

## THE SIEGE OF THE SEVEN SUITORS

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I saw no such things, though to be sure I was afraid to quibble over the waitress's suggestions. May I ask when you were there?"

"Oh, I dropped in quite accidentally one day last spring. I saw the sign, and remembered that somebody had spoken of the place, and I was tired, and it was a long way to the club, and" —

Dissimulation is not an art as Wiggins attempts to practice it at times. He is by nature the most straightforward of mortals. It was clear that he was withholding something, and I resolved to get to the bottom of it.

"I don't think the Asolando is a place that would attract either of us, and yet the viands are good as such stuff goes, and the gentle hand-maidens are restful to the eye, — Pippa, Francesca, Gloria, and the rest of 'em."

Wiggins pried open his artichoke with the care of a botanist. He had regained his composure, but I saw that the subject interested him.

"You were there this afternoon?" he inquired.

"Yes, my first and only appearance."

"And this is Monday."

"The calendar has said it."

"So you settled your bill with Pippa! I believe this was her day."