

MARY MORELAND

Miss Moreland's room, or cage, was sunny and overlooked miles of city, miles of bay. Arriving and departing ships were visible from her window. The white banners of the city's smoke rose in stainless columns against the hard blue skies. Maughm had made this room comfortable, for he spent a great deal of time here. He had cigars and cigarettes within reach, and when he wanted to do so, he could even mix himself a cocktail.

This morning, when he had slowly drawn off his grey suede gloves and made a little ball of them, which he dropped into his pocket, he began to dictate, and with the first words, lifted his hat and took off his coat.

Maughm was under forty, well-looking and vigorous; and Mary Moreland knew all of his business clothes by heart. He was so extremely fastidious about his dress that he had been, in a way, an education to her. If any one had chosen to send her out to buy cravats, she would probably have brought back something that a man of good taste could wear. She had become almost a connoisseur of well-cut, good-looking, masculine clothes, boots and gloves, and canes and hats. She had a keen eye and an appreciative taste, and she thought that Mr. Maughm was one of the best-dressed men in Wall Street. He probably was.

Their greetings were exchanged as follows. Maughm spoke first, glancing at her; and she looked up at this employer, who paid her a big salary and asked as little of her as was consistent with his business, and she gave in return what would pass anywhere for a radiant smile. In a sweet voice, from which impersonal relations kept absent weariness or staleness, she said: "Good morning, Mr. Maughm."

Maughm came into that room every morning to hear his name spoken like this and be greeted by this radiant smile. No matter what went on "up at the house," —