

JANET. For an intruder.

MYERS. Did you find one?

JANET. I did not. Nor any signs of disturbance save in the sitting-room.

MYERS. How much did you know about the prisoner, Leonard Vole?

JANET. I knew that he needed money.

MYERS. Did he ask Miss French for money?

JANET. He was too clever for that.

MYERS. Did he help Miss French with her business affairs – with her income tax returns, for instance?

JANET. Aye – not that there was any need of it.

MYERS. What do you mean by not any need of it?

JANET. Miss French had a good, clear head for business.

MYERS. Were you aware of what arrangements Miss French had made for the disposal of her money in the event of her death?

JANET. She'd make a will as the fancy took her. She was a rich woman and she had a lot of money to leave and no near relatives. "It must go where it can do the most good," she would say. Once it was to orphans she left it, and once to an old people's home, and another time a dispensary for cats and dogs, but it always came to the same in the end. She'd quarrel with the people and then she'd come home and tear up the will and make a new one.

MYERS. Do you know when she made her last will?

JANET. She made it on October the eighth. I heard her speaking to Mr. Stokes, the lawyer. Saying he was to come tomorrow, she was making a new will. He was there at the time – the prisoner, I mean, kind of protesting, saying, "No, no."

*(LEONARD hastily scribbles a note.)*

And the mistress said, "But I want to, my dear boy. I want to. Remember that day I was nearly run over by a bus. It might happen any time."

(LEONARD leans over the dock and hands the note to MAYHEW, who passes it to SIR WILFRID.)

MYERS. Do you know when your mistress made a will previous to that one?

JANET. In the spring it was.

MYERS. Were you aware, Miss MacKenzie, that Leonard Vole was a married man?

JANET. No, indeed. Neither was the mistress.

SIR WILFRID. (*rising*) I object. What Miss French knew or did not know is pure conjecture on Janet MacKenzie's part. (*He sits.*)

MYERS. Let us put it this way: You formed the opinion that Miss French thought Leonard Vole a single man? Have you any facts to support that opinion?

JANET. There was the books she ordered from the library. There was *The Life of Baroness Burdett Coutts* and one about Disraeli and his wife. Both of them about women who'd married men years younger than themselves. I knew what she was thinking.

JUDGE. I'm afraid we cannot admit that.

JANET. Why?

JUDGE. Members of the Jury, it is possible for a woman to read *The Life of Disraeli* without contemplating marriage with a man younger than herself.

MYERS. Did Mr. Vole ever mention a wife?

JANET. Never.

MYERS. Thank you. (*He sits.*)

SIR WILFRID. (*Rises. Gently and kindly.*) I think we all appreciate how very devoted to your mistress you were.

JANET. Aye – I was.

SIR WILFRID. You had great influence over her?

JANET. Aye – maybe.

SIR WILFRID. In the last will Miss French made – that is to say the one made last spring, Miss French left almost the whole of her fortune to you. Were you aware of that fact?

**JANET.** She told me so. "All crooks, these charities," she said. "Expenses here and expenses there and the money not going to the object you give it for. I've left it to you, Janet, and you can do what you think's right and good with it."

**SIR WILFRID.** That was an expression of great trust on her part. In her present will, I understand, she has merely left you an annuity. The principal beneficiary is the prisoner, Leonard Vole.

**JANET.** It will be wicked injustice if he ever touches a penny of that money.

**SIR WILFRID.** Miss French, you say, had not many friends and acquaintances. Now why was that?

**JANET.** She didn't go out much.

**SIR WILFRID.** When Miss French struck up this friendship with Leonard Vole it made you very sore and angry, didn't it?

**JANET.** I didn't like seeing my dear lady imposed upon.

**SIR WILFRID.** But you have admitted that Mr. Vole did not impose upon her. Perhaps you mean that you didn't like to see someone else supplanting you as an influence on Miss French?

**JANET.** She leaned on him a good deal. Far more than was safe, I thought.

**SIR WILFRID.** Far more than you personally liked?

**JANET.** Of course. I've said so. But it was of her good I was thinking.

**SIR WILFRID.** So the prisoner had a great influence over Miss French, and she had a great affection for him?

**JANET.** That was what it had come to.

**SIR WILFRID.** So that if the prisoner had ever asked her for money, she would almost certainly have given him some, would she not?

**JANET.** I have not said that.

**SIR WILFRID.** But he never received any money from her?

**JANET.** That may not have been for want of trying.

**SIR WILFRID.** Returning to the night of October the fourteenth, you say you heard the prisoner and Miss French talking together. What did you hear them say?

**JANET.** I didn't hear what they actually said.

**SIR WILFRID.** You mean you only heard the voices – the murmur of voices?

**JANET.** They were laughing.

**SIR WILFRID.** You heard a man's voice and a woman's and they were laughing. Is that right?

**JANET.** Aye.

**SIR WILFRID.** I suggest that is exactly what you did hear. A man's voice and a woman's voice laughing. You didn't hear what was said. What makes you say that the man's voice was Leonard Vole's?

**JANET.** I know his voice well enough.

**SIR WILFRID.** The door was closed, was it not?

**JANET.** Aye. It was closed.

**SIR WILFRID.** You heard a murmur of voices through a closed door and you swear that one of the voices was that of Leonard Vole. I suggest that that is mere prejudice on your part.

**JANET.** It was Leonard Vole.

**SIR WILFRID.** As I understand it you passed the door twice, once going to your room, and once going out?

**JANET.** That is so.

**SIR WILFRID.** You were no doubt in a hurry to get your pattern and return to your friend?

**JANET.** I was in no particular hurry. I had the whole evening.

**SIR WILFRID.** What I am suggesting is that on both occasions you walked quickly past that door.

**JANET.** I was there long enough to hear what I heard.

**SIR WILFRID.** Come, Miss MacKenzie, I'm sure you don't wish to suggest to the Jury that you were eavesdropping.

**JANET.** I was doing no such thing. I've better things to do with my time.