

gravely. "Are you sure James would like you waiting till the policeman came?"

Pansy got red and angry. "Don't be absurd Sophonisba, of course I went early, as soon as ever I had said a few consoling words to the broken-hearted man."

"I hope you had your latchkey?"

"He—oh it's pitiful—pitiful!"

"I hope you took something for the good of the house, Pansy?" I could not help saying.

"How like a man! All men think of that first!"

"But did you?" persisted Sophonisba.

"I took a bottle of brandy back as a present to James," said Pansy shortly.

"The best brandy?" asked Sophonisba. "James is so particular. Or just the best price? Uncle sold it you of course?"

"It will come in for cooking," said Pansy briefly.

"James likes his things full-flavoured."

"He'll probably get them full-flavoured," remarked Sophonisba to me.

"I think you might show a little more feeling. Your loss is that creature's gain, and think what a use she is putting him to! They have put up a new sign, 'The Woolly West,' and people come in crowds, and stay till they can't. His culture and conversation is proving most elevating, and doing a lot of good in his profession. Two horrible low public-houses near have had to close up. But all the careless gaiety, all the high spirits of youth, gone! His whisky is dealt out to him by that person, and if she doesn't think he's earned it, he doesn't get it, and the poor crushed thing has come down to earning it, Edward!"

"It is indeed a come-down!" I agreed gravely.

Sophonisba clung to me harder, and Pansy turned on her with disgust. "Don't paw Edward before me, if