

MADISON HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

MADELAINE MARSTON

A COMEDY

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written by

SIR GILBERT MUNGER



Theatre Royal

Haymarket. London

Madelaine Marston

A comedy in three acts

Produced for the first time

on Thursday, February 4th, 1886

with the following cast:

Miss Helen Barry--as Mrs. Trouville (Rose)  
(Specially engaged)

Miss Helen Forsyth--as Madelaine Marston

Mr. H. Beerbohm Tree--as Luigi Ferrara

Mr. Charles Brookfield--as George Beaumont  
(By special permission of Messrs. Hare & Kendal)

Mr. Kemble--as Mr. Marston  
(By special permission of Mrs. Langtry)

Mr. Arthur Ellwood--as Sir Henry Beaumont

Mr. Gilbert Farquhar--as Mr. Percy Neville  
(By special permission of Mr. Robert Buchanan)

And Others.

Private Boxes--\$26.25    Stalls--\$2.50    Balcony--\$1.75

Upper Boxes--\$1.25    Other Rows--\$1.00

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## CHARACTERS

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Mr. George Beaumont

Sir Henry Beaumont

His nephew

Mr. Marston

Luigi Ferrara

Mr. Percy Neville

Edward

Servant

Mrs. Trouville (Rose)

Madelaine Marston

Martha

Miss Marston's Maid

The action takes place in London during the early part of the season, 1885.



3. ACT 1.

Scene Drawing-room in Mr. Marston's house. Morning. On the rise of the curtain Madelaine is discovered playing the piano. Enter Martha, followed by Sir Henry

Martha Sir Henry. (Exit)

Madelaine (Takes no notice but goes on playing. Sir Henry goes to the fireplace, looks at Madelaine, puts down his hat and stick, tries to attract her attention by coughing, finally crosses to piano, behind her, and turns over the page of music which she is playing) (Stops playing) What are you doing? I had not got so far.

Sir Henry I beg your pardon. I had a sort of idea that it was about time to turn over.

Madelaine A sort of idea. Can't you read?

Sir Henry Oh yes, I can read--

Mad. I mean music, of course.

Sir H. Not a note.

Mad. What deplorable ignorance. But I forgot that you knew nothing about music.

Sir H. My knowledge is limited to the trumpet calls, and the first part of "God save the Queen".

Mad. I pity you.

Sir H. And despise me.

Mad. I didn't say that.

Sir H. But you thought it. Do you know, Miss Marston, your contempt makes me a very happy man?

Mad. I don't understand you--

Sir H. You would pity a girl who was forced to marry a man whom she despised.

Mad. If she had any spirit in her no one could force her.



Sir H. I'm so awfully glad you think so. You are quite sure she would refuse?

Mad. Quite sure.

Sir H. Even if her father wished it?

Mad. Even if her father wished it. (Rising)

Sir H. And if the man proposed you would refuse him.

Mad. Most undoubtedly.

Sir H. I am so glad.

Mad. But really, sir Henry, I don't see how my opinion can be of any value to you.

Sir H. It is most valuable, for it enables me to speak to you with perfect frankness.

Mad. How does it concern me?

Sir H. It concerns you and no one else.

Mad. Me?

Sir H. Yes, you are the young lady who is to be forced to marry against her will.

Mad. Never.

Sir H. That's right. Stick to that.

Mad. And may I ask to whom I am to be handed over, against my will?

Sir H. To me.

Mad. To you? Absurd.

Sir H. Just so. (Interrupting himself) No, not absurd, but impossible.

Mad. And who is responsible for this pretty little plan?

Sir H. My uncle and your father.

Mad. I am sure I am very much obliged to them.



- Sir H. Uncle George has talked to me about nothing else for the last three months.
- Mad. And papa has talked to me about nothing else for the last three months.
- Sir H. They have put their heads together, and made up their minds that it shall be. But that don't matter a bit if you and I have made up our minds that it shall not be, Miss Marston, does it?
- Mad. Not a bit.
- Sir H. And you will be firm?
- Mad. As a rock:
- Sir H. I warn you that my Uncle is an old diplomatist, and very much accustomed to get his own way, especially with women.
- Mad. He won't get his own way with me.
- Sir H. I hope not..
- Mad. (Displeased) You hope not?
- Sir H. Well you don't want him too.
- Mad. No, of course not.
- Sir H. Let us shake hands on it.
- Mad. With all my heart.
- Sir H. Miss Marston. You are an angel.  
(Holding out his hand)
- Mad. And you are--(as she is about to give him her hand suddenly withdraws it) Do you know that you are not over civil? It seems to me that you were extremely anxious to be refused.
- Sir H. You must acknowledge that you met me more than half way



Mad. I suppose that you had some very special reason?

Sir H. And you? But you gave me one reason--music--

Mad. Well?

Sir H. I guessed the other--a Poet and artist.

Mad. What do you mean?

Sir H. (Going to Piano and turning over music reads)

"Bitter tears by one who weeps"--"The cold cold grave"  
"Two Funerals" in B minor all respectfully dedicated  
to Miss Madelaine Marston by the composer.

Mad. (Rising and taking the music out of his hand) Really  
Sir Henry, I don't see what business you have to  
trouble yourself with a matter which you confess you  
don't understand.

Sir H. It does not take much knowledge of music to understand  
this.

Mad. (Angry) To understand what?  
(Enter Martha followed by Mrs. Trouville L)

Martha (Announcing) Mrs. Trouville. (Exit)

Mrs. Trou My dear Madelaine. I am afraid that I am interrupting  
you.

Mad. (Confused) Not at all. Sir Henry was explaining.

Sir H. I was trying to show Miss Marston--

Mrs. Trouville--Quite so. my dear, I came this morning to see  
your father and to thank him for his really magnificent  
present to our girls home.

Mad. He is in our room. You know Sir Henry Beaumont. (Sir  
Henry bows)

Mrs. Trou I think we have met before. (Bows)

Mad. And now I will go and tell Papa that you are come, and  
in the meantime, I will leave Sir Henry to entertain



you.

Sir H. I will do my best-- (Exit Mad.)

Mrs. Trou What are you doing here, Henry?

Sir H. I might ask you the same question.

Mrs. Trou You need not flatter yourself that I followed you.  
I am not such a fool as to be jealous;

Sir H I can assure you that you have not the slightest cause.

Mrs T. I am not so certain of that.

Sir H At all events so far as Miss Marston is concerned.

Mrs. T Why are you not frank with me? Do you suppose I  
cannot see that for the last month you have been hiding  
something from me?

Sir H Well. I confess I have. But I did not like to speak  
to you about it. my uncle wants me to marry--

Mrs T Miss Marston?

Sir H Yes.

Mrs T And you?

Sir H How often am I to tell you that I care for no one in  
the world but you?

Mrs T You don't mean to marry her?

Sir H Certainly not.

Mrs T Let me look you in the face, Henry. Give me your hand.  
You know how unhappy it would make me.

Sir H Dearest.

Mrs T I know that you can love me. I can read it in your  
eyes. They never lied to me.

Sir H I love you now as I loved you on the first day we met.  
Do you recollect it?

Mrs T I shall never forget it. But you did not tell me for



such a long time. Do you remember the day you did?

Sir H

Yes, it was last year--on the river--after dinner we went up in the punt above the lock. What a lovely night it was.

Mrs T

And we floated back on the stream. You said, "As I am true to you, so will you be true to me". Will those days ever come back again? Will you ever say to me what you said to me then?

Sir H

Every day, if you will let me.

Mrs T

But not with the same look, not with the same voice. I was happy--very , very happy--No, they shall not take you away from me.

Sir H

Darling.

Mrs T

And now tell me all about it. But we must not be found like this. (He takes his arm away) That is better--stand the other side of the Piano--it will make a most respectable barricade in case anyone should come.

Sir H

You know that my Uncle cares for only two people in the world--

Mrs T

Himself first--that I know; but who comes next?

Sir H

You do him great injustice. First me, and then Miss Marston.

Mrs. T

And why Miss Marston?

Sir H

He was very much attached to her mother before she married old Marston for his money.

Mrs T

And he has transferred his affections to her child. I did not think him capable of so much romantic feeling.

Sir H

You don't know him.

Mrs T

Oh yes, I do, but never mind about that. Go on with



the story.

Sir H He has got it into his head that we would make a very nice pair. But as I love--  
(movements toward her)

Mrs T Hush, take care. There is some one coming.  
(Enter Martha followed by Mr Geo Beaumont behind screen  
And so you are Miss Marston's maid?

Martha Yes sir.

Mr. Beau (Aside) Hum, very charming, acceptable young person.  
(Aloud) Now you tell Miss Marston that Mr. Beaumont is here/

Martha Yes sir.

Mr. B Here, wait a bit. Stop. What in the world do you wear a red ribbon for? Wear a blue one and you will look five years younger/

Martha Do you think so, sir?

Mr B I am sure of it. Take my advice and recollect that advice worth taking is worth paying for, don't be alarmed one little kiss, and we are quits. (He takes Martha by the chin, and is just going to kiss her when Mrs. Trouville strikes a chord loudly on the Piano)

Mr B Bless me, there is some one here. (To Martha, examines her left eye) Yes, I am sorry to say there is no doubt the left eye is visibly affected--ah my dear Mrs. Trouville. (To Mrs T) Miss Marston has sent me to say that Mr Marston is in the library.

Mrs T I will come to him at once.

Mr. B Poor thing, the eye is visibly affected. (Aside to Mrs T) I am grateful to you for the warning. Ah, Henry



you there?

Mrs T Sir Henry has been interesting me immensely in a very charming story about a marriage, of which he has been telling me.

Mr B A story about a marriage? That is going to take place?

Mrs T It remains to be seen. Goodbye, for I must go and see Mr Marston. (Exit)

Mr B That woman is the devil himself. But in a most fascinating form.

Sir H Uncle George I think I am bound in honor to tell you at once--

Mr B Wait a moment, my dear boy, the collar of your coat is covered with powder. (Takes a small looking-glass from his pocket and holds it up) Look for yourself, and by the way, you may just as well keep the glass--it comes in handy now and then. You will find it useful especially in the case of ladies of a certain age.

Sir H I don't call Mrs Trouville a lady of a certain age.

Mr B And I don't say that the powder came from Mrs Trouville's face. You really must have a little more caution, my dear boy; perhaps I should have said, of an uncertain age, and so you have let the cat out of the bag.

Sir H I have told her everything, and however painful it may be for me to go against your wishes, I must tell you that I have made up my mind not to marry Miss Marston.

Mr B And why?

Sir H Above all things, because Mrs T.--

Mr B That absurd affair must be put to an end--

Sir H But I love her--she loves me.



Mr. B

"I love, Thou lovest, she loves", and so on to the end of the cruelly misused verb. I tell you it is all nonsense--you don't really love her.

Sir H

If you knew how truly, how devotedly--

Mr B

How tenderly, how passionately, how perfectly. Still I tell you that you do not love her. My dear boy, trust to a man who knows a deuced sight more about this sort of thing than he ought to. Believe me, that which makes your blood race through your veins, and turns a reasonable human being into an ass, is not love. It is a nightmare--the result of a narcotic. I don't complain--at your age it is very proper that it should be so--I wish to heavens, (interrupting himself) but no matter, who'm you meet in society a woman of singular beauty, no longer young, and not old, therefore surrounded by that autumnal charm which is so dangerous to youth. The men are at her feet. The women of course hate her, and jealousy works, hard, to discover the flaw in the gem which outshines them. But calumny has no chance against the bewitching charm of her smile, and she reigns like a queen over her slaves, who half worship, half hate her. Then a certain young gentlemen finds himself the especial property of her majesty. The quick, bright glances from beneath her lashes are meant for him. They serve to remind him of the secret which is theirs alone--hers and his, eh? My dear boy, you see that even I am becoming poetical--I--with sixty misspent years marked in my grey hairs. Now can I blame you, with the bloom of five and twenty summers in your face?



Sir H But you introduced me to her yourself.

Mr. B No doubt. If you happen to fall a little in love with Mrs Trouville, I can have no possible objection whatever, from an educational point of view.

Sir H Educational point of view?

Mr Beau. Exactly. You forget what you looked like when you came back from the Rocky Mountains, with the face of a cow-boy and the hands of a navvy. You don't know what a shock your clothes gave me, and as for your manners with women, they were enough to break my heart--what I have suffered.

Sir H Poor Uncle George. (Laughing)

Mr B You may laugh; but I had my duty to perform to your poor father, who left me in your hands. First, I thought that if I got you into the Life Guards it would help to form you, and so it did, in a measure.

Sir H But I will marry Mrs Trouville.

Mr B Pray do not jest on a subject on which the happiness of your life depends. The women you make love to without H'm any definite ideas of marriage, and those who are fit to be wives, belong to two very different classes, which should never be mixed up together. A marriage with Mrs. Trouville is quite out of the question.

Sir H Then you wish me to break with her?

Mr Beau With such a woman there is no question of breaking at the outside, it is a question of weaning. You know what a woman does when she wants to put an end to an "affair". She has a very bad headache. You call



to inquire, she is not at home. The next time you call, she is not at home. The next time you call, she has gone to the country, and when she comes back she has forgotten all about it. Miss Marston on the other hand--

Sir H

My dear Uncle, we are unsuited.

Mr B

Nonsense. You have, both of you, your faults as well as your virtues, but they are of a very different kind: and

~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ unless I am very much mistaken will dovetail very well together. I have made up my mind if I turn you out. You can be of no use to me present, as I am going to ask Mr Marston's consent to your marriage with his daughter.

*(mind and therefore in less than a fortnight from now. I shall have you on your knees asking me for my blessing.)*

Sir H Never.

Mr Beau. On your knees, I tell you. And now you must not

Sir H

But Uncle--

Mr Beau

(Pushing him towards the door) No thanks: you can pour out your gratitude to me when I have accomplished my task.

(Exit Sir H)

(Enter Mr Marston paper in his hand)

Mr Beau

Ah, there you are at last.

Marst

My dear fellow, forgive me for keeping you waiting.

Mr Beau

Don't mention it.

Marst

I have been in such a state of confusion all the morning. (Puts down paper) It is my birthday, and Madelaine insists upon taking me to a Private View and giving a large supper party here afterwards.

Mr Beau

I did not know that you cared for art or music.

Marst

I don't --I hate both. (Looking round, seeing busts of musicians) Poets and Painters. Look at their faces. This scoundrel wrote a thing called a Sonata--twenty minutes of infernal agony on the pianoforte--I dare



say we shall have something of that sort tomorrow night.

Mr B My poor friend:

Marst If I could only go to bed, or take chloroform, I should get through the night comfortably--but Madelaine means for the best, although her enthusiasm for music and art is most inconvenient. What with concerts, the Royal Academy, the Crystal Palace, the Philharmonic and the Opera--with occasional trips to Bayreuth in the summer my life is not worth living, and then--George--that dreadful piano. If I were your nephew, that is one condition I would absolutely insist on in the settlement--no piano on the premises.

Mr Beau By-the-way, it was on the subject of those very settlements that I wish to speak to you, and you have not changed your mind about the marriage?

Marst On the contrary--I am more anxious for it than ever. It now only remains for your nephew to succeed in gaining Madelaine's affections.

Mr B No doubt that is most important. Tell me, you don't think that anyone has forestalled him yet?

Marst No one. Excepting, perhaps "Wagner"..

Mr B The composer, you mean? I think we need not be afraid of him--he is dead.

Marst Yes, but he has left a dangerous quantity of music behind him.

(Enter Martha followed by Ferrara)

Martha Miss Marston is not here.

Ferrara Will you tell her the Professor has arrived?



- Martha I beg your pardon--Professor who, Sir?
- Fer The Professor. There is no other. (Exit Martha)
- Marston (Aside to Beaumont, "one of those Pianoforte demons")  
(Aloud) How do you do, Mr Ferrara. (Bows) My daughter will no doubt be here directly.
- Fer No doubt, when she shall have been informed of my arrival.
- Mr B (Aside) I have seen that face somewhere.
- Marst (To Ferrara) Let me introduce you to my old friend Mr George Beaumont.
- Fer I am proud to know Mr Beaumont.
- Marst George, you ought to know Mr Ferrara--the great Ferrara (aside) confound him.
- Mr Beau Everybody has heard of Ferrara.
- Marst A great singer, composer, poet and painter.
- Ferrara Gentlemen, you overwhelm me, the consciousness of deserving it alone permits me to listen to your compliments with the modesty--every the attribute of great art.
- Mr Beau (Who has been watching him carefully) Forgive me, Professor, but unless I am very much mistaken, I have seen your face somewhere before today.
- Ferrara Perhaps in the Photographic shops, or most likely, in the sporting and Dramatic News. There was a portrait of me in the last number, with a slight sketch of my life and works.
- Mr Beau No, I don't mean a portrait, my recollection is that we have met somewhere in Europe of course, now I remember. It was in Florence.
- Ferrara In Florence?



Beau Were you never in Florence?

Fer Never.

Beau Strange. I thought that possibly in your travels you might have visited Florence.

Fer And what should I do in Italy?

Beau In Italy--the land of song and art.

Fer Perhaps; but not the land of music. I do not think you understand me. I am a musician because I am a Poet and a Philosopher. I use music merely for the purpose of giving life to those thoughts which the ordinary language is incapable of expressing--any obstruse subject can be easily explained by music, and becomes perfectly simple.

Mr Beau I had no idea of that. You interest me very much, any subject?

Fer There is no doubt of it.  
(Going to piano and opening it)

Beau Then my dear Professor, you would render me, and indeed, mankind, the greatest service, if you would be so good as to explain in any key you please why you were never in Florence?

Fer It would require a special knowledge of my powers to understand it, a power which my pupils alone possess. I have found in England a faithful band of disciples, who firmly believe in me.

Mr Beau And they venerate you according to your deserts?

Fer Oh far above my deserts. Do not believe that I disguise that fact from myself for a moment. One of the noblest attributes with which I am blessed is an accurate



knowledge of the precise extent of my fitness for the exalted position which I occupy.

(Enter Martha)

Martha Miss Marston will see you in the Library, Sir.

Fer I will come at once. (Exit Martha) (To Beaumont) I am very glad to have had this opportunity of making your acquaintance. When I have a little more time at my disposal I shall be glad to expound to you on the proper instrument the sublime thoughts which have made me what I am, and if I should by chance, pass you in the street without recognixing you, you will, I am sure, forgive me. My poor Artist's head contains such a collection of names and faces, that it <sup>is</sup> impossible to keep a record of anything but Imperial and Royal features. Good day. (Exit)

Marst Confound his impudence.

Mr Beau Ha ha ha what a creature.

Marst And yet every woman in the place likes him.

Mr Beau My dear friend, you ought to know that a woman's favorite will-o'-the-wisp is Novelty. For the fair sex a change is necessary, and it is acceptable, even when it is a change from soap and water to the veneer of artistic untidiness. How did you come to pick him up?

Marst Madelaine made his acquaintance at Bayreuth, and since then we have seen a good deal of him.

Mr Beau They do music together, eh?

Marst Yes, and he sings.

Mr B Sings does he? Thats bad.



Marst I didn't know that its much worse than that confounded Piano.

Mr Beau I am not so sure. I know rather more about this sort of thing than you do. There is nothing so dangerous as a man who accompanies himself--with a romantic glance a look of anguish--and a high note.

Marst But George, you can't really think that a girl like Madelaine would be attracted by a fellow like that?

Mr Beau There is no knowing how far the attraction of a tenor voice will excite a young girl's sympathy and sentiment I know the game. (At Piano) A moments pause before you begin. The hair brushed from the forehead with an impatient gesture--a downward look--a sigh--one glance at the beloved object, and off you start, gently at first but as you get towards the end you put on steam until you arrive at the refrain, which is sure to have something about love and a broken heart in it. Then is the time to fix the victim with a piercing look. Your song is finished, you take little notice of the congratulations which you receive on all sides and you glide to her side, to assure her that you only sang well because she was there--and so on and so on. It is the oldest game in the world. It began with Orpheus, and it will go on, until the society for the Protection of Women and Children take the matter up seriously.

Marst But, surely, you don't mean that Madelaine--

Mr Beau My dear Marston--I mean nothing, because I know nothing. I only wished to warn you generally against the unlimited use of ballad music in an establishment which is presided



over by an impressionable young lady.

(Enter Madelaine and Mrs Trouville)

Madelaine Oh, Papa is here. I am afraid we shall not be able to play. I suppose you are not likely to be going away soon papa?

Marston Yes, my dear, we will go downstairs to my room. (Exit)

Madelaine You don't mind my looking through the music before I begin?

Mrs Trou Certainly not. I have plenty of time. I need not be home before luncheon. (Aside looking at Madelaine)  
The child has got a very pretty head, a nice, fresh face, which makes me think of the title-page of some charming book, and Henry has a weakness for charming books.

Mrs Trou (Madelaine puts her hand <sup>to</sup> ~~on~~ her head, as she continues to study the music) A very nice hand, now I understand why she plays the piano. She is younger than I am. If she cared for Henry she would be a dangerous rival. Does she care for him? It will not be difficult to find out.

Mad (Putting down music) There, now I know more about it.

Mrs Trou My dear, do you know that the other day you let me into a little secret?

Mad I did?

Mrs Trou Yes. When you played the moonlight Sonata, at the Chighton's last Thursday. Young ladies don't play that unless they are in love.

Mad Oh Mrs Trouville. How can you say such a thing.  
(Hiding her face)

Mrs Trou You may hide that pretty little face of yours, like



the child that you are: but when you have done blushing, remember that in me you have a friend to whom you can tell everything--

Mad Indeed, you are mistaken--

Mrs T My dear, there ought to be no secrets between you and me. Come, let me help you, who is it? Not Capt. Barclay?

Mad Oh no.

Mrs T No, I thought not, nor Sir Henry?

Mad Good gracious, No. The very last man in the world.

Mrs T (Aside) Not him--thank heaven. (Enter Ferrara, L behind screen) May I venture to come in?

Mad Hush.

Mrs T It is Ferrara.

Mad (Away from Mrs T) No, no certainly not him. (Much confused

Mrs T (Aside) Two negatives makes an affirmative, and so it is Ferrara, is it? Well, that suits me admirably.

Ferrara Ladies, I have finished my composition, and (Handing paper to Madelaine) here it is--

Mad I am so much obliged to you.

Mrs Trou You are just in time to hear Miss Marston play the

Mrs Trou Funeral March, isn't he, dear?

Mad Yes, I was just looking it through--

Fer Then perhaps you will allow me the infinite satisfaction of sitting in a corner and listening to my own composition, rendered as you--and you alone--can render its mystic thoughts.

(Madelaine at piano looking through music)(Mrs T & Fer)

Mrs T (Aside to Ferrara) Prof. Ferrara, Madelaine is going to



be married.

Ferrara To be married?

Mrs T Yes, and if you have any desire to put a stop to the marriage you must act at once.

Fer But what am I to do?

Mrs T Courage, I will help you.

Mad Now I am ready.

Fer Tell me what you think of this creation.

Mad It seems to me you must have been suffering some great sorrow when you wrote it?

Fer A very great sorrow. I was deeply wounded, here and here (Pointing to his heart and forehead) I know that you will not wound my artistic susceptibility by heartless laughter, as I wrote this funeral march I thought of my own cold, earthly grave.

Mad Your grave?

Fer Yes, Miss Marston, and the inexhaustable source of musical combination from which this melody flowed is dried up forever.

Mad Impossible.

Mrs T What a loss to Art.

Fer An irreparable loss, no doubt. But it cannot be helped, the lute-strings are rent asunder, the artist is silent.

Mrs T But may we not know the cause of this decision?

Fer Do not ask me to tear apart the curtain and disclose the mysteries of the Artist's soul. If there were hope, I would speak; but despair bids me ~~to~~ be dumb.

Mrs T I understand, a love affair?

Fer Yes, the story of a broken heart.



Mad (Aside) What can he mean?

Mrs T My poor friend, I understand the nobility of your spirit.

Fer You do?

Mrs T You are too proud to expose a great artist to a humiliating struggle with prejudice.

Fer I am.

Mrs T Why, have you no position but that which your art give you?

Fer Why indeed?

Mrs T In the old days of chivalry, romance and poetry, it would have been sufficient happiness for any girl to have gathered the melodies that flowed from your lips and to have shared an artist's dream.

Fer No doubt.

Mrs T But now a days people are much too practical for such troubadour fancies--are they not, Madelaine?

Mad How should I know?

Mrs T Take my advice--give up these romantic ideas of yours, go home to your own country. Pick up a nice little Italian wife who will cook your dinner and you will soon learn to laugh over your macaroni at your despair of today. What is your opinion, Mad?

Mad I do not believe it possible that you should sink back into ordinary life--your artist's soul will prefer the pain of a separation which the knowledge of your sacrifice will make bearable--

Fer Madelaine, you have understood me. You know that there is a pleasure in such pain, which will be more delightful than any other happiness on earth, if it is shared by you.

Mad I did not say so.



Fer But you feel it as I do. Oh beautiful lady. This joyous pain I take it with me. Henceforth, the device of my life, till it become the epitaph of my tomb, shall be--"Self-sacrifice"

Mad (Hands together) Self-sacrifice.

Mrs T (Aside) I think he has got as far as he could reasonably expect in one morning.

Fer And now Madelaine let me tear myself away from the charm of this moment.

Fer Farewell, perhaps forever. (Going--he turns at the door and adds with a breaking voice) Farewell: for an eternity. (ExitL)

Mad For an Eternity. (She goes to the window, R)

Mrs T (Aside) An eternity, I imagine, of twenty-four hours.

(Enter Beaumont C)

Beau Ah, my dear Mrs Trouville. Still here?

Mrs T Yes, I have had a little business on hand--

Beau I hope it has turned out satisfactorily?

Mrs T Up to the present moment, very. And you?

Beau I also have had a little business on hand.

Mrs T Satisfactory, I hope?

Beau You may judge for yourself. I have just completed with Mr Marston the arrangements for the settlements on my nephews marriage with Miss Marston.

Mrs T Indeed, I hope that you will accept my most hearty congratulations.

Beau You don't happen to know where Miss Marston is?

Mrs T Oh yes; she is standing in the window there. (Pointing to Madelaine, who is waving her handkerchief in a melancholy way)



- Beau What in the world is she doing with her handkerchief?
- Mrs T I rather fancy she is making signs to someone.
- Beau To whom?
- Mrs T Not to your nephew.
- Beau Who the devil else, then? I beg your pardon.
- Mrs T Don't mention it. The composer of the "Dead Tenor".
- Beau What Ferrara? Mrs Trouville, this is one of your little games.
- Mrs T I am far too proud of my handiwork to deny it.
- Beau This is a declaration of war?
- Mrs T To the knife.
- Beau (seriously) Very well, then--~~beit~~ so. But after all, remember I love Henry, and I love Madelaine. After na eventful and varied life, the affections of these two children is very dear to me, and if you attempt to interfere with the happiness of Madelaine, you will find there is nothing in the world I will not do to upset your designs. (Going towards Madelaine) Goodday Mrs Trouville, and remember.
- Mrs T (Smiling) Goobye. (Aside) Fight as you will, you will find my love too strong for you.
- Beau My dear Miss Marston. (She makes a sign for the second time with her handkerchief) (Aside) She is at it again with the handkerchief.
- Mrs T Goodbye, Mr Beaumont. (Motion with handkerchief. Exit (laughing)
- Beau (Aside) The other one is at it now.

QUICK CURTAIN..

END OF FIRST SCENE OR ACT.



## ACT TWO

- Scene Morning 12 O'clock.
- Mr George Beaumont's apartment in Hyde Park Mansions, comfortably furnished. Doors Back and R and L a table near the fire-place on which are the remains of a slight breakfast. Newspapers and letters not opened. Beaumont in dressing gown. Seated in chair.
- Beau (Rising) (To servant ) by-the way. I want you to look in that box for a photograph, here is the key. It is amongst the papers which I put together after I left Florence. I will just finish dressing. (Exit into room L)
- Edward (Opening box) Heres a mighty lot of rubbish. Letters in a lady's hand-writing, a glove, hotel bills--
- Beau Have you found it? (Entering without dressing gown)
- Ed Not yet sir.
- Beau You may just as well lace me a little tighter.
- Ed Yes sir. (Lacing him under waistcoat)
- Beau That will do. (Exit again into room L from room) That photo must be found.
- Ed Here is a registered envelope, Sir, and some violets--
- Beau (At door pulling on long haired wig) Now, on what lovely breast have they faded. No photo?
- Ed No sir.
- Beau (Taking up violets from table) The prelude to some  
(Taking up violets from table) The prelude to some romance, or the end of a story. Pah. The scent is out of them. Throw them into the fire. (Examining box) A packet of letters with two doves on the seal, oh, Angelina Angelina, of the silvery voice. That was the young lady



at Padua. A few letters from Florence, ah, I have found it. You can unlock the door, Edward.

Ed Beg pardon, Sir?

Beau What is the matter?

Ed You have got on yesterdays' wig.

Beau Well?

Ed I think you mentioned to Sir Henry last night that you were going to have your hair cut this morning.

Beau Good heavens, so I did, lock the door.

(Exit into Room L hurriedly)

(Marston's voice without) "Is Mr Beaumont at home?"

(Edward at outer door) "Yes sir" (Enter Marston,) Edward closes door C removes breakfast things, arranges table and papers. Enter Beaumont with short haired wig on)  
My dear Marston, I am delighted to see you.

Marston I thought I should be likely to find you at home at this hour. Why, what in the world have you been doing to your hair?

Beau (Alarmed, putting his hand to his head) Eh? What?

Marston You have had it regularly cropped.

Beau (Relieved) Oh, ah, yes. Confound the fellow. (Looks in the glass over the fire-place) I told him only to take the ends off, however, it will soon grow again. But tell me, to what am I indebted for the pleasure of your visit?

Marst Partly to Madelaine, and partly to that confounded Italian.

Beau Luigi Ferrara.

Marst Yes, he and my daughter are going to devote the morning to practising music. They don't want me, and so I came away.

Beau Do you mean to say that they zare going to practice alone.



- Marst I suppose so.
- Beau My dear friend, have you suddenly lost your senses?
- Marst I don't know what you mean.
- Beau You tell me that you leave your daughter en tete-a-tete with a tenor voice?
- Marst Do you mean to say that I cannot trust my own daughter?
- Beau No, nor anyone elses with a tenor. You must go home again and not let this fellow out of your sight.
- Marst And you think it really necessary that I should sit and listen to his thumping and roaring.
- Beau Certainly.
- Marst Even if it goes on for a whole hour?
- Beau If it goes on for a whole century as long as Madeline is there.
- Marst It is very hard. Do you know, I sometimes wish that one might amputate all piano players at the wrist.
- Beau My dear friend, what a horrible idea.
- Marst You would not think so, if you suffered as I do. You don't know what power these fellows have of spreading the plague. Suppose for a moment that each one of them inoculates ten others (Producing paper) I made calculation this morning early, when I was awakened by Madelain practising, that assuming that to be the case, you arrive in ten years at the total of 25,000,000,501 pianoforte players.
- Beau This comes of having become a wrangler--your miseries increase in geometrical proportion.
- Marst No. I assure you, arithmetical--(Continuing) with 51,748,492,020 fingers.
- Beau My dear fellow, you will drive me mad with your



figures.

Marst And in twenty years there will be about twenty five times as many pianists as the total population of the world.  
Good morning, I must go and look after the Pianoforte demon  
(Exit)

(Enter Sir Henry (C))

Beau Ah, there you are. Well what is the news?

Sir H The Colonel has told me to get ready for Egypt.

Beau For Egypt?

Sir H Poor Bailey has been badly wounded, and they want an officer to take his place.

Beau Confound it. What is the use of getting a boy into the Life Guards if he is to be hurried off to be spitted like a nigger, at a moments notice?

Sir H My dear Uncle, what's the use of being a soldier if one is not to be allowed one's chance of active service? Well, you have had your hair cut.

Beau (Testily) Yes, I have, had my hair cut, but never mind that. Well, at all events, it will put an end to this affair of yours with Mrs Trouville.

Sir H On the contrary, I can't start without having things settled in that quarter.

Beau In one way or the other, you will find things settled in a way you little imagine before you come back, I have found out that Ferrara has fallen in love with Miss Marston, or rather, I should say, with her money.

Sir H I really cannot enter into Mr Ferrara's love affairs.

Beau No, but Miss Marston--

Sir H You don't mean to tell me that she could seriously think



of such a fellow as that for one moment.

Beau Apparently so.

Sir H Why its monstrous--absurd--ridiculous--

Beau My dear Henry, I don't see why you should make such a fuss about it. You Don't want to marry her yourself.

Sir H No, but that is not a reason why I should sit calmly by and see a girl for whom I had respect--and--and--regard, throw herself away on a long-haired, mounte-bank And this is the young lady for whom you wish me to throw over Miss Trouville.

Beau My dear Henry, I wish you would get out of the habit of mentioning those two names in the same breath. I wonder that you have not the sense to see the difference between the ~~x~~ two.

Sir H You don't know Mrs Trouville.

Beau (Aside Oh Don't I?)

Sir H I dare say you know a great deal about women, but you don't know them all.

Beau No, thank heaven for that. But, my dear boy, I know a great many. Now listen to me, Henry. Your Grandfather left your father and myself with equal fortunes, your father left you a fine fortune and a good estate. I have nothing left but a limited income and three rooms. Do you suppose that knowledge bought at such a price is not worth having?

Sir H But, my dear Uncle, in this case I know you are mistaken. Rose--

Beau (Interrupting) Is very fascinating and for the moment, is possibly in love with you, but she is fond of change, a delightful quality in a passing affair, but very



dangerous for the peace and quiet of the domestic hearth.

I am satisfied that she does not possess one true or lasting sentiment.

Sir H

You say that because you have only met her in society. But I tell you that beneath that cold smile, there lies a depth of sentiment of which you have no idea. (Takes paper from pocket) Look at those verses. I ought not perhaps, to show them to you, but it is in her defense that I do so. They were written at a time when she thought we were to part. Read them, and tell me if in these eight lines there is not more feeling than in all the volumes of letters you have received.

(Exit door R)

Beau

(Looking at paper with ironical smile, reads)

"If cruel hands should tear apart  
the bonds that bind these to my heart  
Oh tell me not of joys to come--  
Of happy hours beyond the tomb  
My love shall only end with life  
And when I quit this world of strife  
My parting gift, my own, shall be  
The thought that I have loved but thee." (Bell)  
H'm Pretty poor poetry, but in a woman's handwriting and  
(Smelling) with a dash of scent on it, quite enough to  
turn the poor boy's head. Confound her, she is  
difficult to beat.

(Enter Edward C)

Ed

Will you see Mrs Trouville, Sir?

Beau

Certainly, by all means, Stop a bit. (Goes to door R and locks it. It will never do for Henry to see her.



(To Edward) show her in.

Mrs T I am not disturbing you too early?

Beau Not at all.

Mrs T You are surprised to see me?

Beau A little.

Mrs T Disagreeably

Beau On the contrary you have brought a freshness and brightness into my room to which it is not accustomed.

Mrs T It is very nice of you to say so. Will you keep this bunch of violets as a souvenir of my visit?

Beau You are too kind. But I am really at a loss--

Mrs T Don't be afraid. You can smell them. There is no poison and you want to know why I came here.

Beau I know that you are too good a diplomatist to do anything without a reason, and that if you run the risk of a visit to the enemy's camp, you have possibly concealed in the skirt of that most charming dress a pound or two of Dynamite. I think I ought not to have allowed you to enter without being blindfolded.

Mrs T In order that I might not see that you had put on your short wig this morning?

Beau (Angry) Mrs Trouville.

Mrs T It's no use getting angry, and it's no use trying to deceive me. But never mind your wig.

Beau Really--

Mrs T Well then your hair. Do you know that this declaration of war was a splendid idea of yours. It will give me an immense deal of pleasure for some time to come-- more especially as you haven't a chance.

Beau Oh, come I say.



Mrs T Not a chance, I will tell you. Would you like to see my hand?

Beau If you wish to show it to me--

Mrs T Why not? We are not like beginners, who cling to their cards, for fear that their hands should be seen. I place mine unreservedly on the table.

Beau Let us see what you have got--

Mrs T Wait a moment, let us see what we are playing for.

Beau For Henry, and I, for one, don't mean to lose him.

Mrs T Nor I, here, look at my hand. I have the ace of hearts.

Beau The ace of hearts?

Mrs T Yes Henry's love.

Beau Against that I will take the liberty of playing the Queen of Diamonds.

Mrs T Miss Marston?

Beau She is very young, very pretty, and very amiable.

Mrs T I acknowledge all that, and she would be a very difficult card to beat if I did not happen to have in my hand the Knave of Spades.

Beau You mean Ferrara.

Mrs T Precisely. Ferrara paid me a visit yesterday afternoon--

Beau Well?

Mrs T Miss Marston happened to come in exactly at the same hour.

Beau What do you mean?

Mrs T Of course it may be a coincidence; but you know Mr Beaumont when young ladies blush and smile, and look embarrassed the more experienced of their sex generally find no difficulty in coming to certain conclusions, and I think that you may trust me that our friend has made a very decided impression.



Beau Oh confound it, this is really too bad.

Mrs T My dear Mr Beaumont, you are beginning to lose your game and temper.

Beau Mrs Trouville, this is going beyond a game. If you are prepared with such poisoned weapons, you must expect no mercy for me. I give you fair warning, that I shall shrink from no means to save Miss Marston from the designs of an adventurer, even if I have the misfortune to commit an indiscretion.

Mrs T I am not sure that I quite understand what you mean, but I know how powerful calumny is, and how very easy it is to endanger a woman's reputation by idle talk. I have therefore come prepared with one more little card, which I think will save you from a mean and exceedingly ungentlemanlike action.

Beau (Aside) Now for the dynamite?

Mrs T Do you recollect, some two years ago, at a ball at the French Embassy, you did me the honor to ask me to marry you?

Beau Yes, I recollect, I made a fool of myself.

Mrs T Thank you. It was late in the evening, after supper. You had been dancing with me a great deal. The next morning I received this note containing a formal offer of marriage, and that afternoon you called for your answer, and you got it.

Beau It was "no".

Mrs T It was. I was honest enough to tell you that I should not make a good Ambassadress, for reasons which we need not discuss, and if I recollect right, you thanked me and made a great many pretty speeches about the way



in which I had behaved to you.

Beau But what has this to do with our present affair?

Mrs T Everything. If you use against me the weapons you gently hinted at just now, I use against you this letter.

Beau My dear Mrs Trouville--that is absurd. The letter is two year old.

Mrst Who is to know that? It is dated "Tuesday". It might have been written yesterday.

Beau But you refused me--

Mrs T Who heard me?

Beau (Aside) Now could I ever have been such an ass?

Mrs T You see, my worthy friend, my hand is full of trumps.

Beau But, surely, you could not use the letter?

Mrs T I would do anything. If I heard a remark about me in London, don't look frightened, this is not a sword but a shield. You are much too clever and shrewd to persist in a game which you see you have lost.

Beau I will never give it up, never, never.

Mrs T I am sorry to hear you ~~ik~~ say that for the consequences will be most unpleasant to you, I warn you. Let me hear but a breath of scandal, and I use this letter. You expose yourself to an action for breach of promise of marriage. Damages fifty thousand pounds.

Beau Fifty thousand pounds.

Mrs T Unless you wish to marry me.

Beau No, confound it, not that.

Mrs T You are most civil. Goodbye. We shall meet this evening, and I have no doubt you will be more reasonable, (laughing) Recollect, fifty thousand pounds or me. (Exit)



Beau She has got the best of it. But not for long. (Bell)  
(Enter Edward, announcing)

Ed My<sup>r</sup> Percy Neville.

Beau My dear boy, I am so delighted to see you. What an age it is since we met. But tell me how you are?

Neville Shattered, irretrievably shattered. Not a gasp left. I will tell you about it.

Beau (Interrupting) By-and-bye, I want to hear all about yourself first. When did you get back from Persia?

Neville Two days ago.

Beau After ten years absence, you must be pretty tired of it.

Neville I was terribly bored, but I don't know that I was more bored in Teheran than in "Paris", one is bored everywhere. You are looking very well, a trifle gayer, you wear your hair shorter than you used to.

Beau Yes, it's the fashion now-a-days, but talking about fashion your clothes belong to the 1-st century. A frock coat and a velvet collar are quite out of date, and you have got a white hat with a black band--a French one, too.

Neville Ah that black band. I will tell you all about it--

Beau By-and-bye.

Neville The fact is, that these are the clothes I left behind me when I went to Paris, and my others are not quite ready. But what is it you want?

Beau I want you to help me. I have a very serious matter on hand.

Neville Serious, is it? I have such a terrible headache--

Beau I am very sorry but moments are precious. Do you recollect when we were at the Embassy at Florence



together?

Neville Some twelve years ago? Yes.

Beau Do you recollect the story of poor Francesca Mellin?

Neville The daughter of the Artist?

Beau Yes, and the scoundrel who became engaged to the daughter, robbed the father and left for parts unknown?

Neville I remember perfectly.

Beau What was his name?

Neville Let me see--Oreste Salviati.

Beau Of course. I could not recollect. I vowed that if I ever came across the fellow I would expose him.

Neville Yes?

Beau ~~Yes~~ I think I have come across him at last.

Neville You do. I should like to help you.

Beau You shall. I want to prevent a marriage--

Neville Separate two loving hearts.

Beau You are getting quite sentimental.

Neville I have never been anything else since--(pointing to hat band) But I will tell you all about it.

Beau Yes, yes, you can tell me all about it now (composing himself in chair).

Neville It was the one passion of my life. She was my first love years ago when I was at Vienna. The hour in which we were torn asunder was terrible. She was forced to marry a man whom she did not love, and I was forced to go to China. My dear friend, what an hour was that. I still see her--you are not listening to me?

Beau Oh yes, I am. Go on.

Neville I still see her before me--her beautiful face bathed in tears, which never ceased to flow until her eyes were



closed forever.

Beau Is she dead?

Neville I have no doubt of it. You are taking my life with you." she said, over and over again, and although I never received any positive information of her death, I feel it here--(touching his heart) She could not survive the separation from me, and before I went to Persia I consecrated this hat (showing his hat band) to her memory. Oh, I am boring you--

Beau (bored) Not a bit. I am immensely interested.

Neville I believed at the time I should never survive it, but I have.

Beau Time heals all wounds--

Neville Not mine, I assure you, not mine. And besides, I don't want mine to heal, you don't quite understand me. My grief for her loss is a necessity for my life. To think that her loving heart broke for me, elevates me, and, when I am gone, her own loving lines shall be engraved on my tombstone (reciting)

"If cruel hands should tear apart"

Beau Stop a bit. What did you say? (Taking up a paper)

Neville I said, "If cruel hands should tear apart"

Beau (reading from paper) "The bonds that bind thee to my heart"

Neville "Oh tell me not of joys to come"

Beau "Of happy hours beyond the tomb".

Neville Why, you know the verses?

Beau I've got them here in black and white.

Neville The verses of my sainted Rose.



- Beau Rose; that's it.
- Neville What is the matter with you?
- Beau Joy. Joy. I have won the game. And you, my dear Percy, are my trump card. My ace of trumps.
- Neville What in the world do you mean?
- Beau (Going to door and unlocking it) Here, Henry.
- Sir H (Entering) What is it?
- Beau You must know Mr Percy Neville. <sup>++</sup>This is my nephew, Henry, the owner of your epitaph. Henry, Mr Neville claims your verses.
- Neville What do you mean?
- Sir H I don't understand.
- Beau Now Henry, you hold the verses, and Percy, start off again. But, my dear George--
- Beau Go on, go on, I say.
- Neville (Récites verses, Henry holding paper in his hand) (Bell)
- Sir H What does this mean?
- Beau It means that Mr Neville claims an affectionate acquaintance of some years back, with Mrs Trouville, and the right to mourn her loss. Look at his hat.
- Sir H This must be some mistake.
- (Enter Edward )
- Ed Mrs Trouville has returned, and says she thinks she has left her parasol behind--
- Beau Ask her to come in, by all means, Now for it.
- (Enter Mrs Trouville)
- Mrs Trouville My dear Mr Beaumont, you will think that you are never going to get rid of me--
- Beau I am only too delighted to have an opportunity of



introducing to you one of my old friends, Mr Percy Neville, who has just returned from a residence in Persia, (introducing) Mr Percy Neville, Mrs Trouville.

Neville Rose, you alive?

Mrs T Yes, thank heavens, I'm alive--very much alive.

Beau Old acquaintances? (To Neville) I was under the impression that the object of your affections had died some years ago.

Mrs T Mr Beaumont, I am indebted to you for this.

Beau Mrs Trouville, I am too proud of my own work to deny it.

Mrs T Mr Neville and I were acquainted some years ago. There is nothing very extraordinary in that.

Beau No, but those verses, which you gave to Henry, and which my poor friend had committed to memory ten years before.

Mrs T Those verses are capable of an explanation to anyone who is entitled to ask one. I don't suppose you claim that right, Mr Beaumont.

Beau Certainly not.

Mrs T (Turning to Neville) Nor you, Mr Neville?

Neville Oh dear no.

Mrs T Nor Sir Henry?

Sir H No.

Mrs T Then as there is no one to claim an explanation, I don't see that there is anything more to be said, except, that you all of you, seem to have forgotten that you are three men against one woman, who has no one in the world to say a word for her, and that you do not hesitate to use against her the weapon which her own tenderness has placed in your hands. If you are proud of that, I can't congratulate you on your sense of what is due to a defenseless woman.



And now, Mr Beaumont, I will trouble you for my parasol.  
 (She takes parasol from Beaumont's hand and Exit) (When she is gone Beaumont Henry and Neville look at each other doubtfully.)

Sir H By Jove, she is right.

Beau What. Haven't I saved you from an entanglement which might have made you miserable for life?

Sir H Yes; but I must say that I think you were rather hard on her.

Beau (To Neville) And that is all that he has got to say, after what I have done for him.

Neville I am rather inclined to agree with Sir Henry. If it had to be done it might have been done in a better way.

Beau What. You too? At all events, I have cured you of your illusion.

Neville I don't know that I can thank you for that. I have mourned over her tomb, and now to think that that tomb was empty, is bitter, very bitter.

(Taking hat band ~~xxx~~ from hat)

Beau Why, confound it, all the gratitude in the world is dried up.

CURTAIN

---



## ACT 3.

Same scene as Act 1 Twelve at night. Ferrara is discovered at piano just finishing a piece of music. He strikes the few last chords as the curtain rises. Supper party going on in adjoining room. Folding doors open between rooms. Madelaine seated near piano, listening.

(Enter Edward)

Supper is served, Sir.

Fer

I never eat.

Mad

(laughing) Never?

Fer

Unconsciously, occasionally, in the intervals of sublime thought I take sustenance, but it is an operation which appertains to the material portion of my nature, and which--though necessary--is to me, revolting. were you satisfied with my music tonight?

Mad

I thought it beautiful, and so did all the rest.

Fer

What are the rest to me? Do you think that to a great Artist the noisy flattery and discordant applause of a promiscuous crowd are the regards which he really seeks? Of course, we suffer the applause, because it is the custom and it would be unwise to check the outburst of enthusiasm which recognizes true merit, but (in a low tone) the most precious reward to me, dear lady, is the knowledge that you were satisfied.

Mad

I thought the music very fine.

Fer

It was written with your image in my heart and head.

Mad

Mine?



Fer Yours. It was my musical farewell to you. Every melody rung with pain--the agony which I suffer in parting from you--expressed as music alone can express the last adieu of the unhappy Luigi Ferrara.

Mad Really, Prof, Ferrara, (going) don't <sup>you</sup> think we had better join the rest?

Fer One moment, before I leave the Paradise of sound for the "Inferno" of food. Those words which you wrote and which I was to set to music. Have you written them out? The song beginning "Tis thee alone I love".

Mad (Hesitating) Yes, I have written them out--but--

Fer You will give them to me? The melody shall be the last effort of the dying swan.

Mad I have them here (Taking paper from piano) But I hardly like--

Fer You will not--you cannot--refuse them to me. It is the last prayer of one who shall soon have vanished from your sight.

Mad I cannot give it to you. It was very foolish of me to write them.

Fer Foolish. To clothe the thought of the heart in such beautiful poetry?

Mad Pray do not ask me--

Fer As a souvenie, I beg of you.

Mad No, no. If anyone should see them. ~~If anyone should see them.~~ If anyone should know that I had written them.

Fer That is impossible. I should guard this precious paper which you have invested with a hale of glory, with my life's blood. (Drawing paper away from her)



(Enter Trouville)

Mad (Taking paper away from him) No, pray do not ask me for it.

Mrs T My dearest child, how can you be so cruel as to refuse the poor man so very trifling a request.

Mad But you don't know what it is.

Mrs T Oh, yes I do. (Takes paper) It is a pretty little poem of your pretty little head. (Reads) "Tis thee that I love" signed Madelaine.

Fer Very charming words, which I am desirous of uniting to the inspirations of my own brains.

Mrs T He means he wants to set them to music. My dear Madelaine I really don't see what possible objections there can be--

Mad And you really think I ought.

Mrst Of course, (Gives paper to Ferrara)  
Pretty women and great artists should never be refused anything.

Fer Mrs Trouville, I am most exceedingly obliged to you. Madelaine here close to my heart, until it ceases to beat, shall this paper lie, the memory of love forever past. It will be my companion and solace when I am far away. It shall be my talisman, and I will never part with it, never, but with my life's blood. (Exit to supper room C)

Mrs T There, see how happy you have made him, over nothing.

Mad I wish you had not given it to him.

Mrs T My dear, what possible harm can there be? And besides, the poor man is so devoted.

Mad I am sure I wish he wasn't.

Mrs T But, my dear Madelaine, I fancied you had some little



feeling for him yourself.

Mad Indeed not.

Mrs T But, yesterday morning--

Mad Yesterday morning I was foolish. I wish I had not written that paper. (Up)

Mrs T (Aside) The young lady is changing her mind. Well it is the privilege of our sex Is it possible she can care for the other after all? I must keep my eyes open  
(Enter Beaumont and Sir Henry) Ah, Sir Henry, you are late. they have already sat down.

Beaumont (Interposing) My dear Mrs Trouville, you really must allow me the privilege of aye (offering his arm)  
"Senioris prioris" you know. Henry, will you take in Miss Marston?

Sir H With pleasure. (Offers Miss Marston his arm, they go into the supper room C)

Beau (About to follow them with Mrs Trouville) Will you come?  
(They go up arm in arm)

Mrs T (Stopping) Mr Beaumont will you have the goodness to tell me why this is the fifth time this evening that you have prevented Sir Henry from speaking to me?

Beau If--my dear lady; how could you possibly think of such a thing.

Mrs T Unless your nephew has suddenly become short-sighted at your special request, he as hardly noticed me tonight.

Beau Really, you surprise me.

Mrs T Go on, I don't, you must look after his manners.

Beau Nothing does more harm to young gentlemens' manners than spoiling them. You must allow me to say that you have



spoilt my nephew.

Mrs T How?

Beau Ah. That is more than I can tell you. There are many ways of doing it. But if his respect for you diminishes, you must allow mine to increase, and permit old age to make amends for the neglect of youth.

Mrs T (Smiling) You are a most incorrigible hypocrite. For I am sure in your heart of hearts you must be furious with me.

Beau I, furious? Why?

Mrs T Because I lost my temper, and was rude to you this morning.

Beau Oh, that is all forgotten.

Mrs T And forgiven?

Beau Completely.

Mrs T The fact was, it was the other idiot that annoyed me.

Beau The other idiot?

Mrs T I beg your pardon, I mean the idiot. Do you know I was very nearly playing the big trump--

Beau Your big trump?

Mrs T Yes. (Showing Beaumont's letter)

Beau You seem never to be without it--

Mrs T I never am. I cherish this specimen of your hand-writing, it never leaves me, and it never will, unless you compel me to use it.

Beau I compel you?

Mrs T Do you know that I have always looked upon you as my beau ideal of a gentlemen, and old gentlemen.

Beau Thank you.

Mrs T As chivalrous as a Knight of old, and it would be very



sad for me, if I were forced to hold up this old gentlemen to ridicule. The ridicule of his nephew and friends.

Beau My dear Mrs Trouville--

Mrs T To think that this poor little piece of paper could become the subject of conversation in every club in London.

Beau You don't mean to say that you would--

Mrs T I will do nothing unless I am forced to do it in self-defence. You prevent your nephew, by every means in your power from having an explanation from me. You have not let him out of your sight. I dare say that you have been poisoning his mind with all sorts of stories.

Beau I assure you that your name has not passed my lips since this morning.

Mrs T Impossible. You must have said something. You must have told him something.

Beau Nothing. On my word.

Mrs T Then he must have heard from that Mr. Neville.

Beau Not even from that Mr Neville. They have not met since.

Mrs T The story above referred to a matter which occurred years ago. The mere circumstance of those foolish verses can't account for his change of manner.

Beau My dear Mrs Trouville your experience of the world should teach you that in affairs of the heart, those who start quickest, stop soonest. The metal which is quick to heat is quick to cool. With some men if you destroy the one illusion you destroy all. It is rather like your pearl necklace. If one pearl slips off the string, all the



all the rest follow it. One moment you feel happy in the possession of a beautiful ornament, in the next the string breaks, you catch at one end of your necklace, the pearl slips off, and the floor at your feet is suddenly strewn with pearls. Illusions.

Mrs T But I can pick up my pearls and rethread them.

Beau No doubt, but on another string. Take the case of our romantic friend, Neville, for instance.

Mrs T You mean your friend Neville.

Beau Well, my friend, if you prefer it. He firmly believes that you are dead. He mourns for you accordingly, weeps over your grave, wears a hat band and generally devoted himself to grief. You suddenly turn up in the best of health and spirits, away fly his illusions, off comes his hat band. The man is cured, and by this time has probably picked up his pearls and found a new string.

Mrs T You are assuming in Sir Henry's case that the string is broken.

Beau I am.

Mrs T We shall see. In the meantime, my dear Mr Beaumont, I am positively dying of hunger.

Beau I beg your pardon. (Enter Madelaine)

Mad (To Mrs Trouville) I am afraid you will think me terribly rude. The table is full, so you must take my place, next Sir Henry.

Beau (Aside) Confound it.

Mrs T My dear it is very good of you. I was perfectly famished. Oh Mr Beaumont, I ought to have told you, I have found another trump. (Exit)

Mad Mr Beaumont if you will wait a moment, there will be plenty



of room.

Beau (Aside) There they are, side by side. (looking towards supper room) well, she can't say much to him there.

Mad How lovely Mrs Trouville looks tonight.

Beau Yes; there is not much to complain of in her looks.

(looking into supper room) well she can't.

Mad There will be a place in a minute.

Beau I was not thinking of supper--

Mad There is something else the matter--

Beau With me? Oh dear no. I assure you

Mad How did you like the concert?

Beau Very much, and you?

Mad Oh, I like everybody and everything.

Beau Happy age. And believe in them eh?

Mad And why not? It is my first season.

Beau And my fortieth. (Aside) What a pity to break her string of pearls. (Aloud) My dear Miss Marston, you see with eyes of your own age, I with the spectacles of mine .

Mad What do you mean?

Beau (Showing eyeglass) This is the experience of age, which sees through the masks of society; when I don't use it, I see in the next room beautiful flowers happy faces, splendid jewels a charming and amiable woman, devoted to the happiness of her friends, an artist who has earned by talent and labour a world wide reputation. But I put on my glass, (glass in eye) and the scene changes the charming woman becomes a beautiful deomn, plotting for her own objects, and ready to sacrifice anyone who thwarts <sup>her.</sup>



The artist turns into a shallow humbug, living on the works of another's brain, the flowers are fading, the faces are rouged, the jewels are paste. (Dropping his glass from his eye) It is better sometimes to be blind.

Mad You really don't mean Mrs Trouville?

Beau Good gracious. My dear young lady, why should I mean Mrs Trouville?

Mad But the artist?

Beau The artist is Luigi Ferrara.

Mad Luigi Ferrara.

Beau He is one of the drawing room gypsies, who are to be found in society, all over Europe. The men shrug their shoulders at them but the ladies as a rule, find them interesting.

Mad Indeed.

Beau Yes. The fellow is one of them.

Mad Luigi Ferrara.

Beau Yes, but a very comedian. Capable of strokes of genius, in the exercise of his talents, as a humbug, which, for the life of me I can't help sometimes admiring.

Mad Surely you must be mistaken.

Beau Perhaps so in describing the man to you as a humbug, when I know him to be a scoundrel--

Mad (aside) And he has that paper with those words of mine.

Beau (aside) I think I have got a nail into Ferrara's coffin.

(aloud) And to think that women should condescend to talk to a creature like that, in preference to such a fellow as Henry. By-the-way did he tell you he was going?

Mad No; He did not tell me anything about his movements.

Beau He is ordered to Egypt.



Mad To Egypt?

Beau Yes, he is to take the place of another officer, who has been badly wounded--

Mad You are saying that to frighten me.

Beau Indeed I am not. It is perfectly true. He has been busy all day getting his things ready.

Mad But he might be killed (deeply affected)

Beau He must take his chances with the rest, tho' it is deucedly annoying. (sees Madelaine) Why good gracious, Miss Marston, what is the matter?

Mad It is nothing--nothing. I shall be better in a minute. There I am better already. (recovering herself)

Beau You are sure I can do nothing for you?

Mad Nothing indeed, except to forget my folly. You won't tell anyone will you?

Beau Of course not. But now I think it is time to go and turn Henry out of his seat, and get some supper. (Exit to supperroom)

Mad How foolish and weak I am: I really feel ashamed of myself. But, he won't tell anyone, I feel that I can trust him. And Ferrara has those silly words of mine. How can I get them back? I wonder whether Henry

(Enter Sir Henry)

Sir H Well, Miss Marston, Uncle says he's famished. You had no mercy on him. What a shame at his time of life too.

Mad Why did you not tell me you were going to Egypt?

Sir H I don't know. We had so many other things to talk about, and besides I did not know that it would particularly interest you.

Mad That is unkind of you. Everything you do interests me.



Sir H I am so glad.

Mad When do you go?

Sir H I start by the mail tomorrow night.

Mad So soon?

Sir H Are you sorry I am going?

Mad Yes--No--of course I am sorry.

Sir H And you have forgiven me for being so rude to you yesterday? What a fool I have been. How dreadfully blind.

Mad What do you mean?

Sir H Its a long story; and it is too late to explain to you now.

Mad Too late?

Sir H Yes, I am afraid so. I don't suppose a girl would forgive a man for asking her to refuse him. Do you think she wpuld Miss Marston?

Mad I don't know--perhaps. How am I to tell?

Sir H No, of course not, after he had made such a fool of himself.

Mad Unless perhaps she had made a fool of herself--

Sir H What? You think that two fools make one wise man; and that is impossible?

Mad I wonder whether you would do something for me?

Sir H Would I? Wouldn't I? What is it?

Mad I am afraid you will think me very foolish. It is about Prof. Ferrara.

Sir H Ferrara?

Mad Yes; I was silly enough to write some verses for him to set <sup>to</sup> music . They are not worth much; but (hesitating) I should like to have them back.



Sir H

Did you give them to him?

Mad

I did not exactly give them to him, but he has them, and now I cannot help feeling that I have done something foolish, something wrong. I can hardly ask him to give them back to me, and perhaps he would refuse if I did. I wonder whether you would speak to him.

Sir H

Of course I could, and I will. You shall have your verses back again.

Mad

I cannot tell you how grateful I feel to you.

Sir H

Wait a bit. There is one little difficulty in the way--

Mad

What is it?

Sir H

Suppose he tells me to mind my own business?

Mad

But it is your business, if I ask you to do it.

Sir H

Well not exactly, you see if I had any special right to claim them--

Mad

I don't understand you.

Sir H

If I could say for instance, (hesitating)

Mad

What?

Sir H

I could say, oh Miss Marston, why don't you help me to tell you?

Mad

To tell you what?

Sir H

That I have been an idiot. That I have thrown away a chance of happiness that I didn't deserve, but that I would give my life to be able to carry out my uncle's wishes, Madelaine.

Mad

Oh, Henry, why didn't you say that to me yesterday. You would have saved me from making such a fool of myself. (Enter Beaumont with Mrs Trouville on his arm followed by Marston--Percy--Neville--)

Mrs T

(continuing) No, you see in society one is bound to love with great propriety, and to despair with such exquisite discretion that most of us become automatons, with whomx



any idea of vengeance is quite out of the question. We are schooled to hide our feelings, and to suffer. And now, Mr Beaumont you have promised to tell us a story.

Beau

Yes, from an incident in my own life/  
(Circle around him)

Beau

There lived in Florence, some ten years ago, an old grey-haired Artist, who cared for two things only--his daughter and his art. Amongst his pupils whom he loved to teach, there was one who managed especially to worm himself into the old man's confidence and, unfortunately, into that of his daughter. So that when his studies were ended, the pupil left with the tears of the daughter on his cheek and the blessings of the father on his head. Some days after his departure the old man found that he had been robbed, and his works had been copied and sold as originals. Inquiries were made in all directions but in vain and the old man died without the slightest idea as to who had robbed him. The daughter, however knew.

Mrs T

Then <sup>v/ly</sup> did she not tell her father?

Beau

Because, when she wrote to the pupil, whom she suspected, she received an answer, a warning to hold her tongue, lest those who found out who stole from him might inquire through whose room and at what hour of the night the thief must have passed.

Mrs T

And you mean to say that this story is true?

Beau

Perfectly.

Mad

And you know this man's name?

Beau

Yes, it is Oreste Salviati.

Mrs T

And what is the end of the story?

Beau

Oh, quite commonplace. The girl had to hold her tongue. The father died, the thing was forgotten, and no one knew where the scoundrel had got to. But one day--

(Enter Ferrara from C)

(Aside) here he comes.

Mad

Well, go on.

Beau

One day the poor child died--

Mad

She died?

Beau

Yes Francesca Mellin is dead.

Ferrara

(Aside) Francesca Mellin is dead.(Joins group and much interested)

Beau

A friend of mine stood at her bedside, and received from her lips her last will. Do you know to whom she left the whole of her property? To Oreste Salviati.



Ferrara (aside) Ah

Beau "If you find Oreste she said tell him that I blessed him with my last breath. I loved him passionately, but I feel now that I could never have raised myself to the height of his exalted standard. It was better for him to tear himself away. May he find another the happiness he so richly deserves."

Ferrara (In a trembling voice) Poor child. Poor child.

Beau You know Francesca?

Ferrara Years ago when I was studying in Italy. At that time I called myself Oreste Salviati. (General sensation)

Beau What then? You are--

Ferrara The happy Oreste Salviati whom Francesca loved to her dying hour.

Voices What is it possible?

Ferrara What does all this mean?

Beau It means my fine fellow that we have caught the fox at last. Francesca Mellin is alive, and you are the gentlemen who robbed her father. What explanation have you to make?

Fer I have no explanation to make. I prefer to treat with contemptuous silence the accusations which have been brought against me. The artistic nature and the nature which is not artistic do not understand one another. I am not surprised.

Mrs T (aside) And I nearly sacrificed Madelaine to this man.

Fer Mrs Trouville I can appeal to you.

Mrs T Do not appeal to me. I am only too thankful to think that your treachery has been discovered in time--

Fer Miss Marston (she turns away) and must I leave this in solitude to wonder over the ingratitude of mankind.

Beau Goodbye sir and by-the-way if we should happen to meet again and I should fail to recognize you you will I hope pardon me.

Fer I should prefer it. And now Farewell.

Sir H Stop you have in your possession a paper belonging to Miss Marston--

Fer Pardon me--the paper is mine. The lady gave it to me this evening. I cherish it as one of the most precious of gifts.

Sir H I am sorry to ask you to return it.



- Fer It is impossible. I have sworn not to part with it except with my life (blood)
- Sir H Then we shall include some of that.
- Fer What you would take--
- Sir H I would do anything in the world to force you to return that paper to me--
- Fer And why to you?
- Sir H Because I am engaged to be married to Miss Marston.
- Fer It is not possible.
- Sir H It is a fact.
- Fer In preference to me--Ferrara--you are joking.
- Sir H I am in earnest, I assure you, and I don't choose to have verses in my wife's handwriting paraded about in the hands of an adventurer.
- Fer Adventurer, I Ferrara.
- Sir H You see that I am determined--
- Fer You will not use force?
- Sir H Yes, if you drive me to it.
- Fer But I will not drive you to it. I will not expose to violence the temple of art, which has been confided to my keeping. I owe it to the world to preserve myself from harm. There is the paper.
- Sir H Thank you.
- Fer And now--Farewell for an eternity. (Exit)
- Beau (aside to Mrs T) I think at last that I may claim the game.
- Mrs T Yes, I have lost the more perhaps than you think (with an effort) Madelaine, dear, Mr Beaumont tells me that you are going to be married to Sir Henry Beaumont.
- Mad Yes.
- Mrs T (Kissing her) I hope you will be very happy my dear. (giving her a pocket) will you accept this from one who wishes you every happiness?
- Mad It's Henry's portrait. Oh, thank you. How lovely.



Mrs T You will find the words "Forever" engraved inside  
(aside sadly) With some they mean nearly the whole of  
two years.

Mad (going to Marston at back and waking him) Look Papa.

Beau (Aside to Mrs Trouville) How can I thank you for your  
generous conduct?

Mrs T (quietly) By not rating too highly the extent ~~of~~ of the  
sacrifice.

Beau (aside) I have <sup>a</sup>deuced good mind--Egad I will.

Mrs T Mr Beaumont. (holding letter) I shall reserve this little  
card for a future game.

Beau I think not--

Mrs T What?

Beau I venture most seriously and respectfully to renew the  
offer which I made to you.

Mrs T You want to marry me.

Beau I do indeed.

Mrs T (tearing letter) No, I will be merciful.

Neville Mrs Trouville if you will allow me to take up the thread  
Neville of my sorrow--

Mrs T (laughing) What you too. Good gracious, no.

Beau After all, I must confess myself beaten. You really  
have behaved like a princess  
(Kisses her hand)

THE END

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