

23. The Furnished Room

【二十三】套房出租

Restless, shifting, fugacious as time itself is a certain vast bulk of the population of the red brick district of the lower West Side. Homeless, they have a hundred homes. They flit from furnished room to furnished room, transients forever—transients in abode, transients in heart and mind. They sing "Home, Sweet Home" in ragtime; they carry their lares et penates in a bandbox; their vine is entwined about a picture hat; a rubber plant is their fig tree.

浮躁不安，腳底下踏著流沙，捉摸不定，這些形容詞可以用來比喻時間的本質，紐約西南紅磚建築那地區絕大多數的老百姓也就是這樣。他們沒有固定的一個家，也就是說他們有一百個家。他們從一個出租套房到另一個—像蝸牛一樣背著居處到處走，心思也跟著到處走。他們唱“家，美麗的家”卻把中間那個字跳過不唱；他們的土地公廟是隨身帶著走的；他們種在房間裏裝飾的的蔓籐不像別人家那樣，纏繞在樓梯扶手啦或者什麼其他固定的地方，卻是纏繞著一頂潤沿帽子，反正隨時要走就拿著走；別人家把無花果樹種在院子裏，他們呢，只有那種塑膠製成的假樹的份。

Hence the houses of this district, having had a thousand dwellers, should have a thousand tales to tell, mostly dull ones, no doubt; but it would be strange if there could not be found a ghost or two in the wake of all these vagrant guests.

於是乎這地區的房子，既然有成千的居民，就該有成千的故事可說，無疑的，這些故事絕大多數是平平庸庸的；但是呢，從另一個角度來說，假如跟著這成千的百姓飄泊的腳步後頭，沒有一，兩件稀奇鬼怪的事情可以當成故事來說的話，那也就太說不過去了。

One evening after dark a young man prowled among these crumbling red mansions, ringing their bells. At the twelfth he rested his lean hand—baggage upon the step and wiped the dust from his hatband and forehead. The bell sounded faint and far away in some remote, hollow depths.

一天傍晚，一位年輕男士像隻貓兒一樣在這些破破爛爛的紅磚建築之間巡遊，按門鈴。他第十二次按門鈴的時候，把單薄的手提袋放在階梯上，一邊把帽帶和前額上的灰塵彈掉。微弱的鈴聲在裏面好像是從一個遠遠的空洞傳出來的。

To the door of this, the twelfth house whose bell he had rung, came a housekeeper who made him think of an unwholesome, surfeited worm that had eaten its nut to a hollow shell and now sought to fill the vacancy with edible lodgers.

走到他第十二次按門鈴的這個門這裏的管家婆令他想起一條不健康而吃得太飽傷了肚子的蟲，這條蟲把所蛀的核果吃空了，現在想辦法把可以當成食物來吃的房客招來填滿這些空隙。

He asked if there was a room to let.

他問說有沒有房間出租。

"Come in," said the housekeeper. Her voice came from her throat; her throat seemed lined with fur. "I have the third floor back, vacant since a week back. Should you wish to look at it?"

“進來，”管家說。聲音發自喉嚨；喉嚨鋪著獸毛似的。“三樓後面那間，空了一星期。你想看嗎？”

The young man followed her up the stairs. A faint light from no particular source mitigated the shadows of the halls. They trod noiselessly upon a stair carpet that its own loom would have forsworn. It seemed to have become vegetable; to have degenerated in that rank, sunless air to lush lichen or spreading moss that grew in patches to the staircase and was viscid under the foot like organic matter. At each turn of the stairs were vacant niches in the wall. Perhaps plants had once been set within them. If so they had died in that foul and tainted air. It may be that statues of the saints had stood there, but it was not difficult to conceive that imps and devils had dragged them forth in the darkness and down to the unholy depths of some furnished pit below.

年輕人跟著她上樓。昏暗而沒有特別光源的光把走道的陰影緩和了一些。他們靜悄悄地踩著的階梯毯子連織出這條毯子的織毯機都要否認是它所織出來的。看來都要變成植物了；在那惡臭又沒有陽光的空氣裏腐敗又成長成為茂密的地衣或者覆蓋著梯板生長的蘚苔，這裏一叢，那裏一叢的，滑溜溜的就像有機物質一樣。樓梯每一個轉角都有一個空的壁龕。以前可能擺放花在那裏。假若如此，它們必定都死於污濁骯髒空氣。也有可能聖人的塑像之類的曾經站在那裏，這麼的話，又不難想象小鬼或者惡魔之類的把它們從黑暗中抓走，一直把它們抓到下面一個空洞洞的深窟沒有神福祐的地方。

"This is the room," said the housekeeper, from her furry throat. "It's a nice room. It ain't often vacant. I had some most elegant people in it last summer—no trouble at all, and paid in advance to the minute. The water's at the end of the hall. Sprowls and Mooney kept it three months. They done a vaudeville sketch. Miss B'retta Sprowls—you may have heard of her—Oh, that was just the stage names—right there over the dresser is where the marriage certificate hung, framed. The gas is here, and you see there is plenty of closet room. It's a room everybody likes. It never stays idle long."

“就是這間，”管家婆說，喉嚨好似塞了一塊毛茸茸的獸皮。“房間不錯。不常空著。去年夏天有最上道的人住在這裏——一點問題都沒有，房租預先準時付得便便當當。水在大廳尾端。斯普和穆尼租了三個月。他們是演歌舞劇的。斯普蕊達小姐——你可能聽過她的芳名——哦，那只是藝名——他們把結婚證明書掛在化妝臺上面，裝了框子。瓦斯在這裏，你也可以看到櫥櫃很多。每個人都喜歡的房間。從來不空閑太久。”

"Do you have many theatrical people rooming here?" asked the young man.

“你有許多歌舞界的人住在這裏嗎？”年輕人問。

"They comes and goes. A good proportion of my lodgers is connected with the theatres. Yes, sir, this is the theatrical district. Actor people never stays long anywhere. I get my share. Yes, they comes and they goes."

“他們來來往往的。我的房客有一部分和戲院事業有關。是的，先生，這個區域是歌舞劇院區。歌舞界的人從不久呆。我也得了一部分生意。是的，他們來來往往的。”

He engaged the room, paying for a week in advance. He was tired, he said, and would take possession at once. He counted out the money. The room had been made ready, she said, even to towels and water. As

the housekeeper moved away he put, for the thousandth time, the question that he carried at the end of his tongue.

他訂下房間，預付了一個星期的租金。他說他累了，馬上要這個房間。把錢算好給她。她說房間已經備便，毛巾也有了，水也有了。管家要離開的時候，已經是第一千次了，他把那個放在舌尖的問題問她。

"A young girl—Miss Vashner—Miss Eloise Vashner—do you remember such a one among your lodgers? She would be singing on the stage, most likely. A fair girl, of medium height and slender, with reddish, gold hair and a dark mole near her left eyebrow."

“有個年輕女孩—凡斯娜小姐--凡斯娜伊洛小姐—你記得房客之中有這麼一個嗎？最可能的是，她該在臺上唱歌。一個不錯的女孩，中等高度，苗條身段，紅金色頭髮，左眼眉毛旁邊有顆黑痣。”

"No, I don't remember the name. Them stage people has names they change as often as their rooms. They comes and they goes. No, I don't call that one to mind."

“不，我不記得這名字。他們演藝者換名字就像換房間一樣。來來去去。不，我想不起來這個。”

No. Always no. Five months of ceaseless interrogation and the inevitable negative. So much time spent by day in questioning managers, agents, schools and choruses; by night among the audiences of theatres from all-star casts down to music halls so low that he dreaded to find what he most hoped for. He who had loved her best had tried to find her. He was sure that since her disappearance from home this great, water-girt city held her somewhere, but it was like a monstrous quicksand, shifting its particles constantly, with no foundation, its upper granules of to-day buried to-morrow in ooze and slime.

不。永遠是不。五個月不停地問，答案鐵定是不。白天裏問戲劇團經理，代理人，學校，合唱團；夜間去問劇院觀賞戲劇的人—從那種大牌明星的劇院到那種低級到都要怕在那種地方會找到她的歌廳。最愛她的他現在在找她。自從她銷聲匿跡，他確定這個被水包圍的大城在某個地方抓住了她，像魔鬼似的流沙，一直在流動它的沙粒，無根無底地，今天明明在上層，明天就要被埋葬在黑麻麻的濘泥深處。

The furnished room received its latest guest with a first glow of pseudo-hospitality, a hectic, haggard, perfunctory welcome like the specious smile of a demirep. The sophisticated comfort came in reflected gleams from the decayed furniture, the ragged brocade upholstery of a couch and two chairs, a foot-wide cheap pier glass between the two windows, from one or two gilt picture frames and a brass bedstead in a corner.

這間出租套房發出首次的虛心假意歡迎之光來接受這位剛來的房客，這款歡迎根本是亂作一通，不成樣子，好比一個妓女微笑歡迎嫖客一樣，只是敷衍了事。那宗難以言喻的舒適感來自腐敗家俱反映出來的那種霉亮，一條長沙發和兩張沙發椅上面套著的破爛緞帶椅套，一面一呎寬的長長鏡子按在兩個玻璃窗之間，一，兩幅泥金框的畫，再加上放在一個角落裏頭的黃銅床架。

The guest reclined, inert, upon a chair, while the room, confused in speech as though it were an apartment in Babel, tried to discourse to him of its divers tenantry.

房客躺下懶得動彈，可剎作怪，房間卻似莫名其妙地搶著講話，好比聖經裏面各自說各自的語言亂成一團的那個故事的情景，都聚攏了來要跟他講以前房客的諸般故事。

A polychromatic rug like some brilliant-flowered rectangular, tropical islet lay surrounded by a billowy sea of soiled matting. Upon the gay-papered wall were those pictures that pursue the homeless one from house to house—The Huguenot Lovers, The First Quarrel, The Wedding Breakfast, Psyche at the Fountain. The mantel's chastely severe outline was ingloriously veiled behind some pert drapery drawn rakishly askew like the sashes of the Amazonian ballet. Upon it was some desolate flotsam cast aside by the room's marooned when a lucky sail had borne them to a fresh port—a trifling vase or two, pictures of actresses, a medicine bottle, some stray cards out of a deck.

有張多色的坐毯看似花開鮮明的長方形，南太平洋懶洋洋的一個海島，可惜衝向沙灘的不是鮮藍的海水，而是麻繩編成的腳踏，髒兮兮的。糊在牆壁上的壁紙都是那種把房客從一個套房趕到另一個套房的那種圖畫—兩格諾情人，第一場吵架，結婚早餐，噴泉的女仙。壁爐架貞潔嚴肅的輪廓被一條放蕩的布簾子暗淡地遮蓋住，好比亞馬遜芭蕾舞者漫不經心斜綁著的緞帶一樣。架上是一些飄流的房客遇到一條幸運船把他們帶到一個新港口的時候所遺忘的不怎麼起眼的東西—一兩支瓶子，女明星照片，藥瓶子，幾張散牌。

One by one, as the characters of a cryptograph become explicit, the little signs left by the furnished room's procession of guests developed a significance. The threadbare space in the rug in front of the dresser told that lovely woman had marched in the throng. Tiny finger prints on the wall spoke of little prisoners trying to feel their way to sun and air. A splattered stain, raying like the shadow of a bursting bomb, witnessed where a hurled glass or bottle had splintered with its contents against the wall. Across the pier glass had been scrawled with a diamond in staggering letters the name "Marie." It seemed that the succession of dwellers in the furnished room had turned in fury—perhaps tempted beyond forbearance by its garish coldness—and wreaked upon it their passions. The furniture was chipped and bruised; the couch, distorted by bursting springs, seemed a horrible monster that had been slain during the stress of some grotesque convulsion. Some more potent upheaval had cloven a great slice from the marble mantel. Each plank in the floor owned its particular cant and shriek as from a separate and individual agony. It seemed incredible that all this malice and injury had been wrought upon the room by those who had called it for a time their home; and yet it may have been the cheated home instinct surviving blindly, the resentful rage at false household gods that had kindled their wrath. A hut that is our own we can sweep and adorn and cherish.

密碼開始破解，譯文的字母一個接一個表明出來，以前排著隊一般的房客遺留下來的蹟象發展出一個重要的性質。化妝臺前面那條小地毯因為人的脚步走得太多都磨光了，表示可愛的女人曾經在群眾中大步走過。牆上的小指印告訴我們公寓裏的小囚犯在黑暗中摸索地走向陽光和空氣。有個濺開的污痕，好比爆炸的炸彈火光四射的影子，證明一支杯子或者瓶子連裏面的液體一起被往牆一砸，爆破在那裏。對過鏡子的牆有人用戒子的鑽石在牆上刮出“瑪麗”這個名字。大致上看起來，這間套房一個接一個的房客都憤怒地—或者是被套房表面修飾的冷酷無情被誘惑得不由自主地—對它發作。家俱表面都被割了或者破損了；那條長沙發被裏面要爆發的彈簧歪曲不成形狀，看起來是個在恐怖痙攣的緊張之下被殺死的怪物一樣。大理石的壁爐台被比較強的衝突打掉了一塊。每踩一腳地板，都是吱吱咯咯的，各有其不同的頻率和音調，好比一群和尚念各自的經。想起來也真是不可思議，因為這些人把這個出租套房當成一時的家，卻這麼惡意把傷害加諸其上；

話說回來，也可能是被騙被矇蔽久了的家的直覺，發現家裏拜的土地公根本是假的時候於是大發雷霆，討厭得氣得要死。小木屋假如是屬於我們自己的話，我們可以清掃，裝飾，與珍惜。

The young tenant in the chair allowed these thoughts to file, soft-shod, through his mind, while there drifted into the room furnished sounds and furnished scents. He heard in one room a tittering and incontinent, slack laughter; in others the monologue of a scold, the rattling of dice, a lullaby, and one crying dully; above him a banjo tinkled with spirit. Doors banged somewhere; the elevated trains roared intermittently; a cat yowled miserably upon a back fence. And he breathed the breath of the house—a dank savour rather than a smell—a cold, musty effluvium as from underground vaults mingled with the reeking exhalations of linoleum and mildewed and rotten woodwork.

這個年輕房客就這麼讓這些想頭在腦海裏穿了軟鞋一般一幕接著一幕地遐思，在這同時出租套房的聲音和出租套房的氣味也跟著飄蕩進來。從一個房間傳來蹣跚板一般一會兒擡高一會兒落低上氣不接下氣的放縱淫欲的笑聲；從其它的房間傳來一個人破口大罵，擲穀子的聲音，哄小孩睡覺的歌唱，又有一個人鈍鈍地哭；樓上一支五弦琴鏗然有聲。大力開門關門的聲音；每過一段時候，高架鐵路的火車咆哮而過；黑籬笆上頭一隻貓悲鳴。然後他呼吸這房子的氣息—潮濕的味道而非氣味—冷而發霉的臭氣好比來自地坑與發自油氈毯和發了霉腐爛的木板真的是臭氣相投。

Then, suddenly, as he rested there, the room was filled with the strong, sweet odour of mignonette. It came as upon a single buffet of wind with such sureness and fragrance and emphasis that it almost seemed a living visitant. And the man cried aloud: "What, dear?" as if he had been called, and sprang up and faced about. The rich odour clung to him and wrapped him around. He reached out his arms for it, all his senses for the time confused and commingled. How could one be peremptorily called by an odour? Surely it must have been a sound. But, was it not the sound that had touched, that had caressed him?

然後，突然間，當他在那裏休息的時候，房間裏頭充滿了白蘭花濃烈的香氣。由單單的一陣風吹來，這麼確定，這麼香，這麼濃，簡直是活生生的拜訪。年輕人不自覺地驚叫：“什麼事，親愛的？”就如同有人叫他，於是他一骨碌站起來，轉向後頭。這濃烈的香氣擁抱著他，包圍著他。他向它伸出雙手，這時候他完全進入迷糊狀態，混淆不清。一個人怎麼會被一陣氣味強行叫喚呢？喔，那當然是個聲音。但是呢，難道不是那聲音碰了他，撫摸了他嗎？

"She has been in this room," he cried, and he sprang to wrest from it a token, for he knew he would recognize the smallest thing that had belonged to her or that she had touched. This enveloping scent of mignonette, the odour that she had loved and made her own—whence came it?

“她曾經在這房間，”他大叫，馬上跳起來開始找她留下來的什麼，他明白他能看出來她所擁有即使是最小的，或者她曾經觸碰過的東西。這股包圍著空氣的白蘭花濃香是她所愛而號稱為自己的—是從哪裏來的？

The room had been but carelessly set in order. Scattered upon the flimsy dresser scarf were half a dozen hairpins—those discreet, indistinguishable friends of womankind, feminine of gender, infinite of mood and uncommunicative of tense. These he ignored, conscious of their triumphant lack of identity. Ransacking the drawers of the dresser he came upon a discarded, tiny, ragged handkerchief. He pressed it to his face. It was racy and insolent with heliotrope; he hurled it to the floor. In another drawer he found odd buttons, a theatre programme, a pawnbroker's card, two lost marshmallows, a book on the

divination of dreams. In the last was a woman's black satin hair bow, which halted him, poised between ice and fire. But the black satin hair-bow also is femininity's demure, impersonal, common ornament, and tells no tales.

這個房間只是馬馬虎虎地收拾好，這個可以看出來。化妝臺面鋪了張薄薄的絲巾，上面散擺著五六支髮夾－專屬女人，卻又通屬女人，女性化，心情不定，時態隱藏的事物。這些髮夾他連看都不看，因為他知道它們不能證實什麼。他把化妝臺的抽屜一個一個打開搜尋，找到了一張破破的小手巾。他把它緊按在臉上。是天芥濃烈無禮的香味；他一把丟在地板上。另外一個抽屜，他找到一些扣子，一張劇院節目單，一紙當舖單據，兩粒掉出來的白毬軟糖，一本釋夢的書。最後一個抽屜裏有一支女人的黑緞帶髮結，這個可把他一陣火一陣冰似地給嚇停了。但是，話說回來，黑緞帶髮結也是女性出於認真的本質所擁有的事物，非私人的特殊裝飾，看不出什麼來。

And then he traversed the room like a hound on the scent, skimming the walls, considering the corners of the bulging matting on his hands and knees, rummaging mantel and tables, the curtains and hangings, the drunken cabinet in the corner, for a visible sign, unable to perceive that she was there beside, around, against, within, above him, clinging to him, wooing him, calling him so poignantly through the finer senses that even his grosser ones became cognisant of the call. Once again he answered loudly: "Yes, dear!" and turned, wild-eyed, to gaze on vacancy, for he could not yet discern form and colour and love and outstretched arms in the odour of mignonette. Oh, God! whence that odour, and since when have odours had a voice to call? Thus he groped.

這個之後，他像一隻聞到獵物的獵狗一樣，在那裏走過來，走過去，仔細搜尋每一壁牆，跪在地上檢查鼓起來的方形地毯的每一個角，又跑到壁台和桌子打開抽屜翻東翻西，然後呢，每一張窗簾和掛布也不放過，又到角落裏那個醉了的酒櫥，看能不能找到任何的蛛絲馬跡，卻完完全全看不出她曾經在這裏的證據，就是除了在他周圍，他對面，他內裏，他上面，擁抱著他，追求著他，呼喊著他，經由他上層的感官這麼地強烈的感覺，使得他低層的感官也意識到了這個呼喚。再度，他大聲回答：“什麼事，親愛的？”頭一轉，目不轉睛地往空洞洞的空間裏看，這都是由於他這麼地努力但是還不能察覺到白蘭花香氣裏面的形狀，顏色，愛，和伸出的雙手。啊，老天爺！這氣味是哪裏來的，是什麼時候氣味能發出聲音來呼喚的？就在這個狀態裏，他摸索著。

He burrowed in crevices and corners, and found corks and cigarettes. These he passed in passive contempt. But once he found in a fold of the matting a half-smoked cigar, and this he ground beneath his heel with a green and trenchant oath. He sifted the room from end to end. He found dreary and ignoble small records of many a peripatetic tenant; but of her whom he sought, and who may have lodged there, and whose spirit seemed to hover there, he found no trace.

他檢查隱伏的洞隙和角落，找到軟木塞和香烟。這些他不屑一顧。他在地毯摺角裏找到抽過的半根雪茄，這個他用腳跟狠狠地踩，尖刻地罵。聯邦調查局似的，把房間每一吋都檢查過了。他找到那種流動房客微不足道無關緊要的記錄；但是他所要找的她，可能住過這裏的她，靈魂似乎飄泊在這裏的她，卻完全沒有蹟象可循。

And then he thought of the housekeeper.

然後他想起那個管家婆。

He ran from the haunted room downstairs and to a door that showed a crack of light. She came out to his knock. He smothered his excitement as best he could.

他從那間有鬼似的房間下樓跑到一個稍微開啓露出光綫來的門那裏。一敲門她就出來了。他一邊努力壓制興奮的心情。

"Will you tell me, madam," he besought her, "who occupied the room I have before I came?"

“女士，能不能告訴我，”他懇求她，“我來之前誰住在那個房間？”

"Yes, sir. I can tell you again. 'Twas Sprowls and Mooney, as I said. Miss B'retta Sprowls it was in the theatres, but Missis Mooney she was. My house is well known for respectability. The marriage certificate hung, framed, on a nail over—"

“是的，先生。我能再告訴你一次。斯普和穆尼，我說過。藝名是斯普蕊達小姐，實際上是穆尼太太。我的房子是為人所尊敬著稱的。結婚證書裝了框，掛在一支釘子上，在—”

"What kind of a lady was Miss Sprowls—in looks, I mean?"

“斯普小姐是什麼樣的人—我是說，長得怎麼樣？”

"Why, black-haired, sir, short, and stout, with a comical face. They left a week ago Tuesday."

“這個，黑一頭髮，先生，短身材，有點胖，臉很滑稽。他們上星期二搬走了。”

"And before they occupied it?"

“他們之前，又是誰？”

"Why, there was a single gentleman connected with the draying business. He left owing me a week. Before him was Missis Crowder and her two children, that stayed four months; and back of them was old Mr. Doyle, whose sons paid for him. He kept the room six months. That goes back a year, sir, and further I do not remember."

“這個，是一個單身男士，做運貨馬車生意的。他走的時候欠了我一星期的房錢。在他之前是克勞女士和她的兩個小孩，他們住了四個月；再往前是老杜先生，他的兒子替他付房租。他住了六個月。算起來一年了，先生，再往前我不記得。”

He thanked her and crept back to his room. The room was dead. The essence that had vivified it was gone. The perfume of mignonette had departed. In its place was the old, stale odour of mouldy house furniture, of atmosphere in storage.

他謝了她，若有所失地回到自己房間。房間死寂。那股令它栩栩如生的精髓不再。白蘭花香已經離去。氣味回復到原來的老朽和發霉家俱那種藏在瓶子裏的滯留空氣的那種氣味。

The ebbing of his hope drained his faith. He sat staring at the yellow, singing gaslight. Soon he walked to the bed and began to tear the sheets into strips. With the blade of his knife he drove them tightly into every crevice around windows and door. When all was snug and taut he turned out the light, turned the gas full on again and laid himself gratefully upon the bed.

失望之餘，信心全失。他坐在那裏，瞪著黃色哼著歌聲的瓦斯燈看。很快地，他走到床那裏，把床單撕成條。他用刀身把這些布條填緊門窗的每一個細縫。一切準備就緒，他把瓦斯燈關掉，又把開關再度開到最大然後心存感恩地躺在床上。

* * * * *

It was Mrs. McCool's night to go with the can for beer. So she fetched it and sat with Mrs. Purdy in one of those subterranean retreats where house-keepers foregather and the worm dieth seldom.

這天是賣高太太做啤酒東的日子。她於是提著一壺跟鋪地太太一同坐在那種管家婆會合而蟲兒不怎麼會死的地窖似隱藏地方。

"I rented out my third floor, back, this evening," said Mrs. Purdy, across a fine circle of foam. "A young man took it. He went up to bed two hours ago."

“我今天晚上把三樓後頭那間租出去了，”鋪地太太隔過一圈細密的啤酒泡泡說。“一個年輕小夥子租下了。兩小時之前上床去了。”

"Now, did ye, Mrs. Purdy, ma'am?" said Mrs. McCool, with intense admiration. "You do be a wonder for rentin' rooms of that kind. And did ye tell him, then?" she concluded in a husky whisper, laden with mystery.

“這個，真的，鋪地太太，夫人？”賣高太太十分景仰地說。“把那種房間租出去，你真的是件奇蹟。你有沒有告訴他，那個？”她沙啞而輕聲又神秘兮兮地把話說完。

"Rooms," said Mrs. Purdy, in her furriest tones, "are furnished for to rent. I did not tell him, Mrs. McCool."

“房間，”鋪地太太經由毛茸茸的嗓子說道，“是擺設來租給人家的。我沒說，賣高太太。”

"'Tis right ye are, ma'am; 'tis by renting rooms we kape alive. Ye have the rale sense for business, ma'am. There be many people will rayjict the rentin' of a room if they be tould a suicide has been after dyin' in the bed of it."

“妳說的是，夫人；我們是靠出租房間過活的。妳的生意腦經很對，夫人。假如聽到有人死在床上自殺的話，很多人要拒絕租這個房間。”

"As you say, we has our living to be making," remarked Mrs. Purdy.

“就像妳所說，我們必須過活，”鋪地太太講。

"Yis, ma'am; 'tis true. 'Tis just one wake ago this day I helped ye lay out the third floor, back. A pretty slip of a colleen she was to be killin' herself wid the gas—a swate little face she had, Mrs. Purdy, ma'am."

“是的，夫人；是真的。就是上星期的今天我幫忙你把三樓後頭那間清理過。真的是一個漂亮的女孩就這麼拿瓦斯自殺死了—可愛的小臉龐兒，鋪地太太，夫人。”

"She'd a—been called handsome, as you say," said Mrs. Purdy, assenting but critical, "but for that mole she had a—growin' by her left eyebrow. Do fill up your glass again, Mrs. McCool."

“人家說她美，就像妳說的，”鋪地太太說，同意是同意卻又在雞蛋裏挑骨頭，“可惜她左邊眉毛邊有一顆黑痣。再滿斟一杯，賣高太太。”