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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE SWEET GIRL GRADUATES: A FARCE
IN THREE ACTS AND AN EPILOGUE ***

The Sweet Girl Graduates

By REA WOODMAN



PRICE 35 CENTS

ELDRIDGE ENTERTAINMENT HOUSE
FRANKLIN, OHIO ALSO DENVER, COLORADO
644 South Logan St.

The Sweet Girl Graduates

A FARCE
In Three Acts and an Epilogue

BY
REA WOODMAN, M.A.

Author of "She Organized a Club," "The Master's Birthday,"
and "The Professor."

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ELDRIDGE ENTERTAINMENT HOUSE
FRANKLIN, OHIO

To My Own Boys and Girls, The Class of 1902

SYNOPSIS

ACT. I.

Sitting Room of the De Smythe Home.
Wednesday Morning at 10 o'clock.
"We'll have the prettiest frock if it breaks the R. I. P. R. R.!"

ACT. II.

Sitting Room of the De Smythe Home.
Thursday afternoon at 3 o'clock.
"Deep, deep are the meanings of life."

ACT. III.

Hallway of the De Smythe Home.
Friday Morning at 9 o'clock.
"Mr. Bulbus, the lilies are lovely."

EPILOGUE.

Dining Room in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Hamilton.
A Friday Morning in May, 1905.
"Therefore, Valeria squints."

CHARACTERS

Miss Maude De Smythe, The Sweet Girl,
Secretary of the Class of 1902.

Mrs. De Smythe, Her Mother,
Who is threatened with nervous prostration.

Mr. De Symthe, Her Father,
President of the R. I. P. Railroad.

Mr. Jack Hamilton, Her Beau,
President of the Class of 1902.

Miss Matilda Hoppenhoer, Her Aunt,
Who never graduated, thank Heaven!

Miss Valeria Reynolds, Her Dearest Friend,
Whom she loves very much.

Madam Sateene, Her Dressmaker.

Madam Rantum, Her Elocution Teacher, (*late of the Boston School.*)

Professor Grindem, Principal of the High School.

Mr. Chinese Bulbus, The Florist.

Katherine, The Maid.

ACT I.

(*Sitting-room of the DeSmythe home; "confusion worse confounded;" everything topsy-turvy. MRS. DESMYTHE on couch; MADAM SATEENE and she looking over lace samples, of*

which they have a great number. Madam in "swell" street costume.)

Mrs. De S. (tossing samples in a heap). There's positively *nothing* like it! Nothing anywhere near it!

Madam No, and nothing that can be used.

Mrs. De S. (snatching a bit of lace from the heap). There! That's a lover's knot pattern. Why, it-

Madam No, that's a sailor's knot. There is a great difference.

Mrs. De S. (vaguely). I don't see it.

Madam (patiently). You see the loop in this bends down and in this, it bends-goes up. Every difference in the world, my dear Mrs. De Smythe.

Mrs. De S. (meekly, but convinced). Wouldn't it do? All bunched up?

Madam But it is not to be bunched up!

Mrs. De S. (with a profound sigh). What *can* we do? And I threatened with an attack!

Madam I don't know! (rises, sits down, then groans). I am at my wit's end. Let me think.

Mrs. De S. (with an inspiration). Take the lace off!

Madam (crushingly). My dear Mrs. De Smythe, the gown is *modelled* for lace.

Mrs. De S. (helplessly). Oh!

(*Madam sits in brown study, tapping her forehead.*)

Madam Let me see; Wednesday morning. (looks at watch). Ten o'clock. It might be done. Practically two days. (sits staring at wall). No, it couldn't! We might use chiffon.

Mrs. De S. Maude hates chiffon.

Madam (with professional coldness). Chiffon is a very artistic trimming.

Mrs. De S. (wearily). It may be-it may be, but you know Maude.

(*Enter MISS HOPPENHOER.*)

Miss H. (looks around; sniffs at the untidiness). Jennie, you look ready to faint!

Mrs. De S. Sit down. Don't stand there like-a-wooden Indian!

Miss H. They don't keel over every few minutes, anyhow! (sits with a thud). You look ready to faint!

Mrs. De S. I feel ready to faint; the lace has given out.

Miss H. (picking up things). The lace-?

Mrs. De S. (with infinite patience). The lace, you know, for Maude's dress.

Miss H. (blankly). Eh-what dress?

Madam (in polite surprise). Why, Miss Hoppenhoer, *what* dress?

Mrs. De S. (shrilly). *What* dress,-oh, Matilda!

Miss H. (commencing to "straighten" room in earnest). Oh, is *that* all? I thought the President had been assassinated!

Mrs. De S. Matilda! I must say you don't seem much interested. I should think you would,-your own niece, too!

Miss H. (tragically). Look at this room,-*look at this room!* It is a disgrace to a Christian community! Think of the breakfast we had-or rather, that we didn't have! And yesterday! And now you down sick-down *sick!* Does it take a month to graduate? (*dusts an upholstered chair vigorously*). It's such (*bang*) such non-(*bang*) nonsense!

Mrs. De S. Nonsense to graduate! Matilda Hoppenhoer! Do stop thrashing about! Ugh, that dust! (*coughs weakly*). Katherine will do that.

Miss H. (pounding sofa cushions). Katherine is busy; she has ten miles of flutin' to flute!

Mrs. De S. (coughing). Well, stop, anyway! My nerves are bad today.

Miss H. You are worn out. We're all as cross as bears!

Madam (emerging from a brown study). What shall I do? And only a yard needed! I think chiffon-

Miss H. (straightening out a rug). Use ribbon.

Madam (with dignity). They used ribbon last year.

Miss H. Fringe, then,-fringe is very dressy.

Madam They used fringe two years ago.

Miss H. (snapping her up). Well, what's the idea? To use something that hasn't never been used?

(*MAUDE comes in, breathless.*)

Maude (sitting down hard). Goodness, I'm tired! Auntie, your grammar is bad-very bad. What are

you doing?

Miss H. (sarcastically). Getting you ready to graduate.

Maude (peeling off her gloves). Well sir, I've just been racing around! O, Valeria's going to have chiffon.

Madam (dramatically). Chiffon!

Maude (tossing her hat on the floor). Yes, and it's awfully pretty.

Madam Chiffon! Is she? (*Sits, from sheer weakness.*)

Maude (beginning to undo sundry packages). Yes, and-why, what's the matter?

Madam (gasping). Chiffon!

Maude (a light dawning). Am I? Am I?

Miss H. (winding yarn into a ball). Am you what? Sit down, child, sit down, you look like a statute!

Maude Am I to have chiffon?

Mrs. De S. (firmly). You are.

Maude We can't both have chiffon! I won't be a copy-tale! I won't!

Mrs. De S. (sitting erect and speaking with authority). Listen, dearie. The lace has given out.

Maude (stamping her foot). Get more!

Mrs. De S. We can't.

Madam And the gown is so modelled that we can use nothing else.

Maude I won't have chiffon! I won't-I won't-I won't.

Mrs. De S. (warningly). Do not let Madame Sateene see you in a passion.

Maude Madam would be in a passion herself! She knows how I feel! O dear! (*begins to sob*). Everything is going wrong! I w-w-won't graduate, so there now!

Miss H. (mounting a chair to straighten a picture). That's sensible! You needn't. I never did.

Mrs. De S. Matilda, do not encourage the child! Of course she must graduate. Everybody does.

Miss H. (sarcastically). If everybody stood on their heads, I suppose we'd have to!

Mrs. De S. You cannot judge in such matters, Matilda. You are very old-fashioned.

Miss H. (upsetting contents of work basket in lap). Maybe so, maybe so, but I am alive, and that child'll be dead if-

Mrs. De S. (holds her head). Matilda, for heaven's sake, stop!

Maude I'll telephone Valeria. May be she-

Mrs. De S. (with decision). Maude, sit down! You will do nothing of the sort. Mrs. Reynolds is *such* a talker! The whole town would know it in ten minutes. Besides, at the Tuesday Club she cut me-actually *cut* me! I will not permit it.

Maude I don't think that ought to count, *now*. I suppose I have to have something to wear.

Madam What do you say to a Paris muslin?

Maude (listlessly). What is a Paris muslin?

Madam A sort of fine organdie.

Maude Swell?

Mrs. De S. Maudie! Would Madam Sateene propose anything else? She doesn't want you to look like a fright. Now, I think,-(*pauses, listening*). Why there is papa's voice!

Maude Papa, bless his old bones! Papa, come in here, quick! Hurry up!

(MR. DE SMYTHE *comes in hastily.*)

Mr. De S. What is it-what is it? Is Mamma worse?

Maude (in tragic attitude). I can't graduate!

Mr. De S. (with profound astonishment). Can't graduate? Can't graduate? Didn't you pass?

Maude (scornfully). Pass! That doesn't matter! My dress, my dress, my dress!

Mr. De S. (immensely relieved). Oh, your dress! Isn't it fine enough?

Madam Why, you see, Mr. De Smythe, the-

Maude (sobbing and clinging to his neck). I got to have chiffon, ugly, limp, old chiffon! It is so-so-d-drabbled!

Mr. De S. Well, never mind! Hus-s-h! You'll make Mamma worse. You needn't graduate! Never mind.

Maude Oh, oh!

Mr. De S. Never mind, little girl, you needn't graduate! Never mind!

Maude Oh, I-I must. The presents are coming in.

Miss H. (shortly). Return 'em.

Maude You wouldn't, if they were yours! You know you wouldn't! Oh, you're all so mean!

Madam (soothingly). Let's have Paris muslin. It'll be lovely.

Mrs. De S. It's too stiff.

Miss H. And sounds too furrin! Haven't we got any American muslin? I'd rather wear gunny sack.

Mr. De S. Hurrah for Matilda! A female Patrick Henry!

Mrs. De S. Papa, don't speak so loud!

Mr. De S. (contritely). I beg your pardon, Mamma,—your poor head!

Maude I want something pretty! Not-not just-just any old thing!

Madam (with awful dignity). Paris muslin is beautiful.

Maude The other girls have silk.

Mr. De S. Then you must have silk, too,—decidedly. Mustn't she, Mamma?

Mrs. De S. (sighing). I do not know, Papa, I do not know. This is a dreadful time,—a dreadful time. I fear I shall not live to see her graduate! (*sighs dismally*). But you will all enjoy it. Matilda, will you heat the salt bags?

(MISS HOPPENHOER *bounces out*.)

Maude (flies to couch). O, you precious, precious Mamma! Don't you dare get sick and die!

(KATHERINE *opens the door*.)

Katherine Miss Reynolds and Mr. Hamilton.

Maude Hello, Valeria, how you vas? Jack, did you get 'em?

Jack (bows to ladies, shakes hands with Mr. De Smythe). Couldn't Maude, nothing but red.

Maude Red! I can't wear red! Madam Sateene, can I?

Madam (after due deliberation). Yes, you can. You will need a touch of color.

Valeria Why don't you carry pink ones?

Jack Pink roses are lovely. You carried pink ones at the Junior Banquet, didn't you, Val?

Valeria (thoughtfully). Did I? Yes, I did! Bridesmaid, I think they were.

Maude I hate pink roses!

Mrs. De S. Maudie, Maudie, do not be so vehement!

Mr. De S. Never mind about the roses. They are a side issue. The question is, "Wherewithal shall you be clothed!" I must be off to earn your daily cake. Let's decide.

Maude (pensively). Jack, do you like Paris muslin?

Jack Is it anything like Plaster of Paris?

Maude Jack, behave! I am so worried! (*signs of tears*.)

Valeria She's just tired, poor dear; don't tease her, Jack.

Maude (with dignity). I am *not* tired. He can't tease me, thank you, Valeria. I think, Madam, I will have Paris muslin. Silk is so common.

Jack Why don't you have bobinet?

Valeria Why, Jack, bobinet is—

Jack I know what bobinet is; heavy and kind of corded,—dead swell.

Maude That's pique!

Mr. De S. Well, children, defer that discussion until the Fourth of July. Is there time for a whole new rig?

Madam Y-e-s,—I think so.

Mr. De S. Cheer up, everybody! We'll have the prettiest frock in the outfit, if it breaks the R.I.P. Railroad! We are the people! I must go hunt those papers—things are stirred up so! Good-bye, Mamma, don't worry! Madam Sateene will save us! (*goes*.)

Madam (rising with alacrity). I shall go look at Paris muslins. Shall I bring you samples?

Mrs. De S. No, I am not able to decide. We trust to you absolutely, Madam Sateene, absolutely. (*groans*). I believe I am going to have an attack! Oh, dear, my nerves! They actually twitch! I wish Matilda were of some use in such matters. Because she never graduated, she thinks Maude shouldn't! Jack, do you see my smelling salts?

(JACK *hunts for the salts*. GIRLS *talk apart*. MADAM *makes memoranda*.)

Madam Miss Maude, how would you like ribbon, very narrow satin ribbon?

Maude Kate Saunders had that in—let me see,—oh, in 1900.

Valeria And that French Girl,—Giggre—wore it last year.

Madam O dear! (*grimly*). Anybody ever use rope?

Jack (*grinning*). Only men—for neck-ties mostly. I can't find it, Mrs. De Smythe.

Mrs. De S. Then Matilda has put it in the medicine chest. She is so neat! I can't help it—I don't want to have an attack! What shall I do? But I am afraid I—I am going to have one!

Maude (*with signs of tears*). O, Mamma, don't have an attack! What shall I do? No roses, no dress, no nothing!

Madam (*resolutely*). Well, you shall have a dress, about noon, to give you (*with a tragic sweep of hand*) if it is my last effort! Mrs. De Smythe, I'll drop in and report! (*Goes hastily*.)

Valeria I must go. I stopped for a list of my committee.

Maude (*absently*). Don't go. What committee?

Valeria Committee on Decorations.

Maude (*vaguely*). Committee on—?

Valeria Decorations. Wake up!

Maude (*goes to desk*). O yes! (*rummages*). This desk is disgraceful! Here it is! (*Reads crumpled paper*.) "Be it resolved—" goodness, that's about poor Ned Woodruff! Jack, who was on that committee?

Jack (*smoothing Valeria's gloves on his knee*). Miss Secretary, I do not keep the minutes.

Maude Well, you were presiding! (*rummaging*). Here it is,—six,—is that enough? Five, rather,—Hal Taylor won't serve.

Valeria (*taking the list*). O yes, he will.

Maude Said he wouldn't! Told Mabel Hopeland so last night.

Valeria (*calmly*). Yes, he will.

Maude Well, he said he wouldn't.

Valeria (*pocketing the list, unmoved*). He will if I ask him.

Maude (*shutting desk with a bang*). Oh!

(*Enter MISS HOPPENHOER, with shawls, salt bags, etc.*)

Miss H. Jennie, you'd better go to bed.

Mrs. De S. (*sadly*). I will. I hope I shall not have an attack.

Miss H. Attack! We'll all have an attack before Friday night! (*She busies herself about the couch. Valeria and Maude go out.*)

Miss H. Now, can you walk, do you think? I'd better call Katherine, hadn't I? Katherine! Be careful of that bag—it's hot—awful hot! Lean on me—(*they go out, but Miss Hoppenhoer runs back to pick up things*).

Jack Can't I help you! A fellow never knows what to do when—when—anybody has an attack.

(*MAUDE returns.*)

Jack Come on, Maude, I've got an old tandem out there. Let's take a spin.

Miss H. (*dropping a shawl and two bottles*). Got a what?

Jack Go get ready, Maude. A tandem.

(*MAUDE goes.*)

Miss H. (*moveless with astonishment*). You ride it?

Jack (*respectfully*). Yes, ma'am.

Miss H. (*aghast*). Ride it?

Jack (*fascinated*). Yessum. (*earnestly*). Yes, ma'am.

Miss H. Ride a tantrum! Well, such goings on! And all of it comes from graduating! Thank Heaven, I never graduated!

(*Commences to pick up things. Curtain.*)

ACT II.

(*Sitting-room of the De Smythe home. Bouquets with cards attached. MAUDE's desk, open, in confusion. Her hat and gloves on a chair. JACK, MISS RANTUM and MAUDE, latter*

"practicing.")

Miss R. (decidedly). It is best to hold it in one hand.

Jack (surprised beyond measure). Oh, are you going to read it?

Maude (standing in the middle of the room). W-e-1-1, not exactly read it, you know.

Maude I really know it—almost.

Jack Then don't hold the paper.

Maude (apprehensively). Oh, but if I *should* forget!

Jack (confidently). You won't!

Maude I might! Oh, it's very easy for you to say orate, for *you* can!

Jack (conscious of ability). Yes, but you could, too.

Miss R. What is the subject of your oration, Mr. Hamilton?

Jack (modestly). "Universality in Statecraft."

Maude And it's a dandy! You ought to hear him when he comes to, "For of all the nations, builded of power and sealed with blood—" (*in tremendous tones*).

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Jack Oh, now, Maude, I say, let up.

Maude Well, honest, you *are* fine. No I should die if I forgot,—just simply die.

Miss R. It is wiser for her to hold her manuscript, I think. This is an essay, *not* an oration.

Maude (sitting down and getting up, a la Delsarte). Of course, Jack, don't you see? It is an essay, *not* an oration. Now, did I get up right?

Miss R. Try it again.

Maude (repeats the operation and advances very stiffly). Is that it?

Jack (judicially). Too corky.

Miss R. Be leisurely. Leisure is elegance. And bend more. Try it again,—so. (*illustrates*).

Maude (doing likewise). I do hope I won't drop anything. How was that?

Miss R. (hesitating). A trifle—just a trifle—well, er—stiff. Of all things, a lady must rise well.

Jack Yes, not as if she were shot out of a cannon!

Maude Jack, you keep still!

Miss R. Try it again—so. (*illustrates*). Bend from the waist.

(*MAUDE does so amid solemn silence.*)

Jack (graciously). That was better.

Miss R. Now, go on.

Maude (reading). "Life's Inner Meanings."

Miss R. Louder and more deliberately. "Life's Inner Meanings."

Maude "Life's Inner Meanings."

Miss R. Go on, not too fast. Don't hold it so high and bend the body forward from the waist.

Maude (in high shrill tones). "As a traveler, among the mighty mountains, fails to realize the height to which he has climbed—" (*Stops, winded.*)

16

Miss R. Compose yourself, compose yourself! Your voice is—well, unnatural.

Jack Yes, it's squeaky.

Maude (with heat). It isn't! You're awfully mean! I've got to be heard!

Miss R. Try it again. Use a deeper tone. "As a traveler, among the mighty mountains, fails to realize the height—" Now, go on.

Maude (nervously). "As a traveler, among the mighty mountains, fails to realize the height to which he has climbed, so we, in Life's dusty pathway, cannot estimate the distance we have traveled." O, Miss Rantum, that isn't right!

Miss R. No, not exactly, not precisely right. You see, you—

Jack Why don't you use "journeyed" instead of "traveled"?

Maude (ignoring him). Miss Rantum, what *is* the matter with it? I'm not doing as well as I did last week!

Miss R. No, you really aren't, but—

Jack I say, why don't you change—

Maude (imploringly). What is the matter, Miss Rantum?

Miss R. It isn't firm. You don't seem to know what you are saying.

Maude (in grave-yard tones). "As the traveler, among the mighty mountains, fails to-

Jack (ditto). Finally, my beloved brethren-

Miss R. (hastily). Lighter, but firmly. Use a conversational tone, "As the traveler, among the mountains;" "It is a very pleasant day," "How do you do?" See?

Maude (in light, quivering tones). "As a traveler, among the mountains-mighty mountains-fails to realize the height to which he has climbed-has climbed, so we, in Life's dusty pathway, cannot estimate the distance we have traveled." 17

Jack "Climbed-climbed." I don't like "climbed" there; wouldn't "attained" be better?

Maude Professor Grindem didn't say so.

Jack "Attained" is a prettier word.

Maude (earnestly). Do you think so?

Miss R. "Climbed" is better. It is a real traveler and real mountains, hence "climbed." "Attained" sounds as if it were ideals, you know.

Maude (sighing profoundly). Yes, I think so, too. Besides, it's too late to change it now. I'd forget.

Jack All right! "On with the dance." I'm no judge.

Miss R. Go on with the next paragraph.

Maude The next isn't a paragraph.

Miss R. (very patiently and gently). Well, go on with the next.

Maude "Among life's bright flowers, its rugged slopes, its pleasant walleys-

Miss R. Valleys.

Maude "Its pleasant walleys, its-

Miss R. Valleys.

Maude (nervously). Let me start over.

Miss R. Well, only use deeper tones. (*She sits down.*)

Maude (very slowly). "Among life's bright flowers, its rugged slopes, its pleasant walleys-valleys, its dangerous pitfalls, we cannot realize the magnitood of the common things about us."

Miss R. "Magnitude," not "tood."

Maude "The magnitude of the common things about us."

Miss R. Touch "common things" more lightly; "of the common things about us,"-"common things." 18

Maude (takes a sprint). We cannot realize the magnitood-tude-of the "common-" oh, dear, I can never say it!"

Miss R. Yes, you can. You are doing well,-remarkably well.

Maude O Miss Rantum!

Jack You are, honest Injun! It'll be dandy.

Miss R. Please read,-are you tired standing?

Maude (dismally). No,-I got to get it.

Miss R. Please read that second paragraph-sentence-again.

Maude (taking a brace). Among life's bright flowers, its rugged slopes-

Miss R. R-r-r-rugged slopes.

Maude Rugged slopes.

Miss R. No, r-r-rugged slopes. Trill your "r."

Maude (flatly). I can't.

Jack What's the use? I don't think she need. People only do that on Decoration Day. "Br-rave, r-rugged heroes," you know.

(*Enter KATHERINE.*)

Katherine Miss Maude, a letter from you-for you, I mean. (*Hands one in awestruck manner and escapes.*)

Jack That girl is scared to death at anything that looks like writing. Did you see her?

Miss R. (leaning back in her chair). Is she of foreign extraction?

Jack No, foreign distraction.

Maude (falling into a chair and opening letter). From Valeria. She can't come over this afternoon. She's got to, to-I can't make it out. (*spells slowly*). B-a-an, B-a-n-

Jack Banana, maybe. She's got to banana. Let me see it, I'm used to her hand. 19

Maude Indeed! (*elaborately*). Indeed, you *are!* Maybee this is *your* note?

Jack You needn't get so mad. Let her banana. I don't care!

Maude (*springing up*). Neither do I! Take the note!

(*KATHERINE appears at the door.*)

Katherine (*in much trepidation*). Perfesser Grindem.

Jack (*pleasantly*). All right Katherine, we are perpared!

(*Enter PROFESSOR GRINDEM.*)

Grindem (*bows profoundly, repeatedly*). Ah, good morning, ladies, good morning! Mr. Hamilton, ah, good morning! How is the work progressing?

(*JACK shakes hands. MISS RANTUM bows distantly.*)

Maude (*tearing note into tiny bits*). I shall be scared to death.

Grindem (*cordially*). Not at all, Miss Maude, ah, not at all! Not at all! You will feel power,-power is ahem!-power is a great thing-a great thing.

Maude (*dejectedly*). Yes, Professor.

(*Enter MRS. DE SMYTHE*)

Grindem May I hear the-ah, Mrs. De Smythe, good morning!

(*MRS. DE SMYTHE adjusts herself on couch.*)

Mrs. De S. Yes, Maudie, dear, read it all to us. O Matilda, Matilda, my salts! Now, Maudie!

(*MISS HOPPENHOER bustles in and takes her station behind couch.*)

Maude (*painfully taking "position"*). "Life's Inner Meanings."

Mrs. De S. A very pretty subject, I think.

Miss H. (*sniffs*). A very pretty *broad* one, I think!

Maude (*impressively*). "Life's Inner Meanings."

Miss R. Stand straighter, Miss Maude-so.

Jack I think that's awkward,-looks as if she were going to cry "Lay on, Macduff!"

Maude Why, Jack Hamilton!

Mrs. De S. Jack's only joking. Why don't you go on?

Maude "Life's Inner Meanings," (*then, very rapidly*). "As a traveler among the mighty mountains, fails to realize the height to which he has climbed, so we, in Life's dusty pathway, cannot estimate the distance we have traveled. Among life's bright flowers, its rugged slopes, its pleasant walleys-valleys, its dangerous pitfalls, we cannot realize the magnitood-tude-magnitude of the common things about us." (*Stops, breathless.*)

Miss R. Don't sway so. Hold the body firm.

Mrs. De S. There's no hurry, child.

Jack That pace would kill!

Miss R. (*to Professor Grindem*). Her voice is not deep enough. It lacks impressiveness.

Grindem Yes, it lacks power-power, I should say.

Maude (*near tears*). I can't get a new voice for this old essay!

Miss H. Yes, you ought to; you ought to be made over if you're going to graduate!

Mrs. De S. Do go on; I am very fond of the next part.

Maude (*continues*). "We stand upon the brink-"

Miss R. More rapidly there, "We stand upon the brink!"

Maude (*in exact imitation*). "We stand upon the brink."

Jack (*ditto*). That is, if we don't fall off-

Maude Make Jack be still or I-I-can't!

Jack Beg your pardon, but really, 'a *brink*,' you know.

Maude "We stand upon the brink-who can guess what say the dashing waters beneath? Who can interpret the silence of the eternal stars? We rest in the walley-valley, who can understand the whispering of the leaves? Who can read the secrets of the ocean blue? O, deep are the inner meanings,-deep, deep are the mysteries of nature, infinite are the suggestions of life!"

Grindem Too, rapidly, Miss Maude,-too rapidly. Those are grand sentiments,-give 'em time-give 'em time.

Miss R. There is not enough emotion in the climax: "Deep, deep are the mysteries of nature!" Read it (*in a cellerage tone*). "Deep, deep are the mysteries of nature!"

Maude (*using the "vox humana stop"*). "Deep, *deep* are the mysteries of nature!"

Mrs. De S. (soothingly). You are not doing so well, Maudie, today.

Miss H. No, I think you get worse.

Maude Nobody c-could! You all find fault. (*weeps*). You couldn't do any better—none of you—so there now!

Miss H. Never mind! It doesn't matter. Don't graduate.

Maude (still weeping). It does matter! It d-does! I don't want to disgrace the family.

Miss H. Ought to have commenced sooner, then, if you didn't!

Voice from without. Who's going to disgrace the family? I'd like to see 'em try it.

(*As MR. DE SMYTHE appears, PROFESSOR GRINDEM and JACK go out, in deep converse.*)

Maude I am!

Mr. De S. Oh, no, you're not,—not by the R.I.P. Railroad! (*cheerfully*). You won't be permitted to, Miss! Doesn't the dress fit?

Maude (with intense scorn). The dress! Oh, Papa, my piece!

Mr. De S. O, you're piece! Say it to me! I haven't heard it today.

Maude You're making fun of me!

Miss H. The child is worn out.

Maude I am not worn out! I am not a baby! (*collapses*). I wish I was d-d-dead!

Mrs. De S. O dear! O dear! Maudie, child!

Maude I just w-wish I was.

Mr. De S. W-h-y-ee! When I have brought you your present! I am astonished!

Maude Have you? Oh, Papa, *have* you? Let me see!

Mr. De S. (taking out of his pocket a tiny case). No more tears?

Maude (rubbing eyes hard). No—never.

Mr. De S. Honest? I've never seen so many tears. We are a Johnstown flood lately. (*Gives jeweler's case.*)

Maude A watch! A w-a-t-c-h!! (*flies at him*).

(*Re-enter JACK and MR. BULBUS.*)

Mr. Bulbus. (bows awkwardly). I come to see about them decorations.

Maude (rapturously). A watch!

Mr. De S. Guess we don't need 'em, Mr. Bulbus. There is something going on at the school that night.

Maude I was afraid it would be books. (*She and Jack examine the watch aside.*)

Mrs. De S. We might have a reception.

Miss H. Jennie, you'll be sick! Mark my words, you'll have an attack!

Mrs. De S. But it's so nearly over—

Mr. De S. Ought we to have one? Does everybody?

Miss H. (sarcastically). Does everybody have *what*? Have an attack?

Mr. De S. (patiently). A reception.

Mrs. De S. It's the thing to do, isn't it, Miss Rantum?

Miss R. (looks up from Maude's MS., which she has been studying). I beg your pardon, Mrs. De Smythe?

Mrs. De S. It's the thing to do—to have a reception, isn't it?

Miss R. They always do in Boston.

Maude Do what in Boston?

Miss R. They have receptions. (*with great dignity*).

Jack And Beans.

(*MISS RANTUM straightens up to retort, but MR. DE SMYTHE cuts in.*)

Mr. De S. And here is Mr. Bulbus waiting! He is a business man, you know. When do you want him, Jennie?

Mr. B. (confusedly). Yes, sir.

Maude (sweetly). You'd just as soon wait, wouldn't you, Mr. Bulbus?

Mr. B. (blushing, drops hat). Yes, I-d-I'd-I'd rather.

Mrs. De S. We must decide while Mr. Bulbus is here, so we can get his suggestions.

Mr. B. (standing like a stork). Yes'sum.

Miss R. (preparing to depart). Well, Miss Maude, I think we will not need another rehearsal.

Maude Oh, Miss Rantum, *do* you think I can do it all right?

Miss R. Yes, I think so. You must rest this evening.

Maude The Juniors are to give us a spread.

Miss R. (definitely). But you must not go. Mr. De Smythe, may I speak to you?

Mr. De S. Go on with your reception business. Mr. Bulbus hasn't all day. *(Goes out with Miss Rantum.)*

Mr. B. (changes weight to other foot). Yes, sir.

Mrs. De S. Won't you be seated, Mr. Bulbus?

Mr. B. (sits on edge of small chair). Yessum, thank yer.

Maude Let's have just the graduating class.

Jack No, I'm dead tired of the push! Let's have a picked crowd,—friends of "the highly contracting parties," you know.

Mrs. De S. We ought to have your professors.

Maude We'd have to invite Grindem, and he's so awfully—

Mrs. De S. Professor Grindem is a *very* delightful gentleman, Maudie!

Jack (in imitation). Yes, ahem, he has—power—ahem,—power is—power is a wonderful thing, a wonderful thing!

Mrs. De S. Well, as to the decorations.

Maude Smilax from the chandelier—

Jack Don't let's have any smilax. It's too much like funerals.

(MR. DE SMYTHE returns.)

Mr. De S. Well, Mr. Bulbus, have they decided?

Mrs. De S. No, Papa, we can't decide who to have.

Mrs. De S. Let that slide now, and go into a committee of the whole on decorations.

Maude Let's—but I don't want the faculty.

Jack You'd like to have Professor Graham. All girls are gone on him.

Mrs. De S. We needn't order cut flowers. All of Maudie's—*(stops to cough)*.

Miss H. (throws down her darning). Jennie, *you'll* have an attack! I won't be no committee! I won't encourage this nonsense. Education is all right; everybody needs a little,—enough to make an honest livin'. But look at your mother, look at your father! They're plumb wore out settin' up nights to get you graduated! In my day when girls got through school they quit, they didn't go to Commencin' and carrin' on! I won't be no committee of the whole nor no other kind. When you're all dead nobody can blame me! *(walks out, sniffing disdainfully)*.

Mrs. De S. (rising hastily). Oh, dear, now she'll go sweep every room in the house! *(goes out in haste)*.

Maude (springs up). Mamma mustn't wear herself out. It would be all right if Auntie had graduated. *(goes in haste)*.

Mr. De S. (gazing helplessly after them all). Matilda's Declaration of Independence! *(seating himself resignedly)*. Draw up your chairs, gentlemen. We'll have to 'wait til the clouds roll by'.

(Curtain falls on the three men looking at each other silently.)

ACT III.

(Hallway of the DeSmythe house. Flowers on extra tables, cards attached. Door bell in vestibule rings constantly; flowers and packages arriving. Maude's picture hat, gloves and fan on chair. MR. BULBUS on ladder, measuring the wall. KATHERINE enters and re-enters, with flowers and gifts. MISS HOPPENHOER flits in and out. Everybody nervous.)

Katherine The bill's been a-ringin' all morning like that. *(arranges flowers)*.

Mr. B. I should think you'd be tired. Ain't yer?

Katherine No, it's as exciting as a wedding.

Mr. B. You wimmen like weddin's. I never see a woman as didn't.

Katherine (wonderingly). Are you going to decorate the hall?

Mr. B. (largely). Of course,—palms and ropes of smilax—

(Enter JACK, carrying his hat and gloves.)

Jack (agreeably). Good morning, Katherine. I let myself in, you not being a regiment. (*Katherine goes*). Good morning, Mr. Bulbus. You look pretty festive in here. (*examines bouquets, reading cards aloud and commenting*). "Compliments of Harold Taylor."-Umph, got them here in time, I should say. "With love of Edith."-girls always put on "with love of." "Wishing you a joyous day. Dick Dowell." That's nice of Dick, considering the late unpleasantness. "Lucile," of course; "Lucile" in white and gold! A girl couldn't graduate unless she had three 'Luciles' and a 'Maurine!' Golden Gate roses! Whew, that means dough! Professor Graham, I'll bet! He's got dough and cheek-

(MAUDE runs down the stairs.)

Jack O, hello, Maude! (*gives a long whistle*). Aren't we fine? Swagger!

Maude (imploringly). Jack, how do I look?

Jack Turn around,-slowly. (*Maude revolves very slowly*.)

Maude (anxiously). Well?

Jack You look-you look-out of sight! By George, you do!

Maude (caressing her dress skirt). You like the train?

(MR. BULBUS gets down and goes out, unnoticed by MAUDE.)

Jack It's splendid. You're a-a queen! I'd kiss you-

Maude (startled). H-u-s-h! Mr. Bulbus!

Jack (coolly). Oh, he's gone.

Maude Goodness, what if he'd been there!

Jack (comfortably). He wasn't.

Maude (trying to see the back of her train in glass). But you didn't know it!

Jack Don't you *think* I didn't know it! 'Spose I want to make the poor duffer green with envy? I can't kiss you anyway, you're too fine.

Maude No, I can't even sit down! Jack, you look awfully handsome.

Jack Thank you. Would you wear a rose?

Maude Of course-one of Dick's. Nice of Dick, wasn't it? (*gets one; puts it on; an operation requiring time and patience*).

Jack Don't leave so much green show. I want a contrast, not a study in tints.

Maude Don't touch me! Hold your arms out straight.

Jack (standing like a sign post). Then hurry up! I am not the stuff martyrs are made of.

Maude Is that all right?

Jack Stand off and get the effect. How can I tell?

Maude (standing back). Put down your arms!

Jack (obediently). Well?

Maude (with enthusiasm). Perfectly lovely! My, I shall be proud of you! For pity's sake, don't look at me!

Jack Can't help it.

Maude I don't mean *now*-goosey! I mean when I read. If I should forget!

Jack You won't! Keep your eye on Old South Church and-

Maude On *what*?

Jack I beg your pardon. On Miss Rantum.

Maude Oh! It must be time,-where is everybody?

Jack I'm here, (*sits on arm of chair and gazes at her*.)

Maude O you, yes! But I mean mamma! I am so nervous!

Jack You girls just try to be nervous. You think it's becoming.

(Enter MRS. DE SMYTHE, in black silk.)

Mrs. De S. The carriages have come. Where can Papa be?

Maude (in dismay). O, it isn't time, is it? O horrors, where is my essay? Jack, please look in my desk.

(Jack dashes out.)

Maude Mamma, is my hair all right?

Mrs. De S. Yes, Maudie, yes, (dismally) you look lovely.

(Jack dashes in, essay in hand.)

Jack Here it is, but don't practice now.

Maude (pacing the floor). "As a traveler, among the mighty mountains, fails to realize—to realize the heights to which he has climbed, so we, in Life's dusty pathway, cannot estimate the distance we have—we have,—cannot estimate the distance we have—" There, I knew I didn't know it! What shall I do?

Jack (brilliantly). Open your manuscript.

(Katherine enters, with letters and small package.)

Maude (unseeing, resumes). "Deep, deep are the mysteries of nature, infinite are—are—"

Mrs. De S. Maudie, here is a letter from Uncle John. (withholds package).

Maude (drops essay). O, I wonder what he sent! Is this all!

Mrs. De S. Why, Maudie! Read it.

Maude (tears it open; reads). "My dearest Niece: Hail to the happy day! 'Way down here in South Africa, 'mong monkeys and Boers, I feel the excitement. We don't graduate down here, but we know people who do. Never, I know, has the house of De Smythe been so shaken. In honor thereof, I am sending a—a—" O, goodness, I can't—"a diamond ring,"—a diamond! Hasn't it come?

Mrs. De S. Does he say when?

Maude (referring to the letter). He says "I am sending—" Katherine is such a stupy! (*calls*). Katherine—

Mrs. De S. Maybe this is it. (*gives package*).

(KATHERINE *comes with pink roses*.)

Maude O, O. O.! Isn't it a beauty! Jack, look!

Jack (*just glancing*). Umph! Yes, I see.

Maude Dear Uncle John! Everybody is *so* good! It's bigger than Valeria's. Must I wear gloves? I don't care, I just won't.

Mrs. De S. Your roses, Maudie.

Maude O, your roses, Jack! They're lovely!

Jack (*slowly*). The red weren't pretty, so I got pink. I hope you'll—

Maude (*rapturously*). I just love *pink* roses!

(KATHERINE *comes in with a big package*.)

Maude (*tearing away pink ribbons and tissue papers*). "With Valeria's dearest love." A bonbon dish! Isn't it lovely! And violets on it!

Jack (*with a grimace*). It will hold two pounds!

Maude It isn't a bit too big! If you won't fill it—well, there are others. I'm forgetting my piece. "Deep, deep are the mysteries—"

Jack Are you going to *say* it?

Maude No, but I must really know it, you know, so I can look up often.

Jack "O, I see clearly," said the blind man.

Mrs. De S. Dear, dear, this is just as if you were getting married! (*sinks into a chair; she has been examining the flowers*). The presents and the flowers and the carriages and—and everything. O, suppose you were—suppose you were!

Maude (*with intense indignation*). But I'm not! I'm graduating!

Jack (*disconsolately*). I don't think they're much alike!

Mrs. De S. But where *is* Papa?

Jack As I came, I saw him at the drug store.

Mrs. De S. The drug store! Why in the world—oh, I remember now,—I sent him. We'll never get off.

(MISS HOPPENHOER'S *voice is heard from somewhere, "O Jennie!"*)

Mrs. De S. (*rising and collecting things dropped*). I wonder what's happened now? I hope Papa isn't killed! (*hurries out*).

Maude (*gazing at her ring*). Aren't my presents pretty?

Jack Yes, but you are prettier.

Maude (*archly*). Thank you, Mr. Hamilton, but aren't you a little rash? (*holds roses to her face by way of contrast*.)

Jack (*critically*). No, I think not, on mature consideration. Your hair looks like gold—California gold, and those lovely lilies! Who gave you those lilies-of-the-valley? (*suddenly*).

Maude (*evasively*). Why California gold?

Jack O, it's redder, and then, it is a native product. You'd be mad if I said antique gold.

Maude But do you like antique gold better?

Jack That isn't the point. Who gave you those lilies?

Maude Aren't they dear?

Jack (*cruelly*). Don't know,—didn't buy 'em. Whose tribute are they?

Maude "Tribute" sounds like a funeral.

Jack (*with awful meaning*). There may be a funeral. Whose are they?

Maude (*demurely*). Mine.

Jack (*with infinite patience*). You know what I mean, (*with terrible calmness*). Who gave you those?

Maude (*preparing to cry*). You're awfully cross, I think.

(MR. BULBUS *enters in rear hunting something*. MAUDE *sees him*.)

Jack (*unmoved*). Who gave you those?

Maude (*graciously, sweetly*). Mr. Bulbus, the lilies are lovely.

Mr. B. (*surprised into dropping a hammer*). Yes'sum, I'm glad you—you like 'em. (*retreats in confusion*.)

Jack Oh! (*slowly*). That's awfully nice of you.

(*Enter* MRS. DE SMYTHE and MISS HOPPENHOER, *bonnets and gloves on*.)

Mrs. De S. Where *is* your father? It's time to go.

Jack Past time. Grindem said to be there at 9:30.

Mrs. De S. What shall we do? I knew he would be late! I hope I shall not have an attack!

Miss H. (*grimly*). No, I *hope* not—in that dress!

Mrs. De S. As if one's dress made any difference with an attack! O, there he is! Well, Papa, you—good morning, Madam.

(MR. DE SMYTHE and MADAM SATEENE *come in together*.)

Mr. De S. My, how fine we look!

Maude Madam Sateene, this shoulder—wrinkles.

Madam Let me see. (*Madam and Maude consult apart*.)

Mrs. De S. We ought to go.

Mr. De S. Miss Rantum hasn't come.

Jack (*looking up from his own Ms.*) O, I forgot! Miss Baked Beans will meet us there. She couldn't come here.

Maude She promised she would!

Mr. De S. All ready. How many of these do we take? (*indicating flowers*). Need a dray?

Maude Only Jack's—and I carry them. Jack, you carry my essay and fan. (*puts on hat*). Is it straight? Where are my roses?

(MISS HOPPENHOER *gives* MR. DE SMYTHE *two shawls and he goes*.)

Madam (*anxiously*). Wait one moment. (*adjusts Maude's train*). Now.

Miss H. Have you any lemon drops?

Maude Of course not,—nobody carries lemon drops! Where *is* my handkerchief!

Jack (*sheepishly, taking it out of his vest*). Here it is.

Mr. De S. (*from door*). Come on, you people.

Mrs. De S. O dear, dear, I shall never stand it.

Miss H. (*collecting salts and fans*). We're coming.

Mrs. De S. O dear,—kiss me, Maudie. (*sits down exhausted*). It's just like a wedding! I can't stand it! Some day you'll be getting married!

(MR. BULBUS *enters in the rear and just stands*.)

Jack (*cheerfully*). I hope so.

Maude (*arranging train to carry it gracefully*). Poor Mamma!

Mr. De S. (*from outside*). Come on! Matilda, bring Mamma!

Mrs. De S. O, O, O!

Maude Brace up, Mamma, you *must*.

Mrs. De S. (*to her handkerchief*). And only yesterday she was a baby!

Miss H. (snappishly.) And only day before yesterday you were!

Mrs. De S. (from outside). Come on—we *must* go.

Chorus We're coming! (*All start, collecting fans, handkerchiefs, and gathering up trains, adjusting bonnets anew, etc.*)

Maude (as they rush for the door). O, look out for my flowers! Jack, got my piece? I know I shall forget! What if we're late? Good-bye, Mr. Bulbus! (*all go*).

(*Curtain drops on MR. BULBUS, gazing after MAUDE in a sort of trance.*)

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EPILOGUE.

(*A Wednesday morning in May, 1905. MR. and MRS. JACK HAMILTON at breakfast. He reading a paper, totally absorbed. She opening her letters; there are two by her plate.*)

Maude (reading letter and talking to herself). Well, Well! (*reading*). I am not angry—not in the least. You *dear* old girl! (*drops letter and meditates*). You *dear* old girl! (*resumes reading*). I know better,—you wouldn't! (*reads about a page without comment, then*) W-h-y! *Why!* O goodness gracious! Jack!

(*JACK looks over top of paper absently, then resumes reading.*)

Maude (explosively). Jack, what *do* you think? Only fancy—Valeria is—Jack, listen! Put down your horrid paper! Valeria is *married*.

(*He looks at her vacantly.*)

Jack Well?

Maude Well? Listen: Valeria is married.

Jack (waking to the situation). Is that so! Valeria—well, well. I'm not astonished.

Maude (pensively). Why not?

Jack (at a venture). O, because—she is so—so handsome.

Maude (scornfully). She isn't handsome! Where are your eyes? She's clever—clever, that's what Valeria is. But not handsome,—certainly not. She squints.

Jack (staring). I thought you were so fond of her.

Maude (with dignity). I am, I am awfully fond of her—I've always been. But (*cuttingly*) affection doesn't blind *me*. I can love her and see her faults. Nobody ever called Valeria handsome.

Jack (hunting his place on the page). Maybe it was stunning.

Maude (with intense emphasis). Stunning!

Jack (turning the page with a prodigious rattling). Hal used to rave over her.

Maude O! Hal, he—don't rattle your paper so, you make me nervous! Hal didn't care for her.

Jack (absently). No, I suppose not, I suppose not. Of course, nobody could.

(*Silence. Both read.*)

Maude (intent on letter and all to herself). I wonder what she wore! She is too old for white. (*reads aloud*). "You'll be surprised, my dear." Yes, I confess I am. (*gazing at coffee urn thoughtfully*). Yes, I am. (*resumes reading*). Where was I? "I want to tell you first, dear." Here it is. So she *did* wear white—now, I am astonished. (*reads on*). For pity sakes! Jack

Jack (starts violently, crushing paper). A man might as well live on Vesuvius.

Maude (in great excitement). But, *Jack*, guess *who* married her.

Jack (with calm certainty). The man in the Moon. He's too jolly to mind squints.

Maude Just guess. You never can.

Jack (impatiently, much wrought upon.) Then tell me.

Maude (in an explosive). Hal!

Jack (inanely). Hal!

Maude (calmly, the mine sprung). Hal Taylor.

Jack Hal Taylor. Well, I am—bobbed!

Maude I'm not surprised.

Jack You said Hal didn't care for her.

Maude (very slowly). He doesn't, Jack. Hal was—*roped in*.

Jack (stares, then gives vent to a long whistle of astonishment). Well, you women!

Maude Don't talk to me. I am disgusted!

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Jack (ruefully). Well! (*He stares, folds napkin, unfolds it and takes up his newspaper.*)

Maude Don't sit there, just saying "Well" all the time!

Jack (slowly). Say, what is it to you?

Maude (sobs a little). She h-has deceived me-basely deceived me. But I don't care. I shall send her a cut-glass berry dish,-maybe a Tiffany c-c-cut! (*dries her eyes resolutely.*) Coffee, dear?

Jack (irritably; a trifle suspicious yet). Yes, don't I *always* take coffee?

Maude (plaintively). Don't scold me. I cannot endure much more. To think Valeria-

Jack (with decision, carving the steak). Don't think, then. Drop it. What's your other letter?

Maude (sadly). I don't care-I don't care for anything. (*takes a biscuit.*) The biscuits are burned.

Jack No, they are not. Never mind-give the letter to me.

(*MAUDE gazes pensively at nothing. JACK opens the letter with a fork, and reads silently.*)

Jack (to himself, muttering). Of course, it's money,-always money. Only a dollar and fifty cents apiece,-a man ought not growl. Umph! "The happy old days." Yes, I remember.

Maude (meekly). Remember what, Jack, dear? (*He reads. Silence. She folds and unfolds Valeria's letter.*)

Jack (suddenly). By George!

Maude (buttering a biscuit, slowly). What is it?

Jack By George!

Maude What is it? A woman might as well live on-on Vesuvius!

Jack George Graham is in the New York legislature!

Maude Professor George De Witt Graham!

Jack (reading while he speaks). The same, my dear. We're to banquet him; it seems he's made a big speech.

Maude He was very handsome, and nice to us girls. He pulled us all through chemistry.

Jack (absently). Yes, he was a good wire puller. And now he's Senator, Senator in New York. That's great.

Maude How do you know? Is that from him?

Jack This is the Alumni Letter.

Maude Alumni?

Jack (slowly and elaborately). Yes, my dear, the Alumni Letter,-Alumni. We graduated in 1902,-possibly you remember the circumstances. You ought to.

Maude How long ago it seems,-how long, long ago!

Jack Thank you. It is. Three years.

(*Silence. He stirs coffee.*)

Maude The lace for my dress gave out,-do you remember? And I wore Paris muslin and Mamma was sick.

Jack It was a great day! You remember your Aunt?

Maude Poor Aunty! I can see her now-so 'fraid I would forget-sitting on the edge of her chair! And those lemon drops,-I thought I should faint when Bob brought 'em up!

Jack Yes, I remember how his shoes squeaked! And Bob *would* usher!

Maude Poor Aunty, I hope she is happier now out among the Hottentots. Aren't they Hottentots?

Jack (with scholarly precision). Your Aunt, my dear, is in Korea. Korea is an island just east of-

Maude (vaguely). Well aren't the Hottentots there, too? I thought they were all together over there somewhere,-all fat and dusty together, with their queer hats like plates,-all praying and embroidering lovely silks.

Jack As I was saying, Korea is east of-of Asia.

Maude (taking another biscuit). Asia was always hard for me. The rivers had such dreadful names! "1902! 1902! We are the people, who are you?" What fun we had! Let's go back!

Jack Haven't time. You write 'em greetings and so on, and enclose three dollars. I wonder where old Grindem is?

Maude Old Grindem! You remember his side whiskers? I couldn't bear that man! He was horrid on Commencement day-wouldn't wait one second! Not one second! And Valeria, (*she sighs heavily.*) Poor Valeria!

Jack (cheerfully). You looked mighty pretty that day. You didn't need any lace.

(*She sighs gently and shakes her head.*)

Jack (with desperate cheerfulness). And your hair was like gold,—and those lilies-of-the-valley! I remember I went so far as to think of Solomon. How is it? "Solomon in all his glory—all his glory was—was—Solomon was"—how is it?

Maude "Was not arrayed like one of these."

Jack O yes—"like one of these," of course. "Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." You were a sort of female Solomon. Not a Mrs. Solomon,—perish the thought!

Maude (reproachfully). Jack!

Jack (still cheerfully). Who gave you those lilies? Come on—tell me now. This is a sort of anniversary when "all things shall be made clear." Old Bulbus?

(She braces herself with visible effort.)

Jack It was awfully hard on me, your just carrying my roses and putting old Bulbus' lilies in your Solomon hair.

Maude They weren't B-B-Bulbuses.

Jack Honest?

Maude H-honest.

Jack (gravely). Whose were they?

(Silence. Maude twists her napkin.)

Jack (more gravely). Whose were they, Mrs. Hamilton?

Maude You won't be mad?

Jack Do I get "mad"? I am not a two-year-old!

Maude Nor cross?

Jack Whose lilies were those, I ask!

Maude (sitting very erect). I am going to tell you!

Jack (a trifle viciously). See that you do.

Maude Hal sent those lilies.

Jack (incredulous). Hal Taylor?

Maude (with a dead period). Hal Taylor.

(He gazes at her sternly; she hides her face behind the coffee urn.)

Jack Therefore, Valeria squints!

Maude O don't, Jack!

Jack (severely). The vanity of woman!

Maude (rising quickly and coming round to his chair). But I have your roses, Jack, in the box with my dress! And I shall send Valeria a cut-glass berry-bowl—maybe a Tiffany cut!

(He pulls her down to him as curtain falls.)

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