

# VULNERABLE.

THE STORY OF AN INCIDENT AT A DINNER PARTY.

Frelinghuysen smothered an exclamation and flung away the tie that for five minutes he had been hopelessly trying to make into a bow. "Hang it all," he thought, "just let a man be in a hurry and everything acts like all possessed." He brought forth another tie as yet uncreased, and again essayed to adorn his collar, this time with success. He was distinctly anxious to be on time at the dinner at which he was due; his interest and curiosity were aroused—the latter a quality he had believed himself without—and he wanted to get his bearings before he was told off to the woman whom he was to take in. Moreover, he had promised his wife not to keep her on tenterhooks watching the clock as the hands went around, and the other guests arrived and the dinner waited for him. She declined any longer to wait at home and go with him; the knowledge of the way, at the last moment, he dashed into the house and changed his clothes made her cold with excitement lest he should fail to make connections. Not that he ever had, but Mrs. Frelinghuysen was a bit inclined to pessimism.

To-night he was curious about the woman who was to be his sister's guest of honor, and whom he was to have on his right. Oddly enough he had not met her, though she and her husband had been a month in town.

They had just come over from London, where H. R. H. had worshipped at Mrs. Carmichael's shrine as being one of great beauty, thereby giving her a *cachet* that had established her socially. His sister raved over her air of distinction and breeding, but nothing was known of them beyond the fact that Mr. and Mrs. Carmichael had suddenly appeared from Australia with money galore, and *savoir faire* not associated with that country of bushrangers. Mrs. Carmichael was said to bear the unmistakable hall-mark of a long pedigree—Frelinghuysen was anxious to reconcile pedigree with Australia; he had never before heard the two associated together. But the prospect of encountering novelty was piquante.

He got into his coat and tore downstairs and into the waiting bansom. He never used his wife's horses; she declined to have her animals make time for her husband.

When he entered his sister's drawing-room his wife nodded at him approvingly; five minutes to dinner. Gad! he had done well, was his thought; and Miss Frelinghuysen told him as much in an undertone as she took him across the room, adding that if he was not so lazy and indifferent he would be more satisfactory. Inwardly he smiled at the mingling of criticism and praise, and then, as his sister murmured some words of presentation, he bowed to the woman before him. She was beautiful; that part of the story was true enough, anyway. He hoped she would be entertaining.

Certainly her beginning was promising; for when they were seated at dinner she turned to him and said slowly:

"Do you know, Mr. Frelinghuysen, I am sorry to meet you, and even more so that I have you on my hands for a dinner. Only my great friendship for your sister prevailed upon me to accept."

"Eh?" Frelinghuysen laid down his oyster-fork and regarded her. She was well bred, too; only a woman of the world could have said what she had, civilly and yet seriously.

"They say, she went on calmly "that you are altogether the most difficult man in New York, because you are the most *blase*—that nothing interests you, not even enough for you to criticize it. I dislike *blase* people, but—I am fond

of your sister."

"I see. For her sake you consented to be afflicted with me. Do you realize, Mrs. Carmichael, what the gods have spared you in preventing our meeting before?"

"And I find," the woman remarked evenly, "that you are sarcastic. That is even more unpardonable than boredom."

"If I should say, with Mrs. Howe, that you make me wonder if 'polite society is polite,' you would probably say that I had already suggested the same thought to you. But you began, you know!"

"And being a woman I claim the last word."

"Which I shall not dispute."

"But you have been a bit maligned, Mr. Frelinghuysen, for I have noticed no lack of interest—so far. It will be something to have made you dislike me."

Frelinghuysen was regarding her intently; something seemed vaguely familiar; mentally he frowned and tried to place her.

Mrs. Carmichael played with her fish a moment, then laid down her fork. "Well?" she said.

Frelinghuysen started. "Pardon me; I have been staring. But you are a very beautiful woman."

"So I believe. But it was not because of that you were staring."

"No; I was wondering if it could be possible that I had ever before seen you. There is something strangely familiar that haunts me—I cannot place it; perhaps it is because of your pictures."

"It might be," Mrs. Carmichael remarked, slowly, "yet it is not."

"No?"

"Really, Mr. Frelinghuysen, you are the most annoying person—but you always were. Yet it is droll, too; you have so completely forgotten me."

"Forgotten?" the man repeated.

"Yes, forgotten. You are such an all that he should be head of an old family that the recollection of your salad eyes, when you carried the burden lightly, has disappeared."

"Meaning?"

"That you no longer remember the episode, shall we call it?—of Sallie Forbes."

The man's lips tightened a second beneath his thick mustache, and the fingers that had been playing with his bread pinched the crumbs before he recovered his self-control. "What do you know of the episode?"

"I? Only what the principal would know."

"It is a lie!" Frelinghuysen said, thickly. "She is dead!"

"I know you thought so. But you recognize me, even against your will—*n'est ce pas?*"

"It is a lie!" he repeated. Instinctively he drank his chablis; the sensation of swallowing made him conscious that he was not dreaming, and Mrs. Carmichael was speaking again:

"What use is there in being rude? I am who I am. Long years ago—sixteen (it quite sounds like that song in 'Patience,' does it not?)—you married Sally Forbes. Only that you were very young you would have done it under a false name, and the marriage would have been illegal. How that would have simplified matters!"

"What do you mean?" It required all Frelinghuysen's self-control not to fly at the woman's throat and choke her. She was so calm and unmoved and—alive!—she whom he had supposed dead these fifteen years! That she should be at his sister's table—her guest of honor!—the grimness of it almost made him laugh.

"If your first marriage had been illegal," the woman explained, "the second one would have been all right. Then, too, I should be Mr. Carmichael's legal wife."

"Instead of his mistress," interrupted Frelinghuysen, brutally.

"As Mrs. Frelinghuysen is yours," she ended, quietly.

The blood rushed to the man's head with a suddenness that almost blinded him, then receded, leaving him pale and unmoved. "Take care," he said, "or I shall kill you!"

The woman laughed softly. "Oh, no,

# FITZGERALD DRY GOODS CO.

GLOTH JAGKETS

CLOTH AND FUR CAPES

\$4.98 Each.

Ladies Jackets with the new shield front, new sleeves, new back, high Medicis collar, made of Boucle, English Kersey, Fleecead Beaver, some half silk lined coats that ought to \$7.50.

\$3.98 Each.

Ladies' good wool Beaver Jackets, black and navy blue, all sizes 32 to 44, correct styles, could not be produced at the factory today for less than \$5, regular retail price \$6.50.

\$6.98 Each.

Ladies' Kersey Jackets, strictly all wool, Extra weight, made in the very latest style, high storm collar, strapped on front, an elegant garment which you cannot duplicate under \$10.

\$7.98 Each.

Ladies' Plush Capes, made from Salt's Plush, extra full sweep, some 140 inches, lined with best Rhadame silk, handsomely embroidered and jetted, a \$12.50 garment.

## A BIG DAY FOR SILKS

69c yard, 21 inch, heavy weight, pure silk, black Peau de Soie, regular price \$1.

98c yard, 24 inch, black Peau de Soie, our \$1.40 quality.

\$1.17 yard, best quality black Peau de Soie, extra weight and lustre, none better, regular price \$1.75.

7 1/2c yard, 30 inch half wool Serges, all colors, worth 15c.

17c, 100 pieces, all wool, strictly all wool French Serge, 36 inches wide, black and all colors, regular price 29c.

27c, 45 pieces 48 inch all wool French serge, black and all shades, a regular 49c cloth.

39c, 100 pieces all wool novelties, copies of French and English high priced Dress Goods, Bourettes, Checks, Invisible Plaids, etc., worth from 50c to 65c.

49c, 25 pieces, black Mohair and wool Novelty, our 75c quality, 15 pieces black, navy, brown and green English worsted, 52 inches wide, the right thing for Jacket Suits, really worth 75c.

100 pieces 38 to 46 inch Novelties, Scotch Mixtures, Silk Mixtures, Bourettes, etc., worth up to 83c, all in one grand lot during this sale for 49c a yard.

# THE LANSING THEATRE

JOHN DOWDEN, Jr., Manager.

WEDNESDAY, EVENING, OCT. 14.

One Night Only, Introducing

OTIS SKINNER.

Joseph Buckley Manager, Presenting the Great Shakespearian Tragedy

# HAMLET

"Not since the day that Edwin Booth laid aside the inky cloak has the stage seen so good a Hamlet."—Lyman Glover, Chicago Times-Herald.

Seats on sale Monday morning at Theatre box office. Carriages may be ordered at 11 o'clock.

Prices—\$1.50, \$1.00, 75c, 50c, 25c.

Friday, Oct. 16.

SIDNEY R. ELLIS'

Grand Production,

"DARKEST RUSSIA."

Under The Management of

MR. SIDNEY R. ELLIS.

PRICES—\$1.00, 75c, 50c and 25c

Seats on sale Wednesday morning 10 a. m. at Box office.