I say to myself: 'He comes! The Purchaser comes—and with him come Fortune and Fame!' And though I'm bound to admit I haven't seen the least sign of him yet, that only assures me that I have so much the less time to wait for his coming.

"Yes, I believe in the spirits thoroughly, Mauve. Every action of my life, for years past, has been guided by them. And I believe that it is because I have not their guidance in this great matter of my love that I am going all wrong."

"What's the reason they won't guide you now? Have you had a row with 'em?"

"I do wish that you wouldn't speak in that irreverent way. No, the trouble is that the medium whom I have been in the habit of consulting for years has—has gone away. In point of fact"—Roberson blushed a little, "he has been arrested for swindling. It is a great outrage, of course, and I am desperately sorry for him. But I am more sorry for myself. You see, getting a new medium is a very difficult matter. It is not only that

he must be a good medium intrinsically, but he must possess a nature that easily becomes *en rapport* with mine. When I began this conversation, it was in the faint hope that you also might be a believer and might be able to help me in my quest; but I see now that this hope has no foundation. I must search on, alone—and until I find what I require I shall toss aimlessly upon the ocean of life like a rudderless ship in a storm. Don't think me ungrateful, old man, because I am so melancholy. Your sympathy has cheered me up ever so much. Indeed, I haven't been so light-hearted since I don't know when"—and with tears in his eyes and sorrow stamped upon every line of his face Roberson gently minced his way out of the room.

"I say, Roberson!" Rowney called after him. "I've a notion that I know a medium who is just the very card you want. I'll look him up, and if he's what I think he is, I'll pass him along to you."

"Oh, thank you, thank you very much,

Mauve," said Roberson, putting his head in at the door again. "It's ever so good of you to think of taking this trouble on my account. But if you will find me a new medium, a good one, you know, that I can trust implicitly, you really will make a new man of me." And uttering these hopeful words Roberson closed the door.

For an hour or more Rowney Mauve continued to sit and smoke in the big chair. During this period he grinned frequently, and once he laughed aloud. When at last he stood up and knocked the ashes from his third pipe, it was with the satisfied air of a man who has formulated an Idea.

AT the outset of this narrative the fact has been mentioned that Violet Carmine was a pickle. The additional fact may be appropriately mentioned here that a residence of five months in the stimulating atmosphere of New York had not by any means tended to make her less picklesome. Except in the case of Mr. Mangan Brown, who stood by

her loyally, she was the despair of the Eleventh Street household; and she was not favorably commented upon abroad. After that dinner at the Gamboges—when Violet flirted so outrageously with young Orpiment that even Verona's placid spirit was ruffled—Mrs. Gamboge said to Mr. Gamboge, in the privacy of their own chamber, that she was very sure that this wild Mexican-Irish girl would bring all their gray hairs down in sorrow to the grave. Mr. Gamboge, who had a rather soft spot in his heart for Violet, and to whom the mystery of Miss Caledonia's back hair was a mystery no longer, glanced shrewdly at the toilet-table, grinned in a manner that was highly exasperating, and made no reply. Mr. Gamboge regretted his adoption of this line of rejoinder; but Mrs. Gamboge—having suffered peace to be restored when she found herself in possession of the Indian shawl for which her heart had panted all winter long—inclined to the opinion that brutality was not without its compensating advantages, after all.

And being a pickle, Violet threw herself, heart and soul, into the part assigned to her by Rowney Mauve in the realization of his Idea.

"It's delightful, Rowney!"—"Mamma always used to call her gentlemen friends at Fort Leavenworth by their first names, cousin Mangan. I am sure that you might let me do what mamma did," Miss Carmine had observed with dignity, when Mr. Mangan had suggested to her one day that this somewhat unceremonious mode of address might be modified advantageously.

"It's delightful, Rowney! Really, I didn't think that you had the wit to think of doing anything so funny. Of course, I'll keep as dark about it as possible. If that sweet little Rose were to get wind of it, I believe she'd faint; and funny little old cousin Caledonia would have a fit; and Van would be seriously horrified and disagreeable. And even cousin Mangan, who is the dearest dear that ever was, wouldn't like it; and he'd end by coaxing me out of it, I'm sure.

And I don't want to be coaxed out of it, Rowney, for it will be the best bit of fun that I ever had anything to do with. But I'll have to have somebody along, you know. And I'll tell you who it will be: that nice Rose d'Antimoine! She's just as bad as they all say I am. I don't think that I'm very bad, Rowney; do you? Only she's sly, and knows how to pretend that she isn't. May I tell her about it, and ask her to take a hand? You'd better say yes, for unless she comes in I'll stay out, you know."

Rowney, who was acquainted only with society young American women, and to whom the natural young American woman's instinct of self-preservation, that is most shrewdly manifested in her determination always to have one of her sex with her in her escapades, was unknown, was rather staggered by this proposition, and was disposed to raise objections to it. But Miss Carmine gave him to understand in short order that his objections could not be enter-

tained for a moment. He would do what she wanted, she told him decidedly, or he would not do anything at all. And Rowney, not altogether unwillingly, for he did not want to get Violet into a scrape, gave in. Therefore the aid of Madame d'Antimoine was sought, and was given with effusion; for marriage had not tended to make her take a view of life much more serious than that which she had entertained when her scandalous flirtation with the "Marquis" had driven poor Jaune almost to extremities. So these three lively young people laid their reprehensible heads together, and if Roberson's ears did not burn, it was no fault of theirs.

It was the morning after this conference that Rowney Mauve dropped in upon Roberson in his studio.

"Oh! I'm ever so glad to see you, Mauve," said Roberson. "I was just wishing for somebody to come in to tell me about this thing. I'm not satisfied with it exactly, and yet I don't know what there is wrong about it

either. I must explain though what I'm driving at. I call it 'The Real and the Ideal,' though I've been thinking that possibly 'High Life and Low Life' will be better. On this side, you see, I have a pile of turnips and a cabbage and a mackerel, and on this side a vase of roses and a glass globe with goldfish in it. The idea's capital—contrast and that sort of thing, you know. But somehow the picture don't seem to come together. I've changed the composition two or three times, but I don't seem to get what I want. I do wish that you'd give me your advice about it, what you honestly think, you know."

"To tell the truth, Roberson, the way you've got it now—the things all jumbled together in a heap like that—it looks a good deal like nine-pins after the first ball has cracked into 'em."

"No? does it though? Why, I do believe you're right, Mauve. I've been thinking myself that perhaps the composition was too scattery. And yet I think there's a good

effect in the way that they rise gradually from this one turnip here on the left to the roses on the right. I can't paint out those roses again, they're too good—don't you think that they're better than Lambdin's? I do. But I might move the globe of goldfish over to the left, and then have the mackerel and the vegetables along in a row between it and the roses. How do you think that would do? I've got to do something in a hurry, for the mackerel is beginning to smell horribly. I hope you don't find it very bad. I put carbolic acid over it this morning. Oh dear! Mauve. I don't seem to be able to do anything in these days; now—now," and Roberson's voice became lower and had a tone of awe in it, "that I no longer have a Guide, you know."

"That's just what I came to speak to you about, Roberson."

"Goodness gracious! Mauve, you don't mean to say that you have—that you have found a Medium?" exclaimed Roberson in great excitement, springing up from his chair

and dropping his palette and mahlstick with a clatter.

"That is just what I do mean to say, old man; but I wish that you wouldn't jump around so. It disturbs the atmosphere and stirs up the smell of the fish horribly!"

"Oh! I beg your pardon. Just wait a minute and I'll put some more carbolic acid on it. Now tell me about him. Is he really a good medium? Have you tested him? Is he knocks, or voices, or a slate? Is he—"

"He isn't 'he' at all; he's a she."

"A 'she'?"

"Yes, a woman medium, you know."

"Oh," said Roberson, doubtfully, and with less brightness in his face, "I've never tried a woman medium. Do you think they're apt to be as good as men?"

"Not as a rule," Rowney answered, in the grave, careful tone of one who had given the subject a very thorough investigation and whose decision was final. "No, not as a rule; but as an exception, yes. Dugald Stuart, in his admirable chapter on clairvoy-

ance—spiritualism hadn't come up in his day, you know—says that 'the delicate, super-sensitive nerve-fibre of women renders them far more keenly acute to psychic influences than are men. It is for this reason that women, and women only, have given us trustworthy evidences of clairvoyant phenomena.' The eminent Professor Crookes, during his recent exhaustive and most fruitful experiments upon the element to which he has given the name of psychic force, has arrived at a conclusion which substantially is identical with that arrived at by the great Scotch philosopher. He says, clearly and positively, 'while the majority of my experiments with women have been failures, it is a notable fact that of all my experiments the only ones which have been completely and entirely satisfactory have been those in which the operating force was a woman; and from this fact I conclude that only in the exquisitely sensitive nervous structure of women can proper media for the most interesting, the most astonishing class of psychic phe-

nomena be found.' Now what can you say in opposition to this positively expressed opinion of the great English scientist? Surely, Roberson, you will not have the temerity, not to say the downright impudence, to set up your opinion, based only on your own meagre experience, against that of this profound investigator; against the dictum of the man who has invented the Radiometer?"

Roberson was greatly astonished, as well as greatly impressed, by this eloquent and learned outburst—and he was a good deal puzzled, later, when his most diligent search through the works of the authors named failed to discover the passages, or anything at all like them, that Rowney had quoted.

"What a wonderful fellow you are, Mauve!" he said, admiringly. "I had no idea that you had gone into the matter in this serious way."

"Well, when I set out to know anything, I do like to know it pretty thoroughly," Rowney answered airily. "But I hope that what I've said has weakened your prejudice

against women-mediums. A man of your strong intellect, Roberson, has no right to entertain a prejudice like that. Of course, though, if you don't believe in women-mediums, we will say no more about this one that I have found for you."

"Oh, please don't speak that way, Mauve. I see that I have been very foolish, and I want to meet this one very much, indeed. Who is she?"

"She's a Theosoph."

"A what?"

"A Theosoph—a member of that wonderful and mysterious Oriental Cult that Madame Blavatsky so ably has expounded. But, of course, you know all about Theosophism?"

"I know about it in a general way, you know. It's something like—like animal magnetism, isn't it?"

"Yes, it's something of that general nature." Rowney found that he was getting into rather deep water himself, and he floundered a little in getting out of it.

"Yes, it's like animal magnetism in a general sort of way. And having this magnetic basis, you see, of course, it affords a wonderfully perfect channel for communication with the spirit world."

"Of course," Roberson assented.

"And this particular medium," Rowney continued, speaking with confidence again, now that the awkward turn in the conversation was safely past, "is without exception the most extraordinary medium that even Theosophism has produced. She does everything that ordinary mediums do, and some most astonishing things that they don't. Of course you've seen materializations, Roberson?"

"Oh, yes, repeatedly."

"But of people who were dead?"

"Of course."

"Well, this Theosoph will show you, will actually show you materializations of the living."

"You don't say!" said Roberson, greatly interested.

"It's a fact, I assure you. This has never been done before, and even she has been able to do it only recently—after twelve years of study among the oldest Pajamas of the Cult in India. It's wonderful! And what is more, she can materialize inanimate objects—can make things in distant places appear visibly before your eyes. Of course she can do the trance business, and knocks, and slate writing, and all that sort of thing, you might say, with one hand."

"Wonderful! wonderful!" exclaimed Roberson.

"Right you are, my boy. She is the most wonderful medium that the world, at least the Western World, has ever known. She is—she is what a Colorado newspaper person would call a regular daisy, and no mistake!"

"And when can I see her, and where? Oh, Mauve, my heart is beginning to brighten again. I'm sure that she will set me in the right way again about my pictures, and—and about Violet, you know."

It was with some difficulty that Rowney restrained his strong desire to box Roberson's ears for this free use of Miss Carmine's name. But he did restrain himself, and answered: "You shall see her this very night, and in my studio. She is here in New York only for a day or two—she starts for India again at the end of the week—and has no regular place for her séances, so I have arranged with her to come to my studio this evening at eight o'clock. Will that suit you?"

"Yes, yes; and thank you a thousand times, Mauve. I shall be grateful to you all my life for what you have done."

"Will you, though? Don't be too sure about that," said Rowney with a queer smile. "Good-by till eight o'clock. Phew! how that fish does smell!"

EGYPTIAN darkness reigned in Rowney Mauve's studio when Roberson entered it at eight o'clock that evening. Roberson did not more than half like this gloom and mys-

tery. Rowney, leading him to a seat, felt that he was trembling. "Has the Indian lady come yet?" he asked in a shaky voice.

"The Theosoph? Yes, here she is. Permit me to present to you, madame, an earnest seeker after truth."

"It is well," was answered in a deep voice that quavered as though with suppressed emotion. "What seeks this earnest seeker?"

"Now, crack away and ask about the picture. You'd better begin with that, and take the other matter afterward," Rowney whispered.

"Mustn't I call up an advising spirit first? That's the usual way of beginning a séance, you know."

"Oh, of course, that's what I meant you to do," Rowney answered, in some slight confusion.

"Is the spirit of Jan Weenix present?" asked Roberson.

There was a regular volley of raps, and then the deep voice answered "He is!"

("*It* is; there is no sex in spirits," murmured Rowney, sotto voce.)

"I am ever so glad to meet you again," Roberson said, quite in the tone of one who greets an old friend after a long separation. "I'm dreadfully muddled about this new picture of mine, 'High Life and Low Life,' you know. Won't you please tell me what I must do to get it right?"

"Behold it as the great Weenix himself has painted it!" and the deep voice was deeper, and also shakier than ever.

"Now you will see one of the wonderful materializations that I told you about," Rowney whispered. "Only the most highly-gifted even of the Theosophs can do this sort of thing. Look!"

In one corner of the room there appeared a soft, hazy glow, covering a space of about three feet square. The haze passed slowly away, and as the brightness increased, a picture became visible. It was Roberson's picture, sure enough, but the composition had been modified materially. The rosebush was in

the centre; on one side of it was the glass globe, filled with the vegetables; on the other side was the mackerel, standing straight up on its tail, while the four goldfish, standing on their tails and touching fins, were circling around it in a waltz.

"Oh!" was all that Roberson could say on beholding this astonishing rearrangement of his work.

"Now, isn't that wonderful?" Rowney asked impressively.

"Ye—es, it certainly is," Roberson answered with hesitation. "At least it's very wonderful as a materialization; indeed, I never saw anything like it. But—but really, you know, Mauve, this arrangement of the picture is a most extraordinary one. Is it possible, do you think, that a malignant spirit has obtained control of the medium? You know that does happen sometimes."

"Like getting the wrong fellow at the telephone," suggested Rowney.

"Precisely," Roberson answered.

"And what do you do then? With the

telephone you ring for the exchange again and swear at them. But that wouldn't do with the spirits, I suppose."

"Of course not," said Roberson, a good deal horrified. "No, the proper thing to do when this happens is to drop all attempts to communicate with the spirit that has been called, and the effort of which to come has been frustrated, and to continue the séance with others less susceptible to malignant influences."

"With the Theosophs the custom differs a little. Being more potent than ordinary mediums, they usually insist upon the attendance of the spirit called. Still, it might be well in this case to adopt the plan that you mention. Suppose you go right ahead and demand a materialization of Miss Carmine, and then have things out with her."

"You don't mean to say that the medium can do that?"

"Indeed I do. Didn't I tell you that these Theosophs could materialize living people? You don't seem to understand,

Roberson, what a tremendous power is here at our command. But I'll manage it for you." And Rowney continued in a deep, solemn tone: "Madam, I conjure you to compel the visible presence of the spirit of Violet Carmine."

As Rowney ceased speaking, the materialized picture vanished, the hazy light disappeared, and profound darkness came again. Then the phenomenon of the gradual appearance of the light was repeated; but this time they beheld behind the misty veil not Roberson's reconstructed picture, but the wraith of Violet herself. Oddly enough, the beautiful apparition seemed to be doing its best not to laugh.

Roberson was so overpowered by this astounding sight that he was speechless. It was monstrous, this awful power that could subject a living being to its sway, so far beyond anything that he ever had encountered in the course of his spiritual investigations, that a great fear seized him. Cold perspiration started upon his forehead, and his knees shook.

"Well, you goose, now that I'm here haven't you anything to say for yourself? Can't you even ask me about what people eat in Mexico?" Voice, tone, and manner were Violet's to the life. It was too much for Roberson. His demoralization was complete.

"Mauve! Mauve! for heaven's sake help me to get away! This is no ordinary medium. It is the very Power of Evil that we have invoked!"

"That's a pretty compliment to pay a lady, now isn't it?" and the apparition spoke with a certain amount of sharpness. "As I didn't come here to be called bad names, I shall leave—and the next time that you have a chance to speak to me you'll be apt to know it, my lad!" with these decisive words Miss Carmine's wraith faded away, and the misty light slowly vanished into darkness.

"Oh take me away! take me away!" moaned Roberson feebly. In his terror he had sunk down in a little heap of misery upon the floor.

"All right, old man. Just wait half a minute, though, until I speak a word to the Theosoph."

Roberson heard Rowney cross the room; perceived a momentary gleam of light—such as might come when a curtain that conceals a lamp is quickly raised and quickly dropped again—and then came the sound of whispering. Roberson's fear was leaving him a little now; but in the darkness, without Rowney to guide him, he did not dare to stir. Suddenly the whispering, becoming less guarded, was audible.

"You shan't! Go away!"

"I shall! I can't help it! You've no idea what a lovely ghost you made!"

Then there was a sound of a scuffle, that ended in a crash—and there, seen in a blaze of light over the fallen screen, was Rowney Mauve in the very act of kissing Violet Carmine. The whole apparatus of the trick was disclosed. In the part of the screen that remained standing was the square hole where the picture had been visible; and the gradual

coming and going of the light, and its mistiness, were accounted for by the dozen or so of gauze curtains arranged to draw back one by one. And there was the picture itself—even more shocking when seen clearly than when hidden by the misty veil. On the outer side of the screen, where she could manage the curtains, stood Rose d'Antimoine.

As he sat there on the floor and perceived by these several disclosures how careful the preparations had been for making a fool of him, and as he painfully realized how admirably well he had been fooled, fear ceased to hold possession of Roberson, and in its place came spiteful rage.

"It's a nasty, mean trick that you have played on me; and I'll get even with you for it, see if I don't! You ought to be ashamed of yourselves, every one of you; and I'll make you ashamed, too, before I get through with you."

"Oh, come now, old fellow, it was only a joke you know. Don't be unreasonable about it and raise a row."

"You may think it a joke, Mauve, to have these ladies here at your studio at night, and to go on in that scandalous way with Miss Carmine, but I don't think that either Mr. d'Antimoine or Mr. Brown will see anything much of a joke in it! Oh, you'll all repent this! I'll teach you to play tricks! I'll fix you, you mean things!" Roberson's voice, never a deep one, rose to a shrill treble as he delivered these threats, and in a perfect little whirl of fury he rushed out of the room.

The fact must be admitted that the three conspirators, being thus delivered over into the hands of their intended victim, were pretty badly crest-fallen. They knew that Roberson certainly had it in his power to make things exceedingly unpleasant for them; and they knew, too, that he certainly intended to use his power to the very uttermost. Decidedly, the outlook was not a cheerful one. As they left the studio, and the wreck of their spirit-raising apparatus, they all three were in a chastened and melancholy frame of mind.

"THERE'S been a dreadful rumpus, Rowney," Violet said, when, as they had agreed, they met in the friendly shelter of Madame d'Antimoine's drawing-room the next afternoon. "That mean little Roberson has told everybody everything, and—and hot water's no name for it! Mr. and Mrs. d'Antimoine have had a regular squabble, though they've made things up now; and Rose has been crying till her lovely blue eyes are all swollen and ugly; and Van is in a perfect Apache rage; and Verona is dignifiedly disagreeable; and little Mrs. Gamboge got so excited and indignant that her back-hair all went crooked and nearly came off, and she had to go upstairs and fix it; and dear little Mr. Gamboge looks solemnly at me, and I heard him say as I came by the parlor-door: 'I am sure that Mr. Orpiment would not have hesitated to characterize such conduct as highly reprehensible.' And the wo-worst of all, Rowney," and Violet's voice broke and her eyes had tears in them, "is that cousin Mangan won't get comfortably angry and have it out with

me, but is just miserable and mopes. All that he said to me was: 'Mr. Roberson has told me something that I have been very sorry to hear, my child,' and his voice didn't sound right, and I know that he wanted to cry. O Rowney, I'm the most wretched girl in the world!"

Rowney was feeling pretty low in his mind already, and this frank avowal of her misery by Violet made him feel a great deal lower; and he was cut the more keenly because neither by her words nor her manner did she imply that he was the cause of it—as he most certainly was.

"I am very, very sorry," he said.

"Yes, I'm sure you are, Rowney; and its ever so good of you, you dear boy. You see—you see," and Violet blushed delightfully, "what upsets them all so is your—your kissing me that way. Of course I know that you didn't mean anything by it, and I'm sure I don't see why they make such a fuss about it. Mamma has told me that several of her gentlemen friends at Fort Leavenworth used to kiss her whenever they got a chance, and that she always used to box their ears whenever they did it. Now, I wonder," Violet continued, struck by a happy thought, "I wonder if it's because I didn't box your ears that they all object to it so? Because if it is, you know, I might do it yet. Shall I?" and she looked at him half inquiringly, half with a most bewitching sauciness. The comfort of telling her troubles to so sympathetic a listener was having a very reviving effect upon her. She certainly did not look at all like the most wretched girl in the world now.

Rowney moved a little closer to her, they were sitting on the sofa, and took her hand in his. Then, rather shakily, he spoke: "Violet!"

She started. He never had called her Violet before. But she did not take away her hand.

"Violet!" Rowney's voice had not its usual mocking tone, but was quite grave and had a strange ring of tenderness in it. "My

little girl, there's just one way for me to get you out of the scrape that I've got you into, and that's to marry you. May I?"

"O Rowney! Do you mean to run away with me?"

"Well, I hadn't exactly contemplated running away with you, I confess," said Rowney, grinning a little in spite of himself.

"Hadn't you, though?" Violet answered, with a touch of disappointment. "Why, grandpapa ran away with grandmamma, and they had a lovely time. Colonel Smalt, that was grandmamma's father, you know, started right out after them with dogs and a shot-gun, and chased them for two whole days. And at last they came to a river that they had to swim their horses across, and the Colonel, who was close behind them, swam after them. And his horse was dead beat, and couldn't swim; and the Colonel would have been drowned if grandpapa had not come back and rescued him. And the Colonel insisted upon fighting grandpapa

right there in the water, and he did cut him pretty badly; and it was not until grandpapa held him under water until he was nearly drowned that the Colonel gave in. And then grandpapa carried him safely ashore; and after that, of course, they were the best of friends. Wasn't it all delightful? I've heard mamma say again and again, how much she was disappointed, because papa did not run away with her. So, don't you think, don't you really think, Rowney, that you'd better run away with me, dear?"

"And have Mr. Mangan Brown, and Van, and Mr. Gamboge galloping after us, and swimming the Hudson, and peppering us with shot-guns?"

"Yes! yes! Oh, *do* do it, Rowney. It would be such splendid fun, and would be so very romantic!"

"All right. If you really want to run away, I'd just as lief have things arranged that way as any other, and it certainly will save a lot of trouble. But don't count too

much on the shot-guns, for I don't think it probable that Mr. Mangan Brown and Mr. Gamboge will come out strong in that direction; it isn't exactly their line. And now, let me have a kiss; just one, to make it a bargain, you know."

And Madame d'Antimoine coming in at this moment assumed an air of stately benevolence, and said: "Ah, my children, is it thus? Let me then give to you the blessing, as is done by the good mamma in the play!"

MR. MANGAN BROWN did not adopt the shot-gun policy. Indeed, this policy was rendered quite impracticable by the fact that Rowney and Violet, immediately upon accomplishing their marriage, did their running away on board of Rowney's yacht—a mode of departure that Violet approved of rapturously, because, as she said with much truth, "it was so like eloping with a real pirate." But Mr. Mangan felt pretty dismal over it, and wrote a very apologetic

account of his stewardship to Señor Carmine. He tried to make the best of things, of course, pointing out that in the matters of family and fortune Rowney really was quite a desirable son-in-law; but even after he had made the best of it, he could not help admitting to himself that the situation was one that a prudent parent scarcely could be expected very heartily to enjoy. And he was most agreeably surprised, therefore, a month or so later, when Señor Carmine's letter escaped from the Mexican Post-Office, and came to him laden with olive-branches, instead of with the thunderbolts which he had feared.

Violet's father was not angry; on the contrary, he seemed to be highly pleased with the "excellent match" that his daughter had made, and expressed his unqualified approval of the "spirited way" in which she had made it. "She has done honor to herself, to her mother, and to the education that she has received," Señor Carmine declared, "and we are very grateful to you for

giving her the opportunity that she has so well improved." The letter concluded with a most urgent invitation for Mr. Mangan to come down for six months or a year, and to bring with him Mr. and Mrs. Gamboge, Van and Rose, Verona and young Orpiment, and Monsieur and Madame d'Antimoine, with all of whom, this hospitable Mexican gentleman wrote, he had made a very pleasant acquaintance in his daughter's letters. And enclosed in this communication was a note, signed, Brígida O'Jara de Carmine, of which the theme was a breezy laudation of the love that defies conventionalities, and laughs at locksmiths, and is the true parent of romance!

"Well, since they take it this way," said Mr. Mangan Brown with a great sigh of relief as he laid down the letters, "I must say that I'm glad she's gone. At my time of life close association with such a—such a very volcanic young woman as Violet is, is rather overwhelming. It's like being the Czar of Russia and having the leading Nihilist right

in the house with you. And it is a great comfort, just when I thought that everything was ending shockingly, to find that everything has ended pleasantly. For—except that Violet has left that confounded parrot behind her—everything *has* ended pleasantly, after all."

And only Roberson, among those who had enjoyed the rather mixed pleasure of Miss Carmine's acquaintance during her sojourn in New York, dissented from the optimistic view of the situation thus formulated by Mr. Mangan Brown. In this matter Roberson was not optimistic: he was a pessimist of the deepest dye. When he came to know what a boomerang his revenge had turned out to be he forswore both love and spiritualism and settled down to art with the stony calmness of despair. And it is a notable fact—though a fact not unparalleled—that the longer he painted the more abominably bad his still-lifes were!