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THE UPSETTING OF
JABEZ STRONG

BY
HELEN P. KANE

DICK & FITZGERALD
PUBLISHERS
18 Ann Street, New York

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DARKEY BREACH OF PROMISE CASE. Mock Trial.....	22
GREAT LIBEL CASE. Mock Trial; 1 Scene; 2 hours.....	21
RIDING THE GOAT. Burlesque Initiation; 1 Scene; 1½ hours	24

DICK & FITZGERALD, Publishers, 18 Ann Street, N. Y.

THE UPSETTING OF JABEZ STRONG

A Comedy in Three Acts

BY

HELEN P. KANE

AUTHOR OF "A BUNDLE OF MATCHES," "WHITE DOVE OF
ONEIDA," ETC.

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THE UPSETTING OF JABEZ STRONG.

CHARACTERS,

MIRIAM ORR, age 45.....*The Adjuster*
HOPE HATHAWAY, later HOPE STRONG, age 20...*Her Friend*
JABEZ STRONG, age 55..*Financier, suspicious and tyrannical*
MRS. STRONG, age 50..*His wife, kind, timid and inconsequent*
DAISY, age 18.....*His daughter, wilful and rebellious*
DANA STRONG, age 30.....*His son, husband of Hope*
JACK DRAKE, age 25..*Stroke oar at Harvard, Lover of Daisy*
JOHN BURTON, age 30.....*Broke, also lover of Daisy*
BINKS, age 40.....*Butler at the Strongs*

LOCALITY.—Near Boston, Mass.

TIME OF REPRESENTATION.—One and one-half hours.

SYNOPSIS OF INCIDENTS.

..ACT I.—DANA'S sudden call to the Ozarks and its results. JABEZ on the track of JACK and DAISY who elude him. DANA reveals to his father what he is about to do.

ACT II. SCENE I.—DAISY'S luncheon appointment at Young's. JABEZ'S unexpected arrival for luncheon at home, accompanied by BURTON, to whom DAISY is directed to be particularly civil. The luncheon at Young's does not occur. BURTON'S deal. JACK'S unlooked-for call. How he received and accepted JABEZ'S invitation for luncheon, and what happened. SCENE II.—MIRIAM'S tactics. Their influence over JABEZ. DANA'S return, to find HOPE at the theater. The theater party again home.

The Upsetting of Jabez Strong.

ACT III.—DAISY's letter to BURTON. JACK again invited for luncheon. DANA and JACK plan to obtain a clutch on BURTON. BURTON on the scene. His villainies exposed. Restitution. JACK's engagement to DAISY at last accomplished.

COSTUMES.

Modern and up-to-date.

INCIDENTAL PROPERTIES.

Piece of Jewelry. Knitting-work. Books. Music. Papers. Writing Materials. Tray and Card. Letter. Suit-case. Umbrella.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

As seen by a performer on the stage facing the audience, R., means right; L., left; C., center; R. C., right of center; L. C., left of center; UP STAGE, towards the back; DOWN STAGE, towards the audience.

R.

R. C.

C.

L. C.

L.

THE UPSETTING OF JABEZ STRONG.

ACT I.

SCENE.—HOPE'S room, modern furnishings; pretty and girlish. Entrance back with portieres. Table, down L. with books and flowers. Easy-chair R. of table. Couch L. and low seat near it. One or two other chairs. Piano R. with music. DISCOVERED HOPE in easy-chair, reading. ENTER DAISY, standing between portieres, HOPE does not see her, and she runs forward and puts her hands over HOPE'S eyes.

DAISY. Guess who!

HOPE (*laughing as she looks up*). Couldn't! So glad you came, Daisy. You're just in time to go in town with me.

DAISY. Mistake on your part, I'm just in time to go with Jack. (*Sits on couch.*)

HOPE (*throwing book on table, and clasping her hands on knees*). Which means I don't get any innings on this trip?

DAISY (*apologetically*). You know Jack and I——

HOPE (*laughing*). Oh, I know, you come to see me, and Jack comes to see you.

DAISY. Now Hope, you know what an awful fog father raises if he comes to the house.

HOPE (*coming over and kissing her*). Poor little girl. You and Jack do have a hard time. It was mean to tease you. I wonder he doesn't forbid Dana coming to see me.

DAISY (*ruefully*). Oh! he likes you, and he has no use for Jack. I believe I'll run away, I'm tired of this everlasting nagging.

HOPE (*whimsically*). It is a "dernier ressort."

DAISY (*wilfully*). Just you wait till you are married, and live in the house with him.

HOPE. That's not a foregone conclusion.

DAISY. Father thinks it is. (*Bell rings*) Oh! there's Jack! (*Runs out.*)

HOPE (*alone and laughing*). So does Dana. But there are two sides to every question. And there's time enough yet for that.

ENTER DAISY *with* JACK.

JACK (*coming forward and shaking hands*). As usual, Miss Hathaway, imposing on your hospitality and good nature.

HOPE. You can't, on the first; and you never stay long enough to test the second.

JACK (*laughing*). We certainly do make a convenience of you. But I can't ask Daisy to hang round corners waiting for me, now can I?

DAISY. Haven't come to that yet; but I may——

JACK. When you come to that, I shan't wait any longer. There will be an auto on that corner, and it will be headed for Copley Square. Which reminds me, there's an auto below now, and it's headed for the Aqueduct Road. (*Bowing with exaggerated politeness to HOPE*) Did I understand you to say you could not go to-day, Miss Hathaway?

HOPE (*with exaggerated regret*). So sorry, Mr. Drake. Such a pressing invitation. But circumstances over which I have no control—I am forced to trust you to Daisy's tender mercies.

JACK. That is hard luck. Daisy's mercy isn't the Portia kind.

HOPE (*laughing*). Which doesn't get the blessing?

JACK (*dolefully*). Me! When there is any.

DAISY. But you take everything else in sight——

JACK. Including you, when I can get you, for which thanks to Miss Hathaway. (*Shaking hands*) Come on, Daisy, they've cut us down to twelve miles an hour, you know.

DAISY (*going*). Sorry to leave you, Hope.

HOPE (*laughing*). You look it, both of you. Good-bye. (*As DAISY and JACK are going out, they run into DANA coming in.*)

DANA. Hullo, Commodore! You here?

JACK. Hullo, Strong! Didn't look for you this time of day.

DANA. Oh, don't mind me, you and Daisy aren't eloping,

are you? (*Crosses to HOPE, who greets him smilingly, and draws her hand through his arm.*)

JACK. We haven't come to that point yet. Not that I'd mind.

HOPE. Nice, careful brother, you are, Dana. This is the age when things are done "by suggestion."

DAISY. Thanks, Hope. Take note, if I do anything reckless Dana is responsible.

DANA. I have a fellow-feeling for you kids; you have to steal all you get anyway.

HOPE. So you condone petty larceny and encourage burglary. I think I will reconsider our relations.

JACK (*laughing*). If he means to make a financier, he'd best cut out the first.

DANA. Come on, Daisy, I haven't much reputation left. (*Suddenly*) I say, Jack. (*To HOPE*) If you two will excuse me, I want to say a word to Jack.

HOPE (*laughing*). Oh! certainly. Come look over this song, Daisy. (*Goes to piano, and turns over music, playing snatches*) Had this yet? It is only just out, but everybody will be singing it in a week. (*JACK and DANA cross to window, and DANA talks earnestly, JACK looks surprised and amused.*)

JACK (*shaking hands*). Well, wish you luck, old man. I may follow your lead. Come on, Daisy, we're losing the whole "endurin' day." Good-bye again, Miss Hathaway.

[EXIT both.]

HOPE (*crossing to DANA*). It is a shame. He is such a good fellow. But seriously, Dana, I wouldn't suggest more wilfulness to Daisy. (*Sits on couch.*)

DANA (*laughing*). She's "up and coming" in that line.

HOPE. If they will only wait, things will come out all right in time.

DANA. Well, I'll leave you to preach waiting, I couldn't do it with a very good grace just now. (*Suddenly, seriously*) Hope, can we be married to-morrow?

HOPE (*springing up*). To-morrow. Married—to-morrow!

DANA (*whimsically*). That is what I said. It may seem a trifle previous.

HOPE. Previous! Why I haven't even thought of getting ready.

DANA (*crossing, and putting his arm about her*). But you said you would marry me—

HOPE (*interrupting*). Next Spring.

DANA (*argumentatively*). Then why not now?

HOPE. Why, I haven't a new thing to my name.

DANA. All the better. A man hates to be spotted as "newly married."

HOPE. But why?

DANA. Hates to be spotted?

HOPE. Now you know. Why?

DANA. Well—I hadn't a thought of it this morning; but in the morning mail, came an order from a big concern in Oregon, for a month's work; a hurry-up job, wire reply. And I wired "Start by Canadian Pacific, to-morrow, 3 P. M." Then I thought, what a shame Hope should miss that. If we were married now. And then I thought, why not? I may never have an order there again. So here I am!

HOPE (*listening eagerly*). Dana!—That perfectly gorgeous trip through the Ozarks.

DANA. That's it!

HOPE. Oh! How I have wanted that.

DANA (*whimsically*). And me?

HOPE (*laughing*). It is an inducement—

DANA. Me?

HOPE (*laughing again*). No! The Ozarks.

DANA (*with mock humility*). Well. I never hope to fill the place of the Ozarks. Do you think you could take me as an accompaniment?

HOPE (*thoughtfully*). There is no other way of getting them, I suppose.

DANA (*getting up and standing with his hands in his pockets*). I should hate to be an impediment. I don't see any other, at present.

HOPE (*hesitatingly*). It is so very present, to-morrow.

DANA (*quoting*). "If 'twere well 'twere done, 'twere well 'twere done quickly."—Can you?

HOPE (*breathlessly*). Dana, I can't. Give me an hour. Come back in an hour, and I will tell you.

DANA (*coming to her quickly, and bending over her*). Will you, Hope? Will you really consider it? Honestly, that's more than I hoped.

HOPE (*laughing*). You mean more than you deserved. Now go.

DANA. I am going to telephone for two tickets and a compartment.

HOPE. Provisionally?

DANA. "Hope springs eternal"—provisionally— (*Looks at watch*) In an hour. [EXIT DANA.]

HOPE (*alone, moves about restlessly, then sits in armchair, musing*). Can I? Can't I? Is there any reason why not? (*Laughs*) I suppose there are heaps of reasons, and heaps of people who would and will be properly shocked. But there's not one who has the right to say "No" (*Soberly*) nor one to say—"Yes, dear, go!" (*Rises and walks about again*) And I want to. (*Laughs*) If you only knew, Dana. (*Sits on low seat, hands clasped on knees*) And all the fussing cut out. This bride wouldn't be worn out with dress-making. (*Catching her breath*) And the Ozarks instead. Can I?

ENTER MIRIAM.

MIRIAM (*standing holding portieres apart*). May I come in, Hope?

HOPE (*springing up and meeting her*). Was there ever a time when you might not?

MIR. (*coming down with her arm about HOPE*). It is good to look at you, childie!

HOPE (*laughing*). Look your fill, then; for it's like to be the last you will see of Hope Hathaway.

MIR. (*stopping suddenly*). The last——

HOPE (*putting her in easy-chair, and bringing low seat*). Sit down, and I'll tell you all about it. (*Puts her arms up and draws MIRIAM down with an impulsive embrace*) Do you know, when a girl hasn't a mother she is very lucky to have you, Miriam Orr.

MIR. (*laughing tenderly, and smoothing her hair*). Do you know, when a woman hasn't a daughter, she is very lucky to have you, Hope Hathaway. Well?

HOPE. Well—I am going to marry Dana——

MIR. I know that——

HOPE. And you are coming down to the Advent, to-morrow, to see me do it.

MIR. To-morrow! When was that settled?

HOPE (*demurely, looking at her watch*). Just thirty minutes ago. (*Takes pin from her dress, and fastens it in MIRIAM'S*) Hope Hathaway's parting gift, dear.

MIR. (*kissing her*). You extravagant child. But Hope——

HOPE (*fastening pin securely*). It looks just like you—do you like it?

MIR. Like it, your gift?

HOPE. But if it wasn't! (MIRIAM *laughs*) Oh! I remembered.

MIR. Oh, you remembered, without question. Do you ever forget what people like?

HOPE (*saucily*). When I like, I forget even the people.

MIR. But Hope—

HOPE. You've lectured me on that point, more than once. There I won't tease. You see Dana had a sudden order from a big concern in Oregon and he is going by the Canadian Pacific—that magnificent trip through the Ozarks—and he said it was a shame I should miss it, and if I could and would get ready in a hurry (*Speaking very rapidly*) and since I had made up my mind to marry him some day, and since you had made up my mind that a man marries a woman, and not her clothes, I just made an obeisance to the Fetich of Convention—you see.

MIR. I see, but it rather takes my breath away.

HOPE. It did mine. And when I caught it, I said, "I can't. I haven't a new thing to my name."

MIR. (*laughing*). And Dana said "All the better."

HOPE. He did. How did you know?

MIR. (*soberly*). When I was a man, I hated to be spotted as newly wed.

HOPE (*laughing*). How you do see the other side, Miriam. Now I just look through my own little peephole.

MIR. (*touching pin*). I've noticed that. So you are going to see the Ozarks, and Banff, and all the rest of it through your little peephole.

HOPE (*springing up*). Could you even think of a more perfectly gorgeous wedding journey? (*Soberly, standing before MIRIAM*) Truly, Miriam, I've hardly given a thought yet to the way I'm going, the going itself is so wonderful.

MIR. But you will. And when you come back— (HOPE *crosses suddenly to window, then comes back.*)

HOPE (*soberly*). That is another thing. Dana wants me to go to his father. His father asked it. He has been awfully nice to me, Miriam, but—

MIR. (*sympathizingly*). Of course, every girl wants her own home.

HOPE. And I've never had a real one. This is the one bitter drop in my cup.

MIR. So very bitter, dear?

HOPE (*sitting on the arm of her chair, and speaking earnestly*). It isn't altogether selfish. I want to make a

home for Dana too, (MIRIAM takes her hand and strokes it softly) and now— (Pauses and speaks dreamily) and now— (Looking at MIRIAM, and speaking slowly) I am going to the Strongs.

MIR. (smilingly). Yes?

HOPE (hesitatingly). It is Dana's home.

MIR. (emphatically). Good.

ENTER DANA.

DANA (at portieres). Hour's up—may I come in, Hope?

HOPE (springing up). Oh, Dana! (MIRIAM rises.)

DANA (coming forward and greeting her). Beg pardon, Miss Orr; you see Hope and I had an engagement—

MIR. (smiling). So have I, to-morrow, at the Advent. (DANA stops suddenly, and looks at HOPE. HOPE smiles shyly at him. He crosses to her quickly, and takes both her hands.)

DANA. Really, Hope?

HOPE (mischievously). There had to be a preliminary, if I wanted to go.

DANA (looking at her eagerly). And you will?

HOPE. You don't seem especially open to conviction.

MIR. (laughing). A truly masculine quality. Good-bye, I seem to be of no special use to you two at present. If you want me later, Hope, telephone.

DANA (shaking hands violently with MIRIAM). She's been awfully good to me, Miss Orr. When you spring a thing on a girl that way—

HOPE (laughing). She can't get away from it, I was caught fast, Dana, among the Ozarks. We take the train at three, to-morrow, Miriam.

DANA. Take note, we take the train, Miss Orr.

MIR. And the preliminary?

DANA (grasping his hat). Good heavens! And I haven't seen the minister.

HOPE. Make it late as possible, Dana. Don't go, Miriam, there's a "mort o' things" to do, and I want to ask you more'n a million questions. (Puts her arm around her.)

DANA (checking on his fingers). Minister, ring, license, carriage, tickets, express.

HOPE (laughing). Confess you didn't know what you were "up against." Better "call it off."

DANA. If he says noon?

HOPE (smiling). Noon it will be.

DANA (*taking both her hands again*). Hope, sure?

MIR. (*smiling at them, and going up L.*). Sure. Hope hath a way. [EXIT MIRIAM.]

DANA (*catching HOPE quickly in his arms*). There never was a girl like you, Hope. Is it true?

HOPE (*laughing*). It won't be, if you stay here.

DANA. Right you are. There's no shilly-shallying this trip. (*Catches his hat, and goes quickly back, and almost knocks over JABEZ at door.*)

DANA (*starting back*). Beg pardon. Why, hullo, Governor. Who'd thought of seeing you, this time of day!

HOPE (*coming forward*). Glad to see you, any time of day, Mr. Strong.

DANA (*aside to HOPE*). By all that's lucky. (*To JABEZ*) Hope I didn't butt into you too strong, sir.

JABEZ (*shaking hands with HOPE*). Oh! that's all right, Dana, that's all right! I'm not senile yet, I hope. (*Sharply*) Where's Daisy? Her mother said she came here.

HOPE (*quickly*). She was here, she has just gone.

JABEZ. Hm! Gone where?

DANA. She didn't say, sir.

JABEZ (*suspiciously*). Alone?

HOPE (*quickly*). She came alone, Mr. Strong.

DANA (*laughing*). She's probably in the middle of a bunch of girls, now, sir. Daisy's popular, you know.

JABEZ (*gruffly*). Too popular by half. (*Looks keenly from one to the other*) You didn't see young Drake lounging round outside, waiting for her?

HOPE (*laughing and relieved*). Oh! no, sir.

DANA (*carelessly*). Give you my word on that, sir. I know Drake wasn't outside!

JABEZ (*angrily*). He is hanging round again. And I tell you, Dana, I won't have it.

DANA (*carelessly*). The boys are all after Daisy, sir. She's a jolly sort of girl, and I don't think one counts more than another. (*Suddenly*) Can you spare an hour, Governor? I'm off to the West to-morrow; and there's rather an important matter I've got to talk over with you.

JABEZ (*suddenly attentive*). Made a bad investment?

DANA (*looking at HOPE*). Well, no, sir; rather a good one, I think; but I'd like to have your opinion on it.

JABEZ. Hm! Well, we can talk as we go down town. (*Sharply*) Haven't been buying on margins, have you?

(*Shaking hands with HOPE*) This is the best stock you've invested in! (*Going.*)

HOPE (*laughing*). Thank you, sir.

DANA (*emphatically*). That stock's all right, sir. (*Going with JABEZ.*)

JABEZ (*as he goes out*). But mind you, I don't take any stock in young Drake, and I won't have him!

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE 1.—*Two months later. Morning room at the STRONGS'. Modern furnishing, rather rich. Piano R. Small desk L. Table R. center. Several chairs, one a rocker. Entrances back, L. and R. DISCOVERED MRS. STRONG, in rocking chair with knitting. ENTER HOPE back.*

MRS. STRONG. Oh! Hope, I just wanted you. I worry, and worry, and it doesn't do a bit of good.

HOPE (*laughing and patting her shoulder*). Never did, little mother!

MRS. S. Daisy is so wilful; and Jabez is so determined; and neither of them will listen to me. (*Telephone rings outside.*)

ENTER DAISY L.

DAISY (*running across to entrance back*). Oh! I know that's Jack.

MRS. S. And she has been forbidden even to telephone him.

DAISY (*outside*). Hullo—thought that was you, Jack—sorry—can't—father'd raise the roof if you brought me home. Matinee?—why, yes. I could come home alone after that. All right. Young's. In time for luncheon? I don't see why not—all right. I'll be there. Good-bye.

MRS. S. (*helplessly*). There you see.

ENTER DAISY *from back*.

HOPE. Little risky, isn't it, Daisy? Domestic tornadoes aren't comfortable.

DAISY (*indifferently*). We always have them, you know. It doesn't make much difference whether Jack is the exciting cause, or some other little thing.

HOPE (*laughing*). I shouldn't call Jack a "little thing."

DAISY (*laughing*). No, bless him. Harvard would have lost last time without his "strong right arm." I must run up and dress. (*Starts to go as JABEZ ENTERS back.*)

MRS. S. Why, Jabez. What brought you home this time of day?

JABEZ. I suppose I can come home to luncheon, if I like. (*Throws himself into armchair*) If you are very inquisitive, I had some papers I wanted to go over with John Burton, so I told him to come to lunch. (*Turns to DAISY*) Daisy, I expect him to be treated with civility. Understand?—

DAISY (*leaving room*). Sorry I can't be civil to Mr. Burton to-day. I have an engagement.

JABEZ (*quickly and suspiciously*). With whom?

HOPE (*interposing playfully*). I'm not so fascinating as Daisy, father; but I will do the best I can in the way of civility.

JABEZ (*softening*). You are always civil, my dear. Dana probably never knew it, but he did a good thing when he married you.

HOPE (*demurely*). I don't know how Dana could be expected to know that. I might tell him your opinion. (*Signals to DAISY to go.*)

JABEZ (*aggressively*). I asked you a question, Daisy.

DAISY (*evasively, standing in doorway*). I was going to the matinee.

JABEZ. I prefer you to stay at home. Mr. Burton will be pleased to take you to the theater to-night, instead.

DAISY (*crossly*). You know I can't bear Mr. Burton. (*Crosses to piano.*)

JABEZ (*sharply*). I know more than that. (*Turns suddenly to MRS. STRONG, who starts nervously*) Mother, has that young Drake been here again?

MRS. S. (*hesitatingly*). I don't know why you should think so, Jabez. And I don't see what possible harm he can do, the Drakes are very nice people.

JABEZ (*sneeringly*). A race of adventurers with sense enough to make governments pay for their adventures. (*Turns to table and takes up paper*) Now, John Burton is a solid man—

DAISY (*sitting at piano, and turning music*). I should say

“heavy,” but perhaps the two are synonymous. (JABEZ *throws down paper angrily.*)

MRS. S. (*in timid reproof*). Daisy, your father was talking. Besides, it really doesn't make much difference, you know, whether he is solid or only heavy.

DAISY (*playing softly, any convenient air*). No difference whatever in this case.

JABEZ (*angrily*). You will find a difference, young lady! No Drake shall have the handling of my money.

ENTER BINKS *with card.*

BINKS. A gentleman to see you, sir. Shall I take 'im to the liberry, sir?

JABEZ. Yes, and say I will be there presently. (EXIT BINKS, JABEZ *crosses to DAISY*) I forbid your leaving the house this afternoon. (DAISY *shrugs her shoulders*) I won't have you going about with that young man! (*Violently*) Do you understand? [EXIT JABEZ.

MRS. S. (*complainingly*). I don't see why you will annoy your father so, Daisy, if you would only do as he says——

DAISY (*angrily*). Do as he says. Let poor Jack go, and marry John Burton.

MRS. S. Oh, I don't mean to go as far as that, my dear. Oh, Daisy, you do worry me so.

DAISY (*coming over and petting her*). Poor little Mammykins. Between father's cannonading and my musketry you get it pretty hard. Hope is about all you have of comfort when Dana's away. Don't you worry, dearie, I won't go to-day.

MRS. S. (*relieved*). That's a dear child. I must see Nora about the lunch table. (*Bustles out L.*)

DAISY (*going back to piano stool, and sitting dejectedly*). Poor Jack, I don't know what he'll think.

HOPE (*putting MRS. STRONG'S knitting away*). Can't you telephone him at Young's?

DAISY. Wouldn't dare, father would hear every word.

HOPE (*anxiously*). Can't I go in and explain to him?

DAISY (*laughing*). If you did, that blessed Genius of Suspicion would see through the whole thing and know why you went, and then you would come in for some of it. No dear, he will just have to wait, and wonder, and say “confound it” and a few other little things. I'll write him and put a special on, he will get it to-night.

HOPE. Write it now. I'll take it out to make sure of it.

DAISY. You're a dear. (*Kisses her, then sits at desk, HOPE stands beside her while she writes*) Poor fellow, he will be disappointed. Don't know when I can contrive to see him. (*Looks up at HOPE*) These storms aren't doing you any good, my dear. You are acquiring a tiny line here. (*Draws pen between her eyes*) There. (*Sealing note, which HOPE takes*) Thanks dear. Hurry (*EXIT HOPE back*) back, or father will know you went for some message to Jack. Catch me going to the theater with John Burton. I don't like him, and I don't. (*Sits on low stool with chin on hands*) Now, I wonder. He flatters father, that I know; and when a man flatters, he is born to it like a Spaniard or a darkey, or he does it for a purpose. Now I don't think John Burton was born to it. (*Muses.*)

ENTER HOPE and MIRIAM back.

HOPE. Daisy, I want you to meet my friend, Miriam Orr. May I bring her in here?

DAISY (*springing up, crossing to meet them and greeting MIRIAM*). Charmed to meet you, Miss Orr. Hope has told me a little bit about you.

MIR. I couldn't have a better introduction. (*Stands holding DAISY'S hand*) I am glad to see Hope's sister Daisy.

DAISY (*impulsively*). Hope's sister wouldn't mind being "Daisy" to you, too. And some day I am coming to see you, may I? (*MIRIAM smiles at her*) Now I am going to leave you two. Hope has more'n a million things to tell you, I know. (*To HOPE*) Miss Orr will stay for luncheon?

HOPE (*appealingly*). Will you, Miriam?

MIR. Yes, if you wish it, with pleasure.

DAISY (*going*). Au revoir, then. [EXIT L.

HOPE. Now that is good of you. Give me your hat. (*Takes it*) Now sit here. (*Putting her in armchair, and bringing low seat beside her*) You are such a comfort, Miriam.

MIR. (*smiling*). A two months' wife want comforting?

HOPE (*quickly*). Oh, not that way. (*Laughing*) You always were a comfort, you know.

MIR. (*laughing*). You too.

HOPE. Why did you go away just as I came? For a whole month I have been longing to make you see those wonderful mountains.

MIR. You did. Your letters were short, but they were pictures.

HOPE. They were woefully inadequate. I was intensely excited before, but there, something made words an impertinence. The only thing I could do, was to hold Dana's hand hard.

MIR. And be glad you had it to hold.

HOPE (*nodding*). Pretty good hand to hold to.

MIR. And now you're settling down.

HOPE (*with a little sigh*). Yes.

MIR. What is the shadow, dear?

HOPE. It's not my shadow, Miriam. It is just an atmosphere of cross-purposes, very cross-purposes, (*With a little laugh*) and tangles, and snarls; the snarliest kind of snarls.

MIR. That may be why you came. Tangles can be straightened out.

HOPE (*earnestly*). I thought so at first but it must have been an impertinence. Instead of smoothing out the snarls, I am getting tangled up in them. (*Suddenly*) Miriam, I believe you could do it.

MIR. (*quietly*). Do what?

HOPE (*impulsively*). I know you could. I never saw anyone find out ways to help cross-purposes as you do.

MIR. (*laughing*). Diagnose the case, dear.

HOPE. You'll diagnose it fast enough at lunch. I want you just now, more than I can say. Could you come, say for a week?

MIR. But Mrs. Strong?

HOPE. Oh, that is all right. I have my own apartments. Guests are among my "perquisites."

MIR. And Dana?

HOPE (*laughing*). Wait till Dana comes. If he doesn't endorse my invitation I'll recall it, and my opinion of him.

MIR. I wouldn't meddle with the last, even under such provocation. (*Laughing*.)

HOPE. He is a dear boy. Then it is settled, and I shall announce at lunch that you are to make me a little visit, and I believe—

BURTON (*outside*). Just as you think best, Mr. Strong. I defer entirely to your opinion.

ENTER JABEZ *with* BURTON.

JABEZ. Nonsense, nonsense, Burton. Your opinion is as

good as mine any day. I may have a little more experience, (*Stopping, and emphasizing with finger on his palm*) but for good solid judgment, I'd take your opinion quicker than I would most men's.

BURT. And you think you'd better take hold of this? (*Tentatively*) It's a pretty big deal.

JABEZ. Sure as the Treasury. We'll clear half a million on that, easy. (*As they talk, they stand facing each other near the entrance. HOPE and MIRIAM are hidden by the back of the chair, and are both uneasy at overhearing. Here HOPE crosses to them.*)

HOPE. I am afraid we are intruding, father.

JABEZ (*turning pleasantly*). Not a bit, Hope, my dear, not a bit. We had settled matters before we came in. Let me present Mr. Burton, Mrs. Dana Strong, Burton.

HOPE (*pleasantly, shaking hands*). Mr. Burton's name is not strange to me.

BURT. (*impressively*). May I hope Mr. Burton's self may not be?

HOPE (*lightly*). Time will show. (*Turning to JABEZ*) Father, I want to introduce an old friend of mine. (*MIRIAM comes forward*) My friend, Miss Orr, Mr. Strong.

JABEZ (*shaking hands*). Glad to see you, Miss Orr, my friend, Mr. Burton. (*MIRIAM bows, and BURTON responds*) Hope, where is Daisy?

HOPE. In her room, I think. I'll call her.

[EXIT *quickly back*.

ENTER MRS. STRONG *back*.

MRS. S. I was just going to see if you were ready for luncheon, Jabez. How do you do, Mr. Burton? (*Shakes hands*) This is all in the family, you know, we don't make a stranger of you.

BURT. You are very kind, Mrs. Strong. I hope you do not mind my intrusion.

MRS. S. (*flustered*). Oh! not at all. I don't mind anybody. If people are disagreeable, I always think the easiest way is not to mind it.

BURT. (*dryly*). Hm—yes—

JABEZ (*frowning and speaking quickly*). Mother, you haven't seen Hope's friend.

MIR. (*coming forward quickly, and offering her hand*).

I am trespassing on your hospitality, too, Mrs. Strong, under Hope's authority. I hope you won't mind me, either.

MRS. S. Oh! not at all. I don't mind (*Looking at her with interest*) Have I ever met you before? You seem like an old friend, somehow.

MIR. (*laughing*). I am Hope's old friend, Miriam Orr; and since it is "all in the family" now, perhaps you will let me in.

MRS. S. (*pleased*). My dear, I'll be delighted. Where is Daisy? (*ENTER DAISY and HOPE back*) We're all waiting for you, Daisy.

HOPE (*quickly*). That was my fault. I was talking to her.

BURT. (*crossing to her*). A most unexpected pleasure, Miss Daisy.

DAISY (*flippantly*). "It is the unexpected which happens." For instance I "expected" to be at the matinee.

BURT. (*suavely*). I hope nothing serious prevented.

DAISY (*dryly*). Quite the reverse. I assure you I do not give "it" a moment's consideration.

BURT. (*bending over her*). Am I so light in your estimation?

MRS. S. Jabez, will you take Miss Orr into luncheon?

JABEZ (*offering his arm*). With pleasure. How does it happen, Miss Orr, that we haven't had the pleasure of seeing you before? (*Going out with her.*)

BURT. (*offering his arm*). Miss Daisy?

DAISY. Oh! not at all. It is your privilege to take the bride. (*BURTON bows, offers his arm to HOPE, and EXITS with her.*)

DAISY (*offering her arm with mock ceremony to her mother, then giving her a little hug*) I slipped out of that, didn't I? Not the first time I've blessed Hope.

MRS. S. Your father didn't like it, Daisy. (*Apprehensively.*)

DAISY. Oh, don't bother your head over that! He never likes anything I do. What does it matter?

[*EXIT both. Stage empty.*]

BINKS (*outside*). I'm not sure she's at 'ome, sir. I'll see, sir. (*Opens portieres.*)

ENTER JACK.

JACK (*puts hat on side-table and comes forward*). Suppose I can't run across the old gentleman this time of day.

ENTER DAISY *back*.

DAISY (*crossing quickly to him*). Oh, Jack, you must go this minute.

JACK (*putting his arm about her and laughing*). 'Pon my word, Daisy, I haven't had such a hospitable welcome since I was a kid. Used to get that sort then.

DAISY (*putting her hand over his mouth*). Sh! Father's in the dining-room.

JACK (*giving a long, low whistle*). So, *that's* why you didn't come.

DAISY (*nodding*). Hm—hm——

JACK. Been feasting long?

DAISY. No, just begun.

JACK (*pulling her down on couch beside him*). Good, then let's be comfortable.

DAISY (*jumping up*). Jack, I can't. He may come in any moment. And Mr. Burton is there, and I must go back.

JACK. Confound him. What does he want?

DAISY (*demurely*). Me.

JACK (*putting his arm around her again*). So do I. Let's see him get you. (DAISY *laughs*) I never did like John Burton.

DAISY (*nestling against him*). Nor I. That's our one point of sympathy. Jack, (*Withdrawing from him*) this will never do.

JACK (*putting his hands in his pockets, and frowning heavily*). He was in the class of '99. I know lots of fellows who knew him, and I say, Daisy, not one has a good word for him. He was keen at cards, and he always cleaned out the other fellows. I hear he's been speculating pretty heavily lately, but he'll come out right side up; he always does.

DAISY. Jack, do you suppose? (*Pause.*)

JACK. Next!

DAISY. Father has money, you know——

JACK. I've had that idea presented to me. I understand he objects to "Naval Pensioners." I *might* go into trade, but I don't want to. There's a hunger for the sea in the Drake blood, Daisy.

DAISY. I wasn't thinking about you——

JACK. Thanks! Seems I flattered myself.

DAISY. I was thinking of Mr. Burton——

JACK (*with burlesque tragedy*). My hated R-r-r-ival!

DAISY (*laughing*). Jack, behave! Do you suppose he could have "designs" on father?

JACK. It is enough for me that he has designs on you.

DAISY. Now, Jack, be serious. It is a fact, for Hope told me so, that he is getting father into some speculation now. Now, do *you* think.

JACK (*seriously*). I think John Burton would not hesitate to make use of anyone, but I also think he's too level-headed to play a losing game. All business men take risks, and this is probably one where he will pull off a hundred thousand or so; and, if he has the management of it—your father half as much.

ENTER HOPE *hurriedly*.

HOPE. Daisy! (*Sees JACK, and stops suddenly*) Oh—

JACK (*coming forward and shaking hands*). That's eloquent, Mrs. Strong.

HOPE (*smiling, but looking worried*). You must come back, Daisy. Your father is getting very uneasy, and I offered to come and suggest that you invite your friend out to lunch.

JACK (*with a low bow*). Her friend accepts with alacrity.

HOPE (*apprehensively*). I don't know how long Miriam can keep him quiet. Do go, Mr. Drake!

JACK. You're as pressingly hospitable as Daisy. (*Laughs*) I'll go; but not to stay. That Burton chap is not going to have all the innings. (*Picking up his hat.*)

DAISY (*with a little push*). Do go, Jack.

JACK (*going*). There was a young damsel named Daisy,
Whose financial ideas were that hazy—

DAISY (*laughing*). Oh go! (*As JACK starts through the portieres on one side, JABEZ ENTERS through the other. Both start back.*)

JACK (*stopping with a very deep bow*). I was just about to accept your very cordial invitation to lunch, Mr. Strong.

JABEZ (*furiously angry*). My invitation, sir—my invitation—

JACK (*with urbane courtesy*). Should have been honored at once, sir; as I am honored by it. If you will have the kindness to precede me?— Mrs. Strong, may I offer you my arm? (*HOPE takes it.*)

JABEZ. Sir—sir—

JACK (*waiting with HOPE on his arm*). After you, sir. (*JABEZ turns to go out, JACK and HOPE following.*)

CURTAIN.

The Upsetting of Jabez Strong.

SCENE 2.—*Same as SCENE 1. Same day, evening. Room lighted. MRS. STRONG DISCOVERED in rocking chair, knitting, JABEZ walking about in a rage.*)

JABEZ (*furiously*). It is outrageous. A man was never so browbeaten in his own house before. Such flagrant disobedience. Nice way you've brought up your daughter, Mrs. Strong.

MRS. S. (*rocking*). One—two—three—four—five——

JABEZ. Mother! (MRS. STRONG *jumps*) Why don't you answer me?

MRS. S. (*aggrieved*). There. You've made me drop my stitch. I didn't know you asked me anything, Jabez.

JABEZ. Why did you let your daughter go with that good-for-nothing?

MRS. S. Mr. Burton?

JABEZ (*violently*). No! Will you stop that everlasting rocking?

MRS. S. But she went with Mr. Burton. (*Complainingly*) I think you are a little unreasonable, Jabez.

JABEZ. Yes—and who else went?

MRS. S. Why Mr. Drake took Hope, and he *asked* Mr. Burton to take Daisy. I'm sure, I don't see how you can find fault with that.

JABEZ (*dryly*). Burton's capable of doing his own asking. I tell you I won't have it, mother.

MRS. S. (*puzzled*). Mr. Burton's asking, do you mean? (*Aggrieved*) I don't understand you, Jabez; I thought that was just what you wanted.

JABEZ (*savagely*). I wish I had gone with them!

MRS. S. I was wishing you would. We could have taken a box, just a nice family party.

JABEZ. Thank you, I don't count young Drake in *my* family.

ENTER MIRIAM.

MIR. (*at entrance*). Shall I disturb you if I come in?

JABEZ (*gruffly*). Oh! not at all, not at all. (*Continues his walk.*)

MRS. S. Delighted to have you, my dear. (*Bustles up to place chair.*)

MIR. (*taking chair*). Oh, don't trouble, Mrs. Strong. I had finished my letters, and wanted to come and tell my hosts how much I am indebted for their hospitality.

MRS. S. (*fluttered*). Oh, that's nothing, really, Miss Orr; this is such a big house, I don't mind who comes.

JABEZ (*emphatically*). I do.

MIR. (*smiling at him*). Then I rate more highly your welcome of me. It gives me the opportunity to see Hope in her own home. I don't know whether you know it, Mr. Strong, but Hope is to me, like my own child.

JABEZ (*gruffly*). Hope she'll repay you better than mine does me. (*Still walking, but less excitedly.*)

MIR. (*laughing*). Really, I never thought of payment. But I think I could hardly have felt less responsibility than you. When she first knew Dana, I made as close inquiry as you would in like case. (*Laughs again*) I even went to his old college professors, and saw some of his classmates.

JABEZ (*stopping, with a sudden keen look at her*). Don't know as I should have gone as far as that, myself.

MIR. You couldn't get better testimony. It is like a sea-trip. A man shows himself for what he is there.

JABEZ. Well, Dana stood well in his classes. (*Sits near her.*)

MIR. (*earnestly*). More than that, his record was clean and straight, all through. You have a son to be proud of, Mr. Strong.

MRS. S. I always said Dana would come out all right.

JABEZ (*mollified*). Very kind of you to say so. He and I had one disagreement about business. I wanted him to go into the office with me; but he preferred electrical engineering. He would have made more, to do as I said.

MIR. But he makes a fair income?

JABEZ. O, so—so. He might do much better.

MIR. But if he and Hope are satisfied?

JABEZ. That's just what I can't understand. How a man can be content with hundreds, when he might have thousands. (*Warming, and leaning forward*) There's a sense of power, Miss Orr, in controlling large issues; and the way things are run in this country, about the only chance for that, outside politics, is in handling big corporations.

MIR. (*quietly*). What would the corporations be without electricity?

JABEZ (*emphatically*). By George. Never looked at it that way before! (*Leans toward her*) You are a very unusual woman, Miss Orr!

MIR. (*laughing*). Your acquaintance must be limited.

JABEZ (*leaning back in his chair*). May be—may be—I am

a busy man. My acquaintance is mostly with stenographers and typewriters.

MIR. You have a charming daughter.

JABEZ (*frowning*). A most obstreperous one.

MRS. S. (*remonstrating*). Now, Jabez.

MIR. And Mrs. Strong is full of the milk of human kindness.

MRS. S. (*fluttered*). That's so sweet of you, Miss Orr.

JABEZ (*still frowning*). Too full. If she had a little more discrimination.

MIR. I cannot help being glad she didn't discriminate against me. You have both been most kind.

JABEZ (*softening*). Miss Orr, I still hold to my opinion. There's something about you, I don't know what it is, but if you would take hold of Daisy.

MIR. What is the trouble? She seems to me very lovable.

JABEZ (*dryly*). She is too lovable. That's the trouble.

MIR. Oh—

JABEZ. And she encourages a young man to whom I have the *strongest* objections. In fact (*Violently*) I won't have him! (*Rises and crosses to chimney, where he stands with his hands behind his back.*)

MRS. S. (*timidly*). I don't believe Miss Orr is interested in these things, Jabez.

MIR. (*laughing*). You know no one is so interested in other affairs, as one who has none of her own. If you wouldn't mind stating your objections, Mr. Strong?

JABEZ. Why—he's one of the Harvard athletes.

MIR. Pretty bad; but not criminal. What else?

JABEZ (*violently*). The Drakes have been government pensioners for generations. And I am not in favor of an enlarged naval appropriation. I have some respect for a man who honestly earns his money.

MIR. (*rising and crossing to beside JABEZ*). I remember reading when a child of one Francis Drake. (*Smiling whimsically*) He had something to do with the Spanish Armada.

JABEZ. Well? If he hadn't done it, another would.

MIR. (*quietly*). Doubtless. England has never been lacking in men. I believe that Drake rescued Raleigh's ill-fated colony, too.

JABEZ (*plunging his hands in his pockets*). Adventurers all of them.

MIR. (*laughing*). This would have still been the Unknown Land, without that sort. What else?

JABEZ (*walking to and fro*). He's an insolent beggar.

MIR. (*sitting on piano stool*). He concealed it well at luncheon. I should have said, a gentlemanly (*Light pause*) beggar.

MRS. S. Now, Jabez, you know his father's sister lives on Commonwealth Avenue.

MIR. A family quarrel?

JABEZ (*grudgingly*). I admit the term was comparative.

MIR. Is his character hopelessly bad?

JABEZ (*stopping before her*). I don't know, and don't care. I thought we were talking about Daisy. Now, I want her to marry John Burton; and she's as self-willed and obstinate as—as— (*Strikes his hand with his fist*) There—it's no use talking. Anyone can see Burton is a rising man. He is young; but he's already well known on Change. Why, (*With enthusiasm*) Miss Orr, he can handle a big scheme as coolly as the oldest man there.

MIR. (*smiling sympathetically*). Naturally, you would like a son-in-law of congenial tastes.

JABEZ. And a man to whom I can trust my money. Now, Burton, is bound to be a rich man; and rich men have some respect for money.

MIR. (*quietly*). I've noticed that.

JABEZ. And Daisy hasn't a particle.

MIR. (*laughing*). Not even the king could make her a rich man, you know. That's unblushing theft from Thackeray.

JABEZ (*walking again, with his hands in his pockets*). 'Pon my word, Miss Orr, you are tremendously upsetting.

MIR. (*crossing to MRS. STRONG*). What are you making so pretty, Mrs. Strong? You look so cozy with your knitting.

MRS. S. (*pleased*). I think it's pretty. It's an afghan for a box they are sending out to the Philippines. They asked the ladies of the church for contributions, and I like to knit, so I began this. I don't know whether it will be done in time for this box, but it can go in the next.

MIR. (*controlling her amusement*). You are putting a great deal of time in it.

MRS. S. Oh, I don't mind. You are always having to give for some charity it might as well be this as anything else. (*Knitting and rocking comfortably. JABEZ stops in his walk,*

and makes a few steps toward MIRIAM as if to say something more, stands a moment, then walks again.)

MIR. (*examining afghan*). I was taught to knit as a little girl, but I am afraid I am not persevering enough.

MRS. S. (*seriously*). If ever you have trouble, my dear, you'll come back to it. You have no idea how you can knit your worries into an afghan, and then you send off the afghan and that's the last of them.

ENTER DANA, *back, with suit-case and umbrella, taking off hat as he comes in.*

MIR. (*laughing*). I will remember, if I——

DANA (*coming down*). Hullo! Hope upstairs? Thought she might be here. (*Dropping suit-case, etc.*) Why, Miss Orr, this is a pleasant surprise. (*Shakes hands warmly*) How do, mother? (*Kisses her*) All right, father?

JABEZ. All right, all right, Dana. How'd you get off? Didn't look for you till to-morrow.

DANA. Inspector came down. Told me he'd finish up there and I might come home to-day and get ready for new orders. Something big on hand, I fancy. But I'll go upstairs and find Hope, if you'll excuse me. See you later, Miss Orr. (*Picks up suit-case, etc.*)

MRS. S. Don't go, Dana; I haven't had a chance to look at you. Besides Hope's not there.

DANA. Not there. (*Drops suit-case again.*)

MRS. S. She went to the theater with Mr. Drake.

DANA. Well, I like that. Has Jack transferred his affections to my wife?

JABEZ (*dryly*). Not at all; there was no transfer. She acted as decoy, that's all.

DANA (*sternly*). Look here, father; it is my wife you are speaking of. Where is Daisy?

MRS. S. She's gone to the theater, too.

MIR. (*quickly*). With Mr. Burton. They made a party of four.

DANA (*relieved*). Oh, (*Laughs*) That's all right.

JABEZ (*surlily*). That's not "all right."

[EXIT JABEZ *back.*

DANA (*sitting down and laughing heartily*). How did it happen, mother? Daisy never would have gone with Burton without special provocation.

MRS. S. (*timidly*). Why, Mr. Drake was here at luncheon——

DANA. Jack, *here*—at *luncheon*—Good heavens! What next?

MRS. S. And he invited Hope to go and see the "Music Master" with him; and then he said:—"Mr. Burton, why don't you invite Miss Strong, and come too?"

DANA (*laughing*). And he did.

MRS. S. Why, yes; and Daisy accepted at once.

DANA (*laughing uncontrollably*). Accepted. 'Course she did. What did the old gentleman say?

MRS. S. Why—he couldn't say Hope shouldn't go with Mr. Drake; and he wouldn't say Daisy shouldn't go with Mr. Burton, and so they went.

DANA (*laughing*). That's rich. And then, poor little mother, you had to pay for it. Excuse me, Miss Orr, this is really very bad manners. But if you knew what a good fellow Jack is, and what a time he has of it to get even a glimpse of Daisy, and how funny the whole performance is. (*Laughs afresh.*)

MIR. (*laughing*). I own to sympathy with the runaways. But I'm afraid they gave your mother "un mauvais quart d'heure."

MRS. S. Oh, I don't mind. He always does it, you know.

[EXIT MRS. STRONG.]

DANA. Couldn't you smooth him down, Miss Orr? You have a genius that way.

MIR. (*smiling*). He says I am "tremendously upsetting".

DANA. That's queer. One time I should have been "tremendously upset" but for you. Remember the one quarrel Hope and I had?

MIR. Don't place too much to my account. Hope hath a way.

DANA. But you helped. (*Coming over and offering his hand*) I can never tell you all it meant.

MIR. (*holding his hand, and laying her other hand over it*). Be good to my child, Dana.

DANA (*bending over her hand, then holding it*). Mother Miriam, do you think you could take in a son?

MIR. (*laughing softly*). I have taken him in. And, Dana, keep that name, I like it. (*'Phone rings outside, DANA goes to answer it. MIRIAM sits a moment leaning back in her chair, smiling, then EXITS back.*)

DANA (*outside*). Hullo, Mr. Strong? Yes, he's here, hold the 'phone while I call him. Father. (*RE-ENTERS, picks up suit-case, and starts to go upstairs, but stops as he hears*

his father at the 'phone, drops his suit-case again, and listens with interest.)

JABEZ (*outside*). Coming. Hullo, Yes, this is Mr. Strong. Long distance from New York, all right. Hullo. Who wants me? Clayton, is it? What's up? What's that, Northern Intra-Montane Extension dropped clean out of sight? Burton, yes, knew he was, but he'll recoup. Hard luck for him when he knows it. Knew it this morning? Sure? You told him, Oh! Say you told him if he didn't have \$50,000 before to-morrow noon, he'd lose it all? Confound you! Why didn't you tell me sooner? Tried the office but couldn't get me? You did, Hm! And I was here, handing \$50,000 to that damned swindler. Yes, gone. Clean gone. Gave him check at noon. No—can't stop payment. Cashed it before three. What's the matter with that blamed New York office? They are paid to keep people up to these things. Well, it's gone. But if ever I can get a rise out of him, he better look out. (ENTERS *angrily*) Hear anything in New York, Dana, about Northern Intra-Montane Extension?

DANA. Heard it was pretty shaky, and interested parties were trying to keep it quiet. Meant to tell you. Sorry you got bit, sir!

JABEZ (*angrily*). Got bit! Tumbled into a trap, like a blamed fool that never saw 'Change. Got bit.

DANA. Can't you get after him? He knew.

JABEZ. Knew—How could I prove he knew? Confound him. Thought he had the inside track. And every figure was a lie. But the thing that makes me maddest, Dana, is to think how easily he took me in. Me!

Bell rings—followed by voices, as he is speaking. DANA goes out quickly, and RE-ENTERS, with HOPE and DAISY, all laughing and talking together.

QUICK CURTAIN.

ACT III.

The next day.

SCENE THE SAME.—DAISY *at the piano, playing a lively two-step, and HOPE in easy-chair with book.*

DAISY (*suddenly stopping in the middle of bar and whirling round*). He hasn't said a word, Hope, not a word. What do you think is going to happen?

HOPE. Don't know, my dear. All I do know is that Dana rushed off the first thing after breakfast to find your Jack. Said it was most important; and if a business call came, I was to take the number, and say he would call up later.

DAISY. I've been so puzzled all the morning because he didn't storm, that I'm almost frightened.

ENTER DANA *hastily.*

DANA. Daisy, here. I want you to write a note, quickly as you can. There's a messenger waiting downstairs. (*Opens desk and arranges writing materials.*)

DAISY. Since when couldn't you write? What is it, and to whom? (*Crosses to desk.*)

DANA. I'll dictate—"My Dear Mr. Burton"—

DAISY. I won't!

DANA. You will, and quickly. I'll tell you why later. (*DAISY writes*) "I feel that last night requires an explanation. Can you come at once?" Now sign it.

DAISY. But, Dana—

DANA. Quick. Now address the envelope "John Burton."

DAISY. Minus "Mister"?

DANA (*ignoring her question*). "The Kensington". Good. (*Puts on stamp and leaves the room quickly.*)

DAISY. Now, what do you suppose. If it had been anyone but Dana, I wouldn't have done it.

BINKS (*outside*). Yes, sir. I'll see, sir.

DAISY (*groaning*). Oh, he can't have come already.

BINKS (*entering and presenting card on salver*). Are you at 'ome, Miss?

DAISY (*looks at card, gives a little gasp, then recalls herself*). Yes, Binks. Bring him in here. Hope, it's Jack.

HOPE. Jack?

JACK (*at entrance*). Anyone call me?

DAISY. Oh, Jack! What did you come for?

JACK (*standing between portieres*). A very pressing invitation to lunch from your esteemed parent of the sterner sex.

DAISY. Jack! What do you mean?

JACK. Fact, I do assure you. May I come in if I show my credentials? (*Takes note from pocket and waves it.*)

DAISY (*crossing to him*). Not really?

JACK (*putting his arm about her*). Excuse me, Mrs. Strong, I need support. This is a trying ordeal.

HOPE (*laughing*). Don't mind me. I'll retire, if it will make you any happier.

DAISY (*emphatically*). Don't. I need the support of your presence. Now, Jack, if you will have the goodness to read—

JACK (*holding the note at arm's length, and reading*). "Mr. Jabez Strong"—note the third person, if you please—"requests the pleasure"—note "pleasure"—"of Mr. John Drake's"—know Mr. John Drake, Daisy?

DAISY (*laughing*). Never heard of him.

JACK (*with dignity*). That's me. "Mr. John Drake's company, at luncheon to-day, at 1,30 P. M. The Firs, Brookline, Thursday, November 7th." There you have it all. (*Folds and pockets it with a flourish*) I received it within the hour. I stayed not on the order of my coming; but I came; and if this is a forgery, and the result is a hurricane, I'll abduct you and make you "Mrs. John Drake" before there is time for a second one to burst. To which declaration, Mrs. Dana Strong is a witness.

HOPE (*laughing*). More than that; I promise to witness the act.

JACK (*bowing profoundly, with his hand on his heart*). Mrs. Strong, I am your slave for life. Now, Daisy, may I sit down?

DAISY (*dubiously*). I suppose you might. (*They sit*) What do you suppose he wants?

JACK. Not the faintest idea. He may offer to buy a yacht for me; and send us round the world on a wedding trip.

DAISY. Jack!

JACK. Or he may bring a private detective, to arrest me in revenge for last night. I really have nothing more plausible to suggest. But whatever happens we had last night. Wonder how Burton liked it?

HOPE (*laughing*). He answered direct questions—at random,—and kept a lowering eye on you while he did it.

JACK (*laughing heartily*). It was rough on him; but he'd no business poaching on my preserves!

HOPE. He might say the same of you. "All's fair in love and war."

DAISY (*springing up*). I wonder if this *is* war? Jack—do you suppose—

JACK. Well?

DAISY. Do you suppose Mr. Burton could have written that note?

JACK. Blest if I know. If he did, I'll have it out with him. He'll find a "Stroke Oar" no fool of a job to tackle. Besides—

DAISY. Is it father's hand? Let me see it.

JACK. Dictated; and sent by messenger.

DAISY (*jumping nervously*). Oh, I wish I knew. Jack, I have just sent—no—Dana has just sent, a note from me to John Burton, asking him to come here at once. (*Sits in an attitude of despair*) Why—I don't know, Dana does!

ENTER DANA *hurriedly, back.*

DANA (*crossing to JACK*). If this isn't a streak of luck. Been chasing you all over town. I heard you had some special information I was in need of. (*Lowering his voice*) I say, old man, what do you know about John Burton and Sid Harwell?

JACK (*getting up and thrusting his hands in his pockets*). I know all about it. And that's one thing made me mad to see him here. Why?

DANA. Good. They said you did if any one.

DAISY (*crossing to them*). Dana, what did I write that note for?

DANA (*turning to her*). Don't bother, Daisy. I haven't time for explanations now. I wanted John Burton here—that's all—and I knew he'd come if you asked him.

DAISY. I don't want him!

DANA (*laughing*). I didn't ask you to entertain him. Jack and I can give him all the entertainment he needs. And if you don't mind, you and Hope might leave the field to us.

DAISY (*running to JACK, and catching his arm*). Jack, you're not going to fight?

JACK (*laughing*). Don't bother your dear little head about that. We don't fight curs. We *whip* them.

DANA. Which is exactly what we propose for John B.

DAISY (*groaning*). Oh—it will be in all the papers.

JACK. Not much. Burton will see to that.

DANA. I'll tell you two girls everything you want to know in an hour or two. Now, Jack and I want to talk.

HOPE (*laughing*). "Run away little girls, we want to talk." Come, Daisy, this is the second time we've been invited to leave. (*Going out and looking back merrily*) We bear no malice. Bye-bye, Poo-Bah! [EXIT *both back*.

DANA. I would like to know what sent you here. Couldn't have planned it better if you had known. And in view of the circumstances. How did it happen?

JACK (*sitting center opposite DANA*). An invitation to lunch. And I don't quite know what to make of it, Strong. (*Shows it*). Of course I came.

DANA (*reading and frowning. Whistles*). Queer.

JACK. 'Spouse it's genuine?

DANA. Can't say. Governor wasn't much in this humor last night. (*Returns note*) However, nothing could be better just now. I want to get a clutch of some sort on that rascal, Burton—

JACK (*shaking hands vigorously*). Good. I'm with you. What's up?

DANA. Thanks. I knew he had some shady spots, and I find the shadiest was Sid Harwell. Now?

JACK. Case of malfeasance, possibly forgery.

DANA. Whew! That ought to serve my turn. Tell me about it.

JACK. Well, you know there was that set in Class '99, always played for money on the quiet, you know, and Harwell was plunger from the word go. Rich dad, and no sense. Burton was his Fidus Achates, went everywhere with him, and when Sid drank himself roaring drunk, or stupid, Burton was always on hand to tote him home.

DANA. Beautiful self-sacrifice.

JACK. Yes. One night they had a game, and Sid drank as usual, and lost as usual, pledged every blessed thing he had about him, even to his watch and studs, then gave Burton his I. O. U. for the rest of his winnings. Result, Harwell Senior withdrew Sid from college; and Burton cashed a check that ran up to five numbers.

DANA (*whistling*). Whew—! Any sequelae?

JACK. There was a lot of talk. Harwell Sr. said he wouldn't prosecute. Didn't want Sid mixed up in it. No-

body really knew anything, then. And I don't now. Now, what's all this for?

DANA. Well, the rascal mulcted my dad yesterday of \$50,000 on a scheme he knew was rotten. And I rather want to get even with him. I'd like to make him refund, but 'spose that's hopeless. I had a plan to corner him, I thought might work if I couldn't get at you, so I used Daisy as a decoy. Rather rough on Daisy but I didn't see any better way.

JACK. Think he'll come, after the little transaction of yesterday?

DANA. The slump's not published yet. He may think he can still pose as co-investor. I'll tackle him; and see what I can do, and hold you in reserve. (*Telephone rings outside*) Come into the den, and have a smoke. He ought to be here soon.

[EXIT both down R.]

BINKS (*answering telephone outside*). Hullo—Mr. Strong, sir—Yes, sir. Yes, sir—I'll tell 'er, sir—Yes, sir—All right, sir. (*Opens portieres as MRS. STRONG ENTERS up L.*)

MRS. S. Was that for me, Binks?

BINKS. Yes, Ma'am. It was Mr. Strong. Ma'am; an' 'e says as 'ow 'e'll be 'ome for lunch, Ma'am, at one-thirty.

MRS. S. Home for lunch again to-day!

BINKS. Yes, Ma'am, an' 'e said as 'ow 'e expected a gentleman, Ma'am.

MRS. S. Was that all?

BINKS. Yes, Ma'am. (*Stands waiting, and coughs discreetly.*)

MRS. S. Anything you want, Binks?

BINKS. If you please, Ma'am, one of the gentlemen that was 'ere yesterday is 'ere now.

MRS. S. (*looking round bewildered*). Here now!

BINKS. Yes, Ma'am—leastways 'e was; an' 'is 'at's not gone, Ma'am. (*Picks up JACK'S hat.*)

MRS. S. Oh, well, you may go, Binks. (EXIT BINKS. MRS. S. *picks up hat and looks at hat-band*) What possessed him to come again to-day? And Jabez coming home again with a gentleman. I must certainly get him out of the house before Jabez comes. They do worry me so!

[EXIT L. as MIRIAM ENTERS back.]

MIR. (*entering*). Hope, my dear— (*Sees empty room*) Oh, she must be upstairs. (*Turns to go out, and meets JABEZ coming in.*)

JABEZ. This is luck, Miss Orr. I had just sent Binks up to see if I might see you.

MIR. (*turning back*). I am entirely at your disposal, Mr. Strong.

JABEZ (*placing chairs*). I came home early, because—well, because I wanted a little talk with you before lunch. (*Leaning across the table toward MIRIAM*) Miss Orr, I never met another woman like you.

MIR. (*smiling*). I suppose we are all more or less individual.

JABEZ. Most of them less. You are more. You are most extraordinary. (*Pauses.*)

MIR. (*laughs*). You can hardly be waiting for me to confirm that statement?

JABEZ. I have been trying an experiment, and I want to tell you what I have been doing, or rather, what you have been doing.

MIR. (*amazed*). I thought I knew that.

JABEZ. Well—perhaps—but I doubt it. However, the result is that I have invited young Drake to luncheon.

MIR. You have invited young Drake to luncheon? How did it happen?

JABEZ. Well, your idea of college records struck in, I remembered how it was when I was at college, and I knew you had the thing straight. Then another thing happened, "but that's another story."

MIR. Well?

JABEZ. I went over to Harvard and I got his record.

MIR. (*smiling*). And what then?

JABEZ (*rather lamely*). And then—as I told you—I invited him to luncheon.

MIR. (*laughing*). Anything more?

JABEZ (*gruffly*). Anything more. Good heavens, Miss Orr, what more do you want? What do you expect of a man? If they can't work it out from that?

MIR. They don't deserve it. I wish all success to your new investment, Mr. Strong. And I think it will pay.

JABEZ. Maybe—maybe—but I doubt it. However, he's coming to luncheon—

ENTER MRS. STRONG L.

MRS. S. Oh, I didn't expect you so soon, Jabez. Did your friend come with you?

JABEZ. No—no—he'll come later, that is, I suppose he will.

MIR. (*going*). I will see you again at luncheon, Mr. Strong; and I shall be more than pleased to see your guest.

JABEZ. (*going after her*). One moment. You'll say nothing to Daisy?

MIR. Oh, no; certainly not. [EXIT MIRIAM *back*.

MRS. S. Who is it, Jabez?

JABEZ (*somewhat surlily*). A new acquaintance. Just met him. (*Sits and takes up paper*) By the way, I may take him into the family.

MRS. S. (*shocked*). Into the family? A stranger? Jabez, you don't mean to say you'd take a stranger right into the family!

JABEZ (*indifferently, looking over his paper*). I think you can get along with him.

MRS. S. Oh, I don't mind. But it does seem queer—and not like you, Jabez. (*She has been going about the room with a very apparent effort at aimlessness, and now takes up JACK'S hat and drops it behind a sofa cushion. JABEZ sees, but pretends not to, and grins over his paper.*)

JABEZ (*sotto voce*). Bait took! (*Throws down paper and turns to go out*) I'll be in the library when he comes.

[EXIT JABEZ R.

MRS. S. (*picking up hat again, and holding it in indecision*). What shall I do? How shall I get Jack out?

DAISY (*running in back*). Mompsy, do you know whether father is coming home for lunch?

MRS. S. My dear, he has come and he expects a stranger. Daisy, is Jack here again?

DAISY. He just is.

MRS. S. Oh dear! Oh dear! You do worry me so. Why need he come again to-day. I don't know what your father'll say.

DAISY. He didn't say a word this morning.

MRS. S. He said a good many last night. I don't know how long he'd have gone on if Miss Orr hadn't come in. I was thinking when I woke up in the night, it might be a good thing for her to come here and live for good. (*Starts L., talking as she goes, then stops.*)

DAISY (*taking hat*). I suppose Jack had better put this on. (*Laughs*) He had thought of taking lunch here.

MRS. S. (*aggrieved*). I don't see how you can laugh, Daisy. Your father coming home with a stranger, and find-

ing Jack here again. You *must* get Jack out of the house, right now.

DAISY (*thoughtfully*). Must be a business acquaintance, he wouldn't invite Jack to meet him.

MRS. S. *Invite* Jack, Daisy, are you crazy? Oh, you do worry me so! [EXIT L.

DAISY (*carrying hat*). Where are those boys? In the den, I suppose. (*Crosses to entrance R. and draws portiere*) Paradise! Smoke so thick I can't see through it. Jack, did you hear? Well?

BINKS (*at door*). A gentleman to see you, Miss. (DAISY *crosses and takes card.*)

DAISY. Wait a moment, Binks. (*Crosses again*) Dana, here is the answer to your invitation.

ENTER DANA.

DANA. Good. Thought he'd accept. (*Takes card*) Ask the gentleman to come up, Binks. (DAISY *runs into den, and closes portieres.* ENTER BURTON. *Comes in with great suavity, stops and looks surprised on seeing DANA.* DANA *bowing formally*) Mr. Burton, I presume. Permit me to introduce myself. I am Dana Strong.

BURT. (*offering his hand*). How are you, Mr. Strong? I had the honor of a note from your sister, requesting me to call this morning. Very charming girl, your sister.

DANA (*placing chairs so that he apparently does not see BURTON'S offered hand*). Daisy is not quite ready to come down. Sit down. I'd like to get a little information while you are waiting for her, about that Ultra-Montane, you and father made a deal on yesterday. (BURTON *looks at him suspiciously*) I had a little myself, I thought I'd like to put in where it would grow. Pretty good thing, isn't it?

BURT. (*who has recovered confidence*). Oh "good" 's mild. It's a chance in a thousand. And I could get you in on the ground floor. Green Copper, in its best days was nothing to this. Any little investment you'd like to make, I could place for you. And I'd be glad to do it, my dear fellow—glad to do it. You see I have the inside track with the promoters.

DANA (*thoughtfully*). About how much, now, would you advise putting in? I have about \$15,000 in a safe concern, paying 4 per cent, now if I withdraw this. and put it in Ultra-Montane, what would be the profit?

BURT. (*carelessly*). Well, \$15,000 is a small amount.

At 4 per cent it gives you a paltry \$600 per annum, at 10, 20, or even say 25, you get \$3,750. \$3,150 over your \$600.

DANA (*apparently much interested*). You mean to say it can earn 25 per cent?

BURT. Sure. Why, let me show you. (*Takes papers from his pocket*) Here—

DANA (*tentatively*). Sure it's safe? I heard rumors in New York yesterday that it was shaky.

BURT. (*scornfully*). Shaky. My dear sir, the Bank of England's shaky, if this is.

DANA (*slowly*). All the same, Mr. Burton, it was protested on Change, yesterday. *And you knew it.*

BURT. (*starting, then recovering himself*). Who says so?

DANA (*briefly*). Clayton, of New York.

BURT. He lies!

DANA. That you knew it yesterday morning—

BURT. (*furiously*). He lies!

DANA (*quietly*). All the same. I think it would be wiser for you to refund that donation of \$50,000.

BURT. (*rising and leaving toward him across the table*). If you think to trap me by any such stuff as this—

DANA (*quietly*). You refuse, then?

BURT. (*recovering himself somewhat and speaking aggressively*). Any investment is liable to depletion. I can't be held responsible for the fluctuations of the market.

DANA. You knew the market was dead broke.

BURT. (*defiantly*). Prove it.

JACK (*entering*). There's another little transaction I'd like to recall to you, John Burton.

BURT. (*sneering*). Oh, you're here. This is a put-up job.

JACK (*ignoring his tone*). There was a member of Class '99 who would have been expelled but for "Noli Pros". And the charge would have been—forgery.

BURT. (*coolly*). How long did it take you two to contrive this? Last night seems to have been a spur to your inventive faculties.

JACK (*easily*). Yes—last night was such a bracer, I wanted a chaser, to-day. (*Changing his tone*) I would suggest that here are all conveniences for drawing a check, or making over any little incumbrance you may have in the way of marketable stocks—

DANA (*placing pen and paper before him*). If the value is anything over \$50,000 the surplus will be returned after value is assigned.

BURT. (*rising—sitting down—taking the pen, then throwing it down*). You can't prove any of this stuff.

JACK (*quietly*). Error on the part of defendant. I took Sid Harwell's room; and in the ashes of his fire-place, I found half a dozen half-buried checks, with signatures written over and over—"practice makes perfect", you know. Who wrote them, John Burton?

BURT. (*defiantly*). How should I know?

JACK (*slowly*). There was another mark on two of the checks. Curious how reckless some men are. It was the impression of a seal. Curious how clear it was. *And is.*

BURT. (*writing*). Oh, damn you!

JACK (*looking over his shoulder*). "For value received", "to Jabez Strong". Quite correct, Mr. Burton. I'll deliver that personally. You may make your mind quite easy. (*Takes pen and writes rapidly*) Receipt, from John Drake. You hold that as collateral. If Mr. Strong comes down on you, refer him to me. Now, if you would like to take your leave, there is nothing to detain you.

BURT. (*between his teeth*). So this was a trap?

DANA. Trap, or the dogs, for a fox, always.

JACK. And the dogs, you know—I think you may congratulate yourself, Mr. Burton.

BURT. (*snarling*). You couldn't prove it. (*Goes—turns at door*) Damn you!

[EXIT BURTON *back*.

JABEZ (*outside*). Confound you, sir. You had the effrontery to come here after I refused to see you at the office? (*JACK goes down R. into den. JABEZ ENTERS from back*) The scoundrel. What does he mean by it? What was he doing here, Dana?

DANA. He came by invitation, sir.

JABEZ (*wrathfully*). Invitation? Invitation?

JACK (*entering from den*). If I might have a word with you, sir?

DAISY (*behind*). Let me.

JACK (*putting her back, and closing the portieres and holding them*). No! No! Mr. Strong, I owe you an apology.

JABEZ (*turning suddenly*). Eh—what—

JACK. I had no right, sir, to confront you in your own house and at your own table, and compel you to entertain an unwelcome guest. And I apologize.

JABEZ. Oh! You do—do you?

JACK. Most heartily. And whatever lesson you intended to give me to-day (*Takes note from pocket*) I richly deserve.

JABEZ (*taking his chin in his hand thoughtfully*). Hm—Yes!

JACK (*whimsically*). But you will admit the temptation was great.

JABEZ (*frowning*). Daisy being the temptation?

JACK. Just so.

JABEZ. Hm! I was taught the greater the temptation, the greater the merit in conquering it.

JACK. The trouble was, sir, that this temptation had already conquered me. I can't promise to give up Daisy, sir, but I will promise to wait.

JABEZ (*looking under his eyebrows*). Till when?

JACK (*quoting melodramatically*). "Till the sun grows cold, And the stars are old, And the leaves of the Judgment-Book unfold", for Daisy.

JABEZ. Hm! Where is she?

DAISY (*entering*). Here, eavesdropping.

JABEZ. Nice practice. Then you heard this young man's estimate of his staying powers. How long are you ready to wait?

DAISY (*considering*). A week across, and a week back, and six weeks for the dress-makers. I think it would take just two months to get my trousseau ready.

JABEZ (*dryly*). I suppose you must have a trousseau. Hope didn't seem to place much importance on that.

JACK (*eagerly*). Nor I, I assure you, Mr. Strong, it's a matter of no importance whatever.

DAISY (*saucily*). "Dress makes the man." I have it on high authority.

JACK. Ante-dated. Pardon me one minute, I have a little document here for your consideration, Mr. Strong. (*Gives BURTON'S paper.*)

JABEZ (*taking it*). Eh—what's this? Certificate of stock in Northern Pacific, John Burton.

DANA. A trifling memento of his call, sir, which Mr. Burton was persuaded to leave.

JABEZ (*looking over his glasses, first at DANA then at JACK*). Persuaded. Who persuaded him?

DANA. We both adduced reasons, sir; but Drake's was the convincing argument.

JABEZ. Hm, John Drake.

JACK. Sir?

JABEZ. You've mistaken your calling. This is as good a

financial transaction as I've known. (*Putting note in pocket-book*) Now, let's go to luncheon. Where's Miss Orr?

MIR. (*entering with HOPE*). Here. Did you want me, Mr. Strong?

JABEZ. I have the honor to announce the engagement of Miss Daisy Strong to Mr. John Drake. You are the first to be informed.

MIR. (*offering her hand to JABEZ*). I congratulate you.

JABEZ (*shaking hands violently*). I thought the proper thing was to congratulate the high contracting parties.

DANA. I'll do that. (*Shaking hands with JACK and DAISY*. ENTER MRS. STRONG. *She looks on bewildered, but smiling.*)

HOPE (*laughing*). Leave a little for me! (*Joins her hand with DANA'S. They all begin talking and laughing together, MRS. STRONG standing a little apart, looking on.*)

JABEZ (*turning to MRS. STRONG*). Mother, let me introduce your prospective son-in-law.

JACK (*shaking hands with her*). I hope you don't mind, Mrs. Strong?

MRS. S. (*beaming*). O, I don't mind!

(*They all begin talking again, as the curtain goes down, and*

MR. STRONG offers his arm to MIRIAM ORR to lead her from the room.)

CURTAIN.

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