

Julie (looking round): O, it's just darling Moma, do look at the bust of Washington—

Witton: Dante—I'm sorry.

Julie: O yes, he was a member of the Lambs Club during his last visit to New York city. I saw his Macbeth. It was fine. And there's a nice handy little bust of your great National writer Hall Caine.

Witton (with a shudder) No, that's Shakespeare.

Julie: Let me think now. . . Yes, I've heard the name, but—

Mrs. Carryl (leaping in) O, say, honey, come! Shakespeare was the name the great Hebrew writer Bacon took when he flared round the town incognito. Hall Caine is a modern person.

Julie: Of course! [He comes from that queer island where cats have no tails and men have three legs. He's just putting out a new work about his early life in this city.]

Witton: Yes, The Prodigal Son.

Mrs. Carryl Say, doesn't it strike you that the authors on this side are getting very very egotistical. I thought it very daring of Mr. C. relli to call his autobiography God's Good Man.

Julie (suddenly looking at the frieze): O, what a darling snake!

Miss Witton (gurgling with delight): But it's not a snake, is it Langley?

Witton: That is a symbolical pattern, Miss Julie. As a matter of fact, it is to suggest the brain waves that go on in this room.

Julie: O yes, of course! You write pieces don't you, Mr. Witton?

Witton (gently): I have never yet descended to that level. Hitherto I have only perpetrated poetic dramas.

Julie: Say, where can we see one? Did

you write that poetic play that is running at the Vaudeville right now?

Witton (turning pale): O, please!

Mrs. Carryl (sotto voce): Julie, you've made a bloomer!

Witton: My dramas, fortunately, are too far above the public's head to be produced. In the present state of the stage only the works of dramatists are presented. Playwrights keep their work in the study. Indeed, one is positively nervous of being accepted by the modern actor-manager. It is a conclusive proof that one's pen has deteriorated into the Mere Popular.

Julie (with her charming ingenuousness): Say, what do you write, then? Don't you wish to draw any dollars?

Miss Witton (with a gasp, looking at her brother in a frightened kind of a way): Ah!—ha! ha!

Mrs. Carryl: Julie, dear, I don't think you should ask our dear friend to open his secret cupboard and show you his skeleton!

Witton: My mission is to raise the stage, to lift it from the slough of amusement to the calm heights of edification. I believe in a National Theatre.

Julie: I take it you want to turn all the theatres into chapels?

Miss Witton (delighted beyond any words at the sound of the tea gong): Ah, there's tea. Will you come this way?

Mrs. Carryl (who has twigged the strain in the relations between them all). Suddenly. Delighted! Say, Mr. Witton, the fog in this city really—well, they really—

Julie: Lift the cnp, anyway.

Witton: Precisely. Er—  
(He follows them burning with the injustice of the world).

COSMO HAMILTON.