

Emily. I'm quite sure that I'm avoiding a fearful mess.

Sir C. That's all very fine! That's all very fine! There are some things that I can't talk about. . . . I can't talk about love, for instance. But let me tell you, you don't know what a fearful mess you're making!

Emily. I'm sorry.

Sir C. No, that's just what you aren't. You're glad. You're glad to be out of it. You're jolly glad you've told me and got it over. You look down on me, and I don't know why, upon my soul! You're quite different when you talk to Francis or John. And yet I'm the cleverest chap in our family, by a long chalk. I could wipe the floor with either of my intellectual brothers, any day.

Emily. Charlie, I wish you wouldn't talk like that. I don't look down on you.

Sir C. I'll swear you do. . . . And all this, if you please, because of a newspaper article, one single newspaper article. Where's the common-sense of it? You knew all about me before we were engaged.

Emily. I didn't understand what your system meant.

Sir C. My system! . . . Supposing I say to you that I'll throw up the entire business, leave journalism altogether—and be content to enjoy myself on the miserable interest of a million and a