

MAISTER RIDHORN'S TOILET

"WULLIE, did I no' tell ye, ye could gang hame?"

"Ay, but—but can I no get stoppin' till ye've dressed yersel'?"

"I'm no' in the habit o' performin' ma toilet in public, Wullie. Tak' aff yer lemonade an' get awa' hame."

"Let me bide, an' I'll polish yer buits till ye can see yer face in them."

"I'll be gled when I see ma feet in them. They're that ticht, they're a' richt for a funeral, whaur a body's no expectit to be merry; but for a mairriage, wi' dancin' to follow, they're—weel, Wullie, ye can bide, but nae levity, Wullie, nae levity; mind that. Laddie, for ony favour dinna glower at me as if I was a wauxwork. Did ye never see onybody shavin' afore?"

"Na. It's awfu' funny."

"Funny? Criftens! it's a tragedy! I bocht this rauzor aff a man in Glesca. It cost me hauf a croon, an' the man said it wud provide a luxurious shave. Weel, it's maybe that; I'm no' used to luxury. Never shave, Wullie; grow a baird when yer time comes."

"What wey dae ye no' grow a baird, Maister Ridhorn?"

"Weel, the plainest o' human bein's ha'e their wee vanities. I yinst tried for to grow a baird, but I couldna get it to come even. So, instead o' bein' contentit to be as Providence designed me, I resumed this torture. Let it be a warnin', Wullie; let it be a warnin'. Noo to perform ma abolutions. That wasna a bad shave. Dootless, if I had been the bridegroom, instead o' best man, I wad ha'e cutted aff ma nose?"

"What has the best man got to dae, Maister Ridhorn?"

"What has he got to dae? He's got to be a host in hissel'. A compendium o' tact an' sociabeelity. For instance, I'm feart I stert up and propose the health o' the bride's parents, wha've been deid, puir bodies, for mony a lang year. I'm feart I affront masel' in fifty weys. Never shave, an' never be a best man, Wullie.

"Hech! but that's caller! If ye canna be handsome ye can aye be clean. Tits! this towel's fu' o' holes. I near dislocatit ma nose. Criftens! it's a sight for a female suffragist."

"I'll get ma mither to mend it for ye."

"Dinna repeat it. This towel is yin o' ma boudoyr secrets, laddie.

"If Julius Cæsar had wore this sark, he might ha'e leaved to be hung. He certainly wudna ha'e felt the daggers o' his foes. An', as per usual, the button at the back's awa' wi' 't. Ha'e ye a preen, laddie? Noo for the collar—anither invention of deluded man.

"My! but it's stiff! Whaur's ma stud? It's got a patent heid that flees aff when ye least expect it. It's no' the thing to wear when ye've a ticht collar an' a kitly hoast——

"Tits! I near forgot to brush ma hair. What wey did ye no' ca' ma attention to the omeesion, Wullie?"

"I didna notice, Maister Ridhorn. I was brushin' yer buits."

"Weel, weel, ye've mair to brush nor I've got. Ma hair's like yin o' thae fastin' professors; it gets thinner and thinner every day."

"Are ye ready for yer buits noo?"

"Na; I'll keep them till the very last. Nae use meetin' trouble hauf roads?"

"D'ye see ma tie onywhaur? It's a pink tie—quite the correct thing. Ye've got to look jaunty at a waddin'. D'ye no' see ma tie? This is awfu'!

Five-fifteen—an' me no' ready. Whaur on earth is ma tie?"

"I'll rin hame an' get ma Sunday yin. I'll no be lang. Ye can be pittin' on yer ither things till I come back."

"It's—it's rale braw, Wullie, but it's a—a wee thing juvenile for me. Never heed, though. I'll wear it and be yer debtor."

"The tie looks fine. It's a guid thing ye let me bide the day."

"Deed, ay."

"Are yer buits hurtin' ye?"

"So-so; ma chief torture the noo is mental. Gi'e ma coat a brush, Wullie. An' mind the buttons at the back. They're like masel', requirin' the attentions o' a female. Never you be a bachelor, Wullie—unless ye gi'e up the pentin' an' become a tailor."