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A LION AMONG LADIES



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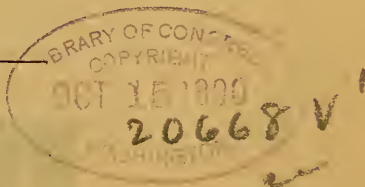
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# LION AMONG LADIES

A Comedy in Two Acts

BY

WILLIAM F. MACY



BOSTON

Walter H. Baker & Co.

1890

PS635  
Z9 M224

CHARACTERS.

SQUIRE MORTON . . . . . *A country gentleman, old school*  
 JACK MORTON . . . . . *His son, a Harvard senior*  
 NED WINSLOW . . . . . *Of Boston, Jack's chum*  
 JOHNNIE . . . . . *A boy*  
 BELLE MORTON . . . . . *Jack's sister*  
 MARION KIMBALL . . . . . *Belle's friend*  
 MISS SARAH MORTON . . . . . *The squire's maiden sister*  
 MARTHA . . . . . *Maid of all work*

LIST OF PROPERTIES.

FIRST ACT.	SECOND ACT.
Fancy Work.	Newspaper.
Book.	Cigars.
Telegram.	Trunk.
Carpet Sweeper.	Matches.
Bundles.	Book.

COSTUMES.— Modern and appropriate.

SCENE.— Room in Squire Morton's House, Greenfield.

Time, present day.

Time in presentation, one hour.



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12-36497



## A LION AMONG LADIES.

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### ACT I.

SCENE. — *Sitting-room in Squire Morton's house. Well furnished in the style of an old country mansion. Piano or bookcase, chairs, table with lamp, etc. Room in some confusion, books, papers, ladies' fancy work, etc., lying about. Fire in grate or fireplace. Large easy-chair on casters U. L. C., before hearth-rug. Room may be decorated with Christmas evergreen if desired.*

(BELLE and MARION discovered at rise of curtain. BELLE at right of table busy with Christmas fancy work. MARION reading in large chair before fire. As curtain rises she throws down book, yawns, and pulls chair round, facing audience.)

MARION. Oh, dear! I do wish Mr. Howells would put a little more life into his heroes. His men are such perfect sticks; and yet one can't help being fascinated with them merely as abstract studies of character, they are so *perfectly* true to life. Bother the men, anyway, I say.

BELLE (*quietly*). Yes, dear. They say that you *do*.

MARION. Do what?

BELLE. Bother the men.

MARION. Belle Morton, what do you mean?

BELLE. Oh, nothing.

MARION. Who ever said that of me?

BELLE. Why, all the fellows in Wellesley have been bothered more or less ever since the day you arrived — a year ago last September — not to mention the hosts of "deah boys" who came all the way from Boston every Saturday afternoon on purpose to see you off on the three o'clock train to Hartford. Why, every one knows how they used to

draw lots to see which one should ride as far as Springfield with you, and then the lucky one had to wait four hours in Springfield for the Albany Express back to Boston, arriving shortly before midnight. If that isn't *bother* enough, I should like to know what is!

MARION. Belle Morton, do you believe in a future state?

BELLE. Nothing beyond the state of matrimony. But (*laughing*), confess now, Marion, that masculine society is absolutely indispensable to your existence.

MARION. I'll not confess anything of the kind. Haven't I been here nearly a week and been perfectly contented?

BELLE. To the first, yes — a week to-morrow. To the second — no! most decidedly. Haven't you wandered aimlessly about the house ever since this horrid storm set in? Haven't you sighed and yawned, and yawned and sighed, alternately, for the past three days, your face wearing all the time a sort of a "what's-this-dull-town-to-me" expression? Don't deny it, I am not so blind as not to see that. But fortunately you won't have to wait but two days longer.

MARION (*carelessly*). Oh, is it Monday the boys are coming?

BELLE. Just as if you didn't know and hadn't been counting the hours for three days past! But it *was* aggravating, wasn't it, that they could not come through to-night. That's the worst of living in such a dull, poky town. The idea of not having any train from Saturday morning till Monday morning! And Jack never will cut recitations if the heavens fall. He must stay till the last gun is fired Saturday afternoon, and then have to wait a day and a half in Cambridge before starting for Greenfield. Oh, it's too mean! Just think of all day to-morrow!

MARION. Well, I guess the boys will be quite contented in Boston. But it would be a little pleasanter for us if they were to be here to-morrow.

BELLE. Oh, you really think so, then? But you do the boys an injustice. I'm sure Jack is anxious to be home over Sunday, especially as I've written him that you are here. But don't please bring him to terms too quickly, Marion. He's awfully susceptible.

MARION. Well, isn't that rather a doubtful compliment? But you needn't fear. I'm awfully out of practice. I think I shall retire to a convent in the spring. I'm weary of the frivolities of this world.

BELLE. O Marion, what a perfectly fascinating little sister of mercy you would make! Just imagine! (*Enthusiastically*). With a robe and hood of *crêpe noire*, just a suspicion of white within the hood and at the throat and wrists. Why, you'd be perfectly irresistible!

MARION. O Belle, don't gush! (*Rises and crosses to table.*) But about the other fellow that Jack is going to bring with him — what sort is he?

BELLE (*crestfallen for a moment, but recovering quickly*). Oh, Mr. Winslow? Well, really, I know no more than you do about him. Only Jack writes that he's a great swell — a regular Boston blue-blood, you know — one of the Mayflower Winslows. The family have lived on Beacon Street for four generations. The original Winslow — not the Mayflower one, but the first wealthy member of the family — made his money in the West India trade, whatever that may be.

MARION. Oh, yes; molasses, and spices, and rum! Principally the latter, I should say, from what I have heard of the old Boston merchants.

BELLE. Why, Marion, how uncharitable! But then, even if it is true, you must remember that such a business was perfectly proper and legitimate in those days, when every one used liquors. In fact it's all right now, if the business is wholesale.

MARION (*sarcastically*). Oh, really.

BELLE (*warmly*). Yes, really! But I know you don't think so, so we won't discuss the matter. We can make our plans for Christmas to-morrow, and fix up a few surprises for the boys. We'll manage to pass the time somehow, though I do wish they could have come through to-night.

(*Door-bell rings. BELLE goes out and returns in a moment followed by JOHNNIE, who is covered with snow, blowing his fingers and stamping his feet.*)

BELLE (*outside*). Come in, Johnnie, and get warm. (*Enters followed by JOHNNIE.*) What a terrible storm! Any news down town, Johnnie?

JOHNNIE (*slowly pulling off mittens, unbuttoning his coat, and warming himself at fire*). No, Miss Belle; I don't hear nothin' partic'lar. The mill's shet down till after Christmas, an' the minister's wife's sick, an' Mr. Smith's gone to Pittsfield on a lawsuit, an' the Boston drummer's here, an'

Dr. Perkins's horse's kicked the bucket, an' — I guess that's all. (*Breathless.*)

BELLE } (*who have been listening raptly*). Oh!  
MARION }

JOHNNIE (*slowly going through his pockets*). I got a telegraph for you somewheres, Miss Belle. Find it'n a minute. It come this mornin', but Joe Carter, the telegraph operator, he was off up river, gunnin', an' his wife, she took the message off the ticker, but she didn't like to send it up till Joe come back and read it, an' he didn't get back till most dark, so I jest come up with it. Hope 'taint nothin' important. Now where'n thunder'd I put that? (*All this time going through pockets. At last takes off hat for first time and finds message inside.*) Oh, here it is. (*Hands message to BELLE, who has been waiting impatiently and helping him go through his pockets.*)

BELLE. A telegram! Why, it must be from Jack! What can have happened? (*Opens hurriedly and reads.*) "To Henry Morton, Esq., Greenfield, Mass. Special train on for the holiday travel. Leave Boston at two o'clock. Arrive in Greenfield at 7.30. (Signed) Jack." (*Looks at watch.*) Why it's quarter past seven now! They'll be here in fifteen minutes! And father and aunt both over at the church decorating. Oh dear, Marion, what shall we do? (*Distracted.*)

MARION (*perfectly cool, to Johnnie, who has been preparing to go*). Young man, skip as fast as your legs can carry you over to the Unitarian Church and tell Squire Morton and his sister to come home quick — Jack is coming at half-past seven! Do you hear?

JOHNNIE. Yes, marm. (*Aside, going.*) Jerusalem crickets, ain't she a jim-dandy! (*Exit.*)

MARION. Now, Belle, what do you want done? Of course they'll be starved. You run down and get something ready for the inner man, and I'll slick up here a little. Hurry now!

BELLE. O Marion, you are an angel! You always know just what to do. (*Exit.*)

MARION (*hastily picking up papers, etc., and putting room to rights*). Well, it's fortunate somebody knows just what to do where she is. Won't her poor husband have to wait on her? Well, there's no man living good enough for her! That is, since she can't marry her own brother. He's good enough for any woman on earth. I wasn't altogether joking when I spoke about retiring to a convent. I shall certainly



do something desperate if Jack doesn't declare himself something within the next week. Susceptible, is he? Oh, yes, very; but awfully slow about coming to the point. (*Ring.*) Now, who can that be? (*Goes toward door, then stops and thinks a moment.*) Suppose it should be the boys. It must be about time for them.

(*Enter MARTHA.*)

MARTHA. O Miss Marion, a great tall gent, with a fur coat on, as wants to see Squire Morton. I told him Squire Morton was out, and then he wanted to see *Miss* Morton, an' when he found *she* was out, he wanted to see Miss *Belle* Morton, an' he's waitin' out in the hall.

MARION (*aside*). Who can it be? Show the gentleman in, Martha, and go tell Miss Belle.

MARTHA. Yes, ma'am. (*Exit.*)

MARION (*down L. C.*). A strange gentleman! It can't be that anything has happened to Jack. (*Enter NED, followed by MARTHA. He is clad in heavy ulster, sealskin cap and gloves.*)

NED. A thousand pardons! Miss Morton, of course. I shall be under the painful necessity of introducing myself. I am Mr. Winslow, your brother's chum. Jack is delayed, unfortunately. (*Commences to remove gloves.*)

MARION. Oh, yes! You are indeed welcome, Mr. Winslow. (*Gives hand; aside, crossing to R.*) So that's a Boston blue-blood. Save the mark!

NED. By Jove! she's a stunner, but she doesn't look a bit like Jack. (*Crosses to L.*)

MARION. Take Mr. Winslow's coat and hat, Martha. Ah, do be seated, Mr. Winslow. (*Aside.*) Suppose I don't tell him who I am for a few minutes. It will be a great lark, and I am just dying for excitement of some kind. (*Aloud.*) Jack is delayed, you say? How, pray?

NED (*taking easy-chair*). Yes; it was too bad, poor fellow, though I could not help laughing. You see we played whist all the way out with two Boston drummers. They got off at Miller's Falls, two stations below, you know; and, as we were out of cigars, Jack stopped off to get some at the news stand in the station. Well, he got off on the left-hand side and had to cross the track. And what do you think, just as he came out the door, contrary to all the established

laws of railroads all over the world, a freight train of about a hundred cars, more or less, came puffing into the station.

MARION (*alarmed*). Oh, he wasn't hurt?

NED. Oh, no. Set your mind at rest on that point; but while he stood there waiting for the freight to pass through, our train started up, and the last I saw of poor Jack he was running up the platform, waving his hands, and gesticulating wildly to the conductor of our train to stop. I could just see his head over the dump cars. Poor fellow, I pitied him; but it was funny, ha, ha, ha!

MARION. And Miller's Falls is ten miles from here, and no train till Monday. But of course he will find some one to drive him over. (*Aside.*) I'll never forgive him if he doesn't.

NED. Oh, yes, he'll be here to-night sure, if he moves heaven and earth to do it. He's been wild for the last three days, since you wrote that your friend Miss Kimball was to be here. Why, he was so impatient and distracted coming up that he trumped my ace no less than four times, and he made a *point* of returning his opponents' lead. Those drummers must have thought he was boozy!

MARION. Was what?

NED. Boozy — intoxicated, you know. But of course he wasn't. Jack's a perfect model. He never drinks — (*aside*) behind the bar.

MARION. I'm very glad to hear it. I don't approve of young men drinking. (*Aside.*) He's a sensible fellow — he likes Jack.

NED. But I say, Miss Morton, I'm awfully anxious to see this Miss Kimball who has made such an impression on your brother. She must be a stunner, for the Cambridge girls consider him a perfect Gibraltar.

MARION (*aside*). What fun! (*Aloud.*) Oh, she is, I assure you, a perfect stunner, as you call it, and as good as she is beautiful! (*Aside.*) What will he think of me when he finds it out?

NED. I know it. Why, it was a standing joke among the fellows the way he was attached to his sister at Wellesley. Used to go up there and see you pretty often last fall, didn't he? ha, ha! Every fellow in our set has wondered what she looked like for the past year.

MARION. Oh, have they? (*Aside.*) Delightful news for a modest retiring young woman — "that's me."

NED. Yes, and from all we can learn she seems, as the fellows say, to be leading him a devil of a dance!

MARION (*rising indignantly*). Sir!

NED. Oh, I beg pardon—a common expression, you know. Quotation marks always excuse profanity. (*Aside*.) She's a regular little Puritan, though she doesn't look it.

MARION (*aside*). "I must dissemble!" as they say on the stage. (*Aloud*.) Oh, I didn't mind the expression so much, but remember, you are speaking of my brother and my dearest friend.

NED. A thousand pardons, of course, if I have offended you. I meant no harm. But between you and me and the andirons, isn't it about so? Isn't she?

MARION. What?

NED. Why, leading him a dance.

MARION. Oh! go the whole length of the expression. Yes, undoubtedly, a—of a dance (*with an expressive pause and gesture*).

NED (*aside*). Jove, but she's a cute one, a star of the first magnitude, but—not exactly my style. (*Aloud*.) I'm glad you agree with me. We all thought so at college. But I tell you, my principal motive in accepting Jack's invitation to spend the holidays with him was to make the acquaintance of his fair charmer.

MARION. Oh, indeed! Suppose I should tell her that?

NED. Oh, but you wouldn't. However, I don't know as I should care. She must be rather heartless, to say the least, to keep Jack walking on eggshells the way she has the past six months.

MARION. You think so?

NED. I know it. Still, I shall of course make myself agreeable to her, and consider if it be worth my while to cut Jack out.

MARION (*aside*). The conceit of the man! (*Aloud*.) Oh, you wouldn't be so hard on poor Jack, if he cares so much for her as you think.

NED. Wouldn't I, though? You don't know me. And I have no doubt she will be agreeable. From all I hear she must be an incorrigible flirt.

MARION. Oh, yes, she is! (*Aside*.) Isn't he getting himself into an awful pickle? But where can Belle be all this time? (*Aloud*.) But I'll go and call her, Mr. Winslow, and present her; then you can judge for yourself.

Perhaps you would like to go to your room, though. It's directly opposite the head of the stairs here. (*Opens door R.*) The lamps are all lit.

(*Exit NED.*)

MARION (*falling into large chair and laughing immoderately*). Oh, oh, oh! Isn't this rich? And won't he be mad when he knows what he's done? Oh, oh! Mr. Winslow! (*Bursting out into fresh peals of laughter. Loud knock outside C.*) Come in. (*Enter JOHNNIE.*)

JOHNNIE. Please, miss, the squire, he's done gone down street in the sleigh to buy Christmas presents, an' his sister with him. (*Aside R.*) Jerusalem, look at them eyes!

MARION. Oh dear, what shall we do now? (*Thinks a moment. Suddenly.*) Why not? The squire and his sister won't be home for an hour yet, and of course Jack won't be here before ten o'clock at the earliest. Wouldn't it be a racket? If Belle will only consent. (*Rushes out left, JOHNNIE staring after her.*)

JOHNNIE. Well, I guess she's "got 'em." (*Crosses to easy-chair.*) Now I wonder where Marthy is. I hain't seen her for three days. In fact, I don't see her more'n once a week anyhow since she come to work at the squire's. (*Enter MARTHA L., back to audience, pulling carpet-sweeper in after her. Sings and runs carpet-sweeper rapidly about the room, not seeing JOHNNIE, who conceals himself behind easy-chair and keeps it between himself and MARTHA until discovered. MARTHA, singing as she sweeps, gradually works round toward fireplace, finally pushing sweeper behind chair. JOHNNIE stands up sheepishly.*)

MARTHA. Well, I've swep' all kinds of stuff off these floors since these ere gals came, but I hain't struck no sich rubbish as this till now.

JOHNNIE. Now, Marthy, you don't mean that. You know you don't.

MARTHA. Don't I? Who told you? You know too much!

JOHNNIE. Now, Marthy, don't be too hard on your best feller. You know you love me. (*Starts forward with the intention of embracing her, when she deftly pushes sweeper in front of him, nearly throwing him headlong.*)

MARTHA. Do I? Where'd you get so much information all of a sudden?



JOHNNIE. Now, Marthy, I call that darned mean. What have I done?

MARTHA. What haven't you done, you better say. Didn't I see you a-walking up from the post-office with Sue Barker last night when I went down after the squire's mail?

JOHNNIE. The squire's mail? Oh, yes, I was the male you was down street after, an' you know it.

MARTHA (*sarcastically*). Oh, ain't you sharp? You better look out this slippery weather. If you should fall down, you'd cut yourself bad!

JOHNNIE. Well, I wouldn't crack the paving-stone; that's one consolation. You'd break the glass in every house within a mile if you should fall down, you great fatty.

MARTHA (*indignantly*). Fatty, indeed! You jist get out o' here quick, an' don't let me see your face in this house again. You great, long-legged, over-grown calf, you!

JOHNNIE (*going*). Well, I wouldn't be your shape for all o' Squire Morton's money, so there! I hope you'll live and die an old maid, so there! (*At door c.*) And I'm going right over to Sue Barker's to pop the question, so there! (*Exit.*)

MARTHA (*throws down sweeper, drops into chair, and bursts into a flood of tears*). I don't care, now; hateful old thing! (*Sobs violently. After a pause door opens slowly and JOHNNIE peeps in; seeing MARTHA, steps inside quietly, closes door, then advances on tiptoe towards her. Stops a moment, looking at her.*)

JOHNNIE (*faintly*). Marthy.

MARTHA (*looking up dubiously*). Well, what do you want?

JOHNNIE. Say, Marthy, do you feel very bad? I didn't mean nothing, an' I wouldn't marry that old fool of a Sue Barker if she was the last woman on earth. I couldn't help walkin' up with her last night. She come right up alongside o' me, an' says "Good-evenin'," and I couldn't get rid of her nohow. (*Puts arm round her.*)

MARTHA (*smiling through her tears*). Really, Johnnie? (*Rises.*)

JOHNNIE. True's I live. Hope to die. Cross my breath. (*Doing so.*)

MARTHA. Oh, Johnnie! (*Falls into his arms.*)

JOHNNIE. Oh, Marthy! (*Holds her tightly.*)

MARTHA. Say, Johnnie, it's almost worth while gitting mad jes' for the fun of makin' up, ain't it?

JOHNNIE. You bet. (*Sings.*) "An' Johnnie placed his arm round his Martha's waist so slim, and Johnnie kissed Martha" (*kissing her behind his hat*), "and Martha kissed him." (*They both osculate fervently behind hat.*) M-m-m-m m-m!

BELLE (*outside R., calling off*). Hurry up, Marion! (JOHNNIE and MARTHA scatter. JOHNNIE runs out; MARTHA snatches up sweeper and works it vigorously. Enter BELLE and MARION.)

BELLE. What was that noise, Martha?

MARTHA. I jest let the dog out, ma'am, that's all. (*Aside.*) Came pretty near letting the cat out, too.

BELLE. Oh, all right. You may go now, Martha. (*Exit MARTHA, L.*)

MARION. Now keep your courage up and see me through, won't you, there's a dear. We can explain it all afterwards, and it will be such fun!

BELLE. Oh, but Aunt Sarah will be wild! (*Sits before fire.*)

MARION (*sits at table*). Nonsense! She need never — (*Noise of coming down stairs, R.*) Sh! Here he comes. (*Enter NED, R.*)

NED. Ah, Miss Morton, still here, I see. (*Seeing BELLE.*) I beg pardon.

MARION (*rising*). Miss Kimball, Mr. Winslow, Jack's chum.

BELLE (*courtesying low; then extending her hand*). Mr. Winslow.

NED (*taking her hand*). Miss Kimball, I am most happy. I assure you I have looked forward to this meeting. Miss Morton's brother has told me so much about you, you know. (*Aside.*) And by all that's holy I don't blame him, either. I'm smitten myself. (*Sits in easy-chair, C., BELLE sitting L., MARION R.*)

MARION (*aside*). What fun! If Belle only doesn't get rattled. (*Aloud.*) Yes, and of course Miss Kimball and I have heard lots about you. One thing — that you were always getting into scrapes of one kind and another.

NED (*confidently*). Oh, that was years ago. I've outgrown that. I used to fall into all sorts of ridiculous blunders, not infrequently getting myself seriously disliked thereby. But that was when I was young. I never do those things now.

MARION (*meaningly*). Oh!

NED (*aside*). She looks as if she didn't believe it.

BELLE. Seems to me you two became very well acquainted in a short time. How did you manage it?

NED. Oh, very simply. You see, I had pictured in my mind just how Miss Morton would look, and I should have recognized her in Australia had I chanced to meet her there. Then Jack always carried a cabinet photograph of her in his inside coat pocket on the left side. I've seen him look at it many a time at night when he thought I was asleep. I always supposed it must be his girl. Fellows are not usually so sentimental about their sisters. (*During NED's speech, BELLE and MARION exchange glances, wink when NED isn't looking, etc.*)

MARION (*aside, restraining her laughter with difficulty*). Oh, I can't stand this any longer. I must go somewhere and laugh. (*Aloud.*) If you young people will excuse me I will go down and see if Mr. Winslow's dinner is ready. (*Crosses behind NED.*) He must be nearly starved.

NED (*rising*). Well, come to think of it, I believe I am, though it hadn't occurred to me before. (*Crosses to R. Aside.*) That girl's got a bad eye. She has a look as if she were a mind-reader and found the result of her perusal very amusing.

MARION (*at door, L.*). Well, be good children, and don't say harsh things about your friends. (*Exit, laughing aside.*)

NED (*sits at R. of table. After a pause*). Do you ever have presentiments, Miss Kimball?

BELLE. Why, I don't know; why?

NED. Oh, nothing. Only I am always having presentiments, and always being disappointed, agreeably or otherwise, in them. Do you know, I always have an idea that I shall like or dislike a person before I meet them, and — well, I'm almost always wrong.

BELLE. How funny!

NED. Yes, isn't it? Now, for instance, without ever having seen either you or Miss Morton, I had made up my mind that I should like her immensely, and — and — (*confused.*)

BELLE. Well, Mr. Winslow, go on.

NED. Well, you see, why — (*Aside.*) Hang it, I've a presentiment now that I'm making a fool of myself! (*Aloud.*) Why, that (*laughing*), I shouldn't like you, you know.

BELLE. Oh, yes; and is this an exception to your rule concerning presentiments?

NED (*aside*). Well, if this isn't a great mess I'm getting myself into. Now, I've got to tell the girl that I like her and don't like her friend. They probably won't speak to me tomorrow. (*Aloud.*) Well, no; not exactly.

BELLE. Oh! then I am to understand that you approve of me?

NED (*forgetting himself*). Oh, immensely.

BELLE. Thank you. And that you don't like Miss Morton?

NED (*aside*). The deuce! It's come now. How shall I get out of it. (*Aloud.*) No, not that, but not immensely, you know. The fact is, Miss Kimball, I have a kind of a feeling all the time that my chum's sister is quizzing me, and then laughing at me behind my back.

BELLE. Oh, you misjudge her, I'm sure. Miss Morton is the sweetest girl in the world, I assure you. (*Aside.*) Perhaps he'll remember that when he comes out of it.

(*Noise outside back, stamping of feet, and noise of some one coming through hall. Enter C., suddenly, JACK, clad in heavy overcoat, etc.*)

BELLE. Jack, darling! (*Rushes to him and throws herself into his arms, while NED stands looking dazed.*)

JACK. Well, my pet (*kisses her*), better late than never. (*Looks at NED, who stands still staring.*) What's the matter, Ned?

NED (*suddenly recalling himself*). Oh, nothing! (*Aside.*) Well, that knocks me out. I didn't know they had got so far along as that. (*Sighs.*) Lucky dog! On the whole, I've changed my mind about cutting him out.

BELLE (*who has been taking JACK's things as he removes them, and putting them on chair*). But how did you get up from Miller's Falls? We did not expect you till after ten.

JACK. Oh, I had a streak of luck to compensate for my hard luck in getting left, I suppose. I caught a ride on the up freight due in Greenfield at nine o'clock; had to ride in the caboose all the way and sat on an old soap-box, surrounded by a heterogeneous collection of rubber boots, lunch pails, oil suits, and kerosene lanterns. I was half frozen and nearly starved besides. One of the freight hands kindly offered me a doughnut out of his lunch pail. It was as big round as the crown of my hat and ten times as tough. I tackled it, but it



threw me on the third round and I gave it up. I'm going to write it up for the *Crimson* when I get back to college — "Downed by a Doughnut ; or, the Freight Hand's Revenge!" How would that sound? However, I got here just the — a — nevertheless, and I suppose I ought to be thankful for that. But where are father and aunt?

BELLE (*nervously*). Oh, they're down street shopping. (*To both.*) But do come out into the dining-room and get something to eat, and see — the — (*looking sidewise at NED*), rest of the family.

NED (*aside*). The rest of the family. Well, that means business, most assuredly.

JACK. Well, I suppose I may go to my room first. I'll be with you in a moment. Come up, Ned?

NED. Oh, cert. (*Both exit, R.*)

BELLE. Won't Aunt Sarah give it to me if she finds it out! I wonder what Marion went off for. Guess I'll go see. (*Exit.*)

(*Enter C., with considerable noise and stamping, etc., the SQUIRE and MISS SARAH, both loaded with parcels which they dump anywhere.*)

SARAH (*throwing off wraps*). For the land's sake, Henry, I wonder if it's going to storm till Christmas.

SQUIRE MORTON. I hope not, I'm sure, Sarah. I'm afraid now that the roads will be blocked before Monday, and that Jack will be delayed. It will be too bad if he is, for I want the young folks to have a pleasant week, and as sure's my name is Henry Morton, I'm not going to spare any expense to make it so for 'em. Bless my soul, but won't we give 'em a jolly time, eh, Sarah? We'll show 'em that there's some fun to be had in Greenfield if 'tis way up in the Berkshires. Ha! ha! ha! (*Rubbing his hands.*)

SARAH. Oh, you dear old boy, you're always thinking about the young people. (*Sighs.*) Well, I was young once myself. But where can the girls be? (*Noise of laughter outside, R. Enter JACK followed by NED.*)

JACK. Father!

SQUIRE M. What, Jack? Why, how's this? (*They embrace after the manner of men.*)

JACK (*turning to SARAH*). And, Aunt, how are you? (*Embraces and kisses her on the cheek; turning.*) Aunt, allow me to introduce my chum, Mr. Winslow of Boston.

(SARAH *courtesies low*; NED *bows in his best style*.) Father my friend, Ned Winslow, of whom I wrote you.

SQUIRE M. Mr. Winslow, you are welcome to my house. Everything it contains is at your disposal for the next week.

NED. Thank you, sir, most heartily. (*Aside*.) The old boy's a trump, but Jack's got a mortgage on the best property in the house — that's Miss Marion.

SQUIRE M. Ahem! I met a Winslow at Washington when I was in the Senate in '69. He was senator from the Sixth Congressional District.

NED. He was my grandfather, sir.

SQUIRE M. Indeed! A gentleman, every inch of him.

JACK. Well, I had rather hard luck getting here, father. I'll tell you about it after we get something to eat. We are starving! Aren't we, Ned?

(*Enter MARION and BELLE, L.*)

MARION (*to JACK, who stands half turned from her*). Why, Jack!

JACK (*turns and crosses quickly, and seizes both her hands; they come down C.*). This is a pleasure. I had hardly dared ask for you yet, fearing you might not be here.

NED (*staring again; aside*). Well, if that isn't the queerest way for a man to greet his own sister that I ever saw! By Jove, I'm stumped!

SQUIRE M.—Well, come, let's go down and give the young gentlemen something to eat. Come, Sarah, we'll go down and see them through the crisis, ha! ha! ha! Will you come down, girls?

MARION. No, thanks, we'll wait. (*Exit L. all but MARION and BELLE, who drop into chairs and laugh hysterically.*)

CURTAIN.

## ACT II.

SCENE. — *The same.*

*The SQUIRE, JACK, and NED discovered smoking cigars. The SQUIRE, in dressing-gown, in chair at table, spectacles on, reading newspaper. NED in large chair at fire, JACK in chair L. As curtain rises SQUIRE lets paper fall into his lap, pushes spectacles up on to his forehead, blows a cloud of smoke, watches it curl upward, looks at cigar, then —*

SQUIRE M. Pretty good weed that, Jack, my boy ; a trifle dry, that's all. (*Puff, puff.*) After all what is there like a good cigar after dinner ? It's the prayer after the sermon, the farce after the tragedy. The sunrise after the night ; or the morning snooze after a good night's rest. There's nothing like it, boys ; nothing. I pity the man who doesn't smoke.

NED. Are you a connoisseur in tobacco, Squire Morton ?

SQUIRE M. I was once, my boy. I used to pride myself on my cigars. When I was in the Senate in '69, they used to call me "Old Havana-filled."

JACK. And yet a few years after that you gave me about the only licking I ever had in my life when you caught me smoking sweet-fern cigaretttes out behind the barn one Sunday morning.

SQUIRE M. Yes, and you deserved it, too, I'll warrant, though I've forgotten all about it. But do you know, Jack, your dear Aunt Sarah is just as much of a crank on the subject of tobacco smoke now as ever. You remember how she used to kick about my smoking ?

JACK. Don't I, though ! But it never made much difference to you, that I could see. I remember that morning you licked me for smoking, she laughed at me when you were taking me up stairs. That was the hardest part of it. Ugh ! "Her bright smile haunts me still !"

SQUIRE M. (*laughing*). Well, well, my boy, she meant well, and does now, but the women can't understand these things. They can't be expected to, bless their dear souls !

NED. Amen !

SQUIRE M. To what, Winslow ?

NED. "Bless their dear souls."

JACK. That's good, from a confirmed old bachelor.

NED. That's just the point, Jack. I like 'em all. I admire woman in the abstract; mere femininity exerts such a power over me that I've never yet been able to disassociate any particular specimen of the genus from the order as a whole long enough to concentrate my attention upon her and realize the value of her specific merits.

SQUIRE M. Young man, you're in a bad way!

NED. I know it, squire, but what can a fellow do?

SQUIRE M. Well, quit smoking, and drink lots of milk.

NED. Why, just now you were singing the praises of the weed. Now you're on another tack.

SQUIRE M. Oh, I meant for men.

NED (*blankly*). Oh!

SQUIRE M. (*chuckling, aside*). One on Winslow.

(*Enter SARAH.*)

SARAH. Tobacco smoke And the young ladies coming down again in five minutes! Go along up into the smoking-room every one of you! What do you think we have a smoking-room for? Come, hurry up! (*Bustles round, opens door into hall and also door R. Men exeunt, laughing, R.*) Oh, these men! these men! (*Ring outside.*) Oh, that must be Jack's trunk. (*Goes to door L., calling off*) Martha! (*Pause; louder.*) Martha!

MARTHA (*outside*). Yes, ma'am, I'm a-comin'. (*Enters.*)

SARAH. Answer the doorbell, Martha. It's probably the man with the trunk. Tell him to take it right upstairs. (*Exit L.*)

MARTHA. Oh, I'll bet it's Johnnie. (*Runs out c. After a moment re-enters followed by JOHN, carrying trunk on left shoulder. Comes down R. C.; MARTHA, L. C.*)

JOHNNIE. I brought this 'ere trunk up on purpose to see you again, Marthy. Jest skip out in the hall, an' when I come down we'll go on from where them girls interrupted us before.

MARTHA (*giggles*). All right, Johnnie. Hurry up. (*Goes toward door to open it for him; as he reaches door, the trunk concealing his head.*)

JOHNNIE. Give us jes' one now, Marthy, before I go up. Something might happen before I come down again, you know — an earthquake or something. (*Puts right arm round her neck.*)



MARTHA. Oh, go 'long, silly! (*They osculate loudly behind trunk, once, twice, thrice. Enter SARAH L. Sees them, screams, commences to faint, then changes her mind and gets mad.*)

SARAH. Young man, there's the door. (*Points c.*)

JOHNNIE (*starting for it with trunk*). Oh, do you want it left out there?

SARAH. No! no! no! up there! (*Pointing r.; JOHNNIE goes out r.; SARAH — laughing, aside, in spite of her effort to appear dignified — to MARTHA, who has been standing sheepishly all the time, swinging on her heel.*) Martha, you may return to the kitchen. (*Aside, going.*) Well, I was young once myself. (*Exit L.*)

(*MARTHA crosses to door L., is about going out, turns when JOHNNIE reappears at door R.*)

MARTHA. Now you see what you've done.

JOHNNIE. 'Twan't me; 'twas you.

MARTHA. Where was you all the time?

JOHNNIE. Humph! Well, I wa'n't far off, was I, Marthy? Gimme jest one more, and then I'll go; but I'll see you after meetin' to-morrow night. (*They are about to kiss again when SARAH calls outside: "Martha!"*)

MARTHA (*turning suddenly and fleeing out door R.*). Yes, ma'am! (*Leaving JOHN standing in position as if about to kiss.*)

JOHNNIE (*turning toward audience*). There's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip. Well. (*Going off c., shaking his head dubiously.*) They're slippery critters, these women.

(*Enter BELLE and MARION L., arms about each other.*)

MARION. Well, I never saw any one look so scared in my life as you did when those fellows were eating their supper. Why, I thought you were going to faint once. (*Sits in easy-chair.*)

BELLE. Well, I did come awfully near it. But say, how are you going to get out of this? (*Goes to window and looks out.*)

MARION. Well, the same way we got in, I guess — fall out. But I hadn't thought much about it yet.

BELLE. Did you see him staring at us while they were eating their supper? (*Crosses L., and sits on rug at MARION'S feet. Stares into fire absently.*)

MARION. Who's him? There are several "hims" in the house now, you know.

BELLE. Why, Mr. Winslow, of course. He looked as if he would like to eat you that time he looked up and caught you laughing at him when he was eating his pie.

MARION. Imagine a Boston blue-blood eating pie! Shades of the departed Winslows, Mayflower and West India, protest!

BELLE. Well, I'm sure Aunt Sarah's mince pies are good enough for any one. But, joking aside, Marion, what will he think of us when he finds it out?

MARION. He — who?

BELLE. Why, Mr. Winslow, of course.

MARION. Well, what do you care what he thinks?

BELLE. Why, of course I care. We may forfeit his respect entirely.

MARION. Oh! (*Aside.*) It's evident that the B. B. B. has made an impression. Well, it won't do to let him know it.

BELLE. Don't you see that you've got us into an awfully awkward position by your recklessness? 'Twas great fun at first, but it's getting serious.

MARION (*aside*). Decidedly!

BELLE. Of course Mr. Winslow is too much of a gentleman to show that he is hurt by our actions, but we will certainly sink in his estimation when he knows the whole truth.

MARION. Seems to me you're awfully anxious to shine before the blue-blood. I never knew you to worry about any man's opinion before. (*Rises and crosses to R.*)

BELLE. Why, Marion, you know better. What has come over you? (*Prepares to weep.*)

MARION (*returning to her quickly and putting arm about her*). Why, you dear child, of course you know I didn't mean anything. Haven't you got used to me yet? There, dearest, weep no more. I'll make a clean confession to the dear boy at the first opportunity. (*Aside.*) It's a bad case, and so sudden!

BELLE. Of course it is silly of me, Marion, but you know I haven't the *sang-froid* that you have in these matters.

MARION (*aside*). Evidently not. (*Aloud.*) Well, dear, I'm going to prepare aunty so that we can avoid a scene if anything should happen. (*Exit L.*)

BELLE (*crosses to easy-chair, turns it facing fire, sinks*

*into it, and sits gazing at the fire*). What a fool I am! Why, the man hasn't been in the house but two hours. But when he looked up at me after he saw Marion laughing at him, there was such a reproachful look on his face that I just pitied him from the bottom of my heart. Poor fellow! He's so homely that he's positively handsome! (*Gazes into fire, back turned from R.*)

(*Enter NED, R., chewing a new cigar not lit; not seeing BELLE.*)

NED (*aside*). Jack and his dear old dad are reminiscing for all they're worth. A model father and a model son! Told 'em I'd be back in a minute. (*Crosses and leans on table.*) By Jove, I had to get off somewhere and collect my scattered senses a little. This is great business for me to come up here with Jack, and go and get smitten on his girl at first sight. Oh, but the way she looked at me when I was eating that pie! She seemed to be sort of pitying me, and she looked awfully embarrassed, too, every time I caught her eye. (*Suddenly.*) Well, it's no use, Winslow, this won't do! You'll have to get out of here Monday morning. Make some sort of an excuse, rheumatism, or something. I'll forget her soon enough when I get back to Boston — that is, I'll try to. (*BELLE coughs slightly and NED starts and looks over toward her.*) By Jove! There she is now! What a picture! It seems a pity to disturb it. (*Aloud, crossing to L.*) Ah — I beg pardon, Miss Kimball. (*BELLE starts at sound of his voice.*) Been sitting here some time thinking; didn't notice you till I heard you cough.

BELLE. A penny for your thoughts, Mr. Winslow. The subject must have been an important one, for you've let your cigar go out.

NED. Why, no! The fact is it's a new one, and I forgot to light it at all.

BELLE. Oh, let me light it for you. I often light papa's. (*Goes to mantel for a match.*)

NED (*aside*). Ye gods! But Jack is a lucky dog! (*Aloud.*) But don't you object to the smoke, Miss Kimball?

BELLE. Oh, no! I rather like the odor of a good cigar. (*Strikes match.*)

NED (*aside*). Thank Heaven they're fifteen-centers!

(BELLE comes down with lighted match, and NED stands at left of table while she holds it and lights his cigar, then turns and throws match into the fireplace.)

NED (*aside*). By Jove, I can't stand this! It's criminal for me to stay here.

BELLE. Smoke as much as you like, Mr. Winslow, as long as Aunt Sarah doesn't catch you. We girls like it. (*Sits L.*)

NED (*sits R.*). That is, you like the odor of the smoke and like to watch a man smoking. (*Aside.*) That is, Jack. (*Aloud.*) But do you approve of it as a habit?

BELLE. Well, no! not altogether. Still, if it's any comfort to a fellow, why, I see no harm in it.

NED. My views exactly, Miss Kimball. (*Aside.*) Jack is a lucky dog, and no mistake.

BELLE (*aside*). Miss Kimball! Oh, I do wish we hadn't done it. I've a great mind to tell him myself, but no: Marion got us into it, now she'll have to get us out.

SARAH (*outside L., calling off*). All right, Marion, I'll remember.

BELLE (*quickly*). Oh, here comes Aunt Sarah. Put that cigar out of sight quick.

(*Both blow smoke away and fan with their hands to clear the air.* NED runs out R. BELLE stands at table. Enter SARAH.)

SARAH (*sniffing the air*). Have the men been in here smoking again? I suppose those boys will completely demoralize Henry within the next week! And just as I've got him thoroughly trained, too! Oh, these men! these men!

BELLE (*mournfully*). I agree with you, aunty.

SARAH (*sharply*). What do you know about them — a chit of a girl like you? A pretty mess you and that scatter-brained girl have got yourselves into, haven't you? (*Softening.*) Well, well, boys will be boys, and girls will be girls, I s'pose, to the end of time. (*Aside.*) And I was young once myself.

BELLE. Well, aunty, you know we didn't think when we commenced, but of course we're awfully sorry, and Marion's going to explain it all to him at the first opportunity.

SARAH. Easy enough to explain, but there's no knowing what he'll think of you. (*Aside.*) He isn't worth worrying about if he thinks any the less of them for it. (*Aloud.*) But



come, dear, and see the Christmas present your papa and I bought for Jack. (*Exit both L. Enter MARION from hall.*)

MARION (*shivering*). Bo'oh! It's snowing harder than ever. I don't believe we'll get out of the house before Monday at the earliest. (*Takes large chair at fireplace.*) There's one thing I like about this household, in contradistinction to most country households. They're never in any hurry about going to bed. Here it is, nearly eleven o'clock, and the men are all up in the smoking-room over their cigars; Belle and Aunt Sarah are looking over Christmas presents; and I — well, I'm wondering where Jack is keeping himself all this time. I never knew him to stay away from me so long when he had a chance to see me. (*Takes up book from table and reads. Enter JACK, R.*)

JACK (*sees her. Comes down R. Aside*). Now or never! I've been trying for eighteen months to make up my mind to it, but somehow I couldn't do it. I've thought sometimes of getting Winslow to help me out, but I'm afraid 'twould be another Priscilla and John Alden racket. (*Crosses to MARION; leaning over her chair. Aloud.*) What are you reading, Marion?

MARION (*starts slightly*). Howells, as usual. "A Chance Acquaintance" this time. And I've read over about a hundred and fifty pages waiting for the fellow to propose. I've about given up all hope that he'll ever do it. (*Aside.*) That ought to fetch him if anything will.

JACK (*aside*). My case exactly! (*Aloud.*) Well, you know it's not always so easy as one might at first suppose. A fellow's not always sure of his ground, you know.

MARION. Some men want to be sure of the earth! — Ah, that is, according to Howells.

JACK (*aside*). By Jove, that sounds pointed. (*Aloud.*) But, confound it, a fellow who's never been there naturally feels a little awkward when the crisis comes.

MARION. But when a girl's just dying for him to speak and all ready to fly into his arms — ah — as this girl in the book is. (*Aside.*) Oh, I really believe he's going to. (*Rises, dropping book in chair.*)

JACK. Oh, dash the book! I beg pardon; but if the girl wouldn't always look so blamed pretty just as the fellow's going to speak, it wouldn't be so hard!

MARION (*facing audience; aside*). Oh, he is! he is!

JACK (*starting forward as she turns toward him*). Marion! (*Opens his arms.*)

MARION. Jack! (*Falls into his arms, turning up her face. He kisses her on the lips. Enter R., NED.*)

NED (*aside*). Well, my eccentric chum has concluded to embrace his sister at last. (*Crosses behind them to L.*) Ahem! Beg pardon! (*Both start suddenly.*)

JACK. Oh, it's only Ned. (*To NED.*) I've done it, old man! Congratulate me.

NED (*staring puzzled.*) Eh?

(*Enter BELLE L.*)

BELLE. At last! Oh, Marion! (*Kisses her, then kisses JACK, at which NED looks mournful.*)

NED (*aside*). Well, I'll be hanged if I can see through this circus! Has the man been accepted by his own sister?

(*Enter R., SQUIRE M.; L., AUNT SARAH. Both grasp situation.*)

SQUIRE M. Well, the expected has happened, eh? (*Rubbing his hands; goes to MARION, places a hand on each cheek, and kisses her on the mouth. Pats JACK approvingly on the shoulder, and crosses to C.*)

SARAH (*coming down*). Great times at our house. (*Aside.*) Well, I was young once, myself.

NED. But, I say, won't somebody explain the thing? I'm rattled.

MARION. Yes, Mr. Winslow, I'll try to. It's all my doing. I deceived you just for fun, and made you think I was Jack's sister. But I'm not; am I, Jack? (*Looks up at him archly.*)

JACK (*putting arm about her*). Well, not exactly.

NED. Eh? What? (*To BELLE.*) And you? Thank God!

BELLE. Why, Mr. Winslow?

NED. Oh, nothing! I'll tell you to-morrow. (*Their looks express it.*)

SARAH (*taking centre L.*) Oh, these men! These men!

SQUIRE. SARAH.

JACK. MARION.

BELLE. NED.

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- FAIRY OF THE FOUNTAIN, THE.** Play for children in two acts. 10 char. 25c.
- FLOWER OF THE FAMILY, THE.** Comedy-drama in three acts. 5 males, 3 fem.
- FLOWING BOWL, THE.** Drama in three acts. 7 males, 3 females. 25 cents.
- FREEDOM OF THE PRESS.** Farce in one act. 8 males.
- GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY.** Farce in one act. 12 males.
- GREAT ELIXIR, THE.** Farce in one act. 9 males.
- GREATEST PLAGUE IN LIFE, THE.** Farce in one act. 8 females.
- GRECIAN BEND, THE.** Farce in one act. 7 females.
- HUMORS OF THE STRIKE, THE.** Farce in one act. 8 males.
- HYPOCHONDRIAC, THE.** Farce in one act. 5 males.
- LAST LOAF, THE.** Drama in two acts. 5 males, 3 females.
- LIGHTHEART'S PILGRIMAGE.** Allegory for schools. 8 females and chorus.
- LITTLE BROWN JUG, THE.** Drama in three acts. 5 males, 3 females.
- LITTLE MORE CIDER, A.** Farce in one act. 5 males, 3 females.
- LOVE OF A BONNET, A.** Farce in one act. 5 females.
- MAN WITH THE DEMIJOHN, THE.** Farce in one act. 4 males.
- MY BROTHER'S KEEPER.** Drama in three acts. 5 males, 3 females.
- MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE, A.** Farce in one act. 4 males.
- MY UNCLE THE CAPTAIN.** Farce in one act. 6 males.
- NEVER SAY DIE.** Farce in one act. 3 males, 3 females.
- NEVADA.** Drama in three acts. 8 males, 3 females. 25 cents.
- NEW BR.** Farce in one act.
- NO CURE.** Farce in one act. 4 females.
- ONCE ON A TIME.** Drama in two acts. 4 males, 2 females.
- ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO.** Drama in two acts. 8 males, 3 females.
- ORIGINAL IDEA, AN.** Dialogue for a lady and gentleman.
- OUR FOLKS.** Drama in three acts. 6 males, 5 females.
- PADDLE YOUR OWN CANOE.** Farce in one act. 7 males, 3 females.
- PAST REDEMPTION.** Drama in four acts. 9 males, 4 females. 25 cents.
- PEDLAR OF VERYNICE, THE.** Burlesque. 7 males.
- PRECIOUS PICKLE, A.** Farce in one act. 6 females.
- PUBLIC BENEFACTOR, A.** Farce in one act. 6 males.
- REBECCA'S TRIUMPH.** Drama in three acts. 16 females. 25 cents.
- RED CHIGNON, THE.** Farce in one act. 6 females.
- REVOLT OF THE BEES, THE.** Musical allegory. 9 females.
- RUNAWAYS, THE.** Farce in one act. 4 males.
- SANTA CLAUS' FROLICS.** Christmas-tree entertainment. Many char.
- SCULPTOR'S TRIUMPH, THE.** Allegory. 1 male, 4 females.
- SEA OF TROUBLES, A.** Farce in one act. 8 males.
- SEEING THE ELEPHANT.** Temperance farce. 5 males, 2 females.
- SEVEN AGES, THE.** Tableau entertainment. 7 males, 4 females.
- SHALL OUR MOTHERS VOTE!** Humorous debate for 11 boys.
- SNOW BOUND.** Musical and dramatic entertainment. 3 males, 1 female. 25 cents.
- STAND BY THE FLAG.** Drama in one act. 5 males.
- SILVIA'S SOLDIER.** Drama in two acts. 3 males, 2 females.
- TEMPTER, THE.** Drama in one act. 3 males, 1 female.
- TENDER ATTACHMENT, A.** Farce in one act. 7 males.
- THIEF OF TIME, THE.** Farce in one act. 6 males.
- THIRTY MINUTES FOR REFRESHMENTS.** Farce in one act. 4 males, 3 fem.
- THORN AMONG THE ROSES, A.** Comedy in one act. 2 males, 8 females.
- TITANIA.** Play for children in two acts. Many char. 25 cents.
- TOO LATE FOR THE TRAIN.** Dialogue for 2 males, introducing songs and recitations.
- TOURNAMENT OF IDYLWENT, THE.** Allegory for 13 females.
- VISIONS OF FREEDOM.** Allegory for 16 females.
- USING THE WEED.** Farce in one act. 7 females.
- WANTED, A MALE COOK.** Farce in one act. 4 males.
- WAR OF THE ROSES.** Allegory for 8 females.
- WE'RE ALL TEETOTALERS.** Farce in one scene. 4 males, 2 females.

WALTER H. BAKER, & CO. (P. O. Box 2846), Boston, Mass.