

ONE WAY IN

In a dream-like sequence, Samuel Carter recounts his imaginary journey to the afterlife, finding himself in a bureaucratic setting reminiscent of a celestial customs office. Upon entering a small, square room through a green baize door, he is greeted by Rhadamanthus, the judge of the dead. Carter witnesses the graceful exit of Mrs. Hilary through a door labeled "Elysian Fields" and expresses his interest in joining her, but Rhadamanthus, stationed at a large table, requests Carter to sit as he reviews his "account."

The dialogue unfolds as Rhadamanthus sifts through Carter's life, touching on moments that range from a petty fine at Bowstreet, defended by Carter as youthful folly, to habitual visits to Monte Carlo, which Carter playfully justifies. The conversation turns grave when a caveat lodged by the Dowager Lady Mickleham arises, indicating a significant impediment to Carter's passage.

Before the matter can be resolved, a diversion unfolds as Dolly Mickleham enters the room. The interaction between Dolly and Rhadamanthus shifts the tone, infusing the dream with charm and wit. Despite allegations from "half the women in London" against her and Rhadamanthus's initial firmness, Dolly's demeanor—flirtatious, disarming, and finally, plaintively persuasive—softens the judge's stance. Employing a mixture of guile and a subtle plea, she convinces Rhadamanthus to grant her entry to the Elysian Fields, leaving with a quick, teasing kiss.

The story briefly returns to Carter, who, observing the preferential treatment awarded to Dolly, attempts to leave, anticipating a similar leniency. Rhadamanthus's reaction, a blend of embarrassment and authority, underscores the inequity of the situation yet suggests a bending of rules under the right circumstances. The title, "One Way In," with its supernatural setup, humorously explores themes of charm, social navigation, and the arbitrariness of moral judgment, all encapsulated within Carter's dreamlike

encounter in the threshold of the afterlife.

