

**FACING THE FOOTLIGHTS:
A NOVEL. IN THREE
VOLUMES. VOL. III**

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Facing the footlights: A Novel. In Three Volumes. Vol. III by Florence Marryat

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FLORENCE MARRYAT

**FACING THE FOOTLIGHTS:
A NOVEL. IN THREE
VOLUMES. VOL. III**

FACING THE FOOTLIGHTS.

A NOVEL.

BY

FLORENCE MARRYAT

(MRS FRANCIS LEAN),

AUTHOR OF "LOVE'S CONFLICT," "MY SISTER THE ACTRESS,"
"PHYLIDA," ETC. ETC. ETC.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.



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FACING THE FOOTLIGHTS.

CHAPTER I.

“HOW DID YOU REPAY HER?”

IT was some months after Mrs Gerome's death. Christmas, with its tinselled glories of burlesque and pantomime, had come and gone, and Spring was once more heralding her approach by an army of green leaves.

“Have you heard the news?” asked Joe Sherard, as he returned from an early walk, and met Eudora on the staircase.

The girl was sadly altered. She had been playing vigorously all the season, but it was only by the glare of the footlights that she had any colour on her cheeks, or a flash in her eye. She looked pale, heavy, and indifferent to everything.

"What news?" she demanded, languidly.

"Why, that we are to have the celebrated London beauty, Lady Mirabel Sefton, down at Heartpool. You know that she has appeared at the 'Empress' and the 'Frolic' theatres, with fair success, and Delamaine has just told me he has secured her to appear at the 'Albert,' and expects to fill the house in consequence. And after she has finished her engagement here, he is to take her round the provinces with a selected company. Now is your time, Eudora. If Delamaine will only include you in the cast, you will have a better opportunity of being seen and heard than may fall to your lot for years in the ordinary course of events."

"What will she play?" said Eudora.

"Everything in turns, I imagine, and nothing long. It is not her acting that people will flock to see, but her face. When a woman has gained the reputation of being the greatest beauty in England, she requires nothing more to fill the pit and gallery—at all events, until the public curiosity is satisfied."

"It sounds rather like a degradation of our art," remarked Eudora quietly.

"*Sounds!* my dear? It does more than sound—*it is!* What would our dear friend, Mrs Gerome, have said to the stage being turned to such base uses? But there is but one god in the world to-day, and his name is Money. Whatever will draw money from the public will find favour with the managers; and, after all, are they so much to blame! We all like the tinkle of the cash, my dear, and wouldn't mind hearing it a little oftener than we do."

"I am glad *she* didn't live to see her place taken by a woman who has nothing