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Fechner Fichte Weiße Rose von Fallersleben Kant Ernst Richthofen Frommel  
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# Lippa

Beatrice Egerton

# Imprint

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## CHAPTER I

'I hold the world but as the world  
A stage where every man must play a part.'

—Shakespeare.

It is four o'clock, and — — Street is wearing a very deserted appearance although it is July. The cab-drivers are more or less fast

asleep in attitudes far from suggesting comfort, the sentries on guard at — — Palace look almost suffocated in their bearskins, and a comparative quiet is reigning over the great metropolis.

'Do you know, Helmdon,' says Jimmy Dalrymple. 'I'm nearly done;' these two are seated in the bow window of a well-known club.

'You don't mean it, what!' replies Helmdon, better known as Chubby.

'I do, all the same,' says Jimmy, testily, 'heat, money, everything, in fact!'

'That comes of racing, my good boy,' this from Chubby, in a sort of I-told-you-so tone.

'For Heaven's sake don't begin lecturing,' says Dalrymple, 'it doesn't suit you, and how in the name of fortune could the heat come from my racing. Chubby, you're an ass!' and really, J. Dalrymple of the Guards is not far wrong, for the said Chubby, otherwise Lord Helmdon does look rather foolish half leaning half sitting on the back of a chair, his hat well at the back of his head (why it remains there is a mystery), his reddish hair very dishevelled, his face on a broad grin while he watches with deep interest two dogs fighting in the street below.

Dalrymple receiving no answer to his complimentary speech, gives vent to a yawn, and sends for a brandy and soda.

'Eh what!' says Chubby, suddenly, and *à propos* of nothing; by this time the dogs have been separated. 'Didn't you speak just now?'

'Well, yes,' replies Dalrymple, 'I merely observed that you were an ass.'

'Thanks, awfully, but why did it strike you just now?' asks Lord Helmdon, sweetly.

'Don't know, I'm sure —'

'Ah! I thought so, but look here, why are you so down in the mouth, there's something up I'm sure,' and Chubby scrutinises his friend gravely.

'Nothing's up,' says Jimmy, 'but I've got into a confounded business with Harkness over that mare of his, that ought to have run in the Oaks, I've laid more than I've got, against her winning the Ledger, and I don't know what on earth to do—'

'Do nothing,' says Helmdon, 'it'll all shake down somehow, and the Ledger's weeks off—'

Jimmy grunts an assent, and then rising says, 'I'm off to tea at Brook Street and the Park afterwards.'

'You'll probably find me there,' replies Helmdon, settling himself comfortably for a nap. While Dalrymple walks out of the Club and turns in the direction of Brook Street. He has not gone far when he is overtaken by a man who greets him with: 'Where are you going to, my pretty maid?'

'I'm on my way to the Park,' replies Dalrymple, smiling, 'only I thought of stopping at your sister's on the way. Where are you bound for?'

'There too,' answers his companion, who, save for his drooping fair moustache would better deserve to be called a 'pretty maid.' 'Mabel has a small party on, and I promised to drop in, we may as well go together.'

Paul Ponsonby is decidedly handsome; tall, fair, of almost a feminine complexion, and with blue eyes of a very sad expression. He is a great favourite with the female sex and many a mother longs to have him for a son-in-law, remembering that he has plenty of money, and only three people between him and an earldom; but he has no intention of marrying, there being 'a just cause and impediment' why he should not.

But by this time our friends have reached their destination, and ascend the staircase to the strains of distant music.

'Mabel,' otherwise Mrs Seaton, is standing on the landing and greets them both eagerly.

'So glad you've come,' says she, 'but I didn't expect *you*, Mr Dalrymple, and now you're here you must make yourself useful, your mission in life at the present moment, Paul,' she adds, turning to her brother, 'is to go and amuse Philippa, poor child, I'm afraid she feels

rather out of it, but I haven't time to attend to her now. She's near the window, the old Professor was talking to her a few minutes ago—'

'Very well,' says Paul, moving towards the well filled drawing-room; the music has ceased and everyone is talking at once. He pauses for a second in the doorway and glances round the room, bowing to two or three people, then making his way to the window holds out his hand to a girl who is looking decidedly *ennuyée*.

'How do you do, Mr Ponsonby,' she says in a clear sweet voice, 'I'm so glad you've come, don't you know the feeling of loneliness that comes over one in a crowd of unknown people, and I've been here all the afternoon feeling dreadfully cross, and have wished myself back again in Switzerland about twenty times. It's rather a bad beginning,' she adds, with a little laugh—

'Feeling cross, do you mean?' asks he, 'I often think it does one a great deal of good to be cross. I wish Mrs Grundy didn't come between us and the carpet, it would be so delightful to sprawl full length on it and roar; I remember I used to derive a great deal of comfort in it in the days of my youth.'

'I suppose that was a long time ago,' says she, mischievously—

'Yes, of course, almost centuries— but where's Teddy?'

'Gone out for a walk,' replied Philippa, 'isn't he a dear little boy?'

Paul Ponsonby laughs and says, 'I think him rather the *enfant terrible*, but I suppose women are naturally fond of children, even taken as a whole; it does not matter much what they are like taken singly.'

Some one has begun to sing and Philippa does not answer, but when the song is finished, she asks the name of an old lady who is sitting on the sofa at the farther end of the room.

'The one with the blue feather, that's Lady Dadford,' says Ponsonby, 'and that's her daughter standing by her, Lady Anne; she is very clever; but surely they're some sort of relation to you, I know the old lady comes here very often.'

'Well, child,' exclaims little Mrs Seaton, coming up and laying her hand on Philippa's shoulder; 'they have nearly all gone, thank goodness, I am afraid you have been very dull, eh?'

Philippa laughs, while Paul twirling his moustache says, 'You know I've been talking to Miss Seaton for the last half hour, as you told me to, next time I shall not obey you if this is all the thanks I get.'

Philippa looks up quickly, so this is why he has been talking to her. 'It was very good of you,' she says in a very polite tone, 'very kind, but you need not have troubled yourself so much, I am quite happy watching people.'

'My dear child, what an absurd creature you are,' exclaims her sister-in-law, 'but come with me now I want to introduce you to two or three people—'

'What did I say to annoy her,' thinks Paul, and then seizing the first opportunity he makes for the door, but his sister stops him on the threshold.

'Oh, Paul, do be a dear,' she says, 'and get some places for us for the play, I don't care what, only let it be somewhere proper, for Philippa's sake not mine, get them for to-morrow night, and come and dine here beforehand.'

'All right,' he answers, 'I shall probably look in during the morning. Ta ta.'

Mabel Seaton is a great favourite. She is not what one would call pretty, but she possesses a bright, cheery face, which is reflected in miniature in her son Teddy, who is as his uncle says rather the '*enfant terrible!*' but do not say so before his mother, or her wrath would be dire. Her husband George is really the only person who dares to interfere concerning the conduct of that small personage.

Philippa, who up till now has lived with an aunt in Switzerland, having reached the age of eighteen, has come over to England to be presented and enter into the vortex of London society. So it is to quite another world she has come, and she wonders if she will be happy. Life is such a strange thing, so many beginnings and so few endings.

But the theatre is hardly the place for melancholy meditations, and she is sitting in the stalls of the L— —. Mabel on one side, Paul Ponsonby on the other; the latter has become deeply interested in Philippa, and wonders what sort of a woman she will become—a coquette, a flirt? He glances at her fair, childish face and sighs. The curtain goes up, but he does not see the scene before him; no, 'tis a woman's face he seems to see, a pale face, with large brown eyes that are fixed on him with a look of—pshaw! what had love to do with her. Time had been when love for that woman had filled his whole being, but there came a day when he tried to make himself hate her, and he did not succeed. Heigh ho!

'Mr Ponsonby,' Philippa is saying to him, 'do look at that dear little baby.'

With a start he comes back from the reverie into which he had sunk and answers at random 'Yes, she always acts perfectly—'

Philippa looks at him in astonishment, how could that child *always* act perfectly when it couldn't be more than three, but she says nothing and watches with interest the play. It is a sad piece of a woman wronged, the acting is splendid and more than once Miss Seaton feels a lump in her throat, but it is over at length and the curtain falls for the last time.

'Did you like it?' asks Ponsonby, helping her on with her cloak.

'Very much,' she replies, 'I have never been to an English theatre before, you know, but it was awfully sad.'

'Sadder if it had been the man wronged,' he says—

Philippa looks up with a laughing retort about each one for himself, but he seems so very grave that she refrains and wonders why he said that, but it is sometime before she finds out.

## CHAPTER II

'A face in a crowd, a glance, a droop of the lashes, and all is said.' — Marion Crawford.

It is some days later, and having a ball in prospect, Mrs Seaton has left Philippa to rest, whilst she goes on a round of visits; and Philippa, nothing loth, settles herself comfortably on the sofa with a book, and prepares to enjoy a lazy afternoon, but she is destined to interruption. The door suddenly bursts open and Teddy flies in, with 'Oh, Aunt Lippa, will you come into the Square with me. Marie's sister has come to see her and it would be kind to let them be together, don't you think—'

Lippa feels inclined to suggest that it would be just as kind to let her alone, but she refrains and merely says 'Well?'

'Will you?' asks the little boy, emphasizing his words by leaning heavily against his aunt. 'You see,' he continues, 'I do feel sometimes lonely, 'cos Marie's old and won't run, and I think you look as if you could—'

'I have done so in the course of my life,' she answers laughing, 'and I might be able to do so again.'

'Then you will try this afternoon, won't you?' this very coaxingly. 'Marie had better walk with us there, but it's such a little way we can come back by ourselves, can't we.'

'Yes; I should think so,' says Philippa.

'Then I'll just go and get my hat,' and Teddy, pausing at the door, adds. 'Do you know I think you're a very good aunt for a boy to have.'

'Indeed?' and Lippa laughs.

She finds it quite as pleasant sitting under a shady tree in the Square, as on the sofa in Brook Street; and her nephew does not require her to run, having found another companion in the person of a fat, very plain little girl; but after some time she has to go home,

and Teddy having worried the life out of a stray cat, returns to his aunt, with a red, smutty face.

'Well,' he says, 'I am so hot, what shall I do to get cool—'

'Sit still,' suggests Lippa.

'Oh no, that'd make me heaps hotter, oh! there's Joseph,' and away flies Teddy. Joseph is an old gardener whose business it is to keep the paths in order, and of whom most of the square live in wholesome awe, not so Teddy, he loves him dearly and will talk as long as the old man has time to listen, this afternoon he is busy and Teddy soon returns again to the seat.

'He's such a dear old man,' he says, nodding in the direction the gardener has taken, 'a dear old man, but he has a terrible cough, and he doesn't know anything that will cure it.'

'Poor old man,' she answers, 'but really Teddy you *must* sit still, you are so hot, and jumping up and down like that shakes me all over.'

'Does it?' he says, innocently. 'I'll sit still if you'll tell me something, but perhaps I'd better tell you something first. Did you ever know that I had a sister?'

Lippa nods.

'Oh!' he says, 'well then perhaps you knew that her name was Lilian, and she was lost.'

'Yes,' replies Philippa, 'I knew all about her; you see your father is my brother, so of course I know all about you.'

'Not everything,' says Teddy, confidently, 'you don't know that I'm feeling rather empty, not 'xactly hungry but as if I could eat my tea.'

'Well, I dare say it is time to go in,' says his aunt, 'and if you will cease to sit on my feet I will get up.'

Teddy rises with alacrity, and not till they get to the square gate do they remember they have not got the key. 'How tiresome,' ejaculates Philippa.

But Teddy who is always full of resources, departs in the hope of finding Joseph or some one who has a key, but alas they are the only occupants of the square, what is to be done. They stand gazing helplessly over the gate, Philippa looking uncommonly pretty in a light gown that fits to perfection, and her large black hat adorned with red poppies, 'I wonder who she is,' thinks a gentleman who has already passed them twice, and is contemplating turning back to see her again. But he hears his name called in a shrill voice, 'Captain Harkness, Cap-ta-i-n H-a-r-kness!' He turns round hastily and sees Teddy waving frantically over the gate.

'Well, little boy,' he says, 'what is the matter? eh!'

'We can't get out, Aunt Lippa and I, we've forgotten the key, do go to mother and ask her for it.'

Captain Harkness turns to Philippa and raising his hat, says, 'I shall be very pleased if I can be of any service to you, I was just on my way to see Mrs Seaton.'

'If you could get the key,' replies she, 'it would be most kind.'

'Not at all,' says he, still wondering who she is, 'I will not be long,' and he is as good as his word, reappearing with the key and setting them free, when they return to Brook Street.

'My dear child,' says Mabel, addressing Lippa, as they enter the drawing-room, 'how very foolish of you to lock yourselves up like that. I was getting quite uneasy about you, but come and have some tea, and you Teddy go upstairs to yours, Captain Harkness now let me introduce you properly to my sister-in-law.'

Philippa smiles and Captain Harkness congratulates himself on his afternoon adventure.

Eleven o'clock sees Mabel and Philippa on their way to the ball, not having been to many she has not become *blasée*, but enjoys herself thoroughly. It is still early when they reach their destination, and Mrs Seaton is enabled to find a seat in a good place for seeing, almost opposite the door. Lady Dadford followed by her daughter soon puts in an appearance and makes for them at once.

'Well, Mabel, my dear,' she begins, 'so glad to have found you here, how do you do, Philippa, you are not done up yet, I see, and

you look charming, what a sweet dress you have, and I do believe you have not been introduced to my boy yet, I am afraid he isn't coming here to-night, he's such a dear boy, my Helmdon, I'm sure you will like him. But where's Anne, ah! dancing already, the dear child, she does do it so well,' and with a benign smile on her kind old face, Lady Dadford seats herself by Mabel.

Miss Seaton's partners claim her one after the other; they have very little individuality to her, of course some are better dancers than the others, but caring for one more than another, would be quite impossible she tells herself. Why is it then that suddenly as she catches sight of a certain brown head in the doorway, she smiles, and when the owner comes towards her feels just a little thrill of pleasure.

Ah! Miss Seaton let me warn you, don't pretend to care for *none* of them, for that thrill does not come without some cause, and almost before you are aware of it, you will find that your heart is not your own, you know quite well that Jimmy Dalrymple has found favour in your eyes, and you know too, that with very little trouble you could bewitch him. Do not play with edged tools.

Lippa waltzes off with him through the crowded room and just a little sigh escapes her as the music stops.

'Where would you like to go to?' asks he. 'To supper or the garden?'

'Oh, the garden,' says Miss Seaton, 'fancy naming them together. Supper is such a very prosaic affair,' and then as they enter the garden, 'One could almost imagine oneself miles away from London here.'

'They have arranged it awfully well,' says Dalrymple, gazing round on the illuminated parterres, and then, 'would you like to sit or shall we walk about?'

'Walk, I think,' replies Philippa, and so they wander on, talking about nothing in particular, and yet they both forget that there are such things as sleep and to-morrow. Having come to the end of a narrow path, and finding two empty chairs they remain there. The lights are dim and the people passing and repassing are scarcely

recognisable, but presently a lady in a light blue gown attracts Lip-pa's attention. 'Who is she?' she says.

Dalrymple turns and looks at her. They hear a murmured sen-tence and then 'Eh, what!' in rather an unmistakeable tone.

'Oh, her partner is Helmdon,' says Jimmy, 'he's never to be mis-taken with his *what*. The lady, I think, is Mrs Standish, an American widow, and therefore rolling in riches. I never knew an American widow who wasn't.'

'It would be very nice,' says Lippa.

'What! to be an American widow?'

She laughs. 'No! to be very rich; there would be no need to think twice as to whether you could afford anything—'

'What a great many useless things you would get,' says Dalrym-ple.

'Really! but why?'

'I did not mean you in particular,' he protests. 'I assure you I did-n't; but there are a great many useless things in the shops, which I suppose people buy. What is the matter, Miss Seaton? For Philippa has risen hastily with a little scream. 'There's something under my chair, I felt it move,' she says, woman-like raising her skirt.

Dalrymple bends down, kneel he could not in his best evening trousers, 'I don't see anything,' he says, peering about and nearly choking for his collar is high and somewhat tight. *Il faut souffrir pour être beau*.

'Oh, but you must,' persists Lippa. 'I felt it move.'

'Wait a second,' says he, producing a match, and proceeding to light it on the sole of his pump; they are all alone in this part of the garden, and nobody is watching them, the match will not ignite at first and then they both bend down at once nearly upsetting each other, and behold calmly blinking at them a large black cat. This is too much for Jimmy who gives way to suppressed laughter, the match goes out, and Miss Seaton though inwardly convulsed thinks proper to assume an air of dignity. 'I think I had better go back to the ball-room,' says she.

Jimmy vaguely feeling he has done something he ought not to, says; 'I-er beg your pardon, I'm awfully sorry —'

'What for?' asks Lippa, stroking her right arm with her left hand.

Jimmy considers for a moment wondering what he had better say, and then suddenly seized with an inspiration 'I do believe I hurt you,' he says, 'the match didn't touch you, did it?'

'No; but *you* did,' replies she, and then seeing the consternation depicted on his face, Miss Seaton smiles, and then they both laugh.

'You know, you really might have knocked me over,' she says pathetically.

'I can't tell you how sorry I am,' exclaims Dalrymple, gently taking possession of the injured arm; 'please forgive me?'

'I'll try,' she says, — 'I wonder what has happened to the cat —'

They are nearing the ball-room, and he finding this *tête-à-tête* very pleasant wishes to prolong it and says, 'Shall we go back and see?'

'I think I am engaged for this dance,' says Lippa, knowing Mabel will be wondering what has become of her.

'You'll let me have another?' asks Jimmy, eagerly.

'Certainly,' replies she; 'only, no more cat-finding. I can't bear them, can you?'

'Can't endure them,' says Dalrymple, who would agree with whatever she said.

That night, or I should say next morning, when Miss Seaton retires to rest, a certain brown head figures prominently in her dreams, together with searching after huge monsters, who all bear a resemblance to Lady Dadford. And even when awake the brown head is a subject for deep thought, and it is with a bright, happy face Miss Seaton appears (though somewhat late) at the breakfast table.

### CHAPTER III

'Philippa,' says Mrs Seaton one day, 'I have just had an invitation from old Mrs Boothly, asking us to a water party next Wednesday, would you like to go?'

'Who is going?' asks Lippa wisely, 'not only the Boothlys—'

'I suppose the "*not only*," means that in that case you would not go, but rest assured lots of other people are going, the two Graham girls, little Tommy Grant, Mr Dalrymple, and Captain Harkness,' says Mabel, 'but read the note yourself and decide—' Philippa's mind is soon made up. 'I think I should like to go, it will be rather fun I expect.'

'Yes, I daresay,' replies Mabel, 'then I will write at once to get it off my mind, but *what* day is it for?'

'Wednesday,' says Philippa, meaning to enjoy herself. But in one sense she is doomed to disappointment, the weather is everything that could be wished, and, donning a pretty gown, and covering her head with a dainty confection, she feels ready for the fray.

Ten o'clock is the hour fixed for starting from — — Station, but Teddy has been refractory over his breakfast and his mother considers it her duty to reprimand him, tears ensue, and then some time is spent in consolation, so that they are only just in time and have to run along the platform to the saloon carriage, out of which Tommy Grant is gesticulating violently.

'You're only just in time,' says he, helping them in.

Philippa looks round and does not see Dalrymple; she finds herself next the eldest Miss Boothly who is saying, 'I am so pleased you could come,' giving Lippa's arm a little squeeze at the same time, 'I think we shall have a nice day, don't you, and you know all the people?'

'All except the man at the further end.'

'Oh! don't you know him,' says Miss Boothly. 'He's Lord Helmdon; he has come in the place of Mr Dalrymple, who at the last moment wrote to say he could not come, and so we asked Lord

Helmdon, he's so nice; we always fall back upon him when anyone fails us.'

Chubby does not look as if he had been fallen back upon by any means, for apparently he is keeping up the spirits of the party, for they are all in shrieks of laughter. Captain Harkness eyes Lippa from the distance, and when they reach their destination prepares to assist her to alight, when Lord Helmdon clumsily treads on her dress just as she is about to jump down on the platform; no great damage is done, and Chubby, profuse in apologies, wins Miss Seaton's heart by the plain distress depicted on his countenance, and a safety pin which he produces and with which he fastens up the torn gathers, and before they come to the river, they are on quite friendly terms, much to the disgust of Harkness, who has been attacked by his hostess's youngest daughter.

Up the river they go, dividing into three parties; Mrs Boothly, who has placed herself next Mabel, warm, and decidedly sleepy, tries in vain to feel happy in seeing her dear girls amused, and discusses the management of children with Mrs Seaton. And the day wears on, Helmdon making himself decidedly agreeable to everyone. Lippa amuses herself to a certain extent, but she becomes irritated by the assiduous attentions of Captain Harkness, to whom she has taken a violent dislike. She gets more and more out of patience with him and at length is almost rude. It appears to have no effect upon him whatever, for like a great many other people he has a very good opinion of himself, and that this girl is not pleased with his attentions never enters his well-curled head. Philippa has taken his fancy and as he has just made up his mind that it is time to enter the blissful (?) state of matrimony, she seems to him to be the exact person to make his wife; money makes no difference, for he is one of those fortunate individuals who has almost more than he knows what to do with. That Miss Seaton will have nothing to do with him, has not crossed his mind yet.

The party disperse again at the station pouring into Mrs Boothly's ear many sweet sentences, which had she been listening would have made her think that going up the river in a boat and lunching on the bank was almost heaven upon earth; but poor dear lady she is longing to get home, feeling painfully conscious of the shapeli-

ness of her shoes; and the pain thereby caused, absorbs all her faculties for the present: but when the above mentioned articles are removed, she thinks with pleasure how much everyone seemed to enjoy themselves, and she makes up her mind to have a similar day; only, made more pleasant to her by large and shapeless boots. Wise Mrs Boothly —

Garden-parties, balls, dinner-parties, follow each other in rather monotonous succession, and Lippa is beginning to tire of them, she has been to three balls where a certain young man has been conspicuous by his absence; and it is almost a week since he has dropped in to tea, and Miss Seaton misses him more than she will own to herself. She is feeling out of sorts this afternoon and has betaken herself to the back drawing-room, which is only curtained off from the front, leaving Mabel and Lady Dadford in earnest conversation.

Presently the door opens, and Ponsonby comes in. 'All alone,' says he. 'I thought you always had some one worshipping at your shrine.'

'Indeed, you are much mistaken,' replies she laughing, 'but I didn't know you were in London —'

'I only came back this morning —'

'Mabel and Lady Dadford are in there,' interrupts Philippa indifferently, pointing to the front room.

'Well, unless I am disturbing you, I will remain here,' says Paul, 'there are some letters I must write,' and going to the table he proceeds to hunt for paper and pens; Lippa goes on reading her book, and a silence of a few minutes ensues.

Then he says, 'What wretched pens you do keep —'

'Yes,' replies she, 'they are rather bad, but I think you will find some others in the right hand drawer—have you ever read this?' holding up her volume.

'The "Epic of Hades," yes, parts of it are very fine. "There is an end of all things that thou seest. There is an end of wrong and death and hell,"' quotes he.

'What a melancholy passage,' says Lippa.

'A very grand one I think,' he replies, 'but I should never have thought you would care for that kind of literature.'

'Why not?—'

'Because, well, I should have thought it would have been too deep for you—'

'Really,' then after a pause, 'do you know *that* wasn't very polite—'

'Wasn't it? suppose I say then that I am agreeably surprised—'

'That's nearly as bad, if not quite, it sounds as if you expected me to read nothing but books like the "Daisy Chain," or "Laneton Parsonage."'

'Very excellent books too—'

'Oh, Paul! how *tiresome* you are, do you know I,' and then Miss Seaton is filled with confusion, she has called him by his Christian name and he is looking at her and smiling. 'I—er beg your pardon,' she says quickly in her childish way.

'What for?' asks he, pretending not to understand her.

'For calling you by your Christian name—'

'Well, and what harm was there?'

'You see,' she says deprecatingly, 'Mabel is always talking about you, and so I get into the habit of talking of you as Paul.'

Paul rises and standing in front of her says—'As I said before, where is the harm? I have never called you anything else but Philippa, or Lippa; I could not address you as Miss Seaton, it does not suit you one bit you know; now let us make it a compact from henceforth, I call you Lippa, and you call me Paul.'

'Very well,' replies she.

'What ever are you two doing here,' and the curtain is hastily drawn aside by Mabel. 'You look as grave as judges, come and have some strawberries and cream, Lady Dadford has gone.'

At the sound of strawberries, Lippa hastily rises, and they go into the front room, where Jimmy Dalrymple is.