

"A quarter of nine," said the Marchioness, peering at the French clock through her lorgnon. "I am quite sure the Princess will not venture out on such a night as this."

"She's really quite an awful pill," said Lady Jane calmly. "I for one sha'n't be broken-hearted if she doesn't venture."

"For heaven's sake, don't let Cricklewick hear you say such a thing," said the Marchioness in a furtive undertone.

"I've heard Cricklewick say even worse," retorted the girl. She lowered her voice to a confidential whisper. "No longer ago than yesterday he told me that she made him tired, or something of the sort."

"Poor Cricklewick! I fear he is losing ambition," mused the Marchioness. "An ideal butler but a most dreary creature the instant he attempts to be a human being. It isn't possible. McFaddan is quite human. That's why he is so fat. I am not sure that I ever told you, but he was quite a slim, puny lad when Cricklewick took him out of the stables and made a very decent footman out of him. That was a great many years ago, of course. Camelford left him a thousand pounds in his will. I have always believed it was hush money. McFaddan was a very wide-awake chap in those days." The Marchioness lowered one eye-lid slowly.

"And, by all reports, the Marquis of Camelford was very well worth watching," said Lady Jane.

"Hear the wind!" cried the Marchioness, with a little shiver. "How it shrieks!"

"We were speaking of the Marquis," said Lady Jane.

"But one may always fall back on the weather," said