

TREVES. Merrick visibly worse than 86-87. That, as he rises higher in the consolations of society, he gets visibly more grotesque is proof definitive he is like me. Like his condition, which I make no sense of, I make no sense of mine.

Spot on MERRICK placing another piece on St. Philip's. Fadeout.

SCENE 13

ANXIETIES OF THE SWAMP

MERRICK, *in spot, strains to listen*; TREVES, LORD JOHN *outside.*

TREVES. But the papers are saying you broke the contracts. They are saying you've lost the money.

LORD JOHN. Freddie, if I were such a scoundrel, how would I dare face investors like yourself. Broken contracts! I never considered them actual contracts—just preliminary things, get the old deal under way. An actual contract's something between gentlemen; and this attack on me shows they are no gentlemen. Now I'm only here to say the company remains a terribly attractive proposition. Don't you think? To recapitalize—if you could spare another—ah. (*Enter GOMM.*) Mr. Gomm. How good to see you. Just remarking how splendidly Merrick thrives here, thanks to you and Freddie.

GOMM. Lord John. Allow me: I must take Frederick from you. Keep him at work. It's in his contract. Wouldn't want him breaking it. Sort of thing makes the world fly apart, isn't it?

LORD JOHN. Yes. Well. Of course, mmm. GOMM. Sorry to hear you're so pressed. Expect we'll see less of you around the London now?

LORD JOHN. Of course, I, actually—ah! Overdue actually. Appointment in the City. Freddie. Mr. Gomm. (*Exits.*)

TREVES. He plain fooled me. He was kind to Merrick.

GOMM. You have risen fast and easily, my boy. You've forgot how to protect yourself. Break now.

TREVES. It does not seem right somehow.

GOMM. The man's a moral swamp. Is that not clear yet? Is he attractive? Deceit often is. Friendly? Swindlers can be. Another loan? Not another cent. It may be your money, Freddie; but I will not tolerate laboring like a navy that the London should represent honest charitable and compassionate science, and have titled swindlers mucking up the pitch. He has succeeded in destroying himself so rabidly, you ought not doubt an instant it was his real aim all along. He broke the contracts, gambled the money away, lied, and like an infant in his mess, gurgles and wants to do it again. Never mind details, don't want to know. Break and be glad. Don't hesitate. Today. One-man moral swamp. Don't be sucked in.

(*Enter Mrs. KENDAL.*)

Mrs. KENDAL. Have you seen the papers?

TREVES. Yes.

GOMM. Yes, yes. A great pity. Freddie: today.

(*Exits.*)

Mrs. KENDAL. Freddie?

TREVES. He has used us. I shall be all right. Come. (Mrs. KENDAL, TREVES *enter to MERRICK.*) John: I