

MERRICK. With many thanks, Countess.

COUNTESS. I am very pleased to have made your acquaintance. (*Exits.*)

(*Enter LORD JOHN.*)

LORD JOHN. Here's the silver-topped walking stick, Merrick. Make you a regular Piccadilly exquisite. Keep up the good work. Self-help is the best help. Example to us all.

MERRICK. Thank you, Lord John.

LORD JOHN. Very pleased to have made your acquaintance. (*Exits.*)

(*Enter TREVES and PRINCESS ALEXANDRA.*)

TREVES. Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra.

PRINCESS. The happiest of Christmases, Mr. Merrick.

TREVES. Her Royal Highness has brought you a signed photograph of herself.

MERRICK. I am honored, your Royal Highness. It is the treasure of my possessions. I have written to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to thank him for the pheasants and woodcock he sent.

PRINCESS. You are a credit to Mr. Treves, Mr. Merrick. Mr. Treves, you are a credit to medicine, to England, and to Christendom. I am so very pleased to have made your acquaintance.

(PRINCESS, TREVES *exit*. *Enter* Mrs. KENDAL.)

Mrs. KENDAL. Good news, John, Bertie says we may use the Royal Box whenever I like. Mrs. Keppel

says it gives a unique perspective. And for Christmas, ivory-handled razors and toothbrush.

(*Enter TREVES.*)

TREVES. And a cigarette case, my boy, full of cigarettes!

MERRICK. Thank you. Very much.

Mrs. KENDAL. Look Freddie, look. The model of St. Phillip's.

TREVES. It is remarkable, I know.

MERRICK. And I do it with just one hand, they all say.

Mrs. KENDAL. You are an artist, John Merrick, an artist.

MERRICK. I did not begin to build at first. Not till I saw what St. Phillip's really was. It is not stone and steel and glass; it is an imitation of grace flying up and up from the mud. So I make my imitation of an imitation. But even in that is heaven to me, Mrs. Kendal.

TREVES. That thought's got a good line, John. Plato believed this was all a world of illusion and that artists made illusions of illusions of heaven.

MERRICK. You mean we are all just copies? Of originals?

TREVES. That's it.

MERRICK. Who made the copies?

TREVES. God. The Demi-urge.

MERRICK. (*Goes back to work.*) He should have used both hands shouldn't he?

*Music. Puts another piece on St. Phillip's. Fadeout.*