

Mr. Miggs (going down a couple of stairs and then coming back again): I sup-suppose y-you don't think it would be better to go to the p-police, do you? I m-mean—

Mrs. Miggs: No, no, no. That'd give him time to escape. Why, Henry, I do believe that you're afraid!

Mr. Miggs: Who? Me? What nonsense. I was only anxious about the b-burglar. You see, if I hit him I might hurt him, and then we should have to go to the police court, and there'd be an awful lot of trouble. (Sits down on the stairs and wipes his forehead with his handkerchief.) You see w-what I m-mean, don't you?

Mrs. Miggs: Why, Henry. I believe your'e trying to shuffle out of it. Perhaps you'd like me to go down and tackle him.

Mr. Miggs: Not at all. That is not exactly that. But, you know, there's nothing like a little diplomacy in those matters. What's the good of makin' trouble—er—just for the sake of makin' it? D'you see what I mean? If you go and attack a burglar on the spur of the moment, he's apt to lose his head and get frightfully desperate. I m-might'nt be able to throw him at the first try—and—he—he might throw me. And then—well, there you are!

Mrs. Miggs (waving a little): Of course, what we want to do is to get the man out of the house.

Mr. Miggs (brightening up considerably): That's what I say. We don't want to hurt him, do we? I think it 'ud give him more confidence if you went down—

Mrs. Miggs: I go down?

Mr. Miggs: Yes don't you see, that's where our artfulness comes in. Of course, I'd stand behind you and hold the light, and be ready in case he should spring. What these burglars are afraid of is the

chance of being sent to prison. If he sees you, he'll know we are going to take a reasonable view of the matter, and he'll be reasonable as well. And then you might ask him if he'd mind kindly going and burgling somewhere else, as he's disturbing our rest, or something of that sort. I'm sure he'd see it in the right light and go at once. These burglars are decent chaps as a rule.

Mrs. Miggs (listening): I don't hear him now.

Mr. Miggs (growing bolder): Neither do I. Let's both go down together and listen at the door. (They go down cautiously.)

Mrs. Miggs: It's very quiet in there now.

Mr. Miggs (opening the door and peering into the room and satisfying himself that no one is there): You wait there a minute Mary. I'll go first in case there's any danger. If there's anybody in this room I'll make him sorry he was ever born! Hullo!

Mrs. Miggs: What's the matter, Henry! Is anyone there?

Mr. Miggs (discovering the cause of the noise): Of course not. I see what it is. The window's opened a little way and the venetian blind is rattling. I knew all along that there was nobody here.

Mrs. Miggs: You didn't seem any too eager to come down and investigate, anyway.

Mr. Miggs (laughing dismally): He, he! I was only having a joke with you, because you seemed so scared about it. Burglars, indeed! You let a real burglar come into my place and see what he'll get for himself!

Mrs. Miggs (prudently reserving her opinion of her husband's valor): Shut the window, Henry, and come along upstairs, or you'll never be up in the morning.