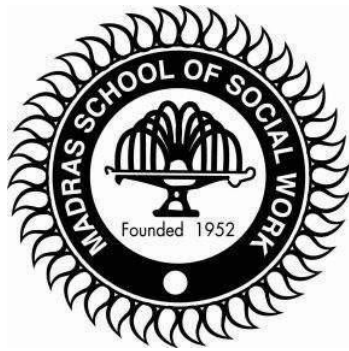


MADRAS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK (AUTONOMOUS)
32, Casa Major Road, Egmore, Chennai – 600 008

(Affiliated to the University of Madras)



Undergraduate Program

Part II – English

Semester II

(Effective from the Academic Year 2017–18 onwards)
(Batch 2018-2021)

SEMESTER- II

PART II - FOUNDATION

ENGLISH - II

CREDITS: 4

TOTAL TEACHING HOURS: 60

OBJECTIVES:

- Give students an exposure to the works in English Literature.
- Enable the students to study different genres in order to appreciate the depth and variety of the written word.

Unit -1 **Poetry** **(15 HOURS)**

1. A Poison Tree by William Blake
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems-and-poets/poems/detail/45952>
2. Two Kinds of People by Ella Wheeler Wilcox
<http://www.ellawheelerwilcox.org/poems/ptwokind.htm>
3. IF by Rudyard Kipling
<https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/if/>
4. More About People by Ogden Nash
<https://www.poemhunter.com/poem/more-about-people/>
5. Mending Wall by Robert Frost
<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/44266/mending-wall>

Unit -2 **Prose** **(10 HOURS)**

1. A Well Educated Mind Vs A Well Formed Mind by Sashi Tharoor
<http://singjupost.com/dr-shashi-tharoor-on-a-well-educated-mind-vs-a-well-formed-mind-full-transcript/>
2. The Pleasure of Books by William Lyon Phelps
<http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/phelps.htm>
3. My Financial Career by Stephen Leacock
<http://www.bartleby.com/380/prose/273.html>
4. On Umbrella Morals by A. G. Gardiner
<http://www.englishinccce.in/2014/05/on-umbrella-morals.html>

Unit -3 **Drama** **(15 HOURS)**

1. The Ugly Duckling by A. A. Milne
http://www.emcp.com/product_catalog/school/litLink/Grade06/U10-02uglyduckling/selection.php

2. Refund by Fritz Karinthy
<http://rafiq-lis.blogspot.in/2013/02/the-refund-hilarious-literary-play.html>
3. The Dear Departed by Stanley Houghton
https://archive.org/stream/cu31924013627256/cu31924013627256_djvu.txt
4. The Sheriff's Kitchen by Ronald Gow
 Source: Panorama English for Communication Emerald Publishers

Unit -4 Short Stories (15 HOURS)

1. When Papa swore in Hindustani by P.G.Wodehouse
<https://americanliterature.com/author/p-g-wodehouse/short-story/when-papa-swore-in-hindustani>
2. A Retrieved Reformation by O Henry
https://americanenglish.state.gov/files/ae/resource_files/a-retrieved-reformation.pdf
3. Clean Sweep Ignatius by Geoffrey Archer
<http://mgimo.ru/uploads/files2/UNIT%202%20STUDENT.pdf>
4. The Story of an Hour by Kate Chopin
<http://archive.vcu.edu/english/engweb/webtexts/hour/>
5. Passing by Langston Hughes
<https://books.google.co.in/books?id=2ezS4cZXM6IC&pg=PA6&lpg=PA6&dq=langston+hughes+short+story+collections&s>

Unit -5 Grammar General English Component (5 HOURS)

1. Prefix suffix, Antonym, Synonym, form Sentences.

References:

- All the works mentioned above are available on public portals online.
- A compilation of the works will be made available to the department.

ESE Question Paper Pattern:

Part A:

- Ten questions out of Twelve questions. (2 marks each).
- To include two compulsory questions on grammar from Unit V.

Part B:

- Four Questions out of Six Questions (10 marks each).
- To include one compulsory question in which a passage will be given with ten blanks. Against each blank, choice of Five words will be given. Students need to choose the most appropriate word and fill in the blanks.

Part C:

- Two questions out of Three questions (20 marks each).
- To include one General Comprehension question. The candidate is required to answer 5 questions of 4 marks each (no choice) based on the given passage. The passage will not be from the prescribed list of poems, prose, short stories and Indian writing in English.

A Poison Tree

By William Blake

I was angry with my friend;

I told my wrath, my wrath did end.

I was angry with my foe:

I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears,

Night & morning with my tears:

And I sunned it with smiles,

And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night.

Till it bore an apple bright.

And my foe beheld it shine,

And he knew that it was mine.

And into my garden stole,

When the night had veiled the pole;

In the morning glad I see;

My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

Two Kinds of People

By Ella Wheeler Wikcox

There are only two kinds of people on earth today

Two kinds of people, no more I say.

Not the rich and the poor, for to know a man's wealth

You must first know the state of his conscience and health,

Not the happy and sad, for in life's passing years,

Each has his laughter and each has his tears.

No, the two kinds of people on earth I mean

Are the people who lift and the people who lean.

In which class are you? Are you lifting the load

Of some overtaxed lifter who's going down the road

Or are you a leaner who lets others share

Your portion of toil and labor and care?

IF

By Rudyard Kipling

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you,
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:
If you can dream — and not make dreams your master;
If you can think — and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to, broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out tools:
If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on!"
If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings — nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And — which is more — you'll be a Man, my son!

More About People

by Ogden Nash

When people aren't asking question

They're making suggestions

And when they're not doing one of those

They're either looking over your shoulder or stepping on your toes

And then as if that weren't enough to annoy you

They employ you.

Anybody at leisure

Incurs everybody's displeasure.

It seems to be very irking

To people at work to see other people not working,

So they tell you that work is wonderful medicine,

Just look at Firestone and Ford and Edison,

And they lecture you till they're out of breath or something

And then if you don't succumb they starve you to death or something.

All of which results in a nasty quirk:

That if you don't want to work you have to work to earn enough money so that you won't have to work.

MendingWall

Robert Frost, 1874 - 1963

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbor know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:
'Stay where you are until our backs are turned!'
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
Oh, just another kind of outdoor game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, 'Good fences make good neighbors.'
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:
'*Why* do they make good neighbors? Isn't it
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offense.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down.' I could say 'Elves' to him,
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, 'Good fences make good neighbors.'

A Well Educated Mind Vs A Well Formed Mind

Dr. Shashi Tharoor

I'm here to talk to you about Indian education, higher education in particular. But I'm actually going to start with demography.

How many of you here are under 35? Okay, that seems pretty representative of the country; 65% of India is under 35.

How many of you are under 25? Okay. Then you are not so representative because we have half of the Indian population pretty much under 25. We are an amazingly young country. In fact, if you just take the age group from 10 to 19, there are 226 million Indians, poised, in other words, to enter higher education, going through school and ready for higher education.

Now this is amazing because it's happening at the time when the rest of the world is aging. Right? If you look at the average age in India today, it's 28. Of course, don't ask about the gap – since we heard about gaps – between the average age of the Indian person and of the Indian cabinet. I think we hold the world record for that.

But, that's another TED talk, right? But what you've got with the average ages at a time when the rest of the world is changing, so by 2020, the average age in Japan is going to be 47, in China it's going to be heading well past 40, Europe, 46, the United States, youthful US, also 40, and India's average age is going to be 29.

So we are potentially the people who are the youthful, productive, dynamic, young population, ready to work, and transform the world, the kinds of role that, say, China played in the last generation could be ours in the next. In fact, International Labor Organization has worked out that by 2020, we'll have 160 million people in the age group of starting work — 20 to 24 is what they calculate — and China will only have 94 million, at the same time. So we really are poised to do that.

But, and by the way, other countries will have a serious deficit that's estimated that the US will have 17 million short in terms of how many people they need of working age. We, in India, have the people. But do we have the ability to equip the people to take advantage of this, to be the workforce of the work engine for the world? See, if we get it right, we educate and train them, we really transform not just our own economy and our society, but the world.

If we get it wrong, the demographic dividend that I'm talking about becomes a demographic disaster. Because, we've already seen in 165 of our 625 districts what happens when unemployed, frustrated, undereducated young men become prey to the blandishments of the Maoists and prey to the gun and the bullet.

So education in our country is not just a social or economic issue, it's even a national security issue. We've got to equip our people to take advantage of what the 21st century offers them.

Now this is the story in a nutshell: 4 E's, Expansion with our first priority in education. Why? Because the British — and I wouldn't even ask if any of you are here — left us in 1947, with a 16% literacy rate. There were only 400,000 — four-lakh students in the entire country in higher education. We had 26 universities, fewer than 700 colleges. So obviously, expansion was essential; we've gone right from that 16% to 74% literacy today, we've gone from 26 universities to 650 universities, we've gone from those 400,000 students, four-lakh students, to 20 million students in higher education today, and we have 35,000 colleges as well, instead of the 700 colleges we had then. So expansion has taken place.

We've also had to fight for the second E of Equity. That is, including the excluded from the education, trying to reach out to the unreached, the people who didn't get a fair shake in education for reasons they couldn't help: gender, an obvious reason. When we had that 16% literacy rate, do you know what the female literacy rate was? 8.9% at the time of the independence. Just one out of 11 Indian women could read and write. Caste, region, religion, all sorts of people got left out of system. We had to bring them in. And that became a big challenge and a priority for education.

Getting those two things more or less right, I don't know how well we did on the third E, which is the E of Excellence. Obviously, you need quality. And we set about setting up institutions of great quality in our country. The IITs are a good example, in fact, it's part of Jawaharlal Nehru's vision that IIT in Kharagpur was established back in 1956, the year I was born, and it was done on the site of a British detention center, the Hijli detention center. So a symbol of political oppression became instead a symbol of hope, of technology, of looking to the future.

But, for the IITs, the IIMs, a few good institutions, I'm sure you could all pick your few around the country, these have tended to be islands of excellence floating on the sea of mediocrity. The average Indian higher education institution is simply not of the quality that you and I, all of us, in this audience would like to see.

And that ties into the fourth E that I've added to this catechism: Employability. Talk to employers, talk to CEOs, what would they tell you? That they're simply not satisfied with the quality of the graduates they're getting. Even in the T of TED, the technological area, engineering graduates, half a million engineering graduates a year, but if you talk, for example, to the Federation of

Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, they did a survey, 64% of employers are not satisfied with the quality of graduates they're getting.

Some companies are running, essentially, re-education places, Infosys', the gigantic campus in Mysore. And it's not on the job training which big companies tend to do, it is, in fact, really a full-year's education for the people they've already hired, to make up for the deficiencies of what they've learned or not properly learned in the college.

Now, that's the scale of the challenge that we face. What are we doing about it? A great deal needs to be done. Of course, we are trying to put in kids into the system at an early age, the RTE, the Right to Education Act, if kids were out of school in the old days, it was their parents' fault; today, if there are out of school it's a state's fault. The government is committed to actually getting them an education.

We've got more and more money being pumped in by the system at all levels. For example, many of you may have gone to prestigious universities; lots of people in India don't. They go to state universities which are grossly under-financed. We've come up with a scheme to pump central money into the state universities, so they actually have the resources to do something with the students they have there.

Money isn't the whole answer. There is an entire challenge, in terms of addressing things like the gender gap – that's a gap, but despite what mister — or what an earlier speaker said, we don't want to embrace, right? – it's a gap we must, must overcome. Right now, women's literacy is 66%, better than the 8.9%, but it still means that, one out of every 3 Indian women still can't read and write. We have to overcome that.

And we need to catch the ones who've been left out of the net: adult literacy; huge challenge. I went off to a village in Tamil Nadu, not far from Kanchipuram, and I've met women, who in their 50s and 60s, were learning to read and write. And people think sometimes what's the point, some of their own family members, their husbands, think what's the point. The answer is it changes their lives, it empowers them in real ways. I spoke to a woman called Chitra Mani, who proudly wrote her name in Tamil on a piece of paper. And I said: *"So, what does being able to read and write mean to you?"*

And she said: *"Now I can see the destination of a bus, where it's going; I don't need to ask somebody where that bus is going. I know where I can go. When I get to the big city of Kanchipuram, I can read the street signs, I can find where I need to go, I don't feel helpless anymore."*

That kind of empowerment is what literacy gives people in a very fundamental and real way. And we're trying to do that of course, for those who've dropped out early on, in the days before we got to that 74%.

The younger kids, we've got them into school now. We've something called a gross enrollment ratio, the percentage of children of a certain age, of the age appropriate for a particular level of education. Well at primary school now, our gross enrollment ratio is 116%. We've actually

enrolled more kids than we thought existed at that age group, because some of the older ones are coming in too. Bad news is, as you go up the level, it starts dropping. So by the 8th grade, I'm afraid it's down to 69%, by the 10th grade, 39%, and by college, our gross enrollment ratio is about 18%, against the global average of 29%.

So, clearly, we still need to do more. Our expansion hasn't gone enough. We haven't managed to get everyone to stay in the system. Some of them actually need vocational training. They're not all going to become white collar clerks, or officials, or IAS officers, right? So we need to try and catch them, and get them into vocational training.

But how do you do that in a culture where, for 3,000 years, if you wanted to become a cobbler or a carpenter, you'd better have an uncle or father who's a cobbler or a carpenter, because nobody else is going to teach you. The transmission of knowledge, of trade craft in our country, has always been through the gene pool, the one reason why the sons of politicians tend to be politicians also, you know. And with the Bollywood movies stars, same story.

So we need to get master craftsmen. Why is it with a country of 1.2 billion people that we should have a nationwide shortage of masons, of plumbers, of certified electricians? We need to get more vocational training into the system, we're doing that, we're now rolling out the whole concept of community colleges so that kids can go in, have some academic learning, lots of vocational training, and at the end of 2 years, if they show tremendous academic promise they can go back to a university, if not, they leave with a 2-year certificate, and they go off and do a useful trade in a society that is clamoring for these skills. So these are the kinds of changes that we're trying to bring about, and move along.

But there's a change that the government alone can't do. You know, if you look at the need for research and innovation, you've heard a lot of that, I'm sure in the course of the TED talks. Research is something which — the government wants to double the amount of money spending on research from 1% of GDP to 2%; we haven't had the money to pump into it yet, but, innovation requires new ways of thinking. I heard you had a talk about hyper-thinking; I've missed it. But new ways of thinking means learning to think out of the box, learning to create, I know we're famous for "jugaad", right? If you Google the word 'frugal innovation,' and top 20 hits will all relate to Indian inventions. We invented the world's cheapest electrocardiogram, the simplest and cheapest EKG, the cheapest insulin injection, the world's cheapest small car, the TATA Nano, but all these have been things invented elsewhere that we have stripped down, made more affordable, more replicable, more relevant to our conditions.

We need to do things that others haven't done before, which we used to do in our culture, we're the land that invented the zero. Remember how the Romans used to write their numerals in long strings of letters, until an Indian thought of the idea of zero emerging from the notion of "śūnyatā" in Hindu and Buddhist thinking? And that came into the zero "śūnya" which transformed global mathematics.

We need to think like that again; we need to come up with ideas. With 17% of the world's brains, why do we only have 2.8% of the world's research output coming out of our country? Well,

perhaps we need to start in the classroom. Get our kids, not just to have their heads filled full of facts, and textbook materials, and teachers' lectures. Because frankly, that gives you a well-filled mind, but in the era of the Internet, you don't need a well-filled mind, you've got Google, right? Find out everything you want with 2 clicks of the mouse.

What you need is a well-formed mind. A mind that reacts to unfamiliar facts and details that can actually synthesize information that it hasn't studied before. A mind, in other words, that can react to the bigger examination called 'life, 'which doesn't actually only give you the things you're prepared for. And for that you need a mind that's shaped by original thinking, a mind that doesn't just ask the teacher, "Why?", but "Why not?"

I've actually had a little experience of out of the box thinking myself. I wear glasses, I don't need them to read, I don't need them to see you folks on the front, but if I want to catch somebody in the back row, there I have to look through glasses. But because I hardly ever wear them, I keep losing or breaking them. I shove them in the pocket, bang them against the wall or something, they crack, I put them on the lap, when I get up, they fall down, somebody steps on them, they break. In the first 3 months of this year, I lost or broke 6 pairs of glasses.

So I was telling a friend about this, and he said: *"A simple solution, why can't you think of one?"*

I said: *"Look, there is no easy solution because for 150 years, glasses have been made in one way, right? They join together at the center, they hang over your ears. That's what I've found an inconvenience, so I take them off."*

And he said, *"No, no, no, no, no, you will find a different way. You can re-imagine glasses in a way they're not going to hang over your ears, or be joined at the middle,"* and this is what he did.

I'm wearing them right now; and if I want to see anybody at the back, I just pull them together, it has two magnets in the middle that click together, and I can see you all at the back.

Now, it's just a silly example perhaps, but it's an example of how one can think out of the box. Things, familiar objects can be thought of in ways they haven't been thought of before. And that way, we can move forward in the world.

I have no doubt that the challenges are enormous, there is simply no question that here, in our country, we have to become literate. But there's one piece of good news. 95% of our 12 year-olds across India can read and write. So the future looks good.

And as far as the workforce is concerned, if we can get all these other pieces in place, we can say to the rest of the world, *"We are coming."*

Thank you very much.

The Pleasure of Books

William Lyon Phelps

William Lyon Phelps (1865-1943) was an American educator, literary critic and author. He served as a professor of English at Yale University from 1901 to 1933. His works include *Advance of the English Novel* and *Essays on Modern Dramatists*. On April 6, 1933, he delivered this speech during a radio broadcast.

His reverence for books was not shared by everyone, especially those in Nazi Germany. On May 10, 1933, the Nazis had staged an event unseen since the Middle Ages as young German students from universities, formerly regarded as among the finest in the world, had gathered in Berlin and other German cities to burn books with "un-German" ideas.

The habit of reading is one of the greatest resources of mankind; and we enjoy reading books that belong to us much more than if they are borrowed. A borrowed book is like a guest in the house; it must be treated with punctiliousness, with a certain considerate formality. You must see that it sustains no damage; it must not suffer while under your roof. You cannot leave it carelessly, you cannot mark it, you cannot turn down the pages, you cannot use it familiarly. And then, some day, although this is seldom done, you really ought to return it.

But your own books belong to you; you treat them with that affectionate intimacy that annihilates formality. Books are for use, not for show; you should own no book that you are afraid to mark up, or afraid to place on the table, wide open and face down. A good reason for marking favorite passages in books is that this practice enables you to remember more easily the significant sayings, to refer to them quickly, and then in later years, it is like visiting a forest where you once blazed a trail. You have the pleasure of going over the old ground, and recalling both the intellectual scenery and your own earlier self.

Everyone should begin collecting a private library in youth; the instinct of private property, which is fundamental in human beings, can here be cultivated with every advantage and no evils. One should have one's own bookshelves, which should not have doors, glass windows, or keys; they should be free and accessible to the hand as well as to the eye. The best of mural decorations is books; they are more varied in color and appearance than any wallpaper, they are more attractive in design, and they have the prime advantage of being separate personalities, so that if you sit alone in the room in the firelight, you are surrounded with intimate friends. The knowledge that they are there in plain view is both stimulating and refreshing. You do not have to read them all. Most of my indoor life is spent in a room containing six thousand books; and I have a stock answer to the invariable

question that comes from strangers. "Have you read all of these books?" "Some of them twice." This reply is both true and unexpected.

There are of course no friends like living, breathing, corporeal men and women; my devotion to reading has never made me a recluse. How could it? Books are of the people, by the people, for the people. Literature is the immortal part of history; it is the best and most enduring part of personality. But book-friends have this advantage over living friends; you can enjoy the most truly aristocratic society in the world whenever you want it. The great dead are beyond our physical reach, and the great living are usually almost as inaccessible; as for our personal friends and acquaintances, we cannot always see them. Perchance they are asleep, or away on a journey. But in a private library, you can at any moment converse with Socrates or Shakespeare or Carlyle or Dumas or Dickens or Shaw or Barrie or Galsworthy. And there is no doubt that in these books you see these men at their best. They wrote for *you*. They "laid themselves out," they did their ultimate best to entertain you, to make a favorable impression. You are necessary to them as an audience is to an actor; only instead of seeing them masked, you look into their innermost heart of heart.

William Lyon Phelps – 1933

My Financial Career

By Stephen Leacock

US currency, 1914

When I go into a bank I get rattled. The clerks rattle me; the wickets rattle me; the sight of the money rattles me; everything rattles me.

The moment I cross the threshold of a bank and attempt to transact business there, I become an irresponsible idiot.

I knew this beforehand, but my salary had been raised to fifty dollars a month and I felt that the bank was the only place for it.

So I shambled in and looked timidly round at the clerks. I had an idea that a person about to open an account must needs consult the manager.

I went up to a wicket marked "Accountant." The accountant was a tall, cool devil. The very sight of him rattled me. My voice was sepulchral.

"Can I see the manager?" I said, and added solemnly, "alone." I don't know why I said "alone."

"Certainly," said the accountant, and fetched him.

The manager was a grave, calm man. I held my fifty-six dollars clutched in a crumpled ball in my pocket.

"Are you the manager?" I said. God knows I didn't doubt it.

"Yes," he said.

"Can I see you," I asked, "alone?" I didn't want to say "alone" again, but without it the thing seemed self-evident.

The manager looked at me in some alarm. He felt that I had an awful secret to reveal.

"Come in here," he said, and led the way to a private room. He turned the key in the lock.

"We are safe from interruption here," he said; "sit down."

We both sat down and looked at each other. I found no voice to speak.

"You are one of Pinkerton's men, I presume," he said.

He had gathered from my mysterious manner that I was a detective. I knew what he was thinking, and it made me worse.

"No, not from Pinkerton's," I said, seeming to imply that I came from a rival agency. "To tell the truth," I went on, as if I had been prompted to lie about it, "I am not a detective at all. I have come to open an account. I intend to keep all my money in this bank."

The manager looked relieved but still serious; he concluded now that I was a son of Baron Rothschild or a young Gould.

"A large account, I suppose," he said.

"Fairly large," I whispered. "I propose to deposit fifty-six dollars now and fifty dollars a month regularly."

The manager got up and opened the door. He called to the accountant.

"Mr. Montgomery," he said unkindly loud, "this gentleman is opening an account, he will deposit fifty-six dollars. Good morning."

I rose.

A big iron door stood open at the side of the room.

"Good morning," I said, and stepped into the safe.

"Come out," said the manager coldly, and showed me the other way.

I went up to the accountant's wicket and poked the ball of money at him with a quick convulsive movement as if I were doing a conjuring trick.

My face was ghastly pale.

"Here," I said, "deposit it." The tone of the words seemed to mean, "Let us do this painful thing while the fit is on us."

He took the money and gave it to another clerk.

He made me write the sum on a slip and sign my name in a book. I no longer knew what I was doing. The bank swam before my eyes.

"Is it deposited?" I asked in a hollow, vibrating voice.

"It is," said the accountant.

"Then I want to draw a cheque."

My idea was to draw out six dollars of it for present use. Someone gave me a chequebook through a wicket and someone else began telling me how to write it out. The

people in the bank had the impression that I was an invalid millionaire. I wrote something on the cheque and thrust it in at the clerk. He looked at it.

"What! are you drawing it all out again?" he asked in surprise. Then I realized that I had written fifty-six instead of six. I was too far gone to reason now. I had a feeling that it was impossible to explain the thing. All the clerks had stopped writing to look at me.

Reckless with misery, I made a plunge.

"Yes, the whole thing."

"You withdraw your money from the bank?"

"Every cent of it."

"Are you not going to deposit any more?" said the clerk, astonished.

"Never."

An idiot hope struck me that they might think something had insulted me while I was writing the cheque and that I had changed my mind. I made a wretched attempt to look like a man with a fearfully quick temper.

The clerk prepared to pay the money.

"How will you have it?" he said.

"What?"

"How will you have it?"

"Oh"—I caught his meaning and answered without even trying to think—"in fifties."

He gave me a fifty-dollar bill.

"And the six?" he asked dryly.

"In sixes," I said.

He gave it me and I rushed out.

As the big door swung behind me I caught the echo of a roar of laughter that went up to the ceiling of the bank. Since then I bank no more. I keep my money in cash in my trousers pocket and my savings in silver dollars in a sock.

The Ugly Duckling

by A. A. Milne..

CHARACTERS

The King	Dulcibella
The Queen	Prince Simon
The Princess Camilla	Carlo

The [Chancellor](#)¹

(The scene is the Throne Room of the Palace; a room of many doors, or, if preferred, curtain-openings: simply furnished with three thrones for [Their Majesties](#)² and [Her Royal Highness](#)³ the PRINCESS CAMILLA—in other words, with three handsome chairs. At each side is a long seat: reserved, as it might be, for His Majesty's Council (if any), but useful, as today, for other purposes. The king is asleep on his throne with a handkerchief over his face. He is a king of any country from any storybook, in whatever costume you please. But he should be wearing his crown.)

A Voice. *(Announcing)* [His Excellency](#)⁴ the Chancellor!
(The CHANCELLOR, an elderly man in hornrimmed spectacles, enters, bowing. The KING wakes up with a start and removes the handkerchief from his face.)

King. *(With simple dignity)* I was thinking.

Chancellor. *(Bowing)* Never, Your Majesty, was greater need for thought than now.

King. That's what I was thinking. *(He struggles into a more dignified position.)* Well, what is it? More trouble?

Chancellor. What we might call the old trouble, Your Majesty.

King. It's what I was saying last night to the Queen. ["Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown,"](#)⁵ was how I

Guided Reading Question 1

What is the king doing just before the chancellor enters?

put it.

Chancellor. A profound and original thought, which may well go down to [posterity](#).

King. You mean it may go down well with posterity. I hope so. Remind me to tell you some time of another little thing I said to Her Majesty: [something about a fierce light beating on a throne](#).⁶ Posterity would like that, too. Well, what is it?

Chancellor. It is in the matter of Her Royal Highness's wedding.

King. Oh . . . yes.

Chancellor. As Your Majesty is aware, the young Prince Simon arrives today to seek Her Royal Highness's hand in marriage. He has been traveling in distant lands and, as I understand, has not—er—has not—

King. You mean he hasn't heard anything.

Chancellor. It is a little difficult to put this [tactfully](#), Your Majesty.

King. Do your best, and I will tell you afterwards how you got on.

Chancellor. Let me put it this way. The Prince Simon will naturally assume that Her Royal Highness has the customary—so customary as to be, in my own poor opinion, slightly monotonous—has what one might call the [inevitable](#)—so inevitable as to be, in my opinion again, almost mechanical—will assume, that she has the, as I think of it, faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly—

King. What you are trying to say in the fewest words possible is that my daughter is not beautiful.

Chancellor. Her beauty is certainly [elusive](#), Your Majesty.

King. It is. It has eluded you, it has eluded me, it has

Guided Reading Question 2

Who is arriving in the kingdom that day? What is the purpose of the visit?

Guided Reading Question 3

Why is the chancellor worried?

eluded everybody who has seen her. It even eluded the Court Painter. His last words were, "Well, I did my best." His successor is now painting the view across the water-meadows from the West Turret. He says that his doctor has advised him to keep to landscape.

Chancellor. It is unfortunate, Your Majesty, but there it is. One just cannot understand how it can have occurred.

King. You don't think she takes after me, at all? You don't detect a likeness?

Chancellor. Most certainly not, Your Majesty.

King. Good. . . . Your predecessor did.

Chancellor. I have often wondered what happened to my predecessor.

King. Well, now you know. (*There is a short silence.*)

Chancellor. Looking at the bright side, although Her Royal Highness is not, strictly speaking, beautiful—

King. Not, truthfully speaking, beautiful—

Chancellor. Yet she has great beauty of character.

King. My dear Chancellor, we are not considering Her Royal Highness's character, but her chances of getting married. You observe that there is a distinction.

Chancellor. Yes, Your Majesty.

King. Look at it from the [suitor's](#) point of view. If a girl is beautiful, it is easy to assume that she has, tucked away inside her, an equally beautiful character. But it is impossible to assume that an unattractive girl, however elevated in character, has, tucked away inside her, an equally beautiful face. That is, so to speak, not where you want it—tucked away.

Chancellor. Quite so, Your Majesty.

King. This doesn't, of course, [alter](#) the fact that the Princess Camilla is quite the nicest person in the Kingdom.

Chancellor. (*Enthusiastically*) She is indeed, Your Majesty. (*Hurriedly*) With the exception, I need hardly say, of Your Majesty—and Her Majesty.

King. Your exceptions are tolerated for their loyalty and [condemned](#) for their extreme [fatuity](#).⁷

Chancellor. Thank you, Your Majesty.

King. As an adjective for your King, the word “nice” is ill-chosen. As an adjective for Her Majesty, it is—ill-chosen. (*At which moment HER MAJESTY comes in. The KING rises. The CHANCELLOR puts himself at right angles.*)

Queen. (*Briskly*) Ah. Talking about Camilla? (*She sits down.*)

King. (*Returning to his throne*) As always, my dear, you are right.

Queen. (*To CHANCELLOR*) This fellow, Simon—What's he like?

Chancellor. Nobody has seen him, Your Majesty.

Queen. How old is he?

Chancellor. Five-and-twenty, I understand.

Queen. In twenty-five years he must have been seen by somebody.

King. (*To the CHANCELLOR*) Just a fleeting glimpse.

Chancellor. I meant, Your Majesty, that no detailed report of him has reached this country, save that he has the usual personal advantages and qualities expected of a Prince, and has been traveling in distant and dangerous lands.

Guided Reading Question 4
What do people know about the prince?

Queen. Ah! Nothing gone wrong with his eyes?
Sunstroke or anything?

Chancellor. Not that I am aware of, Your Majesty. At the same time, as I was venturing to say to His Majesty, Her Royal Highness's character and disposition are so outstandingly—

Queen. Stuff and nonsense. You remember what happened when we had the Tournament of Love last year.

Chancellor. I was not myself present, Your Majesty. I had not then the honor of—I was abroad, and never heard the full story.

Queen. No; it was the other fool. They all rode up to Camilla to pay their [homage](#)—it was the first time they had seen her. The heralds blew their trumpets, and announced that she would marry whichever Prince was left master of the field when all but one had been [unhorsed](#).⁸ The trumpets were blown again, they charged enthusiastically into the fight, and—(*The KING looks [nonchalantly](#) at the ceiling and whistles a few bars.*)—don't do that.

King. I'm sorry, my dear.

Queen. (*To CHANCELLOR*) And what happened? They all simultaneously fell off their horses and [assumed](#) a posture of defeat.

King. One of them was not quite so quick as the others. I was very quick. I proclaimed him the victor.

Queen. At the Feast of [Betrothal](#)⁹ held that night—

King. We were all very quick.

Queen. The Chancellor announced that by the laws of the country the successful suitor had to pass a further test. He had to give the correct answer to a riddle.

Chancellor. Such undoubtedly is the fact, Your

Guided Reading Question 5

What was the purpose of the Tournament of Love? What happened at the Tournament of Love?

Majesty.

King. There are times for announcing facts, and times for looking at things in a broad-minded way. Please remember that, Chancellor.

Chancellor. Yes, Your Majesty.

Queen. I invented the riddle myself. Quite an easy one. What is it which has four legs and barks like a dog? The answer is, "A dog."

King. (*To CHANCELLOR*) You see that?

Chancellor. Yes, Your Majesty.

King. It isn't difficult.

Queen. He, however, seemed to find it so. He said an eagle. Then he said a serpent; a very high mountain with slippery sides; two peacocks; a moonlight night; the day after tomorrow—

King. Nobody could accuse him of not trying.

Queen. *I* did.

King. I *should* have said that nobody could fail to recognize in his attitude an appearance of [doggedness](#).

Queen. Finally he said "Death." I nudged the King—

King. Accepting the word "nudge" for the moment, I rubbed my ankle with one hand, clapped him on the shoulder with the other, and congratulated him on the correct answer. He disappeared under the table, and, personally, I never saw him again.

Queen. His body was found in the [moat¹⁰](#) next morning.

Chancellor. But what was he doing in the moat, Your Majesty?

King. Bobbing about. Try not to ask needless

questions.

Chancellor. It all seems so strange.

Queen. What does?

Chancellor. That Her Royal Highness, alone of all the Princesses one has ever heard of, should lack that [invariable attribute](#) of Royalty, supreme beauty.

Queen. (*To the KING*) That was your Great-Aunt Malkin. She came to the christening. You know what she said.

King. It was [cryptic](#). Great-Aunt Malkin's besetting weakness. She came to *my* christening—she was one hundred and one then, and that was fifty-one years ago. (*To CHANCELLOR*) How old would that make her?

Chancellor. One hundred and fifty-two, Your Majesty.

King. (*After thought*) About that, yes. She promised me that when I grew up I should have all the happiness which my wife deserved. It struck me at the time—well, when I say “at the time,” I was only a week old—but it did strike me as soon as anything could strike me—I mean of that nature—well, work it out for yourself, Chancellor. It opens up a most interesting field of speculation. Though naturally I have not liked to go into it at all deeply with Her Majesty.

Queen. I never heard anything less cryptic. She was wishing you extreme happiness.

King. I don't think she was *wishing* me anything. However.

Chancellor. (*To the QUEEN*) But what, Your Majesty, did she wish Her Royal Highness?

Queen. Her other godmother—on my side—had promised her the dazzling beauty for which all the women in my family are famous—(*She pauses, and the KING snaps his fingers [surreptitiously](#) in the direction of the chancellor.*)

Chancellor. (*Hurriedly*) Indeed, yes, Your Majesty. (*The KING relaxes.*)

Queen. And Great-Aunt Malkin said—(*To the KING*)—
what were the words?

King. I give you with this kiss
A wedding-day surprise.
Where ignorance is bliss
'Tis folly to be wise.
I thought the last two lines rather neat. But what it
meant—

Queen. We can all see what it meant. She was given
beauty—and where is it? Great-Aunt Malkin took it
away from her. The wedding-day surprise is that there
will never be a wedding day.

King. Young men being what they are, my dear, it
would be much more surprising if there *were* a
wedding day. So how— (*The PRINCESS comes in. She is
young, happy, healthy, but not beautiful. Or let us say
that by some trick of make-up or arrangement of hair
she seems plain to us: unlike the PRINCESS of the
storybooks.*)

Princess. (*To the KING*) Hallo, darling! (*Seeing the
others*) Oh, I say! Affairs of state? Sorry.

King. (*Holding out his hand*) Don't go, Camilla. (*She
takes his hand.*)

Chancellor. Shall I withdraw, Your Majesty?

Queen. You are aware, Camilla, that Prince Simon
arrives today?

Princess. He has arrived. They're just letting down the
drawbridge.

King. (*Jumping up*) Arrived! I must—

Princess. Darling, you know what the drawbridge is
like. It takes at *least* half an hour to let it down.

Guided Reading Question 6

What does the queen believe
is Camilla's "wedding-day
surprise"?

Guided Reading Question 7

Who has arrived? How does
the king react to this news?

King. (*Sitting down*) It wants oil. (*To the CHANCELLOR*)
Have you been [grudging](#) it oil?

Princess. It wants a new drawbridge, darling.

Chancellor. Have I Your Majesty's permission—

King. Yes, yes. (*The CHANCELLOR bows and goes out.*)

Queen. You've told him, of course? It's the only chance.

King. Er—no. I was just going to, when—

Queen. Then I'd better. (*She goes to the door.*) You can explain to the girl; I'll have her sent to you. You've told Camilla?

King. Er—no. I was just going to, when—

Queen. Then you'd better tell her now.

King. My dear, are you sure—

Queen. It's the only chance left. (*Dramatically to heaven*) My daughter! (*She goes out. There is a little silence when she is gone.*)

King. Camilla, I want to talk seriously to you about marriage.

Princess. Yes, father.

King. It is time that you learnt some of the facts of life.

Princess. Yes, father.

King. Now the great fact about marriage is that once you're married you live happy ever after. All our history books [affirm](#) this.

Princess. And your own experience too, darling.

Guided Reading Question 8

About what does the king want to have a serious talk?

King. (*With dignity*) Let us confine ourselves to history for the moment.

Princess. Yes, father.

King. Of course, there *may* be an exception here and there, which, as it were, proves the rule; just as—oh, well, never mind.

Princess. (*Smiling*) Go on, darling. You were going to say that an exception here and there proves the rule that all princesses are beautiful.

King. Well—leave that for the moment. The point is that it doesn't matter *how* you marry, or *who* you marry, as long as you *get* married. Because you'll be happy ever after in any case. Do you follow me so far?

Princess. Yes, father.

King. Well, your mother and I have a little plan—

Princess. Was that it, going out of the door just now?

King. Er—yes. It concerns your [waitingmaid](#).¹¹

Princess. Darling, I have several.

King. Only one that leaps to the eye, so to speak. The one with the—well, with everything.

Princess. Dulcibella?

King. That's the one. It is our little plan that at the first meeting she should pass herself off as the Princess—a harmless [ruse](#), of which you will find frequent record in the history books—and allure Prince Simon to his—that is to say, bring him up to the—in other words, the wedding will take place immediately afterwards, and as quietly as possible—well, naturally in view of the fact that your Aunt Malkin is one hundred and fifty-two; and since you will be wearing the family bridal veil—which is no doubt how the custom arose—the surprise after the ceremony will be his. Are you following me at all? Your attention seems to be wandering.

Guided Reading Question 9

Who is Dulcibella?

Guided Reading Question 10

What is the plan of the king and queen?

Princess. I was wondering why you needed to tell me.

King. Just a [precautionary](#) measure, in case you happened to meet the Prince or his attendant before the ceremony; in which case, of course, you would pass yourself off as the maid—

Princess. A harmless ruse, of which, also, you will find frequent record in the history books.

King. Exactly. But the occasion need not arise.

A Voice. (*Announcing*) The woman Dulcibella!

King. Ah! (*To the PRINCESS*) Now, Camilla, if you will just [retire](#) to your own apartments, I will come to you there when we are ready for the actual ceremony. (*He leads her out as he is talking; and as he returns calls out.*) Come in, my dear! (*DULCIBELLA comes in. She is beautiful, but dumb.*) Now don't be frightened, there is nothing to be frightened about. Has Her Majesty told you what you have to do?

Dulcibella. Y-yes, Your Majesty.

King. Well now, let's see how well you can do it. You are sitting here, we will say. (*He leads her to a seat.*) Now imagine that I am Prince Simon. (*He curls his moustache and puts his stomach in. She giggles.*) You are the beautiful Princess Camilla whom he has never seen. (*She giggles again.*) This is a serious moment in your life, and you will find that a giggle will not be helpful. (*He goes to the door.*) I am announced: "His Royal Highness Prince Simon!" That's me being announced. Remember what I said about giggling. You should have a far-away look upon the face. (*She does her best.*) Farther away than that. (*She tries again.*) No, that's too far. You are sitting there, thinking beautiful thoughts—in maiden [meditation](#), fancy-free, as I remember saying to Her Majesty once . . . speaking of somebody else . . . fancy-free, but with the mouth definitely shut—that's better. I advance and fall upon one knee. (*He does so.*) You extend your hand

Guided Reading Question 11

What does the king ask Dulcibella to pretend?

graciously—*graciously*; you're not trying to push him in the face—that's better, and I raise it to my lips—so—and I kiss it—(*He kisses it warmly.*)—no, perhaps not so [ardently](#) as that, more like this (*He kisses it again.*), and I say, “Your Royal Highness, this is the most—er—Your Royal Highness, I shall ever be—no—Your Royal Highness, it is the proudest—” Well, the point is that he will say it, and it will be something complimentary, and then he will take your hand in both of his, and press it to his heart. (*He does so.*) And then—what do you say?

Dulcibella. Coo!

King. No, not Coo.

Dulcibella. Never had anyone do that to me before.

King. That also strikes the wrong note. What you want to say is, “Oh, Prince Simon!” . . . Say it.

Dulcibella. (*Loudly*) Oh, Prince Simon!

King. No, no. You don't need to shout until he has said “What?” two or three times. Always consider the possibility that he *isn't* deaf. Softly, and giving the words a dying fall, letting them play around his head like a flight of doves.

Dulcibella. (*Still a little overloud*) O-o-o-o-h, Prinsimon!

King. Keep the idea in your mind of a flight of *doves* rather than a flight of panic-stricken elephants, and you will be all right. Now I'm going to get up and you must, as it were, [waft](#) me into a seat by your side. (*She starts wafting.*) *Not* rescuing a drowning man, that's another idea altogether, useful at times, but at the moment [inappropriate](#). Wafting. Prince Simon will put the necessary muscles into play—all you require to do is to indicate by a gracious movement of the hand the seat you require him to take. Now! (*He gets up, a little stiffly, and sits next to her.*) That was better. Well, here we are. Now, I think you give me a look: something, let us say, half-way between a worshipful attitude and

wild [abandonment](#), with an undertone of regal dignity, touched, as it were, with good comradeship. Now try that. (*She gives him a vacant look of bewilderment.*) Frankly, that didn't quite get it. There was just a little something missing. An absence, as it were, of all the qualities I asked for, and in their place an odd resemblance to an unsatisfied fish. Let us try to get at it another way. Dulcibella, have you a young man of your own?

Dulcibella. (*Eagerly, seizing his hand*) Oo, yes, he's ever so smart, he's an archer, well not as you might say a real archer, he works in the armory, but old Bottlenose, *you know who I mean*, the Captain of the Guard, says the very next man they ever has to shoot, my Eg shall take his place, knowing Father and how it is with Eg and me, and me being maid to Her Royal Highness and can't marry me till he's a real soldier, but ever so loving, and funny like, the things he says, I said to him once, "Eg," I said—

King. (*Getting up*) I rather fancy, Dulcibella, that if you think of Eg all the time, say as little as possible, and, when thinking of Eg, see that the mouth is not more than partially open, you will do very well. I will show you where you are to sit and wait for His Royal Highness. (*He leads her out. On the way he is saying*) Now remember—*waft—waft—not* [hoick](#).¹² (PRINCE SIMON *wanders in from the back unannounced. He is a very ordinary-looking young man in rather dusty clothes. He gives a deep sigh of relief as he sinks into the king's throne. . . . CAMILLA, a new and strangely beautiful CAMILLA, comes in.*)

Princess. (*Surprised*) Well!

Prince. Oh, hallo!

Princess. Ought you?

Prince. (*Getting up*) Do sit down, won't you?

Princess. Who are you, and how did you get here?

Prince. Well, that's rather a long story. Couldn't we sit down? You could sit here if you liked, but it isn't very

Guided Reading Question 12

Who is Eg?

Guided Reading Question 13

What does Prince Simon look like?

comfortable.

Princess. That is the King's Throne.

Prince. Oh, is that what it is?

Princess. Thrones are not meant to be comfortable.

Prince. Well, I don't know if they're meant to be, but they certainly aren't.

Princess. Why were you sitting on the King's Throne, and who are you?

Prince. My name is Carlo.

Princess. Mine is Dulcibella.

Prince. Good. And now couldn't we sit down?

Princess. *(Sitting down on the long seat to the left of the throne, and, as it were, wafting him to a place next to her)* You may sit here, if you like. Why are you so tired? *(He sits down.)*

Prince. I've been taking very strenuous exercise.

Princess. Is that part of the long story?

Prince. It is.

Princess. *(Settling herself)* I love stories.

Prince. This isn't a story really. You see, I'm attendant on Prince Simon who is visiting here.

Princess. Oh? I'm attendant on Her Royal Highness.

Prince. Then you know what he's here for.

Princess. Yes.

Prince. She's very beautiful, I hear.

Guided Reading Question 14

How do the prince and the princess introduce themselves to each other?

Princess. Did you hear that? Where have you been lately?

Prince. Traveling in distant lands—with Prince Simon.

Princess. Ah! All the same, I don't understand. Is Prince Simon in the Palace now? The drawbridge *can't* be down yet!

Prince. I don't suppose it is. *And* what a noise it makes coming down!

Princess. Isn't it terrible?

Prince. I couldn't stand it any more. I just had to get away. That's why I'm here.

Princess. But how?

Prince. Well, there's only one way, isn't there? That beech tree, and then a swing and a grab for the battlements, and don't ask me to remember it all—(*He shudders.*)

Princess. You mean you came across the moat by that beech tree?

Prince. Yes. I got so tired of hanging about.

Princess. But it's terribly dangerous!

Prince. That's why I'm so exhausted. Nervous shock. (*He lies back and breathes loudly.*)

Princess. Of course, it's different for *me*.

Prince. (*Sitting up*) Say that again. I must have got it wrong.

Princess. It's different for me, because I'm used to it. Besides, I'm so much lighter.

Prince. You don't mean that *you*—

Princess. Oh yes, often.

Guided Reading Question 15

What has the prince heard about the princess?

Guided Reading Question 16

How was the prince able to get to the palace even though the drawbridge was not yet down?

Prince. And I thought I was a brave man! At least, I didn't until five minutes ago, and now I don't again.

Princess. Oh, but you are! And I think it's wonderful to do it straight off the first time.

Prince. Well, *you* did.

Princess. Oh no, not the first time. When I was a child.

Prince. You mean that you crashed?

Princess. Well, you only fall into the moat.

Prince. Only! Can you *swim*?

Princess. Of course.

Prince. So you swam to the castle walls, and yelled for help, and they fished you out and walloped you. And next day you tried again. Well, if *that* isn't pluck—

Princess. Of course I didn't. I swam back, and did it at once; I mean I tried again at once. It wasn't until the third time that I actually did it. You see, I was afraid I might lose my nerve.

Prince. Afraid she might lose her nerve!

Princess. There's a way of getting over from this side, too; a tree grows out from the wall and you jump into another tree—I don't think it's quite so easy.

Prince. Not quite so easy. Good. You must show me.

Princess. Oh, I will.

Prince. Perhaps it might be as well if you taught me how to swim first. I've often heard about swimming but never—

Princess. You can't swim?

Prince. No. Don't look so surprised. There are a lot of

Guided Reading Question 17

Why did the princess fall into the moat once? How did she get out? How does the prince react to this story?

other things which I can't do. I'll tell you about them as soon as you have a couple of years to spare.

Princess. You can't swim and yet you crossed by the beech tree! And you're ever so much heavier than I am! Now who's brave?

Prince. (*Getting up*) You keep talking about how light you are. I must see if there's anything to it. Stand up! (*She stands obediently and he picks her up.*) You're right, Dulcibella. I could hold you here forever. (*Looking at her*) You're very lovely. Do you know how lovely you are?

Princess. Yes. (*She laughs suddenly and happily.*)

Prince. Why do you laugh?

Princess. Aren't you tired of holding me?

Prince. Frankly, yes. I exaggerated when I said I could hold you forever. When you've been hanging by the arms for ten minutes over a very deep moat, wondering if it's too late to learn how to swim—(*He puts her down.*)—what I meant was that I should like to hold you forever. Why did you laugh?

Princess. Oh, well, it was a little private joke of mine.

Prince. If it comes to that, I've got a private joke too. Let's exchange them.

Princess. Mine's very private. One other woman in the whole world knows, and that's all.

Prince. Mine's just as private. One other man knows, and that's all.

Princess. What fun. I love secrets.
. . . Well, here's mine. When I was born, one of my godmothers promised that I should be very beautiful.

Prince. How right she was.

Princess. But the other one said this:

Guided Reading Question 18

What compliment does the prince pay the princess?

I give you with this kiss
A wedding-day surprise.
Where ignorance is bliss 'Tis folly to be wise.

And nobody knew what it meant. And I grew up very plain. And then, when I was about ten, I met my godmother in the forest one day. It was my tenth birthday. Nobody knows this—except you.

Prince. Except us.

Princess. Except us. And she told me what her gift meant. It meant that I *was* beautiful—but everybody else was to go on being ignorant, and thinking me plain, until my wedding day. Because, she said, she didn't want me to grow up spoiled and willful and [vain](#), as I should have done if everybody had always been saying how beautiful I was; and the best thing in the world, she said, was to be quite sure of yourself, but not to expect admiration from other people. So ever since then my mirror has told me I'm beautiful, and everybody else thinks me ugly, and I get a lot of fun out of it.

Prince. Well, seeing that Dulcibella is the result, I can only say that your godmother was very, very wise.

Princess. And now tell me your secret.

Prince. It isn't such a pretty one. You see, Prince Simon was going to woo Princess Camilla, and he'd heard that she was beautiful and haughty and imperious—all *you* would have been if your godmother hadn't been so wise. And being a very ordinary-looking fellow himself, he was afraid she wouldn't think much of him, so he suggested to one of his attendants, a man called Carlo, of extremely attractive appearance, that *he* should pretend to be the Prince, and win the Princess's hand; and then at the last moment they would change places—

Princess. How would they do that?

Prince. The Prince was going to have been married in

Guided Reading Question 19

What does the godmother's gift mean? When did the princess find out what it meant?

Guided Reading Question 20

What secret does the prince

full armor—with his visor down.

first share with the princess?

Princess. (*Laughing happily*) Oh, what fun!

Prince. Neat, isn't it?

Princess. (*Laughing*) Oh, very . . . very
. . . very.

Prince. Neat, but not so terribly funny. Why do you
keep laughing?

Princess. Well, that's another secret.

Prince. If it comes to that, I've got another one up my
sleeve. Shall we exchange again?

Princess. All right. You go first this time.

Prince. Very well. . . . I am not Carlo. (*Standing up and
speaking dramatically*) I am Simon!—ow! (*He sits down
and rubs his leg violently.*)

Princess. (*Alarmed*) What is it?

Prince. Cramp. (*In a mild voice, still rubbing*) I was
saying that I was Prince Simon.

Princess. Shall I rub it for you? (*She rubs.*)

Prince. (*Still hopefully*) I am Simon.

Princess. Is that better?

Prince. (*Despairingly*) I am Simon.

Princess. I know.

Prince. How did you know?

Princess. Well, you told me.

Prince. But oughtn't you to swoon or something?

Guided Reading Question 21
What is the second secret the
prince shares?

Princess. Why? History records many similar ruses.

Prince. (*Amazed*) Is that so? I've never read history. I thought I was being profoundly original.

Princess. Oh, no! Now I'll tell you my secret. For reasons very much like your own, the Princess Camilla, who is held to be extremely plain, feared to meet Prince Simon. Is the drawbridge down yet?

Prince. Do your people give a faint, surprised cheer every time it gets down?

Princess. Naturally.

Prince. Then it came down about three minutes ago.

Princess. Ah! Then at this very moment your man Carlo is declaring his passionate love for my maid, Dulcibella. That, I think, is funny. (*So does the PRINCE. He laughs heartily.*) Dulcibella, by the way, is in love with a man she calls Eg, so I hope Carlo isn't getting carried away.

Prince. Carlo is married to a girl he calls "the little woman," so Eg has nothing to fear.

Princess. By the way, I don't know if you heard, but I said, or as good as said, that I am the Princess Camilla.

Prince. I wasn't surprised. History, of which I read a great deal, records many similar ruses.

Princess. (*Laughing*) Simon!

Prince. (*Laughing*) Camilla! (*He stands up.*) May I try holding you again? (*She nods. He takes her in his arms and kisses her.*) Sweetheart!

Princess. You see, when you lifted me up before, you said, "You're very lovely," and my godmother said that the first person to whom I would seem lovely was the man I should marry; so I knew then that you were Simon and I should marry you.

Prince. I knew directly I saw you that I should marry you, even if you were Dulcibella. By the way, which of you *am* I marrying?

Princess. When she lifts her veil, it will be Camilla. (*Voices are heard outside.*) Until then it will be Dulcibella.

Prince. (*In a whisper*) Then good-bye, Camilla, until you lift your veil.

Princess. Good-bye, Simon, until you raise your visor. (*The KING and QUEEN come in arm-in-arm, followed by CARLO and DULCIBELLA also arm-in-arm. The CHANCELLOR precedes them, walking backwards, at a loyal angle.*)

Prince. (*Supporting the chancellor as an accident seems inevitable*) Careful! (*The chancellor turns indignantly round.*)

King. Who and what is this? More accurately who and what are all these?

Carlo. My attendant, Carlo, Your Majesty. He will, with Your Majesty's permission, prepare me for the ceremony. (*The PRINCE bows.*)

King. Of course, of course!

Queen. (*To DULCIBELLA*) Your maid, Dulcibella, is it not, my love? (*DULCIBELLA nods violently.*) I thought so. (*To CARLO*) She will prepare Her Royal Highness. (*The princess curtsies.*)

King. Ah, yes. Yes. *Most* important.

Princess. (*Curtsyng*) I beg pardon, Your Majesty, if I've done wrong, but I found the gentleman wandering—

King. (*Crossing to her*) Quite right, my dear, quite right. (*He pinches her cheek, and takes advantage of this kingly gesture to say in a loud whisper*) We've pulled it off! (*They sit down; the KING and QUEEN on their*

Guided Reading Question 22

When did the princess realize on her own that Carlo was Simon? Why did she realize this?

thrones, DULCIBELLA on the princess's throne. CARLO stands behind DULCIBELLA, the CHANCELLOR on the right of the QUEEN, and the PRINCE and PRINCESS behind the long seat on the left.)

Chancellor. (*Consulting documents*) H'r'm! Have I Your Majesty's authority to put the final test to His Royal Highness?

Queen. (*Whispering to king*) Is this safe?

King. (*Whispering*) Perfectly, my dear. I told him the answer a minute ago. (*Over his shoulder to CARLO*) Don't forget, *Dog.* (*Aloud*) Proceed, Your Excellency. It is my desire that the affairs of my country should ever be conducted in a strictly constitutional manner.

Chancellor. (*Oratorically*) By the constitution of the country, a suitor to Her Royal Highness's hand cannot be deemed successful until he has given the correct answer to a riddle. (*Con conversationally*) The last suitor answered incorrectly, and thus failed to win his bride.

King. By a coincidence he fell into the moat.

Chancellor. (*To CARLO*) I have now to ask Your Royal Highness if you are prepared for the [ordeal](#)?

Carlo. (*Cheerfully*) Absolutely.

Chancellor. I may mention, as a matter, possibly, of some slight historical interest to our visitor, that by the constitution of the country the same riddle is not allowed to be asked on two successive occasions.

King. (*Startled*) What's that?

Chancellor. This one, it is interesting to recall, was [propounded](#) exactly a century ago, and we must take it as a fortunate [omen](#) that it was well and truly solved.

King. (*To QUEEN*) I may want my sword directly.

Chancellor. The riddle is this. What is it which has four legs and mews like a cat?

Guided Reading Question 23

What is the prince's final test?
Why is the king not worried about the prince passing the test?

Carlo. *(Promptly)* A dog.

King. *(Still more promptly)* Bravo, bravo! *(He claps loudly and nudges the QUEEN, who claps too.)*

Chancellor. *(Peering at his documents)* According to the records of the occasion to which I referred, the correct answer would seem to be—

Princess. *(To PRINCE)* Say something, quick!

Chancellor. —not dog, but—

Prince. Your Majesty, have I permission to speak? Naturally His Royal Highness could not think of justifying himself on such an occasion, but I think that with Your Majesty's gracious permission, I could—

King. Certainly, certainly.

Prince. In our country, we have an animal to which we have given the name "dog," or, in the local dialect of the more mountainous districts, "doggie." It sits by the fireside and purrs.

Carlo. That's right. It purrs like anything.

Prince. When it needs milk, which is its staple food, it mews.

Carlo. *(Enthusiastically)* Mews like nobody's business.

Prince. It also has four legs.

Carlo. One at each corner.

Prince. In some countries, I understand, this animal is called a "cat." In one distant country to which His Royal Highness and I penetrated, it was called by the very curious name of "hippopotamus."

Carlo. That's right. *(To the PRINCE)* Do you remember that ginger-colored hippopotamus which used to climb on to my shoulder and lick my ear?

Guided Reading Question 24

What was the correct answer to the question? How does the prince try to correct the situation?

Prince. I shall never forget it, sir. (*To the KING*) So you see, Your Majesty—

King. Thank you. I think that makes it perfectly clear. (*Firmly to the chancellor*) You are about to agree?

Chancellor. Undoubtedly, Your Majesty. May I be the first to congratulate His Royal Highness on solving the riddle so accurately?

King. You may be the first to see that all is in order for an immediate wedding.

Chancellor. Thank you, Your Majesty. (*He bows and withdraws. The KING rises, as do the QUEEN and DULCIBELLA.*)

King. (*To CARLO*) Doubtless, Prince Simon, you will wish to retire and prepare yourself for the ceremony.

Carlo. Thank you, sir.

Prince. Have I Your Majesty's permission to attend His Royal Highness? It is the custom of his country for Princes of the royal blood to be married in full armor, a matter which requires a certain adjustment—

King. Of course, of course. (*CARLO bows to the KING and QUEEN and goes out. As the PRINCE is about to follow, the KING stops him.*) Young man, you have a quality of quickness which I admire. It is my pleasure to reward it in any way which commends itself to you.

Prince. Your Majesty is ever gracious. May I ask for my reward *after* the ceremony? (*He catches the eye of the PRINCESS, and they give each other a secret smile.*)

King. Certainly. (*The PRINCE bows and goes out. To DULCIBELLA*) Now, young woman, make yourself scarce. You've done your work excellently, and we will see that you and your—what was his name?

Dulcibella. Eg, Your Majesty.

Guided Reading Question 25

What does the king admire about the prince?

King. —that you and your Eg are not forgotten.

Dulcibella. Cool! *(She curtsies and goes out.)*

Princess. *(Calling)* Wait for me, Dulcibella!

King. *(To QUEEN)* Well, my dear, we may congratulate ourselves. As I remember saying to somebody once, “You have not lost a daughter, you have gained a son.” How does he strike you?

Queen. Stupid.

King. They made a very handsome pair, I thought, he and Dulcibella.

Queen. Both stupid.

King. I said nothing about stupidity. What I *said* was that they were both extremely handsome. That is the important thing. *(Struck by a sudden idea)* Or isn't it?

Queen. What do *you* think of Prince Simon, Camilla?

Princess. I adore him. We shall be so happy together.

King. Well, of course you will. I told you so. Happy ever after.

Queen. Run along now and get ready.

Princess. Yes, mother. *(She throws a kiss to them and goes out.)*

King. *(Anxiously)* My dear, have we been wrong about Camilla all this time? It seemed to me that she wasn't looking *quite* so plain as usual just now. Did *you* notice anything?

Queen. *(Carelessly)* Just the excitement of the marriage.

King. *(Relieved)* Ah, yes, that would account for it.

Guided Reading Question 26

What does the queen think about Carlo, who she believes will be marrying her daughter?

The Refund - a hilarious literary play

Refund by Fritz Karinthy

Play logline

A man about 40 returns to his old school and demands to refund the tuition fees paid by him 18 years back for the reason that the education given to him never proved useful and that he is now not good for anything.

The Principal is seated at his flat-tapped desk in his office in a high school. Enter a servant.

THE PRINCIPAL: Well, what is it?

THE SERVANT: A man, sir. Outside. He wants to see you.

THE PRINCIPAL [*leaning back and stretching*]: I receive parents only during office hours. The particular office hours are posted in the notice-board. Tell him that.

THE SERVANT: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. But it isn't a parent, sir.

THE PRINCIPAL: A pupil?

THE SERVANT: I don't think so. He has a beard.

THE PRINCIPAL [*disquieted*]: Not a parent and not a pupil. Then what is he?

THE SERVANT: He told me I should just say 'Wasserkopf.'

THE PRINCIPAL [*much disquieted*]: What does he look like? Stupid? Intelligent?

THE SERVANT: Fairly intelligent, I'd say, sir.

THE PRINCIPAL [*reassured*]: Good! Then he's not a school inspector. Show him in.

THE SERVANT: Yes, sir.

[He goes off. An instant later the door reopens to admit a bearded man, carelessly dressed, somewhat under forty. He is energetic and decided]

WASSERKOPF: How do you do? [*He remains standing*]

THE PRINCIPAL [*rising*]: What can I do for you?

WASSERKOPF: I'm Wasserkopf. [*He pauses*] Don't you remember me?

THE PRINCIPAL [*shaking his head*]: No.

WASSERKOPF: It's possible I've changed. What the hell...! Your class records will show I've got a right to come here.

THE PRINCIPAL: The class records? How so?

WASSERKOPF: Mr. Principal, if you please, I'm Wasserkopf.

THE PRINCIPAL: Doubtless, doubtless – but what has that to do with it?

WASSERKOPF: You mean to say you don't even remember my name? [*He thinks it over*] No, I imagine you wouldn't. You were probably glad to forget me. Well, Mr. Principal, I was a student in this school eighteen years ago.

THE PRINCIPAL [*without enthusiasm*]: Oh, were you? Well, what do you want now? A certificate?

WASSERKOPF [*doubtfully*]: Since I'm bringing back the leaving certificate you gave me I suppose I can get along without another one. No, that isn't why I came here.

THE PRINCIPAL: Well?

WASSERKOPF: [*clearing his throat firmly*]: As a former pupil of this school I want you to refund the tuition fees, which were paid you for my education eighteen years ago.

THE PRINCIPAL [*incredulously*]: You want me to refund your tuition fees?

WASSERKOPF: Exactly; the tuition fees. If I were a rich man I'd tell you to keep them, so far as I'm concerned. What the hell...! But I'm not a rich man, and I need the money.

THE PRINCIPAL: I'm not sure I understand.

WASSERKOPF: Dammit, I want my tuition fees back! Is that plain enough?

THE PRINCIPAL: Why do you want it back?

WASSERKOPF: Because I didn't get my money's worth, that's why! This certificate here says I got an education. Well, I didn't. I didn't learn anything and I want my money back.

THE PRINCIPAL: But, look here, look here! I don't understand it at all! I've never heard of anything like it. What an absurd idea!

WASSERKOPF: Absurd, is it? It's a good idea. It's such a good idea that I didn't get it out of my own head, thanks to the education I got here, which made nothing but an incompetent ass out of me. My old classmate Leaderer gave me the idea not half an hour ago.

THE PRINCIPAL: Gave it to you?

WASSERKOPF [*nodding violently*]: Like that. Here I was walking along the street, fired from my last job, and wondering how I could get hold of some cash, because I was quite broke. I met Leaderer. I said, 'How goes it, Leaderer?' 'Fine!' he says. 'I've got to hurry to the broker's to collect the money I made speculating in foreign exchange.' 'What's foreign exchange?' I said. He says 'I haven't got the time to tell you now, but, according to the paper, Hungarian money is down seventy points, and I've made the difference. Don't you understand?' Well, I didn't understand. I said, 'How do you make money if money goes down?' and he says, 'Wasserkopf, if you don't know that, you don't know a damn thing. Go to the school and get your tuition fees back.' Then he hurried away and left me standing there, and I said to myself, 'Why shouldn't I do that?' He's right, now that I've thought it over. So I came here as fast as I could, and I'll be much obliged if you give me back my tuition fees, because they amount to a lot of money, and I didn't get anything for them.

THE PRINCIPAL [*at a loss for words*]: Really... But now... See here, we've never had a request like yours before. Leaderer told you –

WASSERKOPF: He's a good friend, Leaderer. He told me, and when I get my money back I'm going to buy him a present.

THE PRINCIPAL [*rising*]: You – you are not really serious, are you?

WASSERKOPF: I was never more serious in my life. Treat me wrong here and I'll go straight to the Ministry of Education and complain about you! You took my money and you taught me nothing. Now I'm no good for anything, and I can't do the things that I should have learned in school.

THE PRINCIPAL: You're mad! [*He breaks off, to continue in a more conciliatory tone*] My dear sir, Herr – er – Wasserkopf, please go away quietly. I'll think the matter over after you've gone.

WASSERKOPF: [*sitting*]: No, no! You don't get rid of me so easy. I'll go when everything's been settled. I was given the instruction here in exchange for money, so that I might be able to do something; but I can't do anything because I was taught so badly, and any body can see I ought to have my money back.

THE PRINCIPAL [*trying to gain time*]: What makes you think you can't do anything?

WASSERKOPF: Everybody thinks so. If I get a job I can't keep it. Give me an examination and tell me what I ought to do. Call in the masters and let them say.

THE PRINCIPAL: What a distressing business! How unfortunate! You really want to take another examination?

WASSERKOPF: Yes. I've a right to take one.

THE PRINCIPAL: What an unusual case! [*He scratches his head*] I've never heard of anything like it before. Er – I shall have to consult the staff. I shall have to call a conference... Er – will you wait in the waiting room and give me a few minutes?

WASSERKOPF [*rising*]: Yes, be quick. I've got no time to waste [*he saunters out in a leisurely fashion*].

THE PRINCIPAL [*rings; the servant enters*]: Ask the staff to come here at once. A most extraordinary conference!

THE SERVANT: Yes, sir. [*He goes out*]

THE PRINCIPAL [*trying out his speech*]: Gentlemen, I have asked you to come here on account of a most unusual state of affairs. It is unprecedented. In the thirty years that I have been a schoolmaster I have never heard of anything like it. Never, so long as I live, shall I expect to hear of anything like it again. Never! God forbid! [*The masters enter; they are characteristic figures whose eccentricities are exaggerated*] Gentlemen, I have asked you to come here on account of a most unusual state of affairs. Sit down, gentlemen. I shall open the conference. It is unprecedented, incredible and fantastic. A former pupil has come to see me – er – an individual named Wasserkopf. He brought up a question, which I've never encountered in my many years of experience. [*He explodes*] I have never heard of anything like it.

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: Tell us about it.

THE PRINCIPAL: He wants – he wants his tuition fees back.

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: Why?

THE PRINCIPAL: Because he's lost his job. Because he's broke. Because he's an ass. I should be glad to have you express your views on this unparalleled case.

THE PHYSICS MASTER: The case is natural. The law of conservation of energy proves that any given pupil will lose, in any given period, as much knowledge as a teacher can drill into his head in another period of like duration.

THE HISTORY MASTER: There is nothing like it in the history of civilization. It is said that the Bourbons learned nothing and forgot nothing. If that is true.

THE PHYSICS MASTER: The law of conservation of energy – [*The two argue*]

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: The question is, does he want the amount with simple or compound interest, because in the latter event –

THE GEOGRAPHY MASTER: Where is the fellow, anyhow?

THE PRINCIPAL: He's waiting outside. He wants to be re-examined. He says he learned nothing. He says a re-examination will prove it. I'd like to know what you gentlemen think about it.

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER [*chuckling*]: A re-examination? Gentlemen, it is my conviction that we will lose nothing by re-examining Wasserkopf. If he fails he will place us in an awkward position; therefore he must not fail. He has – shall I say? – pursued advanced studies in the school of life. We will not make our questions too difficult – agreed, gentlemen? We are dealing with a sly, crafty individual, who will try to get the better of us – and his money back – by hook or crook. We must checkmate him.

THE PHYSICS MASTER: How?

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: By sticking together. The object is to prevent him from failing, because if he fails he succeeds. That we must stop. If he fails, tomorrow there will be two more former pupils, and the next day a dozen. We must back each other up, gentlemen, so that this painful affair does not become a pedagogical scandal. We will ask him questions. Whatever his

answers, we agree beforehand that they are correct.

THE PHYSICS MASTER: Who will decide?

THE MATHEMATICS TEACHER: I, if you will permit me. Mr. Principal, let us proceed with the examination. We will show the former pupil that we too can be shrewd!

THE PRINCIPAL [*ringing; uneasily*]: Isn't there a chance of something going wrong? Suppose it gets into the newspapers –

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: Leave it to us.

THE PRINCIPAL [*to the servant who has reappeared*]: Show in Herr Wasserkopf.

[*He enters, without waiting to be shown in. He is most truculent. His hat is over one ear; he keeps his hands thrust into his pockets and stares insolently*]

THE STAFF [*bowing, heartily*]: How do you do?

WASSERKOPF: Who the hell are you? Sit down, you loafers!

[*He grins, waiting to be thrown out*]

THE PRINCIPAL: How dare you –

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER [*interrupting*]: Please! [*He turns to the others.*] Sit down, you loafers! [*They sit, greatly astonished. He turns to Wasserkopf.*] My dear sir, the greeting you have just given us shows that you understand the patriarchal manners, which we impress upon everybody in this institution. Exactly as in the days of the medieval humanists, teachers and pupils here are on a footing of perfect equality. You have shown us, in a most tactful way, that you approve of our customs. That is good of you, and I am sure my colleagues will agree that the pupil Wasserkopf, who appears before us for re-examination, need not be examined in what appertains to gentlemanliness. Instead we waive the examination in that subject, and mark him 'Excellent.'

THE PRINCIPAL [*understanding at once*]: Quite right! Quite right! [*He writes*] 'Manners: Excellent.'

THE STAFF: Agreed! Agreed!

WASSERKOPF [*puzzled, then shrugging his shoulders*]: All right, if you say so. What the hell...! I don't give a damn for the lot of you. My being gentlemanly isn't going to pass the examination. Let me fail as quickly as possible, and give me my money. Everything else is just nonsense.

THE PRINCIPAL [*flattering*]: Speaking for the staff, we agree with you. Your exquisite courtesy will not affect us one way or the other. We will examine you, and be guided entirely by your replies to our questions. Take notice of that.

WASSERKOPF: All right, carry on! Let's hear the questions. I need money. [*He takes off his coat and hitches up his sleevebands.*] Go to it! Ask me questions, professors – I mean, long-eared asses! I'd like to see you get a single correct answer out of me.

THE PRINCIPAL: The examination will begin. History. Herr Schwefler?

THE HISTORY MASTER [*moving to the centre of the table and indicates a chair facing of it*]: Herr Wasserkopf, won't you be seated?

WASSERKOPF [*staring at him insolently, arms akimbo*]: To hell with a seat! I'll stand.

[*The History Master is disconcerted, and shows it, but the Mathematics Master leaps into the breach*]

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: Bravo! Excellent! Herr Wasserkopf wishes us to understand two things. He will dispense with a formal written examination and will answer orally. Good! He will

not be seated; he will stand. Also good. It follows that his physical condition is splendid, and I take it upon myself to award him an 'Excellent' in physical culture. I ask the Principal, who teaches that subject, to concur.

THE PRINCIPAL: Quite Right. [*He writes*] 'Physical Culture: Excellent'

THE STAFF: Agreed! Agreed!

WASSERKOPF [*energetically*]: No! [*He sits; he grins.*] You caught me once, didn't you? Well, you won't do it again. From now I'll have my ears open.

THE PRINCIPAL: 'Alertness: Very Good'

THE HISTORY MASTER: 'Perseverance: Unusual.'

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: 'Logic: Excellent.'

WASSERKOPF: Get on with your questions!

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER [*to the Principal*]: 'Ambition: Boundless.' [*The Principal nods and writes*]

THE HISTORY MASTER [*scratching his head*]: Yes, yes, just a minute. [*The other masters look at him with concern.*]

WASSERKOPF: What's the matter, Schwefler? Aren't you prepared?

THE HISTORY MASTER: A moment!

WASSERKOPF: Oh, you can't think of a question that's easy enough? You were always a numskull.

THE HISTORY MASTER [*the idea arrives; triumphantly*]: Candidate, answer this question: How long did the Thirty Years' War last?

WASSERKOPF: Thirt – [*He interrupts himself.*] I mean to say, I don't know.

THE HISTORY MASTER: Please answer my questions! I am sure you know! Give me the answer! [*Wasserkopf thinks with his eyebrows drawn together. The Physics Master tiptoes to him and whispers loudly, 'Thirty years.' The Geography Master winks at him and holds up ten fingers three times.*] Well, well?

WASSERKOPF: Mr. Principal, this is no way to run an examination. [*He indicates the Physics Master*] That fellow is trying to make me cheat.

THE PRINCIPAL: I shall deal with this decisively. [*To the Physics Master*] Go away! [*The Physics Master slinks back to his place*]

WASSERKOPF [*after much thought*]: How long did the Thirty Years' War last? Was that the question?

THE HISTORY MASTER: Yes, yes!

WASSERKOPF [*grinning*]: I know! Exactly seven meters! [*They are paralyzed. He looks about in triumph.*] Ha, ha! Seven meters! I know it lasted that long. It's possible I'm wrong, and if I am I fail. Seven meters! Ha, ha! Seven meters long! Seven meters! Please give me back my tuition fees. [*The Masters look at each other; at their wits' ends*]

THE HISTORY MASTER [*decisively*]: Seven meters? Right! Your answer is excellent.

WASSERKOPF [*incredulously*]: What. What did you say?

THE HISTORY MASTER [*swallowing manfully and watching the Principal out of the corner of his eye*]: The answer is correct, as a matter of fact. The candidate has shown us that his thought processes are not merely superficial, and that he has investigated the subject in accordance with moderns researches based on – based on – based on –

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: Relativity, of course. The quantum theory. Planck. Einstein. It's all

very simple. [*To the History Master*] Don't say another word. We understand perfectly. Einstein has taught us that time is as real as space and matter. It consists of atoms, and may be synthesized into a unified whole, and may be measured like anything else. Reduce the mass-system to a unit and a year may be represented by a meter, or seven years by seven meters. We may even assert that the Thirty Years' War lasted seven years only because – because – because –

THE HISTORY MASTER: Because the actual warfare took place only during half of each day – that is to say, twelve hours out of twenty-four – and the thirty years at once become fifteen. But not even fifteen years were given up to incessant fighting, for the combatants had to eat – three hours a day, reducing our fifteen years to twelve. And if we deduct from this the hours given up to noon-day siestas, to peaceful diversions, to non-warlike activities – [*He wipes his brow*]

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: To social distractions, we are left only with time which the candidate has represented by the Einsteinian equivalent of seven meters. Correct! I take it upon myself, gentlemen, to propose a grading of 'Very Good' in History. Oof!

THE STAFF: Bravo! Excellent! He has passed! [*They congratulate Wasserkopf*]

WASSERKOPF [*objecting*]: But I don't see –

THE PRINCIPAL: That ends the examination in History. [*Writing*] 'History: Very Good.' [*The staff surround the History Master and congratulate him.*] Now the examination in physics.

WASSERKOPF: Now we'll see something, you tricksters!

THE PHYSICS MASTER [*energetically*]: Come, come!

WASSERKOPF [*defiantly*]: Well, what's going to happen? Ask your questions, or don't. I haven't got any more time to waste. [*He stares at the Physics Master*] Oh, now I remember you. Do you know what we used to call you behind your back? [*The Physics Master smiles in agony*] We called you cannibal, because you were always chewing your thumbs, just as you're doing now! [*The master removes his thumb hastily. The rest of the staff smile.*] That's what we called you! Oh, by the way, do you remember the day you tripped and fell flat in the aisle? Do you know who tied a string across from desk to desk, so you'd do that? I did it!

THE PHYSICS MASTER [*furiously*]: You?

WASSERKOPF: Don't get excited, little man. Ask me a hard question instead. Plough me.

THE PHYSICS MASTER: [*controls himself, well aware that Wasserkopf is trying to irritate him. Very sweetly*]: Kind of you – very kind of you. And now, tell me, Herr Wasserkopf, do clocks in church steeples really become smaller as you walk away from them, or do they merely appear to become smaller because of an optical illusion?

WASSERKOPF: What an absolute rot? How should I know? Whenever I walk away from clocks they get larger! Invariably! If I want them to get smaller I turn round and walk straight up to them, and they're not small at all.

THE PHYSICS MASTER: In a word, therefore, in a word –

WASSERKOPF: In a word, therefore, you give me a pain in the neck. You're an ass! That's my answer.

THE PHYSICS MASTER [*furiously*]: Is that your answer? [*He controls himself*] Good! It is correct. [*Turning to the staff*] A difficult answer but a most brilliant one. I'll explain – that is to say, I'll explain. [*With a sigh, he gets on with it*] When we talk of an ass we always notice – we always notice –

THE STAFF [*anxiously*]: Yes? Yes?

THE PHYSICS MASTER:- that his look is sad. Therefore – [*He thinks. Suddenly triumphant*] I've got it!

WASSERKOPF [*worried*]: What have you got, you whiskered baboon?

THE PHYSICS MASTER: I've got it, and the answer is right. Why is the look of the ass so sad? Because we are all the victims of illusion. But what illusions can affect the extremely primitive apperceptive powers of an ass? Obviously, the illusions of the senses, for the ass lacks imagination; and these must be none other than optical illusions, since the ass, like us, observes that objects appear to become smaller as he moves away from them. The candidate has given us a most excellent answer in calling our attention to an animal whose whole expressions is melancholy because its senses are deceptive; or, to put it in another way, because the apparent decrease in size of an object, in this case a clock, is to be ascribed to optical illusion. The answer was correct. I certify, therefore, that the candidate may be given 'Very Good' in Physics.

THE PRINCIPAL [*writing*]: 'Physics: Very Good'

THE STAFF: Bravo!

[*They surround the Physics Master, slapping him on the back and shaking his hands, while he sinks into his chair, completely exhausted*]

WASSERKOPF: I protest!

THE PRINCIPAL [*silencing him with a gesture*]: The examination in Geography.

[*The Geography Master takes the place facing Wasserkopf*]

WASSERKOPF: Just look at him! The old hypocrite! How are you, anyhow, nitwit?

THE GEOGRAPHY MASTER: I beg your pardon?

WASSERKOPF: My name used to be in our class-book, didn't it? You old reprobate! You just wait! I'll fix you all right!

THE GEOGRAPHY MASTER: Tell me, candidate –

WASSERKOPF: I'll tell you! I'll tell you! Oh, how I used to hate you eighteen years ago!

THE GEOGRAPHY MASTER: [*imperturbably*]: Please tell me what city of the same name is the capital of the German province of Brunswick?

WASSERKOPF: What a dumb question! The answer's part of the question.

THE GEOGRAPHY MASTER [*pleased*]: Isn't it? And the answer – what is it?

WASSERKOPF: 'Same' of course. That's the answer. If the name of the city is same, then the name of the city is 'Same.' Right? If it isn't I fail, and you refund my tuition fees.

THE GEOGRAPHY MASTER: The answer is correct. The name of the city is 'Same.' Gentlemen, the candidate shows exceptional knowledge of the history of the city Brunswick. There is a legend that once, as the Emperor Barbarossa was riding in to the city, he met a young peasant girl who was munching a bun, and whose mouth was full. He called out to her, 'God bless you. What's the name of this city?' and the peasant girl answered 'Same to you, sir.' Then she stopped because her mouth was full, and the Emperor laughed and said, 'Ho, ho! So the name of the city is "Same."?' And for many years, thereafter, he never referred to Brunswick, except by that title. [*He turns, winks solemnly at his colleagues.*] The answer is excellent. The candidate is entitled to a grade of 'Excellent' in Geography.

[*He returns to his place to be showered with congratulations*]

THE PRINCIPAL [*writing*]: 'Geography: Excellent.' Thus far the candidate has come through with flying colours. Only the examination in mathematics is left. Should he pass that he will have passed the entire examination.

WASSERKOPF [*nervously*]: I'm going to be more careful now. [*The Mathematics Master takes his place facing Wasserkopf. The Other Masters are worried but the Mathematics Master assures them with a gesture that they may depend on him.*] So here you are, old-stick-in-the-mud! Do you know we used to call you 'old-stick-in-the-mud' behind your back? You'd better brush up your wits if you think you're going to put one over me. I'll start off by telling you a few things about mathematics: two times two is five, and I make up my own multiplication tables as I go along. And if you add eight apples and two pears the answer is twenty-seven apricots. That's my system, and you'll see me use it. To hell with mathematics! 'Answer excellent'? 'Answer very good' 'Answer correct'? Not this time. It will be simpler if you say you aren't prepared, and let me fail.

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER [*forcibly*]: You must not joke about a serious examination. I'm going to ask you two questions. One of them is easy; the other is hard.

WASSERKOPF [*imitating him*]: One of them is easy; the other is hard. The same old-stick-in-the-mud that you always were! I remember the pictures of you we used to draw on the board –

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: [*interrupting*]: If this were an examination in art you would be marked excellent. [*He pauses, and Wasserkopf is suddenly silent.*] But we are dealing with mathematics. The easy question: If we represent the speed of light by x , and the distance of the star Sirius from the sun by y , what is the circumference of a one-hundred-and-nine-sided regular polyhedron whose surface coincides with that of the hip-pocket of a State railway employee whose wife has been deceiving him for two years and eleven months with a regimental sergeant-major of hussars?

THE STAFF [*much upset*]: But look here, Professor! Professor!

THE PRINCIPAL: Professor!

WASSERKOPF: Don't interfere with him! [*To the Mathematics Master*] Will you repeat the question?

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: No. Either you paid attention or you did not. Either you know the answer, or you don't. Tell me the answer, because if you don't know it –

WASSERKOPF: Of course I know it! Naturally I know it! I'll tell you: two thousand six hundred and twenty nine litres. Exact. No fractions. And did I give you the correct answer? [*He chuckles*] I've given you an answer which is too good!

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: No. The answer is wrong. The correct answer is two thousand six hundred and twenty-eight litres, and not twenty nine. [*He turns to The Principal*] I refuse to pass the candidate. Mark him 'Failure.'

WASSERKOPF [*bounding*]: I told you so! I told you so!

THE PRINCIPAL [*thunderstruck*]: Professor! Professor!

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: I'm sorry. It is true that his error amounted to less than a tenth of a per cent, in the total, but it was an error. He fails.

WASSERKOPF: My tuition fees! My tuition fees!

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: In my opinion the candidate's request is reasonable. Now that I have satisfied myself he cannot pass our examination it is his right to recover the monies which were paid us.

WASSERKOPF: That's so! That's right! Give me the money. [*The staff stare as if the heaven had fallen*]

THE PRINCIPAL [*furiously, to the Mathematics Master*]: Is that what you think?

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: Absolutely. This is a good school. It is our duty to see that

nothing ever injures its reputation. How much do we owe you, Herr Wasserkopf?

WASSERKOPF [*greedily, forgetting everything else*]: I'll tell you exactly. I attended this school for six years in all. During the first three years the fee was 150 crowns quarterly. Total for three years 1, 800. During the second three years the fee was 400 crowns semi-annually. Total: 2, 400 and 1, 800 is 4, 200. Examination fees, 250 crowns 95 heller. Certificates, documents, books, stamp taxes, 1, 241 crowns 43 heller. Total: 5, 682 crowns 38 heller. Incidentals, stationery, notebooks, 786 crowns 12 heller. Grand total: 6, 450 crowns 50 heller. Knock of the heller and call it crowns.

THE MATHEMATIC MASTER [*checking with his paper and pencil as Wasserkopf calls out the amount*]: Exactly!

WASSERKOPF: Exactly! You can rely on it.

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: It's right. There's no question of it. It's right to the smallest detail. [*He offers Wasserkopf his hand*] I congratulate you! That was my difficult question!

WASSERKOPF [*not understanding*]: What?

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER [*to the Principal*]: I certify that the candidate passes in Mathematics. His answer to the easy question was a very little out of the way; but his answer to the difficult question – how much the refund should be – was exactly correct. Herr Wasserkopf is a mathematical genius.

WASSERKOPF [*striking his forehead*]: So you did put one over me!

THE PRINCIPAL [*rising*]: I present the results of the examination. Herr Wasserkopf has passed with distinction in every subject, and has again shown that he is entitled to the certificate we awarded him on his graduation. Herr Wasserkopf, we offer our congratulations – accepting a large share of them for ourselves for having taught you so excellently. And now that we have verified your knowledge and your abilities – [*he makes an eloquent gesture*] get out before I have you thrown out!

[*He rings for the servant. The following speeches are nearly spoken simultaneously.*]

THE HISTORY MASTER: So I'm a numskull, am I? Say it again and I'll show you what is what!

THE PHYSICS MASTER: I'm a cannibal? What? And you were the one who tied a string across the aisle –

THE GEOGRAPHY MASTER: Hypocrite? Nitwit? Ass? Me?

THE MATHEMATICS MASTER: Old stick-in-the-mud?

THE SERVANT [*entering*]: Yes, sir?

THE PRINCIPAL [*indicating Wasserkopf*]: Remove that object! [*The servant seizes Wasserkopf by the collar and the seat of his trousers and rushes him off. The Principal turns to the staff and beams.*] Thank you, gentlemen, for your magnificent co-operation. In the future it will be our proudest boast that in this school a pupil simply cannot fail!

[*They shake hands and slap each other's back*]

The Dear Departed

By Stanley Houghton

William Stanley Houghton (1881-1913), was a famous English dramatist. His plays, greatly influenced by Norwegian dramatist Henerick Ibsen, include *The Dear Departed* (1908), *The Younger Generation* (1910), and his best-known work, *HindleWakes* (1912). He was one of the best of a group of realistic playwrights often called the Manchester school. In every play he sought to present an idea. He had a remarkable gift for dialogue that is evident in *The Dear Departed*. From 1907 to 1912 he worked as a critic for the *Manchester Guardian*.

The *Dear Departed* was first produced in Manchester in 1908. Here Houghton satirizes the degradation of moral values in the British middle-class. In trying to grab the things belonging to grandfather the children completely disregard modesty, decency and filial obligation. The materialistic attitudes of Mrs. Slater and Mrs. Jordan come in for bitter criticism. This story enacted in a middle-class drawing room is narrated in natural dialogues.

A Comedy in One Act

Characters

MRS.SLATER	}	sisters
MRS.JORDAN		
HENRYSLATER	}	their husbands
BENJORDAN		
VICTORTIASLATER		a girl of ten
ABELMERRYWEATHER		

(The scene is the sitting room of a small house in a lower middle-class district of a provincial town. On the spectator's left is the window, with the blinds down. A sofa is in front of it. On his right is a fireplace with an armchair by it. In the middle of the wall facing the spectator is the door into the passage. To the left of the door a cheap, shabby chest of drawers, to the right a sideboard. In the middle of the room is a table, with chairs round it.

Ornaments and a cheap American clock are on the mantelpiece, in the hearth a kettle. By the sideboard a pair of gaudy new carpet slippers. The table is partly laid for tea, and the necessaries for the meal are on the sideboard, as also are copies of an evening paper and of

TIT-BITS PEARSON'S WEEKLY. Turning to the left through the door takes you to the front door; to the right, up-stairs. In the passage a hat-stand is visible.

When the curtain rises MRS. SLATER is seen laying the table. She is a vigorous, plump, redfaced, vulgar woman, prepared to do any amount of straight talking to get her own way. She is in black, but not in complete mourning. She listens a moment and then goes to the window, opens it and calls into the street).

MRS.SLATER (*sharply*) : Victoria,Victoria! D'ye hear? Come in, will you?

(MRS.SLATER closes window and puts the blind straight and then returns to her work at the table VICTORIA, a precocious girl often, dressed in colours, enters.)

MRS.SLATER : I'm amazed at you, Victoria; I really am. How you can gallivanting about in the street with your grandfather lying dead and cold upstairs, I don't know. Be off now, and change your dress before your Aunt Elizabeth and your Uncle Ben come. It would never do for them to find you in colours.

VICTORIA : What are they coming for? They haven't been here for ages.

MRS.SLATER : They're coming to talk over poor grandpa's affairs. Your father sent them a telegram as soon as we found he was dead. *(A noise is heard.)* Good gracious, that's never them. *(MRS. SLATER: hurries to the door and opens it.)*

No, thank goodness! It's only your father.

(HENRY SLATER, a stooping, heavy man with a drooping moustache, enters. He is wearing a black tailcoat, grey trousers, a black tie and a bowler hat. He carries a little paper parcel.)

HENRY : Not come yet, eh?

MRS.SLATER : You can see they haven't, can't you? Now, Victoria, be off upstairs and that quick. Put your white frock on with a black sash.

(VICTORIA goes out)

MRS.SLATER : *(to HENRY):* I'm not satisfied, but it's the best we can do till our new black's ready, and Ben and Elizabeth will never have thought about mourning yet, so we'll outshine them there-

(HENRY sits in the armchair by the fire) Get your boots off,

HENRY; Elizabeth's that prying she notices the least speck of dirt.

HENRY : I'm wondering if they'll come at all. When you an Elizabeth quarreled she said she'd never set foot in your house again.

MRS.SLATER : She'll come fast enough after her share of what grandfather's left. You know how hard she can be when she likes. Where she gets it from I can't tell

(MRS. SLATER: unwraps the parcel HENRY has brought. It contains an apple pie which she puts on a dish on the table.)

HENRY : I suppose it's in the family.

MRS.SLATER : What do you mean by that. Henry Slater?

HENRY : I was referring to your father, not to you. Where are my slippers?

MRS.SLATER : In the kitchen; but you want a new pair, those old ones, are nearly worn out. *(Nearly breaking down.)* You don't seem to realize what it's costing me to bear up like I am doing. My heart's fit to break when I see the little trifles that belonged to grandfather lying around, and think he'll never use them again. *(Briskly)* Here! You'd better wear these slippers of grandfather's now. It's lucky he'd just got a new pair-

HENRY : They'll be very small for me, mydear.

MRS.SLATER : They'll stretch, won't they? I'm not going to have them wasted. *(She has finished laying the table.)*

Henry, I've been thinking about that bureau of grandfather's that's in his bedroom. You know I always wanted to have it after he died.

HENRY : You must arrange with Elizabeth when you're dividing things up.

MRS.SLATER : Elizabeth's that sharp she'll see I'm after it, and she'll drive a hard bargain over it. Eh, what it is to have a low moneygrubbing spirit!

HENRY : Perhaps she's got her eye on the bureau as well.

MRS.SLATER : She's never been here since grandfather bought it. If it was only down here instead of in his room, she'd never guess it wasn't our own.

HENRY *(startled)* : Amelia! *(He rises.)*

MRS.SLATER : Henry, why shouldn't we bring that bureau down here now? We could do it before they come.

HENRY *(stupefied)* : I wouldn't care to.

MRS.SLATER : Don't look so daft. Why not?

HENRY : It doesn't seem delicate, somehow.

MRS.SLATER : We could put that shabby old chest of drawers upstairs where the bureau is now. Elizabeth could have that and welcome.
I've always wanted to get rid of it. *(She points to the drawers.)*

HENRY : Suppose they come when we're doing it.

MRS.SLATER : I'll fasten the front door. Get your coat off. Henry; we'll change it.
*(MRS. SLATER goes out to fasten the front door.
HENRY takes his coat off MRSSLATER reappears.)*

MRS.SLATER : I'll run up and move the chairs out of the way.
(VICTORIA appears, dressed according to her mother s' instructions.)

VICTORIA : Will you fastenmyfrock up the back, mother?

MP.S.SLATER : I'm busy; get your father to do it.
(MRS.SLATER: hurries upstairs, and HENRY fastens the frock.)

VICTORIA : What have you got your coat off for, Father?

HENRY : Mother and me is going to bring grandfather's bureau down here.

VICTORIA : *(after a moment's thought.)* : Are we pinching it before Aunt Elizabeth comes?

HENRY*(shocked)* : No, mychild. Grandpa gave it to your mother before he died.

VICTORIA : This morning?

HENRY : Yes.

VICTORIA : Ah! He was drunk this morning.

HENRY : Hush; you mustn't ever say he was drunk, now. *(HENRY has fastened the frock, and MRS. SLATER appears carrying a handsome clock under her arm.)*

MRS.SLATER : I thought I'd fetch this down as well. *(She puts it on the mantelpiece.)*
Our clock's worth nothing and this always appealed to me.

VICTORIA : That's grandpas clock.

MRS.SLATER : Chut! Be quit! It's ours now. Come Henry, lift your end.
Victoria, don't breathe a word to your aunt about the clock and the bureau.
(They carry the chest of drawers through the doorway.)

VICTORIA *(to herself)*: I thought we'd pinched them.
(After a short pause there is a sharp knock at the front door.)

MRS. SLATER *(from upstairs)*: Victoria, if that's your aunt and uncle you're not to open the door.
(VICTORIA peeps through the window.)

VICTORIA : Mother, It's them.

MRS.SLATER : You're not to open the door till I come down. *(Knocking repeated.)*
Let them knock away. *(There is a heavy bumping noise.)*Mind the wall. Henry. *(HENRY and MRS. SLATER, very hot and flushed, stagger in with a pretty old- fashioned bureau containing a locked desk. They put it where the chest of drawers was, and straighten the ornaments, etc. The knocking is repeated.)*

MRS.SLATER : That was a near thing. Open the door, Victoria. Now, Henry, get your coat on.
(She helps him.)

HENRY : Did we knock much plaster off the wall?

MRS.SLATER : Never mind the plaster. Do I look ail right? (*Straightening her hair at the glass.*)Just watch Elizabeth's face when she sees (*Throwing him Tit-Bits.*) we're all in half-mourning. Take this and sit down. Try and look as if we'd been waiting for them.

(HENRY sits in the armchair and left of table and MRS. SLATER left of table. They read ostentatiously. VICTORIA ushers in BEN and MRS. JORDAN. The latter is a stout, complacent woman with an impassive and an irritating air of being always right. She is wearing a complete and deadly outfit of new mourning crowned by a great black hat with plumes. BEN is also in complete new mourning, with black gloves and a band round his hat. He is rather a jolly little man, accustomed to be humorous, but at present trying to adapt himself to the regrettable occasion. He has a bright, chirpy little voice. MRS. JORDAN sails into the room and solemnly goes straight to MRS. SLATER and kisses her. The men shake hands. MRS. JORDAN Not a word is spoken. MRS. SLATER Furtively inspects the new mourning.)

MRS.JORDAN : Well,Amelia, and he's gone at last.

MRS.SLATER : Yes, he's gone. He was seventy-two a fortnight last Sunday. (*She sniffs back a tear.* MRS. JORDAN sits on the left of the table. MRS. SLATER on the right. HENRY in the armchair. BEN on the sofa with VICTORIA near him.)

BEN (*chirpily*): Now, Amelia, you mustn't give way.We've all got to die some time or other. It might have been worse.

MRS.SLATER : I don't see how.

BEN : It might have been one of us.

HENRY : It's taken you a long time to get here, Elizabeth.

MRS.JORDAN : Oh, I couldn't do it. I really couldn't do it.

MRS.SLATER (*suspiciously*): Couldn't do what?

MRS.JORDAN : I couldn't start without getting the mourning. (*Glancing at her sister.*)

MRS.SLATER : We've ordered ours, you may be sure. (*Acidly*)

I never could fancy buying ready-made things.

MRS.JORDAN : No? For myself it's such a relief to get into the black. And now perhaps you'll tell us all about it. What did the doctor say?

MRS.SLATER : Oh, he's not been near yet.

MRS.JORDAN : Not been near?

BEN (*in the same breath*): Didn't you send for him at once?

MRS.SLATER : Of course I did. Do you take me for a fool? I sent Henry at once for Dr. Pringle but he was out.

BEN : You should have gone for another. Eh, Eliza?

MRS.JORDAN : Oh, yes. It's fatal mistake.

MRS.SLATER : Pringle attended him when he was alive and Pringle shall attend him when he's dead. That's professional etiquette.

BEN : Well, you know your own business best, but-

MRS.JORDAN : Yes—it's a fatal mistake.

MRS.SLATER : Don't talk so silly, Elizabeth. What good could a doctor have done?

MRS.JORDAN : Look at the many cases of persons being restored to life hours after they were thought to be 'gone'.

HENRY : That's when they've been drowned. Your father wasn't drowned, Elizabeth.

BEN(*humorously*) : There wasn't much fear of that. If there was one thing he couldn't bear it was water. (*He laughs, but no else does.*)

MRS.JORDAN (*pained*): BEN!

(BEN is crushed at once.)

MRS.SLATER (*piqued*) : I'm sure he washed regular enough.

MRS.JORDAN : If he did take a drop too much at times, we'll not dwell on that, now.

MRS.SLATER : Father had been 'merry' this morning. He went out soon after breakfast to pay his insurance.

BEN : My word, its a good thing he did.

MRS.JORDAN : He always was thoughtful in that way. He was too honourable to have 'gone' without paying his premium.

MRS.SLATER : Well, he must have gone round to the 'Rine-o'-Bells' afterwards, for he came in as merry as a sandboy. I says, 'We're only waiting Henry to start dinner'. 'Dinner', he says 'I don't want no dinner. I'm going to bed!'

BEN (*shaking his head*): Ah! Dear, dear.

HENRY : And when I came in I found him undressed sure enough and snug in bed. (*He rises and stands on the hearthrug.*)

MRS.JORDAN (*definitely*) : Yes, he'd had a 'warning'. I'm sure of that. Did he know you?

HENRY : Yes. He spoke to me.

MRS.JORDAN : Did he say he'd had a 'warning'?

HENRY : No. He said, 'Henry, would you mind taking my boots off? I forgot before I got into bed'.

MRS.JORDAN : He must have been wandering.

HENRY : No, he'd got 'em on all right.

MRS.SLATER : And when we'd finished dinner I thought I'd take up a bit of something on a tray. He was lying there for all the world as if he was asleep, so I put the tray down on the bureau (*correcting herself*) - on the chest of drawers - and went to waken him. (*A pause.*) He was quite cold.

HENRY : Then I heard Amelia calling for me, and I ran upstairs.

MRS.SLATER : Of course we could do nothing.

MRS.JORDAN : He was 'gone'?

HENRY : There wasn't any doubt.

MRS.JORDAN : I always knew he'd go sudden in the end. (*A pause. They -wipe their eyes and sniff back tears.*)

MRS. SLATER (*rising briskly at length: in a business-like tone*): Well, will you go up and look at him now, or shall we have tea?

MRS.JORDAN : What do you say, Ben?

BEN : I'm not particular.

MRS. JORDAN(*surveying, the table*) :Well, then, if the kettle's ready we may as well have tea first.

MRS.SLATER *puts the kettle on the fire and gets tea ready.*)

HENRY : One thing we may as well decide now; the announcement in the papers.

MRS.JORDAN : I was thinking of that.What would you put?

MRS.SLATER : At the residence of his daughter, 235 Upper Cornbank Street, etc.

HENRY : You wouldn't care for a bit of poetry?

MRS.JORDAN : I like 'Never Forgotten'. It's refined.

HENRY : Yes, but it's rather soon for that.

BEN : You couldn't very well have forgot him the day after.

MRS.SLATER : I always fancy, 'Aloving husband, a kind father, and a faithful friend'.

BEN (*doubtfully*): Do you think that's right?

HENRY : I don't think it matters whether it's right or not.

MRS.JORDAN : No, it's more for the look of the thing.

HENRY : I saw a verse in the *Evening News yesterday*. Proper poetry it was- it rhymed. (*He gets the paper and reads.*)

'Despised and forgotten by some you may be
But the spot that contains you is sacred to we.

MRS.JORDAN : That'll never do.You don't say 'scared to we'.

HENRY : It's in the paper.

MRS.SLATER : You wouldn't say it if you were speaking properly, but it's different in poetry.

HENRY : Poetic license, you know.

MRS.JORDAN : No, that'll never do. We want a verse that says how much we loved him and refers to all his good qualities and says what a heavy loss we've had.

MRS.SLATER : You want a whole poem. That'll cost a good lot.

MRS.JORDAN : Well, we'll think about it after tea, and then we'll look through his bits of things and make a list of them. There's all the furniture in his room.

HENRY : There's no jewellery or valuables of that sort.

MRS.JORDAN : Except his gold watch. He promised that to our Jimmy.

MRS.SLATER : Promised your Jimmy! I never heard of that.

MRS.JORDAN : Oh, but he did, Amelia, when he was living with us. He was very fond of Jimmy.

MRS.SLATER : Well. (*Amazed.*) I don't know!

BEN : Anyhow, there's his insurance money. Have you got the receipt for the premium he paid this morning?

MRS.SLATER : I've not seen it.

(VICTORIA, *jumps up from the sofa and comes behind the table.*)

VICTORIA : Mother, I don't think Grandpa went to pay his insurance this morning.

MRS.SLATER : He went out.

VICTORIA : Yes, but he didn't go into the town. He met old Mr. Tattersall down the street, and they went off past St. Philip's Church.

MRS.SLATER : To the 'Ring-o'-Bells', I'll be bound.

BEN : The -Ring-o'-Bells'?

MRS.SLATER : That public-house that John Shorrock's widow keeps. He is always hanging about there. Oh, is he hasn't paid it -

BEN : Do you think he hasn't paid it?Was it overdue?

MRS.SLATER : I should think it was overdue.

MRS.JORDAN : Something tells me he's not paid it. I've a 'warning', I know it; he's not paid it.

BEN : The drunken old beggar.

MRS.JORDAN : He's done it on purpose, Just to annoy us.

MRS.SLATER : After all I've done for him, having to put up with him in the house these three years. It's nothing short of swindling.

MRS.JORDAN : I had to put up with him for five years.

MRS.SLATER : And you were trying to turn him over to us all the time.

HENRY : But we don't know for certain that he's not paid the premium.

MRS.JORDAN : I do. It's come overmeall at once that he hasn't. ,

MRS.SLATER : Victoria, run upstairs and fetch that bunch of keys that's on your grandpa's dressing table.

VICTORIA *(timidly)*: In Grandpa's room?

MRS.SLATER : Yes.

VICTORIA : I—I don't like to.

MRS.SLATER : Don't talk so silly. There's no one can hurt you. (VICTORIA *goes out reluctantly.*) We'll see if he's locked the receipt up in the bureau,

BEN : In where? In this thing? (*He rises and examines it.*)

MRS. JORDAN *(also rising)*: Where did you pick that up, Amelia It's new since last I was here. (*They examine it closely.*)

MRS.SLATER : Oh—Henry picked it up one day.

MRS.JORDAN : I like it. It's artistic. Did you buy it at an auction?

HENRY : Eh! Where did I buy it, Amelia?

MRS.SLATER : Yes, at an auction.

BEN *(disparagingly)* : Oh, second-hand.

MRS.JORDAN : Don't show your ignorance, Ben. All artistic things are secondhand. Look at those old masters. (VICTORIA *returns, very scared. She closes the door after her.*)

VICTORIA : Mother! Mother!

MRS.SLATER : What is it, child?

VICTORIA : Grandpa's getting up.

BEN : What?

MRS.SLATER : What do you say?

VICTORIA : Grandpa's getting up.

MRS.JORDAN : The child's crazy.

MRS.SLATER : Don't talk so silly. Don't you know your grandpa's dead?

VICTORIA : No, no; he's getting up. I saw him.
(They are transfixed with amazement: BEN and MRS.JORDAN left of VICTORIA clings to MRS. SLATER, right of table; HENRY near fireplace.)

MRS.JORDAN : You'd better go up and see for yourself, Amelia.

MRS.SLATER : Here—come with me, Henry. (*HENRY draws back terrified*)

BEN *(suddenly)* : Hist! Listen.
(They look at the door. A slight chuckling is heard outside. The door opens, revealing an old man clad in a faded but gay dressing-gown. He is in his stockinged feet. Although over seventy he is vigorous and well coloured; his bright, malicious eyes twinkle under his heavy, reddish-grey eyebrows. He is obviously either Grandfather ABEL MERRYWEATHER or else his ghost.)

ABEL : What's the matter with little Vicky? (*He sees BEN and MRS. JORDAN.*; Hello! What brings you here? How's yourself, Ben?
(ABEL thrusts his hand at BEN, who skips back smartly and retreats with MRS. JORDAN to a safe distance below the sofa.)

MRS. SLATER *(approaching ABEL gingerly)*: Grandfather, is that you? (*She pokes him with her hand to see if he is solid.*)

ABEL : Of course it's me. Don't do that, 'Melia. What the devil do you mean by this tomfoolery?

MRS.SLATER *(to the others)*: He's not dead.

BEN : Doesn't seem like it.

ABEL *(irritated by the whispering)* : You've kept away long enough, Lizzie; and now you've come you don't seem over-pleased to see me.

MRS.JORDAN : You took us by surprise, father. Are you keeping quite well?
 ABEL (*trying to catch the words.*) Eh? What?

MRS.JORDAN : Are you quite well?
 ABEL : Aye, I'm right enough but for a bit of a headache. I wouldn't mind betting that I'm not the first in this house to be carried to the cemetery. I always think Henry there looks none too healthy.

MRS.JORDAN : Well, I never!
 (*ABEL crosses to the armchair and HENRY gets out of his way to the front of the table.*)

ABEL : 'Melia, what the dickens did I do with my new slippers?
 MRS.SLATER(*confused*): Aren't they by the hearth, grandfather?
 ABEL : I don't see them. (*Observing HENRY trying to remove the slippers.*)
 Why, you've got 'em on. Henry.

MRS.SLATER (*promptly*): I told him to put them on to stretch them; they were that new and hard. Now, Henry.
 (*MRS. SLATER snatches the slippers from HENRY and gives them to ABEL, who puts them on and sits in armchair*)

MRS.JORDAN (*to BEN*): Well, I don't call that delicate, stepping into a dead man's shoes in such haste.
 (*HENRY goes up to the window and pulls up the blind VICTORIA runs across to ABEL and sits on the floor at his feet.*)

VICTORIA : Oh, Grandpa, I'm so glad you're not dead.
 MRS.SLATER (*in a vindictive whisper*): Hold your tongue, Victoria.
 ABEL : Eh? What's that? Who's gone dead?
 MRS.SLATER (*Loudly*): Victoria says she's sorry about your head.
 ABEL : Ah, thank you, Vicky, but I'm feeling better.
 MRS.SLATER(*to MRS.JORDAN*): He's so fond of Victoria.
 MRS.JORDAN (*to MRS.SLATER*): Yes; he's fond of our Jimmy, too.
 MRS.SLATER : You'd better ask him if he promised your Jimmy his gold watch.
 MRS.JORDAN (*disconcerted*): I couldn't just now. I don't feel equal to it.
 ABEL : Why, Ben, you're in mourning! And Lizzie too. And 'Melia, and Henry and little Vicky! Who's gone dead? It's someone in the family. (*He chuckles.*)

MRS.SLATER : No one you know, father. A relation of Ben's.
 ABEL : And what relation of Ben's?
 MRS.SLATER : His brother.
 BEN(*to MRS.SLATER*) : Hang it, I never had one.
 ABEL : Dear, dear. And what was his name, Ben?
 BEN (*at a loss*): Er - er. (*He crosses to front of table.*)
 MRS.SLATER R. (*of table, prompting*): Frederick.
 MRS.JORDAN L. (*of table, prompting*): Albert.
 BEN : Er—FedAlb—Issac.
 ABEL : Issac? And where did your brother Isaac die?
 BEN : In—er—in Australia.
 ABEL : Dear, dear. He'd be older than you eh?
 BEN : Yes, five years.
 ABEL : Aye, aye. Are you going to the funeral?
 BEN : Oh, yes.
 MRS.SLATER and MRS.JORDAN: No, no.
 BEN : No, of course not.

(He retires to L.)

ABEL (*rising*): Well, I suppose you've only been waiting for me to begin tea. I'm feeling hungry.

MRS.SLATER(*taking up the kettle*) : I'll make tea.

ABEL : Come along, now; sit you down and let's be jolly.
(ABEL *sits at the head of the fable, facing spectators.*
BEN and MRS. JORDAN *on the left.* VICTORIA *brings a chair and sits by ABEL.* MRS. SLATER and HENRY *sit on the right.* Both the women are next to ABEL.)

MRS.SLATER : Henry, give grandpa some pie.

ABEL : Thank you. I'll make a start.
(*He helps himself to bread and butter.*)
(HENRY *serves the pie and MRS. SLATER pours out tea.*
Only ABEL *eats with any heartiness.*)

BEN : Glad to see you've got an appetite, Mr. Merryweather, although you've not been so well.

ABEL : Nothing serious. I've been lying down for a bit.

MRS.SLATER : Been to sleep, grandfather?

ABEL : No, I've not been to sleep.

MRS.SLATERandHENRY: Oh!

ABEL (*eating and drinking*): I can't exactly call everything to mind, but I remember I was a bit dazed, like- I couldn't move an inch, hand or foot.

BEN : And could you see and hear, Mr. Merryweather?

ABEL : Yes, but I don't remember seeing anything particular. Mustard, Ben.
(BEN *passes the mustard.*)

MRS.SLATER : Of course not, grandfather. It was all your fancy. You must have been asleep.

ABEL (*snappishly*): I tell you I wasn't asleep, 'Melia.Damnit, I ought to know,

MRS.JORDAN : Didn't you see Henry orAmelia come into the room?

ABEL(*scratching-his head*): Now let me think—

MRS.SLATER : I wouldn't press him Elizabeth. Don't press him.

HENRY : I wouldn't worry him.

ABEL(*suddenly recollecting*) : Ay, begad! 'Melia and Henry, what the devil did you mean by shifting my bureau out of my bedroom? (HENRY and MRS. SLATER are *speechless*).
D' you hear me? Henry! 'Melia!

MRS.JORDAN : What bureau was that. Father?

ABEL : Why,my bureau the one I bought—

MRS.JORDAN (*pointing to the bureau*): Was it that one. Father?

ABEL : Ah, that's it. What's it doing here? Eh? (*A pause. The clock on the mantelpiece strikes six. Everyone looks at it.*)
Drat me if that isn't my clock too. What the devils been going on in this house? (*A slight pause.*)

BEN (*rising*): Well, I'll be hanged.

MRS.JORDAN : I'll tell you what's been going on in this house. Father. Nothing short of robbery.

MRS.SLATER : Be quiet, Elizabeth.

MRS.JORDAN : I'll not be quiet. Oh, I call it double—faced.

HENRY : Now now, Elizabeth.

MRS.JORDAN : And you, too. Are you such a poor creature that you must do every dirty thing she tells you?

MRS.SLATER (*rising*) : Remember where you are, Elizabeth.

HENRY (*rising*): Come, come. No quarrelling.

BEN (*rising*): My wife's every right to speak her own mind.

MRS.SLATER : Then she can speak it outside, not here.

ABEL(*rising: thumping the table*) : Damn it all, will someone tell me what's been going on?

MRS.JORDAN : Yes, I will. I'll not see you robbed.

ABEL : Who's been robbing me?

MRS.JORDAN : Amelia and Henry. They've stolen your clock and bureau.
(*Working herself up.*)They sneaked into your room like a thief in the night and stole them after you were dead.

HENRYand MRS.SLATER: Hush! Quiet, Elizabeth!

MRS.JORDAN : I'll not be stopped.After you were dead, I say.

ABEL : After who was dead?

MRS.JORDAN : You.

ABEL : But I'm not dead.

MRS.JORDAN : No, but they thought you were.
(*A pause. ABEL gazes round at them.*)

ABEL : Oho! So that's why you're all in black today.You thought I was dead.
(*He chuckles.*) That was a big mistake. (*He sits and resumes his tea.*)

MRS.SLATER (*sobbing*): Grandfather.

ABEL : It didn't take you long to start dividingmythings between you.

MRS.JORDAN : No, father; you mustn't think that. Amelia was simply getting hold of them on her own account.

ABEL : You always were a keen one,Amelia. I suppose you thought the will wasn't fair.

HENRY : Did you make a will?

ABEL : Yes, it was locked up in the bureau.

MRS.JORDAN : And what was in it, father?

ABEL : That doesn't matter now. I'm thinking of destroying it and making another.

MRS.SLATER(*sobbing*) : Grandfather, you'll not be hard on me.

ABEL : I'll trouble you for another cup of tea, 'Melia; two lumps and plenty of milk.

MRS.SLATER : With pleasure. Grandfather. (*She pours out the tea.*)

ABEL : I don't want to be hard on anyone. IT1 tell you what I'm going to do. Since your mother died, I've lived part of the time with you, 'Melia, and part with you, Lizzie. Well, I shall make a new will, leaving all my bits of things to whomever I'm living with when I die. How does that strike you?

HENRY : It's a bit of a lottery, like.

MRS.JORDAN : And who do you intend to live with from now?

ABEL (*drinking his tea*) : I'm just coming to that.

MRS.JORDAN : You know, father, it's quite time you came to live with us again. We'd make you very comfortable.

MRS.SLATER : No, he's not been with us as long as he was with you.

MRS.JORDAN : I may be wrong, but I don't think father will fancy living on with you after what's happened today.

ABEL : So you'd like to havemeagain, Lizzie?

MRS.JORDAN : You know we're ready for you to make your home with us for as long you please.

ABEL : What do you say to that, 'Melia?

MRS.SLATER : All I can say is that Elizabeth's changed her mind in the last two years. (*Rising*). Grandfather, do you know what the quarrel between us was about?

MRS.JORDAN : Amelia, don't be a fool; sit down.

MRS.SLATER : No, if I'm not to have him, you shan't either. We quarrelled because Elizabeth said she wouldn't take you off our hands at any price. She said she'd enough of you to last a lifetime, and we'd got to keep you.

ABEL : It seems to me that neither of you has any cause to feel proud about the way you've treated me.

MRS.SLATER : If I've done anything wrong. I'm sure I'm sorry for it.

MRS.JORDAN : And I can't say more than that, too.

ABEL : It's a bit late to say it, now. You neither of you cared to put up with me.

MRS.SLATER and MRS.JORDAN: No, no grandfather.

ABEL : Aye, you both say that because of what I've told you about leaving my money. Well, since you don't want me I'll go to someone that does.

BEN : Come Mr. Merryweather, you've got to live with one of your daughters.

ABEL : I'll tell you what I've got to do. On Monday next Eve got to do three things. Eve got to go to the lawyer's and alter my will; and I've got to go to the insurance office and pay my premium; and Eve got to go to St. Philip's Church and get married.

BEN and HENRY : What!

MRS.JORDAN : Get married!

MRS.SLATER : He's out of his senses. (*General consternation.*)

ABEL : I say I'm going to get married.

MRS.SLATER : Who to?

ABEL : To Mrs. John Shorrocks who keeps the 'Ring-o' -Bells. We've had it fixed up a good while now, but I was keeping it for a pleasant surprise. (*He rises.*)

I felt I was a bit of a burden to you, so I found someone who'd think it a pleasure to look after me.

We shall be very glad to see you at the ceremony. (*He gets to the door.*)

Till Monday, then. Twelve o' clock at St. Philip's Church.

(Opening the door.) It's a good thing you brought that bureau downstairs, 'Melia. It'll be handier to carry across to the 'Ring-o' -Bells on Monday. (*He goes out.*)

The Sheriff's Kitchen **by Ronald Gow**

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WHEN PAPA SWORE IN HINDUSTANI

by P.G.Wodehouse

"Sylvia!"

"Yes, papa."

"That infernal dog of yours----"

"Oh, papa!"

"Yes, that infernal dog of yours has been at my carnations again!"

Colonel Reynolds, V.C., glared sternly across the table at Miss Sylvia Reynolds, and Miss Sylvia Reynolds looked in a deprecatory manner back at Colonel Reynolds, V.C.; while the dog in question--a foppish pug--happening to meet the colonel's eye in transit, crawled unostentatiously under the sideboard, and began to wrestle with a bad conscience.

"Oh, naughty Tommy!" said Miss Reynolds mildly, in the direction of the sideboard.

"Yes, my dear," assented the colonel; "and if you could convey to him the information that if he does it once more--yes, just once more!--I shall shoot him on the spot you would be doing him a kindness." And the colonel bit a large crescent out of his toast, with all the energy and conviction of a man who has thoroughly made up his mind. "At six o'clock this morning," continued he, in a voice of gentle melancholy, "I happened to look out of my bedroom window, and saw him. He had then destroyed two of my best plants, and was commencing on a third, with every appearance of self-satisfaction. I threw two large brushes and a boot at him."

"Oh, papa! They didn't hit him?"

"No, my dear, they did not. The brushes missed him by several yards, and the boot smashed a fourth carnation. However, I was so fortunate as to attract his attention, and he left off."

"I can't think what makes him do it. I suppose it's bones. He's got bones buried all over the garden."

"Well, if he does it again, you'll find that there will be a few more bones buried in the garden!" said the colonel grimly; and he subsided into his paper.

Sylvia loved the dog partly for its own sake, but principally for that of the giver, one Reginald Dallas, whom it had struck at an early period of their acquaintance that he and Miss Sylvia Reynolds were made for one another. On communicating this discovery to Sylvia herself he had found that her views upon the subject were identical with his own; and all would have gone well had it not been for a melancholy accident.

One day while out shooting with the colonel, with whom he was doing his best to ingratiate himself, with a view to obtaining his consent to the match, he had allowed his sporting instincts to carry him away to such a degree that, in sporting parlance, he wiped his eye badly.

Now, the colonel prided himself with justice on his powers as a shot; but on this particular day he had a touch of liver, which resulted in his shooting over the birds, and under the birds, and on each side of the birds, but very rarely at the birds. Dallas being in especially good form, it was found, when the bag came to be counted, that, while he had shot seventy brace, the colonel had only managed to secure five and a half!

His bad marksmanship destroyed the last remnant of his temper. He swore for half an hour in Hindustani, and for another half-hour in English. After that he felt better. And when, at the end of dinner, Sylvia came to him with the absurd request that she might marry Mr. Reginald Dallas he did not have a fit, but merely signified in fairly moderate terms his entire and absolute refusal to think of such a thing.

This had happened a month before, and the pug, which had changed hands in the earlier days of the friendship, still remained, at the imminent risk of its life, to soothe Sylvia and madden her father.

It was generally felt that the way to find favour in the eyes of Sylvia--which were a charming blue, and well worth finding favour in--was to show an intelligent and affectionate interest in her dog. This was so up to a certain point; but no farther, for the mournful recollection of Mr. Dallas prevented her from meeting their advances in quite the spirit they could have wished.

However, they persevered, and scarcely a week went by in which Thomas was not rescued from an artfully arranged horrible fate by somebody.

But all their energy was in reality wasted, for Sylvia remembered her faithful Reggie, who corresponded vigorously every day, and refused to be put off with worthless imitations. The lovesick swains, however, could not be expected to know of this, and the rescuing of Tommy proceeded briskly, now one, now another, playing the rôle of hero.

The very day after the conversation above recorded had taken place a terrible tragedy occurred.

The colonel, returning from a poor day's shooting, observed through the mist that was beginning to rise a small form busily engaged in excavating in the precious carnation-bed. Slipping in a cartridge, he fired; and the skill which had deserted him during the day came back to him. There was a yelp; then silence. And Sylvia, rushing out from the house, found the luckless Thomas breathing his last on a heap of uprooted carnations.

The news was not long in spreading. The cook told the postman, and the postman thoughtfully handed it on to the servants at the rest of the houses on his round. By noon it was public property; and in the afternoon, at various times from two to five, nineteen young men were struck, quite independently of one another, with a brilliant idea.

The results of this idea were apparent on the following day.

"Is this all?" asked the colonel of the servant, as she brought in a couple of letters at breakfast-time.

"There's a hamper for Miss Sylvia, sir."

"A hamper, is there? Well, bring it in."

"If you please, sir, there's several of them."

"What? Several? How many are there?"

"Nineteen, sir," said Mary, restraining with some difficulty an inclination to giggle.

"Eh? What? Nineteen? Nonsense! Where are they?"

"We've put them in the coachhouse for the present, sir. And if you please, sir, cook says she thinks there's something alive in them."

"Something alive?"

"Yes, sir. And John says he thinks it's dogs, sir!"

The colonel uttered a sound that was almost a bark, and, followed by Sylvia, rushed to the coachhouse. There, sure enough, as far as the eye could reach, were the hampers; and, as they looked, a sound proceeded from one of them that was unmistakably the plaintive note of a dog that has been shut up, and is getting tired of it.

Instantly the other eighteen hampers joined in, until the whole coachhouse rang with the noise.

The colonel subsided against a wall, and began to express himself softly in Hindustani.

"Poor dears!" said Sylvia. "How stuffy they must be feeling!"

She ran to the house, and returned with a basin of water.

"Poor dears!" she said again. "You'll soon have something to drink."

She knelt down by the nearest hamper, and cut the cord that fastened it. A pug jumped out like a jack-in-the-box, and rushed to the water.

Sylvia continued her work of mercy, and by the time the colonel had recovered sufficiently to be able to express his views in English, eighteen more pugs had joined their companion.

"Get out, you brute!" shouted the colonel, as a dog insinuated itself between his legs. "Sylvia, put them back again this minute! You had no business to let them out. Put them back!"

"But I can't, papa. I can't catch them."

She looked helplessly from him to the seething mass of dogs, and back again.

"Where's my gun?" began the colonel.

"Papa, don't! You couldn't be so cruel! They aren't doing any harm, poor things!"

"If I knew who sent them----"

"Perhaps there's something to show. Yes; here's a visiting-card in this hamper."

"Whose is it?" bellowed the colonel through the din.

"J. D'Arcy Henderson, The Firs," read Sylvia, at the top of her voice.

"Young blackguard!" bawled the colonel.

"I expect there's one in each of the hampers. Yes; here's another. W. K. Ross, The Elms."

The colonel came across, and began to examine the hampers with his own hand. Each hamper contained a visiting-card, and each card bore the name of a neighbour. The colonel returned to the breakfast-room, and laid the nineteen cards out in a row on the table.

"H'm!" he said, at last. "Mr. Reginald Dallas does not seem to be represented."

Sylvia said nothing.

"No; he seems not to be represented. I did not give him credit for so much sense." Then he dropped the subject, and breakfast proceeded in silence.

A young gentleman met the colonel on his walk that morning.

"Morning, colonel!" said he.

"Good-morning!" said the colonel grimly.

"Er--colonel, I--er--suppose Miss Reynolds got that dog all right?"

"To which dog do you refer?"

"It was a pug, you know. It ought to have arrived by this time."

"Yes. I am inclined to think it has. Had it any special characteristics?"

"No, I don't think so. Just an ordinary pug."

"Well, young man, if you will go to my coach house, you will find nineteen ordinary pugs; and if you would kindly select your beast, and shoot it, I should be much obliged."

"Nineteen?" said the other, in astonishment. "Why, are you setting up as a dog-fancier in your old age, colonel?"

This was too much for the colonel. He exploded.

"Old age! Confound your impudence! Dog-fancier! No, sir! I have not become a dog-fancier in what you are pleased to call my old age! But while there is no law to prevent a lot of dashed young puppies like yourself, sir--like yourself--sending your confounded pug-dogs to my daughter, who ought to have known better than to have let them out of their dashed hampers, I have no defence.

"Dog-fancier! Gad! Unless those dogs are removed by this time to-morrow, sir, they will go straight to the Battersea Home, where I devoutly trust they will poison them. Here are the cards of the other gentlemen who were kind enough to think that I might wish to set up for a dog-fancier in my old age. Perhaps you will kindly return them to their owners, and tell them what I have just said." And he strode off, leaving the young man in a species of trance.

"Sylvia!" said the colonel, on arriving home.

"Yes, papa."

"Do you still want to marry that Dallas fellow? Now, for Heaven's sake, don't start crying! Goodness knows I've been worried enough this morning without that. Please answer a plain question in a fairly sane manner. Do you, or do you not?"

"Of course I do, papa."

"Then you may. He's the furthest from being a fool of any of the young puppies who live about here, and he knows one end of a gun from the other. I'll write to him now."

"Dear Dallas" (wrote the colonel),--"I find, on consideration, that you are the only sensible person in the neighbourhood. I hope you will come to lunch to-day. And if you still want to marry my daughter, you may."

To which Dallas replied by return of messenger:

"Thanks for both invitations. I will."

An hour later he arrived in person, and the course of true love pulled itself together, and began to run smooth again.

CLEAN SWEEP IGNATIUS

BY Geoffrey Archer

FEW showed much interest when Ignatius

Agarbi was appointed Nigeria's Minister of Finance.

After all, the cynics pointed out, he was the seventeenth person to hold the office in seventeen years.

In Ignatius's first major policy statement to Parliament he promised to end graft and corruption in public life and warned the electorate that no one holding an official position could feel safe unless he led a blameless life. He ended his maiden speech with the words, "I intend to clear out Nigeria 's Augean stables."

Such was the impact of the minister's speech that it failed to get a mention in the Lagos Daily Times.

Perhaps the editor considered that, since the paper had covered the speeches of the previous sixteen ministers in extensor, his readers might feel they had heard it all before.

Ignatius, however, was not to be disheartened by the lack of confidence shown in him, and set about his new task with vigour and determination. Within days of his appointment he had caused a minor official at the Ministry of Trade to be jailed for falsifying documents relating to the import of grain. The next to feel the bristles of Ignatius's new broom was a leading Lebanese financier, who was deported without trial for breach of the exchange control regulations. A month later came an event which even Ignatius considered a personal coup: the arrest of the Inspector General of Police for accepting bribes - a perk the citizens of Lagos had in the past considered went with the job. When four months later the Police Chief was sentenced to eighteen months in jail, the new Finance Minister finally made the front page of the Lagos Daily Times. A leader on the centre page dubbed him "Clean Sweep Ignatius", the new broom every guilty man feared. Ignatius's reputation as Mr Clean continued to grow as arrest followed arrest and unfounded rumours began circulating in the capital that even General Otobi, the Head of State, was under investigation by his own Finance Minister.

Ignatius alone now checked, vetted and authorised all foreign contracts worth over one hundred million dollars. And although every decision he made was meticulously scrutinized by his enemies, not a breath of scandal ever became associated with his name.

When Ignatius began his second year of office as Minister of Finance even the cynics began to acknowledge his achievements. It was about this time that General Otobi felt confident enough to call Ignatius in for an unscheduled consultation.

The Head of State welcomed the Minister to Dodan Barracks and ushered him to a comfortable chair in his study overlooking the parade ground.

"Ignatius, I have just finished going over the latest budget report and I am alarmed by your conclusion that the Exchequer is still losing millions of dollars each year in bribes paid to go-betweens by foreign companies. Have you any idea into whose pockets this money is falling? That's what I want to know."

Ignatius sat bolt upright, his eyes never leaving the Head of State.

"I suspect a great percentage of the money is ending up in private Swiss bank accounts but I am at present unable to prove it."

"Then I will give you whatever added authority you require to do so," said General Otobi. "You can use any means you consider necessary to ferret out these villains. Start by investigating every member of my Cabinet, past and present. And show no fear or favour in your endeavours, no matter what their rank or connections."

"For such a task to have any chance of success I would need a special letter of authority signed by you,

General . . ."

"Then it will be on your desk by six o'clock this evening," said the Head of State.

"And the rank of Ambassador Plenipotentiary whenever I travel abroad."

"Granted."

"Thank you," said Ignatius, rising from his chair on the assumption that the audience was over.

"You may also need this," said the General as they walked towards the door. The Head of State handed Ignatius a small automatic pistol. "Because I suspect by now that you have almost as many enemies as I."

Ignatius took the pistol from the soldier awkwardly, put it in his pocket and mumbled his thanks.

Without another word passing between the two men Ignatius left his leader and was driven back to his Ministry.

Without the knowledge of the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria and unhindered by any senior civil servants, Ignatius enthusiastically set about his new task. He researched alone at night, and by day discussed his findings with no one. Three months later he was ready to pounce.

The Minister selected the month of August to make an unscheduled visit abroad as it was the time when most Nigerians went on holiday and his absence would therefore not be worthy of comment.

He asked his Permanent Secretary to book him, his wife and their two children on a flight to Orlando, and to be certain that it was charged to his personal account.

On their arrival in Florida the family checked into the local Marriott Hotel. He then informed his wife, without warning or explanation, that he would be spending a few days in New York on business before rejoining them for the rest of the holiday. The following morning Ignatius left his family to the mysteries of Disney World while he took a flight to New York. It was a short taxi ride from La Guardia to Kennedy, where, after a change of clothes and the purchase of a return tourist ticket for cash, Ignatius boarded a Swissair flight for Geneva unobserved.

Once in the Swiss capital Ignatius booked into an inconspicuous hotel, retired to bed and slept soundly for eight hours. Over breakfast the following morning he studied the list of banks he had so carefully drawn up after completing his research in Nigeria: each name was written out boldly in his own hand.

Ignatius decided to start with Gerber et Cie whose building, he observed from the hotel bedroom, took up half the Avenue de Parchine. He checked the telephone number with the concierge before placing a call. The chairman agreed to see him at twelve o'clock.

Carrying only a battered briefcase, Ignatius arrived at the bank a few minutes before the appointed hour- an unusual occurrence for a Nigerian, thought the young man dressed in a smart grey suit, white shirt and grey silk tie, who was waiting in the marble hall to greet him. He bowed to the Minister, introducing himself as the chairman's personal assistant, and explained that he would accompany Ignatius to the chairman's office. The young executive led the Minister to a waiting lift and neither man uttered another word until they had reached the eleventh floor. A gentle tap on the chairman's door elicited "Entrez," which the young man obeyed.

"The Nigerian Minister of Finance, sir."

The chairman rose from behind his desk and stepped forward to greet his guest. Ignatius could not help noticing that he too wore a grey suit, white shirt and grey silk tie.

"Good morning, Minister," the chairman said. "Won't you have a seat?" He ushered Ignatius towards a low glass table surrounded by comfortable chairs on the far side of the room. "I have ordered coffee for both of us if that is acceptable."

Ignatius nodded, placed the battered briefcase on the floor by the side of his chair and stared out of the large plate-glass window. He made some small talk about the splendid view of the magnificent fountain while a girl served all three men with coffee.

Once the young woman had left the room Ignatius got down to business.

"My Head of State has requested that I visit your bank with a rather unusual request," he began. Not a flicker of surprise appeared on the face of the chairman or his young assistant. "He has honoured me with the task of discovering which Nigerian citizens hold numbered accounts with your bank."

On learning this piece of information only the chairman's lips moved. "I am not at liberty to disclose -"

"Allow me to put my case," said the Minister, raising a white palm. "First, let me assure you that I come with the absolute authority of my government." Without another word, Ignatius extracted an envelope from his inside pocket with a flourish. He handed it to the chairman who removed the letter inside and read it slowly.

Once he had finished reading, the banker cleared his throat. "This document, I fear, sir, carries no validity in my country." He replaced it in the envelope and handed it back to Ignatius. "I am, of course," continued the chairman, "not for one moment doubting that you have the full backing of your Head of State, both as a Minister and an Ambassador, but that does not change the bank's rule of confidentiality in such matters. There are no circumstances in which we would release the names of any of our account holders without their authority. I'm sorry to be of so little help, but those are, and will always remain, the bank rules." The chairman rose to his feet, as he considered the meeting was now at an end; but he had not bargained for Clean Sweep Ignatius.

"My Head of State," said Ignatius, softening his tone perceptibly, "has authorized me to approach your bank to act as the intermediary for all future transactions between my country and Switzerland."

"We are flattered by your confidence in us, Minister," replied the chairman, who remained standing.

"However, I feel sure that you will understand that it cannot alter our attitude to our customers' confidentiality."

Ignatius remained unperturbed.

"Then I am sorry to inform you, Mr Gerber, that our Ambassador in

Geneva will be instructed to make an official communiqué to the Swiss Foreign Office about the lack of co-operation your bank has shown concerning requests for information about our nationals." He waited for his words to sink in. "You could avoid such embarrassment, of course, by simply letting me know the names of my countrymen who hold accounts with Gerber et Cie and the amounts involved. I can assure you we would not reveal the source of our information."

"You are most welcome to lodge such a communiqué, sir, and I feel sure that our Minister will explain to your Ambassador in the most courteous of diplomatic language that the Foreign Ministry does not have the authority under Swiss law to demand such disclosures."

"If that is the case, I shall instruct my own Ministry of Trade to halt all future dealings in Nigeria with any Swiss nationals until these names are revealed."

"That is your privilege, Minister," replied the chairman, unmoved.

"And we may also have to reconsider every contract currently being negotiated by your countrymen in Nigeria. And in addition I shall personally see to it that no penalty clauses are honoured."

"Would you not consider such action a little precipitate?"

"Let me assure you, Mr Gerber, that I would not lose one moment of sleep over such a decision," said

Ignatius. "Even if my efforts to discover those names were to bring your country to its knees I would not be moved."

"So be it, Minister," replied the chairman. "However, it still does not alter the policy or the attitude of this bank to confidentiality."

"If that remains the case, sir, this very day I shall give instructions to our Ambassador to close our Embassy in Geneva and I shall declare your Ambassador in Lagos persona non grata."

For the first time the chairman raised his eyebrows.

"Furthermore," continued Ignatius, "I will hold a conference in London which will leave the world's press in no doubt of my Head of State's displeasure with the conduct of this bank. After such publicity I feel confident you will find that many of your customers would prefer to close their accounts, while others who have in the past considered you a safe haven may find it necessary to look elsewhere."

The Minister waited but still the chairman did not respond.

"Then you leave me no choice," said Ignatius, rising from his seat.

The chairman stretched out his arm, assuming that at last the Minister was leaving, only to watch with horror as Ignatius placed a hand in his jacket pocket and removed a small pistol. The two Swiss bankers froze as the Nigerian Minister of Finance stepped forward and pressed the muzzle against the chairman's temple.

"I need those names, Mr Gerber, and by now you must realise I will stop at nothing. If you don't supply them immediately I'm going to blow your brains out. Do you understand?"

The chairman gave a slight nod, beads of sweat appearing on his forehead. "And he will be next," said Ignatius, gesturing towards the young assistant, who stood speechless and paralysed a few paces away.

"Get me the names of every Nigerian who holds an account in this bank," Ignatius said quietly, looking towards the young man, "or I'll blow your chairman's brains all over his soft pile carpet. Immediately, do you hear me?" he added sharply.

The young man looked towards the chairman, who was now trembling but said quite clearly, "Non, Pierre, jamais."

"D'accord," replied the assistant in a whisper.

"You can't say I didn't give you every chance." Ignatius pulled back the hammer. The sweat was now pouring down the chairman's face and the young man had to turn his eyes away as he waited in terror for the pistol shot.

"Excellent," said Ignatius, as he removed the gun from the chairman's head and returned to his seat.

Both the bankers were still trembling and quite unable to speak.

The Minister picked up the battered briefcase by the side of his chair and placed it on the glass table in front of him. He pressed back the clasps and the lid flicked up.

The two bankers stared down at the neatly packed rows of hundred-dollar bills. Every inch of the briefcase had been taken up. The chairman quickly estimated that it probably amounted to around five million dollars.

"I wonder, sir," said Ignatius, "how I go about opening an account with your bank."

"The Story of An Hour"

Kate Chopin (1894)

Knowing that Mrs. Mallard was afflicted with a heart trouble, great care was taken to break to her as gently as possible the news of her husband's death.

It was her sister Josephine who told her, in broken sentences; veiled hints that revealed in half concealing. Her husband's friend Richards was there, too, near her. It was he who had been in the newspaper office when intelligence of the railroad disaster was received, with Brently Mallard's name leading the list of "killed." He had only taken the time to assure himself of its truth by a second telegram, and had hastened to forestall any less careful, less tender friend in bearing the sad message.

She did not hear the story as many women have heard the same, with a paralyzed inability to accept its significance. She wept at once, with sudden, wild abandonment, in her sister's arms. When the storm of grief had spent itself she went away to her room alone. She would have no one follow her.

There stood, facing the open window, a comfortable, roomy armchair. Into this she sank, pressed down by a physical exhaustion that haunted her body and seemed to reach into her soul.

She could see in the open square before her house the tops of trees that were all aquiver with the new spring life. The delicious breath of rain was in the air. In the street below a peddler was crying his wares. The notes of a distant song which some one was singing reached her faintly, and countless sparrows were twittering in the eaves.

There were patches of blue sky showing here and there through the clouds that had met and piled one above the other in the west facing her window.

She sat with her head thrown back upon the cushion of the chair, quite motionless, except when a sob came up into her throat and shook her, as a child who has cried itself to sleep continues to sob in its dreams.

She was young, with a fair, calm face, whose lines bespoke repression and even a certain strength. But now there was a dull stare in her eyes, whose gaze was fixed away off yonder on one of those patches of blue sky. It was not a glance of reflection, but rather indicated a suspension of intelligent thought.

There was something coming to her and she was waiting for it, fearfully. What was it? She did not know; it was too subtle and elusive to name. But she felt it, creeping out of the sky, reaching toward her through the sounds, the scents, the color that filled the air.

Now her bosom rose and fell tumultuously. She was beginning to recognize this thing that was approaching to possess her, and she was striving to beat it back with her will--as powerless as her two white slender hands would have been. When she abandoned herself a little whispered word escaped her slightly parted lips. She said it over and over under her breath: "free, free,

free!" The vacant stare and the look of terror that had followed it went from her eyes. They stayed keen and bright. Her pulses beat fast, and the coursing blood warmed and relaxed every inch of her body.

She did not stop to ask if it were or were not a monstrous joy that held her. A clear and exalted perception enabled her to dismiss the suggestion as trivial. She knew that she would weep again when she saw the kind, tender hands folded in death; the face that had never looked save with love upon her, fixed and gray and dead. But she saw beyond that bitter moment a long procession of years to come that would belong to her absolutely. And she opened and spread her arms out to them in welcome.

There would be no one to live for during those coming years; she would live for herself. There would be no powerful will bending hers in that blind persistence with which men and women believe they have a right to impose a private will upon a fellow-creature. A kind intention or a cruel intention made the act seem no less a crime as she looked upon it in that brief moment of illumination.

And yet she had loved him--sometimes. Often she had not. What did it matter! What could love, the unsolved mystery, count for in the face of this possession of self-assertion which she suddenly recognized as the strongest impulse of her being!

"Free! Body and soul free!" she kept whispering.

Josephine was kneeling before the closed door with her lips to the keyhole, imploring for admission. "Louise, open the door! I beg; open the door--you will make yourself ill. What are you doing, Louise? For heaven's sake open the door."

"Go away. I am not making myself ill." No; she was drinking in a very elixir of life through that open window.

Her fancy was running riot along those days ahead of her. Spring days, and summer days, and all sorts of days that would be her own. She breathed a quick prayer that life might be long. It was only yesterday she had thought with a shudder that life might be long.

She arose at length and opened the door to her sister's importunities. There was a feverish triumph in her eyes, and she carried herself unwittingly like a goddess of Victory. She clasped her sister's waist, and together they descended the stairs. Richards stood waiting for them at the bottom.

Someone was opening the front door with a latchkey. It was Brently Mallard who entered, a little travel-stained, composedly carrying his grip-sack and umbrella. He had been far from the scene of the accident, and did not even know there had been one. He stood amazed at Josephine's piercing cry; at Richards' quick motion to screen him from the view of his wife.

When the doctors came they said she had died of heart disease--of the joy that kills.

PASSING

By Langston Hughes

Chicago,
Sunday, Oct. 10.

Dear Ma,

I felt like a dog, passing you downtown last night and not speaking to you. You were great, though. Didn't give me a sign that you even knew me, let alone I was your son. If I hadn't had the girl with me, Ma, we might have talked. I'm not as scared as I used to be about somebody taking me for colored any more just because I'm seen talking on the street to a Negro. I guess in looks I'm sort of suspect-proof, anyway. You remember what a hard time I used to have in school trying to convince teachers I was really colored. Sometimes, even after they met you, my mother, they wouldn't believe it. They just thought I had a mulatto mammy, I guess. Since I've begun to pass for white, nobody has ever doubted that I am a white man. Where I work, the boss is a Southerner and is always cussing out Negroes in my presence, not dreaming I'm one. It is to laugh!

Funny thing, though, Ma, how some white people certainly don't like colored people, do they? (If they did, then I wouldn't have to be passing to keep my good job.) They go out of their way sometimes to say bad things about colored folks, putting it out that all of us are thieves and liars, or else diseased -- consumption and syphilis, and the like. No wonder it's hard for a black man to get a good job with the kind of false propaganda going around. I never knew they made a practice of saying such terrible things about us until I started passing and heard their conversations and lived their life.

But I don't mind being "white", Ma, and it was mighty generous of you to urge me to go ahead and make use of my light skin and good hair. It got me this job, Ma, where I still get \$65 a week in spite of the depression. And I'm in line for promotion to the chief office secretary, if Mr. Weeks goes to Washington. When I look at the colored boy porter who sweeps out the office, I think that's what I might be doing if I wasn't light-skinned enough to get by. No matter how smart that boy'd get to be, they wouldn't hire him for a clerk in the office, not if they knew it. Only for a porter. That's why I sometimes get a kick out of putting something over on the boss, who never dreams he's got a colored secretary.

But, Ma, I felt mighty bad about last night. The first time we'd met in public that way. That's the kind of thing that makes passing hard, having to deny your own family when you see them. Of course, I know you and I both realize it is all for the best, but anyhow it's terrible. I love you, Ma, and hate to do it, even if you say you don't mind.

But what did you think of the girl with me, Ma? She's the kid I'm going to marry. Pretty good-looking, isn't she? Nice disposition. The parents are well fixed. Her folks are German-Americans and don't have much prejudice about them, either. I took her to see a colored revue last week and she thought it was great. She said, "Darkies are so graceful and gay." I wonder what she would have said if I'd told her *I* was colored, or half-colored -- that my old man was white, but you weren't? But I guess I won't go into that. Since I've made up my mind to live in the white world, and have found my place in it (a good place), why think about race any more? I'm glad I don't have to, I know that much.

I hope Charlie and Gladys don't feel bad about me. It's funny I was the only one of the kids light enough to pass. Charlie's darker than you, even, Ma. I know he sort of resented it in school when the teachers used to take me for white, before they knew we were brothers. I used to feel bad about it, too, then. But now I'm glad you backed me up, and told me to go ahead and get all I could out of life. That's what I'm going to do, Ma. I'm going to marry white and live white, and if any of my kids are born dark I'll swear they aren't mine. I won't get caught in the mire of color again. Not me. I'm free, Ma, free!

I'd be glad, though, if I could get away from Chicago, transferred to the New York office, or the San Francisco branch of the firm -- somewhere where what happened last night couldn't ever occur again. It was awful passing *you* and not speaking. And if Gladys or Charlie were to meet me in the street, they might not be as tactful as you were -- because they don't seem to be very happy about my passing for white. I don't see why, though. I'm not hurting them any, and I send you money every week, and help out just as much as they do, if not more. Tell them not to queer me, Ma, if they should ever run into me and the girl friend any place. Maybe it would have been better if you and they had stayed in Cincinnati and I'd come away alone when we decided to move after the old man died. Or at least we should have gone to different towns, shouldn't we?

Gee, Ma, when I think of how papa left everything to his white family, and you couldn't legally do anything for us kids, my blood boils. You wouldn't have a chance in a Kentucky court, I know, but maybe if you'd tried anyway, his white children would have paid you something to shut up. Maybe they wouldn't want it known in the papers that they had colored brothers. But you was too proud, wasn't you, Ma? I wouldn't have been so proud.

Well, he did buy you a house and send all us kids through school. I'm glad I finished college in Pittsburgh before he died. It was too bad about Charlie and Glad having to drop out, but I hope Charlie gets something better to do than working in a garage. And from what you told me in your last letter about Gladys, I don't blame you for being worried about her -- wanting to go in the chorus of one of those South Side cabarets. Lord! But I know it's really tough for girls to get any kind of a job during this depression, especially for colored girls, even if Gladys is high yellow, and smart. But I hope you can keep her home, and out of those South Side dumps. They're no place for a good girl.

Well, Ma, I will close because I promised to take my weakness to the movies this evening. Isn't she sweet to look at, all blonde and blue-eyed? We're making plans about our house when we get married. We're going to take a little apartment on the North Side, in a good neighborhood, out on one of those nice quiet side streets where there are trees. I will take a box at the Post Office for your mail. Anyhow, I'm glad there's nothing to stop letters from crossing the color-line. Even if we can't meet often, we can write, can't we, Ma?

With love from your son,
Jack.

A Retrieved Reformation

O. Henry **p**

IN THE PRISON SHOE-SHOP, JIMMY VALENTINE was busily at work making

shoes. A prison officer came into the shop, and led Jimmy to the prison office. There Jimmy was given an important paper. It said that he was free.

Jimmy took the paper without showing much pleasure or interest. He had been sent to prison to stay for four years. He had been there for ten months. But he had expected to stay only three months. Jimmy Valentine had many friends outside the prison. A man with so many friends does not expect to stay in prison long.

"Valentine," said the chief prison officer, "you'll go out tomorrow morning. This is your chance. Make a man of yourself. You're not a bad fellow at heart. Stop breaking safes open, and live a better life."

"Me?" said Jimmy in surprise. "I never broke open a safe in my life."

"Oh, no," the chief prison officer laughed. "Never. Let's see. How did you happen to get sent to prison for opening that safe in Springfield? Was it because you didn't want to tell where you really were? Perhaps because you were with some lady, and you didn't want to tell her name? Or was it because the judge didn't like you? You men always have a reason like that. You never go to prison because you broke open a safe."

"Me?" Jimmy said. His face still showed surprise. "I was never in Springfield in my life."

"Take him away," said the chief prison officer. "Get him the clothes he needs for going outside. Bring him here again at seven in the morning. And think about what I said, Valentine."

At a quarter past seven on the next morning, Jimmy stood again in the office. He had on some new clothes that did not fit him, and a pair of new shoes that hurt his feet. These are the usual clothes given to a prisoner when he leaves the prison.

Next they gave him money to pay for his trip on a train to the city near the prison. They gave him five dollars more. The five dollars were supposed to help him become a better man.

Then the chief prison officer put out his hand for a handshake. That was the end of Valentine, Prisoner 9762. Mr. James Valentine walked out into the sunshine.

He did not listen to the song of the birds or look at the green trees or smell the flowers. He went straight to a restaurant. There he tasted the first sweet joys of being free. He had a good dinner. After that he went to the train station. He gave some money to a blind man who sat there, asking for money, and then he got on the train.

Three hours later he got off the train in a small town. Here he went to the restaurant of Mike Dolan.

Mike Dolan was alone there. After shaking hands he said, "I'm sorry we couldn't do it sooner, Jimmy my boy. But there was that safe in Springfield, too. It wasn't easy. Feeling all right?"

"Fine," said Jimmy. "Is my room waiting for me?"

He went up and opened the door of a room at the back of the house. Everything was as he had left it. It was here they had found Jimmy, when they took him to prison. There on the floor was a small piece of cloth. It had been torn from the coat of the cop, as Jimmy was fighting to escape.

There was a bed against the wall. Jimmy pulled the bed toward the middle of the room. The wall behind it looked like any wall, but now Jimmy found and opened a small door in it. From this opening he pulled out a dust-covered bag.

He opened this and looked lovingly at the tools for breaking open a safe. No finer tools could be found any place. They were complete; everything needed was here. They had been made of a special material, in the necessary sizes and shapes. Jimmy had planned them himself, and he was very proud of them.

It had cost him over nine hundred dollars to have these tools made at a place where they make such things for men who work at the job of safe-breaking.

In half an hour Jimmy went downstairs and through the restaurant. He was now dressed in good clothes that fitted him well. He carried his dusted and cleaned bag.

"Do you have anything planned?" asked Mike Dolan.

"Me?" asked Jimmy as if surprised. "I don't understand. I work for the New York Famous Bread and Cake Makers Company. And I sell the best bread and cake in the country."

Mike enjoyed these words so much that Jimmy had to take a drink with him. Jimmy had some milk. He never drank anything stronger.

A week after Valentine, 9762, left the prison, a safe was broken open in Richmond, Indiana. No one knew who did it. Eight hundred dollars were taken.

Two weeks after that, a safe in Logansport was opened. It was a new kind of safe; it had been made, they said, so strong that no one could break it open. But someone did, and took fifteen hundred dollars.

Then a safe in Jefferson City was opened. Five thousand dollars were taken. This loss was a big one. Ben Price was a cop who worked on such important matters, and now he began to work on this.

He went to Richmond, Indiana, and to Logansport, to see how the safe-breaking had been done in those places. He was heard to say: "I can see that Jim Valentine has been here. He is in business again. Look at the way he opened this one. Everything easy, everything clean. He is the only man who has the tools to do it. And he is the only man who knows how to use tools like this. Yes, I want Mr. Valentine. Next time he goes to prison, he's going to stay there until his time is finished."

Ben Price knew how Jimmy worked. Jimmy would go from one city to another far away. He always worked alone. He always left quickly when he was finished. He enjoyed being with nice people. For all these reasons, it was not easy to catch Mr. Valentine.

People with safes full of money were glad to hear that Ben Price was at work trying to catch Mr. Valentine.

One afternoon Jimmy Valentine and his bag arrived in a small town named Elmore. Jimmy, looking as young as a college boy, walked down the street toward the hotel.

A young lady walked across the street, passed him at the corner, and entered a door. Over the door was the sign, "The Elmore Bank." Jimmy Valentine looked into her eyes, forgetting at once what he was. He became another man. She looked away, and brighter color came into her face. Young men like Jimmy did not appear often in Elmore.

Jimmy saw a boy near the bank door, and began to ask questions about the town. After a time the young lady came out and went on her way. She seemed not to see Jimmy as she passed him.

"Isn't that young lady Polly Simpson?" asked Jimmy.

"No," said the boy. "She's Annabel Adams. Her father owns this bank."

Jimmy went to the hotel, where he said his name was Ralph D. Spencer. He got a room there. He told the hotel man he had come to Elmore to go into business. How was the shoe business? Was there already a good shoe-shop?

The man thought that Jimmy's clothes and manners were fine.

He was happy to talk to him.

Yes, Elmore needed a good shoe-shop. There was no shop that sold just shoes. Shoes were sold in the big shops that sold everything. All business in Elmore was good. He hoped Mr. Spencer would decide to stay in Elmore. It was a pleasant town to live in and the people were friendly.

Mr. Spencer said he would stay in the town a few days and learn something about it. No, he said, he himself would carry his bag up to his room. He didn't want a boy to take it. It was very heavy.

Mr. Ralph Spencer remained in Elmore. He started a shoe-shop. Business was good.

Also he made many friends. And he was successful with the wish of his heart. He met Annabel Adams. He liked her better every day.

At the end of a year everyone in Elmore liked Mr. Ralph Spencer. His shoe-shop was doing very good business. And he and Annabel were going to be married in two weeks. Mr. Adams, the small-town banker, liked Spencer. Annabel was very proud of him. He seemed already to belong to the Adams family.

One day Jimmy sat down in his room to write this letter, which he sent to one of his old friends:

Dear Old Friend:

I want you to meet me at Sullivan's place next week, on the evening of the 10th. I want to give you my tools. I know you'll be glad to have them. You couldn't buy them for a thousand dollars. I finished with the old business—a year ago. I have a nice shop. I'm living a better life, and I'm going to marry the best girl on earth two weeks from now. It's the only life—I wouldn't ever again touch another man's money. After I marry, I'm going to go further west, where I'll never see anyone who knew me in my old life. I tell you, she's a wonderful girl. She trusts me.

Your old friend, Jimmy.

On the Monday night after Jimmy sent this letter, Ben Price arrived quietly in Elmore. He moved slowly about the town in his quiet way, and he learned all that he wanted to know. Standing inside a shop, he watched Ralph D. Spencer walk by.

"You're going to marry the banker's daughter, are you, Jimmy?" said Ben to himself. "I don't feel sure about that!"

The next morning Jimmy was at the Adams home. He was going to a nearby city that day to buy new clothes for the **wedding**. He was also going to buy a gift for Annabel. It would be his first trip out of Elmore. It was more than a year now since he had done any safe-breaking.

Most of the Adams family went to the bank together that morning. There were Mr. Adams, Annabel, Jimmy, and Annabel's married sister with her two little girls, aged five and nine. They passed Jimmy's hotel, and Jimmy ran up to his room and brought along his bag. Then they went to the bank.

All went inside—Jimmy, too, for he was one of the family. Everyone in the bank was glad to see the good-looking, nice young man who was going to marry Annabel. Jimmy put down his bag.

Annabel, laughing, put Jimmy's hat on her head and picked up the bag. "How do I look?" she asked. "Ralph, how heavy this bag is! It feels full of gold."

"It's full of some things I don't need in my shop," Jimmy said. "I'm taking them to the city, to the place where they came from. That saves me the cost of sending them. I'm going to be a married man. I must learn to save money."

The Elmore bank had a new safe. Mr. Adams was very proud of it, and he wanted everyone to see it. It was as large as a small room, and it had a very special door. The door was controlled by a clock. Using the clock, the banker planned the time when the door should open. At other times no one, not even the banker himself, could open it. He explained about it to Mr. Spencer. Mr. Spencer seemed interested but he did not seem to understand very easily. The two children, May and Agatha, enjoyed seeing the shining heavy door, with all its special parts.

While they were busy like this, Ben Price entered the bank and looked around. He told a young man who worked there that he had not come on business; he was waiting for a man.

Suddenly there was a cry from the women. They had not been watching the children. May, the nine-year-old girl, had playfully but firmly closed the door of the safe. And Agatha was inside.

The old banker tried to open the door. He pulled at it for a moment. "The door can't be opened," he cried. "And the clock—I hadn't started it yet."

Agatha's mother cried out again.

"Quiet!" said Mr. Adams, raising a shaking hand. "All be quiet for a moment. Agatha!" he called as loudly as he could. "Listen to me." They could hear, but not clearly, the sound of the child's voice. In the darkness inside the safe, she was wild with fear.

"My baby!" her mother cried. "She will die of fear! Open the door! Break it open! Can't you men do something?"

"There isn't a man nearer than the city who can open that door," said Mr. Adams, in a shaking voice. "My God! Spencer, what shall we do? That child—she can't live long in there. There isn't enough air. And the fear will kill her."

Agatha's mother, wild too now, beat on the door with her hands. Annabel turned to Jimmy, her large eyes full of pain, but with some hope, too. A woman thinks that the man she loves can somehow do anything.

"Can't you do something, Ralph? Try, won't you?"

He looked at her with a strange soft smile on his lips and in his eyes.

"Annabel," he said, "give me that flower you are wearing, will you?"

She could not believe that she had really heard him. But she put the flower in his hand. Jimmy took it and put it where he could not lose it. Then he pulled off his coat. With that act, Ralph D. Spencer passed away and Jimmy Valentine took his place.

"Stand away from the door, all of you," he commanded.

He put his bag on the table, and opened it flat. From that time on, he seemed not to know that anyone else was near. Quickly he laid the shining strange tools on the table. The others watched as if they had lost the power to move.

In a minute Jimmy was at work on the door. In ten minutes—faster than he had ever done it before—he had the door open.

Agatha was taken into her mother's arms.

Jimmy Valentine put on his coat, picked up the flower and walked toward the front door. As he went he thought he heard a voice call, "Ralph!" He did not stop.

At the door a big man stood in his way.

"Hello, Ben!" said Jimmy, still with his strange smile. "You're here at last, are you? Let's go. I don't care, now."

And then Ben Price acted rather strangely.

"I guess you're wrong about this, Mr. Spencer," he said. "I don't believe I know you, do I?"

And Ben Price turned and walked slowly down the street.

- Prefix suffix, Antonym, Synonym, form Sentences.