

Sir James held her hand in his for some moments before he spoke, gazing intently at her. Then he said slowly, "Ah, Donal, Donal, you always had a keen eye for the beautiful."

"Oh, I say," cried the young man, abashed at his uncle's frankness, "I don't call that a diplomatic remark at all, you know."

"Indeed, Sir James," said the girl, laughing merrily, "it is better than diplomatic, it is complimentary, and I assure you I appreciate it. The first time he met me he took me for quite another person."

"Then, whoever that person is, my dear," replied the old man, "I'll guarantee she is a lovely woman. And you mustn't mind what I say; nobody else does, otherwise my boy Donal here would be much higher in the service than the present moment finds him; but I am pleased to tell you that the journey he has now finished will prove greatly to his advantage."

"Indeed, uncle, that is true," said the young man, looking at his betrothed, "for on this journey I met again Miss Baxter, whom, to my great grief, I had lost for some time. And now, uncle, I want you to do me a great favour. Do you know Mr. Hardwick, editor of the *Daily Bugle*?"