

gave a slight scream, and cried "Hands off, you savage!" But I still held her. "Mrs. Williams," I said, "You and this other witty person have amused yourselves in abusing the people whose hospitality you are enjoying. We are strange animals; and I am a fool, that would do well in a third class theatre. You have had your say, and I will now have mine. That we are simple, I grant you; but there is only one person in Rivermouth that is playing the fool, and that is yourself; and I'll do you the credit to say, that I believe you could act it in a first class theatre. A newly-made widow you are, with the crocodile tears for the dear departed scarce dried in your wicked, faithless eyes, you amuse us as much as we amuse you. My Cousin George," I cried, turning savagely to the lavender kids, "was a manly, honest-hearted young man till he met with her; and now, his only fault is liking her too well. As for you, if we are fit to be put in a menagerie, you are not: nobody puts puppies in a menagerie, sir, especially mongrel curs."

"Thank you for the information," said the gentleman. "She's mad!" cried the lady. "For pity's sake, Ralph, make her let go my arm." "He need not," I answered, taking away my hand. "Good-bye, gay widow, you will not be troubled by the last attempt of a fool any more, be your sojourn among the animals long or short," and I bowed mockingly and walked off to the house. Harry Thompkins, thinking there was going to be a great row, had, with true heroism, fled the scene long since, after pulling off my sash ends, in a feeble attempt to take me with him. The lady never made me an answer. She could not have been half so ready-witted as I thought her, or she could easily have replied to my angry, incoherent speech. I think, however, she did feel slightly ashamed of being overheard talking of us all in this way, after every one in the place had been so kind to her. I ran into the spare room to get my hat and shawl, and I could not help dropping the ivory brushes behind the bed and setting the box of airy caps afloat on the basin of water. Having accomplished these feats I left, and was passing through the hall on my way out, when I met Amoret, with a plate of cake in her hand. "Oh, Belle, where are you going? We are just getting supper, and afterwards Mrs. Williams is going to sing." "Let her sing," I said, stolidly. "Oh, do stay," pleaded Amoret. I looked earnestly in her face—"Amoret, she is a treacherous woman, and if I stay I'll thrash her." The girl stared in round-eyed wonder. "Thrash her! Why, whom