

by virtue of long service and a most satisfying avoidance of matrimony, was a privileged servant between the hours of eight in the morning and eight in the evening. After eight, or more strictly speaking, the moment dinner was announced, Julia became a perfect servant. She would no more have thought of addressing the Marchioness as "ma'am" than she would have called the King of England "mister." She had crossed the Atlantic with her mistress eighteen years before; in mid-ocean she celebrated her thirty-fifth birthday, and, as she had been in the family for ten years prior to that event, even a child may solve the problem that here presents a momentary and totally unnecessary break in the continuity of this narrative. Julia was English. She spoke no other language. Beginning with the soup, or the *hors d'œuvres* on occasion, French was spoken in the house of the Marchioness. Physically unable to speak French and psychologically unwilling to betray her ignorance, Julia became a model servant. She lapsed into perfect silence.

The Marchioness seldom if ever dined alone. She always dined in state. Her guests,—English, Italian, Russian, Belgian, French, Spanish, Hungarian, Austrian, German,—conversed solely in French. It was a very agreeable way of symphonizing Babel.

The room in which she and the temporarily imperfect though treasured servant were employed in the dusk of this stormy day in March was at the top of an old-fashioned building in the busiest section of the city, a building that had, so far, escaped the fate of its immediate neighbours and remained, a squat and insignificant pygmy, elbowing with some arrogance the lofty