

**Charles Haddon  
Spurgeon Chambers**

*Passers-by*

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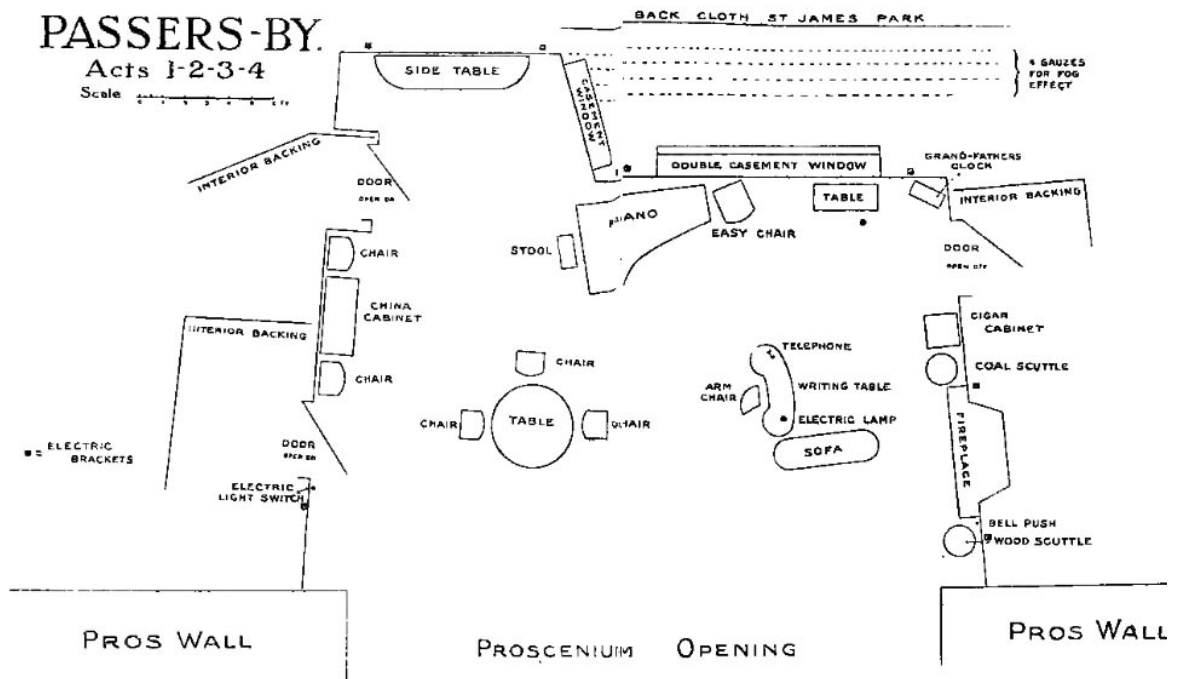
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Cover](#)

[Titlepage](#)

[Text](#)



Room in Mr. Waverton's apartments in Piccadilly. The decoration is in Adam style, with dark mahogany panelling reaching to a height of seven feet, above which is a tapestry wall paper relieved with pilasters, which support a moulded cornice. The ceiling also in Adam style is enriched in bold relief. The doors have enriched panels and overdoors. The fire-place is in two marbles, green and white. Double set of windows overlooking the Green Park. There are eight brackets electric light on pilasters.

**PERSONS CONCERNED**

- MR. PETER WAVERTON (27)
- WILLIAM PINE, his man-servant (40)
- NIGHTY, a cabman (60)
- SAMUEL BURNS, a tramp (36)
- MARGARET SUMMERS (25)
- THE LADY HURLEY, Waverton's half-sister (45)
- Miss BEATRICE DANTON, Lady Hurley's niece (23)
- LITTLE PETER SUMMERS (6)
- MRS. PARKER, Waverton's cook-housekeeper (60)

\*

PERIOD: Our own times

\*

ACT I

SCENE: A handsome sitting-room in a bachelor's apartments on the first floor of a house in Piccadilly, opposite the Green Park. It is obviously the room of a man of comfortable means and good taste. The decoration and furniture are of the Adams period. (For details of scene see accompanying plan.)

TIME: It is about half-past ten at night in the winter, and there is a cheerful fire in the room.

At rise of curtain stage is in darkness, save for the reflection through the windows of the lights in the street below.

PINE, who is smoking a cigar, is up L.C., looking out of window. Suddenly he flings the window open and calls across the road.

PINE. Nighty! (Slight pause. As the call receives no response he whistles in a peculiar way. This apparently attracts attention and he waves his arm, inviting the person signalled to cross the road. After another slight pause, during which he watches NIGHTY cross the road, he bends out of the window and speaks to him.) Come along up! (Slight pause) Oh, yes, it's all right. (He withdraws into the window, which he closes. PINE then goes down R.C., switches on electric light, then crosses up to sideboard and brings down tray, on which are decanters, syphons, and glasses. As he comes down there is a knocking on outer door; he places tray on table down R. and exits R.IE., and the slamming of the outer door is heard. A few moments later PINE re-enters, accompanied by NIGHTY. PINE switches on more light. NIGHTY is a typical London cabman of about sixty, weather-beaten, broad-shouldered and slightly stooping. His face is at once cheerful and shrewd, and

he has  
the quality of being deferential without any sacrifice of his  
natural  
pride. He is very warmly clad. As he enters the room he takes his  
hat  
off.)

PINE. (Behind table R) Pretty cold outside!

NIGHTY. (Down n.) Nippy, I call it, but I've known worse.

PINE. A little something to warm the chest wouldn't hurt anyway.

NIGHTY. Thank you, kindly, Mr. Pine, I could do with it, and  
that's a  
fact. (PINE busies himself with decanter and glass) Me and my old  
horse  
are just going to have our supper.

PINE. I saw you drive up to the shelter. Had a good job?

NIGHTY. (R. of table Rj.) Fair! Stout party with a couple of kids  
to  
Ravenscourt Park 'Ammersmith for short an extra bob for crossing  
the  
radius, and nothing for all the way back. Your 'ealth, Mr. Pine.  
(He  
drinks from the glass PINE has handed to him, then puts glass on  
table)

PINE. Same to you, Nighty! (He drinks)

NIGHTY. Prime stuff! Goes straight to the spot.

PINE. Have a cigar? (Points to box, which is open, on table)

NIGHTY. No, thank you, Mr. Pine, a drop of whisky is only a drop  
of  
whisky, and no one would grudge it to an old cabman on a cold  
night.  
But when it comes to them things. (Picks lip box) Lord! it's like  
eating money. Couple o' bob a touch, I shouldn't wonder! (Puts  
box back  
on table)

PINE. You wouldn't be so squeamish if you'd been brought up in  
service.

(He gives NIGHTY a chair, then crosses down L.)

NIGHTY. (Sits chair L. of table R.) We're all in service, Mr. Pine,  
from the highest to the lowest. The difference between you and me  
is  
that you only take orders from one boss while I take 'em from  
everybody  
that hires my cab.

PINE. (By sofa L.) All the same I often envy you your job.

NIGHTY. Why? You've got a good boss, haven't you? I only knows  
him by  
sight, but he looks all right.

PINE. Oh, he's pretty well. Anyway he doesn't count his cigars  
and  
measure his whisky as some of 'em do. He's open-handed enough but  
you  
never make no headway with him. I've lived with him three years  
now,  
and I don't know him as well as I know you. (Crosses R. a little)  
Is he  
human? That's what I ask.

NIGHTY. We're all human when you pull the mask off.

PINE. (Crosses R. to below table) It'd take 'ydraulic power to  
pull his  
mask off.

NIGHTY. Maybe he's had reason to fix his tight on. You never  
know.  
(PINE helps him to more whisky) Thanks, only a dram. I'll have to  
keep  
m' eyes bright to-night. It's very thick down at Knightsbridge  
and if  
I'm a judge you'll have it black up here presently.

PINE. (Sitting on edge of table R.) I've never known so much fog  
as  
we've had this year.

NIGHTY. (Rising) Well, I must pop off. I'm going to take my old  
'orse  
'ome after supper, before it gets too thick. (Through the window

the fog can be seen gathering in eddies.) See, it's creeping up a bit already. (The noise of a latch-key in a door is heard outside)

PINE. (Startled) Good Lord!

NIGHTY. What's the matter?

PINE. That can't be the guv'nor.

NIGHTY. (Comes down c. a little) Why can't it?

PINE. I've never known him to come in before one.

NIGHTY. (With a significant look at the cigar PINE is smoking) I wouldn't go nap on that if I was you.

(PINE picks up cigar-box, hastily crosses L. and places it in drawer in cabinet L., then he throws the remainder of his cigar into the fireplace. At the same moment enter PETER WAVERTON. He is a good-looking, well-set-up man of 27. The expression on his face is at once grave and indifferent. It is the expression of one who resents rather than enjoys life. He is, however, capable of a rare and very winning smile. He raises his eyebrows in momentary amazement when he sees the two men in his room.)

WAVERTON. (R.) Well, I'm damned! (Leaves door open)

NIGHTY. All I can say, m'lord, is yer don't look it.

WAVERTON. Don't call me m'lord.

NIGHTY. Very well, guv'nor, but some likes it.

WAVERTON. I don't! My name is Waverton. Who are you?

PINE. (By fireplace L.) Beg pardon, sir, it was a liberty, I know, but I asked him in. It's Nighty, the cabman.

NIGHTY. So called, guv'nor, because I've been doing night work for



thirty years. No offence, I 'ope, sir!

WAVERTON. (Ironically) I trust you have been suitably entertained in my regrettable absence, Mr. Nighty?

NIGHTY. The best, guv'nor thank you kindly.

WAVERTON. (Cross behind table, R.) A little more whisky?

NIGHTY. Much obliged, sir, enough's as good as a hogshead, so I'll just 'op along. (Cross R. he salutes WAVERTON and goes to the door, then he turns and says gently) I should be sorry to think, guv'nor, that through 'is kindness to me Mr...

WAVERTON. Good night! Pine, show Mr. Nighty the way. (Exeunt PINE and

NIGHTY R. i E. leave door open. WAVERTON walks to the mantelpiece L., and glances at the remainder of the cigar that PINE has thrown into the fireplace. The noise of the outer door closing is heard. He gives a gesture of disgust. Enter PINE, R. i E V closes door, then crosses up R., gets small tray there crosses down to table R. and takes up the glasses that have been used. WAVERTON, by fireplace) In taking my tobacco and whisky, you exceed your duty, Pine.

PINE. Yes, sir.

WAVERTON. In using my room to entertain your friend you permitted yourself a gross liberty.

PINE. Yes, sir.

WAVERTON. And in throwing away, half-smoked, one of my best cigars, you committed a crime.

PINE. Yes, sir. I hope that you'll allow me to apologise, sir.

WAVERTON. (With angry emphasis) I'll do nothing of the kind. I'd rather receive a blow than an apology from any man at any time. I thought I could trust you. It seems I can't. You must find another place.

PINE. Yes, sir. (He goes to the door R. 2 E., carrying the glasses on a tray he turns before leaving and says) I'm sorry, sir.

WAVERTON. (Shortly) So am I. (Removes coat and muffler and throws them on sofa.) (Exit PINE R. 2 E.) WAVERTON walks to the window impatiently, looks out and shivers at the prospect. The telephone bell rings. He goes to the instrument, which is on a writing-table, and takes up the receiver. Crossly) Hello! Hello! Who is that? (Then he changes to a more amiable tone) Oh, is that you, Beatrice? (Listens for a moment) Cross with you? Good Heavens, no! I came away simply because I was bored. (Listens for a moment) Yes, bored with the others, of course. My dear Bee, how you can stand that set, I don't know. What was the one and only topic of conversation during dinner? "What will the dear Duchess do now?" What the devil do I care what the dear Duchess will do now? The dear Duchess' love affairs leave me entirely cold. The only love affairs that interest me are my own. (Listens for a moment, takes off hat and places it on table, then laughs slightly) Of course, I mean, affair, you child. (Listens for a moment) Oh, no doubt you were bored too, but you didn't show it. (Listens for a moment) No, I shan't go out any more to-night. I am sick to death of bridge, anyway. (He listens for a moment, then laughs with an approach to heartiness) All right! (Listens for a moment) Yes, yes, to-morrow, then. Good

night,  
dear. (Puts down the receiver, is thoughtful for a moment, then  
takes a  
book crosses to sofa and sits another moment's thought, looks  
over to  
door R. 2 E., rises, flings book on sofa, rings the bell and  
stands at  
the fireplace. Enter PINE R. 2 E., crosses down to sofa and  
collects  
coat, wrap and hat) Pine, I came home in a very bad temper, and I  
have  
an uneasy feeling that I may have judged you too hardly.

PINE. (L. c.) I make no complaints, sir.

WAVERTON. (By fireplace) Everything after all is a question of  
point of  
view. You were brought up in service?

PINE. Yes, sir, like my father and mother before me. I rose from  
steward's boy, sir.

WAVERTON. Ah! and the point of view in service is that a man may  
make  
free with his employer's goods without being considered  
dishonest.

PINE. Within reason, sir, particularly in regard to food, drink,  
tobacco, and such like. Practically every valet and butler in  
England  
does it. Most go a great deal further. I could make your hair  
stand on  
end, sir, with the robbery that goes on. (Movement from WAVERTON)  
I'm  
not seeking to justify myself, but I've never belonged to that  
lot.  
I've always respected myself, sir. (Cross R)

WAVERTON. Then from your point of view you've never been  
dishonest?

PINE. Never, sir.

WAVERTON. And have you any point of view to explain your use of  
my  
rooms for purposes of entertainment instead of your own?