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The Observations of Henry

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THE GHOST OF THE MARCHIONESS OF AP- PLEFORD.

This is the story, among others, of Henry the waiter—or, as he now prefers to call himself, Henri—told to me in the long dining-room of the Riffel Alp Hotel, where I once stayed for a melancholy week “between seasons,” sharing the echoing emptiness of the place with two maiden ladies, who talked all day to one another in frightened whispers. Henry’s construction I have discarded for its amateurishness; his method being generally to commence a story at the end, and then, working backwards to the beginning, wind up with the middle. But p. 10in all other respects I have endeavoured to retain his method, which was individual; and this, I think, is the story as he would have told it to me himself, had he told it in this order:

My first place—well to be honest, it was a coffee shop in the Mile End Road—I’m not ashamed of it. We all have our beginnings. Young “Kipper,” as we called him—he had no name of his own, not that he knew of anyhow, and that seemed to fit him down to the ground—had fixed his pitch just outside, between our door and the music hall at the corner; and sometimes, when I might happen to have a bit on, I’d get a paper from him, and pay him for it, when the governor was not about, with a mug of coffee, and odds and ends that p. 11the other customers had left on their plates—an arrangement that suited both of us. He was just about as sharp as they make boys, even in the Mile End Road, which is saying a good deal; and now and then, spying around among the right sort, and keeping his ears open, he would put me up to a good thing, and I would tip him a bob or a tanner as the case might be. He was the sort that gets on—you know.

One day in he walks, for all the world as if the show belonged to him, with a young imp of a girl on his arm, and down they sits at one of the tables.

“Garsong,” he calls out, “what’s the menoo to-day?”

"The menoo to-day," I says, "is that you get outside 'fore I clip you over the ear, and that you take that back and put p. 12it where you found it;" meaning o' course, the kid.

She was a pretty little thing, even then, in spite of the dirt, with those eyes like saucers, and red hair. It used to be called "carrots" in those days. Now all the swells have taken it up—or as near as they can get to it—and it's auburn.

"'Enery," he replied to me, without so much as turning a hair, "I'm afraid you're forgetting your position. When I'm on the kerb shouting 'Speshull!' and you comes to me with yer 'a'penny in yer 'and, you're master an' I'm man. When I comes into your shop to order refreshments, and to pay for 'em, I'm boss. Savey? You can bring me a rasher and two eggs, and see that they're this season's. The lidy will have a full-sized haddick and a cocoa."

p. 13Well, there was justice in what he said. He always did have sense, and I took his order. You don't often see anybody put it away like that girl did. I took it she hadn't had a square meal for many a long day. She polished off a ninepenny haddick, skin and all, and after that she had two penny rashers, with six slices of bread and butter—"doorsteps," as we used to call them—and two half pints of cocoa, which is a meal in itself the way we used to make it. "Kipper" must have had a bit of luck that day. He couldn't have urged her on more had it been a free feed.

"'Ave an egg," he suggested, the moment the rashers had disappeared. "One of these eggs will just about finish yer."

"I don't really think as I can," says she, after considering like.

p. 14"Well, you know your own strength," he answers. "Perhaps you're best without it. Speshully if yer not used to 'igh living."

I was glad to see them finish, 'cause I was beginning to get a bit nervous about the coin, but he paid up right enough, and giv me a ha'penny for myself.

That was the first time I ever waited upon those two, but it wasn't to be the last by many a long chalk, as you'll see. He often used to bring her in after that. Who she was and what she was he didn't know, and she didn't know, so there was a pair of them. She'd run

away from an old woman down Limehouse way, who used to beat her. That was all she could tell him. He got her a lodging with an old woman, who had an attic in the same p. 15house where he slept—when it would run to that—taught her to yell “Speshul!” and found a corner for her. There ain’t room for boys and girls in the Mile-End Road. They’re either kids down there or they’re grown-ups. “Kipper” and “Carrots”—as we named her—looked upon themselves as sweethearts, though he couldn’t have been more than fifteen, and she barely twelve; and that he was regular gone on her anyone could see with half an eye. Not that he was soft about it—that wasn’t his style. He kept her in order, and she had just to mind, which I guess was a good thing for her, and when she wanted it he’d use his hand on her, and make no bones about it. That’s the way among that class. They up and give the old woman a friendly clump, just as you or me would swear at p. 16the missus, or fling a boot-jack at her. They don’t mean anything more.

I left the coffee shop later on for a place in the city, and saw nothing more of them for five years. When I did it was at a restaurant in Oxford Street—one of those amatoor shows run by a lot of women, who know nothing about the business, and spend the whole day gossiping and flirting—“love-shops,” I call ’em. There was a yellow-haired lady manageress who never heard you when you spoke to her, ’cause she was always trying to hear what some seedy old fool would be whispering to her across the counter. Then there were waitresses, and their notion of waiting was to spend an hour talking to a twopenny cup of coffee, and to look haughty and insulted whenever anybody as really wanted something ventured to ask for it. p. 17A frizzle-haired cashier used to make love all day out of her pigeon-hole with the two box-office boys from the Oxford Music Hall, who took it turn and turn about. Sometimes she’d leave off to take a customer’s money, and sometimes she wouldn’t. I’ve been to some rummy places in my time; and a waiter ain’t the blind owl as he’s supposed to be. But never in my life have I seen so much love-making, not all at once, as used to go on in that place. It was a dismal, gloomy sort of hole, and spoony couples seemed to scent it out by instinct, and would spend hours there over a pot of tea and assorted pastry. “Idyllic,” some folks would have thought it: I used to get the fair dismals watching it. There was one girl—a weird-

looking creature, with red eyes and long thin hands, that p. 18 gave you the creeps to look at. She'd come in regular with her young man, a pale-faced nervous sort of chap, at three o'clock every afternoon. Theirs was the funniest love-making I ever saw. She'd pinch him under the table, and run pins into him, and he'd sit with his eyes glued on her as if she'd been a steaming dish of steak and onions and he a starving beggar the other side of the window. A strange story that was—as I came to learn it later on. I'll tell you that, one day.

I'd been engaged for the "heavy work," but as the heaviest order I ever heard given there was for a cold ham and chicken, which I had to slip out for to the nearest cook-shop, I must have been chiefly useful from an ornamental point of view.

p. 19 I'd been there about a fortnight, and was feeling pretty sick of it, when I walked young "Kipper." I didn't know him at first, he'd changed so. He was swinging a silver-mounted crutch stick, which was the kind that was fashionable just then, and was dressed in a showy check suit and a white hat. But the thing that struck me most was his gloves. I suppose I hadn't improved quite so much myself, for he knew me in a moment, and held out his hand.

"What, 'Enery!" he says, "you've moved on, then!"

"Yes," I says, shaking hands with him, "and I could move on again from this shop without feeling sad. But you've got on a bit?" I says.

"So-so," he says, "I'm a journalist."

"Oh," I says, "what sort?" for I'd p. 20 seen a good many of that lot during six months I'd spent at a house in Fleet Street, and their get-up hadn't sumptuousness about it, so to speak. "Kipper's" rig-out must have totted up to a tidy little sum. He had a diamond pin in his tie that must have cost somebody fifty quid, if not him.

"Well," he answers, "I don't wind out the confidential advice to old Beaky, and that sort of thing. I do the tips, yer know. 'Cap'n Kit,' that's my name."

"What, the Captain Kit?" I says. O' course I'd heard of him.

"Be'old!" he says.

"Oh, it's easy enough," he goes on. "Some of 'em's bound to come out right, and when one does, you take it from me, our paper mentions the fact. And when it is a wrong 'un—well, a man p. 21 can't always be shouting about himself, can 'e?"

He ordered a cup of coffee. He said he was waiting for someone, and we got to chatting about old times.

"How's Carrots?" I asked.

"Miss Caroline Trevelyan," he answered, "is doing well."

"Oh," I says, "you've found out her fam'ly name, then?"

"We've found out one or two things about that lidy," he replies. "D'yer remember 'er dancing?"

"I have seen her flinging her petticoats about outside the shop, when the copper wasn't by, if that's what you mean," I says.

"That's what I mean," he answers. "That's all the rage now, 'skirt-dancing' they calls it. She's a-coming out at the p. 22 Oxford tomorrow. It's 'er I'm waiting for. She's a-coming on, I tell you she is," he says.

"Shouldn't wonder," says I; "that was her disposition."

"And there's another thing we've found out about 'er," he says. He leant over the table, and whispered it, as if he was afraid that anybody else might hear: "she's got a voice."

"Yes," I says, "some women have."

"Ah," he says, "but 'er voice is the sort of voice yer want to listen to."

"Oh," I says, "that's its speciality, is it?"

"That's it, sonny," he replies.

She came in a little later. I'd a' known her anywhere for her eyes, and her red hair, in spite of her being that clean you might have eaten your dinner out of her p. 23 hand. And as for her clothes! Well, I've mixed a good deal with the toffs in my time, and I've seen duchesses dressed more showily and maybe more expensively, but her clothes seemed to be just a framework to show her up. She was a beauty, you can take it from me; and it's not to be wondered that

the La-De-Das were round her when they did see her, like flies round an open jam tart.

Before three months were up she was the rage of London—leastways of the music-hall part of it—with her portrait in all the shop windows, and interviews with her in half the newspapers. It seems she was the daughter of an officer who had died in India when she was a baby, and the niece of a bishop somewhere in Australia. He was dead too. There didn't seem to be any of her ancestry p. 24as wasn't dead, but they had all been swells. She had been educated privately, she had, by a relative; and had early displayed an aptitude for dancing, though her friends at first had much opposed her going upon the stage. There was a lot more of it—you know the sort of thing. Of course, she was a connection of one of our best known judges—they all are—and she merely acted in order to support a grandmother, or an invalid sister, I forget which. A wonderful talent for swallowing, these newspaper chaps has, some of 'em!

"Kipper" never touched a penny of her money, but if he had been her agent at twenty-five per cent. he couldn't have worked harder, and he just kept up the hum about her, till if you didn't want to hear anything more about Caroline Trevelyan, your only chance would have p. 25been to lie in bed, and never look at a newspaper. It was Caroline Trevelyan at Home, Caroline Trevelyan at Brighton, Caroline Trevelyan and the Shah of Persia, Caroline Trevelyan and the Old Apple-woman. When it wasn't Caroline Trevelyan herself it would be Caroline Trevelyan's dog as would be doing something out of the common, getting himself lost or summoned or drowned—it didn't matter much what.

I moved from Oxford Street to the new "Horseshoe" that year—it had just been rebuilt—and there I saw a good deal of them, for they came in to lunch there or supper pretty regular. Young "Kipper"—or the "Captain" as everybody called him—gave out that he was her half-brother.

"I'd ad to be some sort of a relation, you p. 26see," he explained to me. "I'd a' been 'er brother out and out; that would have been simpler, only the family likeness wasn't strong enough. Our styles o' beauty ain't similar." They certainly wasn't.

“Why don’t you marry her?” I says, “and have done with it?”

He looked thoughtful at that. “I did think of it,” he says, “and I know, jolly well, that if I ’ad suggested it ’fore she’d found herself, she’d have agreed, but it don’t seem quite fair now.”

“How d’ye mean fair?” I says.

“Well, not fair to ’er,” he says. “I’ve got on all right, in a small way; but she—well, she can just ’ave ’er pick of the nobbs. There’s one on ’em as I’ve made inquiries about. ’E’ll be a dook, if a kid pegs out as is expected to, and anyhow p. 27’e’ll be a markis, and ’e means the straight thing—no error. It ain’t fair for me to stand in ’er way.”

“Well,” I says, “you know your own business, but it seems to me she wouldn’t have much way to stand in if it hadn’t been for you.”

“Oh, that’s all right,” he says. “I’m fond enough of the gell, but I shan’t clamour for a tombstone with wiolets, even if she ain’t ever Mrs. Capt’n Kit. Business is business; and I ain’t going to queer ’er pitch for ’er.”

I’ve often wondered what she’d a’ said, if he’d up and put the case to her plain, for she was a good sort; but, naturally enough, her head was a bit swelled, and she’d read so much rot about herself in the papers that she’d got at last to half believe some of it. The thought of her p. 28connection with the well-known judge seemed to hamper her at times, and she wasn’t quite so chummy with “Kipper” as used to be the case in the Mile-End Road days, and he wasn’t the sort as is slow to see a thing.

One day when he was having lunch by himself, and I was waiting on him, he says, raising his glass to his lips, “Well, ’Enery, here’s luck to yer! I won’t be seeing you agen for some time.”

“Oh,” I says. “What’s up now?”

“I am,” he says, “or rather my time is. I’m off to Africa.”

“Oh,” I says, “and what about—”

“That’s all right,” he interrupts. “I’ve fixed up that—a treat. Truth, that’s why I’m going.”

I thought at first he meant she was going with him.

p. 29 "No," he says, "she's going to be the Duchess of Ridingshire with the kind consent o' the kid I spoke about. If not, she'll be the Marchioness of Appleford. 'E's doing the square thing. There's going to be a quiet marriage to-morrow at the Registry Office, and then I'm off."

"What need for you to go?" I says.

"No need," he says; "it's a fancy o' mine. You see, me gone, there's nothing to 'amper 'er—nothing to interfere with 'er settling down as a quiet, respectable toff. With a 'alf-brother, who's always got to be spry with some fake about 'is lineage and 'is ancestral estates, and who drops 'is 'h's,' complications are sooner or later bound to a-rise. Me out of it—everything's simple. Savey?"

Well, that's just how it happened. Of course, there was a big row when the p. 30 family heard of it, and a smart lawyer was put up to try and undo the thing. No expense was spared, you bet; but it was all no go. Nothing could be found out against her. She just sat tight and said nothing. So the thing had to stand. They went and lived quietly in the country and abroad for a year or two, and then folks forgot a bit, and they came back to London. I often used to see her name in print, and then the papers always said as how she was charming and graceful and beautiful, so I suppose the family had made up its mind to get used to her.

One evening in she comes to the Savoy. My wife put me up to getting that job, and a good job it is, mind you, when you know your way about. I'd never have had the cheek to try for it, if it hadn't p. 31 been for the missis. She's a clever one—she is. I did a good day's work when I married her.

"You shave off that moustache of yours—it ain't an ornament," she says to me, "and chance it. Don't get attempting the lingo. Keep to the broken English, and put in a shrug or two. You can manage that all right."

I followed her tip. Of course the manager saw through me, but I got in a "Oui, monsieur" now and again, and they, being short handed at the time, could not afford to be strict, I suppose. Anyhow I got took on, and there I stopped for the whole season, and that was the making of me.

Well, as I was saying, in she comes to the supper rooms, and toffy enough she looked in her diamonds and furs, and as p. 32 for haughtiness there wasn't a born Marchioness she couldn't have given points to. She comes straight up to my table and sits down. Her husband was with her, but he didn't seem to have much to say, except to repeat her orders. Of course I looked as if I'd never set eyes on her before in all my life, though all the time she was a-pecking at the mayonnaise and a-sipping at the Giessler, I was thinking of the coffee-shop and of the ninepenny haddick and the pint of cocoa.

"Go and fetch my cloak," she says to him after a while. "I am cold."

And up he gets and goes out.

She never moved her head, and spoke as though she was merely giving me some order, and I stands behind her chair, respectful like, and answers according to the same tip,

p. 33 "Ever hear from 'Kipper'?" she says to me.

"I have had one or two letters from him, your ladyship," I answers.

"Oh, stow that," she says. "I am sick of 'your ladyship.' Talk English; I don't hear much of it. How's he getting on?"

"Seems to be doing himself well," I says. "He's started an hotel, and is regular raking it in, he tells me."

"Wish I was behind the bar with him!" says she.

"Why, don't it work then?" I asks.

"It's just like a funeral with the corpse left out," says she. "Serves me jolly well right for being a fool!"

The Marquis, he comes back with her cloak at that moment, and I says: "Certainement, madame," and gets clear.

I often used to see her there, and when p. 34 a chance occurred she would talk to me. It seemed to be a relief to her to use her own tongue, but it made me nervous at times for fear someone would hear her.

Then one day I got a letter from "Kipper" to say he was over for a holiday and was stopping at Morley's, and asking me to look him up.

He had not changed much except to get a bit fatter and more prosperous-looking. Of course, we talked about her ladyship, and I told him what she said.

"Rum things, women," he says; "never know their own minds."

"Oh, they know them all right when they get there," I says. "How could she tell what being a Marchioness was like till she'd tried it?"

"Pity," he says, musing like. "I reckoned it the very thing she'd tumble p. 35to. I only come over to get a sight of 'er, and to satisfy myself as she was getting along all right. Seems I'd better a' stopped away."

"You ain't ever thought of marrying yourself?" I asks.

"Yes, I have," he says. "It's slow for a man over thirty with no wife and kids to bustle him, you take it from me, and I ain't the talent for the Don Juan fake."

"You're like me," I says, "a day's work, and then a pipe by your own fireside with your slippers on. That's my swarry. You'll find someone as will suit you before long."

"No I shan't," says he. "I've come across a few as might, if it 'adn't been for 'er. It's like the toffs as come out our way. They've been brought up on 'ris p. 36de veau ` la financier,' and sich like, and it just spoils 'em for the bacon and greens."

I give her the office the next time I see her, and they met accidental like in Kensington Gardens early one morning. What they said to one another I don't know, for he sailed that same evening, and, it being the end of the season, I didn't see her ladyship again for a long while.

When I did it was at the Httel Bristol in Paris, and she was in widow's weeds, the Marquis having died eight months before. He never dropped into that dukedom, the kid turning out healthier than was expected, and hanging on; so she was still only a Marchioness, and her fortune, though tidy, was nothing very big—not as that class reckons. By luck p. 37I was told off to wait on her, she

having asked for someone as could speak English. She seemed glad to see me and to talk to me.

"Well," I says, "I suppose you'll be bossing that bar in Capetown now before long?"

"Talk sense," she answers. "How can the Marchioness of Appleford marry a hotel keeper?"

"Why not," I says, "if she fancies him? What's the good of being a Marchioness if you can't do what you like?"

"That's just it," she snaps out; "you can't. It would not be doing the straight thing by the family. No," she says, "I've spent their money, and I'm spending it now. They don't love me, but they shan't say as I have disgraced p. 38them. They've got their feelings same as I've got mine."

"Why not chuck the money?" I says. "They'll be glad enough to get it back," they being a poor lot, as I heard her say.

"How can I?" she says. "It's a life interest. As long as I live I've got to have it, and as long as I live I've got to remain the Marchioness of Appleford."

She finishes her soup, and pushes the plate away from her. "As long as I live," she says, talking to herself.

"By Jove!" she says, starting up "why not?"

"Why not what?" I says.

"Nothing," she answers. "Get me an African telegraph form, and be quick about it!"

I fetched it for her, and she wrote it and gave it to the porter then and there; p. 39and, that done, she sat down and finished her dinner.

She was a bit short with me after that; so I judged it best to keep my own place.

In the morning she got an answer that seemed to excite her, and that afternoon she left; and the next I heard of her was a paragraph in the newspaper, headed—"Death of the Marchioness of Appleford. Sad accident." It seemed she had gone for a row on one of the

Italian lakes with no one but a boatman. A squall had come on, and the boat had capsized. The boatman had swum ashore, but he had been unable to save his passenger, and her body had never been recovered. The paper reminded its readers that she had formerly been the celebrated tragic actress, Caroline Trevelyan, daughter of the well-known Indian judge of that name.

p. 40It gave me the blues for a day or two—that bit of news. I had known her from a baby as you might say, and had taken an interest in her. You can call it silly, but hotels and restaurants seemed to me less interesting now there was no chance of ever seeing her come into one again.

I went from Paris to one of the smaller hotels in Venice. The mis-
sis thought I'd do well to pick up a bit of Italian, and perhaps she
fancied Venice for herself. That's one of the advantages of our pro-
fession. You can go about. It was a second-rate sort of place, and
one evening, just before lighting-up time, I had the salle-⁻manger
all to myself, and had just taken up a paper when I hears the door
open, and I turns round.

I saw "her" coming down the room. p. 41There was no mistaking
her. She wasn't that sort.

I sat with my eyes coming out of my head till she was close to me,
and then I says:

"Carrots!" I says, in a whisper like. That was the name that come
to me.

"'Carrots' it is," she says, and down she sits just opposite to me,
and then she laughs.

I could not speak, I could not move, I was that took aback, and
the more frightened I looked the more she laughed till "Kipper"
comes into the room. There was nothing ghostly about him. I never
see a man look more as if he had backed the winner.

"Why, it's 'Enery,'" he says; and he gives me a slap on the back, as
knocks the life into me again.

"I heard you was dead," I says, still p. 42staring at her. "I read it
in the paper—'death of the Marchioness of Appleford.'"

"That's all right," she says. "The Marchioness of Appleford is as dead as a door-nail, and a good job too. Mrs. Captain Kit's my name, nie 'Carrots."

"You said as 'ow I'd find someone to suit me 'fore long," says "Kipper" to me, "and, by Jove! you were right; I 'ave. I was waiting till I found something equal to her ladyship, and I'd 'ave 'ad to wait a long time, I'm thinking, if I 'adn't come across this one 'ere"; and he tucks her up under his arm just as I remember his doing that day he first brought her into the coffee-shop, and Lord, what a long time ago that was!

That is the story, among others, told me by Henry, the waiter. I have, at his p. 43 request, substituted artificial names for real ones. For Henry tells me that at Capetown Captain Kit's First-class Family and Commercial Hotel still runs, and that the landlady is still a beautiful woman with fine eyes and red hair, who might almost be taken for a duchess – until she opens her mouth, when her accent is found to be still slightly reminiscent of the Mile-End Road.

THE USES AND ABUSES OF JOSEPH.

“It is just the same with what you may call the human joints,” observed Henry. He was in one of his philosophic moods that evening. “It all depends upon the cooking. I never see a youngster hanging up in the refrigerator, as one may put it, but I says to myself: ‘Now I wonder what the cook is going to make of you! Will you be minced and devilled and fricasseed till you are all sauce and no meat? Will you be hammered tender and grilled over a slow fire till you are a blessing to mankind? Or will you be spoilt in the boiling, and come out a stringy rag, an p. 48immediate curse, and a permanent injury to those who have got to swallow you?’

“There was a youngster I knew in my old coffee-shop days,” continued Henry, “that in the end came to be eaten by cannibals. At least, so the newspapers said. Speaking for myself, I never believed the report: he wasn’t that sort. If anybody was eaten, it was more likely the cannibal. But that is neither here nor there. What I am thinking of is what happened before he and the cannibals ever got nigh to one another. He was fourteen when I first set eyes on him— Mile End fourteen, that is; which is the same, I take it, as City eighteen and West End five-and-twenty—and he was smart for his age into the bargain: a trifle too smart as a matter of fact. He always came into the shop at the same time—half-past two; he p. 49always sat in the seat next the window; and three days out of six, he would order the same dinner: a fourpenny beef-steak pudding—we called it beef-steak, and, for all practical purposes, it was beef-steak—a penny plate of potatoes, and a penny slice of roly-poly pudding— ‘chest expander’ was the name our customers gave it—to follow. That showed sense, I always thought, that dinner alone; a more satisfying menu, at the price, I defy any human being to work out. He always had a book with him, and he generally read during his meal; which is not a bad plan if you don’t want to think too much about what you are eating. There was a seedy chap, I remember, used to dine at a cheap restaurant where I once served, just off the Euston Road. He would stick a book up in front of him—Eppy something or p. 50other—and read the whole time. Our four-course shilling table d’htte with Eppy, he would say, was a banquet fit for a prince; without Eppy he was of opinion that a policeman wouldn’t

touch it. But he was one of those men that report things for the newspapers, and was given to exaggeration.

“A coffee-shop becomes a bit of a desert towards three o’clock; and, after a while, young Tidelman, for that was his name, got to putting down his book and chatting to me. His father was dead; which, judging from what he told me about the old man, must have been a bit of luck for everybody; and his mother, it turned out, had come from my own village in Suffolk; and that constituted a sort of bond between us, seeing I had known all her people pretty intimately. He was earning good p. 51 money at a dairy, where his work was scouring milk-cans; and his Christian name—which was the only thing Christian about him, and that, somehow or another, didn’t seem to fit him—was Joseph.

“One afternoon he came into the shop looking as if he had lost a shilling and found sixpence, as the saying is; and instead of drinking water as usual, sent the girl out for a pint of ale. The moment it came he drank off half of it at a gulp, and then sat staring out of the window.

“‘What’s up?’ I says. ‘Got the shove?’

“‘Yes,’ he answers; ‘but, as it happens, it’s a shove up. I’ve been taken off the yard and put on the walk, with a rise of two bob a week.’ Then he took another pull at the beer and looked more savage than ever.

p. 52“‘Well,’ I says, ‘that ain’t the sort of thing to be humpy about.’

“‘Yes it is,’ he snaps back; ‘it means that if I don’t take precious good care I’ll drift into being a blooming milkman, spending my life yelling “Milk ahoi!” and spooning smutty-faced servant-gals across area railings.’

“‘Oh!’ I says, ‘and what may you prefer to spoon—duchesses?’

“‘Yes,’ he answers sulky-like; ‘duchesses are right enough—some of ’em.’

“‘So are servant-gals,’ I says, ‘some of ’em. Your hat’s feeling a bit small for you this morning, ain’t it?’