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FOUR ACTING MONOLOGUES

BY

MARGARET CAMERON

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FOUR ACTING MONOLOGUES.

UNEXPECTED GUESTS.

Now, Eleanor, if you can't keep out of the way, you run right upstairs and play. I can't have you hanging to my skirts while I'm getting luncheon. . . . Well, Kate's washing, you know. . . . No, of course you can't go where Katie is. She's cross enough now, goodness knows! Here she comes! Now, you run right out of the kitchen.

I've just come out (*apologetically*) to make a cup of tea, Katie. I'll have some bread and butter and tea for luncheon, and Eleanore can have bread and milk. . . . No bread! Why, Katie! . . . Oh, yes, of course! I forgot that we had a chafing-dish supper last night. . . . Yes, you're quite right; it takes a great deal of bread to make toast. Of course you couldn't be expected to foresee emergencies like that. (*Resignedly.*) Oh, well, we'll eat crackers. And I'll get some jam.

(*Severely.*) Eleanore, what are you doing? Come right out of the pantry. Why, Eleanore Pelham! Look what you've done! What is that? Molasses? All over Katie's clean shelves! You naughty girl!

(*Apologetically.*) Never mind, Katie, I'll clean it up. . . . Yes, I know; you're busy with the washing. Mercy! There's the door-bell! (*Glances at clock.*) Just twelve o'clock. Must be a pedlar. I can't go, and you—oh, no, of course I never expect you to answer the bell on wash-day, Katie. Eleanore, you go to the door, and say that I'm busy and that

I don't want anything. And don't stand talking to the man, but shut the door at once. Then go upstairs and wait until I come. Do you understand?

I'm very sorry about the molasses, Katie, but I'll clean it all up. . . . Oh, well, little people don't always realize what trouble they are making, you know. Oh, yes, I shall punish her, certainly. You may go back to the laundry. I'll attend to this and get luncheon. (*Business of getting pan of water, wringing out cloth, and wiping up shelves and floor.*) Ugh! Of all the sticky messes!

(*On knees cleaning floor. Business of taking card with wet fingers.*) What? Ladies? At this hour? Let me see, Eleanore. Mrs. James Norton Enderby! My land! I asked her to come to luncheon any day that she happened to be in town—and she's come! What? You told her—Eleanore Gladys Pelham! Did you tell that lady that I was busy and didn't want anything? . . . Well, you'll go straight to bed! (*Business of taking child firmly by arm and leading her out.*) Now stop your whimpering this instant! I've no time for any nonsense of that sort! And it's wash-day! And Katie's perfectly savage! And there's not a slice of bread in the house! And all this horrid mess in the pantry! *Two* ladies, did you say? . . . Oh, well, she can't intend to stay, then. I'll just leave this until she's gone. (*Business of wiping hands arranging hair and dress—leaving kitchen and entering another room, brightly smiling.*)

Oh, how do you do, Mrs. Enderby? (*Business of shaking hands.*) . So delighted to see you! . . . Your sister? Not your sister *Florence*, whom you have told me so much about? . . . Oh, so *charmed* to meet you, Miss Johnson! . . . Why, certainly, Mrs. Enderby! So nice of you to understand that I should want to meet her at once! . . . No, I won't make a bit of fuss. . . . Just what we should have ourselves, you know. Let me take your wraps. It's so delightful to have you drop in in this informal way! Eleanore and I are often quite lonely. . . .

Yes, my little girl. . . . Oh, did she? (*In mock consternation.*) How dreadful of her! I told her once to say something like that to a miserable book-agent whom I saw coming, and she's never forgotten it. Children have such unfathomable memories! Now, will you amuse yourselves for a moment, while I put away your wraps and tell my maid to lay some extra plates? . . . Oh, no, not the least in the world! That's one thing that my maids always understand from the first—that there shall be no complaints about unexpected guests. . . . Oh, yes, it requires a little firmness and tact in the beginning, but they can always be trained, and I simply will not be a slave to my cook!

(*Business of leaving drawing-room and entering kitchen. Artificial smile vanishes suddenly and look of great anxiety replaces it.*) Oh, dear, what shall I do? I've got to tell Katie! If— Well, there's no help for it! (*Sighs deeply. Then calls very sweetly.*) Katie! Oh, Katie! Come here a moment, please. Some ladies have just come and— Oh, I'm very sorry, Katie, but really, I can't help it!—and we've got to give them something to eat. . . . Well, you see, it's very important because—oh, well, I haven't time to explain now, but there are reasons why I *must* be nice to Mrs. Enderby. Now what can you give us for luncheon? . . . (*Pleadingly.*) But, Katie, I can't get it now! You may leave the rest of the washing. . . . Well, then, I'll send it out. . . . Katie (*firmly*), you must get us some lunch! I don't know what, but I've got to go back in the other room, and you are to get luncheon. You understand, Katie! . . . Why, give us the cold chicken that was left from yesterday's dinner. . . . *Gone!* (*Astonished.*) Impossible! There was almost a whole one left when it came off the table. I noticed it particularly, and thought it would do for dinner to-night, with a little stretching. . . . Oh, certainly, Katie, I haven't the least objection to your having everything that you need to eat, but a whole chick—

Oh, well, never mind! But get us something! . . . I know there's no bread, but isn't it almost time for the baker? . . . Oh, well, we can't wait until half-past two, you know. That is nonsense. You must make some hot biscuits, only be quick! (*Returns to drawing-room.*)

Why, Eleanore, are you here entertaining the ladies? I'm afraid you are bothering Miss Johnson. Not everybody likes to have little girls leaning on them. . . . Oh, she's been showing you her kindergarten things, has she? . . . Yes, we think she has rather an unusual adaptability for that sort of thing. We hope she's going to be an artist. (*Sits.*) Her teacher thinks she shows great talent. Eleanore, can you tell Miss Johnson about Mrs. Pussy? . . . Oh, I think you can! . . . Come, come, now, don't be naughty! Tell Miss Johnson about Mrs. Pussy, and then mamma'll give you some candy. Stand right here by mamma. Take your finger out of your mouth!—so. Now begin. "Mrs. Pussy, sleek and fat—" . . . "kittens four." That's right! "Went to sleep—" Go on, dear. . . . "By the kitchen—*door.*" That's right! . . . Yes, she's only five, you know! Now the next verse, dearie. . . Oh, yes! Come, now, go right on! "Mrs. Pussy heard—" . . . "—in glee." Yes; go on. "Kittens, maybe—" . . . "—go and see. . . . Yes, we think she has a very remarkable memory. Her teacher says she remembers these things better than any other child in the class. Now, Eleanore! "Creeping, creeping—" . . . Oh, have you forgotten it? You knew it so well yesterday! "But the little mouse had gone—" Why, Eleanore Pelham! What's this on your dress? . . . Molasses! Oh—er—yes, I forgot! Will you excuse me a moment while I go and—er—scrub this small girl? Come, Eleanore. (*Leads child out. Again forced smile dies. Speaks impatiently.*)

Now you go straight up the back stairs to your play-room, and stay there until I come. Don't come down again, Eleanore. Do you understand? I'll

come when I have cleaned up the molasses you spilled all over the pantry!

(*Business of entering kitchen.*) Why, Katie! Why aren't you getting luncheon? . . . Well, I told you to make biscuits. Yes, I know there's molasses all over the pantry—I'm very sorry about that, Katie!—but can't you make biscuits on the kitchen-table this once? . . . Well, but we must have something to eat! It's one o'clock now! . . . Katie! (*Almost a wail.*) Leave me—*now*? Oh, you can't! You—you *mustn't*! . . . I know! It was very thoughtless of Mrs. Enderby to come on Monday—stupid thing she is, anyway!—and I ought not to have given her that sort of an invitation! But if you'll stay and serve luncheon, I'll—I'll give you that new silk petticoat of mine! It's just about long enough for you. . . . No, you needn't cook *anything*! We'll have—let me see!—is there any boned chicken in the house? I mean canned chicken, you know! . . . Well, if you'll open a can of that, I'll cream it in the chafing-dish, and— No, you needn't make biscuits! I'll serve it on toasted crackers. If you'll set the table, Katie, and toast the crackers, and open the chicken, and serve the luncheon, I'll wash the dishes—and give you that silk petticoat—and—yes, and a whole day off! . . . To-morrow? Yes, the ironing can wait. . . . Well, then, I'll have some one come in and do it. Now, that's a good girl, Katie! (*Business of leaving kitchen. Sighs with relief.*) A-a-ah!

(*Enters drawing-room and assumes smiling society manner.*) Yes, we went to hear her last night. Do you think she's as attractive in this rôle as she was in "The Prisoner of Zenda"? . . . Oh, well, perhaps I wasn't in a very responsive mood. . . . Oh, no, not in the least, Mrs. Enderby! Indeed, I'm going to take you at your word, and give you a picked-up luncheon—just what we should have had ourselves, you know. But on Mondays we always have luncheon rather late—in fact, we have it *quite* late. I hope you don't mind? . . . Yes, I have a very satisfactory maid—as

maids go. Of course, she needs a little managing, but I really think I have a way with servants. I really have. I seldom have much trouble with them, until they get perfectly unendurable, and then—I simply dismiss them, you know. Have you heard about poor Mrs. Drayton? She tried to dismiss her cook last week, and the woman drove her out of the kitchen by throwing things at her—anything within her reach, you know! Poor Mrs. Drayton was so upset, she had to send for the doctor and a policeman. Now, if I had a maid who was given to throwing things about, I should— (*Listens, startled.*) Good gracious! what's that? Excuse me a moment! (*Business of hurrying from drawing-room to dining room. Speaks to maid with nervous and forced amiability.*)

Oh, you dropped the chafing-dish, Katie? . . . They are slippery things. I dropped one once myself. Anything broken? . . . (*Business of examining pieces.*) No, I think it's all right. Have you the crackers ready to toast? Here's the chicken—butter—cream—flour—olives—yes, I think that's all. Oh, did you fill the lamp—the alcohol-lamp under the chafing-dish? . . . Never mind; I'll do it. And tea, jam, and little cakes for dessert. All ready, Katie? . . . Yes, you shall have the petticoat this afternoon, just as I promised you.

(*Business of returning to drawing-room. Very smiling and easy.*) Won't you come out to luncheon, ladies?

THE P. A. I. L. W. R.

(*Conversational tone.*) Is this Mrs. Brastow? . . . Yes, good morning, Mrs. Brastow. I thought I couldn't be mistaken. What a charming location you have here! I was in this city when Mr. Brastow bought this lot. I said then that it was an ideal site for a home, and I see it is. And an ideal home on the site. . . . No, I've never had the pleasure of meeting you before, but I've had many a long talk with your husband during the past fifteen years. . . . Oh, yes, I know Mr. Brastow well. You may have heard him speak of me. Jones is my name. Charlie Jones. Yes, I know him well Thank you, I will come in for a moment. (*Business of entering house.*)

What a lovely room, to be sure! Such a sense of restfulness pervades it! How one does feel the individuality of a room, Mrs. Brastow! And I suppose everything in your house is as perfect, in its way, as this room is.

There can be only one thing necessary to complete it, and that one thing I shall now have the pleasure of introducing to you. (*Business of producing article from pocket—or bag. Speech becomes rapid, mechanical and very distinct—as if memorized and often repeated.*) It is the Patent Adjustable Indestructible Loop Wire Receptacle—sometimes called the P. A. I. L. W. R., for short—capable of being transformed, at a moment's notice, and without the aid of any other tool or instrument except the human hand, into any one of twenty-three separate and distinct house-

hold articles, each one absolutely indispensable to the well-regulated and adequately equipped home. For example, as you see it now, it is a fruit-dish. Piled high with oranges and bananas, it is a most artistic and beautiful centerpiece for any table. You will notice that the wires are all plated with a patented composition, invented especially for this article, which makes them look like the finest spun silver. This plate is permanent and will never wear off. Like everything else used in the composition of the Patent Adjustable Indestructible Loop Wire Receptacle, it is absolutely indestructible. Just picture to yourself a dining-table with this magnificent article as a centerpiece.

(*Sudden change to conversational tone again.*) You never eat fruit? Is it possible! I had a brother who had a similar taste. I've known him to leave the table because he was unable to bear the sight of a plate of ripe fruit. On one occasion he broke up a dinner-party by so doing, because he was the fourteenth guest, and, of course, when he left—well, you've heard of that little superstition of thirteen at table. . . . Ah? Well, neither am I. I believe I have no superstitions—unless, indeed, it's the one about pins. "See a pin and pick it up," you know. I never fail to pick up a pin, and it always brings me good luck. I picked up one on your step, while I was waiting for the door to be opened.

By the way, talking about pins, (*returns to mechanical tone*) by compressing this wonderful article, thus, it becomes a pin-tray, an article, indispensable to every well-appointed dressing-table. . . . Ah? You use silver pin-trays. Well, of course, many ladies are fortunate enough to be supplied with them now, but one never knows when thieves may break in and steal, you know. And then, one is liable to run up against an emergency, such as unexpected guests from the country, who have to be accommodated in improvised bed-rooms—bed-lounges, and that sort of thing—and, of course, a conscientious hostess always likes to be equal to the occasion. Now, with a number of these marvelous articles in the house, a

complete toilet-set, lacking only the brush and mirror, may be had at a moment's notice. This, as I have said, is the pin-tray. Now, you slip this loop, turn it thus, pull it out, and, presto! you have a beautiful silver comb! By snapping these loops down, thus, a handle is formed, and the loop at the opposite end may be used as a button-hook.

At, yes, many ladies wear laced boots now, but I am confidentially informed that buttons are coming in, and in a year all women's shoes will be buttoned. "A stitch in time," you know. One should always be prepared. That's the secret of success. Always be prepared. Now, by slipping this spring, the whole string of loops becomes a chain, useful in a variety of ways. It's often found valuable as a supporter for pillow-shams; or, united at the ends, thus, it is worn about a lady's neck as a watch-chain—or a lorgnette may be attached to the end. You've noticed how very fashionable these long chains have become since the introduction of the Patent Adjustable Indestructible Loop Wire Receptacle. Or, by again forming the basket foundation, thus, and attaching the braces, so, one has an egg-basket, always a necessary article in every house.

(*Conversational tone.*) Never eat eggs? Indeed! Now, that's very interesting! You know, I'm making up a set of statistics about the people who don't eat things, and the things people don't eat. Take your own case, for example. I've discovered in this short time that you eat neither fruit nor eggs. One season I solicited orders for a set of patent cake-tins, and you'd be surprised at the number of ladies who assured me that they never ate cake. It's most interesting.

Yes, to be sure; I know it's Saturday morning, and that's always a busy morning for a housekeeper. I'll not detain you a moment. As I was about to say, (*mechanically*) by compressing this part and sliding the handle down, you have a most complete and artistic pudding-dish, of unique and pleasing shape. Oh, pardon me, perhaps you never eat puddings, either? Ah, most interesting! Or, by flatten-

ing it, thus, and pulling this end out, you have a complete toaster and broiler, suitable for use with any kind of heat, coal, gas, oil, or electricity. Again, by scooping out the bottom, thus, pushing these wires back, and shaping it a little with the fingers, you have a handsome picture-frame, of the shape known as the shadow-box, without the heavy, sombre appearance of the usual shadow-boxes made in black.

Now, I see by the toys on the front stoop that you have little ones—ah, yes, what is home without the little darlings!—and what could be a more suitable frame for the baby's picture than that? Just fancy the little dear—his father's joy—a little girl? (*Conversational.*) Indeed! I might have known it! I think I saw her outside. She has her mother's smile. As I was about to say, just picture the little dear, his fa—oh, to be sure!—*her* father's joy, looking out of that shining frame! Have you the baby's picture at hand, Mrs. Brastow? Ah, I'm sorry, I should have liked to see it in this frame. It would have been a pleasant memory to carry away with me.

Yes; just a moment, please. (*Mechanical.*) Then, by completing the basket form again, and by stretching these loops to the uttermost, you have a waste-basket, light, durable, clean, and exceedingly handsome. Or by slightly pressing it together and decreasing its size, one has a jardiniere, suitable for—just a moment, please—a jardiniere, suitable for potted plants.

By studying the various combinations possible to the Patent Adjustable Indestructible Loop Wire Receptacle—and we give with each one (without extra charge) a copy of this valuable little booklet containing full instructions—one may have, as I have said, a fruit-dish, a pin-tray, a beautiful hair-comb, a watch-chain, a sham-supporter, a pudding-dish, an egg-basket, a toaster and broiler, a picture-frame, a waste-basket, or a jardiniere. Not only this—I'll not detain you five minutes more, madam!—but a candlestick—you know how fashionable

candles have become since this wonderful little invention has been on the market?—a small easel, a receptacle for a glass holding hot liquid, as whis—ahem!—*lemonade*; a stove-hook, a flatiron stand, a tea-tray—perhaps you don't drink tea? Beg pardon; no offence meant, I assure you! I was merely thinking of my book—the statistics, you know.

Yes, yes, I quite appreciate your position, Mrs. Brastow. I'm a busy man myself, and, of course, the quicker I can make a sale, the better I'm pleased. Now, sometimes I make a sale right away, and sometimes it takes me all the morning. It's against my principles to ask anybody to buy. There's no greater mistake in this business than urging people to buy. The point is to convince the lady that she wants the article—just stay right with her until she's convinced—and then your work's done. The really successful salesman never has to ask anybody to buy. I'm very successful that way myself.

But some ladies are slow to accept the fact, you know, that there's anything new in the world that's better than the old thing they happen to have. Now, I found a little woman in Davisville last week, who was very hard to convince; but I never give up, you know, never give up! That's the secret of success. Never say die! And I stayed with that woman from ten o'clock in the morning until three in the afternoon. But I made the sale! Now she couldn't keep house without the Patent Adjustable Indestructible Loop Wire Receptacle. However, I was about to call your attention to——

Well, they're being sold now at the remarkably low price of sixty-five cents, just to introduce them, you know. Many ladies are buying them by the dozen and half-dozen, realizing that this opportunity will not offer again. When I come around next year, the price will have advanced fifty per cent., and I expect to make twice as many sales, for then every lady will know me and the Patent Adjustable Indestructible Loop Wire Receptacle, and will real-

ize that she'll save her time and mine by buying it at once. Not that it isn't a pleasure to show it. I'm as proud of it as if it were my own invention. But as I was about to say——

One? Oh, I think you'll need more than that! With a house of this size, you could hardly get along without more than that. I consider six a very small order for a place as large as this. No, really, Mrs. Brastow, my conscience would ache if I let you do yourself that wrong. Yes, I know, but you'll thank me when I'm gone. No, I couldn't feel right about it. Well, of course, you *might* get along with three, but for your own sake, I hate to leave less than half a dozen with you. Three? Very well. Yes, one ninety-five, please. That's right, thank you. I was about to call your attention to the fact that, in addition to the things I have mentioned——

(*In a tone of injured innocence.*) My dear madam, I'm telling you this solely for your own convenience! My sale's made. Very well; but you'll find in the little booklet the directions for making the bread-tray, handkerchief-case, cigar-holder, ink-stand, footstool, and hand-satchel, in addition to the other things I mentioned. (*Genially.*) Good morning, Mrs. Brastow. I'm very glad to have met you. I'll call again next year.

IN A STREET-CAR.

A MONOLOGUE.

(She runs on and pauses, panting, on the car-step.)

Oh, conductor, wait a minute, won't you? There's another lady coming. Well, she's running just as hard as she can. She ain't so light as I am. *(Calls to her friend.)* Hurry up! He won't wait! *(To the conductor.)* Land knows we wait long enough for you, sometimes! You needn't be so mighty uppish about waiting a second for us once in a while! . . . What? . . . Time-table? Huh! Your time-table's a moveable feast, I guess! I notice the only time you're *on* time's when there's nobody waiting for you!

(To her friend.) Oh, here you are! Yes, isn't it an awful pull up that hill? *(Lurches toward a seat.)* Oh, my! *(To a passenger.)* Excuse me! I didn't mean to! That is—I couldn't help it, you know! *(Sits. To her friend in a low, embarrassed, amused tone.)* Did you see what I did? I sat right square down on that man! I think I smashed something he's got in that parcel! Something crushed, anyhow. What do you s'pose it is? . . . Looks some as if it might be a hat, don't it? . . . My, don't he look cross! *(Louder for benefit of passengers.)* Well, I couldn't help it! These men ought to learn to start a car without jerking a lady off her feet!

Oh, see here, I'm going to pay this fare! . . . Yes, I am, too! You always try to get in ahead. . . . No, I've got it right here! Where is my purse? Why—I believe I've lost it! Yes, sir, I must have lost it running up that hill! Stop the car! Oh, look here, conductor! *(She springs up and pulls a strap, shakes her skirts vigorously, and pulls the same*

strap several times in rapid succession. To the conductor.) What? . . . Well, I wanted the car to stop and you wouldn't look! I lost my purse because you made me run up that hill to catch your old car, and I want to get off! Stop the car, I tell you! What? . . . Rang the wrong? . . . The cash register? . . . Well, I don't care if I did! I want to get off! . . . It serves you right if I did ring up a lot of fares! Perhaps the next time a lady wants to get off your car, you'll look at her, and stop the car yourself! Why don't you stop it? I tell you I've lost— *(To a passenger.)* What? Why, yes, that's it! Where'd you find it? On the floor? Well, I declare! *(Somewhat abashed.)* That's all right, conductor. *(Sits. To her friend.)* Well, how do you suppose I ever— *(To the conductor.)* What? . . . Pay for the fare I rung up? Well, I guess not! I'll pay two fares and that's all I will pay! I'm not going to pay for rides I never got! . . . Well, if you'd been looking where you'd ought to 'a been I wouldn't have touched your old strap! It'll teach you to pay some attention to your passengers. There's a man in front wants a transfer, I guess. You'd better go and see him, or you'll get into some more trouble. *(To her friend, in a loud, cheerful tone.)* Some of these men are so unaccommodating! You'd think this one was a machine, for any interest he ever takes in anything. The other day I didn't know just where I wanted to get off, and if you'll believe it, he got real uppish because I stopped the car so I could look up the street to see if that was the place! He wanted to know why I didn't look in the directory and find out where I wanted to go. As if anybody could carry a directory around with them all the time! Besides, what's a conductor for, I'd like to know, if he isn't for the accommodation of passengers? *(To the conductor, paying fare.)* Here, conductor, two. Transfers? N-no, I guess not? *(To her friend.)* We don't want to transfer, do we? . . . Or do you want to go to see about that bonnet to-day? . . . She said

it would be ready this afternoon. Oh, conductor, wait a minute! Well, perhaps we'd better go. What do you think? . . . All right. (*To conductor.*) Transfers to—why, he's gone! See? He hasn't the least interest in accommodating passengers. I think he ought to be reported. Oh, I kind o' hate to do it. He might find out and then it would be unpleasant, and us traveling on this line so much.

Who's that woman in the end of the car, do you know? . . . She looks a little like the pictures of Marian Doubleday, the actress, don't she? . . . Not so pretty, though. But they do say Marian Doubleday wasn't such a tearing beauty until she went on the stage and learned to make up. Oh, conductor, transfers to Powell Street. I know you asked us if we wanted transfers, but you didn't wait to find out whether we did or not. If you treat me to much more of your inattention and impertinence I shall see that you are reported.

Oh, yes, Marian's made a great success now, but she had a pretty hard time getting to the top, I guess. Of course, she had all sorts of things to contend against. I sometimes wonder, when I hear of her driving with Mrs. This and lunching with Mrs. That, what her swell friends would say if they knew that her grandmother kept a boarding-house in Sacramento, and that Marian earned her first money as a clerk in a store. I wonder why that girl's face is getting so red? Maybe she saw us looking at her.

They say young Belshaw is perfectly infatuated with her. My nephew works in a florist's shop near the theater, and he says they send her a big pile of flowers from Belshaw every day. . . . Yes, my sister Maud's boy, Johnnie. . . . Yes, he's pretty wild. Just like his father, you know. His people are all that way. Poor Maud never has a minute's comfort with him, for if he's behaving, she's always sure that it's just the calm before the storm—sort of a weather-breeder, you know—and she just worries and frets all the time. She never loses a chance to tell Johnnie

how he ought to behave. She's never had a card in the house, nor any wines, nor liquors, nor anything like that. She wouldn't even let him learn to dance. And yet, that boy drinks and smokes and gambles and heaven knows what else! Now, there's my Willie! There couldn't be a nicer boy than Willie! He hasn't a single bad habit—and he's such a comfort with his clothes! His room's as tidy as a girl's. Poor Maud's always asking Johnnie why he doesn't pattern more after his cousin Willie, and—well, I won't tell you what he says. It's awful! And his mother such a religious woman, too!

But in that florist's shop, he sees a lot of gay society fellows like this young Belshaw, and he thinks it's smart to try to be like them. . . . Yes, he's Dr. Belshaw's son—at least, he's adopted. . . . Why, yes, didn't you know that? . . . No, I never heard anything in particular about Fred Belshaw, but he's running around after this Marian Doubleday, and when a man gets to going with actresses, it's safe to suppose he ain't any too strict. My Willie wouldn't think of doing such a thing. But Johnnie does. . . . Oh, my, yes! . . . Well, there's that Dolly Dixon you know; she's in Marian Doubleday's company. . . . Oh, I don't know where he met her. In the shop, I suppose; and Willie says he saw a great big bunch of violets that Johnnie sent her, and him just a clerk! Willie says she's kind o' pretty, though. He saw her going past the shop one day when he was there visiting Johnnie. Willie goes to see Johnnie real often and tries to influence him, you know. Willie's such a conscientious boy!

Oh, see this woman just getting in! . . . Yes, she got that silk at Allitson's. They had ten pieces of it last year, and it was a dollar-forty a yard, but they didn't get rid of it all, and this year they sold off what they had left for ninety-eight cents. . . . Yes, it's good value. I think it'll fade, though. . . . M-h'm, that trimming looks real nice, don't it? She must have bought it at Meyerfeld's sale. Sixteen

cents a yard; but it looks nice, don't it? I don't believe it'll wear, though. Meyerfeld's having a sale of laces this week. . . . Oh, hadn't you heard about it? Oh, my dear, real bargains! I saw some inserting for four cents a yard that's just what you want for the baby's things. Let's go right down there and get it; and then we can walk back and use our transfers, just the same. And there was some wide lace—oh, as wide as that!—for twenty-four cents. . . . Oh, I don't know what you'd use it for, but it would come in handy some day. Yes, I bought some, just on a venture. It seems wasteful to let a chance like that go by, you know.

Oh, here goes the girl! If she was only a little better-looking, she'd be the image of Marian Doubleday. It must be annoying to look so much like an actress. Makes a girl so conspicuous! . . . Mercy! Did you see the look she gave me?

Oh, there's Mrs. Beaver! She's speaking to that girl. Now, we'll find out who she is. . . . (*Business of touching a woman to attract her attention, and shaking hands.*) Oh, how do you do, Mrs. Beaver? Such a long time since I've seen you! And is this little Horace? How do you do, dear? How he grows! Just the living image of his father, too, isn't he? . . . Your other boys are getting to be young men, aren't they? Your Tommie's just three months younger than my Willie. I hope he's as much comfort to you as Willie is to me. . . . Smokes, doesn't he? . . . Oh, don't you mind it? . . . Yes, I know his father always did, and I s'pose you do get used to those things if you have to live with 'em, but my Willie has never wanted to do anything like that. I never have any more trouble with him than's if he was a girl.

Oh, Mrs. Beaver, who was the girl you spoke to as you got into the car? . . . Marian Doubleday! That girl in the blue dress Marian Double—well, I said it looked like her, didn't I? But her pictures flatter her. . . . Yes, she's getting to be quite fa-

mous, isn't she? But it must be embarrassing to go along the street and know that everybody knows who you are! But then, not everybody knows about her. . . . Oh, I used to know them in Sacramento, you know. At least, my cousin lived next door to her grandmother's boarding-house, and—why, yes! Didn't you know that? . . . And Marian clerked in a store. Sold buttons and thread and that sort of thing, you know. And her grandfather, old Dick Doubleday, was an awful old wretch. He used to— What? . . . (*Business of looking over her shoulder.*) Where? . . . Is that Dolly Dixon? . . . My! Look at that hat! And that coat! Who's that fellow talking to her? . . . Why—it's my Willie! (*Rises hastily and waves hands.*) Conductor, stop the car! I want to get right off! This is some of Johnnie's work! Willie never met that girl of his own accord! Conductor, why don't you stop this car? . . . But I don't want to go to the end of the block! I want to get off here! . . . Oh, dear! Well, good-bye! (*Business of lurching part way toward car door. Pauses.*) Oh, where'll I meet you? . . . At Meyerfeld's? . . . At the lace counter? . . . Oh, I won't be long. Yes, conductor, just a second! Well, at the notion counter, then? . . . Oh, when you're at the lace counter, get me two yards more of that twenty—(*to conductor*) yes, of course I'm going to get off!—twenty-four-cent lace. Oh, it's about so wide, and cream color. You can't miss it. . . . Yes, just as soon as I've sent that girl about her business! (*To conductor.*) Oh, wait! I'm going to get off! Well, I told you I was! I never saw anybody so impatient! I'll report you before night! (*Loudly, to her friend.*) Good-bye!

A PATRON OF ART.

(*Speaker enters. Peers about through lorgnette. Suddenly smiles. Business of shaking hands.*) Oh, how do you do, Mrs. Disbrow? Are you going so early? . . . Yes, we've just come. This is my niece, Miss Chester. We've been to the Gorham reception. Such a tiresome crush! But of course, everybody was there, and one had to show one's self, at least. How are the gowns this year? Anything worth seeing? . . . A private view is such an excellent place to see new gowns as a rule, but last year I thought they were very tame. Mrs. Belknap wore one that was really quite frumpy, if you remember. Good night. Oh, by the way, how are the pictures? . . . Which one is attracting the most comment? . . . Bosqui? . . . (*indifferently*) Ah, I never heard of him. . . . Oh, indeed? I must look at it. Which wall is it on? . . . Thank you; I'll glance at it. Good night.

(*To her companion, using lorgnette.*) There's Mrs. Forsyth, Muriel, that woman in grey. She must have brought that gown from Vienna. She's just home. And there's Mrs. Belknap in a gown she's worn all winter. Such shocking taste in a woman of her position! It's really one's duty to dress as well as one's income permits. Last year she paid two thousand dollars for one picture, and came to the private view in a shocking gown. I wonder who she's talking to? Frowsy-looking man. Some impossible genius, I dare say. She cultivates 'em.

Oh, here's Kauffman, the great portrait painter —this large, shaggy man at the left. Let's go a little nearer. He's talking about Bosqui, too. Did you hear that? (*Business of listening and carefully repeating what is overheard.*) "The success of the

year" . . . "keen sense of color values" . . . "remarkable distance" . . . "feeling for line" . . . "atmosphere" . . . what was that about atmosphere? I didn't quite catch it. Evidently, Muriel, this Bosqui is promising. We must have him in to tea some day. Perhaps I'll have him do a little thing for me.

Oh, how do you do, Mrs. Dwinelle? Mr. Dwinelle, you've met my niece? Yes, we've just come from the Gorham reception. Such a tiresome crush! We got away as quickly as we could; but you know, when one's friends entertain, one must really show one's self, at least. . . . Oh, *everybody* was there. Have you seen Bosqui's picture? . . . Such feeling for line and distance! My dear, I predict that he'll have a Career! Wonderful atmosphere! Really wonderful! . . . Ah? I've been here so short a time, I'm by no means sure I've discovered all his work; but one glance is sufficient! Er—how many pictures has he? . . . Only one? . . . Ah, really! Such a pity there aren't more! It's quite the only thing on the walls worth talking about, I assure you. I'm thinking of having him do a little thing for me. . . . Yes? Good night, then.

Muriel, did you hear Kauffman say anything about Bosqui's *chiaroscuro*? . . . Are you positive? . . . Well, he must have *chiaroscuro*, if he has all those other things, don't you think?

Oh, how do you do, Mr. Atherton? Muriel, my dear, here's Mr. Atherton. . . . Yes, we've just come from the Gorham reception. Such a tiresome crush! But of course, one must go! Everybody does! You're going there from here? . . . Yes, of course, one does see the pictures better before the crowd comes. Tell me, *have* you seen Bosqui's thing? . . . Oh, my dear Mr. Atherton, you musn't go until you've seen it! I have seldom been so struck by a line—I mean, by—by—the distance! Such remarkable feeling for color, you know! And *chiaroscuro*! *Such* *chiaroscuro*! Really, he'll have a Career!

You mark my word, he'll be the success of the season. (*coldly bowing.*) How do you do, Mrs. Belknap? Mr. Atherton, who is that frowsy-looking person with Mrs. Belknap? Is he—er—*anybody*, you know? . . . She has been talking to him ever since we arrived, and—one never knows about Mrs. Belknap's friends. Sometimes, they're quite—er—well, the sort of person one would like to assist, you know, by asking them to tea, or something. And then sometimes—really, she knows such extraordinary persons, sometimes! . . . (*Indifferently.*) Ah, then I dare say he's nobody. . . . Yes, it is getting late. Good night. We shall see you Friday? Good night.

Muriel, there's not a gown here that I'd be seen in except that grey frock of Mrs. Forsyth's. . . . Where? Oh, yes, very nice, I dare say. I don't care much for marine things, you know. Oh, here comes Mrs. Chapin.—Art patron, and all that sort of thing.

How do you do, Mrs. Chapin? Isn't everything charming! Such a relief to see some pictures again! One gets so tired of merely social affairs! We've just come from the Gorham reception. Such a frightful crush! But of course, we know them so well, and—*everybody* was there. Really, everybody, you know! . . . Yes, the pictures are very good—really very good this year. But of course, there's nothing to compare with Bosqui's thing. Isn't it wonderful? Such remarkable feeling for line, you know—and the distance! My dear, did you ever see such distance! He has such a rare sense of color values, too! Oh, I predict a brilliant future for him! I'm going to have him do a little thing for me—just a little thing, you know. You know him, of course? . . . Do bring him in to tea with us some day while my niece is here. . . . Fridays, you know. . . . Yes; good-bye.

Dear me, what an ordinary looking lot of gowns! . . . Eh? . . . Oh, yes, I dare say. I don't care for figures, you know. . . . What's the title? . . . "The Tempest?" "*The Tempest!*" How excessively

stupid! They've made a mistake in the catalogues! Really, such carelessness is inconceivable! I shall have this reported to the Secretary. "The Tempest," indeed! Just a stupid-looking girl, and an old man, and a—er—a—er—what is that creature? . . . Eh? . . . (*Haughtily and very coldly.*) Thank you, madam; I quite understood that is was after Shakespeare. . . . (*To Muriel.*) How excessively impertinent! That young woman—who has never been presented to me, I'm quite sure—presumed to inform me that this picture is—er—of course, any one could see at a glance! . . . Well, my dear, the title is misleading. It is very stupidly named. The picture should have been called "Caliban." To entitle it "The Tempest" is—er—is *plagiarism!* I'm surprised that the Committee permitted it to be hung. It's by that man Sorbier. They tell shocking things about him. His own father, who was a very respectable sort of person, I believe, cut him off without a sou, my dear, without a sou! But Mrs. Belknap receives him. She says he has temperament. I dare say he has. I've noticed that the friends of men who have temperament are always apologising for it. There's Mrs. Belknap now, still with that frowsy man. He looks as if he might have temperament, too. . . . Eh? . . . Oh, yes, yes, child, I suppose so, if you care for that sort of thing. Landscape doesn't interest me, you know. I wonder where the Bosqui thing is? Do you see it anywhere? . . . How very thick the crowd's getting! Do let's go and find some punch! . . . What? . . . Where? Oh, that? . . . M-m-m, no, I can't say that I care for it. Still life never appeals to me, you know.

Oh; Miss Wendell, isn't this a crush? It's not quite as stifling as the Gorham reception, though. We've just come from there. Such a frightful crush! Really, I wonder why we do it; but everybody was there, you know—and one really must be civil when one's friends—

Eh? What is it, Muriel? . . . Oh, my dear child,

a mere smudge! Do try to cultivate some feeling for Art, Muriel! . . . No, no, it's perfectly impossible! What *was* the man thinking of? . . . Ah, well, never mind. It's nothing of consequence. Real Art idealises, my dear. This is hopelessly realistic. That sky is simply the color that any ordinary person might see. Indeed, the color is quite ordinary throughout. You see? A complete lack of artistic feeling and perception. Do let us find the Bosq—

Oh, Dr. Houghton! You came away early from the Gorhams', too. *Have* you see the Bosqui? Eh? What is it, Muriel? . . . *That* the Bosqui! *That*? Oh—er—yes, (*enthusiastically*), my niece and I were quite lost in admiration of it as you came up. Such a wonderful sense of color values! And—er—er—such a relief to see a bit of *real* Art, after the flood of impressionistic stuff! I'm going to have him do a little thing for me. . . . Eh? . . . Bosqui himself? Really? Do let me see him! Where—where is my lorgnette! . . . That? You mean the—the *distinguished*-looking man with Mrs. Belknap? . . . Is *that* Bosqui? . . . Ah, one can see at a glance that he has temperament! Do, please, present him! Mrs. Belknap has monopolised him quite long enough.

Muriel, that—that very *interesting* looking man who has been with Mrs. Belknap all the evening is Bosqui, and Dr. Houghton is going to—

Ah, Mr. Bosqui, so *charmed* to meet you! My niece and I have been quite lost here before your picture! Such a wonderful sense of color values! I'm sure you must *hear* color, as I do! Doesn't beautiful color always seem to you like a chord of exquisite music? . . . And the distance! Really, I never saw such distance on canvas, never! And the tempera—er—I mean, the *atmosphere*! One can fairly breathe it! Now, that little touch there at the left— Ah, no, unfortunately, I have never studied painting—that is, really *studied* it, you know; but I think if one has sincere feeling for ART—er (*vaguely*) don't you? . . . Ah, yes, of

course, my niece; this is my niece, Miss Chester. Dr. Houghton, will you bring Mr. Bosqui in to tea on Friday? There are so many things I want to ask him about his work, you know. Mr. Bosqui. Er—Mr. *Bosqui!* Dr. Houghton has promised to bring you to us for tea on Friday. . . . Oh, certainly, my niece will be there. . . . Ah, that will be delightful! I want to talk to you about doing a little thing for me. You know, I predict a great future for you. Come, Muriel. So charmed to have met you, Mr. Bosqui! On Friday, then. Good night.

CURTAIN.

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RICHARD HEATHERLY, *engaged to Marjorie*
THOMAS HOLDER, *a policeman*
WILLIAM BIGBEE, *an inmate of the Sanitarium*
HENRY FULLER, *superintendent of the Sanitarium*
MRS. GOODLY, *Ebenezer's wife*
CISSY, *Ebenezer's ward*
MARJORIE, }
MINERVA, } *Ebenezer's daughters*
ALVINA STARLIGHT, *Mr. Goodly's sister*
HELMA, *a servant*

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

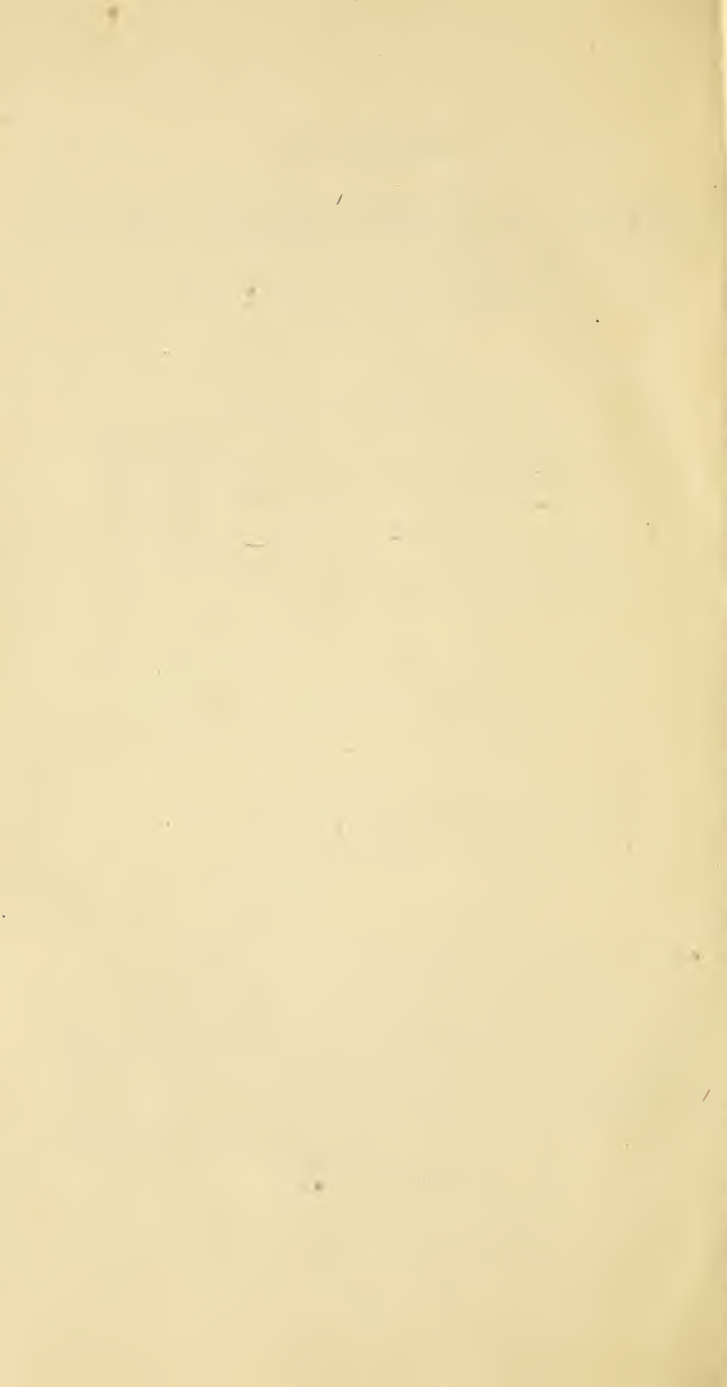
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