

COMMON SENSE FOR HOUSEMAIDS

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Common Sense for Housemaids by Anonymous

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ANONYMOUS

**COMMON SENSE
FOR HOUSEMAIDS**

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FOR

HOUSEMAIDS.

BY

A LADY.

Second Edition.

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EXTRACTS FROM A LADY'S JOURNAL,
SHOWING THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY FOR WRITING
THIS BOOK.

ARRIVED yesterday in Cavendish Square at half-past five o'clock, for a visit of a few days. Much fatigued, but wonderfully sustained in spirits during the journey, by the prospect of seeing a dear friend, the ten thousand comforts of her well-regulated establishment, and the bright visions of the appearance of my accustomed bed-room. Again and again, had it risen before my mind's eye, in all its glory. The inviting appearance of the smooth, flat, well-made bed, with the light night quilt of snowy whiteness (and the heavy creature folded aside); the easy chair, and footstool (with their bright crimson covers), turned towards the clear glowing fire; the dear little kettle of silvery brightness, on the hob, singing its accustomed song to its

grateful mistress. A chair before the toilet, with its pink and pure white drapery. The bright looking-glass reflecting crystal candlesticks, wax-lights, and essence-bottles, with all the perfumes of Arabia. The washhand-stand, a perfect picture, surrounded by a hundred towels. The rose soap giving out sweet odours, The additional large tumbler for the saline draft, the cup and spoon, for less pleasant powders. Alas, alas! how are all these glories buried in the dust, and dust is now indeed the order of the day; my friend is the same in heart and soul, but she has sprained her ankle, and changed her *housemaid*.

Hurried to my room to dress, as the dinner was to be at six o'clock; went straight to the accustomed corner, where my trunk, resting upon a stand, uncovered and uncorded, used to be placed in readiness to be opened. The stand was empty, the trunk upon the carpet, the ropes and cover still on and covered with dust. Rang the bell; no one answered, rang a second time; the housemaid entered, undid the ropes, removed the dusty cover, and left the room. Turned to unlock my trunk, found it had been placed with the lock turned towards the wall; tried to re-turn it—found it impossible—rang again for the housemaid, and with our united efforts turned

the trunk—stooped to unlock it, and found too late that the dust of weeks was on the carpet—shook it in disgust from my silk dress, and advanced in haste to the washhand-stand, to wash the remembrance from my hands at least,—found no soap, no warm water; fortunately had soap in my dressing-box, and, unwilling to apply a third time to a bell-rope of most frail and suspicious appearance, washed with ice-cold water, and having performed my toilet with inconvenient haste, descended to the drawing-room, and found that the dinner had been on the table some minutes. Forgot my discomforts in most agreeable conversation — but much fatigued, was thankful to retire at night, though with secret misgivings as to the discomforts I might perceive on re-entering my room. Opened the door and perceived nothing, the smoke impenetrable, and the fire out; rushed towards the window, threw it open, a rush also of wind and sleet, and the candle became extinguished; groped my way to the bell, pulled it vigorously, heard no sound, felt only a blow upon my cheek, and the bell-rope in my hand—wished it around the neck of a fellow-creature, advanced a few steps, got entangled in the ropes and cover of my trunk (still left upon the ground), stumbled and fell—found the door at last, and rushing out upon the land-

ing-place, with the bell-ropes in one hand, and all that remained of the crystal candlestick in the other, called frantically, *Housemaid, housemaid!* Mr. B—— sprang from his dressing-room en robe de chambre. "What is the matter, is it fire?" he exclaimed. "Alas, it is neither fire nor candle," was my melancholy answer, and my dark history was given. The housemaid, half undressed and sulky was brought into the room. The thick crust of small coal, through which no air could penetrate was removed, sufficient wood to light a dozen fires, thrust into the grate, pieces of small coal added, and all was soon in a blaze; the window was shut down, and the water on the washhand-stand, having once been warm, I resolved to be thankful for small mercies, and, pretending not to feel the smoke which lurked in every corner of the room, as well as in my throat, undressed and went to bed—"To bed, but not to sleep." O the variety of *mountain heights*, and the scarcity of *pleasant plains!* fell asleep at last holding fast by the side of the bed, dreamt I was a swift rolling *snow-ball*, and awoke upon the floor.

Two more nights have passed—No, I will not detail them. What is friendship but a name?

I will leave the house——

I WILL WRITE A BOOK!