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"Upon my word, Rosanna, there is no young woman. That is, there isn't—she doesn't—I mean——"

Rosanna shook her head bitterly.

"That sounds very plausible, no doubt, brother Duke, but it doesn't deceive me. 'There isn't, she doesn't,' indeed! Oh, Duke, have I brought you up to this time of day, and instilled the catechism into you, only to see you come to this? The theatre was bad enough, but to fall in love! And next you will want to get married! Duke! I command you—who is the hussy?"

"There's no hussy in the case, and I'm not in love, and I don't want to get married. Good gracious! Rosanna, what crime will you suspect a fellow of next? Upon my word and Honor," cried Duke, in a paroxysm of torture, "I haven't a notion of getting married now, or ever—oh! there's the postman. Don't mind, Rosanna, I'll go."

Duke bounced off his ladder and rushed to the door. The postman handed him **two letters**, both addressed to himself. Rosanna Mason had never been guilty of epistolary follies, any more than other follies, in her life. One was from Tinsel & Spangle, reproving him sharply for recent unpunctuality, and commanding an early attendance in the orchestra that evening, **on pain of a heavy fine**. Duke flung this to the farthest corner of the room, and glanced at the other. Slippery white satin paper, a faint odor of perfume, a delicate, spidery female hand, a blue wax seal, with crest and a motto. **All the blood in Mr. Mason's arteries** rushed into his face; and there stood Rosanna—that frigid, vestal virgin, with piercing eyes fixed on that furiously blushing face. She saw his look, and answered it with stinging sarcasm.

"Oh! don't mind me. Read your letter, by all means, and then tell me, when I ask you who it's from, that 'there isn't—she doesn't'—that 'there's no lady in the case'—and that you've 'no notion of being married.' Don't mind adding a few more falsehoods to your already overburdened conscience. Read your letter, unhappy young man, and tell me it's from those play-actor men, who employ you in their godless work, if you dare!"

One glance of scorn and sorrow combined, and Miss Mason stalked out to the kitchen. With a sort of groan the badgered scene-painter opened the dainty missive, and read:

You promised to come to me if I should ever want you. The time has come when it remains for you to keep that promise. If you have any pity for an unhappy, friendless girl, you will come, at **three o'clock to-morrow morning**, to the address be-