

holiday. Won't you come to my rooms? It's only a garret, or little better, but I have plenty of the Snow of Heaven, and we could have a wonderful night." "Let's go!" said the girl, pressing her lover's arm. He hesitated a moment. "Three's company," urged the other, "when they all understand."

"It would be perfect," chimed the girl, "and it would suit us—in other ways," she added, darkly. "Yes, the scheme has points," admitted the younger man; "thanks very much. We'll come. What's your name? Mine's Herbert Aynes. This lady—we'll call her Mab, if you don't mind. There's an injured husband in the offing, you know; that's one reason why we have to be careful." "Certainly, prudence before all things; but I've no troubles; call me Francis Ridley." They linked arms, and strolled gaily along the main street of the quarter, enchanted by the color and the chiaroscuro, by the hoarse cries in all strange tongues that greeted them on every side, even by the weird odors—for when people are lit by love and adventure and cocaine, there is no place of this whole universe which is not sheer delight. Presently, however, they branched off, under Ridley's direction, and began to climb the steep streets on their right. A minute later they entered an ancient doorway, and after three flights of stairs found Ridley's dovecote.

It was a charming room, furnished, as if for a woman, with all bright colors and daintiness. On one side of the room was a divan, smothered in cushions; on the other a hammock of scarlet cords hung from the rafters. Ridley went to the window and closed the shutters. "Madame est chez elle!" he announced gallantly. "What a wonderful place!" laughed the girl. "However did you find it?"

"Oh, it used to be a house of assignation."

"Used to be!"

And this time all three laughed in unison.

#### IV.

The reopening of the courts found Ffoulkes enormously preoccupied. For the past two years several influential newspapers had been accusing Ministers of the Crown of the grossest kind of robbery. They had bought and sold stock, it was alleged, manipulating the prices by using their positions to announce that the government had or had not decided to make contracts with the companies involved, and subsequently denying the rumors when they had taken their profits. The attack had been so persistent that the accused ministers had been forced to desperate measures. They had started a prearranged libel action against a newspaper in Paris for reprinting one of these articles; but people still asked why they did not prosecute one of the sheets that were attacking them in London. Unhappily, not one of these was to be bought; each, carefully sounded, announced its intention to fight; and redoubled its venom.

It was at last decided to attempt a criminal prosecution of the weakest of its enemies, a paper edited by a man personally unpopular, and to bring every kind of indirect pressure upon the court to secure a conviction.

Of course the law officers of the Crown were unavailable for the prosecution; and the choice of a leader had fallen, at the last moment, when their own counsel suddenly declined to go on with the case and returned the briefs, upon Ffoulkes.

He had thus only a month to assimilate what really required six; but if he won, he could be sure of office next time a Liberal Government was in power.

So he worked day and night, seeing nobody but the solicitors and witnesses employed on the case.

He had no news of Flynn but a telegram from Berlin, saying that he would be back in a month, and that there was "nothing to report as yet." This amused Ffoulkes hugely; it would be great if Flynn failed to bring off his murder. However, he had no time for trifles like murder these days; he had to get a conviction for criminal libel; nothing else mattered.

But when the case came actually into court he saw it to be hopeless. His opening was masterly; it occupied two days; but on the second day he sent word to his clients during the lunch hour that it was no good to go on, and that he felt forced to take the measures previously agreed upon. These were simple; near the conclusion of the speech he managed to blunder into disclosing a flaw in the procedure so obvious that the judge could not possibly overlook it. His lordship interrupted: "I am afraid, Sir Richard, that you have no case. If you will refer to Jones vs. The Looking Glass, you will see that it has been expressly laid down that—" An elaborate legal argument followed, but the judge was inexorable. "You must redraw your plea, Sir Richard. The case is dismissed."

The docile organs of the government consoled with the great counsel for losing an "already won case" on a technicality; but Ffoulkes was sorry he had ever touched it. He would go to the club and play a game of chess. Flynn would be there later; he had returned to London that morning, and telegraphed his friend to make it a dinner and the Empire.

In the lounge of the club was only one little old man, who was known as a mathematician of great eminence, with a touch of the crank. He had recently finished a pamphlet to prove that the ancients had some knowledge of fourth-dimensional mathematics, that their statement of such problems as the duplication of the cube implied an apprehension of some medium in which incommensurables became tractable. He was especially strong on Euclid's parallel postulate, which has not only been unproved, but proved unprovable. He was also a deep student of Freemasonry, whose arcana furnished him with further arguments on the same thesis.

This old man, whose name was Simon Iff, challenged Ffoulkes to a game of chess. To the surprise of the lawyer, who was a very strong amateur, he was beaten thrice in very short games. Iff then took off a knight, and won a fourth game as easily as before. "It's no good, sir," said Ffoulkes; "I see you are in the master class." "Not a bit of it," replied the old man, "Lasker can beat me as easily as I beat you. He really knows chess; I only know you. I can gauge your intellect; it is limited in certain directions. I had a lost game against you most of the time; but you did not make the winning continuations, and I knew that you wouldn't and couldn't."

"Let me tell you something, if you'll forgive a senior for prosing. There are two ways to play chess. One is a man against a man; the other is a man against a chess-board. It's the difference between match and medal play at golf. Observe; if