

THE ARCH

The extant, unfinished manuscript of Wharton's play, *The Arch*, consists of: twenty sheets of Act I (writing on one side only); one scenario sheet (Wharton writing on both sides); and four sheets (seven sides) summarizing the plotlines of the remaining acts, including two sides of a dramatized 'Last scene'.

Composed on dull blue paper, the play is written predominantly in pencil, although four complete sheets, parts of two other sheets and several glued-in strips are in black ink. Corrections are made primarily in pencil, but also in black ink, with minimal markings in red pencil and a strike-through in blue pencil. Wharton's familiar, pragmatic construction (both 'patchwork' and cut and paste) is in evidence: on a draft that often features extensive crossings out and corrections, the author on several occasions has either pasted strips of paper to the original sheet, or cut up a pencilled page before gluing two surviving pencilled segments to the top and bottom of a strip in ink, to remake the 'whole'.

Unlike *The Man of Genius* and *Kate Spain*, there is no extant typescript of *The Arch*, and indeed the play may have been abandoned before reaching this stage of Wharton's production process. Nevertheless, the nature of the surviving draft clearly evidences that considerable time and energy were invested in *The Arch*. The pencilled manuscript sheets, the pencilled corrections, the ink corrections, the ink manuscript sheets, glued-in sections written in ink (and one in pencil), the minimal red pencil markings, and a blue strike-through suggest at least two workings of the manuscript, and four proofreadings carried out at different times.

As discussed in the introduction to this section, 'Edith Wharton as Playwright', there are resonances in *The Arch* of what is increasingly being viewed as the author's greatest novel, *The Custom of the Country*. Once again, however, the manuscript is undated, the archive offering up few clues (see pp. xlv-i).

Copyright

THE ARCH –

Copyright
Play in IV Acts.

THE ARCH –

(A Play in IV Acts.)

George Adrian. An architect. 35.

John Lyart. The leading lawyer of Hillbridge, & a man of large private fortune. 42.

Fred Langham. <Vanderfleet> A young cousin of Mrs Adrian's. <Lyart's> 23.¹ At Hillbridge University. Reading in Hillbridge Law School.

Stuart Bayne. Elderly man of large means, artistic & literary tastes. Travels, yachts, but makes Hillbridge principal home in winter. 50. Separated from his wife.

Rose Adrian. George Adrian's wife. 28. Divorced from 1st husband.

Christina Lyart. Lyart's wife. 25.

M^{rs} Caspian. Pretty divorcée, remarried to enormously rich vulgarian, whom she snubs & ignores. 27.

~~M^{rs} Langham.~~

M^{rs} Vanderfleet. An elderly widow of small means, who has come to Hillbridge for the winter, ostensibly to be near her son, but really to catch Stuart Bayne for her daughter.

Effie Vanderfleet. The daughter. 19.

Parlourmaid at Adrians'.

THE ARCH. SCENARIO.

Act I. Adrians' drawing-room. Scene I. Parlour-maid. Fred Vanderfleet.

Scene II Rose, Fred.

Scene III. Rose, Fred, Bayne.

“ IV. Rose, Fred, Bayne, ~~Jacky~~, M^{rs} Vanderfleet.

“ V. Effie.

“ V. M^{rs} Vanderfleet, Effie, Rose.

“ VI. Rose, Adrian.

“ VII Rose, Adrian, Christina.

Act II 6² mo's later. - ~~The Adrians' cottage at~~ <The Lyarts' country house at>
Lakeford <.> in the grounds of the Lyarts' place.

Scene I. M^{rs} Vanderfleet, ~~Chris~~ Rose, Effie.

“ II ~~M^{rs} Rose, Eff~~ Rose, Effie, Rose, M^{rs} V. – then Effie & Rose.

“ III Bayne & Rose.

“ IV. Lyart, Adrian, Christina & Fred come up from tennis-court. Tea.

“ V. ~~M^{rs}~~ Effie & Bayne.

“ VI. Rose & Lyart – then Adrian.

“ VII Rose – Adrian.

“ VIII ~~A~~ Christina – Adrian.

Act III ~~Next~~ Next evening. ~~Same Scene:~~ <Room in> Lyarts' house.

Scene I. Adrian – Rose.

“ II. ~~Scene~~ Christina – Adrian – M^{rs} /over³

Scene II. (continued).

= Vanderfleet.

Scene III. Lyart, ~~Chris Rose~~ <Christina>, Adrian, &

<M^{rs} Vanderfleet⁴>

~~“ IV. Ch Rose, Christina.~~

Scene IV. Lyart, ~~Ro M^{rs} V.~~

~~“ V. Lyart, Rose.~~

Scene V. Lyart, Rose.

“ VI Lyart, M^{rs} Vanderfleet, Rose.

Act IV. Late that night. Adrian's work-room on ground floor of house.

Scene I. A Rose alone.

“ II. ~~Adrian~~, Rose, Christina.

< “ III. Rose, Adrian. >

“ ~~III~~ <IV> Lyart, Adrian, Rose, Christina.

Copyright

THE ARCH.

Act I. Scene. Library⁵ in Adrian's house at Hillbridge. About four o'clock on a winter <December> afternoon.

Parlour-maid shows in Fred Vanderfleet.

Parlour-maid. M^r Adrian's not in, sir; ~~but I th~~ <he> telephoned he'd be detained at <late at> the office.

Fred. (evidently disappointed.) Not in? Oh, I'm sorry. (Seems to hesitate.) He's very busy now, <I suppose?>

P. maid. Yes, sir – building M^r Lyart's museum.

Fred. Ah, yes – what else?

P. maid. A big <country> house on the hill <at Lakeford> for Mr Bayne, I believe, he sir.

Fred. (interested.) Oho – ~~capital~~ <at Lakeford?> (Hesitating.) Well. Mary [?] –

P. maid. But M^{rs} Adrian's at home, sir -

Fred. (still uncertain.) Oh, delighted! (Another pause.) ~~Will you~~ <Please> tell her I'm here ? (As the parlour-maid goes out.) Wish I could have seen <old> George first! (He walks up & down whistling, & stops near a card-tray on the table by the door.) Not many visiting, apparently. (Takes up one card after another.) M^r Bayne – M^r Gifford – M^r Halton – h'm – ~~the~~ <no women – & no> married men...~~don't call~~...

Rose's voice in the hall. Don't keep him out too long, Miss Wilmer! It's horribly cold.

Rose enters.

Rose. Dear Freddy! Welcome back from the tropics! When did you arrive?

Fred. Only last night.

Rose. And you've remembered me so soon? <looked me up already> That's nice of you! (She ~~is~~ holds both his hands, & speaks with radiant eyes.) ~~You must keeping~~ Excuse my - Keeping you waiting - ~~but~~ I was packing the boy off for a walk.

Fred (bewildered.) ~~The boy~~ - What boy?

Rose. (laughing.) ~~Mine~~ <Why, mine> of course - my son Jacky <Fenton!> You know it's settled - I have him for six months now and for half the year.

Fred. Really? ~~Then~~ the courts have decided - ?

Rose (in a hard voice.) No - <but> M^r Fenton has come to his senses... ~~that's all.~~

Fred. (embarrassed.) Ah -

Rose. I... has realized that a child's place is with his mother ... which our divorce courts ~~do~~ <don't> not yet seem to <have> understand <haven't yet learned>... (with a rapid change of manner.) But tell me about yourself - have your mother & Effie really come back from Brazil?

Fred. Oh, yes. <Ten days ago.> ~~And I brought~~ <I've brought> them on here with me.

Rose (surprised.) Here? <To Hilbridge?>

Fred. Just for a few days. They're stopping with the Lyarts.

Rose (her manner changing.) Oh - then we shan't see much of you while they're here.

Fred (understanding, but pretending not to.) Why? - what do you mean?

Rose (smiling.) Dear Freddy! ~~You never could pretend.~~ (Laying her hand on his arm.) Don't you suppose I know that people who go to ~~the~~ <Christina> Lyart's are not allowed to come here - that they must choose between us?

Fred. (very valiant.) Oh, come - as if I should allow myself to be dictated to!

Rose (turning away with a smile.) Sit down & I'll ring for tea. (Seating herself & signing to him to do the same.) ~~I suppose~~ Your sister must be very glad to get back.

Fred. Oh, confoundedly! Two years in Brazil isn't much fun at Effie's age.

Rose. No - poor Effie! ~~I suppose~~ <But I thought> your mother felt ~~obliged~~ <meant> to stay there as long as your brother had the consulate?

Fred. Yes – She did; but it was awful for Effie; & they had the chance to come back on Stuart Bayne’s yacht. I went ~~over~~ <down> to Jamaica & joined the yacht there.

Rose (interested.) ~~Oh, really?~~ That must have been delightful! I ~~heard M^r Bayne had~~ <had a note> from M^r Bayne ~~announcing his return;~~ <his return, that he had got back,> but he didn’t mention that ~~he had had such~~ <what> pleasant company ~~on the voyage.~~ <he’d had on the voyage.>

Fred. Well – & how are you & George ~~getting on~~ – in the seventh heaven?

Rose. Just as usual – which means perfectly! No – several stories higher?!

Fred. He’s very busy, I hear?

Rose. Well, he hasn’t ~~many new orders~~ <much new work> & but ~~the M^r the Lyart museum is very interesting & it is~~ & M^r Lyart is so much pleased <with the museum> that he has decided to build the two wings at once.

Fred. Has he? That’s good! (After a moment, speaking impetuously.) It’s a damned <beastly> shame of Christina, ~~with that~~ to treat you as she does, when your <Lyart employs your> husband is building <employed> the Lyart museum ~~to build the museum.~~

Rose. (smiling.) Most people think it’s very kind of M^r Lyart to employ my my husband <to build the museum> when Christina treats me as she does. You know the work <work museum> museum was barely dug when <work was barely begun when> when George ~~marr~~ scandalized Hillbridge by marrying me <.> & M^r. Lyart could easily have replaced him by another architect.

Fred. (impatiently.) Hillbridge w^d not have been scandalized by George’s marrying you if the Lyarts had not been scandalized!

Rose. (judicially.) No – ~~society here~~ <Hillbridge> does take its cue from the <m> Lyarts. But I knew that when I married – I knew that, in bringing me here to live, George ran certain risks. It would have been easier <to begin> again in a bigger place.

Fred. And yet it was you who insisted on his coming back ~~to Hillbridge,~~ though he had that offer of partnership in N.Y.?

Rose. Yes – on principle. I am not ashamed of being divorced – nor is George ashamed of having married a divorced <woman>. Why should we have made any change in our lives? We get ~~we get~~ on very well without the Lyarts!

Fred (with factitious warmth.) I should say you did. And you're a brick, Rose! (He rises & moves about the room) Such a brick that I'm going to ask you to do something for me <me a <great> favour.>

Rose (sympathetically.) Of course, Freddy!

Fred. You remember that pretty M^{rs} Caspian – I think you ~~used to know~~ <knew her> her as M^{rs} Ned Wycherley <before her> divorce, as M^{rs} Ned Wycherley.

Rose. (surprised, & speaking with a certain emphasis.) Oh, yes – I ~~used to know~~ M^{rs} Ned < knew her as Cora > M^{rs} Ned <M^{rs}> Wycherley.

Fred (resolutely ignoring the emphasis.) Well – she's here now – staying with a paralyzed aunt & having a perfectly rotten time. Of course I can't ask my mother <& Effie> to do anything for her, while she's staying <they're> with the Lyarts' - && so I came to ask beg you & George to have here her here to dine tonight, & we'll make up a little theatre party afterward – just a couple of men, you know.

Rose (who has listened in horrified silence now breaks out reproachfully.) Oh, Freddy!

Fred. (nervous, but affecting surprise.) Well – what?

Rose. ~~That woman!~~ I can't <Why didn't you ask me something else?>

Fred. (genuinely astonished.) What – you won't?

Rose (with injured dignity.) I can't imagine how <How could> you can suppose – ?

Fred. Well – upon my word!

Rose (after a pause.) ~~A~~ I suppose <Unless> you think we're all alike?

Fred. Why – Rose!

Rose (nervously.) ~~Is that it? Do you? <You do?>~~ Oh, how can you insult me so? That woman in my house!

Fred. (still amazed.) Upon my word! <Insult you!> (coming to himself.) I'm awfully sorry if I've blundered – but I'm hanged if I see –

Rose. The difference between her & me? ~~Do you know anything of her history?~~ <Don't you know> ~~She~~ had a disgraceful affair with this Rufus Caspian before her divorce? (Fred is silent.) Why ~~Fred~~ don't you answer? (Another pause.) You mean that I was in love with George before — ? (with sudden defiance.) Of course I was! I never realized the bondage I was living in till I loved ... really loved!

Fred. Well – then?

Rose. (indignant.) But Rufus Caspian is an old man – & enormously rich! There was no question of love in their case.

Fred. Oh, that's easily said – but young women have been known to fall in love with men of sixty. <Caspian's age.>

Rose When they were millionaires!

Fred. So if George had been rich you wouldn't have dared to marry him?

Rose (furious.) Do you compare my husband to that ~~vulgar~~ ~~purse-proud~~ ~~creature~~ ~~nonentity~~ < old dotard?>

Fred. No – but every body couldn't marry <have> Adrian!

Rose. Well – assuming ~~your romantic~~ <that your> idea is true – <from what I hear M^{rs} Caspian> ~~she has already~~ tired of her bargain <already.>

Fred. (holding his ground.) <What if she has?> Can't a woman ~~make more than one~~ <be> mistake<n> more than once?

Rose (hesitates – then says firmly:) The second time, she must ~~bear~~ <abide by> the consequences!

Fred. Then what becomes of your theory of divorce as an expression of moral freedom, an escape from social hypocrisy? ~~Would you have Mrs Caspian behave like a hypocrite?~~

Suppose George made you thoroughly wretched? ~~Should~~ <should> you feel obliged to ~~put up with it~~ <why should you stand it this time any more than the first?>

Rose (irritably.) I wish you wouldn't drag George in!

Parlour-maid comes in, followed by Bayne.

Parlour maid. M^r Stuart Bayne.

Rose (going forward cordially.) Dear M^r Bayne!

Bayne. Hallo, Vanderfleet. (They shake hands)

Parlour-maid. The roses have come, ma'am. (She produces a large bunch of white roses.)

Rose. (embarrassed, but laughing a little.) ~~What wonderful~~ Oh – put them there, please.

Bayne. What wonderful flowers!

Rose. Yes – I <'ve> ~~presented them to myself~~ <almost ruined myself –> – to celebrate an anniversary...

Bayne. What anniversary?

Rose (laughing.) Guess! (The men look puzzled.) My wedding-day! It's a year ago today – (They come forward with congratulations.)

Parlour-maid reenters, followed by M^{rs} Vanderfleet & Effie. Fred can hardly ~~M Rose~~: conceal his surprise when his mother enters.

Rose. (going forward.) M^{rs} Vanderfleet – & Effie! How nice of you!

M^{rs} V. (playful.) My dear Rose, you can't turn ~~me~~ <us> out; for it was your son who ~~invited~~ <asked> us in!

Rose. (smiling <beaming>)⁶ Really? Did you meet Jacky?

M^{rs} V. (gushing.) Just at the gate – grown out of all recognition, of course, but so rosy & beautiful that I ~~actually stopped to ask~~ <couldn't resist asking> his name – & <but and> when he said "Jacky Fenton" I recognized your eyes at once, & asked if you were here...whereupon he ~~asked~~ <invited> us in like a little prince!

Effie. Such a beauty he's grown, dear Rose!

M^{rs} V. Ah, <Well> M^r Bayne – here are your two fellow-travellers again.

M^r Bayne. I was just going to M^{rs} Lyart's to ask ~~a~~ how you were.

M^{rs} V. Oh, pining for our old quarters – perfectly homesick & wretched!

Bayne (smiling.) That's good news! (To Effie.) I hope M^{rs} your mother speaks for you too?

Effie. (hoydenish.) ~~You~~ Oh, we were in clover! You know we're not used to smart yachts with French cooks!

M^{rs} V. Effie!

Bayne. (amused.) Well – I have another French cook here. You must come & try him very soon. (He rises advances to Rose.) I ~~must~~ just ~~drop~~ stopped <in> a moment to see how you were – you & George must come & dine with me to meet these ladies.

Rose ~~That will be delightful.~~ <With the greatest pleasure> (Shakes hands.) Goodbye. †

Bayne. Goodbye, M^{rs} Vanderfleet.

M^{rs} V. Did you say tomorrow evening, dear M^r Bayne?

Bayne. I – yes. – ~~Exactly~~ <capital> - tomorrow evening! (in a low tone) Good-bye, little Effie.

Effie. Is this cook as good as the other?

~~M^{rs} V. Effie!~~

Bayne Come & see – tomorrow. (out.)

M^{rs} V. Freddy – why ~~in the world didn't you~~ <did you never> tell me that dear Rose was living at Hillbridge?

Fred. I - really - I thought I had, mother.

M^{rs} V. Not a word! ~~It~~ Such a charming house, Rose, dear. Is it one you've hired?

M^{rs} Rose. No – it's my husband's.

M^{rs} V. Ah, really? ~~I didn't know he~~ <I'd no idea he> had a house ~~here...<here~~ too. ~~And so>~~ <at Hillbridge Hillbridge>

Rose (quickly.) It is pretty, isn't it? ~~And should you~~ And we get so much sun! Should you like to see the other rooms? I've quite a charming conservatory ... Freddy, do show Effie the conservatory... I've some Brazilian orchids, Effie!

Fre Effie. Do show me, Fred! (To Fred.) She ~~What's the matter? She~~ <Why does she> wants to get us out of the way?

Fred (nervous.) Oh, the devil! – Come on. (They go out.)

M^{rs} V. (peering about the room.) Delightful – such taste! (Points to an open door to the left.) And is that M^r Fenton's library?

Rose (abruptly, standing still in the middle of the room.) ~~Has~~ <M^{rs} Vanderfleet, has> no one told you? I am ~~not~~ <no longer> M^{rs} Fenton.

M^{rs} V. (bewildered.) ~~Not – not~~ M^{rs} Fenton? (sympathetic.) Oh, my poor child. ~~I – I~~ <had> heard nothing<!> ~~It~~ Was it sudden?

Rose. My – M^r Fenton is not dead. ~~We are~~ <I am> divorced.

M^{rs} V. ~~Divorced~~ Divorced! ~~And you never told me? You let me bring my child here?~~

M^{rs} Rose. And <I> married again –

M^{rs} V. Married again – ?

Rose. To George Adrian. This is his house.

M^{rs} V. His house? You are seeing me in his house? This is too dreadful! ~~H~~heard ~~he~~ <Some one wrote us M^r Adrian> had made a scandalous marriage – that Hill-bridge was ringing with it! But ~~no one mentioned your name~~ <I never dreamed that it was to you!>

Rose – I Rose. Why a scandalous marriage, M^{rs} Vanderfleet?

M^{rs} V. (with horror.) Your asking the question is scandalous enough! Why, George Adrian is ~~your~~ ~~hus-~~ M^r Fenton's <own> cousin.

Rose That doesn't make him a relative of mine.

M^{rs} V. But you must have met him first –

Rose. Under my husband's roof? I did. It's where some married women meet their lovers. I preferred to leave it before –

M^{rs} V. Oh, don't go on! If Effie sh^d hear!

Rose I sent you daughter ~~away~~ <off> in order to tell you the facts, - as soon as I saw you did not know them. Shall I call her ~~back~~ ~~now~~ <now>, that you may take her away?

M^{rs} V. Yes please...at least (she hesitates, & her manner grows less aggressive) <all> this has been very <so> painful ... & I am so awkwardly placed ... with a young girl ... & staying with the Lyarts. Of course you know Christina's feeling about divorce ...

Rose (drily.) ~~Yes~~, I have had some experience of it.

M^{rs} V. (blunderingly.) Yes – I remember hearing that, though M^r Adrian was such an old friend, she had refused to see him – since his marriage...

Rose (lightly) Oh, she sees him now – but I am still excluded.

M^{rs} V. <(with some contempt.)> ~~How~~ And you ~~are~~ consent to that? Does not your pride – ?

Rose. <My pride?> I have ~~no~~ ~~pride~~ <none> except ~~him~~ in being ~~having~~ ~~married~~ <the wife> of the man I love. The laws of my country gave me ~~the~~ ~~right~~, ~~to~~, & I took it. As for social laws – Hillbridge laws – I simply don't care a fig for them!

M^{rs} V. ~~I~~see Really – such a point of view (A pause) Of course, as I am placed – with a daughter... (Abruptly.) Did I hear you accept M^r Bayne's invitation to ~~dine~~ <for> tomorrow?

Rose. <(ironically.)> Oh, yes – M^r Bayne receives us.

M^{rs} V. ~~Of~~course <Naturally> – a single man –

Rose. Oh, no – only separated!

M^{rs} V. (annoyed.) Separated, <I mean> - & his wife hopelessly ill, I understand ... I ~~am~~ don't presume to judge the affairs of others ... & M^r Bayne has been a very a <such a> good friend to us ... we are under great <such> obligations to him ...

Rose. ~~Yes?~~

M^{rs} V. <that> I should be very sorry to offend him – hurt his feelings ...

Rose. But why should you?

M^{rs} V. (with asperity.) My dear M^{rs} _____

Rose (quietly.) Adrian.

M^{rs} V. – Adrian; you must see that, situated <placed> as I am – ~~with a daughter~~ – & staying with the Lyarts – it will be impossible for me to dine with M^r Bayne – or at least to take Effie – if you – & M^r Adrian – are there ...

Rose (malicious, & feigning obtuseness.) Oh, I see. (As if with a happy thought.) Leave Effie at home then!

M^{rs} V. (off her guard.) Leave Effie at home? But don't you see – ?

Rose Is it <That it's> on Effie's account you're going? But M^r Bayne's not even divorced!

M^{rs} V. (with dignity.) Your insinuations are lost on me. But I should say you would rather be spared the embarrassment ...

Rose Of your backing out of the dinner? Oh, ~~not at all.~~ <I don't mind.> I'm used to it!

M^{rs} V. But the dinner is given for us!

Rose Then I really think you'll have to go!

~~Adrian enters unperceived.~~ <Fred & Effie return from conservatory>

M^{rs} V. You are a perfectly shameless woman!

M^{rs} Fred. Mother!

Adrian enters by other door.

Adrian. Rose, dear – (stops as he sees M^{rs} V. & Effie; then advances with outstretched hand.) My dear M^{rs} Vanderfleet – welcome home!

M^{rs} V. (drawing back.) M^r Adrian – I came here under a complete misapprehension. ~~You must~~ You must excuse me ... Effie, come <away> at once!

Fred. (to Rose.) Oh, Rose – I’m so sorry!

Adrian. What on earth does this mean?

M^{rs} V. <Rose> That M^{rs} Vanderfleet ~~thought I was still M^{rs} Fenton.~~ is staying with the Lyarts.

Adrian. But –

M^{rs} V. Effie! Frederick! (Goes out, followed by Effie.)

Fred (turning back to wring Adrian’s hand) For God’s sake don’t mind – I’ll explain –

M^{rs} V. (from the threshold) w My son!

(Fred follows her out.)

Adrian. What ~~on earth~~ a <the devil> has been happening here?

[The manuscript breaks off at this point, leaving the summary, printed below.]

Act ~~IV~~ ~~III~~ <II>

Scene I. M^{rs} Vanderfleet asks Rose to talk divorce to Bayne.

<Scene II. Effie & Rose left together. Bayne comes. Effie out.>

Scene III. Rose reluctantly pleads with Bayne for Effie. He confesses that he loves her – but his wife is opposed to divorce on religious <grounds>. She has always been a good wife, & when they were first married, & he was young & poor, they had a few happy years. Then he outgrew her, the children died, & she shrank into an ever narrower circle of ideas. But was it her fault? She had taken hard times bravely & cheerfully with him – now she was ill & sad, and he could not wound her deepest beliefs & affront her personal dignity by such a step. – If Effie really cares, he must go away. – Rose says: “Then you must tell Effie. You owe her that.” He agrees.

Scene ~~III~~ ~~V~~ <5⁷ Effie comes back with plan of house, & Bayne> ~~He~~ tells Effie <her>, & she understands & they say goodbye. M^{rs} Vanderfleet comes in as they are parting. She is furious, ~~but~~ & tries to frighten Bayne with thinking that Effie is compromised by his attentions; but he and Effie are both firm & he goes.

Scene ~~IV~~ <6> Rose comes back, & M^{rs} Vanderfleet charges her with not having used her influence. Rose says she believes Bayne is right, & M^{rs} V. believes

she has set him against Effie, to retaliate for her (M^{rs} V.'s) insulting treatment of Rose in Act I.

Scene VI <4> The others come in from the tennis court for tea – Lyart, Christina, Fred, & <Effie &> Adrian. They talk of Adrian's work, & ~~he tells how~~ <what> ~~cle a clever architectural~~ & of the draughting-room Lyart has fitted up for him on the ground floor of the house. Of what a clever draughtsman Effie is getting to be. M^{rs} V. says she has made such a beautiful plan for M^r Bayne's new house. Sends Effie to get it. The others return to tennis.

VII Lyart tells Rose of his unhappiness. His wife is changed – dissatisfied. He believes she cares for some one else. But his feelings about divorce have not changed. He means to fight for her to the end. Rose promises to speak to her.

VIII Adrian returns & Rose speaks to him. She begs him to speak to Rose Christina in her place, as ~~he~~ & she are such friends. He promises, & ~~does~~ waits for Christina, while Rose goes away.

IX. Big Scene. He taxes Christina with being dissatisfied & unhappy, & she suddenly says – “Yes: because I love you.” ~~As they part, Mrs Vanderfleet comes in & overhears their last words.~~

Act III. Same night <evening> - in library <Smoking Billiard room> at the Lyarts'. After dinner. Rose asks her <Scene I> husband if he has spoken. Beyond the drawing-room, where there is music & bridge. <Scene I.> Adrian sits alone, smoking. Rose steals away to find him, & asks if he has spoken to ~~Rose~~ <Christina>. Yes – but of course she has told him nothing. And he wants to leave – wishes that they ^{s^{hd}} go back to Hillbridge the next morning. – What! Rose exclaims – leave Christina at such a time? With no one to help & advise her but that fool M^{rs} Vanderfleet? Of course she will not – and he must not go either. He has M^r Bayne's house to overlook. Why should he want to go? What excuse can he give? Suddenly he feels that she is suspicious, & declares that she is right – they had better stay. Rose goes. <Scene II.> Christina comes in & they <she & Adrian> have a short, passionate scene. No – there can be no divorce. It is impossible – Well, then, why not be happy when they can & as they can?

No – he is going away – going the next morning – [Page break]

Act III. (continued.)

But they hear people coming, & part hastily – she promising to come to his work-room when the others have gone up. M^{rs} V., coming in, overhears this. – ~~They all say goodnight. They Adrian says he will not work~~

Scene III. All the others come in to say goodnight. ^x Lyart & Rose <Christina> left alone. He makes a sort of appeal to her, but she evades it hastily & bids him goodnight.

He sits alone by the fire, when Rose reenters. She has come to plead with Lyart for patience with his wife. She ~~and does~~ thinks he is right to refuse a divorce, but he must be patient. As they talk, each begins to show signs of fearing to betray something to the other.

Suddenly M^{rs} V. comes in apologetically. Effie has left her watch <rings> in the draughting room, & as they are her only bits of jewelry, poor child – & the room is on the ground floor – would M^{rs} Rose get them?

Lyart starts up at once. He will go. But Rose, in sudden terror, bars the way. Her eyes seem to be opened. No – she will go herself! She puts him aside & goes – & she is <conscious that her going has betrayed her husband's secret. ?> over/

Act IV <Scene I.> The ~~draughty~~ draughting-room – Dark. Rose enters, & turns ~~up~~ <on> the light. The room is empty. She looks for the rings, does not find them, & is about to go back when she hears steps outside. She puts out the light & waits. The door open [sic] softly & Christina's voice says: "George!"

Rose turns on the light & the two women face each other. Big scene. It is all Rose's fault – her preaching the gospel of divorce – her example – her talk of individual freedom &c – Rose repudiates the blame, but is inwardly aghast at what she has done. Christina leaves & Rose waits for her husband.

Scene II. Adrian comes. His dismay at seeing his wife. She tells him that she believes Lyart knows – that in her fear she has betrayed his secret. They look at each other in blank horror.

At last she says desperately. "Oh, what have I done? All our lives are in ruins, & yet I can't kill myself, because of the boy." [page break]

Last scene.¹⁰ Rose and Adrian. ~~She has told him what she knows <suspects> & he has confessed.~~

Rose (dully.) I can't kill myself ... because there's the boy ...

Adrian (turning quickly.) But I can, you mean? (He sees the revolver on the table & catches it up.) My God, you're right – (He shoots himself & drops dead.)

At Rose's scream Lyart dashes in, & draws back, seeing Adrian's body.}

Lyart. George! (Slowly he understands.) M^{rs} Adrian ... Is he dead?

Rose (Kneeling by him) He's dead...:

Christina rushes in & ~~sees Adrian~~ <at the sound.>

Christina. Oh – <What is it? What has happened?> (She ~~pushes~~ sees Adrian's dead body.) Ah ...

Rose (Kneeling by her husband.) He's dead ...

Christina (with a scream) No – no – no! (She flings herself on the body, pushing Rose aside)

(over.)

Rose. (rising slowly to her feet & turning toward Lyart.) Oh, spare her ... spare her!

Lyart (looks at her intently for a moment. Then he moves toward his wife, who is cowering over Adrian's body.) Christina, come – my wife ...

She looks up at him, horror struck, dazed, & he draws her slowly to her feet, keeping her hands in his, as the curtain falls.

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is referred to in the notes as Nick Lovat; and at one point on page 2 the name 'Ringwood' is corrected to 'Hartwood'. Names undergo changes in almost all of the texts in these volumes; even so, Wharton publicly claimed her 'characters always appear with their names' and that she found it difficult, at times impossible, to alter them: 'For many years the attempt always ended fatally; any character I unchristened instantly died on my hands...' (BG, p. 132).

11. *Mil. <C>*: Wharton superimposes the 'C' on 'Mil', indicating the change of name. She repeats this in Cynthia/Mildred's next two speeches before Cynthia gains sole precedence.
12. *Know*: Wharton draws an arrow from this point, linking the text to the beginning of a phrase (subsequently struck through) three lines below, which begins '~~You spoke just now~~'.

Untitled

1. *Claud*: Amending Mr Lyas' Christian name from Alfred to Claud, Wharton once again disproves her own writing theory (see note 10 to *The Man of Genius*, above).
2. *M^s L*: The manuscript identifies Mrs Lyas, but the speaker at this point is evidently Mrs Frayne.
3. *I mean that ... but Vivien's evidence*: The anticipated response of Lady Julian in the event of a public accusation bears strong similarities to the adulterous Bertha Dorset's masterly counterattack during the Mediterranean cruise in *The House of Mirth*. Completely outmanoeuvring her rival, Bertha spectacularly sacrifices Lily's reputation to save her own. 'Reputation' is an asset neither woman can afford to lose.
4. *M^s F*: The manuscript identifies Mrs Frayne, but the speaker is in fact Mrs Lyas.
5. *M^s F*: Again, the manuscript identifies Mrs Frayne, but the speaker is in fact Mrs Lyas.
6. *Branwell's*: At several points, the 'loop' of Wharton's handwriting appears to indicate 'Bramwell', rather than 'Branwell'.
7. *Wing is alone for a few minutes*: The stage direction at this point appears to betray signs of inexperience. Wing is alone onstage 'for a few minutes' without dialogue or direction – an uncomfortably long period for actor and audience.

The Arch

1. *Fred Langham <Vanderfleet>... Lyart's wife. 25*: Wharton alters the age of three of the characters in this list, superimposing the new age on the original. Christina Lyart's age is changed from twenty-three to twenty-five. Mrs Caspian becomes twenty-seven (altered, it appears, from twenty, although the superimposition makes the original second digit unclear). Finally, Fred Vanderfleet's age has three variations. While he remains twenty-something throughout, the final variant appears to be twenty-three, possibly altered first from twenty-nine, then twenty-five, but in this case the dual superimposition makes all three versions of the second digit unclear.
2. 6: '6' is superimposed on the original '3' months at this point in the manuscript.
3. /: Page break in original manuscript.
4. *M^s Vanderfleet*: It is unclear whether Mrs Vanderfleet is an addition to scene III or IV.
5. *Library in Adrian's house at Hillbridge*: The library venue – often presented as a masculine enclave/retreat in Wharton's writing – is an alteration from the Scenario, in which Wharton specifies the feminine locale of the drawing-room as the setting for Act I, Scene

I. While the positioning of the apostrophes is slightly unclear, unlike the shared ‘Adrians’ drawing-room’ of the Scenario, in the revised location the apostrophe appears to have been moved before the ‘s’ to specify sole ownership of the ‘Library in Adrian’s house’. If so, even in ‘invisible’ stage directions, Wharton underlines her ever-acute awareness of the precarious financial position of women and particularly, here, the precarious social position of the divorced woman.

6. *smiling <beaming>*: In strengthening Rose’s initial response of ‘smiling’ at the mention of her son to ‘beaming’, Wharton provides another indication that Rose is a proud, even doting parent – very different from Undine Spragg, who treats her son as business collateral, a useful bargaining tool in negotiations with Ralph.
7. *HHV <5>*: The running order of the scenes seems to have given Wharton some concern in the summary. Here, a pencilled ‘III’ is overwritten with ‘V’, also in pencil, before the number is struck through and ‘5’ added in red pencil. In the following scene, the scene number is changed, first from IV to V, before ‘6’ is added in red pencil, while the original Scene VI becomes Scene 4, in which Wharton fills in some of the gaps in the plot. (I have followed Wharton’s original manuscript, leaving the new Scene 4 standing between Scenes 6 and 7, another illustration, like the favoured glued strips, of the author’s very pragmatic working processes.)
8. *over*: Unusually for Wharton, she writes (still in pencil) on both sides of this sheet, numbering the reverse side ‘3’. On the following sheet, she repeats the process, numbering the reverse ‘5’.
9. *conscious that her ... husband’s secret*: Wharton writes this insert vertically up the right-hand edge of the page.
10. *Last scene*: In contrast to the pencilled summary of the remaining acts, this dramatized final scene is written in black pen with pen corrections (excepting the strike-through – in blue pencil – of the line: ‘She has told him what she knows <suspects> & he has confessed.’)

The Necklace

1. *A married woman has a lover <(X)>*: Only Belle Mead (later spelt Meade) is named in the holograph summary, the other protagonists are given merely identifying labels (‘A married woman’, ‘a lover <(X)>’, ‘The wife’, ‘The husband’, ‘M^{rs}—’) as Wharton sketches out the plot.
2. *Kate Ashurst*: Wharton draws a line at this point to link ‘Kate Ashurst’ to ‘certainly had the gift of arranging rooms. The Ashursts become the Altursts and at times the Athursts in the play.
3. *Belle Meade, not being ... at their weakness*: The story’s opening suggests that Belle Meade might have posed an intriguing addition to the cast of female protagonists in Wharton’s oeuvre. Narrated from Belle’s perspective, the opening appears to hint almost at a female version of Lawrence Selden. Unlike Lily Bart, Belle is not dependent ‘on the ... whims of her rich friends’. From her independent stance ‘...she really was admirably placed for seeing them as they were, appreciating their good points, & smiling a little at their weaknesses’. ‘No one knew its [Long Island society’s] component elements better, or was more likely to form a more penetrating judgment of them’. Perhaps, like Selden, Belle was to be able ‘To keep a kind of republic of the spirit’ – a luxury that Lily simply cannot afford.
4. *THE NECKLACE*: In the first draft of the play, the title reads ‘The ~~Letter~~ Necklace’, Wharton perhaps considering, but promptly rejecting, an alternative piece of incrimi-