

# PURE GOLD.

A Play,

IN FOUR ACTS.

BY

WESTLAND MARSTON, ESQ.,

*(Member of the Dramatic Authors' Society.)*

AUTHOR OF

*Strathmore, The Wife's Portrait, The Patrician's Daughter,  
A Life's Hansom, Philip of France and Marie de Meranie,  
Anne Blake, Borough Politics, A Hard Struggle,  
Gerald (a Dramatic Poem), &c, &c.*



THOMAS HAILES LACY,  
89, STRAND, LONDON.

PURE GOLD.

*First performed at the Sadler's Wells Theatre,  
(under the management of Miss Marriott,)  
on Monday the 9th of November, 1863.*

---

**Characters.**

SIR GERARD FANE, Bart..... MR. EDMUND PHELPS.  
BRACKENBURY (*a poor Gentleman*)..... MR. T. B. BENNETT.  
GILBERT BRACKENBURY (*his Son*)... MR. DAVID H. JONES.  
LANGLEY (*a Civil Engineer*)..... MR. PEWIT.  
FRANK ROCHFORD (*an Artist—  
Langley's Nephew*) ..... MR. HENRY MARSTOM.  
LANCIA (*a Refugee*)..... MR. W. D. GRESHAM.  
RINALDO } *Political Emissaries* { MR. E. H. BROOKE.  
DE L'EPINE } { MR. HASTINGS.  
FRITZ ..... MISS ROGERS.  
SCHMIDT..... MR. GEORGE VINNING.  
1ST OFFICER OF POLICE ..... MR. MORTIMER.  
2ND DITTO..... MR. CLIFTON.  
3RD DITTO..... MR. A. VIVIAN.  
NEUNER (*Landlord of an Hotel at Baden*) MR. ROBINSON.  
MORLEY (*a London Merchant*) ..... MR. A. BILDON.  
JACKSON (*a Lodge Keeper*)..... MR. A. DENIAL.

*Waiters, Attendants, &c., &c.*

MRS. ROCHFORD (*Rochford's Wife*) ... MISS MANDLEBERT.  
MISS FORTESCUE (*her Friend—an  
Heiress*)..... MRS. B. WHITE.  
EVELYN ROCHFORD ..... MISS MARRIOTT.

---

*The Scene lies in the 1st Act at BADEN BADEN; in follow-  
ing Acts at Miss Fortescue's House, near DOVER.*

TIME—1ST ACT, 1844.

An interval of about Fifteen Years is supposed to elapse between  
the First and Second Acts.

# PURE GOLD.



## ACT I.

SCENE FIRST.—*Front of the Conversations Haus at Baden Baden. Chairs, tables; VISITORS of both sexes conversing, or reading the Journals.—WAITERS are engaged in serving coffee, ices, &c. &c. ; Music, which ceases shortly after the Curtain rises, heard from the Conversations Haus.*

*Enter* SIR GERARD FANE (*a young exquisite of twenty*),  
R. U. E., *smoking, with him* Mr. BRACKENBURY, *about fifty, and slightly rheumatic.*

SIR G. And so this is your famous Baden Baden, eh, Mr.—Mr. Brackenstone?

BRACK. Brackenbury, pardon me, Sir Gerard; not Brackenstone. I think I remarked to you yesterday that I belong to the Baronial House of Brackenbury, that is, it was Baronial some years ago; whose family seat is, or rather was some years ago, Brackenbury Tower in Kent. (*all this delivered with an effort at carelessness*)

SIR G. Oh, yes! I remember. (*aside*) How this worthy bore sticks to me? What a fossil it is, with its old family notions; as lively as my great grandfather in hair powder, and as fast as his coach and six.

BRACK. Yes, Sir Gerard; we lost the Brackenbury title in the Wars of the Roses; and our estates—the tower included—were confiscated at the same time.

SIR G. Well, that is, indeed, some years ago.

BRACK. But the Crown can't take away a man's ancestors, sir. We can still say "*Fuimus.*"—The Brackenburys belong to the past.

SIR G. (*aside—yawning*) I wish that could be said of their present representative.

BRACK. And let me say, my young friend, though

fortunes have changed with us, we are still a proud race; for instance, we never demean ourselves by low marriages—the late Mrs. Brackenbury, my lamented wife, traced her descent to the noble Irish house of the O’Kilmacows; my only son, now at school in England, is, according to authentic portraits, a juvenile image of the last Baron Brackenbury, barring his lordship’s red hair; though, to be sure, the boy has a touch of the O’Kilmacow family about the nose.

SIR G. What an interesting peculiarity!

BRACK. I forgot to tell you that I still live in sight of Brackenbury Tower. The supporters of our shield may still be seen over the lodge gates; but in such decay, sir! You could never guess they were the old family boars.

SIR G. Couldn’t I? (*aside*) On the contrary, that would have been my very first conjecture.

BRACK. By the way, my little box in Kent is within a stone’s throw of the house of my young friend, Miss Fortescue, the rich heiress, you know, now at Baden.

SIR G. You don’t say so? What, that dashing girl who pretends to despise our whole sex? You must introduce me to her!

BRACK. Introduce you?

SIR G. Decidedly, my friend, young Malcolm, of the Guards pressed her to dance last night, and got a rebuff that floored him. Now I’ve made a bet with Malcolm, that she shall polk with me thrice in one night before a week’s out. You *must* introduce me!

BRACK. Impossible! she has a particular horror of very young men.

SIR G. All the better—I like difficult women! Where’s the sport if the game won’t run?

BRACK. Game! sport, Sir Gerard! this is strange language—what can you know about women?

SIR G. (*aside*) Was there ever such a piece of antiquity—does he suppose that I’ve reached *my* time of life, and gained no experience of the sex? (*aloud*) Come, I’ll take no denial.

BRACK. (*aside*) I don’t run much risk—she won’t look at him twice—and she’ll see that I consort with men of my own class abroad, though too poor to do so at home.

SIR G. Now's the time, my good follow—I saw her ten minutes since at one of the little shops in the avenue.

*(taking BRACKENBURY'S arm and hurrying him off)*

BRACK. Stop! stop! sir. Confound it, what a twinge!

SIR G. Beg pardon—I forgot your rheumatism.

BRACK. *(going off with him slowly)* Gout, sir! *gout!* gout is the hereditary complaint of the Brackenburys.

SIR G. What a pity it wasn't confiscated with the other family property, in the Wars of the Roses.

*(as they are going R. 2 E. enter LANGLEY, FRANK ROCHFORD, and MRS. ROCHFORD—SIR GERARD bows to MRS. ROCHFORD, and goes out with BRACKENBURY, R. U. E.)*

ROCH. (L.) Lucy, who was it that bowed to you?

MRS. R. (C.) Oh, Sir Gerard Fane, who sat with me at the table d'hote.

ROCH. (L.) Avoid him, dear Lucy; though so young, he's one whose notice of a woman insults her.

MRS. R. Indeed! who told you so?

ROCH. A new acquaintance, but one whom I already respect; the Count Manoli!

MRS. R. Very well Frank, I am warned.

LANG. (R.) Here, waiter; chairs, and a table—coffee!

WAITER. Directly, sir

*(he places chairs and a table down stage, L., apart from the company, then serves coffee, LANGLEY, ROCHFORD and MRS. R. sit)*

LANG. (L.) Well, Frank, Lucy and I were lucky to fall in with you. You might have spared a little more time to an old fellow about to take his leave.

ROCH. (R. *of table*) True, dear uncle; but I had no idea that it was so late; a pretty scene in the forest caught my eye, and I stayed to sketch it. See, *(producing his sketch book)* A mother at the door of a woodland cottage, with a toddling lassie of four holding by her finger. *(MRS. R. and LANGLEY examine the sketch)*

LANG. My dear Lucy, you should really forbid these lonely rambles; the rascal's always falling in with pretty faces. Look, now, at this peasant woman, with her coquettish air and limber figure.

MRS. R. (C.) Nay, uncle Langley, there's an antidote to

all my jealousy in the child. As usual, Frank has given her the features, the height, the very expression of our dear little Evelyn. I think if he were to paint a Hottentot child, she would be sure to turn out like our darling at home.

ROCH. There she goes, uncle! How these mothers do rave about their little plagues in pinafores!

MRS. R. And are fathers one bit better, sir? Would you believe now, uncle Langley, I can hardly get a sight of the miniature he took of Evelyn? the miser keeps it all to himself in his waistcoat pocket.

ROCH. A humane precaution, my dear, to prevent you from crying over it.

MRS. R. (*holding up her parasol playfully*) Sir, if there were not company present, I would rap your knuckles severely. My precious Evelyn! at times I really could cry, it seems so unfeeling to have left her in London, though I am sure grandmama will take every care of her. This holiday excursion has been very pleasant, uncle. Frank wanted a change, and we've very much enjoyed seeing you on your way to Italy. But, oh, what joy the going home will be!

LANG. Well, as I start in an hour for Strasbourg, provided that confounded Hendrick sends the remittances in time—why shouldn't you go back to-morrow?

ROCH. We shall be very sorry to part with you, uncle; but you'll forgive a mother's impatience.

MRS. R. And a father's, if you please.

ROCH. Well, then, a father's—I won't deny it.

LANG. Ah! good people, you have a happier lot than a bachelor like me. To think of a man at my years having to leave England for want of work, and become civil engineer to these projected railways in Italy!

MRS. R. It *is* hard, dear uncle. I am sure we both feel for you.

LANG. I know it, lassie, and must not complain. The hard bed, as they say, is of my own making. Like a fool, I gambled away a moderate fortune at twenty-five—and now at fifty-five have barely means to pay my way to the land of my exile.

MRS. R. You deserved a better fate; for I'm sure you have never touched a card since I knew you.

LANG. No ; were I ever so rich, I would never play again, except, perhaps, for trifling stakes and with a cool head.

ROCH. Forgive me, uncle; but should you become as prosperous as we wish you, I hope you would never play more—not even for amusement.

LANG. (*laughing*) We'll talk of that when I've another fortune to lose. Waiter, a glass of Maraschino, (*rises and goes down L. C.*) I don't quite like Frank's playing the Mentor to me thus. I can't even look on at a game of *rouge et noir*, but he's always at my heels—why if I were to risk a Napoleon or two, I could but lose them.

WAITER. (*bringing Maraschino*) The liqueur, which monsieur ordered.

LANG. (*drinking Maraschino and giving money*) There, that pays for all.

(WAITER retires, LANGLEY returns to MR. and MRS. ROCHFORD)

By the way, Frank, I'm much annoyed that old Hendrick, of Frankfort, has not yet sent the money for those jewels which we left with him. I can't start till I get the remittance.

ROCH. About fifty pounds English, is it not? six hundred florins.

LANG. Yes, that was his last offer which I wrote to accept. The money should have reached me last night.

ROCH. You believe him honest?

LANG. Oh yes, besides I have his receipt for the jewels. I dealt with him when I was a young spendthrift, and thought he would give more than I should get in London ;—yes, the rascal has now all my family relics except this diamond ring of my poor father's. (*showing a diamond ring which he wears*) That, I would not part with.

ROCH. (*looking at his watch*) The Frankfort diligence is just due—it might be well for you to go to the office in case the jeweller or his clerk should arrive.

LANG. I wish you could go for me, Frank—do, there's a dear fellow.

ROCH. Suppose we both go?

LANG. No ; I want a farewell gossip with Lucy.

ROCH. Very well, uncle—I'll go. Have you the receipt for the jewels ?

LANG. Yes, and another for the money already prepared. (*produces them from a pocket book and gives them to ROCHFORD*) There will be no difficulty, Frank; Hendrick and his clerk both know you.

ROCH. I'll start at once. I shall find you either here or at the hotel ? (*going*)

LANG. Yes, at the hotel.—Stop, Frank, I declare I had forgotten my pistols ; just call at the gunsmith's for the brace you left for me to be repaired; I may have to travel in queer places, where I should miss such trusty friends. And come back soon—no more strolls in the wood in search of interesting young mothers.

ROCH. Certainly not; when I want a model of very fond foolish maternity I have always Lucy for a sitter.

MRS. R. Beware, Frank ! (*holding up her parasol significantly*) Remember there will be no one to protect you at the hotel.

ROCHFORD *goes out*, R. U. E.

LANG. (*aside*) I feel my own master again now he's gone. I'll manage to get quit of Lucy, and just look in at the *rouge et noir* table, to see how life goes. Lucy, are not those Mr. and Mrs. Merton, whose acquaintance we made yesterday ? Let me place you under their care for a few minutes. I have an enquiry or two to make.

MRS. R. (*rising*) Very well, uncle, but- you'll not be long?

LANG. Not more than a quarter of an hour. (*they advance to another table a little behind*) Good evening, Mrs. Merton, may I entrust Mrs. Rochford to you for a short time ?

(MR. and MRS. MERTON *at table*, R.—LANGLEY and MRS. M. *exchange salutations*—MRS. R. *sits*—LANGLEY *bows and retires*, and shortly afterwards enters *Conversations Haus*, which VISITORS occasionally enter and quit till end of scene—Enter MISS FORTESCUE, SIR GERARD, and BRACKENBURY, R. U. E.—MISS FORTESCUE'S entrance produces a sensation in the company)

SIR G. (*smoking*) Nay, on my honour, Miss Fortescue,

you are too severe ; if you could only guess, now, what a miracle you have accomplished-----

MISS F. (*aside*) This begins to be amusing; In what way, pray?

SIR G. Five minutes since I was bored to death with Baden—thought I had never seen a slower place-----

MISS F. A cruel sentence. Poor Baden!

SIR G. Nay, that *was* my opinion; I now find the place enchanting—I have met *you!*

MISS F. You do credit to your bringing up! At what school ?

SIR G. Harrow ! Harrow!

MISS F. When do you go back there ?

SIR G. Go back ? On my life, you have the advantage of me.

MISS F. Oh, you don't return then?

SIR G. Return? I was talking of Harrow School!

MISS F. So was I! I fear the fine old institution of the whipping block is out of date there-----

SIR G. Madam!

MISS F. Or the school would never turn out affected mannikins, who puff their cigars in a lady's face, and who emit from their mouths two offensive things at once, their compliments, and their smoke. (*crosses, L.*)

SIR G. Confound her impudence!—a deuced fine girl though ! a filly with good action; but wants more breaking in! (*he turns away, and enters into Conversations Haus*)

BRACK. Capital! You put him down most properly, dear Miss Fortescue; a young puppy scarcely out of his teens! how different must be the sentiments of such a coxcomb from the tried devotion of a neighbour like me. Ah ! if you would only encourage me with a smile-----

MISS F. On my word, I don't know any one at whom I smile so often.

BRACK. Do be serious. If you doubt my sincerity, set me any task, however hard, to prove it.

MISS F. Very well. (*dropping her handkerchief*) My handkerchiefs dropped : pick it up.

BRACK. (*hesitating*) Where is it?

MISS F. There at my foot.

BRACK. (*after making an awkward attempt to stoop*)

The truth is, I am just now suffering from gout—the hereditary complaint of the Brackenburys—I can't very conveniently stoop.

MISS F. Alas! then you'll never do for me. I am romantic enough to desire a lover who can, at least throw himself at my feet. (*she takes up the handkerchief*) Forgive me, neighbour; but when an elderly gentleman forgets the gravity of age, a girl of nineteen may be pardoned if she forgets its claims.

BRACK. Age, age! why I'm only fifty—a mere boy comparatively—I want a dozen years of the time when men are made generals or appointed to a flag ship.

MISS F. True; but love and war are distinct services; and men are often promoted in the latter, when they would be superannuated in the former. (*aside, observing MRS. ROCHFORD*) Surely, I know that face.

BRACK. (*aside*) Superannuated! I believe she's laughing at me. I'll not waste another thought on her. I'll start for England by the next *matte poste*. Laugh at a Brackenbury connected with the O'Kilmacows! She has lost *her* chance. *Exit, R. U. E.*

MISS S. (*advancing to MRS. ROCHFORD*) It *is* she—My dear Lucy!

MRS. R. Helen Fortescue—My own dear Helen!

(*they shake hands—MRS. ROCHFORD bows to the MERTONS, and advances with Miss FORTESCUE to table, down L., where they sit*)

MISS F. Lucy, my dearest companion, my other self! What a budget we have to discuss! You know after my poor father's death I was sent to France. You were from England when I returned; so, positively, we have not met since you committed that awful piece of treachery.

MRS. R. I?

MISS F. Was not my father your guardian? Did we not live for years under the same roof with but one heart between us? Were we not sisters in all but name? I could have loved no sister more, and yet you must marry and desert me. Well, what is the man like?

MRS. R. I only wish Nature had made his double for your sake.

MISS F. Thank you, my dear—it's quite as well that

Nature spared herself the trouble. Now do come with me to my apartments.

MRS. R. I must go to the hotel first, to meet my husband.

MISS F. Innocent dove! Let its mate coo alone for awhile; you'll be the more welcome to the nest—and I want you all to myself.

MRS. R. Well, for one quarter of an hour—I must then return to a relative about to leave us.

MISS F. You must tell me all about your little Evelyn. She's not with you?

MRS. R. Alas—no!

MISS F. What a sigh!—come, love-----(*they rise*)

MRS. R. I'm very foolish, Helen; but I have now and then such misgivings about my darling. If anything should happen to me, you'll not forget your old friend's child.

MISS F. (*jestingly*) When anything *does* happen to you, Lucy, I'll be reasonably kind to her, being a daughter; but, oh, love, never trust me with a boy! I should avenge myself in his person on all his empty fortune-hunting sex, and if he survived to be a man—but he never would under my discipline.

MRS. R. Ah, Helen, when you're a mother!

*They go off, L. U. E.*

*Re-enter* ROCHFORD, R. U. E.

ROCH. Not at the hotel—not here! What can have become of them? I'm glad, at all events, that I've got the money for the jewels, for if my uncle means to start by the voiturier to Strasbourg, there's no time to lose. It's at least an English mile to the cabaret in the forest, from which the voiturier starts. Where can he be? Heaven grant not at the gaming table! I'll look in, though, to make sure.

*(as he is about to enter the Conversations Haus LANGLEY quits it with RINALDO and DE L'EPINE, with whom he is in altercation—SIR GERARD and others follow from the Conversations Haus and group around)*

RINAL. I say sir, this language is an insult.

LANG. And I repeat sir, I was a fool to play by your

advice, and let myself be deluded by your confounded system.

RINAL. What do you mean by being deluded ?

LANG. Well, I lost every time I staked.

RINAL. What then ? had I any interest in your losses ? Why you talk as if I and the bank had been in league to rob you.

LANG. I never said so.

RINAL. You insinuated as much. Retract it! (*peremptorily*)

LANG. I never retract under a threat.

RINAL. Do you mean that I was in collusion with the bank—yes or no ! (*raising his cane*)

LANG. No ! though since you raise your cane, I might suspect it. There's a slight presumption that a man's a knave when he stoops to the argument of a bully.

RINAL. A bully ?

DE L'EP. (*to LANGLEY*) *Mon Dieu !* you are too warm, sir!

RINAL. A bully! You English churl, I'll teach you politeness!

DE L'EP. Nay, nay-----

(RINALDO *struggles with* DE L'EPINE, *and advances to chastise* LANGLEY)

ROCH. (*interrupting him, C.*) Stay, sir! I do not know who is in the right here; but I will permit no violence to this gentleman.

RINAL. And who are you, sir, who intrude yourself into other men's quarrels ?

ROCH. One who means no offence; but who will save you from the shame of assaulting a man nearly twice your age.

DE L'EP. (*apart to RINALDO*) Be cautious, you have reason—remember your mission.

RINAL. (*to ROCHFORD*) His years shall not protect him, nor shall you.

ROCH. Assault *me* then ; it will be more to your credit.

DE L'EP. (*apart to RINALDO, and seizing his arm*) Are you mad ? Have you not political secrets—would you draw on yourself the attention of the police?

RINAL. True, true, I am forced to be prudent, else I

would cane him on the spot. (*aloud to LANGLEY*) I shall not lose sight of you, sir, be sure of it.

(*DE L'EPINE and RINALDO go out L. 1 E. amidst the laughter of the BYSTANDERS*)

SIR G. What, there's to be no mill then. It's a regular sell; I expected something exciting—a duel on the spot, or at all events a little pleasant assault and battery. Why should the old fellow make such a noise about a few Napoleons, when he can afford to sport such a diamond ring! perhaps it's glass though!

(*he and some of the BYSTANDERS laugh, and enter Conversations Haus, the rest with the exception of ROCHFORD and LANGLEY disperse*)

LANG. Now, Frank, don't go off—no scolding. It's of no use to make bad worse. I've been a fool, and I've paid the penalty.

ROCH. It is not for me to reproach you, sir—have you lost much?

LANG. Cleared out to my last kreutzer.

ROCH. But you have still the money for the jewels? Hendrick's clerk arrived by the diligence, and paid me the amount.

LANG. All gone, my dear fellow, except a few florins. You know the Count Manoli?

ROCH. Perfectly; we often speak together.

LANG. Well, when I went in the table was full; so to while away the time, I betted with the count on the colours as they turned up—in brief I lost to him nearly sixty Napoleons.

ROCH. Good heavens!

LANG. Again I played and lost. As for Manoli, he behaved like a gentleman, and agreed to wait half an hour for his debt. We must go at once to his hotel.

ROCH. And you—what funds have you left for your journey?

LANG. On my life, you hit me hard there, Frank—my few remaining florins won't cover a day's expenses. How much can you lend me?

ROCH. Only, a trifle, I fear. I have little more than will take me back to England.

LANG. The deuce you haven't—what's to be done?

It's quite vital that I should push on to Italy, where my first official act must be to draw my salary in advance. I tell you what, Frank, you must lend me what money you can, and raise the amount upon my diamond ring.

ROCH. Your father's ring ? A last relic!

LANG. My dear fellow, there's no help for it. I shall redeem it from old Hendrick in a year, come, there it is !  
(*offers it*)

ROCH. , uncle.

ROCH. *Oh*, if you think you run any risk-----

ROCH. I don't mean that!

LANG. Take it then!

ROCH. Keep it till we part.

LANG. (*replacing the ring on his finger*) Very well; now see what you can do for me. You have the money for the jewels about you ?

ROCH. Yes!

LANG. Come then! First to pay the Count; then a kiss, and good-bye to Lucy; and off to the Cabaret in the wood. You would rather see me in bad spirits, I know. Pshaw ! it's only the fortune of war.

ROCH. True! but much depends upon the kind of war. There are some wars in which even defeat is glorious, others, in which success has no honor, and failure no consolation.

LANG. Here's a homily ! Frank, you should have been a parson not a painter. A parson ! ha! ha! ha ! (*they go out, L. U. E.*)

SCENE SECOND.—*A Wood. Moonlight.*

*Enter* THREE OFFICERS OF POLICE, L. 1 E.

1ST OFF. You know the Count Manoli by sight, you say?

2ND OFF. Yes; I never speak till I'm certain. He left his hotel, they said, for a short ride in the forest—that's strange at this hour.

1ST OFF. My orders, just received, are to arrest him instantly!

2ND OFF. The Count Manoli! What has he done ?

1ST OFF. Leave that to your betters. Any one starting by the voiturier to-night must pass this way.

3RD OFF. It's the common road.

1ST OFF. You are sure he was not one of the two men that passed us ?

2ND OFF. Positive.

1ST OFF. There was a lad too wheeling an English traveller's baggage. That might be a truck though. Voices ! Stand close !

*Enter LANGLEY and ROCHFORD, L. 1 E., the latter carrying a pistol case.*

1ST OFF. Your servant, gentlemen. May I ask whither you are bound ?

LANG. To the Black Eagle. I take the voiturier, for Strasburg.

1ST OFF. (*apart to 2ND OFFICER*) Do you know them ?

2ND OFF. Neither of them is our man.

1ST OFF. (*to LANGLEY*) So you take the voiturier—You're likely to have the Count Manoli for a fellow traveller, I hear.

LANG. You are mistaken, there, I think.

1ST OFF. Do you know him ?

LANG. For a capital horseman. He spurred off but now as if he were pursued by the devil or the police.

1ST OFF. On which road.

LANG. That to Frankfort.

1ST OFF. (*apart to others*) We're off the scent, I fear, (*to LANGLEY and ROCHFORD*) Good night, gentlemen. (*crosses to L.—to LANGLEY*) Excuse me, that ring of yours sparkles and may draw notice. This neighbourhood is as famous for sharpers as for princes.

LANG. Thanks for your caution. Good night.

1ST OFF. Good night. OFFICERS *go out*, L. 1 E.

LANG. Well reminded, Frank—here is the ring. Come no scruples, I've had your money.

ROCH. I'm sorry I'm obliged to take it

LANG. (*giving it*) There—there—draw your glove over it—by the way, Frank, there's something wrong about the Count Manoli—I had no sooner paid him my debt, than he sprang to horse, and was off like the wind.

ROCH. His countrymen are impulsive.

LANG. And some Englishmen too, you think—and now,

Frank, go back—remember, Lucy had not returned when we hurried away—she will be anxious about you.

ROCH. But the road's lonely.

LANG. There's a bright moon, and I know every step—no further I insist.

ROCH. Good-bye, then—God bless you—here's your pistol case. (*gives it to LANGLEY*)

LANG. God bless you, dear Frank. (*they shake hands*)  
Don't think worse of the old fellow than you can help.

ROCH. Dear uncle, only be as good a friend to yourself, as you have ever been to me. Farewell! farewell!

LANG. Now, George Langley a stout heart—the world's before you. Adieu! love to Lucy—adieu!

*He goes out, R. 1 E.*

ROCH. Adieu! and so we part—ships holding together on a brief course, then severed on a wide and changeful sea—whether ever to anchor again in the same port, is known but to Him whose breath is the impulse of our fate. Who comes here?

*Enter FRITZ wheeling a truck, R. 1 E.*

Stay—stay—you are the lad who took Mr. Langley's luggage to the cabaret.

FRITZ. Yes; he'll be quite in time, sir; he has a good twenty minutes yet.

ROCH. Your pace is quicker than mine, my boy—when you reach the hotel, let Mrs. Rochford know that I shall be back shortly.

FRITZ. Very well, sir.

ROCH. Don't fail now.

FRITZ. You may depend on me. *Exit, L. 1 E.*

ROCH. It was hardly kind of me to leave him till he reached the cabaret. Whether because my poor uncle's thoughtless disposition makes me fear for him; or because there's sadness in all partings, I have never felt for him so much tenderness—almost apprehension as now. How good he was to me when a boy—gay genial heart, how he entered into all my sports and became himself a child! How often have I sat on his knee by a Christmas fire, and thought his cheery smile was made to match it. I have half a mind to follow him. Lucy will be freed

from all anxiety about me now. (*a report of fire arms is heard, R.*) What's that? (*a second report, R.*) There again; it comes from the direction which he took. It's not a night for a foul deed, or I should fear—nay, I do—I must be satisfied. Langley, uncle Langley! (*he goes out following LANGLEY, R. 1 E.*)

SCENE THIRD.—*Another part of the Wood—Moonlight—RINALDO, DE L'EPINE, and LANGLEY are discovered—DE L'EPINE, kneeling, supports LANGLEY, who is desperately wounded—RINALDO stands a little apart, pistol in hand.*

DE L'EP. This is an ugly affair, Rinaldo.

RINAL. He provoked his fate.

LANG. (*faint*) You forced it upon me—compelled me to fight.

RINAL. Yes—you had insulted me grossly, and in public. I learned your movements and could not suffer you to escape without satisfaction ; but you fell in a fair duel. You fought with your own weapons, mind, though we provided others.

DE L'EP. (*to LANGLEY*) Ah! why did you not apologize ?

LANG. Too late to ask. Fly, fly—while there is yet time.

DE L'EP. You're a gallant fellow.

RINAL. De l'Epine, we must indeed fly. Remember, not only our liberty, but the secrets of a cause are at stake.

DE L'EP. What would you do?

RINAL. Start at once by the voiturier to Strasbourg.

DE L'EP. It's hard to leave you thus, but we must, even to send assistance. Come—the case may not be so bad—lean on me, I'll be very gentle, so—(*he props up LANGLEY*) Poor fellow.

RINAL. Quick ! quick! Moments are precious.

DE L'EP. (*To LANGLEY*) Help will come. Keep up—keep up. Now, Rinaldo ! (*to LANGLEY*), help will come.

RINALDO and DE L'EPINE *exit, R. 1 E.*

LANG. No help will serve me now. I grow faint. Frank—poor Frank—if he knew this!

*Enter ROCHFORD, L. 1 E.*

ROCH. Was it excited fancy, or did I indeed catch a voice ? (*a groan.*) Who's that? It is he! Uncle Langley.

LANG. Ah, Frank! Frank!

ROCH. Merciful Heaven!

(*LANGLEY attempts to rise, ROCHFORD supports him*)

ROCH. He'll bleed to death. What villain has done this?

LANG. My own folly. No vengeance. Frank, I'm dying.

ROCH. Oh, no. Help there—help.

LANG. Bless you ! Lucy—the pet at home—little Evelyn ! Ah! no more games—no more—Frank !

(*he sinks back and dies*)

ROCH. (*kneeling by his side*) Langley, dear uncle—not a sound—he's gone! Oh, night of horror ! how the still moonlight seems to mock this deed! Ah ! a pistol! (*he takes up and tries to examine pistol, then conceals it in his bosom*)

*Enter THREE OFFICERS OF POLICE, as before, L. 2 E.*

1ST OFF. I could swear the shots came from this direction. See—see—a man on his knees! What do you here ? (*laying his hand on Rochford's shoulder*)

ROCH. (*starting up*) Who speaks? The murderer! (*seizes 1ST OFFICER*)

1ST OFF. Take off your hand. If murder has been done, perhaps you can tell us about it.

2ND OFF. (*examining LANGLEY*) The man's quite dead—these are the two persons whom we last met.

1ST OFF. (*to ROCHFORD*) Now, sir, as you may see we are officers of the police, we wait your explanation.

ROCH. I can give none.

1ST OFF. (*pointing to the body*) We met you with this man some minutes back.

ROCH. I parted from him almost instantly ; soon after, hearing the report of arms, I returned and found him—he was then dying.

1ST OFF. Strange that you should have been absent just in the crisis of time. Hold up your hand. (*ROCHFORD holds up his hand*) Your glove's wet, smeared with blood.

ROCH. It may be so.

1ST OFF. Take your glove off. (ROCHFORD *obeys*—1ST OFFICER *takes glove*) What's that on your finger? a diamond ring! I noticed one like it on your companion's hand.

ROCH. That is the ring he wore.

1ST OFF. I don't doubt it!

ROCH. This poor gentleman was my kinsman. He gave me the ring in exchange for money which I furnished to him.

1ST OFF. You couldn't afford then to lend him the money?

ROCH. Alas, no!

1ST OFF. You admit then that you were poor? (*apart to 2ND OFFICER*) That shews his motive! (*to ROCHFORD*) Why do you keep that hand in your breast? (*he roughly shakes ROCHFORD's hand, from which a pistol drops, which 1ST OFFICER picks up*) So! a pistol—and just discharged.

ROCH. Yes; I've seized it, as it might lead to detection.

1ST OFF. And be sure it will! now, mark; a few minutes since you were the victim's companion—we now find him murdered—his ring on your finger—yourself by his body—the murderous weapon on your person; though you are unable to explain his death. You must with us to Baden—I arrest you for murder and robbery!

ROCH. Murder! robbery? Beware, sir.

3RD OFF. Here is the fellow pistol, and a case.

1ST OFF. Give them to me. (*to ROCHFORD*) Now, sir!

ROCH. Charged with his murder?—oh, monstrous! (*aside*) And yet the proofs seem to thicken and cohere. Lucy, my own Lucy, God help thee!

(1ST OFFICER *touches him on the shoulder, and signs to him to proceed*)

I'm ready!

1ST OFF. This way! (*to OFFICER*) Remove the body!

ROCHFORD *goes out, preceded by 1ST OFFICER, and followed by 2ND and 3RD OFFICERS with body, L. 1 E.*

SCENE FOURTH.—*Front of the Conversations Haus as before—Moonlight—The Scene discovers various persons entering or quitting the Conversation Haus, amongst the latter, SCHMIDT, Hendrick's Clerk.*

*Enter from Conversations Haus* SIR GERARD FANE,  
*smoking.*

SIR G. Well, for once, I leave a winner. But what's the use of money ? it won't buy a sensation. Ages since there was a fellow who offered a reward for a new pleasure. Gad, if life was so stale in his time, what must it be now ? Nothing like a sensation ever comes my way. (*voices at side, without, L. U. E. "Halloa there !"—a group forms at L. of stage—other persons enter—a buzz of voices amidst which are heard the words—"Murder!" "Robbery !" " Seized by the Police !" &c. &c.*) What's that ?—Murder! Robbery! Ah, perhaps affairs are looking up ! (*approaching group, L. U. E.*) What is all this ?

SCHMIDT. There's a report that an English gentleman has been murdered—a Mr. Langley. I came over on business to him this very morning.

SIR G. Langley ! I recollect. I saw the man at the rouge et noir table. He sported a fine diamond ring, did he not ?

VOICES. (*from group*) Hush—hush—the police!

*Enter OFFICERS OF POLICE, guarding* ROCHFORD.

SCHMIDT. They have the man in custody.

1ST OFF. Halt awhile. Does any one here recognize this ring ? (*exhibiting it*)

SIR G. Yes, I do by its old fashion. I noticed it on Langley's finger.

1ST OFF. Good ; you may be needed, sir.

SCHMIDT. (*astonished*) What, Mr. Rochford—Langley's nephew!

1ST OFF. Do you know the prisoner ?

SCHMIDT. Yes. I paid him six hundred florins to night on account of his uncle.

1ST OFF. (*to 2ND OFFICER*) Six hundred florins on the murdered man's account. Here's motive indeed.

2ND OFF. He had not nearly that sum about him.

ROCH. He had paid it for a debt at play to the Count Manoli.

1ST OFF. Who, conveniently for you, happens to have fled.

ROCH. You exceed your duty, sir; these are matters for my judges, not for you.

SIR G. (*who has been peering into ROCHFORD'S face*)  
The fellow has some pluck—what a look! (*the group close round ROCHFORD and OFFICERS*).

*Enter Mrs. ROCHFORD attended by NEUNER, the landlord*  
R. U. E.

MRS. R. Here, Landlord, this way; these gentlemen can perhaps inform us.

NEUNER. Gentlemen—this lady, staying at my hotel, has heard a report of some foul practice in the forest: she is alarmed for her husband who was last seen there.

MRS. R. Yes, his name is Rochford.

VOICES. Rochford! (*the group divides and Mrs. R. recognizes her husband*)

MRS. R. Frank! Frank! O, I've been in such trouble.

1ST OFF. Alas, Madam, I fear worse is in store for you.

ROCH. (*to OFFICER*) One moment. Lucy, (*they embrace*) dear loving wife, the truth will come best from my lips—I'm a prisoner.

MRS. R. A prisoner—on what charge ?

ROCH. One that you will laugh to scorn.

MRS. R. (*passionately*) On what charge ?

ROCH. My poor uncle has been murdered.

MRS. R. Uncle Langley!—horrible !

ROCH. I am accused of the crime.

MRS. R. (*bewildered*) Of his murder?—ha, ha, ha !

ROCH. Appearances are against me ; but fear not, I can explain all.

MRS. R. Explain! am I awake ?

ROCH. Lucy, *you* will never doubt me ?

MRS. R. Doubt you—*you* ! Frank, my mind wanders ; keep me close.

1ST OFF. Be calm, madam; your husband goes to prison.

MRS. R. To prison, then—I with him.

1ST OFF. It cannot be.

ROCH. Lucy, obey for my sake. (*aside*) Oh, this is the keenest pang of all! her name—that of my child, may be stained in mine. My own, we must part.

MRS. R. Never!

ROCH. Lucy, you're the wife of an innocent man.

MRS. R. Yes.

ROCH. Then you will say, my husband is innocent, I will not tremble; he goes to prison, but it is to meet a slander, to redeem his name; he *will* redeem it—I will let him go. (*unwinding her arms*)

MRS. R. Go, Frank, go.

ROCH. Bless you! (*kissing her*) Be gentle with her, my friend. (*resigns her to NEUNER*) Lead on, gentlemen.

(*Music—MRS. R. lies insensible in NEUNER'S arms—ROCHFORD is going out in charge of OFFICERS, and followed by others as act drop falls*)

2ND & 3RD OFFICERS.

SIR G. FANE NEUNER. MRS R. ROCHFORD. 1ST OFFICER.

END OF ACT FIRST.

---

Fifteen years are supposed to elapse between the 1st and 2nd Acts.

---

## ACT II.

SCENE FIRST.—*A Drawing Room in Miss Fortescue's Country House near Dover—the grounds are seen at back through an open French window—the Scene discovers MISS FORTESCUE and BRACKENBURY, both seated.*

BRACK. Well, then, dear Miss Fortescue, we may now consider all finally settled except for one thing.

MISS F. What's that?

BRACK. Why, since my son, Gilbert, and your protege, Evelyn Rochford, are to be man and wife, you ought really to be more explicit.

MISS F. About what?

BRACK. About Miss Rochford's father. You know I only consent to the match because Gilbert is resolved upon it.

MISS F. And because I promised Evelyn six thousand pounds on her marriage.

BRACK. True ; though an old family, we are too poor to dispense with money; still, as my son's wife, Evelyn, will inherit an ancient name, and-----

MISS F. Pardon me, neighbour, if I'm rather tired of your ancient name. A man's family is not like a Stilton cheese—the better for being mouldy.

BRACK. But you'll grant we have a right to know with whom we intermarry? Now, as to Evelyn's father, who was he?

MISS F. I have told you twenty times that I never saw him; and that what I heard was not to his advantage. He left England fifteen years ago, and is probably dead by this time.

BRACK. You can assure me, at least, that he was a gentleman ?

MISS F. My good friend, I can assure you of nothing. If your son marry Evelyn, he must take her at all risks.

BRACK. These are hard terms.

MISS F. Then reject them.

BRACK. But can't you say-----

MISS F. Only what I have said before. Mr. Rochford's wife was my dearest friend ; she died about a year after her husband left England, and, in compliance with her last wish, I took her Evelyn, then a child of five, under my protection. That's all I can say—if you're not satisfied you'd better break off the match.

BRACK. Don't be angry.

MISS F. I doubt whether it would break your son's heart if you did. I can tell you, Evelyn is by no means pleased with his careless manner to her of late.

BRACK. Ah, dear Miss Fortescue, juvenile lovers are careless, it's the fashion with them ; but what wonder, when they see how the enduring devotion of mature middle-aged men-----

MISS F. Is cruelly slighted. I know what you mean to say. Fifteen years ago, I refused you at Baden,

and since then you've only gained one point in your favour.

BRACK. And what's that ?

MISS F. Why, that you're fifteen years older, and were I to marry you, my penalty for that gross folly would be so much the shorter.

BRACK. Ah ! you would sooner be a widow. I'm obliged.

MISS F. You see you will stroke my fur the wrong way ; what can you expect but a scratch ?

BRACK. Well, Gilbert will be happy. (*sighs*)

MISS F. Yes, think of that; I know your pride in him, your sacrifices. You don't play the lover well, but I'm sure you always shone as a father. And now I must really dismiss you; I expect a visitor every minute.

BRACK. Indeed!

MISS F. Yes, a Mr. Vernon. Evelyn needs a finishing master for her drawing, and Brown, the Dover printseller, recommends this gentleman. Here's your cane, neighbour. (*gives it*) We're friends again. (*they shake hands*) And so we shall be, if you will only treat me like a confirmed old maid as I am. Good morning, my friend, good morning.

BRACK. Ah, Miss Fortescue !

*Goes out sighing, C. door.*

MISS F. I'm vexed to the soul to evade him thus about Evelyn's father; such concealment is repugnant to me. But, dear charming creature as, spite of her little foibles, she is, how would the world scorn her if the truth were known! The child of a convict, imprisoned for life as a robber, and though, by some strange lenity, acquitted of murder, believed by all men to have been guilty of it! It's true there were some faint suspicions against others; that fact saved his life. Rochford's tale, though wild, was still possible. Yet the proofs were strong enough to convince even me—any one, but his loving, credulous wife, who died protesting his innocence. No, I dare not reveal to others what I have hid from Evelyn herself. Thank heaven, she believes her father dead, as indeed he may be; and all she knows from me is, that he broke her mother's heart.

*Enter EVELYN by door, C. from R.*

What, my darling! I thought you were with Gilbert.

EVELYN. (*sadly*) Yes, dear friend, he has just left me.

MISS F. For a whole hour, possibly; that *is* a trial.

EVELYN. No trial to him! (*sits on tabaret at the feet of MISS FORTESCUE who caresses her*)

MISS F. Another love quarrel! what has happened? Won't the monster go on his knees and swear that she's perfection! Was he five minutes late to-day; or what other enormity?

EVELYN. Don't jest!

MISS F. I thought him so kind and good humoured.

EVELYN. It's that eternal good humour which freezes me. He's always, calm, smiling, and indifferent. I do like impulse in a man.

MISS F. A dangerous element, Evelyn.

EVELYN. So is fire; but we risk the danger for the comfort.

MISS F. Why did you fall in love with him?

EVELYN. He was so different then—all ardour and devotion. Since that last visit to London, when he entered at the Temple, he's come back as dry as one of his own law books, and throws as much romance into a love suit as he would into a Chancery one.

MISS F. It's but a manner that he has caught. Depend upon it, he has been laughed at in London for being romantic, and now, like many people of warm feelings, he shrinks from displaying them. The whole sex, as you know, is my aversion; but, for a man, Gilbert is really passable.

EVELYN. Ah, kind friend, you say this to comfort me because you know that I do—do love him dearly. (*weeping*) But why can't he shew a little interest in me? How unlike he is to some other men—Sir Gerard Fane, for instance.

MISS F. I dislike Sir Gerard Fane more than ever! If I did not respect his relative, Captain Tresham, with whom he's now staying at Dover, I would forbid him the house.

EVELYN. Nay—he is so agreeable and well bred. You're too severe.

MISS F. And *you*, too gracious. I'm quite serious.

At the Ashford flower show you let him monopolize you. At the officers' ball at Dover you were his constant partner: since then he has been here repeatedly; the last time you received him as if *he*, not Gilbert, had been your suitor.

EVELYN. I remember—Gilbert's coldness had stung me that morning—he had pressed me on a subject that always tortures me. (*rises*)

MISS F. What subject?

EVELYN. That of my father, on whose life rests such a cloud. What could I say?

MISS F. Alas—nothing.

EVELYN. Oh, if you but knew how my father died, or what were his errors.

MISS F. Be thankful that a veil hides them. Enough, that by all report they cost you a mother's life.

EVELYN. Still I yearn to know—yes yearn—even while I dread.

MISS F. The mystery is now buried. Come, love, turn to happier thoughts. (*looking off*) See, here comes Gilbert—no more tears.

EVELYN. (*aside*) *He* shall not see them. I'll get to my drawing.

*She goes to an easel on which is an unfinished sketch in colours ; brushes and a palette with colours are at hand, she takes up a brush. MISS F. occupies herself in writing— enter GILBERT, C.*

GILB. What! Evelyn, at your drawing?

EVELYN. (*pretending to be absorbed*) I cannot get this water to look transparent.

GILB. Will your ladyship deign me a word?

EVELYN. Oh, it's you, Gilbert.

GILB. Yes, it is. Have you quite decided?

EVELYN. (*looking at sketch*) What a dull green that is. Decided about what?

GILB. Why, the Dover Regatta, of course. Now won't you allow me to drive you over?

EVELYN. I told you before, Gilbert, that I was engaged.

GILB. Very well; you know that your will is always mine.

EVELYN. (*aside*) He doesn't make the least effort to persuade me. Yes, Gilbert, you generally agree in my decisions when they relieve you of my company.

GILB. My dear Evelyn, be just. You tell me twice that you're engaged and don't wish to go. How can I imagine that you have nothing whatever to do and would very much like the excursion ?

EVELYN. I shouldn't like it, and I don't mean to go.

GILB. (*laughing*) Well, don't be angry, I only supposed that you knew your own mind.

EVELYN. (*aside*) There, he's laughing—my displeasure is but sport to him.

MISS F. (*advancing*) Gilbert, Evelyn is really engaged; she expects Mr. Vernon, a drawing master from Dover. .

GILB. After he leaves we might still be in time for the regatta.

EVELYN. (*aside*) Ah, perhaps he does wish me to go ! We should be very late, Gilbert; it would be scarcely worth while.

GILB. I'm sure it wouldn't, if you don't care for it—

EVELYN. (*excitedly*) I tell you once more I don't care for it. (*retires and sits*)

GILB. Then I'll just tell Watson we shan't want the ponies. (*going*)

MISS F. (*apart to him*) A word, Gilbert—she thinks you indifferent.

GILB. Indifferent—why? I grant I'm not always at her feet, quoting poetry, as I once was. I've lived in London since then.

MISS F. And been laughed out of your heart, eh ?

GILB. No ; but out of my sentimentality. I was properly roasted for it by Templars and club men, I've learned, Miss Fortescue, that while it's manly to feel love, it's childish to prate of it. Acts for me, not talk. Mere words are like steam when it escapes. There's much noise, but the engine's at a stand. Deeds are like steam when it's confined. There's less sound but the train drives on.

*Enter SERVANT, C.*

SERVANT. Signor Lancia, ma'am, has just arrived from London.

MISS F. Signor Lancia! Say I'll come to him at once.

*Exit* SERVANT, C.

Lancia, my dear delightful patriot, the only man I have ever met who has love for his country, and who never pretends it to woman! Evelyn, you must join us; but, first, foolish children, make up your quarrel. Troubles, like weeds, spring up of their own accord; there's no need for us to sow them.

*She goes out.*

EVELYN. Gilbert, she's right. I was out of humour and unjust.

GILB. Say no more, Evelyn, I beg. I had almost forgotten it.

EVELYN. Forgotten it! If *you* had been angry, I should have felt it for weeks.

GILB. Nothing can be better; if I forget *your* little whims and you attend to *mine* we shall have a reasonable chance of being happy.

EVELYN. My whims, sir! you take them easily.

GILB. I may as well, love, as I shall have to bear with them for life.

EVELYN. To *bear* with them. You're under no compulsion, Gilbert—if I cannot be a wife to be prized I'll not be one to be endured.

GILB. (*good-humouredly*) Do you mean to be unendurable then?

EVELYN. (*aside*) He hasn't a spark of love for me. I can't even vex him.

*Enter* SERVANT, C.

SERVANT. Sir Gerard Fane.

EVELYN. (*aside*) So.

GILB. (*displeased, aside*) Here again!

*Enter* SIR GERARD, C.—*exit* SERVANT, C.

SIR G. Good morning, Miss Rochford. How d'ye do, Mr. Brackenbury?

EVELYN. Good morning, Sir Gerard, (*shakes hands with him cordially*) I almost feared you had forgotten us.

SIR G. (*aside*) Good. I was here three days since. Miss Rochford, you give me a temptation to be absent.

EVELYN. What can that be?

SIR G. The pleasure of hearing that you regret it. (*bows*)

EVELYN. But you are too generous to seek pleasure at the expense of your friends.

GILB. (*aside*) Humph!

SIR G. Nay, too selfish to remove their concern, when it so much flatters me.

GILB. (*aside*) What next ?

SIR G. And now to my errand. This is what they call a great day at Dover. Do you patronise the regatta?

EVELYN. I fear not. It must be an interesting sight.

SIR G. You think so ? My trap's at the inn; dare I ask for the pleasure of driving the ladies over?

EVELYN. (*aside*) I'm glad Gilbert hears this. (*aloud*) Oh, that would be delightful!

GILB. (*aside*) What, after she refused me !

EVELYN. (*to SIR GERARD*) But I must refer you to Miss Fortescue.

SIR G. She's now in the grounds. I just caught sight of her with that clever Italian, Signor Lancia. I'll offer my petition at once. (*going*)

EVELYN. Wait, Sir Gerard, on second thoughts-----

SIR G. Nay, I shan't permit you to retract; I told you I was selfish. *Exit, C.*

EVELYN. (*advancing at GILBERT*) How grave he looks. Oh, I've been very wrong, but he so provoked me. Gilbert!

GILB. (*very coldly*) Miss Rochford.

EVELYN. Miss Rochford! why you're angry.

GILB. Too much pained, madam, for anger.

EVELYN. (*aside*) Pained; then he *does* love me. Indeed, Gilbert, I won't go to the regatta.

GILB. You'd better tell this to Sir Gerard. (*taking his hat and going*)

EVELYN. You're not going—listen to me.

GILB. Pardon me—some other time. (*bows and goes slowly to window*)

EVELYN. No, now—now; forgive me, and you shall be as good-humoured as you please. What, Gilbert!

GILB. (*turning to her relentingly*) Evelyn—Evelyn !

EVELYN. (*clasping her hands and affecting childish penitence*) Naughty Evelyn! (*he laughs and shakes his head she takes his arm they pass out by the window C.*)

SCENE SECOND.—*Grounds adjoining Miss Fortescue's House  
—House in the distance ; on one side of grounds a lodge ;  
a rustic seat in C. practicable.*

*Enter JACKSON and MORLEY, from door of lodge, R. C.*

MORLEY. So you're lodge-keeper here, friend?

JACKSON. Yes, sir, for these fifteen years.

MORLEY. You're positive that Sir Gerard Fane is now in the house yonder?

JACKSON. Positive, sir; you'll be sure to find Sir Gerard at the house.

MORLEY. Thank you, I'll wait for him. You've a fine prospect here.

JACKSON. Yes, sir, the view's much admired. It's wonderful what a sight of artists we have hereabouts in summer. (*pointing*) Look, there's one of 'em. (*pointing off*) A queer gentleman he is, to my thinking.

MORLEY. Why so ?

JACKSON. Well, he came here three days since, and asked leave to sketch in the grounds.

MORLEY. That was but natural.

JACKSON. Yes; but I fancy it was all make-believe. After a few scratches with his pencil, he began questioning me about the ladies of the house.

MORLEY. Rather inquisitive, eh ?

JACKSON. Yes; perhaps so ; but in a mild gentleman-like sort of manner. But the strangest thing was how he would now and then fix his eyes on me, as if my words was guineas, and then look away as careless of 'em as if they was pebbles.

MORLEY. Some eccentric man of genius, I suppose.

JACKSON. I can't say as to that. But you should have seen him when the brougham passed through; " Who's that?" says he, all of a shake; " My mistress, Miss Fortescue," says I; " Indeed," he answered, with a gasp like. " I hope she won't think I'm taking a liberty;" " Not a bit, sir;" says I, " she never shuts her gate against artists." Then I told him that my young lady, Miss Rochford, was a pretty tidy artist herself, and that Mr. Brown, the Dover printseller, was on the look out for a first-rate master, just to finish her off: la! what a

start he gave—he snatched up his portfolio—wring my hand as if I had been his best friend, and a minute after was tramping hard on his way to Dover!

MORLEY. Perhaps to make interest for this very situation.

JACKSON. In that case, why doesn't he march boldly up to the house ? Look at him there as he sits with his head propped on his arm. Ah ! he rises—he's coming this way.

MORLEY. Don't watch him; he may dislike observation. I've still a question or two to ask you; suppose we walk into the lodge here.

JACKSON. With all my heart, sir. *Exeunt, R. C.*

*Enter* ROCHFORD, R. 1 E., *who has assumed the surname of Vernon—he advances with a feeble step, and places his portfolio on seat.*

ROCH. Is this a dream? About to see her!—the long—almost hopeless yearning of years fulfilled. Have I indeed been released from my prison?—shall I not wake and be still there ? Released! —yes, pardoned for the services I rendered; but my innocence still unproved. Why do I delay? I have the needful testimonials, yet tremble to approach her. How can I meet her as a stranger? If she have her mother's look—if she speak to me with her mother's voice how shall I command myself?—*I must!* I must learn whether she cherishes the thought of a father, or turns from it as disgrace; If the latter, I will not shame her. I will quit her—quit her unknown—though it break my heart! (*throws himself on bench in emotion*)

*lie-enter* MORLEY, *door, R. C.*

MORLEY. (*after observing* ROCHFORD) I'm not mistaken—it must be he ! (*advancing*) What, Vernon ?

ROCH. You, Morley! my best friend, who helped me when destitute ?

MORLEY. Nay ; I but recognized your merit as an artist, and employed you to instruct my daughter.

ROCH. But what brings you from London, Morley?

MORLEY. I'm on the track of a superfine gentleman—Sir Gerard Fane.

ROCH. Sir Gerard Fane! (*aside*) Years back, the scandal of Baden.

MORLEY. Yes, my friend; Sir Gerard; who, having first borrowed money of me on mortgage, deigned to improve our acquaintance, and even be a guest at *my* table.

ROCH. A dangerous one !

MORLEY. He proved so. In a short time he pursued my daughter with his attentions. The dear simple girl was charmed and flattered—in short permitted herself to love him.

ROCH. He proposed for her ?

MORLEY. Not in words ; he was too wary for that; but by his intimacy—his seeming tenderness—by all the nameless acts which speak to a woman's heart. After a while, on pretence of an advantageous purchase, he applied to me for a fresh loan of some hundreds. As he moved in a different sphere from mine, I had then heard nothing to his discredit—I would not distrust one who might be my son-in-law. I lent him the sum—this time without security; soon his visits grew fewer—then ceased! He left us, and fled to the Continent—I, defrauded of my money—my child, of her hopes and affections.

ROCH. Well that she escaped from him !

MORLEY. Well indeed! I have since learned that it is this man's execrable pastime to win the attachment of trusting women, and, when he can do so safely, to compromise their reputation.

ROCH. Villain ! and he goes unpunished ?

MORLEY. Yes, he is too crafty to commit himself.

ROCH. And you are now in search of him ?

MORLEY. Ay! to recover my money, or at least to punish him. He is at this moment in yonder house.

ROCH. At Miss Fortescue's ?

MORLEY. Yes; it is even reported at Dover that he has a design on one of the inmates.

ROCH. (*with agitation*) What design?

MORLEY. To repair by marriage the fortune he has lost on the turf.

ROCH. Marriage! with whom ?

MORLEY. It is said with a Miss Rochford, who resides there.

ROCH. Miss Rochford! (*aside*) Thank heaven I'm in time.

MORLEY. Stay, I hear voices. Can it be he ? No—(*looking off, L.*)

ROCH. Who then ? (*listening intently*) Women !

MORLEY. One of them.

ROCH. (*still listening, but without looking*) Hist! they turn back.

MORLEY. (*still looking off*) Yes, they strike into another walk. But look, a new form appears that of a younger woman: she approaches us—nearer—still nearer. How fresh and fair a creature; yet her look is pensive—a flesh and blood April for your painting, friend artist—(ROCHFORD *grasps the seat by which he supports himself*) What's this, Vernon—you're ill?

ROCH. No, not ill. (*aside*) Courage—she's here.

*Enter* EVELYN, L. 1 E.—ROCHFORD *totters forward and gazes on her earnestly*; MORLEY *removes his hat to EVELYN, who returns his salutation, ROCHFORD then glances at MORLEY, and remembering himself, removes his hat to EVELYN.*

EVELYN. Your look, sir, is a sort of enquiry. Have you any question for me ?

ROCH. (*struggling with his emotion*) Young lady, if your name is-----

EVELYN. My name is Rochford.

ROCH. I have a letter for you, Miss Rochford. (*he gives her letter*)

MORLEY. As you've business here, Vernon, I'll retire. (*aside*) He doesn't hear me—strange! (*bows to EVELYN and goes out, R. 1 E.*)

EVELYN. (*who has opened letter*) Oh, from the print-seller. You're the drawing-master he wrote about.

ROCH. (*who has been lost in watching her, suddenly recovering himself*) Yes, yes, madam ; I have his recommendation, and other testimonials. I have specimens too—specimens—(*pauses and presses his hand to his forehead*)

EVELYN. You seem faint; the heat has overcome you; lean on me.

ROCH. You are all goodness; but I am myself again—being very poor, the fear of your rejection, for a moment unnerved me.

EVELYN. I grieve that you are unfortunate. Pray walk with me to the house.

ROCH. (*taking up portfolio*) Willingly, madam. (*aside*) Strength, Heaven, strength!

*Enter SIR GERARD FANE, R. 1 E., meeting them.*

SIR G. Occupied, Miss Rochford—or, may I again urge my request?

EVELYN. (*courteously*) Thanks, Sir Gerard, but it would be in vain to-day—Miss Fortescue refuses. (*passes on*)

ROCH. (*aside*) Sir Gerard! (*regarding SIR G. fixedly*)

SIR G. (*as EVELYN goes out*) I shall plead once more. (*regarding ROCHFORD*) You will know me, friend, when we next meet.

ROCH. Possibly, sir. I have a retentive memory.

*Follows EVELYN out, L. U. E.*

SIR G. What does he mean? I could almost fancy I had seen him before. (*throws himself down on the garden bench*) I hope the rascal knows nothing to prejudice me with Evelyn. It's plain she likes me; each time that I call she gives me a warmer welcome. That of to-day was a challenge! The world says, she'll have her friend's money. Most likely, too, she has some fortune of her own. Yes, thoroughbred as I am, I must sacrifice myself and go into the shafts of matrimony. There's no help for it.

*Enter MORLEY, R. 1 E.; he stands apart and observes*

SIR GERALD FANE.

With fortune flown out of the window, and want thundering at the door—with that revengeful old Morley on the watch—(*observing MORLEY*) Eh! talk of the devil, &c, I could swear that's he!—Here's a fix! (*advancing to MORLEY with feigned delight*) What, Morley, my good friend! (*offers his hand*) Not shake hands?

MORLEY. With you, Sir Gerard?

SIR G. My dear fellow, if I'm so disagreeable to you, why do you come after me?

MORLEY. Why? For the money you wheedled out of me.

SIR G. Oh! that trifling loan.

MORLEY. With which you decamped to the Continent: but I heard you were come back.

SIR G. Yes, for the express purpose of paying you. I grew quite uneasy. "That worthy Morley," I said, "will be anxious about his money."

MORLEY. A little.

SIR G. All right; 'twill be at your banker's next week. And now, dear Morley, your hand.

MORLEY. No, sir; not to the spendthrift—the libertine—the gamester-----

SIR G. (*soothingly*) Not quite so loud. Go on, Morley.

MORLEY. The impostor who deserted my child!

SIR G. On my life, you're unjust! I admired your daughter—who could help it? but I am, as you say, a spendthrift and a rover; I knew she would have been wretched with me: so I conquered my passion—I wasn't selfish enough to marry her.

MORLEY. Hypocrite!

SIR G. There's gratitude! Come this way, let's talk matters over. (*offering his arm which MORLEY rejects*)

MORLEY. I demand my debt.

SIR G. Very natural; but not so loud, not so loud. This way, dear Morley.

MORLEY. I'll not be duped twice.

SIR G. Of course not. Take my arm. What, you won't—you really won't? Oh, very well!

*They go out at side, opposite to that taken by EVELYN and ROCHFORD.*

SCENE THIRD.—*Drawing Room as before.*

*Enter EVELYN by window, followed by ROCHFORD, C.*

EVELYN. Walk in, Mr. Vernon; you still look tired, pray sit. (*he bows and sits, while she takes off her hat and scarf*) I'm quite impatient to begin. With Miss Fortescue's consent, I'll take my first lesson to-morrow.

ROCH. Shall I show you my sketches? (*opens his portfolio*)

EVELYN. Do so; but I must warn you you'll have a giddy pupil; I shall try your patience.

ROCH. It will hold out.

EVELYN. I've ordered refreshment in the next room. Till it's ready may I run through your portfolio ? (*crosses to table, L.*)

ROCH. Certainly.

EVELYN. (*taking sketches from portfolio and examining them one by one*) A scene in Switzerland. How exquisite a contrast ! The nook of green valley with its cattle and simple herdsmen, surrounded by mountain walls half veiled in mist—like our little human life, rounded by eternity.

ROCH. (*enthusiastically*) You have the soul of a painter.

EVELYN. Ah, but not his hand. This is far beyond me. (*lays it aside*)

ROCH. What do you say to this ?

EVELYN. Sunset on the Rhine. How grandly that old fortress stands out! Still too difficult. (*lays it aside*) That's a fine clump of trees; perhaps I could manage that. (*lays it aside*) But what's this that looks so like a prison ?

ROCH. It is one—a prison in Germany. (*she lays it aside*)

EVELYN. And here's another; surely it's a prison cell with its lonely inmate.

ROCH. You are right.

EVELYN. These are gloomy subjects.

ROCH. They are illustrations for a story.

EVELYN. A story—do you mean a romance ?

ROCH. You may call it so.

EVELYN. Oh, I delight so in romance. Do you know the author ?

ROCH. Yes, the poor artist beside you, obliged to eke out a living by his pen as well as pencil, is himself the author.

EVELYN. *You!* Author and artist both ! Then you're what's called a genius. How delightful. What is the plot of the tale? Do tell me.

ROCH. (*aside*) She leads to the very point. It relates to a father and a daughter.

EVELYN. *A father!* (*aside, turning away*) He little knows the grief of that word to me.

ROCH. (*aside, watching her*) *A father!* She shrinks from the very name!

EVELYN. Well, Mr. Vernon?

ROCH. (*affecting a smile*) Young lady, the story is a long one. Yet perhaps some day when you have patience—

EVELYN. You will tell it. I shall hold you to your word. Now follow me. (*rising*) You must need refreshment. (*archly*) Do you know I'm getting almost afraid of you as you write romances. I'm told that you clever authors put every one you meet into your books. Pray don't introduce me!

ROCH. You are quite safe.

EVELYN. If you do, I shall expect to be flattered. I don't object to a trifling fault or two, just to keep me human ; but you must make me all that's noble and high-hearted.

ROCH. I will try hard, if I undertake the task.

EVELYN. Come then, it's a compact—come.

*Exeunt, R. door.*

*Enter MISS FORTESCUE and SIR GERARD, C.*

MISS F. You must excuse me, Sir Gerard; I am much engaged to-day. I thought you were at Dover by this time.

SIR G. No ; I wanted to see you alone. Positively, I thought your *tete-a-tete* with Signor Lancia would never end. By the way, is not Lancia the droll fellow who goes through the country boring quiet folks for subscriptions, and persuading romantic ladies to hold fancy fairs for the cause of Italy?

MISS F. Remember, sir, that you speak of my friend. Have you further business with me ?

SIR G. Only to persuade you to be amiable and relent.

MISS F. Relent as to what?

SIR G. As to the regatta; we should still be in time.

MISS F. Sir Gerard, I declined your offer before, I trust, civilly.

SIR G. Undeniably.

MISS F. Then don't repeat it, or I may decline uncivilly.

SIR G. But Miss Rochford's wishes-----

MISS F. In this case, are not mine.

SIR G. Still-----

MISS F. Excuse me; I have one marked failing—a proneness to be downright. Sometimes I tell people my

opinion of them to their faces; that I may not yield to the temptation now, I prudently withdraw from it. Sir Gerard, good morning. *Exit, door R. 3 E.*

SIR G. (*walking to and fro*) I should have married that woman after all: her fortune would have been one famous point—her temper another. Plain life's as insipid as plain water; but every word from her lips would have been a drop of such pure alcohol, that I think I could have relished the draught. (*sits*) I fear she'll hardly stand my friend with Evelyn. Can I win the pretty simpleton in spite of her ? that might be difficult. Something must done; if Morley fulfils his threat, I'm ruined. It's said there's some mystery about the girl's parentage. No matter, if she has money of her own. But *has* she ?—Are there no means by which I could learn ?

*Re-enter* ROCHFORD, R.

ROCH. (*aside*) He here! Evelyn, how to protect thee ? (*he takes up his portfolio and collects sketches*)

SIR G. Who's that?

ROCH. The drawing master.

SIR G. When the deuce did you come in ?

ROCH. Just now for my portfolio.

SIR G. (*aside*) The drawing master! He maybe the man for my purpose; I suppose he's often here and knows something of the family affairs. Your name is—is—

ROCH. Vernon!

SIR G. Pardon me—are these sketches yours ?

ROCH. They are.

SIR G. Surely I know this place —Yes, it's Baden Baden with its saloon and pleasure grounds.

ROCH. You are right.

SIR G. I thought so—(*carelessly retaining the sketch*) You find Miss Rochford an apt pupil—eh, Mr. Vernon ?

ROCH. She has much taste—

SIR G. Every gift of mind, person, and fortune—

ROCH. Indeed ! of fortune ?—

SIR G. Yes—you know, of course, that she'll be Miss Fortescue's heiress—

ROCH. There's such a report. (*aside*) So, he would sound me.

SIR G. Nay, I take a liberty in speaking of it But as her friend-----

ROCH. Naturally you feel interested. (*aside*) I'll give him full scope.

SIR G. (*aside*) The fellow's disposed to gossip. Who could fail to be interested in one so amiable—so-----

ROCH. So unsuspecting.

SIR G. So charitable.

ROCH. To the poor, you mean ?

SIR G. Ay, gives a great deal away, I'm sure.

ROCH. I've heard so in Dover.

SIR G. You have. Excellent young lady. (*aside*) Then she *has* money of her own. Yes, she quite deserves her brilliant prospects.

ROCH. I don't doubt it. Yet brilliant prospects have their dangers.

SIR G. Dangers, Mr. Vernon?

ROCH. Nay, it's hardly for me-----

SIR G. To discuss Miss Rochford's affairs. No, nor for me, still-----

ROCH. I meant the danger which attends inexperience.

SIR G. You're standing. (*points to a chair*. ROCHFORD *sits L. of table*) Yes, I take you.

ROCH. The danger, Sir Gerard, that such a prize might fall to one unworthy of it.

SIR G. (*aside*) He talks freely, on my soul. Well, as you've broached the subject, I grant it would be a thousand pities if she became a prey to some designing fellow—say some country clod—without fortune or accomplishments.

ROCH. And then, sir, you know there's equal danger on the other hand from men of very particular accomplishments.

SIR G. Ah, the ingratiating dogs.

ROCH. Men, Sir Gerard, who, when they have run through one fortune---we'll say on the turf or at play—have the accomplishment of extracting another fortune from the credulity of their friends.

SIR G. Hem ; you're a bit of a cynic, Mr. Vernon. (*aside*) Where have I heard that voice ?

ROCH. I once knew a London merchant, Sir Gerard, who had been the victim of such a person.

SIR G. A merchant! (*aside*) Morley, perhaps. I'm sure I've seen him before. A merchant, eh?

ROCH. Into whose family this accomplished person gained entrance. First he won the daughter's affection, and then made of it a key to the father's strong box. Clever fellow! The one he robbed of money, the other of peace.

SIR G. So.

ROCH. Oh, but he had other triumphs. There were honourable women whose hopes he had blighted, for he could feign love for sport, and still keep clear of the law; innocent women whose good name he had stained, for he knew how to boast by hints, and still keep clear of the law. He was so accomplished, you see.

SIR G. Well, sir, what's this to the purpose?

ROCH. Nothing, perhaps—the mere habit of an artist to hit off a portrait. By the way, do you recognize it?

SIR G. I—no! Confound me if I do.

ROCH. Not singular, Sir Gerard. I have often produced a striking likeness, which every one knew except the sitter.

SIR G. Wait a moment. Yes, yes; putting this and that together, I fancy you mean me. Do you see this cane?

ROCH. It has a gold head. Is it paid for?

SIR G. You know that you are safe, that I cannot punish you without offending Miss Rochford. (*aside, looking at ROCHFORD, keenly, while he collects his sketches*) Rochford! Rochford! How that name and this man's face carry me back. Can it be? The very voice, too.

ROCH. I'll thank you for my sketch.

SIR G. (*looking at sketch which he has retained*) Oh, this—your drawing of Baden. (*aside*) Baden! all tallies and coheres. You've been at Baden, perhaps?

ROCH. I at Baden! Oh, yes—yes.

SIR G. (*aside*) He hesitates. So have I, years ago. A strange incident happened just then, the arrest of an Englishman for the robbery and murder of his kinsman.

ROCH. (*controlling himself*) Indeed. Oblige me with my sketch.

SIR G. (*withdrawing it*) I saw him on his way to prison

in front of this very building. (*points to sketch*) I was present at his trial. I have never forgotten that man's face. (ROCHFORD *screens his face with portfolio*—SIR GERARD *lays his hand upon it*; ROCHFORD *screens his face with a sketch*)

ROCH. No doubt it would strike you—the sketch?

SIR G. You're in haste, sir. He was convicted of robbery and imprisoned for life.

ROCH. Oh, only of robbery !

SIR G. (*aside*) Clever rascal! As to the murder, there were faint suspicions against others, and his judges were squeamish.

ROCH. Merciful, perhaps. But I am pressed. (*holding his hand for sketch*)

SIR G. (*still withholding it*) I am not; and I have a fancy for you to hear me out. My belief is, that this convict escaped, that he came to England, that I've seen him here. (*surveying ROCHFORD*) His height about—about yours—his hair, iron grey—his age, perhaps still under fifty—his manner, caustic and insolent—his profession, an artist's. You see I, too, can hit off a portrait. Is it like ?

ROCH. How can I tell ? show me the original.

SIR G. I thought so; the sitter, you said, seldom knows himself. You're a capital actor, though.

ROCH. (*trying to laugh him down*) But you are not. Is this your clumsy revenge because I've just humbled you ? Away, sir ! (*going R.*)

SIR G. Stay, ROCHFORD !

ROCH. Rochford!

SIR G. Aye, Rochford! I will see if others recognize my portrait of you; I will take it at once to your pupil, Miss Rochford.

ROCH. (*with uncontrolled emotion*) To Evelyn ? Oh, no! no, no, no !

SIR G. *Evelyn*—you call her Evelyn! Evelyn *Rochford*—your own name, too! Then the mystery of her parentage—your agitation—ah ! there's more in this. Yes, to Evelyn Rochford. (*going R.*)

ROCH. No, not to her—not to her !

SIR G. Why not?

ROCH. Because—because-----

SIR G. I'll tell you why; because you are her kinsman—a near one—too old for her brother—her father!

ROCH. Her father!

SIR G. Yes; that word Evelyn from your lips, and your excitement, have betrayed you.

ROCH. Wretched man ! I depend for bread on my art, and you would ruin me with a patron ; this explains all.

SIR G. Not to me. (*a short pause*) Yet listen, there is one way, perhaps, by which you might escape exposure.

ROCH. Exposure!

SIR G. What you please. I doubt not that you are Rochford, the convict—Evelyn's father—yet for her sake—

ROCH. Well?

SIR G. I might spare you; but mark me, there's an if—

ROCH. If what ?

SIR G. Can't you guess?

ROCH. No.

SIR G. I must help you then—I love Evelyn.

ROCH. (*restraining himself*) Go on-----

SIR G. I would marry her—but—psha ! why be nice with you ? My affairs are desperate—I must marry a fortune.

ROCH. Go on.

SIR G. You can help me.

ROCH. No ; she'll spurn you.

SIR G. In that distressing event you can still help me.

ROCH. How ?

SIR G. Confide to her privately who you are. Tell her that I know your secret—that for your sake and her own she must be mine; and bring me, too, an ample dowry from her protectress.

ROCH. So, that's my task?

SIR G. Comply and you are safe!

ROCH. Villain, coward! Oh, words are poor! this to me—to me !

SIR G. Then you are her father?

ROCH. Who said that?

SIR G. Your own passion again—why else should you—

ROCH. Why else? Because I have that of which you have but the forged semblance—manhood. Because I was born to loathe baseness—to revere innocence—ay !

and to protect it. Her father! Why, were I the convict you spoke of I should scorn you still. Passion may drive the wretched even to blood—want, to plunder ; and amidst the wreck of hope and virtue, they may still be men. But you who would force a child's heart through a father's agony—who would extort the marriage vow itself by the rack—the chained felon would pollute his hand by the touch of yours. Begone, I defy you !

SIR G. (*aside*) He must be Rochford! yet I may fail to prove it. Good morning! you'll be sane to-morrow. Till then, I'll keep your secret. *Exit, C.*

ROCH. Discovered! and by him. Oh, I have been rash; but the thought of Evelyn transported me! No hope of his mercy—none! What's to be done? he will belie me to her—she must be warned too of his machinations! how? there's but one course—I must be beforehand with him, and reveal myself. Yet how prove my innocence? no matter ! I must trust to nature's instinct, and to *Him* who is the father's Father! Yes, Evelyn; thou shalt know me to-morrow! (*sinks into chair, R. of table*)

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

---

### ACT III.

SCENE FIRST.—*Grounds in front of Miss Fortescue's House.*

*Enter SIR GERARD, R. 1. E.*

SIR G. So, he's with her now in that very room. He still gives me the answer of yesterday; bids me in fact, do my worst. Though I could almost swear to his face and voice, though his passion and alarm witness that he is Rochford, and show his relationship to Evelyn, how can I prove this ? Were he once identified, all would go well I should at least checkmate young Brackenbury, if he be my rival. What's my policy then ? Decision—I'll act as if I had proof, and warn the Brackenburys, Rochford's emotion may again betray him. They'll keep his secret,

I think : if so, its further disclosure would rest with me. Yes, I should be master of the situation. Who comes here ? Oh, our friend of Italy, our clever patriot, who levies funds for his country and makes himself the treasurer—a good notion that. Why, won't England become an oppressed nationality, and give a poor devil a chance.

*Enter LANCIA, R. I E.*

Good morning, my honest patriot.

LANCIA. You recall me then, sir ?

SIR G. Yes, my sublime virtue. I had once the honour in a crowd of rubbing against your immaculate shoulders.

LANCIA. You should have told me, Sir Gerard, that I might have brushed my coat.

SIR G. How—you speak thus and know me ?

LANCIA. Yes; or why should I speak so. You were pointed out to me yesterday, besides, I have seen you at Baden. (*going*)

SIR G. What—at Baden? That's fifteen years since.

LANCIA. Very likely.

SIR G. Wait! wait!

LANCIA. Well, sir?

SIR G. (*forcibly taking his arm*) Yes, just fifteen years. The very time, you may remember, when an Englishman, named Rochford, was arrested.

LANCIA. I remember well—charged with robbery and murder ?

SIR G. That's the villain.

LANCIA. I heard of him.

SIR G. You never saw the man.

LANCIA. (*carelessly*) Yes, yes, I have seen him.

SIR G. Often?

LANCIA. Several times.

SIR G. Lancia, I can help your fortunes—I mean, of course, your country's.

LANCIA. How?

SIR G. Could you identify this Rochford if you saw him?

LANCIA. I can't say!—possibly—why ?

SIR G. Of course you detest his crimes?

LANCIA. (*after a short pause*) Sir! am I a gentleman?

SIR G. Suppose this criminal had escaped-----

LANCIA. Escaped !

SIR G. Would you help to bring him to justice ?

LANCIA. I would! I would!

SIR G. He *has* escaped ; I can confront you with him!

LANCIA. You can ? do so then. Yes! by all means; but quickly—I sail to-night for Calais.

SIR G. You have the best of the day before you; (*looking off*) Ah ! Miss Fortescue! we must break off—not a word of what has passed! Meet me in half an hour at the inn by the lodge.

LANCIA. And you'll tell me how this will serve my country?

SIR G. Yes, Yes! remember; in half an hour! (*aside*) Now, Rochford. *Exit, R. 1 E.*

*Enter MISS FORTESCUE, L. 1 E.*

MISS F. What! you, Lancia? I scarcely hoped to see you again, at present. Was that Sir Gerard Fane who left you ?

LANCIA. Yes, dear lady; but talk not of him—I've just had glorious news, and flew back to tell it.

MISS F. Indeed!

LANCIA. Yes; two battles have been fought, and the enemy decisively routed. Lombardy is free—my dear native Lombardy.

MISS F. News to stir one's blood—how glad I am! How glad Evelyn Rochford will be,

LANCIA. (*musingly*) Evelyn Rochford—*Rochford* ?

MISS F. Is that strange ?

LANCIA. Oh, no, no! I have reason to dwell upon her name.

MISS F. Because, like me, she loves Italy. Well, good friend, your cause is half won. Oh! were I but a man, I would help you— not with gold—but with steel.

LANCIA. Don't I know it ? Lady, if in going back to my land I feel one struggle, one pang, it is that I—that I leave— (*pausing in emotion*) Oh, I am much foolish!

MISS F. But you will return—you promised.

LANCIA. That is with heaven. I have but given Italy my toil; she may need my blood.

MISS F. (*touched*) Then this may be a last farewell—a

farewell to the friend I most honoured, to the true heart that beat but for a noble cause.

LANCIA. And who was it that cheered me ? Who, when men laughed at me for a dreamer, said, " Courage, Lancia ! better to live in noble dreams than in base realities." Whose heart and hand were ever open to the poor exile? (*much moved*) Ah, lady, forgive the tongue that at parting falters with gratitude, devotion—love !

MISS F. (*surprised*) Lancia!

LANCIA. The Signora understands me— love for a sister. Would I had such. And now adieu. (*takes her hand*)

MISS F. Adieu, dear friend. May your lot be happy as your heart is noble. May you find friends—brothers; even the sister you need.

LANCIA. Never shall I.

MISS F. Except you make one.

LANCIA. How?

MISS F. AS others do—by a wedding ring.

LANCIA. Marry I shall not. If I could live three lives I would not Farewell, Signora. (*kissing her hand, then aside*) Marry, Lancia? Never—never. *Exit, R. 1 E.*

MISS F. So he's gone! Brave, high-hearted gentleman, who bore want with a smile, and lived but for his country, who never flattered me because I was rich, nor presumed because I was gracious. True, staunch friend, I shall miss thee. How pure was his gratitude. He loved me as a sister. Had he breathed a wanner love should I have shrunk from it ? What, Helen Fortescue, this folly at your age ? (*smiling, but a good deal moved*)

*Enter SERVANT, L. 1 E.*

SERVANT. Mr. Brackenbury and Mr Gilbert have called.

MISS F. Very well; say I'll come instantly. (*exit SERVANT, L. 1 E.*) There, it's over. (*wiping her eyes*) Go, good Lancia—Heaven prosper you, and let me thank it that I have seen one man from whom I was sorry to part.

SCENE SECOND.—*Library in Miss Fortescue's House.*

ROCHFORD *and* EVELYN *discovered; drawing on an easel, palette, brushes, &c. ; EVELYN is engaged on her drawing, ROCHFORD stands near and observes her ; a short silence; the clock strikes one.*

EVELYN. One o'clock; then I may lay down my pencil, our lesson for the day is over.

ROCH. Be it so then, we continue to-morrow ?

EVELYN. Yes.

ROCH. *(aside)* Now is the time.

EVELYN. *(showing her drawing)* Well, Mr. Vernon, have you any hope of your pupil ?

ROCH. Yes, you have taste and freedom, but-----*(turning away aside)* How to reveal myself?

EVELYN. I know what you will say, I need care and patience.

ROCH. The subject may not please you: shall we choose another? *(looking through his portfolio)*

EVELYN. No, do ; you will spoil me by indulgence.

ROCH. *(taking up a sketch)* Here is a simpler one for to-morrow, and here----- *(taking up a second sketch)* Ah! is the very sketch.

EVELYN. That I should like, you think? *(approaching him)*  
ROCH. No ; the one that startled you yesterday—that of the prison cell.

EVELYN. Prison cell! oh, yes. *(eagerly)* The sketch that led to your story.

ROCH. That reminds me. I promised you to conclude it.

EVELYN. I have not forgotten; will you do so now ?

ROCH. If you desire it.

EVELYN. Of course I do. *(sits)* There I'm all attention.

ROCH. *(aside)* A few minutes and she knows all. *(sinks into a chair, then slowly turns to her)* I must premise that the story is a sad one.

EVELYN. But it's only fiction.

ROCH. Nay, partly taken from life.

EVELYN. Then the more interesting.

ROCH. I told you that it concerned a father and a daughter.

EVELYN. (*gravely*) You did. Begin with the lady—she was beautiful, of course ?

ROCH. In his eyes.

EVELYN. He was a fond parent, then?

ROCH. He was.

EVELYN. And she loved him?

ROCH. As my tale goes, they had been severed from her childhood.

EVELYN. By what cause?

ROCH. That's the point of the story. Her father was accused of crime—of the robber's crime—it was even said, of the assassin's.

EVELYN. What a painful interest. Proceed.

ROCH. The proofs were strong against him.

EVELYN. Was he guilty ?

ROCH. No, a thousand times no! but the law pronounced him so; yet, as there were faint doubts in his favour, his doom was the prison, not the scaffold.

EVELYN. A hard fate, if innocent.

ROCH. Ay ; cut off from his kind—from esteem—from love—from his friends—from his child!

EVELYN. Yes, his child ! did he see her no more ?

ROCH. See her? (*with forced cheerfulness*) Oh, yes, yes ; in the story I bring it about that he does see her, but fears to reveal himself.

EVELYN. Why?

ROCH. Lest she should believe him guilty.

EVELYN. But she was his child.

ROCH. Well?

EVELYN. She would not have believed it. Spite of the dye on his hand—the chain on his limbs—the scorn of all men, she would have clung to him—she was his child.

ROCH. (*aside*) Bless her, bless her! Is there no case, then, when a child will renounce a father ?

EVELYN. (*aside, much moved*) My father broke my mother's heart. Yes, there are such cases. (*controlling herself*) But one thing strikes me, you have never mentioned his wife.

ROCH. (*agitated*) Spare me there—she was a dear, dear friend. Return to the husband.

EVELYN. Still the tenant of a dungeon?

ROCH. Yes; but even there men's natures will show themselves. In time he came to be trusted, as a convict might be, with the oversight of his fellows. After some years a fire broke out in the prison. All was panic ! For safety the convicts were hurried into the prison yard. They would have seized the chance to escape even by bloodshed. The counsels of this man restrained some, his firmness others; he leaned by the gate, fixed as its own stanchions. He raised the alarm though fierce hands were at his throat, and wild faces, lurid beneath the flames, were gleaming on his own.

EVELYN. But help came ?

ROCH. Yes, in time; the flames were subdued, nor was the man's service forgotten: in two years' more an order came for his release.

EVELYN. His innocence discovered?

ROCH. No ; though perhaps surmised.

EVELYN. Then he still went forth with a stained name ?

ROCH. He did: and the thought might have crushed him, but for another.

EVELYN. I guess it—it was the thought of his child?

ROCH. It was.

EVELYN. He went to her?

ROCH. Aye, once released he set forth in her quest, for many lands and the sea were between them. Penniless, at times he begged his way, nor felt it shame. One day he toiled with the peasants for bread; the next, he gained a pittance by his art. Often, half famished, he made his bed beneath a hovel, or on the bare ground. The very elements seemed leagued against his single heart, but he still bore on ; want and toil, wind and rain, spent their force on him in vain. His life was charmed—a flame that hunger could not exhaust, nor cold chill, nor storm quench—it was fed by heaven—it was love for his child!

EVELYN. Well, he found her, and her mother?

ROCH. He found *her* ; the mother-----

EVELYN. Still lived!

ROCH. (*greatly moved*) In his memory—in his heart, but on earth—no more—no more.

EVELYN. This relation pains you. Proceed no further.

ROCH. *I must !* I can command myself; *can you?*

EVELYN. Surely, if you can.

ROCH. But there is more pain to follow, perhaps a shock.

EVELYN. (*slightly alarmed*) To whom ?

ROCH. Prepare yourself—be calm I entreat.

EVELYN. Calm! What mystery is this ? (*both rise*)

ROCH. I am about to end it. Oh, restrain yourself—that lonely mourner—that bereaved husband-----

EVELYN. (*gasping*) Well?

ROCH. Is the man before you !

EVELYN. (*retreating*) You terrify me. Why these confessions to a stranger?

ROCH. A stranger! How if through me your father spoke?

EVELYN. I have no father.

ROCH. Have you proof of that?

EVELYN. (*trembling*) Silence—don't tell me that he lives?

ROCH. Not tell you ?

EVELYN. Not of him who broke my mother's heart!

ROCH. They are perjured who told you so. Your mother loved him—trusted him to the last. Here are my vouchers, her own letters to him. (*produces and gives letters*)

EVELYN. Her very hand ! (*totters to a chair*)

ROCH. Evelyn!

EVELYN. Evelyn!

ROCH. Yes, Evelyn, mine by the right of love, of nature. Ah, do you not yet see it? I—I am Rochford !

EVELYN. And *my father* ! No—no, unsay those fearful words ! (*after a pause*) Your proofs ?

ROCH. (*pointing to letters*) Those letters ; where could I have obtained them, but from your mother? Besides, many still know me. (*she shrinks*) Ay, shrink. I see—I see. (*he weeps*)

EVELYN. (*aside*) Tears! they are not feigned. It is true. Pity me, sir; if you are indeed my father think what I must feel as-----

ROCH. The child of a convict. I do, and since you recoil from me I'll not torture you. I'll quit you for ever !

EVELYN. Stay.

ROCH. Well?

EVELYN. You said you were innocent.— Prove it.

ROCH. I cannot. The proofs made against me. What can I say? Evelyn, crime leaves its stamp on the face—look on mine. Crime blunts the heart—is mine hardened? Have you no instinct that pleads for me? Evelyn, I implore----- (*he is about to kneel*)

EVELYN. (*starting up*) Oh, do not kneel, sir—not to me!

ROCH. Right! I will not. When under a felon's ban, your mother acquitted me. The man whom she trusted should not *kneel*. Pure in her sight and heaven's, I STAND! Dare I invoke her memory and meet your eye, unshrinking, if I were not innocent? Ah, that look! speak—answer!

EVELYN. Innocent, I believe it, innocent! Father! (*throws herself into his arms*)

ROCH. (*embracing her*) Father! Close! close! I have thee—my own—my own.

EVELYN. Ay—yours! (*they stand hand in hand*)

ROCH. Let me gaze—gaze. How have I dreamed of this! No dream now! This hand is warm—firm. I have seen thee in sleep; but the dawn was cruel. Now, I shall not dread the sun. I shall wake and have thee. Oh, moment that repays a life!

EVELYN. I know you now.

ROCH. You might never have known me but for the threat of a villain.

EVELYN. Who?

ROCH. Sir Gerard Fane! He guesses my secret, and would force you to marry him.

EVELYN. Marry him! I am already betrothed.

ROCH. Betrothed!

EVELYN. To Gilbert Brackenbury, the son of a neighbour.

ROCH. And you love him!

EVELYN. Love him.

ROCH. Thank Heaven, she is safe.

*Enter* MISS FORTESCUE, BRACKENBURY, *and* GILBERT, C.  
*from* L.

MISS F. What is this, Evelyn,—your hand in this gentleman's?

BRACK. Why that almost gives colour to the statement.

EVELYN. What statement ?

BRACK. Sir Gerard Fane's ; he has been with me, and declares that this person calling himself Vernon-----

ROCH. Go on, sir.

BRACK. I must state the charge that you may refute it. He asserts that the so-called Vernon is no other than an escaped convict, and moreover-----

GILB. (*interrupting*) Do not tell her that; it's false—monstrous!

MISS F. Yet she must hear it, Gilbert. Evelyn, Sir Gerard dares to assert that Mr. Vernon is—(*hesitates*)

EVELYN. I know it already ; the gentleman is my father.

BRACK. She admits it.

MISS F. No—I demand his proofs.

EVELYN. They will convince you.

MISS F. Child, dear child, and if he were your father, can you guess-----

ROCH. Madam, she knows all—that I am a man with a branded name, but still innocent.

GILB. (*to BRACKENBURY*) Perhaps so; it is at least possible.

BRACK. (*to GILBERT*) Silence, sir. (*to ROCHFORD*) You grant, then, that your name is tainted; and you, Miss Rochford, you acknowledge this man?

EVELYN. I acknowledge him.

BRACK. Then I must tell you, with deep concern, that you can never be the wife of my son.

ROCH. Ah, let me speak !

BRACK. No ; it matters not whether you *are* guilty; you have been pronounced so. My son shall never be connected with a reputed felon.

EVELYN. (*indignantly*) Felon ! Father !

ROCH. Patience, love—no anger, no anger. (*to BRACK*) I can respect your feelings, sir, being myself a father; still, you will grant *she* should not suffer. Listen, then, I'll not shame her. (*BRACKENBURY makes a gesture of repulse*) I'll quit this spot; visit her as a stranger, in private, and seldom—seldom. I am quite reasonable.

MISS F. (*aside*) Can this man be guilty ?

BRACK. Words are idle. Gilbert! (*going*)

GILB. Stay, sir; whatever her father's faults, they cannot affect Evelyn.

BRACK. Not affect her ?

GILB. No. Do we deal thus in meaner things ? does the gold-seeker reject *his* prize, because encumbered with earth ? Evelyn, I know your worth; if it came not through a father, then heaven gave it you direct. Be mine for what you are—the dearer for your sorrow. (*advances to her and seizes her hand*)

EVELYN. Gilbert!

BRACK. Am I in my senses ? Will you bring infamy upon your name ?

GILB. No, sir, I will maintain it. Remember that sailor of our name—you have told me the tale often—who was hemmed in by the foe; their guns had swept down his comrades—battered his ship from stem to stern. "Strike your flag!" was the word—he refused. "But your ship sinks!" they cried. "And I with it!" he answered, and went down. What's a man's ship to his betrothed? If fate wreck Evelyn, it wrecks me with her.

BRACK. But not you alone—your father—the weak fool who was proud of you—schemed for you! pinched for you—he is your victim ! Persist, and you lose me—you shall be an outcast from my heart, and my memory!

EVELYN. Go, Gilbert—I implore—I command you !

MISS F. Gilbert, obey her—obey your father—go!

GILB. Only for a time then—I'll not yield her.

MISS F. Silence—silence, Evelyn !

EVELYN. Do not speak—leave us.

MISS F. (*to BRACKENBURY*) Come, sir; I feel for you—we will talk of this together.

(MISS FORTESCUE, BRACKENBURY, and GILBERT, *go out, C.*)

ROCH. (*approaching her*) Evelyn! (*she stands absorbed*) Evelyn!

EVELYN. (*abstractedly*) Ah! yes! yes!

ROCH. Not a look. I should have foreseen this—I have undone her.

EVELYN. (*rousing herself*) No—no, father! do not heed his taunts—sit—sit. (*she forces him into a chair, and kneels by his side*) Ah! lay your hand on my head thus

—that's well. I know what you must have borne—I will be your comfort, father. We will have one home—one lot—we shall be so happy—you see I can smile already! But for this trial, I had never guessed the half of Gilbert's love—and though I lose him, still that thought—yes—though I lose him—don't heed me—don't heed me !  
*(she bursts into hysterical weeping)*

ROCH. My child!

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

---

## ACT IV.

SCENE FIRST.—*Grounds in front of Miss Fortescue's House  
(as in Act III.)*

*Enter* MISS FORTESCUE AND ROCHFORD, L. 1. E.

MISS F. Yes, I admit the evidence is sufficient. These letters in the hand of your wife, my dearest friend, and your other proofs, convince me. *(she hands him the letters)*

ROCH. You grant then that I am Rochford, Evelyn's father?

MISS F. I cannot doubt it, and I will add that strong as circumstances seemed against you, I would fain believe in your innocence. But is there no way still left to prove it.

ROCH. None, save the confession of the real criminal.

MISS F. But those jewels which were sold. What became of the money you received for them, and which you were charged with appropriating?

ROCH. It was paid to a certain Count Manoli by my uncle for a debt at play.

MISS F. And where is this Count Manoli? He might throw some light on the affair.

ROCH. Yes, he might.

MISS F. Has due search been made for him ?

ROCH. For years ; but in vain.

MISS F. *(aside)* Poor Evelyn! Who approaches? Sir Gerard Fane. Rochford, Mr. Brackenbury will never consent to his son's marriage with Evelyn.

ROCH. I know it.

MISS F. But for her sake he has promised me to keep your secret. You must do the same. Put Sir Gerard to the proof. As you value Evelyn's honour, never admit to him that you are Rochford, or that-----(*she hesitates*)

ROCH. Or that I am her father. True; she must be spared that.

MISS F. Forgive me.

ROCH. Freely. I know my part.

*Enter SIR GERARD, R. 1 E.*

SIR G. Once more, Miss Fortescue, your very humble servant. Am I welcome ?

MISS F. That depends upon your business. If it be to confess your slanders to this gentlemen, and entreat his pardon—yes!

SIR G. So it's to be war, I find—very well—you mean then to dispute my charges ?

ROCH. I do ! and defy you to the proof!

SIR G. Bravely said, Rochford! How well you're looking—how free from anxiety—how safe and comfortable you must feel.

ROCH. If you mean me by Rochford, I *am* safe. A man's character may be known by his enemies; mine is, Sir Gerard Fane.

MISS F. True, Mr. Vernon, but even malice itself should have some slight pretext. Are you sure after all that we don't wrong this man ?

ROCH. Wrong him?

MISS F. Yes; are such delusions the fruit of a sane mind ? (*speaking in a lower tone, but so as to be heard by SIR GERARD*) I have just heard that he has had frightful losses on the turf—ruinous losses. It may be that the trouble has gone there. (*touching her forehead*)

ROCH. To his brain ? It may be so.

SIR G. Miss Fortescue !

MISS F. (*soothingly*) Yes, Sir Gerard.

SIR G. Give me leave to say how thoroughly I admire you. You play a desperate game with a desperate spirit. Its almost a sensation to be matched against you. You

insist on my proofs, then ? Reflect, Rochford ; the facts are not yet made public. You know my terms for silence?

MISS F. What terms, Mr. Vernon ?

ROCH. (*forcing a laugh*) Modest ones. I believe, madam, that you should give him your *protegee*, Miss Rochford, in marriage ?

SIR G. Ay, or at least a compensation for the loss of her, which, in gallantry to so fair a lady, I must of course rate highly.

MISS F. Unfortunate man ! His malady is past doubt.

SIR G. That's right—fortify, fortify—throw up your works! But in modern tactics the beseiger has generally the advantage; he can attack you see, from an unexpected point. I shall be really sorry to demolish such ingenious defences, especially with a lady in the garrison ; but I must throw in a shell, since you force me. I must indeed (*aside, going*) Where can Lancia be ? He swore not to fail me. (*to MISS F.*) *Au revoir*, my fair enemy: *au revoir!*

*Exit*, R. 1 E.

ROCH. He has some proof then?

MISS F. I think not; his vaunts may be the disguise of his weakness.

ROCH. No ; that look of wicked triumph was not feigned; and the shame will fall upon Evelyn.

MISS F. Come to the house; she will miss you.

ROCH. Miss me! you think so ? *Miss me!*

MISS F. Rochford, nerve yourself for her sake.

ROCH. I shall not fail; but the heart must have way. It is because I would be strong with her, that I am weak now.

*Exeunt*, L. 1 E.

SCENE SECOND.—*The Drawing Room (as in Act II.)*

*Enter* EVELYN and GILBERT, C. door.

EVELYN. Gilbert, dear Gilbert, I cannot bear this ; the struggle rends me. Have pity—say farewell! (*throws herself into a chair*, L. C.—*he sits by her side*)

GILB. And if that word must come, should *your* lips hurry it ? Ah, you cannot guess how I have loved you ! Fool that I was to ape a heartless fashion, and feign indifference.

EVELYN. And mad that *I* was to doubt you—to wound you with my jealous caprices. Ah ! Gilbert, the truth breaks upon us now.

GILB. Yes ; as the dawn upon the doomed man. But why should we bear a fate so wretched—so undeserved ? When we exchanged our vows, from that moment we were one—one no less than if we had knelt at the altar. Evelyn, I will not yield you ! already my wife in heart, be so in name—do not—do not reject me !

*Enter* ROCHFORD *and* Miss FORTESCUE, *unobserved*, C.

EVELYN. Gilbert, your father's command. Do you think I would bring upon you his curse ?

GILB. What does he demand of me ? That I should be false to honour, no less than love—that I should desert you in your sorrow ?

EVELYN. Remember his pride in you—his love.

GILB. In aught else I would obey him.

EVELYN. Make his case yours, Gilbert. My father is innocent; I know it—but men say otherwise. Could I force upon your father a union which he would deem shame ? Oh ! never—I have said it—never !

GILB. So stern, Evelyn!

EVELYN. Stern! Do *I* not feel? Must I not henceforth travel with weary feet through the gloom whose sole light is memory ? Yes, my beloved, the memory of you! (*faltering*)

GILB. Ah, you relent! (*kneeling*)

EVELYN. No; you would not ask it. Think of a parent's claim—a parent's—to whom we owe life—love—nurture—of whose being ours is a part. Help me, Gilbert, help me to do right. If you honour me, do not tempt me.

GILB. Evelyn, you have conquered; I resign you.

EVELYN. Now then, while we have strength. Stay not at my feet. Bless you, and farewell! (*he kisses her hand passionately and rises*)

*Enter* BRACKENBURY, C.

BRACK. I suspected this. So, Gilbert, I have sought for you.

GILB. You should have been earlier, sir: you would then have heard Evelyn reject me at your command. You have triumphed, father—sundered us for ever.

*Exit, L. C.*

BRACK. Young lady, you have done well. My honour—the honour of an old name is all my wealth, and you have spared it. I thank you.

ROCH. Yes, Evelyn, you have done well. (*he takes both her hands and gazes on her intently*) Nay, droop not. This sorrow will pass—thy father says it. Retire awhile, my own. I have business here.

EVELYN. (*looking at him earnestly*) You will not leave me?

ROCH. (*after a short pause*) Leave thee—why ask-----

EVELYN. There is something in your very look like—  
(*pauses*)

ROCH. Like what?

EVELYN. Like a farewell.

ROCH. (*aside*) Strange instinct (*aloud*) Your mind has been o'erstrained. You need repose. Go, sweet. (*she is going*) Once more, Evelyn, to my heart—to my heart! Courage, my girl, (*they embrace*) there is a Providence. Go—go!

(*she goes out, ROCHFORD leading her to door R. and following her with his eyes, then returning he stands a little behind BRACKENBURY and MISS FORTESCUE*)

MISS F. Now, Mr. Brackenbury, you are content I hope. Gilbert has obeyed you.

BRACK. If he hadn't I would have disowned him. I wouldn't have left him one of the family portraits.

MISS F. Well, they'll hardly bring him a fortune. Spoiled canvas fetches little at the auction rooms.

BRACK. How, madam! my son sell his ancestors, sell the Brackenbury's and the O'Kilmacows!

MISS F. What else can he do? Your annuity, I believe, dies with you.

BRACK. True—true, the poor fellow will indeed have to rough it.

MISS F. My dowry to Evelyn would have been a small provision for him.

BRACK. What! Miss Fortescue, would you bribe me to my dishonour?

MISS F. No, but I would lessen your pain in doing an act of justice.

BRACK. Justice?

MISS F. (*coaxingly*) Ah, neighbour, let them marry; what's your name worth if it won't carry them through? Should the world look a little shyly on Evelyn, you have your answer—she married a Brackenbury—that silences everything.

BRACK. No, madam, not even that answer would avail against such facts.

MISS F. But the facts are not known. Sir Gerard cannot prove Rochford's identity or that he is Evelyn's father.

BRACK. But *I* should know it. He would come into Evelyn's presence, sit at my son's table; some day he would betray himself. No, with such perils, with Rochford in the same neighbourhood, in the same land—what you ask is impossible, I will never yield.

ROCH. (*advancing, C.*) One word, sir: would your resolution be changed, if what report once gave out were true—if this Rochford, whom you so loathe, were indeed dead?

BRACK. Dead! This is mockery.

ROCH. But answer—in that case?

BRACK. In that impossible case, I might yield.

ROCH. Then count me dead—dead to my country—dead to Evelyn. I will depart at once to Australia—pledge myself never to return—never, while you forbid it, to see my child, or even to hear from her. I will be as lost to her as if her foot were on my grave!

MISS F. What! Could you really tear yourself from your Evelyn?

ROCH. Yes; to her, mine is but a new tie—a loose creeper round her life: rend it, the tree will still flourish; but her love—the branch grafted on herself—if you blight that—you blight the root that bears it.

MISS F. This is a noble—a fearful sacrifice: and yet you are right. (*to BRACKENBURY*) You hear him, sir?

BRACK. I hear his proposal.

MISS F. What do you require?

BRACK. Security that he will keep it.

ROCH. Security! I am poor, and must live by

toil. I am already suspected; who would employ the discovered convict? Say then, should I be so mad as to return?—should I court starvation and infamy—infamy that would wreck my child?

MISS F. He would not.

ROCH. (*to BRACKENBURY*) You do not refuse. Ah, think! the fate of two human beings is on your breath. You have given one life—give him—give her, the heart's life; give them back Nature's own right—the rich man's crown, the poor man's riches—the right to love. They will bless you all your days—bless you when earth takes to her bosom your proud name, and my stained one—when we two have passed where all ranks are level, and all hearts open. No; you will not refuse me! (*clasps his hands imploringly—BRACKENBURY slowly turns away*)

MISS F. And if he do, I will keep no terms with him—I will myself persuade Evelyn to marry Gilbert.

BRACK. No need, madam; for my son's sake, I accept this compact—I consent.

MISS F. Ah, neighbour, I knew-----

BRACK. Not a word—not a word—the struggle is over; but it has been sharp. I would be alone. *Exit, L. C.*

MISS F. Rochford! from this moment I believe you innocent. (*gives him her hand which he presses in silent emotion*)

ROCH. Now to fulfil my compact. I depart at once.

MISS F. At once! you will first see Evelyn?

ROCH. See her! no, that would indeed unman me—I will but write a brief farewell, which you will give her when—when I am gone.

MISS F. Must this indeed be?

ROCH. It must—you felt that it must—I will now retire to the library. (*going C. and looking off L.*) Ah! who passes?

MISS F. (*looking from C. window*) Sir Gerard Fane—and can I believe it? Lancia!

ROCH. Lancia!

MISS F. Why this emotion?

ROCH. 'Tis nothing—the mere trick of my brain, which still conjures up the past. I will write my letter, and rejoin you. *Exit, R. D.*

MISS F. What can have brought Lancia back, and in company with Sir Gerard? So, he's here to answer.

*Enter LANCIA, L. C.*

Here again, Lancia?

LANCIA. Yes, for two motives. First, let me tell you, I have been to Dover. There a telegram reached me. I am restored to my estates and honours—recalled by the king.

MISS F. (*shaking hands with him*) Joy upon joy.

LANCIA. Ay, joy, that would be perfect, but that it lacks one thing.

MISS F. What?

LANCIA. A little word, a single word, but it may echo through a life. You know that my cause triumphs, and that the world, as you say, claps hands.

MISS F. Ay, for liberty.

LANCIA. For liberty? For success. Ah, dear lady, liberty, when it struggles, is like your London Lord Mayor when on foot. No one knows him—the crowd—what is your word—jostles—ay, jostles him roughly; but liberty successful!—ah, that is my Lord Mayor in his glass coach, when the whole street follows him with shouts.

MISS F. Nay, Lancia, there are exceptions.

LANCIA. Yes. Do I forget who honoured the right in misfortune, whose goodness dropped a seed into my heart that quickened and sprung there. Day by day it struck deeper—grew, budded. I guessed not its name. I called it gratitude. At last, in one parting moment, in a rain of grief, it burst into flower. It was love—love for you.

MISS F. I remember—as *a sister*!

LANCIA. No; love above all other. But, poor and banished, could I offer you my hard lot! That lot is changed. Now I can speak; if with fear, still with honour. Dear friend—friend of the exile—I love you.

MISS F. Lancia. (*aside*) How like him!

LANCIA. NOW for that little word. May I hope?

MISS F. Do not ask me. I have cares to-day; cares for others, that would almost make my happiness a sin.

LANCIA. (*with delight*) *Your happiness*, then—  
F

MISS F. Once more, dear friend, urge me not now. What was that second motive for your return ?

LANCIA. To do what you will approve—an act of justice.

MISS F. Indeed! (*aside*) I hear Rochford's step. Lancia, we are interrupted. Leave me for the present.

LANCIA. For the present; but for the present.

*Kisses her hand—exit, R. 1 E.*

*Enter ROCHFOED with letter, R. 2 E.*

ROCH. Here is the letter. (*giving it*) Give it when I am past recal.

MISS F. About to go? Can this be real ? Rochford, you will write to me from whatever port you embark. You will write, I say ?

ROCH. (*abstractedly*) Yes; 'twas there we sat when I first hinted my story to her. How often will she sit there and the very sunlight fall as now. Others will see her—others—Is this my firmness ? (*taking his hat*) Farewell, generous woman. You, who have been a parent to my child, take the blessing of the parent who quits her. (*takes MISS FORTESCUE'S hand, then slowly advances to C. window.*

*Enter EVELYN by door L.*

EVELYN. My father! Ah, you are here. (*clinging to him, MISS FORTESCUE conceals the letter.*

ROCH. (*tenderly*) My Evelyn, what brings you?

EVELYN. A fear that I cannot master—fear to lose you.

ROCH. Why this fear?

EVELYN. I know not; but it pursues me everywhere, haunts even my dreams.

ROCH. Your dreams, my child ?

EVELYN. Aye, but vivid as realities. Listen. 'Tis said sleep visits but the happy. Oh, false ! Wretched, and worn out, I sought my chamber, stupor fell on me, and I slept. Father, I dreamed that we stood together as now. Suddenly the earth divided at our feet. We were severed, at first by a narrow line; then it widened—widened to a gulf, and a sea rolled between us. Still it spread. Soon I saw you, but dimly. I called to you, but in vain. Then, all was mist, and I lost you—lost you !

ROCH. (*aside*) And she loves me thus! (*to EVELYN*)  
Nay, 'twas but a dream.

EVELYN. You will not leave me?

ROCH. Am I not here ?

EVELYN. You will always be mine ?

ROCH. Thine! aye. Not closer light to the eye or blood  
to the heart. Thine! yes; were that wild dream true—  
lid the yawning earth—the seas which it were death to  
empt—did death itself divide us—love dies not—I should  
still be thine.

SIR G. (*at window*) This way, gentlemen; follow, follow.

ROCH. (*observing him and starting*) Ah !

SIR G. (*aside as he enters*) All is well; Lancia is  
wonderfully keen in this business.

MISS F. You make free with my house, sir.

SIR G. Naturally, being an enemy's post. (*to ROCH.*)  
What, she in your arms, and you not her father?

ROCH. And were I, should you not tremble ?

*Enter, C., BRACKENBURY, LANCIA, and GILBERT.*

SIR G. A threat! then I open fire. (*all come forward*)  
Signor Lancia, permit me—an old acquaintance. (*presents*  
*him to ROCHFORD*)

ROCH. That face again! (*he and LANCIA gaze at each*  
*other in silence*)

SIR G. You recognize him?

LANCIA. I could think so.

ROCH. Have I not met you before? Ay, often, at  
Baden—Lancia! have you borne no other name ?

LANCIA. What other ?

ROCH. Manoli—the Count Manoli.

LANCIA. You are right.

MISS F. The Count Manoli!

LANCIA. Yes, the name which I now resume; and you,  
who thus remember me, must be Rochford.

SIR G. (*to ROCHFORD*) A slight error in tactics. (*to*  
*LANCIA*) You identify him, then. Come, the truth—the  
whole truth.

ROCH. (*to LANCIA*) You may remember then my com-  
panion named Langley?

LANCIA. He who was murdered.

ROCH. The same ; on the very night of his murder he paid you for a debt at play, about sixty napoleons.

LANCIA. I have not forgotten it.

ROCH. That sum was the produce of jewels which he had sold.

LANCIA. Yes, so Langley told me.

ROCH. He did; you could have proved that, but you had fled.

LANCIA. True; I had political secrets—spies were on my track.

ROCH. I had myself received the price of those jewels—was called to account for it; my story was disbelieved. You know the rest—I was condemned.

LANCIA. And I could have cleared you.

SIR G. (*to LANCIA*) Stay; this makes for him.

LANCIA. (*soothingly*) The whole truth you said—this is but part. (*to ROCHFORD*) Yes, you were condemned for robbery and suspected of worse.

ROCH. I was.

SIR G. Out with it—of murder.

LANCIA. Now attend—I had a partner in my political schemes : his name was Rinaldo.

ROCH. Rinaldo? ay—speak.

SIR G. (*aside*) Why he's eager for it. (*approaches LANCIA and whispers*) Wait, Lancia—first-----

EVELYN. No whispering; stand back, Sir Gerard.

ROCH. Right—stand back. (*advancing*)

SIR G. HOW, fellow?

ROCH. Stand back : I've more than life at stake. Now, Count, this Rinaldo ?

LANCIA. Came with me to England; we were seldom apart. After many years he was seised with mortal sickness : on his death-bed he revealed to me a secret.

ROCH. Go on.

LANCIA. He had heard of your fate. He confessed that he had himself slain Langley in a duel—confessed—ah, with what remorse! that you, though innocent, bore the infamy of his deed.

ROCH. Evelyn, you hear ?

SIR G. (*to LANCIA*) This is a fraud! Did you not feign to be his enemy?

LANCIA. I saw you were, so concealed my purpose. Rochford, you've more to hear. I took down Rinaldo's confession. He signed it before me and another witness still living. An attested copy of that confession I have lately sent to Baden; but the original I kept. Hoping to meet you I have brought it—Take, sir, the proof of your innocence—a proof with which you may dare the world. (*produces the written confession and gives it to ROCHFORD*)

ROCH. (*glancing at paper*) Ay, and before that world claim my right! A father's! Yes, my child, the stain is wiped away—the choked heart has vent. No shame, no shrinking, no parting now. Thine, Evelyn, thine for ever! (*ROCHFORD and EVELYN embrace*) I cannot thank you, sir; let this sight thank you. (*to LANCIA*)

MISS F. But I can thank him, and I think one other can—Gilbert. (*she takes GILBERT'S hand and places it in EVELYN'S*) It's with your sanction, neighbour?

BRACK. Why, yes, yes, certainly. (*to ROCHFORD*) I congratulate you, sir. (*aside*) What a romance in the family history!

MISS F. Still here, Sir Gerard—what can detain you ?

GILB. What, indeed ? seeing there's no longer a reputation to slander—a woman to insult—or a bribe to extort.

MISS F. You've fired your battery, Sir Gerard; but the fort stands you see.

GILB. But he can retrieve himself with a new enemy ; as I came in, I found awaiting him, certain skirmishers, cleverly posted round the house—certain emissaries from one Morley, a London merchant.

SIR G. (*aside*) By Jove, the fellow means bailiffs.

GILB. Don't fear; a grateful country will provide for a man of your talents. You will be lodged in that royal mansion, vulgarly called the Queen's Bench.

MISS F. The Queen's Bench! Then Newgate is defrauded.

SIR G. Yes, I leave you the honours of victory. (*to MISS FORTESCUE*) A convict for your friend. (*to GILBERT*) The convict's child for your wife, ha! ha! (*to BRACKENBURY*) To you, sir, a proud addition to your family connexions. For myself, I must be famous, like Xenophon,

in retreat. Good morning. I shall read of the lady's marriage, and doubtless of her distinguished parentage in the newspapers. Good morning, good morning. *Exit, C.*

GILB. (*follows to the window and watches*) He'll get clear of the men after all. No, they were in ambush—he runs—they pursue—ah, a third meets and stops him. They close round—they have him—they have him—a very short engagement and a highly satisfactory result!

ROCH. (*to EVELYN*) Ah, could thy mother see us; and she may—she may-----

LANCIA (*to MISS FORTESCUE*) I said you would approve of my act.

MISS F. And of the doer. Good friends, as to be happy is the fashion, for once I fall in with it. Oh, Evelyn, this love of yours!—you have done for me. One cannot be long with the sick and not risk infection.

ROCH. (*smiling*) From Evelyn?

MISS F. Yes; I'm as far gone as she—a mere woman—one of an enslaved sex— and so please you, here is my master. (*gives her hand to LANCIA*)

LANCIA. Expect no mercy; you have chosen your tyrant.

EVELYN. Best of friends—you—you marry—oh, day of joy!

BRACK. (*aside*) Marry him! and she might have been a Brackenbury.

ROCH. Count, you have given me all that man can give man—I rejoice in your joy. (*takes his hand*)

EVELYN. Ah, there's a blessing in joy ; but no less in sorrow— sorrow that makes life earnest (*looks at GILBERT*) shames us from our self love, with its poor vanities—its mean angers—and, through our own trials, teaches sympathy with all; Yes; there is virtue in the fire that purifies. Happy they who, like this noble heart—(*pointing to LANCIA*)—who like thee, my father, (*embracing him*) come out of it—Pure Gold !

LANCIA. MISS F. ROCH. EVELYN. GILBERT. BRACK.

R.

L.

**Curtain.**