



THE GUARDIAN

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THE GUARDIAN

A Play in Four Acts

BY

Booth Tarkington *and* Harry Leon Wilson

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The time is the present.

The scene is Sorrento, in Southern Italy.

ACT I.—The terrace of the Hotel Regina Margherita on the cliff at Sorrento. Morning.

ACT II.—The Entrance Garden. Afternoon.

ACT III.—An apartment in the hotel. Evening.

ACT IV.—The Terrace. Morning.

CHARACTERS

MEN

Daniel Voorhees Pike (aged thirty-five), of Kokomo, Indiana.

The Grand Duke Vasili Vasilivitch (aged forty-eight).

The Earl of Hawcastle (aged fifty-six).

The Hon. Almeric St. Aubyn (aged twenty-five), son of Lord Hawcastle.

Ivanoff (aged forty).

Horace Granger-Simpson (aged twenty-two).

Ribiere (aged thirty), the Grand Duke's secretary.

Mariano, maître d'hotel.

Michele, a waiter.

Two Carabiniere.

A Valet de chambre.

Several Sorrentine musicians and fishermen.

WOMEN

Ethel Granger-Simpson (aged twenty).

Comtesse de Champigny (aged thirty-two).

Lady Creech (aged sixty) sister-in-law of Hawcastle.

ACT I

Terrace of the Hotel Regina Margherita, on the cliff at Sorrento, overlooking the Bay of Naples.

Back drop shows the bay and semi-circular coast-line, dotted with villages, and Vesuvius gray in the distance. Across the stage at back runs a marble balustrade about three feet high, guarding the edge of the cliff. From up L. C. (meeting upper L. end of railing) the wall of the hotel runs obliquely down to L. where it corners, and runs into foliage wing down L. leaving an entrance there from wings. A door (closed but practicable) in front wall of hotel affords entrance down L. to hotel. This door is of modern Italian style: glass nearly to base, with lace shade. A single step is before the door, which is not on the same level as the doors up L., which are large glass double-doors, forming main entrance from the hotel to the terrace. They are approached by four or five marble steps with railing and small stoop. Windows in Wall L. C. and down L. above door.

THE GUARDIAN

*Awning*s shield all of them. The hotel is of pink and white stucco. R. of stage is a grove, betokened by shrubberies and tree-wings. Two or three small white wicker tea-tables L. Wicker chairs near them. Couple of covered Bath chairs broadly striped with pink and white, up R. near balustrade. Down R. C. is square table laid with white cloth.

Time: Eleven o'clock in the morning; stage bright.

Before the curtain rises mandolines and guitars are heard and the Fisherman's Song, time very rapid and gay, the musicians being off R.

MARIANO, *maitre d'hotel*, is discovered laying the table down R. C. with eggs, coffee and rolls for two. He is a pleasant-faced, elderly man, stout, swarthy, wearing long gray mutton-chop side whiskers; dress clothes, white waistcoat, and black tie. He is annoyed by the music off R.

MARIANO

(as curtain rises, looking off R. crossly).

Silenzio!

MICHELE opens doors from hotel up L. and appears on stoop. He is young, clean-shaven except for a dark mustache, wears a white tie, a blue coat, cut like dress-coat, blue

THE GUARDIAN

trousers with red side stripes, brass buttons; his waistcoat is of striped red and blue.

MICHELE

(speaking over his shoulder to L. but indicating MARIANO with his right hand).

Par ici, Monsieur Ribiere, pour le Maître d'hotel.

RIBIERE enters from the doors up L., crossing

MICHELE on stoop. MICHELE not descending steps, immediately withdraws as he has entered, through doors, leaving them open.

RIBIERE is a trim, business-like young Frenchman, of some distinction of appearance. He wears a well-made English dark "cutaway" walking-suit, a derby hat and carries a handsome leather writing-case under his arm. The scene is quick.

RIBIERE *(as he enters).*

Ah, Mariano! *(Comes down R. C.)*

MARIANO

(bowing and greeting him gaily).

Monsieur Ribiere! J'espère que vous êtes——

(He breaks off, turns on his heel toward the invisible musicians off R. and shouts.) Silenzio!

(He turns again quickly to Ribiere.)

THE GUARDIAN

RIBIERE

(with a warning glance toward hotel).

Let us speak English. There are not so many who understand. *(Both speak with a slight accent.)*

MARIANO *(politely).*

I hope Monsieur still occupy the exalt' position of secretar' to Monseigneur the Grand Duke.

RIBIERE

(sits R. C. and opens writing case, answers gravely).

We will not mention the name or rank of my employer.

MARIANO

(at table, with gesture and accent of despair).
Again incognito! Every year he come to our hotel for two, three day, but always incognito. *(He finishes setting the table.)* We lose the honor to have it known.

RIBIERE *(looking at watch).*

He comes in his automobile from Naples. Everything is to be as on my employer's former visits—strictly incognito. It is understood everyone shall address him as Herr von Gröllerhagen——

THE GUARDIAN

MARIANO (*repeating name carefully*).

Herr von Gröllerhagen——

RIBIERE (*continuing*).

He wishes to be thought a German. (*Takes a notebook from case*).

MARIANO (*as though asking a question*).

Such a man! of caprice? Excentrique? (*as if answering it*) Ha!

RIBIERE

(*emphatically and as if with despair*).

You have said it. Last night he talked by chance to a singular North American in the hotel at Napoli. To-day he has that stranger for companion in the automobile. I remonstrate. What use? He laugh for half an hour! (*Makes a gesture of humorous desperation and closes the writing case with a snap, leaving notebook outside of it.*)

MARIANO.

He is not like those cousin of his at St. Petersburg an' Moscowa. An' yet though Monseigneur is so good an' generoso, will not the anarchist strike against the name of royalty himself? You have not the fear?

THE GUARDIAN

RIBIERE.

I have. He has *not*. (*Opens notebook.*) I take what precaution I can secretly from him. You have few guests?

MARIANO (*smiling*).

It is so early in the season. Those poor musician' (*nodding off R.*) they wait always at every gate, to play when they see anyone coming. There is only seex peoples in the 'ole house! All of one party.

RIBIERE.

Good! Who are they?

MARIANO.

There is Milor, an English Excellency—the Earl of Hawcastle; there is his son, the Excellency Honorable Almeric St. Aubyn; there is Miladi Creeshe, an English Miladi who is sister-in-law to Milor Hawcastle.

RIBIERE (*making notes*).

Three English.

MARIANO.

There is an American Signorina, Mees Granger-Seempstone. Miladi Creeshe travel with her to be chaperone. (*Enthusiastically.*) She is young, gen-

THE GUARDIAN

erosa, she give money to everyone, she is multa bella, so pretty, weeth charm——

RIBIERE (*puzzled*).

You speak now of Lady Creeshe?

MARIANO (*taken aback*).

O, no, no, no! Miladi Creeshe is ol' lady (*tapping his ears*). Not hear well. Deaf. No pourboires. Nothing. I speak of the young American Lady Mees Grahnger-Seemsone who the English Honorable son of Milor' Hawcastle wish to espouse, I think.

RIBIERE.

Who else is there?

MARIANO.

There is the brother of Mees Grahnger-Seemsone, a young gentleman of North America. He make the eyes (*laughing*) all day at another lady who is of the party, a French lady, Comtesse de Champigny. Ha, ha! That amuse' me!

RIBIERE.

Why?

MARIANO.

Beckoss I think Comtesse de Champigny is a such

THE GUARDIAN

good friend of the ole English Milor' Hawcastle. A Maître d'hotel see many things, an' I think Milor Hawcastle and Mme. de Champigny have know each other from long, perhaps. This déjeuner is for them.

RIBIERE.

And who else?

MARIANO.

It is all.

RIBIERE (*scribbling in book*).

Good! no Russians.

MARIANO.

I think Milor' Hawcastle and Mme. de Champigny have been in Russia sometime.

RIBIERE (*putting notebook in pocket*).

Why?

MARIANO.

Beckoss once I have hear them spik Russian to-gegger.

RIBIERE.

I think there is small chance that they recognize my employer. His portrait is little known.

MARIANO.

And this North American who come in the auto-

THE GUARDIAN

mobile—does *he* know who he travel wiz? Does he know his Highness?

RIBIERE.

No more than the baby which is not borned.

MARIANO (*lifting his eyes to heaven*).

Ah!

RIBIERE

(*looking at watch, going toward doors up L. C.*).

Set déjeuner on the terrace instantly when he arrive: a perch, petit pois, iced figs, tea. I will send his own caviar and vodka from the supplies I carry.

MARIANO.

I set for one?

RIBIERE.

For two. He desires that the North American breakfast with him. (*Pauses on stoop.*) Do not forget that the incognito is to be absolute. (*Exits L. U. E.*)

MARIANO.

Va bene, Signore! (*Puts finishing touches to table.*)

(*Enter from wings up R. near balustrade, Lord Hawcastle. He is a well-preserved man of fifty-six with close-clipped gray mustache and*

THE GUARDIAN

gray hair; his eyes are quick and shrewd; his face shows some slight traces of high-living; he carries himself well and his general air is distinguished and high-bred. He is exceedingly well-groomed. Wears a suit of thinly-striped white flannel and white shoes, a four-in-hand tie of pale old-rose crepe, a Panama hat with broad ribbon striped with white and old-rose of the same shade as his tie. His accent is that of an English gentleman and a man of the world, quite without affectation. He comes down R. at once upon his entrance, to chair R. of table. MICHELE enters at same time up L., with folded newspaper; comes R.)

HAW (*as he enters*).

Good morning, Mariano!

MARIANO (*bowing*).

Milor' Hawcastle is serve. (*Takes Hawcastle's hat and places it upon a stool behind table.*)

MICHELE

(*hands Haw newspaper from under his arm.*)

Il Mattino, the morning journal from Napoli, Milor'.

THE GUARDIAN

HAW (*accepting paper and unfolding it*).
No English papers?

MICHELE.

Milor', the mail is late. (*Exit up L.*)

HAW (*sitting*).

And Madame de Champigny?

(*MARIANO serves coffee, etc.*)

(*As HAWCASTLE speaks the COMTESSE DE CHAMPIGNY enters from hotel through doors up L. She is a pretty French woman of thirty-two. Wears a fashionable summer Parisian morning dress, light and gay in color, a short-sleeved little Empire jacket and long gloves. She carries a parasol. Her elaborately dressed hair is surmounted by a jaunty Parisian toque.*)

MME. DE C.

(*lifting her hand gaily as she enters, and striking a little attitude before she descends the steps*).

Me voici!

HAW (*half-rising and bowing*).

My esteemed relative is still asleep?

THE GUARDIAN

MME. DE C.

(speaking gaily, with a very slight accent, as she crosses to chair L. of table).

I trust your beautiful son has found much better employment—as our hearts would wish him to. *(She gives MARIANO her parasol; he places it beside HAWCASTLE'S hat.)*

HAW.

He has. He's off on a canter with the little American, thank God!

MME. DE C. *(interjecting the word).*

Bravo! *(She turns the hands of her gloves back and sips coffee, MARIANO serving.)*

HAW *(continuing).*

But I didn' mean Almeric. I meant my august sister-in-law. *(He reads paper, puzzlingly.)*

MME. DE C. *(smiling).*

The amiable Lady Victoria Hermione Trevylan Creesh has déjeuner in her apartment. What you find to read?

HAW.

I'm such a duffer at Italian, but apparently the people along the coast are having a scare over an escaped convict—a Russian.

THE GUARDIAN

MARIANO

(starting slightly, drops a spoon noisily upon a plate on the table).

Pardon, Milor'!

MME. DE C.

(setting down her coffee abruptly).

A Russian? *(Her voice is quiet, but shows a faint alarm.)*

HAW *(reading with difficulty).*

"An escaped Russian bandit has been traced to Castellamare——" *(Pauses.)*

MARIANO *(awe struck).*

Castellamare—not twelve kilometres from here!

HAW *(continuing).*

"——and a confidential agent"—*(looking up)*—secret service man, I dare say,—“has requested his arrest. But the brigand tore himself”—*(repeating slowly)*—“tore himself”—What the deuce does that mean? *(Puzzles over paper.)*

MARIANO *(bowing).*

Pardon, Milor'—if I might——

THE GUARDIAN

HAW.

Quite right, Mariano! (*Handing him paper.*)
Translate for us.

MARIANO

(*reading rapidly, but with growing agitation
which he tries to conceal.*)

"The brigan' tore himself from the hands of the carabiniere and without the doubts he conceal himself in some of those grotto near Sorrento and searchment is being execute. The agent of the Russian embassy have inform' the bureau that this escaped one is a mos' in-fay-mose robber and danger brigand."

MME. DE C. (*quickly*).

What name does the journal say he has?

MARIANO (*hurriedly*).

It has not to say. That is all. Will Milor' and Mme. la Comtesse excuse me? And may I take the journal? (*He pronounces "journal" as does Mme. de C., in the French manner.*) There is one who should see it.

HAW (*indifferently*).

Very well.

THE GUARDIAN

MARIANO.

Thank you, Milor'! (*Bows hastily and hurries out up L.*)

MME. DE C.

(*gravely, drawing back from the table*).

I should like much to know his name.

HAW (*smiling, and eating composedly*).

You may be sure it isn't Ivanoff.

MME. DE C. (*not changing her attitude*).

How can one know it is not (*pauses and speaks the name very gravely*) Ivanoff?

HAW (*laughing*).

He wouldn't be called an infamous brigand.

MME. DE C. (*very gravely*).

That, my friend, may be only Italian journalism.

HAW.

Pooh! This means a highwayman. (*Finishes his coffee coolly*) —not—not an embezzler, Hélène.

MME. DE C.

(*taking a deep breath and sinking back in her chair with a fixed gaze*).

I am glad to believe it, but I care for no more to eat. I have some foolish feeling of unsafety. It

THE GUARDIAN

is now two nights that I dream of him—of Ivanoff—bad dreams for us both, my friend.

HAW (*laughing*).

What rot! It takes more than a dream to bring a man back from Siberia.

MME. DE C.

Then I pray there has been no more than dreams.

Music of mandolins and guitars heard off R. with song "The Fisherman's Song." Enter ETHEL gaily and quickly from grove R. her face radiant. She is a very pretty American girl of twenty. She wears a light-brown linen skirted coat, fitting closely, and country riding skirt of the same material and color, with boots, a shirt-waist, collar and tie, and three-cornered hat. Carries a riding crop. She is followed by three musicians (two mandolins and a guitar), who laughingly continue the song. They are shabby fellows, two of them barefooted, wearing shabby patched velveteen trousers and blue flannel shirts open at the throat, with big black hats, old and shapeless; one of the mandolin players is somewhat better dressed than his companions,

THE GUARDIAN

wearing coat and shoes. ETHEL halts C. a little up, the musicians immediately halt; the better dressed one makes a low and sweeping bow before her; she takes money from her glove and gives it to him, the other two not discontinuing the song; the three immediately 'bout face and go out gleefully, capering and still singing. All this as quickly as possible.

HAW (*who has risen*).

The divine Miss Granger-Simpson. (*Bowing, he remains at his chair.*)

ETHEL

(*she speaks quickly and gaily but with a pronounced "English accent"*).

The divinely happy Miss Granger-Simpson!

MME. DE C.

(*rising, running to her and kissing her*).

Oh, I hope you mean——

HAW

(*with some excitement in his voice*).

You mean you have made my son divinely happy?

ETHEL, *as he speaks, extricates herself laughingly from Mme. de C. and crosses rapidly down L.*

THE GUARDIAN

ace, is so in love with you, if you asked him suddenly, "is this day or night?" he would answer "It's *Hélène*." But he's too shy to speak. You're a woman; you can't press matters, but Almeric's a man; he can. He can urge an immediate marriage, which means an immediate setment, and a direct one.

MME. DE C. (*seriously, quickly*).

It will not be small, that settlement? (*He shakes his head grimly; leaning back to look at her. She continues eagerly.*) You have decide what sum? (*He nods decidedly.*) What?

HAW

(*sharply, with determination, yet quietly*).

A hundred and fifty thousand pounds!

MME. DE C. (*excited and breathless*).

My friend! Will she? (*Turns and stares toward ETHEL'S room from where piano is still heard softly playing.*)

HAW

Not for Almeric, but to be the future Countess of Hawcastle. My sister-in-law hasn't been her chaperon for a year for nothing. And, by Jove,

THE GUARDIAN

she hasn't done it for nothing, either. (*He laughs grimly, moving back from table.*) But she's deserved all I shall allow her.

MME. DE C. (*coldly*).

Why?

HAW (*rising*).

It was she who found these people. Indeed we might say that both you and I owe her something also. (*Comes around behind table to Mme. de C.*) Even a less captious respectability than Lady Creech's might have looked askance at the long friendship (*kisses her hand*) which has existed between us. Yet she has always countenanced us, though she must have guessed—a great many things. And she will help us to urge an immediate marriage. You know as well as I do that unless it is immediate, there'll be the devil to pay. Don't miss *that* essential: something must be done at once. We're at the breaking point—if you like the words—a most damnable insolvency. (*He moves back to R. side of table.*)

Enter ALMERIC from grove R. He is a fair, fresh-colored Englishman of twenty-five, handsome in a rather vacuous way; has a short, fair mustache. He wears white duck

THE GUARDIAN

riding-breeches, light-tan leather riding gaiters and shoes, a riding-coat of white duck, a waistcoat light tan in shade, and a high riding-stock, the collar of which is white, the "puffed" tie, pink; a Panama hat with a fold of light tan and white silk round the crown. Carries a riding-crop.

ALMERIC (*as he enters*).

Hello, Governor! (*His voice is habitually loud and his accent is somewhat foppish, having a little of the "Guardsman" affectation of languor and indifference.*) Howdy, Countess! (*Drops into chair L. of breakfast table—same which Mme. de C. has occupied, with a slight effect of sprawling.*)

HAW (*at same time, sharply*).

Almeric! (*Mme. de C. moves to center of table, behind it, looking keenly at ALMERIC.*)

ALMERIC (*with same loud indifference*).

Out riding a bit ago, you know, with Miss Granger-Simpson. Rippin' girl, isn't she?

HAW

(*leaning across table toward him, anxiously*).

Go on!

THE GUARDIAN

ALMERIC

(continuing, slapping his gaiters carelessly with crop).

Didn't stop with her, though.

HAW *(angrily).*

Why not?

ALMERIC.

A sort of man in the village got me to go look at a bull-terrier pup. Wonderful little beast for points. Jolly luck,—*wasn't* it? He's got a head on him——

HAW *(interrupting, bitterly).*

We'll concede his *tremendous* advantage over you in that respect. *(Throws his cigar disgustedly into one of the coffee cups on the table.)*

MME. DE C. *(eagerly).*

Is that all you have to tell us?

ALMERIC.

Oh, no! She accepted me.

HAW

(drops into chair R. of table, with a long breath of relief.)

THE GUARDIAN

MME. DE C. (*waving her parasol, C.*).

Enfin! Bravo! And will she let it be soon?

ALMERIC (*quietly and sincerely*).

I dare say there'll be no row about that, I've made her aw'fly happy.

HAW.

On my soul, I believe you're right—and thank God you are! (*Rises as he speaks and walks excitedly up C. Breaks off short as he sees Horace coming out of double doors L. Turns round and says*): Here's the brother—attention now!

Enter HORACE from doors up L. He is a boyish-looking American of twenty-two, smooth-shaven. He wears white flannels, the coat double breasted and buttoned, the tie is light blue "puffing" fastened with a large pearl. He wears light-yellow chamtois gloves, white shoes, a small, stiff English straw hat with blue and white ribbon. When he speaks it is with a strong "English accent," which he sometimes forgets. At present he is flushed and almost overcome with happy emotion. As he comes down steps MME. DE C. rushes toward him, taking both his hands.

THE GUARDIAN

MME. DE C.

(as she goes toward him, excitedly).

Ah, my dear Horace Granger-Simpson! Has your sister told you!

HORACE *(radiant but almost tearful).*

She has, indeed. I assure you I'm quite overcome. *(Mme. de C. dropping his hands, laughs deprecatingly, and steps back from him.)* Really, I assure you.

HAW

(shaking hands with him very heartily).

My dear young friend, not at all, not at all. *(Comes down C. with HORACE on his L., MME. DE C. on his R. ALMERIC has risen.)*

HORACE

(fanning himself with his hat and wiping his brow).

I assure you I am, I assure you I am—it's quite overpowering,—*isn't it?*

MME. DE C.

Ah, poor Monsieur Horace! *(She gently presses him into chair L. C. and sits besides him on his R.)*

THE GUARDIAN

ALMERIC (*having crossed to him*).

I say, don't take it that way, you know. She's very happy.

HORACE (*grasping his hand*).

She's worthy of it—she's worthy of it. I know she is.

HAW (*C. smiling genially*).

My dear young man, may I plead in behalf of my son, for—well—for an immediate marriage?—as soon as the rather stupid business details can be arranged. The affair is settled between the two dear young people themselves,—why should not the ceremony take place in Italy—even here at Sorrento?

HORACE (*flustered but pleased*).

I'm sure I don't know why it shouldn't. Can't think why——

ALMERIC (*passively*).

Just as you like, Governor, just as you like. (*Throws himself down in chair at one of tea-tables L., crosses his legs, and lights cigarette.*)

MME. DE C.

Enchanting. (*She is near table and the word is addressed to HORACE.*)

THE GUARDIAN

HAW

(*with a threatening glance at ALMERIC*).
My son is all impatience!

ALMERIC (*genially and sincerely*).
Quite so!

HAW (*gaily*).
Shall we dispose at once of the necessary little details, the various minor arrangements, the—the settlement? (*Interrupts himself with a friendly laugh.*) Of course, as a man of the world, of our world, you understand there *are* formalities in the nature of a settlement.

HORACE
(*interrupting eagerly and pleasantly, laughing also*).
Quite so, of course I know, certainly, perfectly!

HAW (*heartily*).
We'll have no difficulty about *that*, my boy. (*Laughing.*) I'll wire my solicitor, immediately, and he'll be here within two days. If you wish to consult your own solicitor you can cable him.

HORACE
(*speaking quickly but with some embarrassment*).

THE GUARDIAN

Fact is I've a notion our solicitor, Ethel's man of business, that is, from Kokomo, Indiana, where our Governor lived, in fact a sort of guardian of hers, may be here almost any time.

HAW (*taken aback*).

A sort of guardian—*what* sort?

HAW *stands C.*, HORACE *sits L. C.*, MME. DE C. *sits a little R. of* HORACE, ALMERIC *in chair L. all looking at* HORACE.

HORACE (*apologetically*).

I really can't say. Never saw him that I know of. You see we've been on this side so many years—and there's been no occasion for this fellow to look us up, but he's never opposed anything Ethel wrote for; he seems to be an easy-going old chap.

HAW (*anxiously*).

But would his consent to your sister's marriage—or the matter of a settlement—be a necessity?

HORACE (*easily*).

Oh, I dare say, but if he has the slightest sense of duty toward my sister, he'll be the first to welcome the alliance, won't he?

THE GUARDIAN

HAW (*reassuredly*).

Then when my solicitor comes, he and your man can have an evening over a lot of musty papers and the thing will be done. Again my boy (*taking HORACE'S hand*), I welcome you to our family. God bless you!

MME. DE C. *at same time, leaving her parasol in chair, turns up L. C.*

HORACE (*rising*).

I'm overpowered, you know, really overpowered. (*Fans himself again and wipes his forehead.*)

HAW (*going up L. C.*).

Come, Almeric. (*Aside to MME. DE C., whom he joins L. C. for a moment.*) Let him know it's a hundred and fifty thousand pounds. (*Exit into doors up L. into hotel, followed immediately by ALMERIC.*)

MME. DE C. *at same time comes down C., HORACE turns toward her; she gives him both hands.*

MME. DE C. (*smiling*).

My friend, I am happy for you.

THE GUARDIAN

HORACE (*joyously*).

Think of it, at the most a fortnight, and dear old Ethel will be the Honorable Mrs. St. Aubyn, future Countess of Hawcastle!

MME. DE C.

(*lightly, at the same time withdrawing her hands and picking up her parasol from chair where she has left it*).

Yes, there is but those little arrangement over the settlement paper between your advocate and Lord Hawcastle's—but you Americans—you laugh at such things. You are big, so big, like your country!

HORACE.

Ah, believe me, the great world, the world of yourself, Countess, has thoroughly alienated me.

MME. DE C.

(*coming closer to him, looking at him admiringly*). Ah, you retain one quality! You are big, you are careless, you are free. (*She lays her right hand on his left arm. He takes her hand with his right hand. They stand facing each other.*)

HORACE (*smiling*).

Well, perhaps, in those things I am American,

THE GUARDIAN

but in others, I fancy I should be thought something else, shouldn't I?

MME. DE C. (*earnestly*).

You are a debonnaire man of the great world; and yet you are still American, in that you are abominably rich. (*She laughs sweetly.*) The settlement——, such matter as that, over which a Frenchman, an Italian, an Englishman, might hesitate—you laugh! Such matter as one-hundred-fifty thousand pounds—you set it aside; you laugh! You say “Oh, yes—take it!”

HORACE

(*looking front, his eyes wide with surprise, speaking slowly*).

A hundred and fifty thousand pounds—why that's seven hundred and fifty thous—— (*He pauses, then finishes decidedly*). She couldn't use the money to better advantage.

Enter ETHEL *from, hotel, single door down L. She has one thickly bound book under her arm, another in her hand.*)

MME. DE C.

(*to* HORACE, *with deep admiration*).

My friend, how wise you are! (*She perceives ETHEL's entrance over HORACE's shoulder and at*

THE GUARDIAN

once runs to her, embraces her, and kisses her down L. crying.) Largesse, Sweet Countess of Hawcastle, Largesse! and au revoir! (*Turns swiftly up L.*) Adieu! I leave you with your dear brother. A rivederci. (*She runs gaily out by hotel doors up L. waving her parasol to them as she goes.*)

HORACE (*going to* ETHEL L. C.).

Dear old sis, dear old pal! (*Affectionately gives her hand a squeeze and drops it.*)

ETHEL (*who is radiant*).

Isn't it glorious, Hoddy!

HORACE (*sitting R. of breakfast table*).

The others are almost as pleased as we are. (*He leans back in chair, knees crossed, hands clasped over knees and regards her proudly.*)

ETHEL

(*near tea-table L. C. opens book in her hand, laying it on table open*).

This is Burke's Peerage, and this (*indicating book under her arm*) is Froissart's Chronicles. I've been reading it all over again,—the St. Aubyns at Crecy and Agincourt (*with an exalted expression*), and St. Aubyn will be *my* name!

THE GUARDIAN

HORACE (*smiling*).

They want it to be your name *soon*, Sis.

ETHEL

(*suddenly thoughtful, speaks appealingly*).
You're fond of Almeric, aren't you, Hoddy—you
admire him, don't you?

HORACE (*quickly, in tone of protest*).
Certainly.—Think of all he represents.

ETHEL (*enthusiastically, earnestly*).
Ah, yes; Crusader's blood flows in his veins. It
is to the nobility that must be within him that
I have plighted my troth. I am ready to marry
him when they wish.

HORACE (*excitedly*).
Then as soon as the settlement is arranged. It'll
take about all your share of the estate, Sis, but
it's worth it—a hundred and fifty thousand
pounds.

ETHEL (*earnestly*).
What better use could be made of a fortune than
to maintain the state and high condition of so
ancient a house?

THE GUARDIAN

HORACE (*going toward her*).

Doesn't it seem impossible that we were born in Indiana! (*He speaks seriously as if the thing were incredible.*)

ETHEL (*smiling*).

But isn't it good that the pater "made his pile," as the Americans say, and let us come here when we were young to find the nobler things, Hoddy, the nobler things!

HORACE

(*laying his hand lightly on her shoulder*).

The nobler things,—the nobler things, Sis. When old Hawcastle dies I'll be saying, quite off-hand, you know, "My sister, the Countess of Hawcastle——"

ETHEL

(*sitting thoughtfully, placing one book on top of tea-table, interrupts*).

You don't suppose that father's friend, my guardian, this old Mr. Pike, will be—will be QUEER, do you?

HORACE.

Well, the governor himself was rather raw, you know. This is probably a harmless enough old chap—easy to handle——

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL (*thoughtfully*).

I wish I knew. I shouldn't like Almeric's family to think we had queer connections of any sort—and he might turn out to be quite shockingly American (*with slight but genuine pathos*). I—I couldn't bear it, Hoddy.

HORACE.

Then keep him out of the way. That's simple enough. None of them, except the solicitor, need see him.

Instantly upon this there is a tremendous though distant commotion off L. The noise of wild laughter and cheers, of the tarantela played by mandolins and guitars, also song, shouts of "Bravo Americano" and "Yanka Dooda." The noise continues and increases gradually. HORACE and ETHEL, somewhat startled at the outbreak, turn toward up L. HORACE going up steps leading to doors up L.

ETHEL (*as the uproar begins*).

What is that?

HORACE (*as he goes up steps to door up L.*).
Must be a mob.

THE GUARDIAN

LADY CREECH, *flustered and hot, enters from hotel through doors up R. She is a haughty, cross-looking woman in her sixties, with gray, elaborately dressed hair. Stout, reddish face, with rather frowning, thick gray eyebrows. Handsome and fashionable gray velvet dress. Wears gold-rimmed eyeglasses, a small bonnet, and carries in one hand a small white lace fan. Comes down G. panting and agitated; scene fast.*

ETHEL

(going to Lady C. speaks close to her ear and loudly).

Lady Creech—dear Lady Creech—what is the trouble?

LADY CREECH.

Some horrible people! coming to this hotel. They've made a riot in the village.

Noise same as before, suddenly louder. MARIANO, immediately upon LADY CREECH's entrance, appears in hotel doors up L., makes a quick gesture toward breakfast table down R., and withdraws. MICHELE, laughing, immediately enters by same doors, goes rapidly to table

THE GUARDIAN

down R., clears it, and exits through doors up L. with tray. The others pay no attention to this but continue dialogue.

HORACE (*at steps up L.*).

It's not a riot—it's a revolution.

LADY C. (*sinking into a chair, angrily*).

One of your horrid fellow-countrymen, my dear. Your Americans are really too——

ETHEL (*proudly*).

Not *my* Americans, Lady Creech!

HORACE.

Not *ours*, you know. One could hardly say that, *could* one?

Noise without temporarily fainter.

ALMERIC (*heard off L. laughing*).

Oh, I say, what a go! (*Enters rapidly through doors up L., comes down C., laughing, talking as he comes.*) Motor car breaks down on the way here, one of the Johnnies in it, a German, discharges the chauffeur; and the other Johnny (*he throws himself sprawling into chair L. C.*), one

THE GUARDIAN

of your Yankee chaps, Ethel, hires two silly little donkeys, like rabbits, you know, to pull the machine the rest of the way here. Then as they can't make it, by Jove, you know, he puts himself in the straps with the donkeys, and proceeds, attended by the populace. Ha, Ha! I say!

HORACE, *gloomy, comes down and sits at tea-table L.*

LADY CREECH (*angrily to ALMERIC*).

Don't mumble your words, Almeric. I never understand people when they mumble their words.

RIBIERE, *who looks anxious, appears in doors up L., stands aside on the stoop for MARIANO and MICHELÉ, who enter and pass him with trays, fresh cloth, etc., for table down R., which they rapidly proceed to set. A valet-de-chambre enters up L. following them immediately. He is a smooth-shaven man in plain black sack suit, smooth black hair, neat white bow tie. His waistcoat black, striped with red, cut high at the throat. He carries a tray with a silver dish of caviar and a bottle of Vodka. As he enters he hesitates for one moment, looking inquiringly at RIBIERE,*

THE GUARDIAN

who motions him quickly toward MARIANO and MICHELE, and withdraws. Valet rapidly crosses to table R., sets caviar and vodka on the table, and exits up L. The others pay no attention to any of this.

ALMERIC

(without pause and cutting off LADY C.).

I went up to this Yankee chap, I mean to say. He was pullin' and tuggin' along, you see, don't you?—and I said, "There you are, three of you all in a row, *aren't* you?"—meanin' him and the two donkeys, Ethel, you see.

LADY C.

(who has been leaning close to ALMERIC to listen).

Dreadful person!

ALMERIC *(continuing)*.

All he could answer was that he'd picked the best company in sight.

ETHEL *(annoyed, half under her breath)*.

Impertinent! *(Turns up C.)*

ALMERIC.

No meanin' to it. I had him, you know, I rather think, didn't I?

THE GUARDIAN

MARIANO *exits hastily doors up L., leaving MICHELE to finish setting table down R. At same time and during ALMERIC's last speech, MME. DE C. enters and goes toward ETHEL up C. At same time HAW enters with MME. DE C., a number of folded newspapers under his arm. Simultaneously loud cheers off L. and a general renewal of the commotion intermittently, song, Margherita, shouts, cheers, etc.*

HAW (*as he enters*).

Disgusting uproar!

MME. DE C.

(*quickly, as she joins ETHEL up C.*).

But we know that such Americans are not of your class, chérie.

ETHEL.

A dreadful person, I quite fear.

HAW

(*who has come down L. during MME. DE C.'s speech*).

The English papers. (*Lays papers on table.*)

ALMERIC.

I'll take the Pink 'Un, Governor. I'm off. (*Starts*

THE GUARDIAN

up C., the Pink 'Un under his arm. Passes
ETHEL.)

ETHEL

*(detaining him. Speaks quickly, with a smile, but
rather shyly).*

For a stroll, Almeric? Would you like me to go
with you?

ALMERIC

(somewhat annoyed and embarrassed).

Well, I rather thought I'd have a quiet bit of
readin', you know.

ETHEL *(quietly and coldly).*

Oh! *(Turns up with MME. DE C., troubled. Exit*
ALMERIC *rapidly up L.)*

LADY C.

*(down L. in chair, speaking in deep and gloomy
voice).*

The Church Register!

*(HAWCASTLE gives her paper. HORACE takes Lon-
don Mail. HAW takes the Times.)*

MICHELE *is laying table R. ETHEL and MME.*
DE C. are slightly up R. C. HORACE sits R.
of L. tea-table, down L. LADY C. sits L. of

THE GUARDIAN

R. tea-table down L. HAWCASTLE L. of table next L. of them.

Simultaneously with ALMERIC's exit, MARIANO has entered up L. He is flustered and upset. Crosses rapidly to table R.

HORACE

(unfolding his paper, speaks crossly to MARIANO as M. reaches table R.).

Mariano, how long is this noise to continue?

MARIANO (*distractedly*).

How can I know? We can do nothing.

MICHELE.

(smilingly, looking up from table where he has continued to work).

The people outside will not go while they think there is once more a chance to see the North American who pull the automobile with those donkeys (*noise outside has grown faint and only the song is heard*).

MARIANO.

He have confuse me; he have confuse everybody. He will not be content with the déjeuner till he have the hams and the eggs. (*RIBIERE enters doors*)

THE GUARDIAN

up L., stands on stoop facing front. No interruption to MARIANO's speech.) And he will have the eggs cooked only on one side, and how in the name of heaven can we tell which side?

RIBIERE

(from stoop, sharply but not loudly).

Garçon!

MICHELE and MARIANO instantly step back from table and stand at attention, facing front, like soldiers. RIBIERE exits quickly again into hotel.

HAW *(looking up from paper).*

Upon my soul, who's all this?

MARIANO

(not turning his head, replies in an awed undertone).

It is Herr von Gröllerhagen, a German gentleman, Milor'.

HAW *(amused, to HORACE).*

Man that owned the automobile. Probably made a fortune in sausages.

THE GUARDIAN

VASILI (*heard off L. approaching*).

Nein, nein, Ribiere! 'S macht nichts! (*He enters up L. He is a portly man of forty-five, but rather soldierly than fat. His hair, pompadour, is reddish blonde, beginning to turn gray, like his mustache and large full beard; the latter somewhat "Henri IV." and slightly forked at bottom. His dress produces the effect rather of carelessness than of extreme fashion. He wears a travelling suit of light gray or brownish tweeds, or Irish homespun, neat enough but not freshly pressed, trousers showing no crease, the coat cut in walking-coat style, with skirts, and big slanting pockets, in which he carries gloves, handkerchief, matches, and silver cigarette case full of Russian cigarettes. He wears russet shoes with tan spats, shirt, collar and cuffs of soft cheviot of light shade, four-in-hand tie, darker; on his head a tan-colored automobile cap with buttoned flaps. He is followed by RIBIERE, who is anxious and perturbed and wishes to call his attention to the item in the Neapolitan morning paper.*

VASILI (*as he enters is waving both RIBIERE and the paper aside, and is in high good humor, saying loudly*):

THE GUARDIAN

Vie viele zeite hab' Ich es gesagt? 'S macht nichts—bübchen! Las mich, las mich! Geh'n sie weg!

So speaking he has crossed to table R. RIBIERE has halted at steps leading to doors up L. and as VASILI concludes RIBIERE bows submissively, though with a gesture of protest, and exit doors up L. The group L have watched VASILI with hostility, and immediately upon the conclusion of this speech, Lady Creech speaks.

LADY C.

What a dreadful person!

VASILI in crossing to his seat, chair R. of table R. passes behind table, but in front of MARIANO and MICHELE who bow profoundly as he passes.

VASILI

(lifting his hand in curt, semi-military salute, to acknowledge the waiters' bows as he passes).

See to my American friend.

MICHELE immediately hastens off up L. into hotel.

MARIANO takes cap VAS. hands him and places

THE GUARDIAN

it upon stool behind table. VASILI sits. In speaking VASILI employs an accent so light as to be scarcely detected.

HAW

(no pause—to Lady Creech, in her ear):

Quite right, but take care, he speaks English.

LADY CREECH.

(loudly, glaring at VASILI).

Many thoroughly objectionable persons do!

VASILI

(apparently oblivious to her remark, to

MARIANO).

My American friend wishes his own national dish.

MARIANO

(smiling deferentially, and serving VASILI to caviar).

Yes, Herr von Gröllerhagen, he will have the eggs on but one of both sides and the hams fried. So he go to cook it himself.

Loud shout off L. music much louder. All startled, HORACE, ALMERIC and LADY CREECH, set

THE GUARDIAN

their papers down in their laps and turn towards doors up L. ETHEL and MME. DE C. come down a few steps so that they look into hotel through doors.

MARIANO (*continues, looking L.*).

Ha! He return from the kitchen with those national dish.

ETHEL (*looking in hotel*).

How horrid!

MICHELE *backs out on stoop from doors L. laughing, carrying platter of ham and eggs.*

MICHELE.

Eccentrique! He have gone to wash himself at the street fountain. (*Tumult off L. reaches its height, the shouts of "Yanka Dooda" predominating.*)

VASILI (*laughing, clapping hands*).

Bravo! Bravo! (*He is greeting PIKE, whom he sees, though the audience does not, just without doors L. ETHEL speaks at the same time as VASILI, looking same direction.*)

ETHEL.

Horrible! (*She holds position until PIKE's first speech, then with a slight gesture of repugnance,*

THE GUARDIAN

turns up R. with MME. DE C., who shrugs her disdain. They are up-stage from the steps and PIKE on his entrance does not see them. They go to the Bath chairs up R.)

PIKE enters up L. immediately on the speeches of VASILI and ETHEL. He is a youthful looking American of about thirty-five, good-natured, shrewd, humorous and kindly. His voice has the homely quality of the central states, clear, quiet, and strong, with a very slight drawl at times when the situation strikes him as humorous; often exhibiting an apologetic character of tone. He does not speak a dialect in the strict sense. His English is the United States language as spoken by the average citizen to be met on a day coach anywhere in the central states. He is clean shaven, and his hair, which shows a slight tendency to gray, is neatly parted on the left side. His brown straw hat is tall-crowned with a medium brim, the latter edged with a thin strip of black, and a narrow black ribbon around the crown. The hat, like the rest of his apparel, is neither new nor old. His shirt, "lay-down" collar and cuffs, are of white, well-laundered linen. He wears a black string tie. He wears instead of a

THE GUARDIAN

coat a linen (perhaps pongee) duster, extending to the knees. It is not of a fashionable cut, does not suggest an auto-wrap, but it is not unbecoming, nor does it grotesquely fail to fit him. His waistcoat, cut medium low, is of a gray mixture, neither dark nor light. His trousers are of the same material and not fashionably cut, but they fit him well and are neither baggy at the knees nor high-water. His shoes are plain black Congress gaiters and show a good shine. In brief he is just the average well-to-do but untravelled citizen that you might meet on the accommodation train between Logansport and Kokomo, Indiana. As he enters he is wiping his face after his ablutions, with a large towel, his hat pushed far back on his head. The sleeves of his duster are turned back, and his detachable cuffs are in the pocket of his duster. He comes through the doors rubbing his face with the towel, but pausing for a moment on the stoop, drops the towel from his face to dry his hands. All except VASILI and the waiters staring at him with frowns of annoyance.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

(beamingly unconscious of this, surprised, and in a tone of cheerful apology, believing all the world to be as good-natured and sensible as Kokomo would be under the circumstances).

Law! I didn't know there was folks here. I reckon you'll have to excuse me. *(As he speaks he dries his hands quickly.)* Here, son! *(He hands the towel to MICHELE, who places it over one arm. PIKE rapidly descends steps, goes R. to table, taking chair L. of table. MICHELE holds his position on stoop until PIKE has passed him, then follows to the table and serves him, MARIANO attending VASILI. As PIKE crosses and sits, he takes cuffs from pocket of duster, adjusts them and turns down sleeves. MICHELE takes his hat.)*

VASILI *(gaily as PIKE crosses)*.

You're a true patriot, my friend. You allow no profane hand to cook your national dish. I trust you will be as successful with that wicked motor of mine.

PIKE *(chuckling)*.

Lord bless your soul, I've put a self-binder together after a pony-engine had butted it halfway through a brick deepoe! *(Tucks napkin in collar of his waistcoat and applies himself to meal.)*

THE GUARDIAN

HORACE and HAWCASTLE read their papers, now and then casting glances of great annoyance at PIKE. LADY CREECH lets her periodical rest in her lap, and without any abating or concealment, fixes PIKE with a basilisk glare which continues. He is unconscious of all this, his back being three-quarters to their group. MME DE C. and ETHEL sit in Bath chairs at back up R. and converse, also now and then giving signs of annoyance at PIKE.

VASILI (*no pause*).

You have studied mechanics at the University?

PIKE (*smiling*).

University? Law, no! On the old man's farm.

(VASILI nods gravely.)

HAWCASTLE (*blandly to HORACE*).

Without any disrespect to you, my dear fellow, what terrific bounders most of your fellow-countrymen are!

HORACE (*greatly irritated*).

Do you wonder Sis and I have emancipated ourselves?

THE GUARDIAN

HAWCASTLE.

Not at all, my dear lad.

VASILI (*to PIKE*).

Can I persuade you to accept a little of one of my own national dishes—caviar?

PIKE.

Caviar? I've heard of it; I thought it was Rooshian.

VASILI

(disturbed but instantly recovering himself).

It is German, also. Will you not? (*He motions MARIANO to serve PIKE.*) MARIANO places a spoonful of caviar on a silver dish at PIKE's right. PIKE is sitting three-fourths front.

PIKE.

I expect I'd never get to the legislature again if the boys heard about it. Still I reckon I'm far enough from home to take a few risks. (*As he loads a fork with caviar and with a smile places it in his mouth. The smile slowly fades, his face becomes thoughtful, then grave he slowly sets the fork upon his plate, his eyes turn toward VASILI with a look both puzzled and plaintive, his mouth firmly closed, his jaw moving slightly.*)

THE GUARDIAN

VASILI (*sincerely*).

I fear you do not like it. (*Quickly pours vodka into a clean glass.*) A few swallows of vodka will take away the taste. (*Gives him the glass, which PIKE quickly and gravely accepts, drinking a mouthful in haste, VASILI watching him, sincerely concerned and troubled. PIKE swallows the vodka, quietly sets the glass down on the table, his eyelids begin to flutter, bends a look of suffering and distrust upon VASILI, slowly rises and closes his eyes, then slowly sits and opens them. Gradually a faint, distrustful smile appears on his face.*)

PIKE

(*rather hoarsely and weakly; in the voice of a convalescent*).

I never had any business to leave Indiana! (*He shakes his head slowly, turning his head until his eyes meet those of LADY CREECH, and smiling but ruefully shakes his head at her as if sure of her sympathy. She snorts with indignation and turns toward HAWCASTLE and HORACE, to see if they have witnessed the outrage. PIKE fails to observe this, as he has immediately turned again to VASILI.*

VASILI.

I am sorry, my friend.

(*PIKE takes another large forkful of caviar.*)

THE GUARDIAN

VASILI (*observing this*).

But I thought you did not like the caviar.

PIKE.

It's to take away the taste of the vodka.

VASILI (*laughing*).

I lift my hat to you.

LADY CREECH (*sharply to HAW*).

The unpleasantness of travel lies in the horrid manners of the objectionable people with whom one is forced into contact.

HAWCASTLE.

Quite so.

PIKE.

You never worked on a farm in your own country, Doc.?

VASILI.

That has been denied me.

PIKE

(*picking up the glass of vodka and shaking his head significantly*).

I expect so. Talk about things to drink! Harvest time, and the women folks coming out from

THE GUARDIAN

the house with a two-gallon jug of ice-cold buttermilk. (*Sets down the glass and whistles softly with delight. HORACE shows increasing signs of annoyance.*)

VASIL.

You still enjoy those delights?

PIKE.

Not since I moved up to our county seat ten years ago and began to practice law. Things don't taste the same in the city.

VASIL.

You do not like your city?

PIKE

(*not with braggadocio, but earnestly, almost pathetically, leaning forward across the table confidentially*).

Like it? Well sir, for public buildings and architecture, I wouldn't trade our State insane asylum for the worst ruined ruin in Europe,—not for hygiene and real comfort.

VASIL (*amused*).

And your people?

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

The best on earth. Out my way, folks are *neighbors*.

HORACE *snaps his paper sharply*. HAWCASTLE
stares crossly.

VASIL.

But you have no leisure class. (VASILI *is looking keenly at HAWCASTLE and HORACE as he speaks*.)

PIKE.

Got a pretty good-sized colored population.

VASIL (*quietly amused*).

I mean no aristocracy—no great old families such as we have, that go back and back to the Middle Ages.

PIKE (*genially*).

Well, I expect if they go back that far they might just as well set down and stay there. No sir, the poor in my country don't have to pay taxes for a lot of useless kings and earls and first grooms of the bed-chamber and second ladies in waiting, and I don't know what all. If anybody wants *our* money for nothin' he has to show anyway enough enough to steal it. I wonder a man like you doesn't

THE GUARDIAN

emigrate. (*At the conclusion of this speech he unconsciously lifts the vodka glass but notices it before he drinks, and sets it down where it will be out of his reach and drinks coffee.*)

VASILI (*laughing. No pause*).

Bravo!

HAW (*to HORACE*).

Your countryman seems to be rather down on us!

HORACE (*to HAW*).

This fellow is distinctly of the lower orders. We should cut him as completely in the States as here.

VASILI.

I wonder you make this long journey, my friend, instead of to spend your holiday at home.

PIKE

(*laying down fork, and taking napkin from waist-coat*).

Holiday! Why, I never had time even to go to Niagara Falls!

VASILI (*to MARIANO*).

Finito! (*Sets his napkin carelessly on table and lights a Russian cigarette.*)

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE *carefully and precisely folds his napkin, all except the waiters and VASILI observing this with amused contempt, MME. DE C. up R. pointing it out to ETHEL.*

MME. DE C.

What is it he does with his serviette?

PIKE

(moving his chair back from the table slightly, as he folds napkin).

No sir, you wouldn't catch me puttin' in any time in these old kingdoms unless I had to.

LADY C. *(loudly and crossly to HAW).*

Hawcastle, can you tell me how much longer these persons intend to remain here listening to our conversation?

(This is the first comment heard by VASILI or PIKE since the latter's entrance. VASILI looks keenly at group L. frowning slightly. PIKE half turns to LADY CR. innocently puzzled, sets his napkin on table. MARIANO, bowing, gives him his hat, then attends VASILI, standing R. of him, holding his cap. MICHELE exits with tray up L.)

THE GUARDIAN

HAW (*no pause*).

Oh, it isn't that—but it's somewhat annoying not to be allowed to read one's paper in peace.

HORACE.

Quite beastly annoying!

LADY CR.

I had a distinct impression that the management had reserved this terrace for our party.

VASILI (*quietly*).

I fear we have disturbed these good people.

PIKE (*in wonder*).

Do you think they mean us?

VASILI.

I fear so.

PIKE

(*gently, turning partly L. and meeting LADY CR.'s fiery glance with sincere amazement*).

Why *we* haven't done anything to 'em.

VASILI (*in low tone to PIKE*).

No, my friend.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*smiling*).

Well, I guess there ain't any bones broken.

HORACE

(*quickly to HAWCASTLE. Throws down paper angrily on tea-table*).

I can't stand this. I shall go for a stroll.

PIKE *rises*. HORACE *gropes for his hat, which is under the table*.

PIKE.

I expect it's about time for me to go and find the two young folks I've come to look after. (*He stands L. of chair, hat in hand, hand on chair back, facing front*).

VASIL.

You are here for a duty, then?

PIKE

(*with gravity, yet smiling faintly*).

I shouldn't be surprised if that was the name for it. Yes sir, all the way from Kokomo, Indiana.

ETHEL *who, with MME. DE C. has just risen and advanced a step as if to come down, utters a low cry of fear, starts back slightly, then*

THE GUARDIAN

stands still. HORACE having secured his hat, is just rising to go, drops back into his chair with a stifled exclamation of dismay. HAW lays his paper flat on table. All this instantaneous.

HAW.

By Jove! (*They all stare at PIKE.*)

PIKE (*continuing*).

I expect prob'ly Doc., I won't be able to eat with you this evening. You see—(*he pauses, somewhat embarrassed, fumbling with the top of chair back*) you see I've come a mighty long ways to look after her and she, probably,—that is, they'll prob'ly want me to have supper with them. (*The latter part of this speech is spoken rather breathlessly, though not rapidly, and almost tremulously, and with a growing smile that is like a confession.*)

VASILI (*gaily*).

Do not trouble for me. Your young people, they have a villa?

PIKE.

No; they're right here in this hotel.

HORACE (*rising*).

I must get away! (*He says this huskily, almost in*

THE GUARDIAN

a whisper, as if to himself. His face is tense with anxiety. He crosses to R. behind PIKE.)

VASILI

(with a gesture of dismissal, though graciously).
Seek them, I finish my cigarette.

PIKE.

Guess I better ask.

(HORACE is crossing, meaning to exit R.)

PIKE *(addressing him).*

Hey there! Can you——

(HORACE proceeding, pays no attention.)

PIKE *(lifting his voice).*

Excuse me, son, ain't you an American? *(More decidedly to MARIANO.)* Waiter, tell that gentleman I'm speaking to him. *(All this very quick.)*

MARIANO *(to HORACE R.).*

M'sieur—that gentleman speak with you.

HORACE *(agitated and angry).*

What gentleman?

THE GUARDIAN

(MARIANO bows toward PIKE.)

PIKE (*at same time genially*).

I thought from your looks you must be an American.

HORACE (*turning haughtily*).

Are you speaking to me?

PIKE (*good-humoredly*).

Well, I shouldn't be surprised. Ain't you an American?

HORACE.

I happen to have been born in the States.

PIKE (*amiably*).

Well, that was luck.

HORACE (*turning as if to go*).

Will you kindly excuse me?

PIKE.

Hold on a minute! I'm looking for some Americans here and I expect you know 'em—boy and girl named Simpson.

HAW rises quickly at this, leaning on table and staring at PIKE. ETHEL crosses to up L. C.

THE GUARDIAN

to get a better look at PIKE. She is frightened. She is slightly in advance of MME. DE C. and has seized the latter's hand.

HORACE

(no pause, crosses angrily to PIKE, saying).

Is there any possibility that you mean Granger-Simpson? *(His tone is both alarmed and truculent.)*

PIKE *(much pleased).*

No, sir; just plain Simpson. Granger's their middle name. That's for old Jed Granger, grandfather on their ma's side. *(He pronounces ma with the broad Hoosier accent "maw.")* I want to see 'em both, but it's the girl I'm rilly looking for.

LADY C. *rises and listens closely, her fan behind her ear.*

HORACE

(trembling, but speaking even more haughtily).

Will you be good enough to state any possible reason why Miss Granger-Simpson should see you?

PIKE *(in profound surprise, yet mildly).*

Reason—why, yes—I'm her guardian.

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL *still behind him, lifts her hand to her forehead as if dizzy.* MME. DE C. *puts an arm around her.* ETHEL *recovers herself and stands rigidly, staring at PIKE.*

HORACE (*staggered, no pause*).

What?

PIKE (*smiling*).

Yes, sir, Daniel Voorhees Pike, Attorney at Law, Kokomo, Indiana!

HORACE *falls back from him in horror. Haw excited but cool, makes a quick, imperative gesture to LADY C., who majestically sweeps up to ETHEL, kisses her on the forehead in lofty pity, and sweeps out up L. MME. DE C. kisses ETHEL compassionately on cheek and follows LADY C. off. Haw follows LADY C., swiftly, to ETHEL, stands L. of her.*

HORACE

(*hoarse with shame, to PIKE, slight pause after PIKE's last speech*).

I will ask her if she will consent to an interview.

VASIL, *who has been watching keenly, makes a gesture to MARIANO, who gives him his cap,*

THE GUARDIAN

bowing deeply. Makes a gesture for MARIANO to withdraw. MARIANO bows and exits up L. quickly.

PIKE (*at same time, astounded*)..

“Consent to an interview”—(*looks from HORACE to himself in puzzlement*)—Why, I want to talk to her.

HAW

(*very quickly and earnestly to ETHEL*).

This shall make no difference to *us*, my child. Speak to him at once. (*Exits up L.*)

PIKE (*slowly to HORACE*).

Don't you understand?—I'm her guardian.

HORACE, *with a desperate gesture, turns up sharply. PIKE's eyes begin to follow him, but are arrested by VASILI, who speaks.*

VASILI (*gravely; no pause*).

When you have finished your affairs, my friend, remember my poor car yonder.

PIKE (*with a melancholy smile*).

All right, Doc., I'm kind of confused just now, but I reckon I can still put a plug back in a gear box.

THE GUARDIAN

HORACE (*who has gone to ETHEL*).

I shall never hold up my head again. (*She instantly makes him a sign to go and comes down L. to PIKE. HORACE hurriedly exits up L., hat down over his eyes.*)

VASILI (*at same time*).

Then au revoir, my friend. (*Strolls off R.*)

PIKE (*watching him go, thoughtfully*).

Yes, sir.

ETHEL

(*haughtily, yet with the air of confessing a humiliating truth, her eyes cast down*).

I am Miss Granger-Simpson. (*She is L. and a little front of PIKE, who has been watching VASILI exit R. As she speaks he turns, lifts his hand toward her as if suddenly startled. He has not seen her until now. He stands for a moment in silence, looking at her with great tenderness and pride.*)

PIKE

(*with both wonder and pathos in his voice*).

Why, I knew your pa from the time I was a little boy till he died, and I looked up to him more'n I ever looked up to anybody in my life, but I never thought (*very slowly*) he'd have a girl like you!

THE GUARDIAN

(*She has turned slowly from him; he takes a short step nearer her.*) He'd a been mighty proud if he could see you now.

ETHEL

(*speaking quickly and with controlled agitation*). Perhaps it will be as well if we avoid personal allusions.

PIKE (*mildly*)

I don't see how that's possible.

ETHEL (*sitting L.*).

Will you please sit down?

PIKE

Yes, ma'am! (*Ethel shivers at the "ma'am." He sits in chair which HORACE has occupied, still holding his hat in his hand.*)

ETHEL (*tremulously, her eyes cast down*).

As you know, I—I—— (*She stops as if almost breaking down, then, turning toward him, cries sharply.*) Oh, are you really my guardian?

PIKE (*smiling*).

Well, I've got the papers in my grip. I expect——

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL (*interrupting impatiently*).

Oh, I know it!—It is only that we didn't fancy, we didn't expect——

PIKE.

I expect you thought I'd be considerable older.

ETHEL.

Not only that——

PIKE (*interrupting gently*).

I expect you thought I'd neglected you a good deal (*remorsefully*), and it *did* LOOK like it—never comin' to see you; but I couldn't hardly manage the time to get away. You see, bein' trustee of your share of the estate, I don't hardly have a fair show at my law practice. But when I got your letter, eleven days ago, I says to myself, "*Here, Daniel Voorhees Pike, you old shell-back, you've just got to take time. John Simpson trusted you with his property, and he's done more—(his voice rises, but his tone is affectionate and shows deep feeling)*—he's trusted you to look out for *her*, and now she's come to a kind of jumpin'-off place in her life—she's thinking of gettin' married; and you just pack your grip-sack and hike out over there and stand *by* her!

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL (*frigidly*).

I quite fail to understand your point of view. Perhaps I had best make it at once clear to you that I am no longer *thinking* of marrying.

PIKE

(*leaning back in his chair and smiling on her*).

Well, Lord-a-Mercy!

ETHEL.

I mean I have decided upon it. The ceremony is to take place within a fortnight.

PIKE (*astonished*).

Well, I declare!

ETHEL.

We shall dispense with all delays.

PIKE (*slowly and a little sadly*).

Well, I don't know as I could rightly say anything against that. He must be a mighty nice fellow, and you must think a heap of him! (*With a suppressed sigh.*) That's the way it should be. (*He smiles again and leans toward her in a friendly way.*) And you're happy, are you?

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL

(with cold emphasis, sitting very straight in her chair).

Distinctly!

PIKE's expression becomes puzzled, he passes his hand over his chin, looks at her keenly. Then his eyes turn R. C. to the spot where HORACE has stood during their interview and he starts, as though shocked at a sudden thought.

PIKE

(rising quickly, with pronounced alarm).
It ain't that fellow I was talkin' to yonder?

ETHEL.

That was my brother.

PIKE *(relieved, but somewhat embarrassed).*
Lord-a-Mercy! *(Recovering himself immediately and smiling.)* But naturally, I wouldn't remember him. He couldn't have been more than twelve years old last time you were home. Of course I'd a known you——

ETHEL *(interrupting).*

How? You couldn't have seen me since I was a child.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

From your picture (*admiringly and gently*).
Though now I see—it ain't so much like you.

ETHEL (*slowly*).

You have a photograph of me?

PIKE (*very gently*).

The last time I saw your father alive he gave me one. (*Places hand in inner pocket and takes out, part way, a small photo in silver frame.*)

ETHEL (*frowning*).

Gave it to you?

PIKE.

Gave it to me to look at. (*Replaces photo in pocket. She has not seen it.*)

ETHEL.

And you remembered——

PIKE

(*apologetically, looking away from her*).
Yes, ma'am!

ETHEL (*continuing, incredulously*).

Remembered well enough to *know* me?

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*in same tone of apology*).

Yes, ma'am!

ETHEL.

It does not strike me as possible. We may dismiss the subject.

PIKE (*with assumed cheerfulness*).

Well, if you'd like to introduce me to your (*laughing feebly and tentatively, hesitates*) to your——

ETHEL.

• To my brother?

PIKE.

No, ma'am—I mean to your—to the young man.

ETHEL.

To Mr. St. Aubyn? I think it quite unnecessary.

PIKE.

I'm afraid I can't see it just that way (*with an apologetic laugh*). I'll *have* to have a couple of talks with him—sort of look him over so to speak. I won't stay around here spoilin' your fun any longer than I can help. Only just for that, and to get a letter I'm expectin' here from England. Don't you be afraid.

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL.

I do not see that you need have come at all. (*Her lip begins to tremble.*) We could have been spared this mortification.

PIKE (*sadly*).

You mean *I* mortify you? Why, I—I can't see how.

ETHEL.

In a hundred ways—every way. That common person who is with you——

PIKE (*gently*).

He ain't common. You only think so because he was with me.

ETHEL (*sharply*).

Who is he?

PIKE.

He told me his name, but I can't remember it. I call him Doc.

ETHEL (*impatiently*).

It doesn't *matter*! What *does* matter is that you needn't have come. You could have *written* your consent.

PIKE (*mildly*).

Not without seeing the young man.

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL (*continuing*).

And you could have arranged the settlement in the same way.

PIKE (*smiling*).

Settlement? You seem to have settled it pretty well without me.

ETHEL (*taking him up quickly*).

You do not understand. An alliance of this sort always entails a certain settlement.

PIKE (*sitting again*).

Yes, ma'am—when folks get married they generally settle down considerable.

ETHEL (*impatiently*).

Please listen. If you were at all a man of the world I should not have to explain that in marrying into a noble house I bring my dot, my dowry——

PIKE (*puzzled*).

Money, you mean?

ETHEL.

If you choose to put it that way.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*kindly*).

You mean you want to put aside something of your own to buy a lot and fix up a place to start housekeeping——?

ETHEL (*almost losing patience*).

No, no—I mean a settlement upon Mr. St. Aubyn directly.

PIKE (*disturbed*).

You mean you want to give it to him?

ETHEL.

If that's the only way to make you understand—yes.

PIKE (*amused, as if humoring a child*).

How much do you want to give him?

ETHEL (*coldly*).

A hundred and fifty thousand pounds.

PIKE (*incredulously*).

Seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars!

ETHEL (*sharply*).

Precisely that.

PIKE (*amazed*).

Well, he *has* made you care for him! I guess he must be the Prince of the World, honey! (*Thoughtfully.*) He must be a great man.

THE GUARDIAN

(*Sadly, but half humorously.*) I expect you're right about me not meetin' him. I prob'ly wouldn't stack up very high alongside of a man that's big enough for you to think as much of as you do of him. (*Smiling.*) Why, I'd have to squeeze every bit of property your pa left you.

ETHEL (*angrily*).

Is it your property?

PIKE (*gently*).

I've worked pretty hard to take care of it for you.

ETHEL

(*rising impulsively and coming to him*).

Forgive me for saying that.

PIKE. (*deprecatingly and smiling*).

Pshaw!

ETHEL.

It was unworthy of me, unworthy of the higher and nobler things that life calls me to live up to (*proudly*)—that I *shall* live up to. (*Crossing him to R.*) The money means nothing to me—I am not thinking of that. It is merely a necessary form.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*laughing cheerfully*).

Have you talked with Mr. St. Aubyn about this settlement,—this present you want to make him?

ETHEL.

Not with him.

PIKE.

I thought not. You'll see—he wouldn't take it if I'd let you give it to him. A fine man like that wants to make his own way, of course. Mighty few men like to have fun poked at 'em about livin' on their wife's money.

ETHEL (*despairingly*).

Oh, I can't make you understand. A settlement isn't a gift.

PIKE (*still as if humoring her*).

How'd you happen to decide that just a hundred and fifty thousand pounds was what you wanted to give him.

ETHEL.

It was Mr. St. Aubyn's father who fixed the amount.

PIKE (*astounded*).

His father? What's *he* got to do with it?

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL.

He is the Earl of Hawcastle, the head of the ancient house.

PIKE (*rising*).

And he asks you for your property—asks you for it in so many words?

ETHEL.

As a settlement.

PIKE (*aghast*).

And your young man knows it?

ETHEL.

I tell you I have not discussed it with Mr. St. Aubyn. (*She crosses him to L.*)

PIKE (*emphatically*).

I reckon not! (*Crosses rapidly to R. and turns.*)
Well, sir, do you know what's the first thing Mr. St. Aubyn will do when he hears his father's made such a proposition to you? He'll take the old man out in the back lot and give him a thrashing he won't forget to the day of his death!

The roll of drums, distant, as if sounding below the cliff, bugle sounds at the same time; MARIANO and MICHELE come hurriedly from doors up L. and lean over balustrade at back

THE GUARDIAN

as if watching something below the cliff to R. RIBIERE enters quickly with them, takes one quick glance in same direction, and hurries off up R. PIKE and ETHEL, surprised, turn to look.

MARIANO

(calling to ETHEL as he enters).

A bandit of Russia, Mademoiselle. The soldiers think he hide in a grotto under the cliff. *(Scene very fast.)*

ALMERIC *comes on rapidly from doors up L. carrying shotgun.*

ALMERIC *(enthusiastically, as he enters).*

Oh, I say, fair sport, by Jove! Fair sport!

PIKE

(to ETHEL, indicating ALMERIC, chuckling).

I saw *him* on the road here—what's he meant for?

ALMERIC *(continuing).*

Think I'll have a chance to pot the beggar, Michele? *(He joins MICHELE at balustrade.)*

MICHELE.

No, Signore, there are two companies of carabiniere.

(PIKE, delighted, chuckles aloud.)

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL (*angry and cold, calling*).

Almeric!

ALMERIC (*turning*).

Hallo!

ETHEL (*frigidly*).

I wish to present my guardian to you. (*To PIKE.*) *This* is Mr. St. Aubyn.

ALMERIC (*coming down*).

Hallo, though! It's the donkey man, *isn't* it? How very odd. (*Carelessly.*) You'll have to see the governor and our solicitor about the settlement, you know——(*Bugle sounds below, MICHELE runs off up R. ALMERIC interrupts himself.*) Fair sport, fair sport! (*Hurries off R.*)

PIKE (*solemnly*).

I reckon I got here just in time!

ETHEL.

Does that mean——

PIKE.

It means I did right to come!

ETHEL (*angrily*).

Do you think we shall tolerate even the hint of interference from you?

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

I shouldn't think there'd be the need of any. (*Though very earnest, his tone is still kindly.*) I should think your own good Simpson sense would do all the interfering necessary. (*At the conclusion of this speech his voice becomes slightly sterner.*)

ETHEL

(*suddenly giving away in a voice of pain and shame combined.*)

Oh, you are awful—awful! (*Crying, she goes rapidly to door down L. PIKE looks after her, his expression becoming slightly grimmer, yet filled with wonder. He turns toward R., with accent of wonder in his tone.*)

PIKE.

Seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars for——

CURTAIN.

As curtain descends, ETHEL is entering door with handkerchief to her eyes, PIKE still looking off R., his sentence uncompleted.

ACT II

Scene: Entrance Garden of Hotel.

Back drop shows green slopes of vineyards, castle, and olive orchards leading up the mountain side.

At back an old stone wall seven feet high runs from up L. C. across stage to up R. This wall is almost covered with vines, showing autumn tints, crowning the crest of the wall and hanging from it in profusion. In the wall up C. is a broad green gate of the Southern Italian type, closed. From up R. a white-columned pergola runs obliquely to down R. The top of the pergola is an awning formed by a skeleton of green painted wooden strips thickly covered by entwining lemon branches bearing ripening lemons. Between the columns of the pergola—that is, to R.—are glimpses of a formal Italian garden: flowers, hedges, and a broad flat marble vase on a slender pedestal, etc. Up L. a two-story wing of the hotel meets wall at the back and runs squarely across to tree-wings

THE GUARDIAN

up L. The wall of the hotel facing R. shows windows (not practicable), and is as short as can be made plausible, the object being to throw the building up stage as far as possible. The wall of the hotel facing audience shows open double doors near its R. corner, with windows upstairs and below all with lowered awnings. One window on upper floor as near L. extremity as possible, and yet fully visible to audience, is practicable. One window on lower floor, nearest double doors, is practicable. Boxes of flowers on the ledges of all the windows, and along base of wall to hotel a narrow strip of well-tended flowers, except where a single broad step leading to doorway interrupts it. A Venetian well L. C. with wrought-iron overwork, showing hanging chain. A marble bench down L. among shrubberies; an open touring-car down R. under the awning formed by the overhang of the pergola; bag of tools open on stage near-by, floor boards of the car removed, apron lifted. As the curtain rises, PIKE in shirt sleeves, his hands dirty, and wearing a workman's long blue blouse, buttoned at neck, is bending over L. side of engine, working and singing, at intervals whistling, "The Blue and the Gray." His hat, duster and cuffs are on the rear seat of the tonneau.

THE GUARDIAN

Enter HORACE, wearing hat, carrying stick and gloves from L. rapidly. He is flushed and angry; controls himself with an effort, trying to speak politely.

HORACE (*halting C.*).

Mr. Pike!

PIKE

(apparently not hearing him, hammering at a bolt head with a monkey-wrench and singing).

One lies down at Appomattox——

HORACE

(tapping ground impatiently with stick, speaks more sharply).

Mr. Pike! (*Short pause.*) Mr. Pike, I wish a word with you.

PIKE (*looks up mildly*).

Hum? (*He moves to R. side of engine, regarding it intently, rubbing handle of monkey-wrench across chin as if puzzled.*)

HORACE.

I wish to tell you that the surprise of this morning so upset me that I went for a long walk. I have just returned.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE

(regarding machine intently, sings softly).

“One wore clothes of gray.” *(Then whistles the air. Throughout this interview he maintains almost constantly an air of absorption in his work and continues to whistle and sing softly.)*

HORACE *(continuing).*

I have been even more upset by what I have just learned from my sister.

PIKE *(absently).*

Why, that's too bad.

HORACE *(with feeling).*

It is too bad—absurdly—monstrously bad! She tells me that she has done you the honor to present you to the family with which we are forming an alliance—to the Earl of Hawcastle—her fiancé's father——

PIKE

(in tone of cheerful absent-mindedness—working).

Yes, sir!

HORACE *(continuing).*

To her fiancé's aunt, Lady Creech——

PIKE *(in same tone).*

Yes, sir! the whole possetucky of them. *(Singing*

THE GUARDIAN

softly.) “She was my hanky-panky-danky from the town of Kalamazack!” Yes, sir—that French lady, too. (*Throws a quick, keen glance at HORACE, then instantly appears absorbed in work again, singing.*) “She ran away with a circus clown—she never did come back—Oh, Solomon Levi!” (*Continues to whistle the tune softly.*)

HORACE.

And she introduced you to her fiance—to Mr. St. Aubyn himself.

PIKE (*looking up, monkey-wrench in hand*).

Yes, sir (*chuckles*); we had quite a talk about shootin’ in Indiana; said he’d heard of Peru, in his school history (*chuckles*). Wanted to come out some day he said, and asked what our best game was. I told him we had some Incas still preserved in the mountains of Indiana, and he said he’d like a good Inca head to put up in his gun-room. He ought to get one (*imitating AL-MERIC*) *oughtn’t* he. (*Starts to work again, busily.*)

HORACE

(*indignantly, ignoring PIKE’s speech*).

My sister informs me that in spite of Lord Haw-

THE GUARDIAN

castle's most graciously offering to discuss her engagement with you, you refused.

PIKE (*absently*).

Well, I didn't see any need of it.

HORACE

(*continuing indignantly, coming closer*).

Furthermore you allege that you will decline to go into the matter with Lord Hawcastle's solicitor.

PIKE (*working, not looking up*).

What matter?

HORACE (*angrily*).

The matter of the settlement.

PIKE

(*looking up, speaks quietly and seriously*).

Your sister kind of let it out to me awhile ago that you think a good deal of this French widow-lady. Suppose you make up your mind to take her for richer or poorer—what's she going to give you?

HORACE (*roaring*).

Nothing! What do you mean?

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

Well, I thought you'd probably charge her (*pauses and finishes with a slight drawl*) a little, anyhow. Ain't that the way over here? (*Turns to work again, humming Dolly Gray.*)

HORACE

(*after a few angry steps L. turns angrily.*)

It is impossible for you to understand the motives of my sister and myself in our struggle *not* to remain in the vulgar herd. But can't you try to comprehend that there is an old-world society, based not on wealth, but on that indescribable something which comes of ancient lineage and high birth? (*With great indignation.*) You presume to interfere between us and the fine flower of Europe!

PIKE

(*straightening up, but speaking quietly.*)

Well, I don't know as the folks around Kokomo would ever have spoke of your father as a fine flower, but we thought a heap *of* him, and when he married your ma he was so glad to get her—well, I never heard yet that he asked for any *settlement*!

HORACE.

You are quite impossible.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*continuing*).

The fact is, when she took him he was a poor man, but if he'd a had seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars I'll bet he'd a given it for her. (*Starts to hammer vigorously, humming Dolly Gray.*)

HORACE (*despairingly*).

There is no profit in continuing the discussion. (*Turns on his heel to L. and immediately turns again toward PIKE who is apparently preoccupied.*) And I warn you we shall act without paying the slightest attention to you. (*Triumphantly.*) What have you to say to that, sir?

PIKE *suddenly turns crank of engine starting a fearful uproar. Glances up mildly at HORACE. HORACE throws up hands despairingly and crosses to up L. PIKE stops engine and his voice becomes audible in singing last words of the song "Good-bye, Dolly Gray."*

Enter up L., as HORACE crosses, LADY C. and ALMERIC. ALMERIC in white flannels.

HORACE

(*as he meets them, speaking in undertone*).

The fellow is hopeless.

THE GUARDIAN

LADY C.

(not hearing and speaking from habit, automatically).

Dreadful person! (PIKE down R. continues his work, paying no attention.)

ALMERIC *(to HORACE).*

Better let him alone till the governor's had time to think a bit. Governor's clever. He'll fetch the beggar about somehow.

LADY C.

(with a Parthian glance at the unconscious PIKE).
I shan't stop in the creature's presence—I shall go up to my room for my forty winks. *(Exits into hotel.)*

ALMERIC *(as she goes out).*

Day day, Aunt! *(To HORACE.)* I'm off to look at that pup again. You trust the governor.

HORACE *(as ALMERIC goes).*

I do, I do. It is insufferable, but I'll wait. *(Goes off L.)*

PIKE stands for a moment, contemplating the car in some despondency. Still humming or whistling. LADY C., after a few moments, appears in wrapper at practicable second-

THE GUARDIAN

story window up L. Unseen by PIKE, she pulls up the awning for a better view and drops lace curtains inside of window so as to screen herself from observation. Sits watching. Immediately upon HORACE'S exit MARIANO, flustered, enters hurriedly from L., goes to gates up C., and fumbles with the lock. At the same time VASILI enters from L., smoking, hands in coat pockets.

VASILI (*as he enters*).

You make progress, my friend? (*He saunters to Venetian well L. C., leans his back against it, facing PIKE.*)

PIKE.

Your machine's like a good many people,—got sand in its gear-box. (*MARIANO makes noise with the lock at gate.*)

VASILI (*to MARIANO*).

Are you locking us in?

MARIANO

(*excitedly coming down and showing big key which he has taken from lock*).

No, Herr von Gröllerhagen, I lock someone out—that bandit who have not been capture. The cara-

THE GUARDIAN

biniere warn us to close all gates for an hour. They will have that wicked one soon. There are two companies. (*In a lower tone to VASIL.*) Monsieur Ribiere has much fears.

VASIL.

Monsieur Ribiere is sometimes a fool.

MARIANO (*in a hoarse whisper*).

Monsieur, this convict is a Russian. (*VASIL waves him away somewhat curtly. Exit MARIANO L. shaking his head, carrying key with him.*)

PIKE (*at same time*).

Two companies of soldiers! A town marshal out my way would a had him yesterday.

VASIL (*smiling*).

My friend, you are teaching me to respect your country, not by what you brag, but by what you do.

PIKE.

How's that.

VASIL (*significantly*).

I see how a son of that great democracy can apply himself to a dirty machine, while his eyes are full of visions of one of its beautiful daughters.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE

(slowly and sadly, peering into machine).

Doc., there's sand in your gear-box.

VASILI *(laughing)*.

So?

PIKE *(not looking up)*.

You go down to the kitchen and make signs for some of the help to give you a nice clean bunch of rags.

VASILI *(surprised into hauteur)*.

What is it you ask me to do?

PIKE *(not noticing his tone, not looking up)*.

I need some more rags.

VASILI *(amused)*.

My friend, I obey. *(Makes a mock-serious bow and starts L. PIKE looking up and calling after him.)*

PIKE.

I won't leave the machine—'t wouldn't be safe.

VASILI *(halting, laughs)*.

You fear this famous bandit would steal it?

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

No—but there's parties around here might think it was a settlement.

VASILI.

I do not understand.

PIKE (*chuckling*).

Doc., that's where we're in the same fix.

VASILI (*smiling*).

Weidersehn, my friend. (*Goes off L.*)

PIKE *kneels on L. footboard of machine above gear-box, begins to clean, using an old rag, singing "Sweet Genevieve." A distant shot off R. PIKE looks up at this, holding attitude for a second and ceasing his song. Then continues his work and music. LADY C. leans out from her window, staring off up R. with opera glasses. There is a noise at gate up C. as if some one hastily, but cautiously, tried to open it. PIKE looks up again, turns toward gate, and, after a short pause, again begins to sing and work, but very softly.*

IVANOFF *appears on top of wall up R. at back, as if climbing up cautiously from lane below—*

THE GUARDIAN

creeps from wall on to top of pergola and cautiously along top through the foliage to above PIKE down R. He peers over the foliage at PIKE. PIKE looks up slowly, and as slowly ceases "Sweet Genevieve," his voice fading away on a half-syllable, as he encounters IVANOFF's gaze. Pause while they stare at each other. LADY C. observing.

IVANOFF is a thin, very fragile-looking man, not tall, of thirty-eight. His disordered hair is prematurely gray, his beard is a grizzled four-day's stubble. He is exceedingly haggard and worn, but has the face and look of a man of refinement and cultivation. He has lost his hat, his shoes and trousers are splashed with dried mud, and brambles cling to him here and there. He wears a soiled white shirt and collar, and a torn black tie, black waistcoat and trousers. Is covered with dust from head to foot, one sleeve of his shirt has been torn off at the elbow. He wears no coat.

IVANOFF

(in a voice tremulous with tragic appeal).

Est ce que vous êtes un homme de bon coeur?

Je ne suis coupable——

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*very gravely*).

There ain't any use in the world, your talkin' to me like that!

IVANOFF (*panting*).

You are an Englishman?

PIKE

(*quietly, rising and stepping back*).

That'll do for *that*. You come down from there!

IVANOFF

(*in a voice that lifts, almost cracks with sudden hope*).

An American?

PIKE.

They haven't made me anything else yet.

IVANOFF

(*swinging himself down to the ground*).

Thank God for that! (*He leans against the car as if exhausted*.)

PIKE.

I do. What makes you so glad about it? (*Dialogue very rapid and serious, though the voices are low*.)

THE GUARDIAN

IVANOFF.

Because I have suffered in the cause your own forefathers gave their lives for. I am a Russian political fugitive, and I can go no further. If you give me up I shall not be taken alive. I have no weapon, but I can find a way to cut my throat.

PIKE

(seriously, but with humorous incredulity).

Are *you* the ban-dit they're lookin' for?

IVANOFF.

They call me that. Do I look like a bandit?

PIKE.

How close are they?

IVANOFF

(with despairing gesture up R. and L.).

There!

PIKE.

Did they see you climb that wall?

IVANOFF.

I think not.

Loud sharp ringing at gate up C. At the sound

THE GUARDIAN

IVANOFF starts violently, throwing one arm up as if to shield his face from a blow.

IVANOFF.

Oh, my God! it is they! (*He staggers back against the machine.*)

PIKE

(*hastily stripping off his working blouse*).

Do you know anything about gear-box plugs?
(*The ringing continues.*)

IVANOFF.

Nothing in the world.

PIKE.

Then you're a chauffeur all right. (*Puts blouse on him.*) Take a look at this one—(*with emphatic significance*). It's underneath the machine. (*Quickly sets his hands on IVANOFF'S shoulders, having forced the blouse on him, and pushes him beneath the car. All this very quick.*)

MARIANO (*off L. calling*).

Subito! Subito! Vengo, Signore, Vengo!

PIKE at same time rapidly wipes his hands on a clean rag in the tonneau, puts on hat, cuffs, and duster, which have been lying on seat.

THE GUARDIAN

MARIANO

(running on from L. flustered, no pause).

Corpo de St. Costanzo! Non posso essere daper-
tutto allo stesso tempo. Vengo, vengo! *(Hastens
to gateway with key, unfastening it busily.
Meanwhile PIKE lights cigar, stands L. of auto,
his back to it, one foot raised, the heel resting on
footboard, behind him, his arm carelessly spread.)*

MARIANO.

Ecco! *(Throws open gate and falls back in
astonishment.)* Dio mio!

*Two carabinieri, good-looking, soldierly men in
the carabinieri uniform, cocked hats, white
crossed belts, medium-sized black mustaches,
etc., are disclosed, their carbines slung over
their arms, their long cloaks thrown back.
Behind the carab. stand some fishermen in red
caps, dirty flannel shirts of blue or gray,
trousers rolled up to the knee, also a few
ragged beggars.*

FIRST CARAB. *(as gate is opened).*

Buon Giorno! *(The two carab. enter briskly.)*

THE GUARDIAN

MARIANO

(springing forward and closing gate, calling to crowd outside).

No, no! *(Scene very fast.)*

FIRST CARAB.

Ceerchimo l'assassino Russo.

MARIANO.

Dio mio! Non nell' Albergo Regina Margharita.

SECOND CARAB. *(coming to PIKE down R.)*.

Avete visto un uomo scavalcare il muro?

PIKE *(genially)*.

Wishing you many happy returns, Colonel!

MARIANO

(coming down to PIKE, greatly excited).

It is the robber of Russia. They think he climb the wall, the assassin. The other carabinieri, they surround all yonder—*(gesturing R. and L.)* These two they search here. They ask you, please, have you see him climb the wall.

PIKE.

No.

THE GUARDIAN

FIRST CARAB.

Ae qualcuno passato de qui?

MARIANO.

He say has any one go across here?

PIKE.

No.

FIRST CARAB. (*pointing under car*).

Chi costui?

MARIANO.

He want to know who that is.

PIKE.

The new chauffeur for the machine, from Naples.

MARIANO.

E lo chauffeur di un illustre personaggio padrone dell' automobile.

CARAB. (*bowing to PIKE*).

Grazia, Signore. (*To MARIANO.*) Cerchereremo nel giardino. (*Exit swiftly FIRST CARAB. R. through pergola; SECOND, L.*)

MARIANO.

Dio mio! but those are the brave men, Signore.

THE GUARDIAN

Either one shall meet in a moment this powerful assassin who may take his lifes.

Murmur of voice from back arises, sounds of running feet and shrill whistles, and pounding on gate up C. MARIANO runs back to gate, opens it, showing excited and clamoring fishermen and beggars in the lane. They try to come in. He drives them back with napkin, which has been hanging over his arm, crying, "Vate, Vate! Devo dire al maresciallo di cacciarvi?" Stands up from gate in lane, continues business. Beggars and fishermen continue their noise in distance. He threatens. Meanwhile VASILI has entered from L., bundle of clean white rags in his hand.

VASILI (*as he enters*).

Is there a new eruption of Vesuvius.

PIKE (*meeting him and taking rags*).

No; it's an eruption of Colonels trying to arrest a high school professor. I've got him under your car there.

VASILI (*astounded*).

What?

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

I told them he's your new chauffeur.

VASILI (*gravely and quickly*).

My friend, do you realize the penalty for protecting a criminal from arrest?

PIKE.

We'll be proud of the risk. (*They have come down R. C. during dialogue, which is very fast. PIKE continuing, speaks in an undertone to IVANOFF at same time dashing rags into gear-box and out several times, as if cleaning it.*) This man owns the car. You can trust him the same as your own father. (*Wipes his hand on clean rag after throwing the others aside.*)

VASILI (*remonstrating*).

My friend, my friend! (*Throws up his hands in desperation and walks to well L. C. perturbed.*)

PIKE (*quietly, looking off R.*).

Look out, the governor's staff is coming back.

MARIANO

(*closing gate and wiping his face with napkin*).

Lazzaroni! (*At same time FIRST CARAB. enters from R. SECOND CARAB. from L.*)

THE GUARDIAN

SECOND CARAB. (*as he enters*).

Niente!

FIRST CARAB. (*indicating R.*).

Niente la! (*The two CARAB. cross briskly to each other as they speak, and stand up C. conferring.*)

MARIANO.

(*coming down at same time*).

Grazia Dio! He has gone some other place!

PIKE (*very casually to VASILI*).

You'll have to get a new off front tire, Doc. That one is pretty near gone. Better have Jim, here, put on the spare when he gets through.

THE CARAB. *beckon to MARIANO and speak to him up C.*

VASILI.

(*seriously, stepping toward PIKE*).

Do you know what you are asking me to do?

PIKE (*watching CARAB*).

To put on a new tire.

VASILI *with exclamation and gesture of despair grimly tinged with humor, goes back to L. greatly disturbed.*

THE GUARDIAN

MARIANO.

(at same time coming down to C. addressing PIKE with an embarrassed bow).

The carabinieri with all excuses beg if you will command the chauffeur to step forth from the automobile.

PIKE.

(one foot on footboard, fore-arm across knee, speaks as if annoyed).

No, sir; I worked on that machine myself for three hours. He's got his hands full of nuts and screws and bolts half fastened. If he lays them down now to come out I don't know how long it'll take to get them back in place. We want to get this job finished. *(Continues with a plaintive uplift of voice.)* This is *serious*. Tell them to go on up Main Street with their Knights of Pythias parade, and come around some day when we haven't got our hands full.

MARIANO (meekly).

I tell them—yes sir. *(Turns and confers with the carabinieri.)*

PIKE *at conclusion of this speech begins to throw tools into the bag. Tosses bag into the tonneau and slams the door shut.*

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE

(covering with this noise, his speech to VASILI).
It'll be your turn in a minute, Doc; be mighty careful what you say.

MARIANO *(coming down to PIKE).*

Because the chauffeur have been engaged only to-day and have just arrived, the Carab. ask ten thousand pardons, but inquire how long he have been known to his employer. *(He bows to VASILI with embarrassment.)*

PIKE.

How long? Why he was raised on his father's farm. *(He faces VASILI and stretches his arm out toward him as if for corroboration.)*

MARIANO *(to VASILI).*

Oh, if that is so!

PIKE

(his voice a trifle raised, to VASILI).
It is so, ain't it Doc?

VASILI *(to MARIANO, with dignity).*
You have heard my friend say it.

THE GUARDIAN

MARIANO

(quickly to VASILI in serious undertone).

Monseigneur graciously consents that I reveal his incognito to the carabinieri.

VASILI.

Is it necessary?

MARIANO.

Otherwise I fear they will not withdraw; they have suspicion.

VASILI

(with a gesture of resignation).

Very well, tell them. I rely upon them to preserve my incognito from all others.

MARIANO *(bowing deeply).*

Monseigneur, they will be discreet. *(Goes up to CARAB. and speaks to them. PIKE at same time in low tone to IVANOFF.)*

Make a noise—keep busy *(then with more emphasis)* but don't you unscrew anything.

MARIANO

(coming to VASILI smiling).

Monseigneur, they withdraw. *(The CARAB. with great deference and gravity salute VASILI. He returns the salute curtly.)*

THE GUARDIAN

FIRST CARAB.

Mille grazias, Signore! (MARIANO *throws the gate open, the two CARAB. go rapidly out gate sweeping the crowd away. MARIANO closes gate. PIKE has gone up C. attentively watching this.*)

PIKE (*giving MARIANO a coin*).
You're pretty good.

MARIANO.

It required but the slightest diplomacy, Signore. Thank you, Signore! (*Goes off L. rapidly and gaily. PIKE comes down to well, watching MARIANO off. He rests one hand on the superstructure of the well, his eyes turn for a moment to VASIL, who is R. C., showing that he is going to address him in his next speech, then turns L. again as though watching the disappearance of MARIANO admiringly.*)

PIKE (*in puzzled tone*).
He must have mesmerized those militia boys.

VASIL (*glancing off R. and L.*).
It is quite safe for the time.

PIKE (*going to the car*).
It's all right, old man! (*Extends his hand to*

THE GUARDIAN

IVANOFF *and helps him up from beneath machine to L. side of it.)*

IVANOFF

(continuing to grasp PIKE's hand after he has risen).

I will pray God for you all my life.

PIKE.

Wait till we get you plumb out of the woods.

IVANOFF

(continuing, crossing PIKE toward VASILI who has gone to well).

And you, sir, if I could speak my gratitude——

VASILI *(interrupting crisply).*

My American friend yonder has placed himself *(slight pause)* and myself—in danger of the penal code of Italy for protecting you. Perhaps you will be so good as to let us know for what we have incriminated ourselves.

IVANOFF *(looking at him keenly).*

You are a Russian?

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE *leans against car, VASILI at well, IVANOFF*
R. C.

PIKE.

Don't be afraid—he's only a German.

IVANOFF.

The Italian journals call me a brigand, (*laughs bitterly*) inspired by the Russian legation in Rome. My name is Ivanoff Ivanovitch. (*Throughout the scene IVANOFF is agitated and apprehensive.*)

PIKE (*reassuringly*).

All right, old man!

IVANOFF.

I was condemned in Petersburg ten years ago. I was a professor of the languages, a translator in the bureau of the Minister of Finance. I was a member of the Society of the Blue Fifty, a constitutionalist.

PIKE.

Good for you.

IVANOFF.

I was able to do little for the cause though I tried.

VASILI.

How did you try?

THE GUARDIAN

IVANOFF.

I transferred funds of the government to the Society of the Blue Fifty. Never one rouble for myself. (*Throws open his blouse and strikes himself on the breast*). It was for Russia's sake,—not mine! (*speaks with great emotion.*)

VASILI (*sharply*).

But you committed the great Russian crime of getting yourself caught.

IVANOFF (*bitterly*).

Through treachery. There was an Englishman who lived in Petersburg. He had contracts with the government—I thought he was my best friend—(*laughs brokenly.*) I had married in my student days in Paris—ah, it is the old story! (*bitterly*) I knew that this Englishman admired my wife—But I trusted him—as I trusted her, and he made my house his home. I had fifty thousand roubles in my desk to be delivered to my society. The police came to search; they found only me—but not my wife nor my English friend—nor the fifty thousand roubles! I went to Siberia. Now I search for those two.

VASILI (*gravely*).

Was it they who sent the police?

THE GUARDIAN

IVANOFF.

After they had taken the money and were beyond the frontier themselves. That is all I have against them.

PIKE (*slowly and gently*).

Looks to me like it would be enough.

VASILI (*with cold dignity*).

Then by your own confession you are an embezzler and a revolutionist.

PIKE (*going to VASILI quickly*).

Why the man's down (*seriously*) you wouldn't go back on him now. (*With a half chuckle.*) Besides you've made yourself one of his confederates.

VASILI.

Upon my soul, so I have. (*Bursts into laughter and lays his hands on PIKE's shoulders.*) My friend, from my first sight of you in the hotel at Napoli, I saw that you were a great man.

PIKE (*grinning*).

What are you doing, running for Congress?

IVANOFF.

(*R. to VASILI, who stands R. C. with PIKE.*)

Russia's constitution has been granted. I paid the

THE GUARDIAN

penalty of embezzlement for it by nine years of Siberia. Do you wish to send me back?

VASILI.

(after a grave look at IVANOFF turns to PIKE

again).

I do not think that the Carabiniere went away without suspicion.

IVANOFF.

Suspicion! They will watch every exit from the hotel and its grounds. What I can do, until darkness——

PIKE *(motioning toward hotel).*

Why Doc's got the whole lower floor of this wing—you're his chauffeur——

VASILI *(quickly, grimly).*

I was about to suggest it. I have a room that can easily be spared to Professor Ivanoff.

IVANOFF

(going to them, greatly touched).

My friends, God bless both of you. *(PIKE is on his R. VASILI on his L. As he speaks, he shakes*

THE GUARDIAN

hands with PIKE and turns to offer his hand to VASIL, who, apparently without noticing it, goes up toward hotel.

PIKE (*in kindly tone*).

Don't waste time talkin' about that. I shouldn't be surprised if you were hungry. (*Takes him by elbow and walks him to door of hotel.*)

IVANOFF

I have had no food for a day.

VASIL (*grimly*).^{*}

My secretary and valet de chambre will attend to Professor Ivanoff's needs. No one shall be allowed to enter his room.

PIKE.

And don't you go out of it, either.

VASIL.

He shall not,—this way. (*The three exit into hotel.*) *Immediately on their disappearance* LADY CREECH's curtains are whisked aside; she pops out of the window with the suddenness of Punch, leans far out with her head upside down, at the risk of her neck, trying to watch them even after they

THE GUARDIAN

have entered the hotel. She wears a wrapper. Laughter of MME. DE C. heard off L. LADY CR. waves her hand as if signalling in that direction and withdraws from window. Enter HORACE and MME. DE C. from L., he carrying her parasol and looking into her eyes. She is laughing.

HORACE (*as they enter*).

Ah, but you laugh at me, chere Comtesse. (*This with tender reproach.*)

MME. DE C. (*gently*).

It is because I cannot believe you are always serious. (*They are crossing toward R. walking slowly.*)

Enter LORD HAW. from L. glances up at window, then stands up L. C. observing them.

HORACE.

Serious? Like a lady to her knight of old, set me some task to prove how serious I am. (*Deliriously*) Anything!

MME. DE C.

(*quickly, pausing up R. and turning to face him*).
Ah, gladly! Complete those odious settlement.

THE GUARDIAN

Overcome the resistance of this bad man who so trouble your sweet sister!

HORACE.

You promise me when it is settled that I may speak to you—(*becomes suddenly nervous and embarrassed*) that I may speak to you——

MME. DE C. (*sweetly*).

Yes—speak to me——

HORACE.

Speak as—as you must know I want to speak—as I hardly dare——

MME. DE C.

(*softly, eyes upon the ground*).

Ah, that shall be when you please, dear friend.

HORACE

(*almost choked with gratitude*).

Oh! (*He kisses her hand, they start R. again.*)

HAW

(*with saturnine sentimentality*).

Ah, youth! (*They turn, startled, and halt, up R.*)

HAW (*continuing*).

Ah, youth and sunshine and Italy!

THE GUARDIAN

HORACE.

Oh, I say, dear old boy! Lord Hawcastle, you're chaffing, *aren't* you?

HAW

(benignly lifting a hand, as if blessing them).

Ah, youth and Italy, the blue sky, flowers, music and the—er—what is the other thing that goes with 'em? *(Pauses, with a rallying look, leaving them to fill the blank; then, in a brisk tone):* I am not following you, my children. But me seemed to espy a signal from the fair Hermione's window—that she would descend.

LADY C. *(voice heard within doors).*

Hawcastle!

Enter LADY C. somewhat flustered and still engaged in adjusting her dress.

LADY C. *(as she enters).*

Extraordinary and alarming performance. (HORACE and MME. DE C. *listen to her.* HAW *close to her; she stands on step leading to the door.*)

HAW.

What was?

THE GUARDIAN

LADY C.

I was droppin' a look from my window at that dreadful American person——

HAW.

Did he see you?

LADY C. (*testily*).

Don't mumble your words, Hawcastle.

HAW (*louder*).

Did he see you?

LADY C.

(*with a slight scream of horror*).

Oh, dear, no! In the first place it wouldn't have been proper; in the second, I kept behind the shade. And suddenly a tramp-looking man came right along on the top of the pergola yonder, like a monkey. Then he came down and talked to this Yankee person and the Yankee person took off his blouse and put it on the tramp and made him get under the motor-car.

HAW (*interested*).

Ha! (HORACE and MME. DE C. *draw nearer*.)

THE GUARDIAN

LADY C.

Just as I tell you! And two Carabiniere came in and searched the garden. Then came that German creature who owns the car and the Carabiniere went away. Then the man came out from under the car and they took him in here.

HAW (*startled*).

Where?

LADY C.

Just here. The German creature has all of this floor.

HAW (*taking her by the elbow*).

Come away. (*Takes her down* C. HORACE and MME. DE C. *follow closely*.)

LADY C. (*protesting*).

But their windows are closed.

HAW.

Never mind. Did you hear anything that was said?

LADY C. (*irritably*).

They mumbled their words. You know I never understand people who mumble their words. But isn't it plain? The tramp is a confederate of the other two creatures. They're burglars, burglars

THE GUARDIAN

without a doubt in the world. They're plotting to rob the hotel. Ethel's American friend is an imposter—no more a guardian than the waiter. He's a burglar.

HAW (*sharply*).

Where did the Carabiniere come from?

LADY C.

From the gate yonder. Mariano, the waiter, opened it for them and——

HAW (*sharply*).

Did Mariano stay?

LADY C.

Until the Carabiniere left. How much more time are you going to waste before you send for the police?

(*Bell at gate up C. sounds. They pay no attention.*)

HAW (*excitedly*).

Wait!

MME. DE C. (*excitedly*).

You remember the *journal* this morning, Il Matino—the escaped brigand——

THE GUARDIAN

MARIANO *enters from L. goes to gate, opens it to*
ALMERIC, *who enters.*

HAW (*emphatically*).
That is precisely what I *am* remembering.

LADY C.
I shall go myself.

HAW (*catching her by the arm*).
We can do better than that!

ALMERIC
(*he has entered by the gate, coming down*).
Quite a family powwow you're havin'.

HAW.
Is there anything unusual in the village?

ALMERIC.
Ra-ther! Carabiniere all over the shop—still
huntin' that bandit feller.

LADY C. (*very irascibly*).
Don't mumble your words so!

ALMERIC (*to her, louder*).
Lookin' for a bandit. (*She screams faintly.*)

THE GUARDIAN

HAW (*fiercely to her*).

Be quiet!

ALMERIC.

He's still in this neighborhood, they think.

LADY C. (*frightened*).

What did I tell you? Now, how long——

HAW (*with determination*).

You shall not repeat one word of what you saw.
(*To ALMERIC*) Almeric, find your betrothed and ask her to come here.

ALMERIC.

Oh, I don't mind, Pater! (*Exits L.*)

HAW (*to MME. DE C. and HORACE*).

Not a word of it to anybody, please. This is devilish important.

LADY C.

But why?

HORACE (*at same time*).

But what's the good of it?

HAW.

My dear young man, I congratulate you that you

THE GUARDIAN

and your sister need no longer submit to an odious dictation.

HORACE (*beginning to understand*).

By Jove!

HAW (*continuing*).

—the dictation of a person who is incurring the risk of those extremely severe penalties provided by Italian law for such as abet, shelter or conceal criminals.

HORACE.

By Jove, we've got him!

HAW (*smiling, triumphant*).

If you so choose to put it.

Enter PIKE briskly from hotel; comes immediately down to car.

PIKE (*as he enters, genially*).

Looks to me like it was going to clear up cold.
(*LADY C. haughtily stalks L.*)

HAW (*pleasantly*).

Good afternoon, Mr. Pike.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*as he bends over engine*).

Howdy! (*Begins touching different parts of the engine, apparently paying no attention to the others; humming again.*)

MME. DE C. and HORACE *haughtily follow* LADY C.

HAW (*to them*).

I will join you in a moment. (*The others go off L.*)

HAW (*suavely to PIKE*).

Mr. Pike, it is an immense pity that there should have been any misunderstanding in the matter of your ward's betrothal.

PIKE

(*looking up for a moment, mildly*).

Oh, I wouldn't call it a misunderstanding.

HAW.

It would ill become a father to press upon the subject of his son's merits——

PIKE (*plaintively and sincerely*).

I don't want to talk about *him* with you—I don't want to hurt your feelings.

THE GUARDIAN

HAW (*unabashed*).

Perhaps I might better put it on the ground of your ward's wishes—of certain advantages of position which it is her ambition to attain.

PIKE (*troubled*).

I can't talk about it with anybody but her. (*Enter MARIANO from L. with letter on tray. Goes to PIKE.*

HAW (*suavely, no pause*).

There is another matter—(*PIKE stands examining envelope of letter MARIANO has given him in profound thought. HAW continues*): I fear I do not have your attention. (*MARIANO exits L.*)

PIKE (*looking up*).

Go ahead!

HAW.

There is another matter to which I may wish to call your attention.

PIKE (*genially*).

Oh, I'll talk about anything *else* with you.

HAW (*suavely*).

This is a question distinctly different (*with a glance at the hotel, his voice grows sinister and threatening*) distinctly!

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL enters from L. Looks as if she had been crying; troubled, agitated, but controlled. She enters quickly, but stops L. C.

ETHEL (to HAW).

You wished me to come here. (*Troubled voice, eyes cast down.*)

HAW.

(*going to her and taking her hand, speaking in courtierly, kindly tone*):

My child, I wish you to have another chat with our strangely prejudiced friend on the subject so near to all our hearts. And I wish to tell you that I see light breaking through our clouds. Even if he prove obdurate, do not be downcast—all will be well,—(*benignly, his voice a little louder and very significant, speaking slowly*) All will be well. (*Turns and exits L., his voice coming back from wings in benign, fatherly tones*): “All will be well!”

(*There is a pause after the exit of HAW. PIKE stands regarding ETHEL, who does not look up at him.*)

PIKE (*gently*).

I'm glad you've come, Miss Ethel. I've got some-

THE GUARDIAN

thing here I want to read to you. (*He comes toward her from down R. She is L. C.*)

ETHEL.

I did not come to hear you read.

PIKE (*quietly*).

When I got your letter at home I wrote to Jim Cooley, our vice-consul at London, to look up the records of these Hawcastle folks and write to me here about how they stand in their own community.

ETHEL (*astounded*).

What!

PIKE.

(*continuing, letter in hand unopened*).

What's thought of them by the best citizens and so on.

ETHEL (*enraged*).

You had the audacity—you—to pry into the affairs of the Earl of Hawcastle!

PIKE (*earnestly*).

Why, I'd a done that—I wouldn't a stopped at anything—I'd a done that if it had been the Governor of Indiana himself.

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL (*bitterly*).

You didn't consider it indelicate to write to strangers about my intimate affairs?

PIKE (*placatively*).

Why, Jim Cooley's home-folks! His office used to be right next to mine in Kokomo.

ETHEL (*gasping*).

It's monstrous—and when *they* find what you've done—Oh, hadn't you shamed me enough without this?

PIKE.

I expect this letter'll show who ought to be ashamed. Now just let's sit down here and try to work things out together. (*He above R. end of bench down L., she L. of it.*)

ETHEL (*with a slight, bitter laugh*).

“Work things out together!”

PIKE.

I'm sorry—for you, I mean. But I don't see any other way to do it, except—together.—(*pause*)—Won't you?

She moves slowly forward and sits at extreme L. of bench. He watches her, noticing how far she

THE GUARDIAN

withdraws from him, bows his head humbly, with a sad smile, then sits, not at extreme R. of bench but near it.

PIKE (*troubled*).

I haven't opened the letter yet. I want you to read it first, but I ought to tell you there's probably things in it'll hurt your feelings, sort of, mebbe.

ETHEL (*icily*).

How?

PIKE.

Well, I haven't much of a doubt but Jim'll have some statements in it that'll show you I'm right about these people. If he's got the *facts*, I know he will.

ETHEL (*angrily*).

How do you know it?

PIKE.

Because I've had experience enough of life——

ETHEL

(interrupting, with a laugh at once scornful and pained).

In Kokomo?

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

Yes Ma'am! there's just as many kinds of people in Kokomo as there is in Pekin, and I didn't serve a term in the legislature without learning to pick underhand men at sight. Now that Earl, let alone his havin' a bad eye—his ways are altogether too much on the stripe of T. Cuthbert Bentley's to suit me. (*He opens the envelope slowly, continuing.*) T. Cuthbert was a Chicago gentleman with a fur-lined overcoat that opened up a bank in our town, and when he caught the Canadian express three months later, all he left in Kokomo was the sign on the front door. That was *painted* on. And as for the son—but there—I don't know as I have a call to say more. (*Takes letter from envelope.*) Here's the letter: read it for yourself. (*Gives it to her, watches her as she reads.*)

ETHEL (*reading, frowningly*).

"Dear Dan: The Earldom of Hawcastle is one of the oldest in the Kingdom and the St. Aubyns have distinguished themselves in the forefront of English battles from Agincourt and Crecy to Sebastopol. (*She reads this latter in a ringing voice and glances at him. PIKE seems puzzled and depressed. Takes off his hat and runs his hand through his hair.*) The present holder of the title came into

THE GUARDIAN

it unexpectedly through a series of accidental deaths. He was a younger son's younger son, and had spent some years in Russia in business—*what* I do not know—under another name. I suppose he assumed it that the historic name of St. Aubyn might not be tarnished by association with trade. He has spent so much of his life out of England that it is difficult to find out a great deal about him. Nothing here in his English record is seriously against him: though everything he has is mortgaged over its value, the entail having been broken. (ETHEL *pauses and looks at PIKE who, much disturbed, rises, goes to well and leans against it.*) As to his son, the Hon. Almeric, there's no objection alleged against his character. That's all I've been able to learn. (*She stops reading with an air of triumphant finality, and rises with a laugh, exclaiming*).

A terrible indictment! So that was what you counted on to convince me of my mistake?

PIKE (*distressed*).

Yes; it was!

ETHEL

(*coming toward him, the letter held in her hand as if unconsciously*).

Do you assert there is *one* word in this seriously

THE GUARDIAN

discreditable to the reputation of Lord Hawcastle or Mr. St. Aubyn?

PIKE (*humbly*).

No.

ETHEL.

And you remember, it is the testimony offered by your own friend (*scornfully*) by your own detective!

PIKE (*ruefully*).

Oh, if I wanted a detective I wouldn't get Jim Cooley—at least not any more. (*His attitude is thoroughly crestfallen.*)

ETHEL

(*triumphantly, almost graciously*).

I shall tell Lord Hawcastle that you will be ready to take up the matter of the settlement the moment his solicitor arrives. (*She starts L.*)

PIKE (*seriously*).

No, I wouldn't do that.

ETHEL

(*halting abruptly, in challenging voice*).

Why not?

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*doggedly*).

Because I won't take up the matter of settlements with him or anyone else.

ETHEL (*angrily*).

Do you mean you cannot see what a humiliation your interference has brought upon you in this? (*gesticulating toward him with the letter.*)

PIKE (*ruefully*).

No; I see that plain enough.

ETHEL (*haughtily*).

Have you, after this, any further objections to my alliance with Mr. St. Aubyn?

PIKE.

It ain't an alliance with Mr. St. Aubyn that you're after.

ETHEL.

Then what am I (*pauses and lays scornful emphasis on next word*) "after"?

PIKE (*seriously*).

You're after something there ain't anything to. (*Goes nearer to her.*) If I'd let you buy what you find it as empty as the morning after Judgment

THE GUARDIAN

want to with your money and your whole life, you'd Day. (*She turns from him, smiling and superior.*) You think because I'm a jay country lawyer I don't understand it and couldn't understand you! (*With feeling and growing excited, crosses to car R. as he speaks.*) Why, we've got just the same thing at home. There was little Annie Hoffmeyer. Her pa was a carpenter and doing well. (*He begins to work half unconsciously with the machine as he talks.*) But Annie couldn't get into the Kokomo Ladies' Literary Club, and her name didn't show up in the society column four or five times every Saturday morning, so she got her pa to give her the money to marry Artie Seymour, the minister's son—and a *regular* minister's son he is! Almost broke Hoffmeyer's heart, but he let her have her way and went in debt and bought them a little house on North Main Street. That was two years ago. (*Turns to her.*) Annie's workin' at the depoe candy-stand now and Artie's workin' at the hotel bar—in front—drinking up what's left of the house.

ETHEL (*outraged*).

And you say you understand—you couple the name of a tippling yokel with that of a St. Aubyn,—a gentleman of distinction.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

Distinction?—I didn't know he was distinguished.

ETHEL

(indicating letter with a gesture, and in ringing voice).

His ancestors have fought with glory on every field of battle from Crecy and Agincourt to the Crimea.

PIKE.

But you won't see much of his ancestors.

ETHEL *(proudly).*

He bears their name.

PIKE *(with authority and dignity).*

Yes—and it's the *name* you want. Nobody could look at you and not know it wasn't *him*. It's the *name*! And I'd let you buy it, if it would make you happy—if you didn't have to take the people with it.

At about this point a deepening of color in the lights shows that it has grown to be late afternoon, near sunset. Orange tint in lights to R.

ETHEL *(angrily).*

The "people"?

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

Yes; the whole gang. Can't you see how they're counting on it? It's in their faces, in their ways!—This Earl, don't you see he's counting on living on you? Do you think the son would get that settlement. Why a Terre Hut pick-pocket could get it away from him,—let alone his old man! What do *you* think would become of the money “settlement”?

ETHEL.

Part of it would go to the restoration of Hawcastle Hall and part to Glenwood Priory.

PIKE.

Glenwood Priory, oh?

ETHEL.

That is part of the estate where Almeric and I will live until Lord Hawcastle's death.

PIKE.

Then mighty little settlement would come around “Glenwood Priory”! (*Speaks the name as though grimly amused and continues.*) And this old lady—this Mrs. Creech you been travelling with——

ETHEL (*sharply*).

Lady Creech!

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

All right! Don't you think *she's* counting on it? And this French lady that's with them; isn't she trying to land your brother? (*Quickly and with decision.*) This crowd is on the track of John Simpson's money.

ETHEL (*horrified*).

Silence! You have no right to traduce them. Do you place no value upon heredity, upon high birth?

PIKE (*earnestly*).

Why, I think so much of it that I know John Simpson's daughter doesn't need anybody else's to help her out. (*He comes toward her, looking at her with open admiration.*) She's fine enough and I think she's sweet enough, and I know from the way she goes for me, that she's brave enough, to stand on her own feet!

ETHEL.

This is beside the point; I know exactly what I want in life (*she has been somewhat moved by his last speech, is agitated, and a little breathless*) and I could not change now if it were otherwise. I gave Almeric my promise, it was forever, and I shall keep it.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

But you can't; I'm not going to let you.

ETHEL (*with angry gaiety*).

I throw your interference to the winds. I shall absolutely disregard it. I shall marry without your consent.

PIKE (*looking at her steadily*).

Do you think they'd let you?

ETHEL (*in same tone*).

I think *you'll* let me (*laughing*), especially after this terrible letter.

PIKE (*with a sudden thought*).

By the way, did you finish it?

ETHEL

(*looking at the letter, which with envelope she has continued to hold in her hand*).

I think so. (*Turns the page.*) No—it says “over” (*she turns the sheet—looks at letter attentively for a moment—looks up, casts a quick glance of astonishment at PIKE.*)

PIKE.

Well, read it, please!

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL.

It appears to concern a matter quite personal to yourself. (*Embarrassed, assuming carelessness. Turns toward L. as if to leave, replacing letter in envelope.*)

PIKE (*advancing to her, smiling*).

I don't think I've got any secrets.

ETHEL (*stopping coldly*).

Please remember, I have not read anything on the last page. (*Turns L. again, going.*)

PIKE.

Well, neither have I. (*Reaching his hand for the letter.*)

ETHEL (*more embarrassed*).

Oh! (*Halts, drops letter on bench simultaneously.*)

PIKE *picks letter up and walks slowly toward R. with it, taking it from envelope. She stands looking after him with breathless amazement, far from hostile, yet half turned as if to go at once. PIKE taking letter out of envelope, suddenly turns at C. and looks back at her. At this she is flustered and starts L., but halts at sound of the Fishermen's song off*

THE GUARDIAN

R. The sunset is deepening, lights stronger from R. golden red, the Fishermen's song begins with mandolins and guitars heard first and the four voices heard together.

ETHEL (*at first sound of the song*).

Listen: those are the fishermen coming home.

PIKE *stands in arrested attitude, not having looked at the letter. She sinks upon bench R., her head bent thoughtfully. The song beginning faintly off R. gives the effect of people passing from R. to L., the tenor solo occurring immediately as they pass nearest. At conclusion of the vocal part of song the instruments continue, more and more faintly off R., until the entrance of HAWCASTLE. Sunset effects continue and running into bluish twilight.*

PIKE (*as voices cease*).

It's mighty pretty, but it's kind of foreign and lonesome, too. (*With a sad half-chuckle.*) I'd rather hear something that sounded more like home. (*A growing tremulousness in his voice.*) I expect you've about forgot everything like that, haven't you?

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL (*thoughtfully*).

Yes.

PIKE (*crossing to R. of bench*).

Seems funny, now; but out on the ocean, coming here, I kept kind of looking forward to hearing you sing. I knew how high your pa had had you educated in music, and, like the old fool I was, I kept thinking you'd sing for me some evening, "Sweet Genevieve" mebbe. You know it—don't you?

ETHEL (*gently*).

"Sweet Genevieve?" I used to—but it's rather old-fashioned and common, isn't it?

PIKE.

I expect so; I reckon mebbe that's the reason I like it so much. (*With an apologetic and pathetic laugh.*) Yes'm, it's my favorite. I couldn't—I couldn't get you to sing it for me before I go back home—could I?

ETHEL

(*moved, rising and turning from him*).

I—I think not. (PIKE *turns away from her to R., downcast, letter still in his hand.*)

PIKE (*in low tone*).

Daniel Voorhees Pike, you'd ought to have known

THE GUARDIAN

it! (*Sighs resignedly. Opens letter at last page and begins to read it.*)

Enter HAWCASTLE from L. Comes in briskly and smilingly.

HAW (*as he enters to ETHEL*).
My dear child! (*Then in an undertone to her.*)
You have prevailed over the heathen?

ETHEL (*shaking her head, speaks coldly*).
No.

PIKE *is standing R. gazing in petrification at the letter, facing front.*

HAW (*gaily*).
Then victory is to crown age instead of beauty.
(*Changing his tone to a more serious one.*) Do
not be troubled. Within ten minutes he will be as
meek as a nun. (*He goes a few steps L. with her,*
bowing, as she passes thoughtfully out L.)

As ETHEL passes out L. HAWCASTLE lights a cigarette, goes slowly up C., pauses in front of window nearest door, then stands in doorway leaning against casement. Meanwhile PIKE down R. is reading from letter.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

"I am sorry old man Simpson's daughter thinks of buying a title. Somehow I have a notion that that may hit you Dan. (*Poignant dismay and awe are expressed in his voice, as he continues.*) I haven't forgotten how you always kept that picture of her on your desk. The old man thought so much of you I had an idea he hoped she'd come home some day and marry an American! (*Brief pause.*) Yours truly, Jim Cooley." (*Pause.*)

PIKE

(*staring off L. speaks with a species of awed humility*).

I don't wonder she said she hadn't read it. (*His face begins to light with radiant amazement.*) But she had—(*takes a few steps toward well, gazing L.*), and she didn't go away—not right away! (*His voice shakes slightly with feeling.*)

HAW (*in doorway*).

My dear Pike—(*PIKE starts and turns, HAWCASTLE not moving nor pausing, continues*), there is a certain question——

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE

(interrupting, slowly folding letter and putting it in his inside pocket, meanwhile, speaking in his mildest tone).

I don't want to seem rough with you, but I meant what I said. *(Stage is growing darker; lights shine in the windows of the lower floor of the hotel. Shades of all the windows are drawn.)*

HAW *(coming down C.)*.

Imagining I did not mean that question——

PIKE.

Then it's all right.

HAW *(at well facing PIKE)*.

Late this afternoon I developed a great anxiety concerning the penalty prescribed by Italian law for those unfortunate and impulsive individuals who connive at the escape or concealment *(he speaks with significant emphasis and a glance at the hotel)* of certain other unfortunates who may be, to speak vulgarly, wanted—by the police. *(PIKE regards him steadily for a moment, then turns, crosses to R., puts his right foot on foot-board of the car, rests his right elbow on his knee, his chin on his hand.)*

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*pauses, then says quietly*).

You're anxious about that, are you?

HAW.

So deeply that I ascertained the penalty for it. You may confirm my information by appealing to the nearest Carabiniere—strange to say, many of them are very near—— The minimum penalty for one whose kind heart has thus betrayed him (*he turns up sharply toward lighted windows of hotel, then sharply down to PIKE, his voice lifting*) is two years imprisonment—that is the least, and Italian prisons, I am credibly informed, are quite ferociously unpleasant. (*Moonlight begins to fall from L., growing stronger.*)

PIKE (*slowly and coolly*).

Well, being in jail *any* place ain't much like an Elks' Carnival.

HAW (*near him, grimly*).

There would be no escape, even for a citizen of your admirable country, if his complicity were established; especially if he happened to be (*he steps back, turning significantly to glance at the lighted windows*), as it were, caught in the act.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*crosses him to well*).

An American caught in the act. (*Turning at well to face HAW*). They're not apt to be.

HAW (*going down R.*).

Alas! sometimes the sword hangs over even the most astute.

PIKE (*lifting his eyes*).

I don't see it.

HAW (*quickly*).

My dear young friend, imagine a badly wanted man appears upon the pergola here and makes an appeal of I know not what nature to one of your fellow countrymen, who—for the purposes of argument—is at work upon this car. Say that your too-amiable American concealed the fugitive under the automobile, and afterwards, with the connivance of a friend, deceives the officers of the law and shelters the criminal (*pointing*), say in a room of that lower suite yonder. (*His voice shows growing excitement; IVANOFF's shadow appears on shade of window nearest the door.*) Imagine, for instance, that the shadow which at this moment appears on the curtain were that of the hunted man—*then*, would you not agree that a moderate

THE GUARDIAN

and reasonable request of your fellow-countryman, who had placed the criminal there, might be acceded to. (*Shadow disappears.*)

PIKE (*swallowing painfully*).

What would be the nature of that request?

HAW (*quickly*).

It would concern a certain alliance, it might concern a certain settlement.

PIKE.

If the request were refused, what would the consequence be?

HAW

(*sharply; he is growing more and more excited, but still retains some of his suavity*).

Two years, at least, for the American, and the friend who had been his accessory, and it would also involve the arrest of the fugitive. Altogether I should consider it a disastrous situation.

PIKE (*thoughtfully rubbing his chin*).

Yes, looks like it. Would there be any way out of it for this fool countryman of mine?

HAW.

Only one. He would accede to the demands I have

THE GUARDIAN

mentioned, or the people in possession of his secret would be compelled to allow the law to take its course. In fact, to make it certain that the law took its course. Now, what, in your opinion, would this fellow-countryman of yours do?

PIKE (*slowly*).

Well, it all depends upon which of my countrymen you caught. (*He straightens up from well against which he has been leaning and his voice rises.*) If it depended on the one I know best, he'd tell you he'd see you in hell first!

HAW

(*controlling great anger, speaks loudly and huskily*).

He might not appreciate his own desperate situation.

PIKE (*imperiously*).

Talk straight.

HAW.

I'd like nothing better—I'll give you till ten o'clock to-night. (*Goes quickly up to L. of window, glancing at it.*) If you don't give me the answer I want then—God help you! (*Exits swiftly L.*)

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE stands near well gazing despondently after him. Fishermen's song heard off R. very faint and distant to curtain. After a pause PIKE looks R., then quickly and quietly goes up to window nearest door. Taps with his finger nails, shade is slowly raised and window is opened by IVANOFF, who extends his arm, meanwhile standing himself cautiously screened by wall of room.)

PIKE (*as the window is opened*).

Is anybody else there?

IVANOFF (*kneeling by window*).

Your friend has gone—he is dining away from the hotel. His valet de chambre is in the hall outside my door.

PIKE.

You've got to come out of here.

IVANOFF.

Your friend warned me to remain.

PIKE.

You've got to go. Put on the coat and cap that are on that chair. (IVANOFF puts on cloak and cap from chair near window.)

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

Wait. (PIKE turns and goes stealthily to gate, turns key in lock, opens the gate. Outside, but close to gate and facing front, stands a Carabiniere in the bright moonlight. He slowly salutes PIKE. PIKE falls back from gateway, and speaks in a warning tone and with a note of dismay.) Oh—good evening! (IVANOFF pauses in the window in a listening attitude. Picture. Song in the distance slightly louder. Curtain medium. Second curtain discloses PIKE closing gate and turning away; IVANOFF not seen, window closed and shade lowered.)

ACT III

Scene—Late same evening, a handsome private salon in the hotel; cabinets against the walls, buhl tables, luxurious tapestried chairs, etc. Walls panelled Louis XV. style. Large double door up R. in R. wall; single door down R. in R. wall; both closed. Up L. in L. wall, handsome fireplace with fire burning. Window down L. in L. wall, with lambrequins and curtains. Up C. wide double doors, open; electric lights in sconces round the walls; not lit. The only light in the salon comes from the fire and the open doors up C., so that the room is dim. The open doors up C., however, disclose a brilliantly lit conservatory hall, which extends up stage as far as possible, showing amongst the plants—palms and oleanders in bloom, etc.—one or two small coffee tables with chairs. Unseen and off L. an orchestra is playing (Pagliacci).

Rise of curtain discloses PIKE sitting in dejected attitude before fire, but dimly seen. He wears black tie, collar and linen as before, black trousers, black waistcoat, cut rather low, and black frock coat—"Western statesman" style—

THE GUARDIAN

not fashionably cut, but well-fitting and graceful—tightly buttoned at waist.

MARIANO passes in conservatory at back from L. to R., bearing coffee tray. LADY C. in evening gown of black velvet and lace, follows with stately tread. HORACE, in evening clothes, follows with MME. DE C. on his arm; she is in a handsome, very Parisian, decollete dress. They are deep in tender conversation.

PIKE rises, looking up toward doors as they pass. ETHEL passes L. to R. on arm of ALMERIC. She wears a pretty evening gown, ALMERIC in evening clothes; her head is bent and eyes cast down. PIKE stares at them as they pass, then goes to window down L. and looks out. Pause. HAW appears in conservatory hall at back. He seems about to pass on, but gives a swift glance toward the salon, then makes a sign toward off up R. MARIANO returns with tray. HAW signs him to put tray on small table at C. as far up toward back drop as possible. He sits, lighting cigar. HORACE and MME. DE C. return and join him at table. MARIANO pours coffee and exits L. (Music.)

PIKE throws open window and looks out. Sounds of wheels on cobble-stones without and crack of whip. Pause. PIKE closes window and turns toward doors up C. with a sigh of relief. The valet de

THE GUARDIAN

chambre (same dress as Act I., but wearing plain black overcoat and square-topped black derby) enters doors up C. from L., carrying a handsome carriage rug of black fur on his arm. He touches electric button on wall near door; bell, as he does so, is heard to ring off R. RIBIERE comes quickly and noiselessly from upper door R. They stand bowing at doors C. as VASILI enters from L. through conservatory. Valet immediately closes doors, and turns on light from button near door. VASILI wears overcoat trimmed with sables, silk hat, evening clothes, and white gloves; order ribbon in his buttonhole.

PIKE (*as VASILI enters*).

I'm mighty glad you've come—I've been waiting—— (*breaks off and steps back in surprise as lights go up.*) Law me! You must have been leading the grand march somewhere to-night.

VASILI

(*as valet takes his coat, turning to RIBIERE and speaking in undertone*).

You have telegraphed for the information?

RIBIERE.

Yes, sir. (*Valet, with coat, hat, etc., exits by upper door R., followed by RIBIERE.*)

THE GUARDIAN

VASILI (*continuing to PIKE*).

I have dined with an old tutor of mine. Once every year I come here to do that.

Valet immediately returns with tray on which are vodka and cigarettes, places on table near fire and exits.

VASILI

(*continuing, with brief, keen glance at PIKE*).

And you, I suppose you dined with the charming young lady, your ward, and her brother, as you expected. (*He goes to fire and warms his hands.*)

PIKE (*turning away to C., sadly*).

Oh, no, they've got friends of their own here.

VASILI (*quietly*).

So I have observed. (*Sits by fire and sips vodka.*)

PIKE (*gently*).

Oh, I don't mind their not asking me. (*With assumption of cheerfulness.*) Fact is, these friends of hers are trying to get me to do something I can't do——

VASILI.

You need not tell me that, my friend. I have both eyes and ears; I understand.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*troubled, coming near him*).

I wish you understood the rest, because it ain't easy for me to tell you. Doc., I'm afraid I've got you into a pretty bad hole.

VASILI (*smiling*).

Ah, that, I fear I do not understand.

PIKE (*remorsefully*).

I'm afraid I have. You and Ivanoff and me—all three of us. This Hawcastle knows, and he knows it as well as I know you're settin' in that chair, that we've got that poor feller in yonder (*pointing down R.*).

VASILI.

Surely you can trust Lord Hawcastle not to mention it. He must know that the consequences for you, as well as for me, would be, to say the least, disastrous. Surely you made that clear to him.

PIKE (*grimly*).

No; he made it clear to me. Two years in jail is the minimum, and if I don't make up my mind by ten o'clock (*VASILI looks at his watch*) to do what he wants me to do——

VASILI.

What does he want you to do?

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

The young lady's father trusted me to look after her, and if I won't promise to let her pay seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars for that—well, you've seen it around here, haven't you——

VASILY (*quietly*).

I have observed it—that is if you refer to the son of Lord Hawcastle.

PIKE.

Well, if I don't consent to do that, I reckon Ivanoff has to go back to Siberia, and you and I to jail.

VASILY (*frowning*).

He threatens that?

PIKE (*decidedly*).

He'll *do* that!

VASILY (*looking at him sharply*).

What do *you* mean to do?

PIKE

(*troubled, crossing to R. and turning, with his hands behind his back*).

There wouldn't be any trouble about it if it was only me. That would make it easy. They could

THE GUARDIAN

land me for two years (*swallowing painfully*) or twenty. What makes it so hard is that I can't do what they want, even to let you and Ivanoff out (*with serious emphasis*). It ain't my money. All I can do is to ask you to forgive me, and warn you to get away before they come down on me. This feller's *got* me, Doc. Don't you see how it stands? Ivanoff can't get away——

VASILI (*interrupting quickly and quietly*).
No; I think he can't.

PIKE

(*continuing, with gesture to window L.*).
They've got this militia all around the place.

VASILI.

I passed through the cordon of Carabinieri as I came in.

PIKE (*urgently and quickly*).

But *you* could get away, Doc. Up to ten o'clock you can come and go as you choose.

VASILI (*rising*).

So can you; Ivanoff is the only one who can't go. You have not thought of that?

PIKE.

No; and I won't think of it. But as for you——

THE GUARDIAN

VASILI (*quickly, sharply*).

As for me (*rings bell near door*). I shall go.

PIKE.

That's part of the load off my mind. I can't bear to think of the rest of it. I haven't known how to tell that poor feller in there.

(*Valet enters from L. Bows, scene quick.*)

VASILI

(*to valet, indicating door down R.*).

Appellez le Monsieur la. (*Valet goes to door down L., opens it, bowing slightly to IVANOFF, who appears. Valet then exits up R.*)

Enter IVANOFF, very pale and haggard looking, dressed as in Act I., but with clothes mended and neatly brushed, hair well brushed. VASILI up C., PIKE L. C. Scene fast. IVANOFF comes in slowly and quietly, stands a few steps L. of door.

VASILI

(*as IVANOFF enters, speaking in the tone of a superior*).

You may come in Ivanoff. Some unexpected diffi-

THE GUARDIAN

culties have arisen. Your presence here has been discovered by persons who wish evil to this gentleman who has protected you. He can do nothing farther to save you unless he betrays a trust which has been left to him.

IVANOFF *swallows painfully and looks pitifully from VASILI to PIKE.*

PIKE

(coming down to IVANOFF, standing before him humbly).

It's the truth, old man. I can't do it. (IVANOFF's head falls forward on his chest. Short pause.)

IVANOFF

(lifting his head, speaks in a low voice, tremulous, but controlled).

I thank you for what you have tried to do for me. *(Gives PIKE his hand. PIKE turns away to conceal his emotion. IVANOFF turns back to audience, his head again bowed.)*

VASILI

(who in meantime has touched bell-button again near doors C., speaks sharply).

You have until ten o'clock. *(Valet appears in*

THE GUARDIAN

doors up R.) Mon chapeau et pardessus. (Valet exits.) In the meantime my friend believes Naples a safe place for me. (Valet returns with his coat, hat, and gloves, helps him on with coat, all very quick), and so, auf weidersehn. (Dismisses valet with gesture. Valet exits up L.)

PIKE

(going to him and shaking hands heartily).
Good-bye, Doc., and God bless you!

VASIL (turning to door up C.).

To our next meeting. *(Exits briskly up C. As door closes behind VASIL, IVANOFF'S manner changes, showing excitement and vehemence. He goes rapidly to table near fire, picks up the cigarettes which are in a large silver open box and touches the bottle of vodka significantly.)*

IVANOFF *(exclaiming).*

I thought so—Russian!

PIKE

(who has been closing the door from inside after VASIL, and seeing that the catch is secure, looks up).

What!

THE GUARDIAN

IVANOFF.

That man, your friend, who calls himself Gröller-hagen, is not a German—he is a Russian—not only that, he is a Russian noble. I see it in a hundred ways that you can not.

PIKE.

Whatever he is, he helped us this afternoon. I'd trust him to the bone.

IVANOFF.

I have felt it inevitable that I should go back to Siberia. A thousand times have I felt it since I entered these rooms. (*He goes down toward windows L. leaning against wall, forearm for a moment over his eyes.*)

PIKE (*coming down, much troubled*).

I know you feel mighty bad, but perhaps—perhaps——

IVANOFF.

There is no perhaps for me. There was never any perhaps after I met Helene.

PIKE (*scratching his head*).

Helene!

THE GUARDIAN

IVANOFF.

Helene was my wife, she who sent me to Siberia, she and my dear accursed English friend.

PIKE (*thoughtfully*).

What was his name?

IVANOFF.

His name—it was Glenwood. I shall not forget that name soon.

PIKE (*sharply*).

What was he doing in Russia?

IVANOFF.

I have told you he had contracts with the ministry of finance where I met him—he supplied hydraulic machinery to the Government. Does the name Glenwood mean anything to you? Have you heard it?

PIKE

(*profoundly thoughtful, pauses, looking at*

IVANOFF *sharply*).

• No. (*Then as if to himself.*) And there must be a million Helenes in France.

IVANOFF.

I prayed God to let me meet them before I was taken. But I talk too much of myself. I wish to

THE GUARDIAN

know—you—you will be safe. They can do nothing to you, can they?

PIKE (*with assumed cheerfulness*).

Oh, I'm all right—don't worry about me.

(*Loud knock at doors up C.*)

IVANOFF (*despairingly*).

It is the Carabiniere.

PIKE

Steady. (*Looks at watch.*) Not yet. Go back. (*Points to room down R.*) We won't throw our hands into the discard until we're called. We'll keep on raising. (*Exit IVANOFF door down L., PIKE closing door after him. PIKE then goes up toward doors C. Stops with preoccupied air scratches his head and slowly says.*) "Helene." (*Opens one of the doors; MARIANO discovered bowing without. HAWCASTLE is seen seated at table in background alone.*)

PIKE (*as he opens door, to MARIANO*).

Well?

MARIANO.

Miladi Creesh—she ask you would speak with her a few minutes.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

All right! Where is she?

MARIANO.

Here, sir. (*He opens other door, disclosing LADY C. standing in stately and belligerent attitude.*)

PIKE.

Come right in, ma'am!

LADY C. *gets a slight sign from HAWCASTLE and enters. PIKE as she passes him gives HAWCASTLE a sharp glance. HAWCASTLE smiles coolly and lifts his coffee cup as if drinking to him. PIKE closes doors.*)

LADY C. (*frigidly coming down C.*).

I need scarcely inform you that this interview is not of my seeking. (*She sits R. C. stiffly.*) On the contrary it is intensely disagreeable to me.

PIKE

(*turning from doors, gives her a quiet glance, saying in kindly tone.*)

Don't you want to sit closer to the fire?

THE GUARDIAN

LADY C.

(glaring sidelong as he comes down L., ignoring his remark).

My brother-in-law feels that someone well acquainted with Miss Granger-Simpson's ambitions and her inner nature should put the case finally to you before we proceed to extremities.

PIKE *(sitting L. of her).*

Yes, ma'am!

LADY C. *(crossly).*

Don't mumble your words, if you expect me to listen to you.

PIKE *(louder, cordially).*

Go on, ma'am!

LADY C.

My brother-in-law has made us quite aware of the state of affairs, and we are quite in sympathy with my brother-in-law's attitude as to what should be done to you.

PIKE *(in tone of cordial inquiry).*

Yes, ma'am, and what's your idea of his attitude?

LADY C.

If, in the kindness of our hearts, we condone your

THE GUARDIAN

offence, we insist upon your accession to our reasonable demands.

PIKE (*sardonically, rising*).

By ten o'clock!

LADY C. (*sharply*).

Quite so.

PIKE (*leaning on the back of his chair*).

You say he told all of you? Has he told Miss Ethel?

LADY C.

It hasn't been thought proper. Young girls should be shielded from everything disagreeable.

PIKE (*gravely*).

Yes, ma'am; that's the idea that got me into this trouble.

LADY C. (*continuing*).

I say, this young lady who seems to be technically your ward is considered, by all of us who understand her, infinitely more *my* ward.

PIKE.

Yes, ma'am! Go on.

THE GUARDIAN

LADY C. (*loftily*).

She came to me something more than a year ago——

PIKE (*simply*).

Did you advertise?

LADY C. (*stung*).

I suppose it is your intention to be offensive.

PIKE (*protestingly, honestly*).

No, ma'am; I didn't mean anything. But you see I've handled all her accounts, and her payments to you——

LADY C. (*cutting him off crushingly*).

We will omit tradesman-like references! What Lord Hawcastle wished me to impress on you is not only that you will ruin yourself, but put a blight upon the life of the young lady whom you are pleased to consider your ward. We make this suggestion because we conceive that you have a preposterous sentimental interest yourself in Miss Granger-Simpson.

PIKE (*taken aback*).

Me?

THE GUARDIAN

LADY C.

Upon what other ground are we to explain your conduct?

PIKE.

You mean that I'd only stand between her and you for my own sake?

LADY C.

We can comprehend no other grounds.

PIKE (*solemnly*).

I don't believe you can! (*Slight pause.*) But you *can* comprehend that I wouldn't have any hope, can't you?

LADY C.

One never knows what these weird Americans hope. Hawcastle assures me you have some such idea, but my charge has studied under my instruction—deportment, manners, and ideals, which have lifted her above the mere American circumstance of her birth. She has ambitions. If you stand in the way of them she will wither, she will die like a caged bird. All that was sordid about her parentage, she has cast off. We have thought that we might make something out of her.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE

(*in a clear voice, but looking at her mildly*).
Make something out of her—yes, ma'am?

LADY C. (*sharply and quickly*).
Make something *better* of her. We offer her this alliance with a family which for seven hundred years——

PIKE (*sitting again, a little uneasily*).
Yes, ma'am—Creech and Agincourt—I know.

LADY C.
With a family never sullied by those low ideals of barter and exchange which are the governing impulses of your countrymen.

PIKE (*warmly*).
Seven hundred years—(*fumbling in coat pocket*).
Why, look here, Mrs. Creech (*at this LADY C. half rises from her chair with a profound shudder, sinks back again; PIKE continues*), I've got a letter right here (*takes letter from pocket*) that tells me your brother-in-law was in business—and I respect him for it—only a few years ago.

LADY C. (*angrily*).
A letter from whom? (*Scene fast.*)

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

Jim Cooley, our Vice Consul in London. Jim ain't the wisest man in the world, but he seems to have this all right, and he says Mr. Hawcastle——

LADY C. (*exploding*).

Mr. Hawcastle!

PIKE (*placatingly*).

Well, I can call a person Colonel or Cap. or Doc. or anything of that kind, but I just plain don't know how to use the kind of words you have over here for those things. They don't seem to fit my mouth somehow. Just let me run on my own way. I don't mean to hurt your feelings. Anyway, Jim says your brother-in-law was in business in Russia. (*Up to this point he has gone on rapidly, but after the word "Russia" he pauses abruptly as if startled by a sudden thought and slowly repeats.*) "In business in Russia!" (*He rises.*)

LADY C.

This is beside the point entirely!

PIKE

(*leaning on back of his chair and looking at her intently*).

It is the point! Now, between us, ain't Jim right? Ain't it the truth?

THE GUARDIAN

LADY C. (*angry and agitated*).

Since some of your vulgar American officials have been spying about——

PIKE (*with controlled excitement*).

Your brother-in-law was in business in Russia—so far, so good. (*Leans upon back of chair watching her, eager, but smiling cordially.*) I don't say he was peddling shoestrings on the corner or selling weinerwursts——

(LADY C. *gives a slight scream of indignation.*)

PIKE (*continuing*).

Probably something more hifalutin' and dignified than that. He was probably agent for a wooden butter-dish factory.

LADY C. (*rising, agitated and enraged*).

He had contracts with the Russian Government itself!

PIKE

(*staggering back and recovering himself immediately, speaking sharply, but in a voice of great agitation*).

Not for mining—not for hydraulic machines!!

THE GUARDIAN

LADY C.

And even so he protected the historic name of St. Aubyn.

PIKE (*greatly excited*).

By God, I believe you!

LADY C.

Don't mumble your words!

PIKE.

Had he ever lived at Glenwood Priory?

LADY C. (*indignantly*).

Is your mind wandering? The priory belonged to Hawcastle's mother. Can you state it's connection with the subject?

PIKE.

That's how he protected the historic name of St. Aubyn! That's the name he took—Glenwood! (*He speaks with great excitement, but appealing to her for confirmation.*)

LADY C. (*furiously*).

What of that!

PIKE (*awe-struck, solemnly*).

God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.

THE GUARDIAN

LADY C. (*testily*).

Oblige me by omitting blasphemous allusions in my presence. What answer are you prepared to make to Lord Hawcastle?

PIKE (*in a ringing voice*).

Tell your brother-in-law that he can have my answer in ten minutes—and he can come to me *here* for it! I'll give it in the presence of the young lady and her brother.

LADY C. (*turning to go up C.*).

Her brother,—certainly! He is in perfect sympathy with our attitude. As for Miss Granger-Simpson's knowing anything of this most disagreeable affair—no!

PIKE.

I beg your pardon.

LADY C.

I shall not permit her to come near here. As her chaperon I refuse. We all refuse! (*She sweeps up to doors C.*)

PIKE.

All right; refuse away.

LADY C.

I shall tell Lord Hawcastle——

THE GUARDIAN.

PIKE (*interrupting*).

Ten minutes from now and in this room. (*He has followed her up C.*)

LADY C. (*at door*).

But Miss Granger-Simpson under no condition whatever. (*Sweeps out haughtily.*)

(*PIKE closes door behind her, goes quickly to electric button over mantle up R.—not the same as used heretofore—sits at table near fire, which is supplied with stationery, and writes hurriedly. Knock at doors up C.*)

PIKE.

Come in!

(*Enter MARIANO.*)

PIKE.

Mariano, I want you to take this note to Miss Simpson. (*Quickly enclosing note in envelope and addressing it.*)

MARIANO.

The Mees Grahnger-Seempson?

PIKE.

Do you know where she is?

THE GUARDIAN

MARIANO.

She walks on the terrace alone.

PIKE.

Give it to her yourself—to no one else (*emphatically*) and do it now. (*Gives him note.*)

MARIANO.

At once, sir! (*Going*).

PIKE.

Hurry! (*Almost pushes him out of doors up C. closing door behind him. PIKE is excited but cool. His action up to this point for the most part easy and quiet, becomes quick and alert. He calls toward down R. C.*)

Ivanoff!

(*IVANOFF opens door down R. and comes out apprehensively.*)

IVANOFF (*as he enters*).

Have they come?

PIKE.

Not yet! (*coming to chair down L. C. but not sitting, speaks sharply*). Ivanoff, you prayed to

THE GUARDIAN

see your wife and your friend Glenwood before you went back to Siberia. (*scene fast*).

IVANOFF (*falling back with a cry*).

Ah!

PIKE.

If that prayer is answered through me, will you promise to remember that it's my fight?

IVANOFF (*distractedly*).

Ah! it is impossible;—you wish to play with me!

PIKE.

(*setting his hands on IVANOFF's shoulders*).

Do I look playful? (*A bugle sounds sharply off L.*)

IVANOFF (*wildly*).

The Carabiniere come for me. (*The two rush together to window down L.*)

PIKE

(*as they reach the window, thrusting IVANOFF behind him*).

Don't show yourself!

IVANOFF

(*looking out of window over PIKE's shoulder*).

THE GUARDIAN

Look! Across the street from the lamp yonder—there by the doors—the Carabiniere.

PIKE.

They've been there since this afternoon.

IVANOFF.

They are drawn up in company. (*Turning away a step and throwing up his arms in despair*). Oh, my God! they will come now!

PIKE.

Hold your horses! Not yet! (*Shading his eyes from the light of the room with one hand*). Look there—who on earth—who's that they've got with them?—Why, good Lord! it's Doc! (*astounded*).

IVANOFF.

Do you mean Herr von Gröllerhagen?

PIKE (*excitedly at window*).

That's who I mean—don't you see him?

IVANOFF (*returning to window*).

It is. Did I not tell you he was a Russian? He has betrayed me himself. (*turning from window again*) he was not satisfied that others should. (*Bitterly*) I knew I was in the wolf's throat here!

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE.

Don't you believe it? They've arrested poor old Doc. They got him as he went out.

IVANOFF (*pointing*).

No; they speak respectfully to him. They bow to him——

PIKE (*grimly*).

They'll be bowing to us in a minute. That's probably the way these colonels run you in. (*Sharp knock on doors up C.*)

PIKE

(*excitedly urging IVANOFF to door down R*).

You wait till I call you, and remember it's my fight.

IVANOFF

(*turning half hysterically*).

You *promise* before I am taken that I shall see—
(*As he cries out this door up C. opens and MARIANO appears.*)

PIKE

(*domineeringly cuts off IVANOFF*).

And don't you forget what I've been telling you—you get the sand out of that gear-box first thing to-morrow morning. (IVANOFF *whose gesture has been wild, suddenly relapses to quiet*; PIKE *fin-*

THE GUARDIAN

ishes): or I'll see that you draw your last pay Saturday night.

(IVANOFF bows meekly and exits down R., closing door after him.)

MARIANO.

Miss Grahnger-Seempson!

PIKE (*turning up C.*).

All right, Mariano!

(ETHEL enters haughtily, goes L. near fire. MARIANO exits. PIKE sees that door is closed, comes down near ETHEL and speaks in a voice that shows controlled emotion).

I'm much obliged to you for taking my note the right way. I've got some pretty good reasons for not leaving this room. (*She is icy in manner, but her hands fidget with the note he has sent her, crumpling it up.*)

ETHEL

(*sitting in chair near fire*).

Your note seemed so extraordinary urgent——

THE GUARDIAN .

PIKE

(interrupting, coming to table near her).

It had to be. Some folks who want to see me are coming here, and I want you to see *them*—here. *(He glances at door down R.)* They'd stopped you from coming if they could.

ETHEL

(holding herself very straight in her chair and looking at him).

There was no effort to prevent me.

PIKE.

No; I didn't give 'em time.

ETHEL.

May I ask to whom you refer?

PIKE *(seriously).*

The whole kit and boodle of 'em!

ETHEL

(not relaxing her coldness yet gently). .

You are inelegant, Mr. Pike.

PIKE *(drawing back to C.).*

I ain't got time to be elegant, even if I knew how.

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL.

Do you mean that my chaperon would disapprove?

PIKE (*with increasing grimness*).

I shouldn't be surprised. I reckon the whole fine flower of Europe would disapprove. "Disapprove?"—they'd *sand-bag* you to keep you away!

ETHEL (*rising quickly*).

Oh, then I can't stay. (*Moves toward doors up C.*).

PIKE

(*as he goes nearer doors than she, speaks with ring of domination*).

Yes you can, and you will, and you've got to!

ETHEL (*angrily*).

Got to! I shall not!

PIKE.

I'm your guardian and you'll do as I say. You'll obey me this once if you never do again. (*She looks at him defiantly, he faces her with determination, and continues without pause*): You'll stay here while I talk to these people, and you'll stay in spite of anything they say or do to make you go. (*Slight pause: she yields and walks back to table*

THE GUARDIAN

near fire up L. throwing note which she has crumpled in her hands on table. PIKE continues): God knows I hate to talk rough to you. I wouldn't hurt your feelings for the world, but it's come to a point where I've got to use the authority I have over you.

ETHEL

(at table, not sitting, turns to him with a renewal of her defiance).

Authority? Do you think——

PIKE *(domineeringly, interrupting).*

You'll stay here for the next twenty minutes if I have to make Crecy and Agincourt look like a Peace Conference!

(She looks at him aghast, sinks into chair by table; he continues after very slight pause, in same tone).

You and your brother have soaked up a society-column notion of life over here; you're like old Pete Delaney of Terry Hut—he got so he'd drink cold tea if there was a whiskey label on the bottle. They've fuddled you with labels, and you've come to where you're liable to get into big trouble and

THE GUARDIAN

spoil your life. I'm talking to you as the guardian your father left you and as your lawyer. It's my business to see that you know what kind of people you're dealin' with, and you'll sit there till I *show* you. As your guardian you'll be quit of me in a year. Personally, you'll be shut of me to-night, because I think I'm goin' to be put where I'll have to lead an indoor life, and can't come and talk to you, nor look after your property, either.

ETHEL (*agitated, almost in tears*).

You're bullying me! I don't see why you talk so brutally to me.

PIKE (*sadly and earnestly*).

Do you think I'd do it for anything but you?
(*Turns away immediately*).

ETHEL (*angrily*).

You are odious. (*Looks at him, quickly; he has turned away.*) Insufferable! (*She picks up the noë on table and begins to smooth it out on her knee.*)

PIKE

(*humbly, turning again toward her*).

Don't you think I know you despise me?

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL

(looks up sharply, looks down again at the note which she continues to smooth out on her knee, her lip trembles; she controls her emotion, and speaks with restraint, neither harshly nor gently).

I do not despise you; if I had staid at home, and grown up there, I should probably have been a provincial young woman playing "Sweet Genevieve" for you to-night. (PIKE gives a sharp sigh at this and turns R. She continues, lifting her voice, slightly). But my life has not been that, and you have humiliated me from the moment of your arrival here. You have made me ashamed both of you and of myself. (A note of anger comes into her voice.) And now you have some preposterous plan which will shame me again, humiliate both of us once more, before my friends, these gentlefolk.

(A loud noise without up C. LADY C's. voice is heard shouting.)

PIKE (dryly).

I think the gentlefolk are here. *(They both turn toward up C. Doors up C. are thrown open, LADY C. hurriedly enters, with MME. DE C. and HORACE, followed by ALMERIC.)*

THE GUARDIAN

LADY C.

(as she enters, coming toward ETHEL, followed by the others).

My dear child, what are you doing in this dreadful place with this dreadful person. You must know it is improper.

MME. DE C. *(at same time).*

My dear, les convenances!

HORACE *(at same time).*

Ethel; I'm extremely surprised, come away at once!

ALMERIC.

Oh, I say, you know, really, Miss Ethel! You can't stay here, you know, *can* you?

PIKE

(in cool but dominating voice).

I'm her guardian; she's here by my authority; she'll stay by my authority.

(They group bustlingly L. in semicircle above ETHEL, who has not risen, and is looking at PIKE. They turn to PIKE indignantly as he speaks. At same time LORD HAW. appears in open doors up C. and bows sardonically to PIKE.)

THE GUARDIAN

HAW (*suavely*).

Ah, good evening, Mr. Pike! (*Comes down C. smiling.*)

HORACE

(*to HAW impulsively as latter comes down*).

Lord Hawcastle, will you insist upon Ethel's leaving? It's quite on the cards we shall have a disagreeable scene here.

HAW (*smiling*).

I see no occasion for it; we're here simply for Mr. Pike's answer, which I believe will occasion something so different from what you call a disagreeable scene that we might describe it as a general rejoicing. (*PIKE goes up to doors C. which HAW has left open. HAW down C. addresses others who are grouped L., continuing without pause.*) Mr Pike, in spite of the eccentricities in which he chooses to veil himself, is a man of extremely good sense. (*significantly, as he turns toward PIKE.*) He knows where we stand and we know where he stands.

PIKE (*with a grim smile*).

I reckon you're right so far.

HAW (*continuing*).

And his answer will be yes.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*with quiet emphasis*).

But you're wrong (*very short pause as he closes doors and turns*)—there!

HAW

(*to HORACE, with sudden increase of seriousness, somewhat sinister, speaking quickly*).

Perhaps you are right, Mr. Granger-Simpson. Painful things may be done. Better the young lady were spared them. Take your sister away. (*He motions HORACE toward the door.*)

ALMERIC

(*quickly and earnestly to HORACE*).

For God's sake do—it may be quite rowdy.

LADY C. (*to ETHEL at same time*).

My dear, you positively must!

HORACE.

Ethel, I command you!

(*Last three speeches almost simultaneous. ETHEL, troubled, half rises as if to go.*)

PIKE

(*coming down a few steps from door, imperiously to ETHEL*).

You stay right where you are!

THE GUARDIAN

ALMERIC (*angrily*).

Oh, I say!

LADY C.

(*at same time with scream of indignation*).

Oh, the lynching ruffian!

HORACE.

Ethel, do you mean to let this fellow dictate to you?

ETHEL

(*breathlessly and loudly, as if resistance were hopeless*).

But—he says I *must*! (*sinks back into her chair*.)

PIKE

(*coming down C. to HAWCASTLE, who is R. C., all the others L. C. and L.*).

You're here for an answer, you say. (PIKE *speaks passionately*.)

HAW (*on the defensive and vicious*).

Yes! (*Scene sharp and fast*.)

PIKE.

An answer to what?

THE GUARDIAN

HAW

(painfully resuming his suavity).

An answer to our request that you accede to the wishes of that young lady.

PIKE.

And if I don't, what are you going to do?

HORACE.

Ethel, you must go!

MME. DE C. *(at same time).*

This man is an Apache. *(pronounced Apash.)*

LADY C. *(simultaneously).*

Barbarian!

PIKE

(almost without pause and continuing in same tone).

I'll leave it to you to tell her.

HAW.

A gentleman would spare her that.

PIKE *(with emphasis).*

I won't! Speak out! Why do you come here sure of the answer you want?

THE GUARDIAN

HAW (*intensely annoyed*).

Tut, tut! (*He crosses to L. near ETHEL, leaving PIKE R. C., all the rest L. C. and L.*)

LADY C.

Don't mumble your words!

PIKE.

I'll make it even plainer than you like.

HORACE.

I protest against this.

ALMERIC (*at same time*).

Throw the rotter out of the window.

PIKE

(*Continuing and now addressing particularly ETHEL*).

This afternoon I tried to help a poor devil—a broken-down Russian running away from Siberia, where he'd been for nine years. (*She rises, her eyes eagerly meet his, as she comes down L. C. He addresses her alone, continuing without pause.*) A poor weak thing, hounded like you've seen a rat in the gutter by dogs and bootblacks. Some of

THE GUARDIAN

your friends here saw us bring him into this apartment; they know we've got him here now. If I don't agree to hand over you and seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars of the money John Simpson made—it means that the man I have tried to help goes back to rot in Siberia and I go to an Italian jail for two years, or as much longer as they can make it. What's more, the man whose rooms these are has already been arrested, because I wolfed him into helping me, and he goes with me—that's the three of us—unless I hand you and your fortune— (*he makes a sweeping gesture, indicating HAWCASTLE, LADY C., ALMERIC and MME. DE C. who stand together, grouped from L. C. to L.*) over to them!

HAW (*violently, but trying to smile*).

Nonsense!

LADY C.

Quite a lunatic!

MME. DE C. (*furiously*).

Apache chameau, cornichon!

HORACE (*to ETHEL*).

I told you to go!

THE GUARDIAN

ALMERIC.

He's getting nasty!

(These speeches almost simultaneous.)

ETHEL

(lifting her hand to quiet them and stepping toward PIKE, speaks to him indignantly).

I knew that you had only a further humiliation in store for me——

HAW

(following her and trying to interrupt).

But my dear——

ETHEL *(with dignity).*

No—you need make no denial for yourselves—surely you know that that is not necessary with me. *(To PIKE, haughtily.)* Do you think I would believe that an English noble would stoop.——

PIKE

(interrupting, with a passion of indignation).

Stoop! Why ten years ago in St. Petersburg there was a poor revolutionist who, in his crazy patriotism, took government money for the cause he believed in. He made the mistake of keeping that money in his house, when this man *(pointing*

THE GUARDIAN

his hand outstretched to HAWCASTLE) knew it was there. He also made the mistake of having a wife that this man (*still pointing to HAWCASTLE*) coveted and stole—as he coveted and stole the money. (*with a denunciatory gesture at HAWCASTLE*) Oh, he made a good job of it. Don't think that to-night is the first time he has given information to the police. He did it then, and the husband went to Siberia——

HAW (*staggered and enraged*).

A dastardly slander!

PIKE

(*continuing, in ringing voice*).

——and he'll do it again to-night. I go to an Italian jail (*he suddenly swings his outstretched hand to point to MME. DE C., continuing without pause*) and by the living God, that same poor devil of a husband goes back to Siberia!

(MME. DE C. *with an ejaculation of horror and fright staggers back.*)

HORACE

(*stepping indignantly forward and speaking violently*).

Another such brutality on your part——

THE GUARDIAN

ALMERIC (*angrily, at same time*).
Let's throw him out.

HAW (*in extreme agitation*).
It's a ghastly lie! (*to ALMERIC*) Get the police.

(ALMERIC starts toward doors up C. At same time
HAW and HORACE start toward PIKE threat-
eningly.)

PIKE
(*going toward door down R.*)
You came for your answer. Here it is. (ALMERIC
halts) I give him up.

PIKE
(*as he throws open door down R. calls sharply*).
Ivanoff! (HORACE and HAW halt quickly, HAW-
CASTLE falling back. MME. DE C. who is down L.
C. utters a slight scream at the word Ivanoff. She
stares into room R. as PIKE throws open the door,
then, horrified, retreats slowly backward, L. IVAN-
OFF appears in doorway R.

HAWCASTLE
(*falling back another step L. C.*)
Damnation! (*He seizes a chair as a weapon, hold-
ing it as if to defend himself. PIKE has advanced*

THE GUARDIAN

to IVANOFF, *L. of him, throws his right arm across IVANOFF'S breast, as if to prevent him from advancing farther. ETHEL and HORACE amazed L. C. LADY C. L. of them. Picture. IVANOFF lifts both clenched fists above his head, taking a step toward HAWCASTLE and MME. DE C. as if he felt the power to crush both of them in his naked hands. PIKE watching him intently as if ready to prevent violence. MME. DE C. who has been L. of HAWCASTLE, crosses in front of HAWCASTLE with a shuddering cry, not loud, falls on her knees in an attitude of fright and abasement, a pace L. of IVANOFF.)*

MME. DE C.

Ivan, Oh, Mother of God, Ivan! Don't kill me—
ne me tue pas, ne me tue pas!

IVANOFF *shudders with weakness, trembles violently, collapses into chair, she still at his feet. IVANOFF sobbing.*

HORACE

(starting toward her in extreme agitation).
Helene!

PIKE

(one hand on IVANOFF'S shoulder, sternly to

HORACE).

You keep back, she's his wife. *(To ETHEL, and*

THE GUARDIAN

pointing to HAWCASTLE.) And *that* is his best friend!

HAW.

It's a lie!

PIKE.

Then what are you doing with that chair?

HAW

(frantically, throwing down the chair, as he glances toward doors up C.).

I deny it—I never saw the man before in my life.

PIKE

(grimly, with a gesture toward MME. DE C.)
The lady seems to recognize him.

HAW

(moving up C., going backward, his face toward IVANOFF, as if on the defensive).

Almeric, go for the police. Call them quickly!
(His voice loud and hoarse.)

MME. DE C.

(springs to her feet protesting).
No—no—I can't!

ALMERIC *who has started up C. halts uncertainly.*

THE GUARDIAN

HAW (*violently to ALMERIC*).

Pay no attention to her.

PIKE

(*with his hand on IVANOFF's shoulder*).

Call them in—we're ready. (*To ETHEL.*) But I want *you* always to remember, that I considered it cheap at the price.

ETHEL *in an agony of shame turns from him. At same time MME. DE C., never taking her eyes from IVANOFF's face, and showing great fear, moves back up to L. C. near HAWCASTLE, who has not relinquished the chair; though he lets it rest upon the floor, he keeps one hand upon it. HORACE, at end of HAWCASTLE's last speech, has thrown open the doors up C., and stands in the conservatory hall at back, looking off R. No pause. Scene sharp and fast.*

ALMERIC

(*at conclusion of PIKE's speech to ETHEL, calling off R.*).

Tell that officer to bring his men in here!

At same time VASIL enters briskly up C. from off L., passing behind ALMERIC, who does not see

THE GUARDIAN

him until he speaks. RIBIERE enters immediately after from same direction and touches button near door. A valet enters up R., takes VASILY'S coat and hat; no pause in dialogue for this.

VASILY

(in loud clear voice as he enters).

There will be no arrests to-night, my friends. *(General sensation. ALMERIC turns, startled; IVANOFF rises; PIKE keeps hand on his shoulder. PIKE and IVANOFF down R.; VASILY, RIBIERE, and valet, R. C., MME. DE C. and HAW, L. C.; LADY C. a little up of them; HORACE and ETHEL R.)*

HAW

(violently to ALMERIC and sharp on VASILY'S speech).

Do as I say. This man *(meaning VASILY)* goes, too.

VASILY *(curtly).*

The officer is not there, the Carabiniere have been withdrawn. *(To PIKE, gravely and rapidly.)* For your sake I have relinquished my incognito.

PIKE *(astounded).*

I didn't know you had one.

THE GUARDIAN

VASIL (to HAWCASTLE).

The man Ivanoff is in my custody.

HAW (*frightened, but violent*).

By whose authority? Do you know that you are speaking to the Earl of Hawcastle?

RIBIERE

(*in ringing voice, advancing a step*).

More respectful, sir! You are addressing his highness, the Grand Duke Vasili of Russia.

HAWCASTLE *falls back stricken*.

PIKE (*thunderstruck*).

Respectful! Think of what *I've* called him!

VASIL

(*quickly, unsmilingly, and with dignity*).

My friend, it has been refreshing. (*To RIBIERE.*) Ribiere, I shall take Ivanoff's statement in writing. Bring him with you. (*The valet crosses to door up R. quickly, holding it open and bowing.* VASIL at conclusion of his last speech turns on his heel, curtly, and goes rapidly out up R. RIBIERE at same time touches IVANOFF on shoulder, indicating that he must follow VASIL. IVAN-

THE GUARDIAN

OFF *starts up with RIBIERE; as he comes up MME. DE C. shrinks back with low exclamation of fear.*)

IVANOFF (*hoarsely to her*).

I would not touch you—not even to strangle you. (*With outstretched hand, pointing to HAWCASTLE.*) But God will let me pay my debt to the Earl of Hawcastle. (*Goes rapidly out up R. with RIBIERE. ETHEL down L. C. utters, at conclusion of IVANOFF'S speech, a low cry of horror, and leans toward HORACE as if faint. HORACE pust his arm around her.*)

HAW

(*immediately, in hoarse whisper to ALMERIC, who has come L. C.*)

Go to her, you fool!

ALMERIC

(*appealingly, as he comes quickly down to ETHEL*).
Ethel!

PIKE

(*in a quiet but imperious voice to ALMERIC*).
You let her alone!

ETHEL

(*turning to PIKE, speaks half-brokenly, but loudly and quickly, at the same time turning from*

THE GUARDIAN

HORACE *and taking a step or two near PIKE, and looking mournfully into his eyes.)*

No; he has the right. I gave him my promise when I thought it an honor to bear his name. Now that you have shown me that it is a shame to bear it, the promise is only more sacred. The shame is not his fault. (ALMERIC *coming behind her, takes her hand; her face shows great suffering; she stands facing PIKE, three-fourths turned from ALMERIC, and after very short pause finishes falteringly to PIKE.*) You—you—want me to be honorable, don't you?

HAWCASTLE *up L. has uttered a subdued exclamation of triumph at ETHEL's words, "The promise is only the more sacred." He seizes LADY C.'s arm, both their faces showing great reaction to triumph, as they lean forward, watching ETHEL eagerly. MME. DE C. is up L. C. near doors, her back to audience, her attitude despairing. HORACE R., watching with angry and miserable face. PIKE and ETHEL face each other, during a pause, then he turns slowly to R., while her head drops upon her breast, her face showing great suffering.)*

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*slowly, and with great sorrow*).

Daniel Voorhees Pike, God help you! (*He sinks into a chair in an attitude of complete dejection.*)
You're an old fool. (*Picture.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT IV

The morning of the next day. Scene same as Act I., except that large table down R. has been removed, and only one tea-table stands down L. Upon the steps leading to doors up L. is a pile of bags, hat-boxes, and rugs. HAWCASTLE, in tweed travelling suit and cap, is directing a porter who is adjusting a strap on a travelling bag. ALMERIC, in white flannels, Panama hat, carrying light stick, enters from double doors up L., smoking cigarette. Leans carelessly against balustrade at top of stoop.

ALMERIC.

Ah, Governor; see you're moving!

HAW.

I may. (*His manner is nervous, apprehensive, and wary. Porter touches cap and exits into hotel.*) It depends.

ALMERIC.

Depends? Mme. de Champigny took the morning boat to Naples, and your trunks are gone. Shouldn't say that looked much like dependin'.

THE GUARDIAN

HAW (*nervously*).

It does, though, with that devilish convict——

ALMERIC (*interrupting*).

Oh, but I say, Governor, you're not in a funk about him! You could bowl him over with a finger.

HAW . . .

(*nervously, glancing over his shoulder*).

Not if he had what he didn't have last night, or I shouldn't be here to-day.

ALMERIC.

You don't think the beggar'd be taking a shot at you?

HAW (*fastening clasp of hat-box*).

I don't know what the crazy fool mightn't do.

ALMERIC

(*coming down steps and going to C.*).

But, you know, he's really quite as much in custody as you could wish. That Vasilivitch chap has got him fast enough.

LADY C., *same costume as in Act I., enters down L., stands near L. C.; they do not notice her.*

THE GUARDIAN

HAW (*sharply*).

The Grand Duke Vasili has the reputation of being a romantic fool. I don't know what moment he may decide to let Ivanoff loose.

LADY C. (*with triumphant indignation*).

Then I have the advantage over you, Hawcastle. He's just done it.

HAW (*startled*).

What?

LADY C. (*continuing*).

Got him a pardon from Russia by telegraph.

HAW.

You don't mean that!

LADY C.

Ethel has just told me.

HAW.

My God! (*Springs forward and touches bell on wall near doors up L.*)

LADY C.

An outrage! Our plans all so horribly upset——

THE GUARDIAN

HAW (*turning and coming down steps*).
No, they're not. (*Scene very sharp and fast.*)

MARIANO *appears in doorway.*

HAW (*without pause*).
Mariano, I'm off for Naples. Sharp's the word!

MARIANO (*quickly*).
It is too late for the boat, Milor. You must drive to Castellamare for the train.

HAW.
There's a carriage waiting for me at the gate yonder (*points off L.*). Get these things into it quick—quick! (MARIANO *beckons porters from off L. Porters enter sharply and carry bags, etc., off L. Meanwhile, HAWCASTLE, without pause, continues rapidly and in excited voice, to ALMERIC and LADY CREECH, coming down a few steps L. C.*) You must see it through, you mustn't let the thing fail; what's more you've got to hurry it, just as if I were here. This girl gave her word last night that she'd stick.

LADY C.
But she's behaving very peculiarly this morning. Outrageously would be nearer it.

THE GUARDIAN

HAW.

How?

LADY C.

Shedding tears over this Ivanoff's story. What's more she has sent that dreadful Pike person to him with assistance.

HAW.

What sort of assistance?

LADY C.

Money; I don't know how much, but I'm sure it was a lot.

ALMERIC (*with a sudden inspiration*).

By Jove! Buying the beggar off, perhaps, to keep him from making a scandal for us.

HAW (*excitedly*).

By God! that's what she's trying to do!

LADY C.

Then why do you go?

HAW.

Because I'm not sure she can. (*Going to steps*.) Wire me at the Bertolini, Naples. (*Turning at stoop*.) This shows she means to stick.

THE GUARDIAN

LADY C.

For the sake of her promise.

HAW (*emphatically*).

Yes, and for the sake of the name. (*Exit up L. very rapidly.*)

PIKE *enters from R., stands near wings down R., looking after HAWCASTLE. He wears same trousers as in first act, with rather longish sack coat of same material; neat waistcoat, hat same as in Act I. Is smoking cigar. ALMERIC at C., looking after HAWCASTLE. LADY C. same. Short pause.*)

PIKE (*slowly and thoughtfully*).

Your pa seems in a hurry.

LADY C. and ALMERIC *turn, startled. LADY C. haughtily sweeps up and exits up L.*

ALMERIC (*cheerfully*).

Oh, yes, possibly—he's off, you know—to catch a train. He's so easily worried by trifles. (*As he speaks he saunters R. They cross each other. PIKE comes to chair by small table L. C., rests his elbows on table, as he sits, and looks at ALMERIC with a sort of chuckling admiration.*)

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*amiably*).

Well, you don't worry—not too easy; do you, son?

ALMERIC (*coldly*).

Oh, one finds nothing in particular this morning to bother one.

PIKE (*as if assenting*).

Nothing at all.

ALMERIC.

Not I. Of course Miss Ethel is standing to her promise.

PIKE

(*grimly, more to himself than to ALMERIC*).

Yes, she is.

ALMERIC (*continuing*).

The Governor only thought it best to clear out a bit until we were certain that she manages to draw off this convict chap.

PIKE (*puzzled*).

Draw him off?

ALMERIC.

What you Americans call "affixing him," isn't it?

PIKE (*kindly*).

"Affixing him?" Don't try to talk United States, my son. Just tell me in your own way.

THE GUARDIAN

ALMERIC.

She's been giving him money, hasn't she? You took it to him yourself, didn't you? Naturally, we understood what it was for. She's trying to keep the beggar quiet.

PIKE (*quietly*).

So that's what she sent this poor cuss the money for, was it?

ALMERIC.

Why, what other reason could there be?

PIKE.

Well, you know I sort of gathered it was because she was sorry for him—thought he'd been wronged; but, of course, I'm stupid.

ALMERIC.

Well, *ra-ther*. I don't know that it was so necessary for her to hush him up, but it showed a very worthy intention in her, didn't?

PIKE (*slowly*).

Would you mind my being present when you thank her for it?

ALMERIC.

Shouldn't in the least if I intended thanking her.

THE GUARDIAN

It simply shows she considers herself already one of us. It's perfectly plain—why it's plain as you are. (*Chuckles.*)

PIKE.

And that's why you're not worrying?

ALMERIC.

Worrying? My good man, do you mind excusing me. I saw a most likely pup yesterday; I'm afraid some other chap'll snatch him up before I do. I should have taken him at once. Good morning! (*Exits R., with a sprightly gait and a wave of his stick.*)

PIKE *sits gazing after him, shaking his head with half-admiring, half-sardonic chuckle. Looks front, wipes his forehead, and stares again after ALMERIC. Enter ETHEL up L. She wears a pretty morning dress and hat; her face is very sad.*

ETHEL (*coming down L. C.*).

I hear that Lord Hawcastle has left the hotel.

PIKE

(*rising, resting one hand on back of chair, speaks dryly.*)

Yes; I saw him go.

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL.

He left very quickly?

PIKE.

He did seem to be forgetting the scenery.

ETHEL (*decidedly*).

He was afraid of Ivanoff.

PIKE (*dryly*).

I shouldn't be surprised. (*Turns up C.*)

ETHEL.

Has Ivanoff followed him?

PIKE.

Not yet; I think he is looking for you.

ETHEL.

Why does he wish to see me? (*Turns R. C.*)

MARIANO *enters up L.*

MARIANO.

Monsieur Ivanoff, to say good-bye, if Mademoiselle permit.

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*at steps*).

That's all right, Mariano; Mademoiselle permits. (*Exit MARIANO up L. quickly, PIKE goes up steps, turns, and looks across to ETHEL; she bows her head gravely in acquiescence; IVANOFF enters up L., passing PIKE.*)

PIKE

(*detaining him by placing hand on his shoulder, as the latter reaches the step below him*).

I'll say good-bye to you at your carriage outside, old man. I'll see you off. (*Exit up L. after IVANOFF has quickly pressed his hand.*)

IVANOFF

(*going down R. C., bows deeply to ETHEL. He wears same coat and trousers as in Act III., white collar, cuffs, and black tie, plain Italian cloak and black felt hat; clean shaven*).

Dear, kind young lady, your guardian has known how to make me accept the help you granted. He has known how because his heart is like yours, full of goodness. I shall go to London and teach the languages. There I shall be able to repay you—(*hesitates as if ashamed*)—at least what you have given me in money.

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL (*earnestly*).

Professor Ivanoff, are you following Lord Hawcastle and your wife?

IVANOFF

(*with emotion, yet controlling himself*).

My wife exists no longer for me. When I saw her last night so bitterly afraid of me I only knew that I never wished to see her again.

ETHEL.

But Lord Hawcastle?

IVANOFF (*with conviction*).

Him, I shall drag down with these hands.

ETHEL.

You mean you will follow him till you find him?

IVANOFF.

No, no, no! I could not hurt his body—I would not. The suffering of a man is here—here! (*Strikes his clenched fist on his temples.*) What is it he has of most value in this world? It is that name of his—that proud name. Except for that, he is poor, and that I shall destroy. I shall make his name a sounding for all that is shameful and despised, and I shall do that in his own country,

THE GUARDIAN

in England. He shall not go in his club, he shall not go amongst his own class, and in the streets they will point at him. His story and mine shall be made—Ah, but too well known! Do not think me helpless to do that. There are Russians in London to-day who belong to my society, friends of mine not without influence, not without power; the world will know that each word I say is true, and that name of which he and all his family have been so proud, it shall be disgrace and dishonor to bear.

ETHEL (*choking*).

Already it is that.

IVANOFF (*more calmly*).

But I forget myself. You think, perhaps, I am revengeful, wicked—I talk so ugly.

ETHEL

(*sinking into chair R. C., her face turned away from him, but at the same time stretching out her hand to him*).

It is not in my heart to blame you. Your wrongs have given you the right.

IVANOFF (*kissing her hand*).

God bless you always! (*Exit quickly up L.*)

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL *sits in despairing attitude; music off R.,*
“*Fisherman’s Song,*” *mandolins and voices.*

LADY C. (*off R., after a few bars*).
Not a centesimo for you. Go to the charitable organizations! (*Appears in wings R., waving her fan admonishingly toward R., where music continues. She shouts loudly.*) Go to the charitable organizations! (*Comes panting to chair L. C.*) Natives!

(*Voice from wings R. mockingly.*)
Bellissima Signora!

LADY C. (*sitting panting*).
Ethel, I have something to tell you.

ETHEL (*coldly*).
What is it?

LADY C.
Lord Hawcastle wished me to say au revoir for him.

ETHEL.
Why didn’t he say it himself?

LADY C.
He was called away—urgent matters of business in London.

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL (*wearily*).

Oh, I know, I know!

LADY C. (*continuing*).

Though we expect to catch him by telegraph at Naples and bring him back, my dear,—(*benevolently*)—bring him back. (*Beamingly and significantly*.) Of course you know better than I how that will come out—about this convict wretch, I mean.

ETHEL (*coldly and wearily*).

I don't understand you.

LADY C.

It is beside the point. (*Loudly and sweetly*.) Lord Hawcastle wished me to tell you that now, more than ever, he hopes you will press matters with your guardian, and insist upon an immediate marriage with Almeric.

ETHEL (*wretchedly*).

Since it must be, it had better be at once. That it is a point of honor has shaken my guardian.

LADY C.

Naturally! Creature that he is, even he must feel

THE GUARDIAN

that he should atone for the frightful way in which he behaved last night. Dreadful person!

ETHEL (*coldly and rising*).

If you please, we will not speak of him in that way. (*Crosses to L. C. near tea-table, her back to LADY C.*)

LADY C. (*shocked and angry*).

You mean you object to my calling that dreadful person a dreadful person?

ETHEL

(*her back still to LADY C., in a steady voice, somewhat louder*).

I not only object to it; I will not permit it.

LADY C.

(*beginning to tremble violently with rage and fear*).

Don't mumble your words, Ethel!

ETHEL

(*same attitude, voice clearer and louder*).

I say no one shall speak disrespectfully of my guardian in my presence.

THE GUARDIAN

LADY C. (*enraged and amazed*).

Disrespectfully? You won't permit—— Do you realize that you are speaking of a person whom you, no longer ago than yesterday, yourself called a preposterous savage?

ETHEL (*turning to her and blazing out*).

He is the best man I ever—I have ever known, the wisest, truest, and bravest.

LADY C. *screams with horror and rises.*

ETHEL

(*continues with dignity, in ringing voice*).

You must understand that no one who speaks slightingly of him can continue to call herself my friend.

LADY C. (*greatly agitated and enraged*).

Do you realize that you are forbidding me, your chaperon, to use the term “dreadful person”? Upon my word, how is society to repel its vulgar invaders! I warn you that any attempt to dictate to me concerning such terms may result in my leaving my post and abandoning you.

ETHEL (*clearly and coldly*).

Very well—I think that may be best. (*Turns back*

THE GUARDIAN

to L. C. LADY C. screams, shows signs of hysteria and fainting. HORACE enters up L. He wears dark morning clothes, a black tie, high black ribbon round his straw hat.)

LADY C.

Oh, that I should live to hear such ingratitude, after all I have given for you—all I have sacrificed.

HORACE *comes down L.*

LADY C. (*appealing to him tragically*).

Do you hear what your sister says? Have I lived this long to be addressed as a servant? (*She falls weeping in chair R. C.*)

HORACE (*L. ruefully*).

Sorry, Lady Creech, but you needn't appeal to me. I've had a most awful shaking-up, and I'm almost thinking of going back home with Mr. Pike. I rather think he's about right in his ideas. You know we abused him, not only for himself, but for his vulgar friend—yet his vulgar friend turned out to be a Grand Duke—(*pauses with a slow, plaintive gesture*), and look at what our friends turned out to be. (*Speaks the last clause with*

THE GUARDIAN

almost tragic plaintiveness. Exits moodily door facing front down L.)

LADY C.

Both against me! *Think* what I have given up to form you, to introduce you, and make this brilliant match for you!

PIKE *enters up L., stands on stoop.*

LADY C.

(more hysterical, continues to ETHEL).

It's plain you wish me to go; you do not *permit* me to call your guardian a dreadful person. Why, the creature's bewitched you. Anyone hearing you would believe you thought him the archangel Michael. *(Shrewishly.)* Things will be different in a few days. Even if I cease to be your chaperon, I shall be your aunt, and you shall learn——

PIKE *(placatingly, coming toward her).*

Now—Mrs. Creech!

LADY C.

(turns upon him with a convulsive shudder, glares at him. Explosively).

Dreadful person! *(Sweeps out quickly down L.)*

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*meditatively, looking after her*).
Forefront of battle, Crecy and Agincourt!

ETHEL (*L.*).

Ah, please don't! (*She crosses him to R.*).

PIKE

(*looks at her with a puzzled and troubled smile.*
Sits by table L. C., rests elbow on table, con-
tinues to look at her, speaks quietly).

I never did know about Mythology. Who is this archangel Michael she spoke of? Do they say anything bad about him?

ETHEL

(*down R., eyes downcast, speaks gently in a troubled voice, as if making a confession*).

No. (*She turns and walks slowly to balustrade back up R. He sits as before, watching her.*)

PIKE

(*with faint quaver of feeling in his voice*).
Do they say anything very good about him?

ETHEL (*in same tone as before*).

Yes. (*She stands with back three-quarters to him looking down over balustrade.*)

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE

That'll be mighty sweet to remember when I'm back home again.

ETHEL.

When you're home again I hope you will forget everything I've ever said.

PIKE (*sadly*).

Somehow it doesn't look to me as if I very likely would.

ETHEL

(*impulsively—coming toward him*).

Oh, yes, you will! All those unkind things I've said to you——

PIKE.

Oh, I'll forget *those* easy.

ETHEL

(*going on eagerly, but almost tearfully*).

And the other things, too, when you're once more amongst your kind, good home folks you like so well—and probably there's one among them that you'll be so glad to get back to you'll hardly know you've been away—an unworldly girl (*she falters*),—one that doesn't need to be cured—Oh! of all sorts of follies—a kind girl, one who's been

THE GUARDIAN

always sweet to you. (*Turns away from him.*)
I can see her—she wears a white muslin and waits
by the gate for you at twilight (*turns to him*
again)—isn't she like that?

PIKE (*shaking his head gravely*).

No; not like that.

ETHEL.

But there is some one there?—some one that you've
cared for?

PIKE (*sadly*).

Well, she's only been there in a way. I've had her
picture on my desk for a good while. Sometimes
when I go home in the evening she kind of seems
to be there. I bought a homey old house up on
Main Street, you know, it's the house you were
born in. It's kind of lonesome sometimes, and
then I get to thinking that she's there, sitting
at an old piano, that used to be my mother's, and
singing to me——

ETHEL (*smiling sorrowfully*).

Singing "Sweet Genevieve"?

PIKE.

Yes—that's my favorite. But then I come to and
I find it ain't so, no voice comes to me, and I

THE GUARDIAN

find there ain't anybody but me (*swallows painfully*), and it's so funny that even (*turns away*) Jim Cooley can write me letters making fun of it.

ETHEL (*hurriedly, breathlessly*).

You'll find her some day—you'll find some one to fulfill that vision, and I shall think of you in your old house among the beech trees. I shall think of you often with her, listening to her voice in the twilight. And I shall be far away from that sensible, kindly life—keeping the promise that I have made (*falters*), and living out my destiny.

PIKE (*gravely*).

What is that destiny?

ETHEL (*quickly*).

I am bound to Almeric in his misfortune, I am bound to him *by* his misfortune! (*She goes on with a sorrowful eagerness.*) He has to bear a name that will be a by-word of disgrace, and it is my duty to help him bear it, to help him make it honorable again; to inspire him in the struggle that lies before him to rise above it by his own efforts, to make a career for himself; to make the world forget the disgrace of his father in his own triumphs—in the product of his own work——

THE GUARDIAN

PIKE (*aghast*).

Work!

ETHEL (*in same tone as before*).

Oh, I am all American to-day. No matter how humbly he begins, it will be a beginning, and no matter what it costs me I must be by his side helping him, with all my energy and strength. Can you challenge that? Isn't it true?

PIKE.

I can't deny it—that's what any good and brave woman ought to feel.

ETHEL (*continuing rapidly*).

And since it has to be done, it must be done at once. I haven't seen Almeric since last night; I must see him now.

PIKE (*grimly, looking R.*).

He's not here just now. (*HORACE enters down L., stands in doorway, unobserved, listening.*)

ETHEL.

I've shirked facing him to-day. He has always been so light, and gay, I have dreaded to see him bending under this blow, shamed and overcome.

THE GUARDIAN

Now it is my duty to see him, to show him how he can hold up his head in spite of it!

PIKE.

I agree, it's your duty——

ETHEL (*eagerly, but tremulously*).

That means that you—as my guardian—think I am right?

PIKE (*quickly*).

I agree to it, I said.

PIKE *R. C.* ETHEL *L. C.* *Scene fast.*

ETHEL (*more excited*).

Then that must mean that you consent——

PIKE.

It does—I give my consent to your marriage.

ETHEL

(*shocked and frightened in spite of herself*).

You do?

PIKE (*decidedly*).

I place it in your hands.

THE GUARDIAN

HORACE

(vehemently, coming across toward R.).

I protest against this. She's talking like a romantic school-girl. And I for one won't bear it and I won't allow it.

ETHEL.

Too late—he's consented! *(With a half-choked sudden sob, she runs off down L.)*

HORACE *(turning furiously on PIKE).*

I tell you I shall not permit her to throw herself away!

PIKE *(gravely).*

Look here—who's the guardian of this girl?

HORACE.

A magnificent guardian you are! You came here to protect her from something you thought rotten—now we all know it's rotten, you hand her over! *(Turns with short bitter laugh, walks up stage, comes back.)* By Jove! I shouldn't be surprised if you consent to the settlement, too!

PIKE *(solemnly).*

My son, I shouldn't be surprised if I did.

THE GUARDIAN

HORACE (*with exclamation of rage*).

Is the world topsy-turvy? Have I gone crazy?
(*With accusing finger pointed at PIKE.*) I'll bet
my soul that'll disgust her as much as it does me!

PIKE.

My son, I shouldn't be surprised if it would.

HORACE

(*staring at him in astonishment, backing a step*).
By the Lord, but you play a queer game, Mr.
Pike!

PIKE.

Oh, I'm jest crossing the Rubicon. Your father
used to have a saying: "If you're going to cross
the Rubicon, cross it. Don't wade out to the middle
and *stand* there, you only get hell from both
banks." (*Turns up, and stands looking off R.*)

Enter LADY C. from down L.

LADY C. (*testily*).

Mr. Granger-Simpson, have you seen my nephew?

HORACE (*L. C.*).

No; I've rather avoided that, if you don't mind
my saying so.

THE GUARDIAN

ALMERIC'S *voice is heard off R.*, "Come along!
There's a good fellow!"

LADY C.

Isn't that Almeric?

PIKE.

Yes, ma'am! (*To HORACE.*) Your sister wants to see him—now's a good time. Go ask her for me if she'll come right away.

HORACE, *with a glance over his shoulder toward R. and a shrug, exit door down L.* ETHEL *almost immediately comes out. Stands near chair down L.*

ETHEL.

Is he here?

PIKE.

He's here, poor fellow, shamed and overcome, bending under the blow.

ALMERIC *heard whistling off R.* ETHEL, *down L., gazes with horror off R. An instant before ALMERIC enters, she turns and leans against wall facing front, down L., her back toward R.*

THE GUARDIAN

ALMERIC (*before he enters*).

Mariano, Mariano—I say Mariano! (*Enters carrying a fox terrier pup, stops R., near wings, by LADY C., continuing enthusiastically.*) I say, Aunt, ain't he rippin'? Lucky I got there just as I did—a bounder wanted to buy him five minutes later. (*MARIANO enters from hotel.*) Mariano, do you think you could be trusted to wash him?—tepid water, you know, and mind he doesn't take cold, and just a little milk afterwards—nothing else but milk, you understand—you be deuced careful, I mean to say.

MARIANO.

Very well, sir. (*Quickly takes pup, crosses up L., and exits.*)

LADY C. (*crossly*).

Almeric, really, there are more important things, you know. (*PIKE comes to LADY C. and ALMERIC R.*)

ALMERIC.

But you don't seem to realize I might have missed him altogether. I think I'm rather to be congratulated, you know. *What?*

PIKE (*in low but significant voice*).

I think so, too. (*With a full-arm gesture indicating ETHEL.*) I have given my consent, my son.

THE GUARDIAN

LADY C. (*hurriedly*).

And the settlement?

PIKE.

I consent to the settlement also—everything.

ETHEL *hears nothing of this.*

LADY C.

(*greatly relieved and overjoyed, starting toward*
ETHEL).

Ethel, my dear!

ALMERIC (*cheerfully*).

I told you it would all be plain sailing, Aunty.
There was nothing to worry about.

LADY C. (*continuing to* ETHEL).

All shall be forgiven, my child. I am too pleased,
too overjoyed in your good fortune—(ETHEL
droops rather drearily into chair down L.)—to re-
member any little bickerings between us. The sky
has cleared wonderfully. Everything is settled.

ETHEL.

Yes: it's all over; my guardian has consented.

THE GUARDIAN

ALMERIC

(*coming R. C.; PIKE R., watching ETHEL keenly*).

Of course I never worried about it—but I fancy it will be a weight off the Governor's mind. I'll see that a wire catches him at Naples—and he'll be glad to know what became of that arrangement about the convict fellow, too.

ETHEL (*very seriously, even sternly*).

Almeric, I think it's noble to be brave in trouble, but——

ALMERIC (*puzzled, interrupting*).

I say you know, you've really got me.

ETHEL.

I mean that I admire you for your pluck, for seeming unconcerned under disgrace, but——

ALMERIC (*coming L. C.*).

Disgrace? Why, who's disgraced—not even the Governor, as I see it. You got that chap called off, didn't you?

ETHEL.

Whom do you mean?

ALMERIC.

Why that convict chap—didn't you send him away

THE GUARDIAN

—you bought him off, didn't you, so that he won't talk?—Gave him money not to bother us?

ETHEL

(rising and turning on him indignantly).
Why, heaven pity you! Do you think that?

ALMERIC.

Oh—what?—he wouldn't agree to be still? Oh, I say, that'll be rather a pill for the Governor—he'll be a bit worried, you know.

ETHEL

(almost despairingly, but with anger).
Don't you see that it's time for you to worry a little for yourself? That you've got to begin at once to do something worthy that will obliterate this shame—to begin a career—to work—to work!

ALMERIC

(quickly, puzzled and frowning).
But? But I mean to say, though—but what for? What possible need will there be for that? Don't you see, in the first place, there's the settlement—

ETHEL *(aghast).*

Settlement! You talk of settlement, now.

THE GUARDIAN

LADY C. (*angrily*).

Settlement, *certainly* there's the settlement!

ETHEL (*sternly*).

What for?

LADY C.

Why, don't you understand—you're to be the Countess of Hawcastle, aren't you?

ALMERIC (*sharply, breaking in*).

Why—hasn't he told you?—the only obstacle on earth between us was this fellow's consent to the settlement, and he's just given it.

ETHEL (*dazed and angry*).

Do you mean to say he's consented to that!

ALMERIC.

Why, to be sure—he's just consented with his own lips, didn't you?

PIKE (*quickly, gravely*).

I did.

LADY C.

Don't you see, don't you hear that—he's consented? He didn't mumble his words—don't you hear him?

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL.

I do and disbelieve my own ears. Yesterday, when I wanted something I thought of value—and that was a name—he refused to let me buy it—to-day, when I know that that name is less than nothing, worse than nothing—he bids me give my fortune for it. What manner of man is this!—And you (*to* LADY C. *and* ALMERIC), what are you that after last night, you come to me and ask a settlement?

LADY C. (*very angrily*).

Certainly we do—would you expect to enter a family like this and bring nothing?

ALMERIC.

I can't see that the situation has changed since yesterday. I don't stick out for the precise amount the Governor said. If it ought to be less on account of last night, why don't think we should haggle over a few thousand pounds—

ETHEL

(*with a cry, half of relief and half of rage*).

Oh! That is the final word of my humiliation. I felt that you were in shame and dishonor, and, because of that, I was ready to keep my word—to stand by you, to help you make yourself into

THE GUARDIAN

something like a man—to give my life to you. That you permitted the sacrifice was enough! Now you ask me to pay for the privilege of making it—I am released! I am free! (*With fire.*) I am not that man's property to give away, neither my fortune nor myself.

LADY C. (*violently*).

You're beside yourself— isn't this what we've been wanting all the time?

ALMERIC (*almost at same time*).

But slow up a bit—didn't you say you'd stick?

ETHEL.

Any promise I ever made to you is a thousand times cancelled. This is final! (*With concentrated rage and haughtiness, turning to PIKE.*) And as for you—never presume to speak to me again. (*Turns off to L., standing rigid and indignant.*)

ALMERIC (*quickly to LADY C.*).

Most extraordinary girl—she's rather dreadful, isn't she?

LADY C. (*haughtily, but with agitation*).

Give me your arm, Almeric. (*They pass behind*

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL *haughtily and exit down L., lowest entrance.*)

LADY C.

(voice is heard from wings in a hoarse whisper).
Dreadful person!

PIKE *a little up stage R. Pause till they have gone.*

ETHEL

(sharply and not turning to PIKE).
What have you to say to me?

PIKE *raises his hands slowly, with palms outward, and drops them.*

ETHEL.

What explanation have you to make?

PIKE.

None.

ETHEL.

That's because you don't care what I think of you—*(turning to him bitterly.)* Indeed you've already shown that, when you were willing to give me up to those people, and to let me pay them for taking me! You let me romanticize to you about honor and duty and sympathy—about my efforts to make that creature a man—and you pretended to sympathize with me, and you

THE GUARDIAN

knew all the time it was only the money they were after!

PIKE (*humbly*).

Well, I shouldn't be surprised.

ETHEL.

Money, money, money! I wish I had not a penny in the world.

PIKE

(*with a step toward her, his voice trembling*).

I wish you hadn't!

ETHEL.

Didn't you have the faint little understanding of me enough to see that their asking for money, now—would horrify me? Didn't you know that your consenting to it, leaving me free to give it to them, would release me—make me free to deny everything to them?

PIKE (*tremulously, very slowly*).

Well, I shouldn't be surprised if I *had* seen that.

ETHEL

(*staggered—falling back a step, her face and attitude showing that the revelation both frightens and angers her*).

You mean you've been saving me again from myself, from my silliness, from my romanticism, that

THE GUARDIAN

you've given me another revelation of the falsity, the unreality of my attitude toward these people, and toward life.

PIKE (*placatingly*).

No, no!

ETHEL (*vehemently*).

You'd always say that, you'd always deny it—it's like you. You let me make a fool of myself and then you show it to me, and after that you deny it! (*Angrily.*) You're always exhibiting your superiority! Would you do that to the dream girl you told me of, to the girl at home who plays dream songs for you in the empty house among the beeches? Do you think *any* girl could love a man for that? (*She goes to door down L. The door is open.*) Go back to your dream girl, your lady of the picture.

PIKE

(*sinking into chair disconsolately R. C.*).

She won't be there.

ETHEL (*stubbornly*).

She might be.

PIKE.

No, there ain't any chance of that. The house will still be empty.

THE GUARDIAN

ETHEL (*almost crying*).

Are you sure?

PIKE.

There ain't any doubt of it now.

ETHEL.

You might be wrong for once. (*Very slowly enters and closes door behind her.*)

PIKE (*slowly and sadly*).

Not the time when I want to be wrong. Daniel Voorhees Pike, it would be too good for you to be wrong now. Such things ain't going to happen to you—they're too fine for you—but, thank God, you haven't been such a fool as to hope for it—because if you had——(*From within hotel come sounds of piano in preliminary chords of "Sweet Genevieve," then ETHEL's voice in the song, at first faint, somewhat tremulous and quavering, then rising strongly and confidently. PIKE rises and stands, almost appalled, by his chair, then slowly crosses the stage as one spellbound to L. of door down L., and noiselessly and slowly pushes door open. He falls back a step, looking in. Curtain slow, orchestra taking up song.*)

THE END