

SIR FRANCIS Donna Lucia, to meet you to-day for the first time, is to me like a lonely traveller coming across some-er bright little floweret- by the wayside.

LORD FANCOURT Do you mean me?

SIR FRANCIS Yes, Donna Lucia, yes! By George, that's a good start.

LORD FANCOURT Oh, yes, I think that's very kind of you.

SIR FRANCIS (*aside*) By George, she looks anything between fifty and a hundred.

Well, I've put myself to it, so I must come to the point.

Donna Lucia, do you know what a man longs for when he's lonely--desolate and wretched?

LORD FANCOURT A drink?

SIR FRANCIS No, Donna Lucia, this is what he longs for--he longs to plant in his own heart that bright little floweret.

LORD FANCOURT I know--by the wayside --that one. Does he really?

SIR FRANCIS Yes, Donna Lucia, yes. The floweret I mean must sit at the head of my table--walk by my side--dwell in my heart forever. But I'll waste no more words--I'll come to the point with a soldier's bluntness. Will you be my wife?

LORD FANCOURT Well, "You've taken me so much by surprise."

SIR FRANCIS Then I may hope?

LORD FANCOURT I'm afraid not. No, don't hope--I wouldn't hope if I were you.

SIR FRANCIS I beg pardon, Donna Lucia. Do I understand?

LORD FANCOURT I must refuse you. The fact is, I am another's.

SIR FRANCIS Another's?

LORD FANCOURT I say, don't be downhearted-- You see, I'm in a more peculiar position than I could ever explain. I am a woman with a history.

SIR FRANCIS Then it is quite useless our prolonging this interview. And you will accept my regrets and--apologies for ever having broached the subject?

LORD FANCOURT Oh, certainly! Any time you're passing.