

*Helen* [solemnly]. How much would you give?

*May*. Would you give a lot?

*George*. Would you give ten thousand pounds?

[Almost shaking him. Dramatic pause.]

*Francis* [faintly, but quite self-possessed again]. I feel it coming.

*Helen*. What?

*Francis*. *It*. My impulse of extravagant generosity, my terrible charitableness. [He makes an inarticulate noise.] There! There!

*May*. Perhaps pen and ink would assuage the agony.

*Francis*. Perhaps. [They lead him to the table. He sits down and pulls cheque book out of his pocket. May hands him the pen. He begins to write.]

*Helen* [reading over his shoulder]. "Pay George Gower ten thousand pounds." . . . Now the signature.

*Francis* [pausing on the verge of the signature]. Understand! I don't have to see that baby till it's six months old, and I don't have to handle it till it's a year — no, two years old. [George nods, all smiles. Francis signs with a flourish. Tears cheque out of book, and hands it to May. May hands it to George, who receives it in ecstatic silence. Francis heaves a profound sigh.]

[Curtain.]