

not yet crossed the Rubicon, had their own anticipations of a happy passage. It was but our voices that kept silence, while Life spoke aloud among us all. Till at last we were fairly in Southwark, and dismissed the cab, to walk home over London Bridge.

I know nothing more solemn than the night of the great city. Cheapside deserted is a homily in itself, and Fleet street unthronged a touching exhortation. The silent pavements of the Strand are instinct with their lessons from Ecclesiastes, and, in the memories of those who have trodden them, cry aloud that all is vanity indeed. Till, presently, we are at Charing Cross, and history fills all the background. There is nothing sleepless but the lion of the Percies, and the flashing fountains, and it is quiet walking down Pall Mall, and past the War Office up by the Conservative Club. For we lodged in those days in St. James street, and were all too soon arrived. It was impossible to take Charley home, and she had perforce to stay with Nell. While Lockyer and I smoked our Havannahs on the balcony, green under the setting moon, and he told me what must be written here. It is a simple narrative enough in print, but the time, the occasion, and the tone lent a remarkable interest to it then. I give it as briefly as I can, and, for perspicuity, in the third person.

Fred Lockyer and the Hon. Fred Lockyer, only son of Lord Mortlock, were both grand-nephews of old Sir James Willsher, of Kennington Grange. Their prospects were nearly on a par. The peer was poor and the baronet rich, and where one would have title there would be wealth for his cousin. For, *our* Fred was ever the favorite at the Grange, and had been brought up an orphan there, and then sent to Harrow and Christ Church, always with a tolerably decided understanding of his succession to all unentailed property. It was in this happy position that he had made Mr. Leadenhall's acquaintance, and had been eagerly enough accepted as a suitor for the hand of his ward. Suddenly the match was broken off, and the gates of the Tulse Hill villa closed uncompromisingly against him. The reason was not far to seek. He had been supplanted in Sir James' good graces by his namesake, and for a professionless youngster, with perhaps two or three thousand pounds in the world, it was not reasonable to expect the prudent city man to extend great consideration. This much was easy to understand. But the cause of his disgrace lay deeper, and it was the exposition of this that lent special interest to that evening's tale.

Sir James Willsher, it appears, was nothing if he were not jealous. There had been two or three ugly landmarks in his earlier life that had proved how fatal could be with him this passion. From Fred, as from all else he loved, be it but horse or dog, he exacted the most undivided devotion; with which, to do my friend justice, his tenderness was amply repaid, and sufficiently unmistakeably to have satisfied anybody only