for yourself every word I have spoken. Do come, so that when I am gone forever, you may be able to give her the slight consolation of knowing that she did not waste her love upon an altogether worthless cheat.

*River.* I will go with you; tho' as for her, poor girl, I fear there is no comfort in this world for her from now.

*Dyn.* There must be some curse upon me, Riverdale, or surely I should not twice in my life have become the victim of such a fearful fate. If I alone could suffer, I should not care, but the most cruel pang of all I feel, is that my misery should entail such calamity on her.

*River.* No good repining, what is to be done? You have closed that scoundrel's mouth and assured her safety from his venomous tongue, but what of her future and your own?

*Dyn.* There is but one course; we must separate. You will take her under your protection; she will live beneath your wife's roof; I will make it known that I alone am the offending one; a thousand stories shall gain currency thro' me and blaming me, but none shall ever guess the truth. She shall be free from the lightest breath of slander.

*River.* Dynevor, you are a good fellow, you are, upon my soul, you are, and you deserve a better fate.

*Dyn.* See, she is coming this way with your wife.

*River.* Come away. (*drawing him.*) You must not meet again.

*Dyn.* No, we must not (*Going and returns.*) Heaven, how ill she looks and I may not give her one word of tenderness and consolation.

*River.* No; come away; 'tis better for you both.

*Dyn.* Aye, may be so, (*going*) but Riverdale, man, man, my whole soul is going out to her. Let go, I say; loose your hold; I must, I will (*throws him off*), speak to her again!

### Enter Sadie and Sybil—(Picture and Pause.)

*River.* Sadie (*she crosses to him at back*), I am convinced now. She is safe with him. Their suffering is sacred. Let us go. (*Exit with her*) (*A painful pause, neither knowing how to speak.*)

*Dyn.* You are looking very ill.

*Sybil.* You—are—so—too.

*Dyn.* Would I could bear your pain as well as mine.

*Sybil.* 'Twould be a load too heavy for the bravest man.

*Dyn.* I was strong three short hours ago, and thought myself capable of bearing any weight the hand of fate could lay upon me, for then I held you in my arms, the proudest man on earth; but the dense shadow I could almost feel has become a living, horrible reality; has risen out of the tomb of a dead past and now confronts me with a present full of torture and a future charged with terrible remorse.

*Sybil.* Six months ago when you told me all, I pitied you; you have my pity still.

*Dyn.* Aye, mine is a pitiful fate, but what human pity is profound enough to compassionate the misery that I have brought on you?

*Sybil.* I am, indeed, unhappy.

*Dyn.* And have you no reproach for him who has made you so, and who must appear so mean and odious to your eyes?

*Sybil.* Such teeming wretchedness as mine can find no courage for reproaches.

*Dyn.* It can only weep, weep for its degradation and dishonor, weep vain hopeless tears for the faith and hope that are forever gone, but could it find tenderness enough for some slight token of forgiveness, I, even I, your wronger, would almost dare to sue for pardon for the barbarity and folly of which you are the hapless victim. I would plead in the name of the exalted love I swear I gave you, I would conjure you, by the memory of the days when I tried to make myself worthy of the sacred trusts you reposed in me. (*Pause.*) Oh, Sybil! Sybil! You cannot and you will not believe that I was capable of plucking so fair a flower as you, of blasting your beauty and your fragrance, only to fling you from me like a loathsome weed at last.

*Sybil.* Whatever I may think, matters little now, for we can never more be aught to one another.

*Dyn.* Never! never! I am here to bid you an eternal farewell.

*Sybil.* (*Sobs aloud.*)

*Dyn.* But e'er I go, I must have your assurance that you believed me honest; that, in spite of the tangled skein of infamy that has enmeshed me, you believe I sinned in ignorance alone; for, as heaven is my witness, I could not lie to you. Yet how can I hope to make *you* believe when I am racked with fearful doubts myself; for have I not seen the woman who says she is my wife, and gazed upon her features till they seem to have become a part of my very eyes, which I shall never again close out? I have analyzed her face with all the intensity of which my brain is capable. I have absorbed her very voice into my ears, and yet, despite my ears, my eyes, and in defiance of my reason, I say, I followed my wife, Margaret Kilsyth, to her grave in the cemetery of Pere Lachaise. (*Pause.*) Oh, Sybil, say that you believe me, or my heart will break.

*Sybil.* Have no fear of that. I have learnt now how much a heart can bear and still *not* break.

*Dyn.* But I must convince you I am not the villain that man has painted me. I cannot, will not part from you until I hear the blest assurance from your own lips that you do believe I loved you in all purity, and that when I stood by your side at the altar, I thought myself free to take you for my wife.

*Sybil.* Whatever may have been your sin, your punishment—

*Dyn.* Sybil, my punishment is greater than I can bear, but there is a higher court than that of man, the tribunal of the Almighty God! and before that awful presence I solemnly declare that I believed her dead, and that I loved you with all the chastity of soul of which a mortal can be capable. Say that you believe me; say it, or I shall go mad!

*Sybil.* (*Hesitating pause.*) I will, I will; I do believe you!

*Dyn.* (*Expresses his deep gratitude by feature and attitude; is about impetuously to embrace her, when he again realizes their situation and speaks with forced calmness.*) There remains no more then but

to part, to bid you an adieu that must be everlasting. I have made all arrangements with Lord Riverdale, your brother, who will find you an asylum beneath his roof, where you will be safe from all calumny and slander. I cannot hope you will be happy, but I pray you may try, at least to forgive, and perhaps in time you may forget, as well, that such an unhappy wretch as I ever cast the blight of his fatal love over the joy of your unspotted youth. ——— Good bye.

*Sybil.* (*Weeping*) Stay, and you, what will you do? Where will you go? In what place will you find oblivion?

*Dyn.* While your pain lives, mine can never have an end. There is no corner of the earth where I can hide myself from a remorse that per force must be eternal. In time, even you may pardon, but I shall never forgive myself. Good-bye! good-bye! and may God help you—(*Going.*)

*Sybil.* (*Sobbing loudly.*) Lord Dynevor! Douglas! Douglas! Do not leave me yet. (*He returns.*) I know I have been greatly wronged, yet, if it will make you less wretched in your future wanderings to know that I thought you loyal true and honest, take with you all the comfort that the knowledge can bestow; for I did believe you—and I—I—I—do so still!

*Dyn.* Thank God! thank God! (*Going.*)

*Sybil.* And I would have you know as well, I think you are more sinned against than sinning. (*Breaks down completely.*) Oh, Douglas! Douglas! What have we done that we should be punished so?

*Dyn.* Sybil, do not speak to me like this, you will rob me of all the man there is still left in me, and make me feel that parting is impossible.

*Sybil.* Douglas, it is impossible, for I cannot part from you.

*Dyn.* Sybil, you must.

*Sybil.* I cannot, I will not. I would rather die. (*Throws herself upon him*)

*Dyn.* Sybil, remember what I am; remember what we have been, and that you are Lady Sybil Riverdale. I cannot suffer you to do yourself such wrong as this, for which you would blame both yourself and me hereafter.

*Sybil.* I know full well what I am doing; *you* only reason coldly, while *I* love, Douglas. Love with all my soul! I cannot let you go! After all that we have been to one another, we cannot part as mere strangers. Think, I have been yours in the holiest possession a woman can render to a man; then keep me, keep me, yours forever.

*Dyn.* Sybil, for the love of God! do not tempt me so. (*Throws her arms off.*) Loose your arms or I shall feel I must unsay all that honor bade me speak, and clasp you to my heart in defiance of that woman and of all the world!

*Sybil.* Clasp me, then, and keep me, and let the dead past be forever buried and forgotten, for I cannot live without you.

*Dyn.* Sybil, Sybil, have mercy!

*Sybil.* Mercy! Is it mercy to tear my very heart strings from my bosom? No, if you will go, kill me 'ere you go, for life without you will be a living death.

*Dyn.* Sybil, think, we should neither of us ever enjoy happiness again. In your calmer moments, you would no longer honor me, and I should deserve all that man has said, for I should have ceased to respect myself.

*Sybil.* You have never really loved me.

*Dyn.* I have, I did, I do.

*Sybil.* Not as I have loved, for in the last 3 hours of bitter agony I have felt I would have given my soul to have your arms about me once again, and to feel the burning of your lips on mine. Douglas, I am still your wife! She who calls herself such is only wife in name. Our souls themselves are united, and my heart is fused in yours in an inextinguishable love, which has made us one forever in the sight of God!!!

*Dyn.* My love! My wife! My soul!!! (*They close in a passionate embrace.*)

**Enter Col., leading Marg.**

**Picture.**

*Col.* As I suspected!

*Sybil.* (*Breaking from Dyn's embrace and turning like a tigress on Marg.*) And it is you! I see you at last! You, who have twice blighted his life, and now seek to blast my happiness and honor! Why do you come back to him? What demon prompted you to come?

*Dyn.* 'Twas he. (*Indicating Col.*) Answer, was it not he? None, but such a one, steeped to the very lips in vice and shame; knowing that I was deceived—and that you were still alive, could have permitted me to lead an angel to the altar, degrading her to worse than nothing, only to gratify a barbarous revenge!

*Sybil.* But he shall not sunder us. No, you, Douglass, gave me, your love, your home, your honor; he, she, and all the world weighed against those precious gifts, are but as feathers in the scale.

*Marg.* (*Advances with Col. one step.*)

*Sybil.* (*Standing before Dyn. and uplifting her hand.*) Stand back, you shall not part us!

*Col.* This is highly theatrical, and were it on a stage, instead of in real life, would be a very effective scene, no doubt. But that man is this woman's husband, quit his side.

*Sybil.* Never while I have life.

*Col.* Then it will be our painful duty to bring you to a sense of the proprieties.

*Dyn.* Do you, then, after what has passed, dare again to show yourself to me?

*Col.* Not as my own solicitor, but as the guardian of this lady's rights. When her interests are satisfactorily adjusted, I will retire.

*Dyn.* And I must perforce submit to your hateful presence?

*Col.* Yes, for in the game we are playing the points we have scored are equal. I am silent because I must be so. Your lips are sealed, for a very powerful reason, too.

*Sybil.* Douglas, think no more of me. I care not tho' all the tongues on earth may wag their worst. Do not let that man defy you so, not even for my sake. Send for an officer and have him arrested as a forger and a thief

*Dyn.* I cannot, my darling, I cannot.

*Col.* I hope your Ladyship now thoroughly appreciates my position and you own. The tables are turned at last. I swore to have revenge. I have waited, and my vengeance will satisfy me.

**Enter River. and Sadie.**

But all this is a waste of time. This lady came from Paris to find her husband, aye, six months ago, but I kept her back. This morning she thought she would insist on a restitution of her conjugal rights, but after seeing him in the embrace of this—good for nothing—

*Dyn.* By Heaven! (*Sybil restrains him.*)

*Col.* She has come to the conclusion that it will be a better arrangement for him to settle a comfortable sum upon her, as he promised her this morning.

*Dyn.* I will, what sum?

*Col.* £50,000!

*Dgn.* I cannot do it.

*Sybil.* But I can, Douglas, and I will.

*Marg.* Oh! if you are so anxious to be free to revel in your forbidden joys, we shall require a payment from you as well.

*Dyn.* This must have an end. It is best, Sybil, to face the worst at once. They will never give us another moment's peace in life. No, woman, I utterly refuse, do your worst!

*Col.* This is final?

*Dyn.* Final!

**Enter Adolph. and Jenkyns.**

*Col.* Ah, then, here is the officer, just in time. Now, Lady Dynevor, make your charge.

*Marg.* That man is my husband. I charge you to place him under arrest for bigamy. You have the warrant, have you not?

*Adolph.* He has! I got it from the magistrate according to instructions.

*Jenkyn.* (*Touches Dyn. upon the shoulder.*) Now, sir.

*Dyn.* And so the worst has come. Good bye, Sybil, my wife, good bye, good bye.

*Sybil.* No, no, Douglas, they cannot take you from me, they shall not part us, I am your wife, and I will go with you (*Clinging to him.*)

*Jenkyns.* Very sorry madam, but that's agin the regulations. He must go alone. (*Taking Dyn. up. She clinging to him and screaming. No. Every character moves excitedly. Dyn. and Jenkyn reach about L. C., and the excitement is at it's climax, when*

**Enter Fritout and Bings.**

*Marg.* (*Turns her back to Fritout immediately and goes down R. C.*)

*Fritout.* Ah! Mes amis, vat is ze raison of zese so much noises? Is Madame Mi Lady Malade not well?

*Col.* No, she is not, for her lover is under arrest for bigamy.

*Fritout.* Bigamy! Who is bigamy?

*Col.* Lord Dynevor.

*Fritout.* Mi Lord Dynevor. Bigamy! Vat, haves he more wives zen since he vas marry to Lady Sybil?

*Col.* No, but he had a wife before.

*Fritout.* Oh, yes; oui, vraitment, certainment; but she vas dead.

*Col.* Oh, no; not at all; she still lives.

*Fritout.* Vraitment! and vere she is?

*Col.* Here. (*Touching Marg. on shoulder.*)

*Fritout.* Ah! faites moi le plaisir. Introduce me.

*Col.* To be sure. M. le Count Leon Bonaparte Fritout—Lady Douglas Dynevor!

*Marg.* (*Bows with her back to Fritout.*)

*Fritout.* She has a very nice back, and I have some memories of a back viz much ze same pattern on it, so I vil even regard her face, if she vil permettez moi. (*Turns Marg. around, much against her will.*) (*Pause.*) Ah, Madame Celestine! why do you depart from your gambling hell in ze Rue Garonne, in Paris? Because ze city vas too hot for you, vas it not? Eh, tell me zat, Madame La Contesse Leon Bonaparte Fritout?

*Omnes.* Countess Fritout!

*River.* Then this is the lady you spoke of at the lunch 6 months ago?

*Fritout.* Yes, zere is no mistake. Zis lady is not ze vife of Lord Dynevor.

*Omnes.* Not his wife!

*Fritout.* No, for she is mine!

*Omnes.* Your wife?

*Fritout.* Yes, ze Lord help me, I am sorry it is so. She is my vife.

*Sybil.* Douglas! Douglas! } (*Embrace.*)

*Douglas.* Sybil! my darling! }

*Sadie.* (*Embraces River. and Bings together.*)

*Col.* (*Raging furiously.*)

*Jenkyn.* Then there is some mistake here?

*Col.* Yes, on the part of this foreign gentleman. He evidently takes this lady for some one else

*Fritout.* No such luck. I vish I did. Lord Dynevor, you remember I vas run away viz suddenness ze day of ze lunch 6 months ago—because I see sometings?

*Dyn.* Yes.

*Fritout.* Vel, ze sometings I see vas zis: My vife! she lead me such lifes of dogs and cats zat I vas terrify of her. Oh, she is a vicked voman, and her cousin, zat vas you vife, was as worse as her.

*Col.* Her cousin—your wife—is dead.

*Fritout.* Non, pas dutout. Her cousin—his wife—is dead.

*Col.* Prove it!

*Fritout.* Avecplaisir! (*Whispers Lord Dynevor.*)

*Dyn.* True, very true. If, Madam, you are the woman whom I made my wife, you will at once remember which of my arms it was I broke on the fourth day after our marriage.

*Marg.* (*After a moment's pause.*) It was the left.

*Dyn.* You are wrong.

*Marg.* (*Eagerly.*) Yes; of course, I remember; it was the right.

*Dyn.* Wife, Riverdale, friends. She is an imposter. I am free, for I never broke an arm at all.

*Marg.* } (*In fierce rage.*)

*Col.* }

*Fritout.* Beside, I vas know her only too well, despite ze wonderful resemblance; *my* vife have a wide streak of white hair on ze top of her head vich her cousin, your vife, had not. (*Tears off her bonnet*), and zere it is! I have been six months in Paris and have discovered all your schemes viz ze Colonel here, and I am come back to blow you up!



*Marg.* 'Tis useless to hold out any longer; I *am* this man's wife, I admit, and I have, at the instigation of Col. Osborne, who promised me a large sum of money, attempted to practice this imposture on you. He had me in his power, or I would never have agreed. My poor cousin, who *was* your wife, my Lord, *did* die, and you followed her to the grave yourself. This man's mad cravings for revenge against you, prompted him to take advantage of the marvellous resemblance between us to play this cheat upon you.

*Sybil.* Then you are my real true husband?

*Dyn.* I am, my darling wife. Thank heaven!

*Col.* Since then, I have been duped by this miserable woman. I will wish you all good night.

*Dyn.* Not quite so fast. Officer, I give this man in charge for forgery.

*Jenkyn.* What is the person's name?

*Dyn.* Sir Breton Osborne.

*Arrest.* Oh, indeed, I've had a warrant in my pocket for his arrest these three days on a similar charge. Colonel Sir Breton Osborne, I shall have to tear you from the bosom of your regiment. Allow me to present you with this pair of steel bracelets. (*Hand-cuffs him.*)

*Adolph.* (*Is slinking off when Bings collars him and throws him down C.*) I can't hear what's going on, but I can see justice is being done, so while you're about it, take poker-back, as well. They're a fine couple.

*Jenkyn.* Come gentlemen.

*Col.* My curses on you all. (*Exit.*)

*Adolph.* (*Is about to say the same with ultradignity.*) *Bings* kicks him and he exits with a howl and jump—*Bings* after him.)

*Sybil.* And what of her?

*Dyn.* Wife, forgive her; it was he who forced her to the crime she had almost committed. I will pardon her; do you the same

*Sybil.* I will; go and try to live a better woman.

*Marg.* Yes, that's very kind and very pretty, but the advice comes a little too late in life for me; so, tho' I can't be Lady Dynevor, I am still Countess Bonaparte Fritout, and I intend to make the most of my position. I came to seek my husband six months ago. He ran away from me then, but I have caught him now, and I mean to stick to him. Come along! (*Siezes Fritout and drags him off. He gesticulating and screaming in comic horror.*)

*River.* Will you ever forgive me, old boy, that I doubted you a whole two hours?

*Sadie.* I have no forgiveness to ask for. I knew you were a true man, every inch of you, all the time; A 1 in all the qualities, in fact good enough to have been an American.

*Sybil.* Then you may hold me to your heart again.

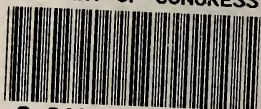
*Dyn.* Yes, my darling wife, happy that our mutual love has sunk e'en deeper in our souls with the agony of the past few hours, agony that shall have it's compensation in a heightened happiness risen out of the ashes of

**"A DEAD PAST."**





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