

SCENE II

SCENE.—*Bright sunshine. The table, which has been moved nearer the window, is laid for breakfast. MRS. WHITE is busy about the table. MR. WHITE is standing in the window looking off R. The inner door is open, showing the outer door.*

MR. WHITE. What a morning Herbert's got for walking home!

MRS. WHITE (L.C.). What's o'clock? (*She looks at the clock on the mantelpiece.*) Quarter to nine, I declare. He's off at eight. (*She crosses to the fire.*)

MR. WHITE. Takes him half an hour to cha' and wash. He's just by the cemetery now.

MRS. WHITE. He'll be here in ten minutes.

MR. WHITE (*coming to the table*). What's for breakfast?

MRS. WHITE. Sausages. (*At the mantelpiece.*) Why, if here isn't that dirty monkey's paw! (*She picks it up, looks at it with disgust, and puts it back. She takes some sausages in a dish from before the fire and places them on the table.*) Silly thing! The idea of us listening to such nonsense!

MR. WHITE (*goes up to the window again*). Ay—the Sergeant Major and his yarns! I suppose all old soldiers are alike——

MRS. WHITE. Come on, Father. Herbert hates us to wait.

(*They both sit and begin breakfast.*)

How could wishes be granted, nowadays?

MR. WHITE. Ah! Been thinking about it all night, have you?

MRS. WHITE. You kept me awake, with your tossing and tumbling——

MR. WHITE. Ay, I had a bad night.