



The Alternative

She tried not to appear to be looking for him when her fretting taxicab finally struggled up to the ferry building at Twenty-third Street, just before one o'clock. Nearly an hour had been spent in the trip from the Scoville home to the ferry. There were times when she thought the effort would have to be abandoned.

He was there. In fact he opened the door and assisted her to alight from the vehicle. There was a brief discussion with the driver over the register's showing. Then they hurried into the ferry building, pursued by three bags and a "Much obliged, Miss," from the surprised chauffeur.

"You were very reckless, giving him a dollar," he criticised severely, but not forgetting that he had given five the night before. He had been wondering all the morning if *she* had noticed the cocktails.

"It is so good of you to come down," she said, a color in her cheeks that was not from the cold. He was marveling. Never, in all his life, had he seen any one so pretty as this trim, proud young person in the Persian lamb coat and ermine stole and muff. She gauged his thoughts. "Presents from Mrs. Scoville — in advance of Christmas," she said dryly. He was properly embarrassed. "Now, I must ask about the trains."

"It's all attended to, Miss Pembroke," he said. "I got here at half-past twelve, lunchless. Boat in ten minutes, train out of Jersey City at two o'clock, positively. We can have luncheon on the train." He seemed a bit embarrassed, as he ought to have been, in truth.