

Ld. Mount.: So we are. At least I am.

Ld. Toll.: So am I.

Ld. Mount.: No, no!

Ld. Toll.: Oh, I am indeed very plain.

Ld. Mount.: Well, well! perhaps you are.

Phyllis: There's really nothing to choose between you. If one of you would forego his title and distribute his estates among his Irish tenantry, why, then I should see a reason for accepting the other. (*Phyllis retires up.*)

Ld. Mount.: Tolloller, are you prepared to make this sacrifice?

Ld. Toll.: No!

Ld. Mount.: Not even to oblige a lady?

Ld. Toll.: No! not even to oblige a lady.

Ld. Mount.: Then the only question is, which of us shall give way to the other? Perhaps, on the whole, she would be happier with me. I don't know; I may be wrong.

Ld. Toll.: No, I don't know that you are. I really believe she would. But the awkward part of the thing is, that if you rob me of the girl of my heart, we must fight, and one of us must die. It's a family tradition that I have sworn to respect. It's a painful position, for I have a very strong regard for you, George.

Ld. Mount.: (*much affected*) My dear Thomas!

Ld. Toll.: You are very dear to me, George. We were boys together—at least *I* was. If I were to survive you, my existence would be hopelessly embittered.

Ld. Mount.: Then, my dear Thomas, you must not do it. I say it again and again: if it will have this effect on you, you must not do it. No, no! If one of us is to destroy the other, let it be me!

Ld. Toll.: No, no!

Ld. Mount.: Ah, yes! By our boyish friendship I implore you.

Ld. Toll.: (*much moved*) Well! well! be it so. But no, no! I cannot consent to an act which would crush you with unavailing remorse.

Ld. Mount.: But it would not do so. I should be very sad at first—oh! who would not be?—but it would wear off. I like you *very much* but not, perhaps, as much as you like me.

Ld. Toll.: George, you're a noble fellow, but that tell-tale tear betrays you. No, George, you are very fond of me, and I cannot consent to give you a week's uneasiness on my account.

Ld. Mount.: But, dear Thomas, it would not last a week. Remember, you lead the House of Lords; on your demise I shall take your place. Oh, Thomas, it would not last a day!

Phyllis: (*coming down*) Now, I do hope you're not going to fight about me, because it really isn't worth while.

Ld. Toll.: (*looking at her*) Well, I don't believe it is.

Ld. Mount.: Nor I. The sacred ties of friendship are paramount.