

L I L I T H

"Not a drop of her blood was human,
But she was made like a soft sweet woman."

A Play in Four Acts.

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CHARACTERS

Hold
JERRY MALTBY -
SIBYL MOTT
THE HON HUGH FANSHAWE
JOAN, DUCHESS OF WINMOUTH
LORD HARVEY
LILITH CARSTAIRS -
DENIS, DUKE OF WINMOUTH
~~ERROL~~ BROOMFIELD

ASOCLEGAN: *(diag)*
M'LALA) NATIVES
MAFOOTA)
ZANALELE)

A C T 1

SCENE:-

Garden of the Duke of Winmouth's house on the Thames, England. There is a stone terrace at right lighted by the glow from the windows of the house. Stone steps lead down into the garden. A formal box hedge goes round upper right and right centre, screening a semi-circular stone bench from the house. There is a pathway running up stage between the terrace and the box hedge. At lower end of hedge stands a statue holding lamp which lights up the bench and right half of garden, the rest of the garden is dark save for the moonlight streaming through the trees. Up centre there is an evergreen archway, through which the river can be seen rippling a short distance away. On left there is a group of trees with entrances above and below. A stone sun-dial stands left-centre lighted by the moonlight and standing out in strong relief against the background of trees.

There is an atmosphere of old world dignity and charm, a sense of security and peace, which might be expected of a place which has been pleasantly mellowing for a century at least.

Throughout the act sounds of laughter and dance music issue intermittently from the house. The present tune is somewhat jazzy.)

(JERRY MALTBY and SIBYL MOTT appear on terrace R. JERRY is a typical smart Society 'tame cat'. Rather flabby with hair inclined to be sparse on top. His passion is people. He has no illusions, but still a few enthusiasms. SIBYL is rather a pleasant girl of uncertain age, extremely well dressed)

Jerry

Phew! We're too old for that freak dancing. Lilith is the only one who can do it and not look like the village idiot in a fit.

Sibyl

Speak for yourself.

Jerry

Then go and find someone your own age to rattle around.

Sibyl

Are you being offensive?

Jerry
No, flattering - very subtle.

Sibyl
Well, I don't pretend to be a flapper.

*first appears
around 1914*

implies that Lilit is

Jerry
Thank God. I think forty is an ideal age myself.

Sybil
Forty! You do exaggerate.

Jerry
Oh Lord, aren't you? - You see you have so much sense I thought-

Sibyl
No woman wants to be admired for her sense.

Jerry
Really I don't see how you acquired so much wisdom under -

Sibyl
Must you keep harping on my age?

(They move up right and disappear behind hedge.
The music has drifted into a soft waltz.
HUGH enters from centre arch. He is about thirty,
tall, dark, lean. He is eager, impulsive, intense,
and rather suggests a race horse impatient of restraint.
High-strung, sensitive, passionate, he is the soul of
honour and fiercely loyal to his friends. With his strong
passions and hatred of anything mean, life to him is
not an easy matter. He moves R and appears to be looking
through the windows in search of someone, he finds them
and watches with great intensity as they move in and
out among the dancers. The object of his attention
then disappears. He turns away, lights a cigarette
and stands by centre arch, watching the river.

JOAN appears on terrace looking about - apparently for
no one in particular. She is about 24, small, dark,
beautiful, with fine features and a straight trim figure.
She has a frank, charming personality, and suggests the
thoroughbred. Her warmth, generosity and utter
lack of affectation make her pretty generally adored.
She espies HUGH and moves toward him.)

Joan
Hello, Hugh! Want a partner?

Hugh
Hello! No, thanks, Joan, I don't feel like dancing

*Ideal -
Voiced by a
woman to give
it "truth"*

Joan
And I got the prettiest girls in London for you. Awful
snub for them - most eligible bachelor to prefer the -

Hugh
Eligible!

Joan
Anything wrong, Hugh?

Hugh
Oh, nothing more than usual.

Joan
Got a grouch? You're always more discontented when you've
made a success.

Hugh
Such a feeble success compared to -

Joan
To what you're going to do. I know. Still you've made
a good start.

Hugh
I was a fool to choose politics. It's no game for a poor
man, and having to fag for Harvey to make ends meet is - Hell.

Joan
Yes, bit of a sweat. Still Lord Harvey is a good stepping
stone. That's why I asked him to-night.

Hugh
I'm wearing out on stepping stones. It'll be years before
I can decently ask a girl to marry me.

Joan
(after a slight pause)
Money isn't so important to women, Hugh.

Hugh
All right for you - you've never missed it.

Joan
No, but I've often cursed it. I'd be happier with Denis in
a cottage.

Hugh
One can't ask a girl to give up everything just for-

Joan
Question of values.

*Again - woman
speaks*

Hugh
But when a girl's been used to all the trappings - going everywhere, doing everything - How on earth can I *---

Joan
You won't be poor long, and if a girl loves you -

Hugh
Out of date, old girl.

Joan
Is it - Lilith, Hugh?

Hugh
Yes.

Joan
She's wonderful.

Hugh
But it isn't fair to ask her to -

Joan
It isn't fair not to. Cheer up, old man. We're all betting on you..... Must toddle back. Coming?

Hugh
(putting his arm through hers)
Yes, and what's more - I'm going to dance.

(LORD HARVEY appears on terrace, looks about him appraisingly. He is a fine military looking man about fifty, a little inclined to stiffness, rather autocratic in manner, fundamentally sound, but inducing respect rather than affection.
As Joan and Hugh turn, they see him without being seen)

Hugh
Oh, lord, there's Harvey. Can't lose him. Come the other way.

Joan
No, you go. I must be nice to him.

Hugh
(kissing her hand)
Little Joan of Arc!
(he disappears through arch. JOAN turns and approaches LORD HARVEY.)

Harvey
(meeting her)
You have a wonderful place here, Duchess.

Joan
Yes, we love it, though we hardly use it except for week-ends when we are staying in Town.

*Joan is
a Duchess -
and "universally
loved"*

Harvey

Ah, Arcadia after the metropolis! Your dance is a great success. I have rarely seen so many lovely girls. Miss Carstairs of course outshines them all.

Joan

Yes, Lilith is looking lovely. It was so nice of you to come, Lord Harvey. Hugh was afraid you would be too busy.

Harvey

One's secretary has to keep up that illusion of course. But really, in this case, Fanshawe should have known.

Joan

Oh. Hugh didn't think you cared for dancing.

Harvey

He thinks my sole recreations are laying corner stones and making speeches. A great friend of yours. I believe.

Joan

He and my husband have been chums since Eton, and of course, Denis' chums are mine. Hugh is like a big brother to me.

Harvey

Ah! He talks a great deal of you both.

Joan

He has brilliant prospects, don't you think, Lord Harvey?

Harvey

(he is down stage looking towards ballroom)
Very promising indeed. How very ethereal Miss Carstairs looks in white.

Joan

Oh, Lilith always looks glorious - even before breakfast.

Harvey

That I have not had the happiness of -

Joan

Wouldn't you like a partner?

Harvey

(hastily)

I have the next dance with Miss Carstairs, so was saving myself in anticipation.

Joan

(glances thoughtfully the way Hugh has gone)
Oh, I see. Would you like to see the sunken garden? It is so lovely by moonlight.

(SIBYL and JERRY appear at centre)

Costume

Harvey

(coughs)
Er - I should - very much. But er - Miss Carstairs popularity
is so great I er -

Joan

(laughing)
Oh, we shall have plenty of time.

Harvey

Then, Duchess, nothing would give me greater pleasure.

(JOAN and HARVEY exit L., as SIBYL and JERRY come
down centre)

Jerry

(looking after them)
Poor Joan being civil to Lord Harvey. I don't see why they
had that stick to a jolly kick-up like this.

Sibyl

I love Lords. You can't have too many about for me.

Jerry

My dear Sibyl, if you must be a snob, at least be snob enough
to conceal it. Besides Harvey -
(shrugs)

Sibyl

He looks awfully aristocratic.

Jerry

The nursemaid's idea of aristocratic. Come, I'll show you the
garden. This is the Courting bench.

Sibyl

Courting bench?

Jerry

Joan says more matches are made here than any other spot on
the Thames. Sit down.

Sibyl

(promptly sitting)
Oh, this is so sudden.

Jerry

Get up.

Sibyl

(jumping up quickly)
Why?

Jerry

Wrong cue.

Sibyl

(relieved)

Oh, I thought it was a spider.

(sits)

Sit down.

Jerry

Thanks, but-my intentions are not honourable

Sibyl

Idiot!

Jerry

That's all right then.

(sits)

I bring all my partners here, it breaks the ice.

Sibyl

Each time I've seen you, it's been Joan.

Jerry

Not often enough to cause scandal, I'm afraid.

(sighs)

Curious, I don't like good women. But Joan makes saintliness as charming as sin.~~Look out for the Duke. I never saw a man so in love with his wife.~~

Sibyl

You're growing lyrical Jerry

And married two years too.

Jerry

Joan can always inspire me to song.

~~She's a darling~~

Sibyl

Look out for the Duke. I never saw a man so in love with his wife.

Jerry

And married two years too.

Sibyl

He's a darling.

Jerry

Personally, I can't forgive a man for having everything - money, titles, youth, good looks, lovely wife... It is hogging it a bit.

Sibyl

Not when he carries them so nicely. I love his attitude to women * -- such homage and deference.*How men should behave*

Men on women's
honor

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Jerry

Women don't want deference - they know they don't deserve it.

Sibyl

I suppose they prefer your rudeness.

Jerry

What else attracts them in such hordes?

Sibyl

(looks him up and down witheringly)

Must be pity.

Jerry

Pity! Akin to love. H'm, this bench *-- dangerous. Get up.
I'll show you the garden.

(rises hastily)

Sibyl

(rising)

This place is adorable.

Jerry

You should see their place in Suffolk - ancestral with a capital
C. All the old feudal -

(there are sounds of clapping from the house and cries of
'encore'. LILITH comes out laughing. She is about 25,
tall, fair, slender, beautiful as a goddess. She has
startlingly blue eyes which sometimes have a slightly
sensuous droop, and sometimes open wide in a soft trustful
stare. Everything about her is exquisite. The haughty
arch of her eyebrows gives her a slightly fastidious air,
which is augmented by the finely chiselled nose and chin.
But this effect is charmingly contradicted by the appeal-
ing eyes and richly curved lips. Altogether she is
a rare and exotic thing, made for love and luxury.

She is followed by DENIS, DUKE OF WINMOUTH, Denis is
about thirty, middle height, very good looking sportsman
type. Jolly and easy going, enjoys life to the full.
Open handed, kindly, affectionate, a thoroughly good fellow
with men, and with a charming deferential and protective
air to women, suggesting the chivalry of the Round Table
era, rather than of the twentieth century.)

Denis

(catching LILITH by the hand)

Lilith, don't go. They want some more.

(they are both breathless and laughing)

Lilith

No more Denis. You made up those steps yourself. They are
quite mad.

Denis

Latest thing. You caught on beautifully. Come on, I'll show you some more.

Lilith

I daren't, I'm all worked up. Another moment and I should have burst out into barbaric whirls and leaps.

Denis

Fine! Come on back.

Lilith

I hate to be laughed at.

Denis

Laughed at - you! Your whim to-day is to-morrow's mode.

Lilith

(laughs musically. She and Denis talk animatedly together)

Jerry

(to Sibyl)

His Grace flirting with the toast of the town.

Sibyl

Who? O Lilith Carstairs. She's too lovely to be true.

Jerry

She's probably not - for long.

(aloud, as Denis and Lilith approach)

Hello, Denis, I'm dazzling Miss Mott with tales of your grandeur.

Denis

If he bores you any more, Miss Mott, scream for help and I'll -

Sibyl

Oh, I'm thrilled. Don't you think this garden is romantic, Miss Carstairs?

Lilith

Yes, they get such good moonlight effects.

Jerry

Denis, old man, be brave. Harvey has just run away with your wife.

Denis

Don't make me laugh. Poor old Harvey!

Jerry

I thought that would go well. They are the only two in London I can't get any scandal on.

Fears
Lack of
control -
"true nature"

Lilith
Well it is scandalous - Joan running off with my partner.

Jerry
(in a stage whisper)
The sunken garden.

Lilith
Are we to go there?

Jerry
That's so you can avoid it.

Lilith
(laughs)
Then you'll tell Joan I've run away with her husband. I know
you, Jerry Maltby. Come along, Denis.

(she and Denis move L)

Jerry
(aside to Sibyl)
She would too, if she got half a chance.

Denis
(by sun dial. to Lilith)
You don't want to find Harvey.

Lilith
But I promised -

Denis
He'll find you - even if he has to wade through blood.
You've made a hit with the old boy. But I think we can do better
for you than that.

Lilith
(laughing)
You have decided to marry me off then.

Denis
Well, personally, I don't think you ought to marry.

Lilith
Why not?

Denis
You'd leave too many broken hearts.

Lilith
Dear old Denis, always gallant.

(they exit left)

not indication
of trouble

Broken
men too

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Sibyl

(to Jerry)
What have you got against her?

Jerry

Gets too much attention.

Sibyl

Puts your nose out of joint?

Jerry

And she's not half so brilliant.

Sibyl

She looks so sweet and spirituelle. I should instinctively talk about Heaven to her.

Jerry

That's a place she doesn't know much about.

Sibyl

Oh!

Jerry

But I'll be charitable and add that there's little else she doesn't know about.

Sibyl

(looking after Lilith)

I suppose anyone as beautiful as she is bound to get conceited.

Jerry

It isn't conceit - it's conviction. She knows she's pre-eminent - everyone's attitude proves it. There's not a man alive who would refuse her when she speaks in her charming imperious tone - I couldn't, if I had to die the next minute. In another age she'd have set whole nations clawing at each other, but in this phlegmatic age she has to be content with individuals. She's the type of woman who would order her lover to death the morning after - and he'd think it cheap at the price.

Sibyl

Doesn't sound very lovable.

Jerry

Well, women don't love her, though I must admit that she and Joan are great pals. But Joan is more like a man in her social relations - no pettiness or jealousy.

Sibyl

Oh, well, Joan has no need to be jealous of anyone.

Jerry

Other women would. Lilith did have a try for Denis - he was the best mmatch in her set. But Joan rode straighter to hounds. That's where she had it all over Lilith. Both Joan and Denis are mad about horses.

Sibyl

Funny Lilith hasn't married. I expect she's too popular.

Jerry

Too popular?

Sibyl

Men fight shy of popular women for wives.

Jerry

Oh, my poor child! Only disappointed old maids say that. It's how they justify their own single state.

(Joan and Denis come in arm in arm from left)
(to Denis)

Ah! Thank God, you were in time.

Denis

Don't be an ass.

Joan

Aren't you coming to dance?

Jerry

Oh, thanks!

Joan

(laughing)

Oh, not with me. I'm engaged to Denis.

(she and Denis go off laughing, still arm in arm)

Sibyl

I suppose we ought to go too.

Jerry

Do you want to dance?

Sibyl

No, but -

Jerry

Afraid of being compromised?

Sibyl

With you?

Jerry
Then don't fidget. I'll show you the garden.

(they move left into the shadow of the trees.
HUGH comes from the house, goes to arch and looks about,
then turns left and nearly runs into them)

Hugh
Oh, I beg your pardon, I thought -

Jerry
Hello Fanshawe! Looking for your M.P.? Last time I saw him
he was luring women into the sunken garden.

Hugh
Thanks, I'm not his dry nurse.

Jerry
But think of your country and-

(HUGH disappears left)

Drama afoot. We must stay around. Come and sit down.
(they return to bench)

Sibyl
You get all your thrills watching other people.

Jerry
More thrills and half the cost. Now you don't know who
Fanshawe was looking for.

Sibyl
Do you?

Jerry
Yes - but I'm discreet. Fanshawe nearly knocked me down
once because I said something complimentary about Lilith.

Sibyl
What?

Jerry
I said she combined the wisdom of Solomon with the beauty of all
his concubines. Ahem!
(coughs warningly as LILITH appears on the terrace with
HARVEY)

Harvey
Wouldn't you rather sit this dance out?

Lilith
I'm not tired.

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Harvey

You've been dancing all the evening.

Lilith

I love it so, don't you?

Harvey

Not when the alternative is to be with you alone in a garden

Lilith

(laughs gently)
It is lovely here.

Harvey

Come and sit down.

(turns to bench, but finding Maltby there, coughs embarrassed)
Ah, Maltby, resting your old bones?

Jerry

No, sir, merely studying the local fauna.

Harvey

I hope it repays your attention.

Jerry

Quite.

Harvey

Ah!

(clears his throat and moves on)

Lilith

(to Jerry as she follows Harvey)
Were you being personal?

Jerry

No more than he was. Oh, Lilith, first wife of Adam, you cut my dance.

Lilith

You're an impudent little boy.

Jerry

Not a drop of her blood was human, but she was made like a soft sweet woman.

Lilith

(laughs and joins Harvey at the centre arch)
Oh, look at the moon on the river. It's like a pathway of liquid silver.

Harvey

Let me take you to that silver path.

*Here myth
is mentioned*

Lilith

(hesitates and looks back uneasily)
But we ought-

Harvey

(urgently)
Just for a few magic moments. I want to speak to you. It would be a perfect setting for what I have to say.

Lilith

But I have promised to dance with-

Harvey

I will bring you back.

Lilith

(thinks hard a moment, then says quietly)
It would be rather thrilling.
(The disappear through the archway)

Jerry

(quoting) *what?*
Every hair of her head is golden, and there in a net his heart is holden.) Pity he's such a pompous old ass.

Sibyl

I suppose he's very important - always seems to be making speeches.

Jerry

Fanshawe writes all his stuff and Harvey takes the credit. Now it looks as though he were trying to take his girl.

Sibyl

What, Lilith - is she -

Jerry

Not officially. Fanshawe's only a younger son. Still he may get into Parliament next go.

Sibyl

She couldn't live on the income from that . That dress alone -

Jerry

She's a spoiled wench. Always had everything till her father died. All he left her was a taste for luxury without the wherewithal.

Sibyl

She should do something.

Jerry

Lilith? - she couldn't. She knows one thing - how to charm men. That ought to get her anything she wants *- which is no small order.

explains need for goods/marriage

greedy

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Sibyl

Do you think she'll marry Harvey?

Jerry

God help her if she does.

Sybil

Might do her good.

Jerry

Two self willed people, each pulling for himself, is not likely to build a house of harmony. Whatever she does is is right now, but once she is his wife -

Sibyl

I don't believe you like him.

Jerry

Oh yes, fine virtuous fellow - not many of us left.

(HUGH enters quickly from right, starts toward arch, sees Jerry)

Hugh

(rather peremptorily)

Did you see Miss Carstairs?

Sibyl

Oh yes, only a moment -

Jerry

(hastily)

She went to the sunken garden.

Hugh

Thanks.

(exit left)

Sibyl

Whatever did you send him wrong for?

Jerry

Don't want to disturb the night with a double murder.

Sibyl

Do you think he'd -

Jerry

He'd have gone and stuck them both head downward in the river mud.

Sibyl

He did look rather -

Jerry
A fiery lad. There's a row coming. Lilith usually manages to stir up something. I was there the night Dickie Winton committed suicide.

Sibyl
Dickie Winton! I knew him. I thought it was because he lost his fortune at the races.

Jerry
You're an intelligent child, can't you do subtraction? Dickie plus money equals Lilith. Dickie minus money equals minus Lilith.

Sibyl
(rising)
I think you're rather a ghoul. I'm going in.

(JOAN and DENIS appear right)

Jerry
(to Joan)
My dance I think.

Denis
Go and find a partner for yourself, don't always be taking mine.

Jerry
She's not your partner, she's only your wife. And I protest against this tendency of husbands to monopolise their own wives.

Denis
Well, old man go and find a wife for yourself if you're so keen on them.

Jerry
Only on other peoples.

Denis
Well there are a lot of that kind in there pining for one glance of your beaux yeux.

Jerry
Next one, then Joan. Don't forget.

(Joan laughs. Jerry and Sibyl go off right)

Jerry
(calling back)
Take care of my partner for me.
(exit)

Denis
Weird chap, Jerry. Seems awfully keen on you.

There's an interesting statement

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Joan

(teasing)
Is that so weird?

Denis

No, you little fish - be weird if he weren't. But he's sort of uncanny.

Joan

Yes. I'd hate to have him about if I'd anything to conceal.

Denis

You never would. You couldn't deceive a -

Joan

All the same, I know something you don't.

Denis

(They are sitting on the bench. He turns her face to him)
Something good by the look of you.
(kisses her. Draws her hand through his arm and holds it)

Joan

About Hugh.

Denis

He's got that post.

Joan

No, much more romantic.

Denis

Romantic! You're always nosing out romance.

Joan

Haven't you noticed anything?

Denis

Noticed he seemed a bit grouchy.

Joan

That's because he hadn't asked her, but he's -

Denis

Asked who?

Joan

Why Lilith, of course.

Denis

Lilith! Do you mean Hugh is going to marry Lilith?

Joan

It isn't quite settled but -

Denis
 Jove, that's great. I never thought - But are you sure?
 Old Hugh hasn't much -

Joan
 What does that matter, if she loves him?

Denis
 Does she?

Joan
 Of course! Why - Oh Denis, you don't think -

Denis
 Oh I don't know a thing. But Lilith is rather - you know.
I can't picture her as a poor man's wife. Still, they'd make
 a great team.

Joan
 (all the joy gone)
 Oh, I'm sure that - Oh, suppose she -

Denis
 Cheer up old girl. I expect it'll be all right.

Joan
 But Hugh feels things so desperately. If anything -

Denis
 (putting his arm round her)
 Don't take it so hard old thing. Old Hugh is aiming a bit
 high, and if -

(JERRY enters from right)

Jerry
 (to Joan)
 Come and have something to eat.

Joan
 Is it supper time?

Jerry
 No, I put that in to lure you.

(HUGH enters from left. Joan has risen)

Joan
 Hello, Hugh darling. Having a good time.

Hugh
 (with forced cheer)
 Great!
 (Joan blows him a kiss and goes off with JERRY, who
 remonstrates at the gesture)

greedy

Denis
Come and have a drink, old man.

Hugh
Thanks. but I'm taking Lillith in to supper.

Denis
(as they move right)
Oh, I see. Guess she's inside somewhere.
(exeunt)

(LILITH and HARVEY enter centre)

Harvey
Must we go in?

Lilith
I think we should.

Harvey
People at this moment seem so inapropos.

Lilith
I'm afraid they will miss us.

Harvey
They will condone all when they hear. Sit here a moment.
(puts his hand on her shoulder, she shivers a little)
Are you cold?

Lilith
A little.

Harvey
Let me get you a wrap.

Lilith
Oh, my scarf - I must have left it on the seat by the river.

Harvey
Shall I get it?

Lilith
Oh, thank you.

Harvey
You will wait for me here?

Lilith
Yes. I'll wait.

(HARVEY kisses her hand, and murmuring 'My Queen'!
exits C.
LILITH crosses to the sun-dial. She is very thoughtful.
She stands, tracing with her finger the hours on the dial.)

(The moon shines full upon her, and she makes a very lovely picture against the dark trees. HUGH enters from right. Stands a moment to take in the picture, she is half turned from him. He then hurries over and envelopes her in his arms from behind. She gives a start, almost of fear, and stiffens for a moment, then quite naturally relaxes and lets her head fall against his breast. He kisses her passionately breathing her name. From the house come the elusive strains of a softly yearning waltz.)

Hugh

(whispering)

Lilith, Lilith, where were you? I can't bear you out of my sight.

Lilith

Hold me, Hugh, hold me close.

Hugh

Always my beloved.

Lilith

(passionately)

Kiss me, Hugh.

(their lips meet in a long kiss)

Again, again.

(she kisses him hungrily and then draws herself from him)

Hugh

Don't go.

Lilith

I must. This is the end, Hugh.

(in the following scene Lilith is unhappy but hides it under an air of reckless indifference)

Hugh

The end?

Lilith

Between you and me.

Hugh

Is it?

(he seizes her again and tries to kiss her, but she holds him off)

There can be no end between you and me. You are mine for always. Not death can part us, not God nor man.

Lilith

Let me go. Hugh.

Hugh

I will not let you go. Listen, Lilith, I can't bear this eternal hunger for you. We must marry and -

Passion

Hugh
Always my beloved.
Lilith
Will you love me always

Lilith

(drawing coldly away)
 What on?

Hugh

Does that matter so much? We'll go away somewhere where we don't have to try and appear as rich as our neighbours. We're not living. Let's get out of it, Lilith.

Lilith

(shaking her head)
 I can't. I want - oh - everything. We've been taking what we could out of life with each other, but it's not enough. We both want more.

Hugh

Yes, I do want more - more of you. I want you all the time - I want your whole life.

Lilith

(has moved over to the bench)
 Come and sit down, Hugh. I want to talk to you.
 (sits. Hugh follows but does not sit)
 Have you ever thought that I might want something besides -

Hugh

Besides?

Lilith

Besides love. You want to absorb me into yourself - to take everything, but what are you giving me?

Hugh

Good Lord, what do you mean. I'm ready to give you my whole life.

Lilith

Yes, but I don't want to be huddled into the background - I want power, position-

Hugh

Don't you want my love?

Lilith

Yes, but you see I want other things too, * things you can't give.

Hugh

Oh. I know matters are not very brilliant at present, but next year I -

Lilith

But you'll never be rich, Hugh, your too honest, too idealistic. And - well - I'm frightfully in debt.

23

Hugh

Is money to come between us?

Lilith

No, dear, the lack of it.

Hugh

(staring at her)

What has happened to you?

Lilith

I have always been like it. Your love lulled me for a while,
but now - I'm restless. I need luxury, power, people, cities,
life -

Hugh

Give me time, then, Lilith. You shall have everything.

Lilith

I can't wait. Besides it's too late now.

Hugh

Too late!

Lilith

Lord Harvey has asked me to be his wife.

Hugh

(aghast)

He - why the - What damnable cheek.

Lilith

Is it?

Hugh

Didn't you tell him we were engaged?

Lilith

We're not.

Hugh

We are. I'll kill anybody who -

Lilith

Of course if you're going to be melodramatic.....

Hugh

(controlling himself)

What has got into you, Lilith? You are like a stranger.

Hah!

Lilith

I told you you never really knew me. You dressed me up in all sorts of virtues. I adored it for a while. I even tried to live up to you - I thought it was really me at first, but it wouldn't stand the everyday wear and tear. If we had had heaps of money.

*Hugh's fault
Always been
bad*

Hugh

Good God, Lilith, you can't -

Lilith

Hugh dear, don't get angry. I am trying to make it clear. I do love you. You brought out all that is best in me - for a time, but now you are up against the real me.

Hugh

I don't believe it. You can't do this, Lilith. You belong to me.

Ownership

Lilith

Dear - please. it's settled.

Hugh

You are going to sell yourself to that -

Lilith

(with a reckless little shrug)

It's an arrangement to our mutual advantage. He can give me the life I want. And I shall make an excellent show case for his wealth and importance.

Hugh

Oh stop, for God's sake.

Lilith

You ~~might~~ be more understanding. I have laid my soul bare.

Hugh

Soul! You have no more soul than a - And I loved you - worshipped you as something rare and perfect.

Lilith

I was not made for poverty. Can't we still be friends, Hugh? I'd be a much better friend than wife. And Harvey could do wonderful things for you.

Hugh

(fiercely)

Do you think I'd -

Lilith

Hush, not so loud. I might have known you'd be violent. I expect that is why I love you so. You will always be my lover at heart, Hugh.

Hugh

Then why -

Lilith
Money, Hugh. I'm being dunned.

Hugh
Why didn't you tell me?

Lilith
You couldn't help me, and I didn't want to spoil our -

Hugh
And what are you doing now?

Lilith
Just a matter of convenience. Don't you see? If only
you would be sensible you needn't really lose me.

*Marriage
for convenience
suggest affair*

Hugh //
(staring at her)
Are you the idol I worshipped? "A beautiful mask, hiding nothing
but rottenness?"

Lilith
(shrugs)
At least I've been honest. I could have given any one of a
dozen reasons and you'd have -

Hugh
Is it your idea of honesty to let me love you, and then
disclose - this? Am I the only one who has been blind to
you? There were rumours - hints and --- Good Lord,
Dickie Winton..... Dickie Winton and you.....
Now I know what he meant - now I know why he put a bullet
through his brain.

Lilith
What are you talking about?

Hugh
You were his -

Won't say it

Lilith
(sharply)
Hugh, be quiet.

Hugh
Now I understand the note he left me - "I backed a wrong'un.
Good luck, old man, but - look before you plunge".

Lilith
He was backing horses and lost.

Hugh
He wasn't a gambler, why did he plunge so deep all of a sudden?

Lilith
I don't know.

Hugh
I do. He found your tastes were expensive. He needd money to hold you - you were the wrong'un.

Lilith
That's absurd. There was nothing between Dickie and me.

Hugh
No more than between us, I suppose. Wasn't he in love with you?

Lilith
So were others, but they didn't comit suicide.

Hugh
It was that night I kissed you - the first. You didn't waste any time. I at least wasn't broke like Dickie, poor devil. He must have seen. If only he had told me. But he was too decent to give a woman away.

Lilith
It is ridiculous to blame me for his death.

Hugh
Another poor devil who couldn't stand your 'honesty'. Oh, don't be afraid, I'm not going to give you the tribute of a bullet through the brain. If only he had told me.... Why the hell do we carry on this farce of loyalty to women who are not worth it. Well

(significantly)
I don't intend to keep it up.

Lilith
What are you going to do?

Hugh
I'm going to give Harvey the benefit of my experience. I fancy you omitted to tell him you were my mistress - engaged to be married as soon as -

Lilith
You wouldn't be such a cad. You couldn't betray -

Hugh
(bitterly)
No, better betray the other fellow. Fortunately we have different codes, you and I. My honesty forbids me to let you go on tricking other poor devils. There shall be no more Dickie Wintons if I can help it.

Moves on
to the next
Dickie, Hugh, Lord Harvey
Denis

Questions
"chivalry"

Lilith

(scornfully)

You mean because you can't have me, you won't let anyone else.

Hugh

Put it any way you like.

Lilith

Hugh, don't let us part like this. You are not being fair. I do love you - I do, but -

Hugh

You prostitute! And I thought you - When I came upon you just now, I thought you the most perfect thing on God's earth. And now I wish I had found you lying dead in the moonlight. First Dickie, now me, and already you are planning to deceive Harvey. Well at least I can show him where he stands.

Lilith

(quietly)

You won't, Hugh. I know you too well.

Hugh

(violently)

Oh you think you can shame me into doing what you call the 'decent thing'. But I mean to show you up for what you are.

(LILITH only gazes at him with her wide soft eyes)

(HARVEY hurries in C! with Lilith's scarf)

Harvey

Your scarf, my dear, I hope you haven't -
(notices the two confronting each other)
Anything wrong?

Lilith

(cooly)

I have just been telling Hugh of our engagement.

Harvey

Ah! And he -

Lilith

I am sorry to say he is - disappointed.

Harvey

Well, I am not surprised. I fear my happiness will prove the disappointment of many.

Hugh

You poor fool.

Lilith

Hugh!

Harvey

Really, Fanshawe, I'm afraid you have been drinking.

Hugh

Oh drop your best parliamentary manner. We are not in official relationship now.

Harvey

Nor are we likely to be in the future if -

Lilith

Oh please. Harvey don't get angry to-night - for my sake.

Harvey

Sorry, my dear, but really -

Lilith

I want you so much to be friends.

Harvey

Anything you wish - I am sure Fanshawe, I have no desire to-

Hugh

Oh, don't trouble. Understand I am no longer in your employ. I resign, I'm through with the whole rotten show. Write your own fool speeches. Now, what I have to say to you -

Harvey

I prefer not to hear, in your present state.

Hugh

You'd better hear.

Harvey

Your disappointment I understand, although I should have expected a more generous and manly attitude. Since Miss Carstairs has done me the honour to become engaged to me -

(JOAN and JERRY have entered from right in time to hear the last sentence)

Jerry

What's that? What do I hear? Engaged. You must let me be the first to congratulate you. With my usual perspicacity I predicted this.

(shakes LILITH's hand warmly)

Lilith

(grateful for the relief)

Thanks, Jerry, you always do know these things in advance.

(JOAN has crossed to Hugh and slipped her hand into his. His tightens on it. He stands very tense)

Jerry

Yes, always. Bless you my children. I hope you will be as good as you are happy.

(shakes Harvey's hand)

Lord Harvey, you will be the envy of London.

Harvey

Thanks, Maltby. Duchess, I hope we have your approval.

Joan

Oh yes - I - congratulate you both. It is a great surprise - I do hope you'll be happy.

(gives a hand each to LILITH and HARVEY. They thank her)

(DENIS and SIBYL have entered from right)

Denis

Hello, what's all the rejoicing about?

Harvey

Miss Carstairs has done me the honour to -

Denis

By Jove!

(he gives a sharp glance over at Hugh)

So you're the lucky man. I say, you know, I'm awfully glad of course. I hope you'll ~~be~~

(shakes hands with them both)

Sibyl

May I? My best congratulations, Miss Carstairs, and Lord Harvey. I think you are both lucky.

(there is a general buzz of congratulations and laughter)

Denis

Come on in all of you and tell the news. We'll have some more champagne. This a big night. We're making history.

Hugh

Just a minute. I have something to add to the general eloquence before you start your public rejoicing.

Denis

Keep it a bit, old man.

Hugh

No, ~~wait!~~ We have all known Miss Carstairs a long time, particularly Denis and myself, who, with Dickie Winton, were a sort of three musketeers, sworn to her service. Poor Dickie is not here, Denis is married, but I - I am left - with a duty. What I have to say is in the interest and happiness of all - free from personal bias. I know Miss Carstairs better than any of you, and I think it only fair that everyone should know that she is - she was -

(Hugh's burning eyes are fixed on Lilith, but before he can go on, Joan, who has been nervously clutching her husband's arm, comes swiftly to his side)

Joan

Just a minute, Hugh dear. I know you're going to make a wonderful speech - you always do. But it's growing just a little chilly for us poor things. Couldn't you -

Denis

(coming to her aid, heartily)

Yes, old man, fine! But ~~mm~~ come on inside with your eulogies. Speeches will be served up with the champagne. Don't waste them on the night air.

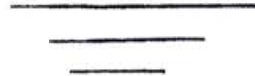
(while speaking he has started to shepherd the group to the house. There is a general air of relief and a brisk movement. Everyone talks at once as they troop inside, led by DENIS who has appropriated LILITH. JOAN is at the end of the group. As the others disappear she turns and looks back at HUGH who is standing in the same spot. She goes to him impulsively)

Joan

Hugh, Hugh dear, I'm so sorry.

(HUGH does not move nor seem to hear. There is a sudden burst of applause and laughter from the house. HUGH clenches his fists and starts as though he would go in. JOAN puts a gentle restraining hand on his arm. He turns and looks down at her and then slowly back to the house. JOAN watches him anxiously as

THE CURTAIN FALLS



A C T 2

(Five years later)

A C T 2

(Five years later than Act.1.

SCENE:- Denis' suite in the Carlton Hotel, Johannesburg, South Africa. Entrance from hallway right centre.

Door to Denis' bedroom up left. and to Lilith's down left.

Fireplace down right, above which stands large couch facing audience. Behind couch a small table with large vase of flowers. Down left of centre another table with chairs on either side. Telephone table to left of entrance. To left of this a consol table on which stand tantalus, glasses, etc. The room is finished in good taste, but with an elegance and luxury likely to appeal to those of more recently acquired wealth.

There is a dim light burning. Door C. opens abruptly and Lilith is silhouetted against the bright light from the hall. She is in evening dress, white again, looking very lovely. A wrap of white and silver brocade is slipping from her shoulders. She hurries in, closes door, switches up lights, and goes to telephone)

Lilith

(urgently in 'phone)

Hello. Hello. Give me the manager. Hurry please.....

Hello, hello. Mr Broughton? The Duchess of Winmouth speaking. There is some unpleasantness in the Palm Garden, the Duke is being seriously annoyed - some man -

I'M afraid there will be trouble unless..... Can you go at once? Yes. Be very careful please. Try and

get him to come up. Tell him - What?..... Make sure please. All right...

(pause) lift

In the elevator? Are you sure? Who was with him?....

Oh. You don't know who he is?..... All right. Thank you.

(she hangs up the receiver. Picks up her wrap which has slipped off, and goes to room down right.

(The centre door is thrown open and HUGH appears supporting DENIS. HUGH is wearing a pith helmet and Khaki riding kit. DENIS is wearing a dinner coat and is quite drunk)

Hugh

Are you sure this is your room?

Denis

'Course it's my room. Silly question. There's the table and there's chairs -

(HUGH brings him and closes door. DENIS stands looking round foolishly)

Separate rooms

Another white dress

Slipping

Denis

Wait a bit. Don't believe it is my room - looks queer to me. No s'wrong room.
(turns to go.)

Lilith

(off)

Is that you, Denis?

(DENIS stops and waves about puzzled.

HUGH has started violently at the sound of LILITH's voice, he seems mystified. Then he hastily tilts his helmet over his eyes)

Denis

Wha's that?

(again starts for door.

LILITH appears, does not recognise HUGH. She sees DENIS going and moves after him)

Lilith

Where are you going, Denis?

Denis

Oh, 'sat you. Thought it was wrong room.

(laughs foolishly. Then gives a lurch and nearly falls. HUGH goes quickly and supports him)

Lilith

Oh, so kind of you to trouble, Mr - Mr -.....

(goes quickly to couch and arranges the cushions)

Perhpas if he lies down - Here I think if you wouldn't mind -..... That's it. He will be all right soon.

There. Thank you. I can manage now, and thank you so much for your kindness.

(her manner formal as to a complete stranger, which she believes Hugh to be. Hugh has helped Denis on to the couch. Proceeds to undo his tie and loosen his collar. He takes no notice of Lilith, but hovers anxiously over Denis)

Lilith

(trying to cover an awkward situation)

Something must have upset him. I suppose it's this Johannesburg altitude. I believe it does make people dizzy when they first arrive. I know I felt -

Denis

(thickly)

Don't be silly. Al'tude's all ri' *----S'tha' champagne - Shouldn't have had the lash bottle. Funny - it's always the lash bottle. This dam African desert - makes a chap so beastly dry. Perhaps 'nother bottle make all ri' Let's -

Lilith
 Denis, don't be silly. He's quite all right now, Mr er -
 We really mustn't trouble you further. I don't know how
 to thank you.

Denis
 Don't send him away - first decent feller in the place.
 Means well, but - Where's that Jew bounder?
 (rises but falls back)

Oh, what the devil? Why did you interfere? Never interfere
 between man or beast. He no business staring at Lilith like
 that. Presumshurous - that's what, pres - have to teach
 'em. If she hadn't been there I'd have thrashed him to pulp.
Can't fight with women around. Code again

Lilith
 (still striving to keep up pretence)
 Denis, do talk sense. If I hadn't been there, he couldn't have
 stared.

Denis
 (quarrelsome)
 But he did stare, didn't he? Don't be so contra - contra -
 what's the dam word? I tell you he was preshumshurous,
 (again trying to rise)
 Where is he? I'm going to -
 (HUGH quietly holds him down)

Lilith
 He wasn't doing any harm. There's no law against people
 staring.

Denis
 You like it I spose. Well, I'm not going t'allow it. Too
 darn much staring. Insult to me. You're under my protection.
 Not going to allow any liberties, just because we don't
happen to be -
 (suddenly notices HUGH standing over him, grows very haughty)
 Take off your hat in presence of lady, can't you? Dam poor
 manners these Colonials.

Lilith
 Do be quiet, Denis. Try to sleep a little.
 (to HUGH)
 I think perhaps is we leave him alone, he will rest better.

Denis
 Damned if I will. Going to teach him to treat you with respect.
 Insult to you is insult to me. He don't know you aren't my
wife.

(to HUGH)
 Duchess of Winmouth. that's who she is. Now what you got
 to say?

Affair!

Lilith
 (with a shrug of annoyance)
 Perhaps you'd better. I'm sorry, but I'm afraid if he gets excited again -

(HUGH quietly removes his helmet with his eyes on LILITH)

Lilith
 (with a gasp)
 Hugh!
 (she recoils. He watches her coldly)

Denis
 (who has noticed nothing, mumbling)
 Yes, Duchess of Winmouth. Married in sight of God if not of man.
 (notices HUGH has removed his helmet)
 Ah, that's better. Courtesy costs nothing, even in this Godforsaken hole. Though it's scarce - scarcer than diamonds - plenty diamonds, not an ounce of courtesy, by God.
 (he grows lachrymose. HUGH presses his shoulder)

Hugh
 Denis, old man, pull yourself together.

Denis
 (with renewed hauteur)
 Whaddya mean calling me Denis. Damn familiar these Colonials. Don't allow any familiarity. My family blue bloodiest in -
 (recognises him vaguely)
 Why, it's Hugh, isn't? Honourable Hugh Fanshawe.
 (Hugh does not reply)
 No, beg pardon, ~~course~~ not. Couldn't be Hugh. He disappeared. Deucedly like the old boy, though. Haven't seen Hugh in years. Best pal a man ever had. You're too old for Hugh. Might be his father.
 (wistfully)
 Say, old man, know anyone by the name of Fanshawe?

Hugh
 I'm Hugh.

Denis
 (stirred to lucidity, sitting up)
 The deuce! So you are.
 (they grip hands)
 Hugh, Hugh, good old Hugh. By Jove it's great to see you again. Lilith, you know old Hugh.

Lilith
 Yes.

Denis

Oh Lord, yes. I forgot. What are you doing in this Godforsaken country?

Hugh

Knocking around.

Denis

It's years since we -

Hugh

Five years.

Denis

I've missed you, old man. Had the dickens of a time. Good Lord I suppose you don't know about the beastly mess we're in.

Lilith

Oh, for Heaven's sake, Denis, don't drag that up now.

Denis

Everyone's turned against us. Never meant any harm. Love of course - Couldn't be helped. We gave up - what is it - world well lost, damnit.

Lilith

Do be quiet, Denis. Hugh is not interested in all that.

Denis

(obstinately)

Got to tell him. People don't understand.

Lilith

Then why bore Hugh.

Denis

Now you be quiet. Don't want Hugh misunderstand.

(Lilith gives an impatient shrug and retires. She sinks into a chair and listens expressionlessly)

Denis

Don't mind for myself, but it's Lilith. Lilith's had trouble. Always help a friend in- You can appreciate that, Hugh, can't you. Then Joan got queer. Can't understand Joan. Best wife in the world till -

(he grows tearful like a puzzled child)

Now she won't speak to me. She was the straightest rider to hounds - and now she won't speak to me.

(he breaks down)

Hugh

Come on, old man, buck up.

Denis

Couldn't make her see I had to do the decent thing. And now it's all up with us. Beastly mess. Had to come to this hell of a country to get out of it. Love makes outcasts of us all.

(HUGH gives a long accusing look at LILITH)

Denis

People took to cutting us, you know. Suppose you'll cut us now. Well you dman well can. We don't need you - don't need anyone. Going to stick to Lilith - damn beautiful woman in distress. We're in together see, and we don't want you interfering. You clear out -

Hugh

I wish you'd sober up and talk sense. I'm so beastly glad to see you, I don't care what -

Denis

(makes a grabb for HUGH's hand, he is overcome with emotion)

You're all right. That's Hugh all over - never desert a friend. Shake, old man. God, it's good to see you. We've been in many a hole together. Remember that time at Cambridge - Always in trouble to-gether, but never in trouble alone. For the sins that ye do by two by two - Who the dickens said that? Trouble, that's wat proves your true friends.

Hugh

For God's sake stop drivelling. Here, come and douse your head in cold water. I want to talk to you. I can't stand this slobber.

(He jerks DENIS up by the arm. LILITH rises and opens door up left. DENIS reels a bit, and puts his arms about Hugh to steady himself)

Denis

(emotionally)

Stick to me, old man. Need you. Only friend in the world.

(HUGH is propelling him towards bedroom)

Women are all right, but there some things - takes a man to understand.

(They disappear through door. The mumbling fades out, and the sound of running water and splashing takes its place.

LILITH goes over to mirror and smooths her hair.

In a few moments HUGH reappears, closes door behind him)

Lilith

Well?

Hugh

Well?

*Men/women
get it*

Lilith

I think grey hair is becoming, but of course you look much older.

Hugh

You don't. You are more beautiful than ever, and more disastrous.

Lilith

Of course you will blame me for everything.
(regretfully)
You used to be so chivalrous.

Hugh

You did your best to cure me of that.

Lilith

(reproachfully)
Age doesn't seem to have improved your disposition.

Hugh

Age doesn't seem to have improved your technique. This time you have rather overshot the mark.

Lilith

(shrugs lightly)
Don't let's quarrel, Hugh. Tell me about yourself. ^aare you married?

Hugh

No.

Lilith

Have you been prospering.

Hugh

Not enough to make me worth your attention.

Lilith

Hugh! Can't you forgive?

Hugh

I could have forgiven what you did to me, but this - As I remember, Joan was your best friend.

Lilith

A great deal has happened that you don't know of.

Hugh

Couldn't you have found fair game than Denis?

Lilith

You are not fair, Hugh. Denis's marriage was a great mistake.

The worse she treats men the more beautiful she becomes

Betrayal of another woman

Hugh

You mean you set about making it a great mistake. No doubt you got sick of Harvey and looked around for higher game.

Lilith

Why will you distort things so? My marriage was very unhappy. Harvey became impossible - overbearing, tyrannical - oh, he behaved ridiculously.

Hugh

Having made a botch of your own marriage, you proceed to mess up Denis's.

Lilith

No. But I suppose both being unhappy formed a sort of bond between us.

Hugh

Isn't it possible you worked on Denis' sympathy to-

Lilith

Oh no, he needed me. Joan never understood him.

Hugh

(savagely)

You could have had any man you wanted, why the devil couldn't you leave Denis alone?

Lilith

If only I didn't feel things so. It has always been some foolish kindness that caused the trouble.

Hugh

(quietly cynical)

Oh, some foolish kindness caused you to steal Denis from Joan.

Lilith

(with a sad little laugh)

Steal him! I reasoned with him, scolded, begged him to leave me alone. It was all no good. Then he took to drinking. I was afraid he might - He wore me out. When I did give in, it was because I - well, I was tired. Now

(lowering her voice, as she looks toward Denis' room)

I wish I had let him kill himself.

Hugh

Won't Joan give you the divorce you counted on?

Lilith

Oh, it's not for me - it's Denis. She is so stubborn. She knows it is the only decent thing to do. Poor Denis - it is breaking him up. Of course she never cared for him or she wouldn't stand in the way of his happiness.

Stealing men
Enticing

No divorce =
no marriage

Hugh

You used not to be such a hypocrite. I suppose you get away with it with Denis - it's wasted on me.

Lilith

You never did understand me. You deserted me when I needed you most.

Hugh

I deserted you!
(laughs)

Lilith

If you had really loved me -

Hugh

Well, if -

Lilith

You would not have given me up.

Hugh

Do you suppose I wanted you when you proved what you were?
No, Harvey was welcome. My only regret is that I didn't show you up as I meant. It might at least have prevented - this. Now you have thoroughly messed up Denis' life. The man's a wreck. He never got drunk the whole time I knew him, now he's on the verge of D!T.s.

Lilith

I tell you he was worse before we - He was going to the dogs - that's why I -

Hugh

Your idea of saving a man from a fall seems to be to give him the final push. You have done the worst thing you could to a man like Denis - made him an outcast, killed all his self respect. Parted him from everything that made up his life.

Lilith

Do you think I don't suffer? Must you always blame the woman? It's bad enough to have Denis driving me insane with his attacks of conscience. Really the way men stick together against the women they have wronged - If only women would be as stanch. But I come in for the censure of both. And because I don't go about whining over my wrongs - I'm hardened and evil. I'm not evil. I only want to be happy. I know I'm not a saint. I suppose no one who hungers for life and love as I do could be a saint. I want to live - to love. And soon it will be too late.

Lilith explains herself

Hugh

And what about the men you've -

Lilith

Oh, these recriminations! Must you - You used to be so different, Hugh.

Hugh

Yes, I used to be a darned fool.

Lilith

You were adorable - a laughing, impulsive boy. I missed you so. There has never been anyone who could charm the shadows away as you could. Do you remember how we laughed. Everything was screamingly funny to us then. And do you remember our little Paradise at Sun Vale.

Hugh

I prefer not to.

Lilith

(reproachfully)

Oh Hugh! Now I feel as though I should never laugh again.

Hugh

You will. There will be other men.

Lilith

Never! If you knew how I have suffered since I let you go. That was my one false step, and I have been punished - more even than you could wish.

(comes close to him soft and pleading)

Won't you forgive me? Can't we at least be friends. I need you, Hugh. I haven't been as bad as you say. If only you'd - You did love me. You can't have changed so - A love like ours can't -

(she is looking up at him with all her soul in her eyes, one hand resting appealingly on his breast. HUGH is swept with all the old yearning for her. Slowly dreamily he places his hands on her shoulders, and looks searchingly, hungrily into her face. She sinks gently against him. He is spell bound once again, and seems about to kiss her proffered lips, when a snatch of song from Denis in the other room recalls him rudely to the present. He thrusts her from him with an exclamation of disgust. His anger against her all the more violent that he realises his own weakness)

She works her charms - but fails

Hugh

Oh God, you're rotten. You've brought ruin - calmly and deliberately - on every man you've known. You kicked Dickie, messed up my life, deceived Harvey, wrecked Denis, and now you - God - you should be in the gutter with the others of your sort.

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Lilith

Hugh!

(she has recoiled and stares at him as though he had struck her. She speaks in a low tense voice)
How dare you? Is it the new sportsmanship to hit anyone when they're down?

Hugh

(savagely)
You'll get no quarter from me. You will always look after yourself first.

Lilith

So that's your attitude. Thanks for telling me.

Hugh

What are you hanging on to Denis for? He can't marry you

Lilith

(coldly)
That's my affair.

Hugh

How much do you want to clear out?

Lilith

You never did have much diplomacy. If you want me to leave Denis, you don't go quite the right way to persuade me. I shall stay with Denis just as long as it suits my purpose.

Hugh

Is it hate for Joan, or a forlorn hope of becoming the Duchess of Winmouth?

Lilith

Neither, my friend. You yourself have supplied the incentive.

Hugh

What?

Lilith

Your all too obvious desire to part us. You shouldn't have shown your hand so plainly. It is not so much to save Denis as to work off your own vindictiveness. You would like to punish me, to see me deserted and humbled. In your smug righteousness you think to pluck Denis as a brand from the burning, and leave me to - God knows what. Very well. it will be interesting to see you try.

Hugh

A ll right, we'll see.

Lilith

Two sides —
 We will. Your choice, my friend. You had your chance. I was sincere in what I said to you. I was ready to be very sweet for the sake of old times. I can be sweet, but I can also hate. You have said things to me that I shall never forgive, taxed me with every vileness that - All right I shall do my best to act the part.

(with a bitter little laugh she exits down left)

(HUGH starts as though to call her back. then checks himself and stares after her in helpless misery. There is tragedy in his eyes. Then with an angry shake, he turns away, picks up his helmet and starts for door centre. Pauses opposite Denis' room and hesitates, troubled. As he starts to go, Denis appears, he is in a smoking jacket, his hair is wet and slicked back, he looks white and ill, but is sober)

Denis

God, what a head I've got.

(seeing HUGH with his helmet at door)

You're not going, old man? Sit down. I've got to talk to you.

Hugh

What's the use?

Denis

Oh, I know you think I'm an awful skunk.

Hugh

What on earth induced you to leave Joan?

Denis

I don't know/. It just happened. Things seemed to drive that way.

Hugh

You mean Lilith-

Denis

(fretfully)

No, no, It wasn't her fault, poor girl. She had a hell of a time with that pig Harvey. We tried to make things easier - had her to stay and so on. She seemed to rely on me somehow. Then Joan, - funny for her - began to cut up rough. It was a beastly muddle, and the drink sort of got me. When Joan fairly turned Lilith out, I got into a sort of rage. Had to look after Lilith, she was so helpless and alone. And somehow, before we realised it - we had gone too far. Old Harvey found out. Someone sent him an anonymous letter.

Hugh

(sharply)

An anonymous letter?

Denis

Yes.

(HUGH looks thoughtfully towards Lilith's door)
 Never could figure out who did. We were the only two people in the world who knew. Anyway he divorced her and that put the responsibility of her right on me. People got so damned nasty, it seemed best to clear out of the country. If Joan were to divorce me I could at least make it all right with Lilith. But she won't. And there's the Court of course, the King frowns on divorces in our crowd. Poor little Joan, I've messed things up all round. The only way out seems a bullet, and I'd have done it long ago if it hadn't been that Lilith -

Hugh

Do you care for her?

Denis

What the devil does that matter. I got her in and it's up to me to get her out.

Hugh

Are you so sure you got her in?

Denis

(fretfully)
 Don't ask riddles. I've told you how it happened. It's damned hard on Lilith - brilliant woman, leader of society - to find herself suddenly out by everyone.

Hugh

And what about Joan.

Denis

Oh, I know, but you see she didn't care.

Hugh

You mean she was too proud to let you see.

Denis

I tell you, old man, I thought she would be only too glad to divorce me.

Hugh

You were wrong there, just as you were wrong about her not caring.

Denis

How the devil do you know?

Hugh

I know Joan.

Denis

Do you think she - Joan - Joan - Oh God -
(he weakly breaks down and buries his head in his hands)

Hugh

(sternly)
Don't be a fool. Come on, brace up. Don't lose your grip.

Denis

It's no good, I'm done for. I'd better be dead. I've brought misery to everyone. I'm a skunk, whichever way you look at it, whether I go back or go on.

Hugh

Rot! You're all shot to pieces or you wouldn't talk such drivel. First thing you've got to do is cut out the booze.

Denis

I can't - it's got me. If you knew the filthy misery when I'm sober enough to think.

Hugh

You must buckle to and do something.

Denis

What's the good?

Hugh

(savagely)
I'd like to shake you. I never thought you could go to pieces like this. It makes me sick.

Denis

Well you don't have to stay. You can't help me - no one can.

Hugh

I'm damned if I clear out and leave you to wallow in this - We're going to find some way out.

Denis

That's easy to say, but how?

Hugh

WE'll get together on it, old man. We've been in holes before.

Denis

I don't know whether I want to get out. Leave me alone - that's the kindest thing.

(HUGH turns away impatient and frowning. There is a pause. Then Denis, as though the matter were closed. speaks in a more friendly tone)

Tell me about yourself. What are you doing in South Africa?

Hugh
 (absently, through the next few speeches he is
 concentrating on the problem of Denis)
 Hunting and prospecting. Look here, can't you try cutting
 out the drink for * say - a week?

Denis
 No, old man, I tried.
 (wishing to steer the conversation from himself)
 Have you had any luck with your -

Hugh
 Yes, pretty good. I've gone in with Broomfield. Ever heard
 of him?

Denis
 What, Hutchison Broomfield?

Hugh
 Yes. Listen, Denis, if you can't cut it out right away, try
 tapering off.

Denis
 (wearily)
 Oh, for God's sake, forget it..... Tell me about
 Broomfield. He's sort of King of South Africa, isn't he?

Hugh
 Well - pretty important.

Denis
Millionaire, isn't he?

Hugh
Owens a few gold mines.

Denis
 I've heard a lot about him. Great hunter.

Hugh
 Yes, that's his passion. We're down here now fitting out
 for another hunt - elephant and lion.

Denis
 Jove, that must be sport.

Hugh
 (quickly notes his interest and determines to play it
 up. Watches Denis covertly)
 Not so easy as partridge.

Denis
 Where are you making for?

Hugh
 Way up in Rhodesia. We have headquarters up there in the
 heart of the bush, and make our trips with that as a centre
 for

*The Jews
 for L.Lith*

help w/date

Hugh (cont.)

for dumping skins and ivory. It's a great game region, place is alive with it. Every sort - buck, antelope, leopard, lion, elephant, rhino and hippo in droves.

Denis

(wistfully)

Must be great.

Hugh

(with sudden determination)

Look here, you're a good shot, why don't you come along?

Denis

I? Why you wouldn't want me.

Hugh

Why not? We could do with another gun. Of course you'd have to train up a bit. It's not easy going at the best of times.

Denis

Train! Good Lord, I'd be willing to train myself to leather if - But how about Broomfield? He wouldn't want a wreck like me in the party.

Hugh

I'll fix it with Broomfield. You're coming - it's a bargain.

Denis

Do you mean it?

Hugh

Of course - it's all settled. Means cutting out the drink.

Denis

(excited)

Done, old man. By Jove, what a chance. I've always wanted to have a try at big game. What did you say? Elephant, lion, leopard - I bet leopard give you a run for your money. And rhino, they must need a good dose of lead.

Hugh

You have to find the right spot.

Denis

You'll have to coach me. How about getting rifles?

Hugh

We've got plenty.

Denis

What sort of outfit?

Hugh

You can get everything here.

Denis

(happy as a boy)

Lord, I'd like to start at once. Can I get plenty of ammunition? Give me a list of stuff I'll want.

(turns over things on desk for pencil and paper)

I've got to be right on this.

Hugh

WE'll go shopping first thing in the morning.

(produces map from his pocket)

See, here's the trek.

(indicating points on map)

Railway so far, then by ox wagon to Wolambo, after that by native bearers and machila, except for this bit of river which we do in canoes. Quite a trip.

Denis

Good, the farther the better.

Hugh

See, here's our camp, no whites within thirty miles.

Denis

That suits me, I'm fed up with people.

Hugh

Look here, I'll try and get hold of Broomfield to talk it over. He's somewhere in the hotel.

(LILITH enters. She has changed into a very lovely negligee)

Lilith

(to DENIS)

Are you going to stay up all night?

Denis

Sorry. You go to bed.

Lilith

What's all the excitement?

Denis

Hugh's got a hunting trip on - lion elephant - everything you can think of, he and Broomfield. You know - Hutchison Broomfield.

Lilith

What, the Hutchison Broomfield?

Denis

Yes, he's Hugh's partner.

Lilith

Really! Isn't he a sort of Croesus.

Hugh

Suppose to be the richest man in Africa. That's the least of his concerns/.

Lilith

Is he a crank? I seemed to hear lurid rumours about him a few years ago. Agitation in Parliament about something he-

Hugh

They're always getting nervous about his influence with the natives. They're afraid it's too much power for one man.

Denis

Is he easy to get on with personally?

Hugh

Yes, if you don't try any humbug. He doesn't like frills.

Denis

Good, I think I'd like him.

Hugh

Yes. He's a man's man - women bore him. He's an strong as an ox. A good deal of the savage in him and something of a god. Afraid of nothing, respects nothing, hates civilization.

*Lilith's
downfall*

Lilith

Sounds quite attractively repulsive. I should like to meet him.

Hugh

(pointedly)

He also despises women.

Lilith

(cooly)

That makes him even more intriguing.

Denis

He's down here with Hugh fitting out for the trip. Hugh's going to try and find him to talk it over. Lion and elephant, Lilith, how's that for sport?

Lilith

(indifferently)

Splendid.

Hugh

I'll get him and be back in a minute. I'll be back anyway.

Denis

Right, old man.

(exit HUGH. DENIS returns to his study of the map.
Look, here's the route. Railroad as far as this, then ox wagon
to here, then native bearers. It's bad country for horses
and cattle. You have to have natives carry everything.

Lilith

Why are you so excited about it.

Denis

Hugh has asked me to come along.

Lilith

(equably)
Really?

Denis

Yes, I'll have to train like the dickens to get fit enough.

Lilith

(still very quietly)
How long will this trip take?

Denis

Oh, I don't know. Depends on the luck, I suppose. Great
to have a chance at elephant and lion, eh? I've always
rather fancied myself potting a lion. And they say
tracking elephant is the greatest sport there is. You
sometimes have to follow them up for days. Perhaps I'll
get you a pair of tusks and a leopard skin or two -
(realising suddenly that she is not in the least
interested)

What's the matter? Are you bored?

Lilith

Oh, no, it will be delightful for you of course - but -

Denis

Good Lord, what a selfish beast I am. You're tired. Get
along to bed. I'll keep those chaps quiet when they come.

Lilith

I'm not ~~kinda~~ sleepy.

Denis

This thing has got me all excited.

Lilith

Yes, so I see.

Denis

I feel like a new man - something worth living for.

Garden of
Eden?

Lilith

Thanks!

Denis

Oh, don't be huffy, you know what I mean.

Lilith

I'm not sure I do.

Denis

Well, you know, after you've been drifting round at a loose end, it's good to have something to put your teeth into * a man's job brings back your self respect.

Lilith

Go on - you're most complimentary. I give up everything for you, stick to you through all your moods - mostly drunk or depressed. And now you have to go off with these men to regain your self respect'.

Denis

(disturbed)

I say, what's up, Lilith, Don't you want me to go?

Lilith

That's not the point. The point is what am I suppose to do while you are roaming the country?

Denis

GoodHeavens, it's only for a little while. You see how things are, I'm not much good as I am. This'll sort of set me up.

(Lilith is silent)

Come on, cheer up, it won't be for long.

Lilith

How long?

Denis

Oh, I don't know exactly. Look here, couldn't you go down to Capetown or Durban. It wasn't so bad there, with the beaches to -

Lilith

Do you really expect me to go down and mope there alone. To watch the people nudge each other and laugh at a woman deserted by the man she-

Denis

Deserted! Don't talk nonsense. I'll be back and join you before you've had time to miss me.

Lilith

You might be mauled by a lion, or trampled by an elephant.

Denis

(trying to rally her)

Come, that's foolish. You shouldn't start fancying things.

Lilith

(in a low voice)

How can I help it? You're all I have - now.

Denis

(looks at her sharply, all the pleasure and excitement dies out of his face. He looks suddenly broken and helpless. Pushes the map away from him)

Yes, I see. I understand. I've no right to go and leave you.

Lilith

But you're wild to go.

Denis

That's all right. I should never have considered it in the first place.

(he turns away moodily. She watches him keenly)

Lilith

(with sudden passion)

Oh go - for Heaven's sake, go! I know - I can see - I am in the way. I've become a burden to you. I'm like the old man of the sea, and you're beginning to hate me.

Man: manipulates her

Denis

(goes to her quickly)
(soothingly)

No, no, that's all rot, you know. We agreed to stick together, didn't we? I didn't realise for the moment... I was a beast ever to - Come on, old girl, let's forget it.

Lilith

But you do want to go.

Denis

Nothing on earth would drag me. There, all settled. You trot off to bed. I must wait and explain to old Hugh.

Lilith

He'll talk you into it.

Denis

No, he can't, besides he'll understand.

(with forced cheerfulness)

Now, do you forgive me? We're pals, eh?

(kisses her)

Let's have a drink on it.

(DENIS goes to the tantalus and is pouring out some whiskey, when there is a knock at the door and in answer to LILITH's 'Come', HUGH enters)

Hugh

Well, I've got him. He's coming right along -
 (He stops short on seeing Denis with the Whiskey.
 He moves quickly to stop him)
 What the devil are you doing?

Denis

(with forced gaiety)
 It's all right, old man, the trip's off. What'll you have?

(HUGH looks at him sharply, then his eyes dart keenly over to LILITH. They stare for a moment with mutual defiance)

Hugh

You -
 (There is a knock at the door, Hugh opens it to admit BROOMFIELD, having restrained himself with an effort. HUTCHISON BROOMFIELD is about fifty, a Colonial * half British, half Dutch. He is a large powerful man, imperturbable without being either heavy or hard. There is latent fire in his deep penetrating eyes which lights up the strong well tanned face. About his lips there is usually a faint suggestion of ironic amusement. He has a deep vibrating voice, an air of authority unused to question, and a potentiality for ruthlessness when roused))

Hugh

This is Mr Broomfield. Lady Harvey, the Duke of Winmouth.

(Denis nods and mutters 'How d'ye do?'. LILITH comes forward with perfect charm and simplicity and gives him her hand. Meanwhile Hugh carefully takes the whiskey from Denis and puts it out of reach, despite Denis' feeble protests, and firmly steers him away)

Lilith

(to Broomfield)
 How do you do, Mr Broomfield. I have heard of your prowess, but never hoped to meet you. You seem as exclusive as the animals you hunt.

Broomfield

I'm rarely in cities.

Lilith

You prefer the jungle.

Broomfield
I find it more comfortable.

Lilith
And the society of beasts and savages more congenial than -

Broomfield
They live more rationally.

Lilith
But have you given our poor human society a fair chance?

Broomfield
I daren't - it induces melancholia.

(LILITH laughs. BROOMFIELD turns to DENIS)

Fanshawe tells me you are joining the party. I hope you know
what you are in for.

Denis
Oh, thanks very much, but I find I can't go after all.

Hugh
Oh rot. What's the trouble?

Denis
Nothing. I can't - well - it's just not convenient.

Hugh
I suppose it's more convenient to slump down here and
drink yourself to death. I can assure you that won't
take long in this climate.

Lilith
Must you be unpleasant? It is simply that Denis is not
able to neglect his responsibilities in the carefree manner
you -

Hugh
And you represent his responsibilities.

Lilith
One of them, perhaps.

Broomfield
As this seems to be a private discussion -
(shrugs and starts for the door)

Hugh
(stopping him)
No, wait a bit.
(BROOMFIELD again shrugs indifferently and goes to
fireplace. HUGH turns to Lilith)
Do you mean to stand in the way of Denis' good?

Lilith

Not at all. Though I do think Denis would be safer with me than with the lions.

Hugh

Then I don't. When I came in just now you were complacently watching him take another drink. You might as well give him poison and done with it in his present state.

Denis

(placatingly)

Look here, don't let's have a fuss. The thing isn't worth it. You go off for your trip as you planned and forget about me.

Hugh

I'm damned if I do. You agreed to come, and you've given no good reason for backing out.

Lilith

I'll tell you, if you must know. Denis refuses to go on any trip that necessitates his leaving me.

Hugh

I thought so. It's you who are-

Lilith

I'm glad you recognise that I am not altogether negligible.
(softly)
You see you really should have been nicer to me.

Hugh

(in suppressed anger)
You trade on his kindness and decency to -

Lilith

(softly to him)
Don't lose your temper. I know you'd like to murder me but you shouldn't show it so plainly.

(she turns lightly away and moves over to BROOMFIELD)
I'm sorry you should be so terribly bored. I can understand that society of this type gives you melancholia. And of course you can't shoot us, though I expect you would like to. You seem like some great God of Destruction. *yep*

Broomfield

(gravely and significantly)
I manage to restrict myself to beasts, I don't destroy men.

Lilith

(stares at him with a provocative little smile)
Thanks for the compliment. Are you equally merciful to women?

Broomfield
I don't trouble women - unless they trouble me.

Lilith
Could they trouble you?

Broomfield
Even flies can be troublesome.

Lilith
Ah! I heard you were a woman hater. That ususally means
a man has had too little experience of women - or too much.

Broomfield
For me the terms are symonymous.

Lilith
You should not be so reckless. Someday you may pique a woman
into trying to change your views.

Broomfield
Only an idiot would try the ~~im~~possible.

Lilith
They said that about the North Pole and yet -

Broomfield
I have not heard they changed the North Pole by flying round it.

Lilith *late*
(gracefully)
Touche'! First blood to you.
(her eyes rest on him admiringly.
(BROOMFIELD turns imperturbably to HUGH who has been
talking quietly and urgently to Denis.
At the same time LILITH watches BROOMFIELD. She
is piqued and intrigued. She considers him speculatively,
looks over at the others, finally makes up her mind)

Broomfield
(to Hugh)
Well, what's the programme?
(HUGH who has apparently made no progress with Denis,
gives a shrug and stares bitterly at LILITH)

Lilith
(coming forward)
Give it up? I thought you would. There is only one way
to persuade Denis to go with you.
(they all look at her sharply)
That is for me to consent to go too.
(she gives a half glance at Broomfield to watch the effect)

Hugh
You!

Lilith

Yes. You see nothing would induce him to leave me here alone. I don't want to stand in his way. I am perfectly willing to accompany you.

Denis

Good Lord, Lilith, you could never -

Lilith

Yes, I could, and if it means your health and everything that Hugh says, I will. I have no desire to be a burden.

Broomfield

You would certainly be a burden if you came.

Lilith

That agrees with your general opinion of women.

(smiling at him charmingly)

I shall welcome an opportunity of proving you wrong.

Broomfield

In this case I prefer to accept your word to risking the proof.
I decline to have my hunting trip turned into a pic-nic party

Lilith

(with a little shrug)

Oh, very well, that settles it of course.

(she looks challengingly at HUGH)

Hugh

(to Broomfield)

Wait a minute. Denis, would you come, if Lilith would come too?

Denis

Why - yes, if the thing is at all possible.

Broomfield

The idea is preposterous.

Hugh

What is so preposterous about it? Women have been on hunting trips before.

Broomfield

Yes, but not the sort of woman you are now proposing to take.

what sort could go?

Lilith

Aren't you a little hasty? People who know me better credit me with never undertaking more than I can do.

Broomfield

In this case you are ignorant of what you are undertaking.

Lilith
(with a meaning little smile)
Am I?

Hugh
Look here, Broomfield, I will take all responsibility for Lady Harvey, if she insists on coming.

Lilith
Insists!
(coldly)
That is not the way to put it. It is you who insist on Denis going. As Denis will not go without me, it seems to be you who are insisting. I don't wish my action to be misinterpreted.

Hugh
Oh you shall ^{have} full credit for your nobility and unselfishness,
(in an undertone to her)
I don't know what you are playing at, but you are welcome to your own little game so long as Denis gets a chance.

Denis
If Mr Broomfield is so opposed to our joining the party, I don't think we ought to butt in.

Broomfield
(harshly)
I am opposed. I was not keen even on the idea of you - new to the country, green and inexperienced - but when it comes to a woman as well, I veto it, absolutely.

Denis
(huffily)
Thanks for your frankness. Then that's that.

Hugh
(to Broomfield)
Wait, there's no need to make a row over this thing. I have my reasons for wanting Denis to go on this trip. If you object ~~to~~ why then you can go without me.

Broomfield
(peremptorily)
Steady, never mind the heroics! What's the idea?

Hugh
I'm sorry to change the plans at the last minute like this. But as things are, - it can't be helped.

Broomfield
But I want you with me. All the arrangements - damn it all, you've got to come.

Hugh

If you want me enough you will allow my friends. I know it is asking a great deal, but I promise to take the full responsibility for them, and your plans need not be disturbed.

Broomfield

But that's impossible - with a woman along.

(during the next few speeches DENIS is protesting to Hugh to give the idea up)

Lilith

(to BROOMFIELD)

I'm afraid your ideas of women haven't outgrown the mauve decade. I assure you I shall expect no consideration from you whatever.

- what's this help date

Broomfield

My dear madam, I have had sufficient experience of women to know they completely disrupt any affair into which they intrude.

General position on women

Lilith

I'm sorry you should have been so unfortunate.

Broomfield

They clamour for equality, but can't dispense with all the hypocrisies of social life.

Lilith

Oh, if only you knew how tired I am of all that. Already you have refreshed me with your difference - or is it - indifference?

(she adds the last very softly)

Broomfield

(calmly)

Which already you are planning to undermine.

Lilith

Oh, no, I wouldn't destroy anything so rare for the world.

Broomfield

(smiles cynically) he speaks aloud to avoid the appearance of a tête à tête)

Where we are going you would be as much at home as a fish in the Sahara. ~~There are no luxuries or even comforts.~~ The food is poor and often scarce. No silk cushions, hot baths or iced drinks. No feather beds, no plumbing, no ten course dinners.

Lilith

But - you are too experienced a traveller not to have made provision against discomfort.

Broomfield

My dear Madam, there are too many uncomfortable contingencies to be able to prepare against them all. Insect pests, plagues when animals and natives drop dead in heaps. Supplies lost or stolen, rivers unexpectedly dry, no water to drink - much less to wash in. And the travelling - ox wagons bump you black and blue, and machika with ill disposed natives can play strange tricks. On such trips we can have no dead weight. each must be able to fend for himself.

Denis

It's no go. Lilith. It's jolly decent of you to suggest it, but I don't want you to have to go through all that just for me. Besides, they don't want us.

(with forced lightness)

Well, that's that. Now we can all have a drink to show there's no hard feelings.

(Goes over to the whisky. HUGH goes quickly up and stops him. They have a suppressed argument in the background. Hugh again show Denis the map)

Lilith

(to BROOMFIELD)

It all sounds most exhilarating. How do you know I'm not able to fend for myself.

Broomfield

From the fact that your friend does not feel able to leave you alone.

Lilith

That he won't go without me suggests that I'm an essential part of the exxpedition.

Broomfield

(grimly)

I admit that it would be wholesome discipline for a person so bent on her own way.

Lilith

That at least should decide you in its favour. I'm sure you would love to see me disciplined.

Broomfield

But not to hear the incidental cries and whimpers it would elicit.

Lilith

(studying him speculatively)

I wonder what prompts your extraordinary terror of women.

Broomfield

Not terror - merely avoidance.

well!

Lilith

Such feverish avoidance suggests the burnt cat.

Broomfield

I assure you I am fire-proof.

Lilith

Then why so much agitation against them. Have you been scared by the bogey tales of your bachelor friends?
(glances swiftly towards HUGH)

Broomfield

No.

Lilith

Then your own affairs with them must have been devastating.

Broomfield

They invariably ended in disaster.

Lilith

Oh, I see.

Broomfield

(cooly)
Not to me.

Lilith

(laughs)
You are trying to suggest that your avoidance is out of consideration for poor susceptible woman.

(she looks provocatively into his eyes)
I assure you in this case that is unnecessary.

Broomfield

Consideration for women is not one of my failings.

Lilith

(mockingly)
You merely run away. That hardly agrees with your accepted reputation for bravery and daring. Is it by avoidance of danger that one earns such a reputation?

Broomfield

By not admitting danger.

Lilith

And yet you -

(with a note of challenge)

You are so confident of your invulnerability - it would be charming to prove you wrong.

Broomfield

(with slight impatience)

You are so confident of your power to do so - it seems imperative to set you right.

beauty is down

Lilith
 Quite! Then you agree to my coming?

Broomfield
 I not only agree, I insist. If a lady wishes to dash her head against a stone wall to prove it is not hard, I am not the man to stop her.

Lilith
 Exactly!

Broomfield
 (to HUGH)
 Fanshawe, I quite see that Lady Harvey should be included in this trip.

Hugh
 But I thought - are you serious.

Broomfield
 Intensely. The thing is imperative. She has claims to make good - it would be churlish to deny her the chance.

Denis
 Honest, Lilith, do you really want -

Lilith
 It's all settled.

Hugh
 All right, I'll start planning for the extra -

Broomfield
 Nothing elaborate mind. Lady Harvey agrees to demand no concessions to her sex. Her presence will not change the plans in any particular, under any circumstances. She will take her full share of responsibilities. And never a murmur or complaint will pass her lips.

(grimly, looking full at Lilith)
Incidentally she will have full scope to prove the interesting abilities she so confidently claims.

Denis
 Is that all right, Lilith?

Lilith
 Perfectly. Mr Broomfield has expressed it beautifully.

Denis
 Great then. That's fine.
 (excitedly)
 Let's have another look at that map old man.
 (he and HUGH study the map eagerly together)

Broomfield

(to Lilith)
Do you still want to come?

Lilith

More than ever. You see you don't understand me at all.

Broomfield

You will find you understand me even less.

Lilith

That is still more promising of interest

(she is smiling up at him irresistibly. He looks down at her with his faint smile, cynical and imperturbable.
HUGH and DENIS are bending over the map. On LILITH's last line HUGH happens to look round. He is arrested by their attitude, his eyes narrow, and he watches them curiously as

THE CURTAIN

SLOWLY

FALLS
