

§ 1. I want to tell you about my old friend Bobbie Cardew. If you're a recent acquaintance of Bobbie's, you'll probably be surprised to hear that there was a time when he was known for having a weak memory. In the days when first knew him Bobbie Cardew was the most unreliable person you could ever imagine. If I invited him to come and have dinner with me, I had to go to all sorts of trouble. I used to post him a letter at the beginning of the week, and then the day before send him a telegram, and a phone call on the day itself.

§ 2. One day Bobbie did something I would never have expected. He fell in love, got married — full of excitement, as if it were the greatest fun in the world — and then began to find out things.

§ 3. Her name was Mary Anthony. She was a hospital nurse. When Bobbie Smashed himself up playing polo she was there in the hospital taking care of him. No sooner was he up and about again than they were busy making wedding plans. A real case of love at first sight They took a flat and settled down. I was in and out of the place a good deal. Everything appeared to be running along as Smoothly as you could want. Mary seemed to think Bobbie the greatest thing on earth and Bobbie seemed to think the same about her.

§ 4. But now we come to the incident of the Quiet Dinner, which is when things began to happen. I met Bobbie in the street one day and he asked me to come back to dinner at his flat. When we got there I was amazed at how lovely Mary looked. She had her red-gold hair piled up on her head with a diamond tiara in it and was wearing a really beautiful dress. No wonder, I thought, that Bobbie liked married life. "Hello, dear," he said. "I've brought Reggie home for a bit of dinner." Mary stared at him as if she had never seen him before. Then she turned scarlet. Then she turned white as a sheet of paper. Then she gave a little laugh, before finally **recovering** herself. After that she was all right. She talked a lot at dinner, teased Bobbie and played tunes for us on the piano afterwards, as if she hadn't a care in the world. But I had seen her face at the beginning, and I knew that she was working hard to keep herself in hand and not scream. At the very earliest moment I made my excuses and got away.

§ 5. When I met Bobbie at the club next day he seemed glad to have someone to talk to. "Do you know how long I've been married?" he said "About a year, isn't it?" "Not about a year," he said sadly. "Yesterday was the anniversary of the wedding. I'd arranged to take Mary to the theatre. She **particularly** wanted to hear Caruso sing. I had a ticket for the box in my pocket. You know, all through dinner I had some vague idea that there was something I'd forgotten, but I couldn't think what."

Определите значение указанного слова в тексте.

recovering (§ 4)

- 1) putting on a piece of clothing 2) pulling herself together
- 3) reappearing