

Since the beginning of time, no woman has been a mystery to another woman. Women understand each other, although they are still a mystery to men. Suddenly, Barbara saw her opportunity to get Gilbert back from Nevada.

Barbara **hesitated** for a moment. “Really, Nevada,” she said, looking **embarrassed**, “why did you tell me to open this letter. It’s for you – I’m sure Gilbert didn’t want me or anybody else to read it.”

Nevada forgot her gloves for a moment and looked at Barbara.

“Then read it aloud,” she said. “You’ve already read it, so what’s the difference? If Gilbert wrote me something impolite, or suggested something bad, something that nobody else should know, that’s exactly why everybody should know it.”

“Well,” said Barbara, “this is what it says: ‘Dearest Nevada, Come to my studio at twelve o’clock tonight. It’s very important.’” Barbara stood up and gave the letter to Nevada. “I’m sorry that I know this,” she said. “This isn’t like Gilbert, perhaps there’s some mistake. Let’s pretend that I don’t know. I must go upstairs now, my head hurts. I don’t understand the letter. Perhaps Gilbert drank too much wine and will explain. Goodnight!”

#### PART 4

Nevada walked quietly to the hall and heard Barbara’s door close upstairs. The time was a quarter to twelve. She ran quickly to the front door and went out into the **snowstorm**. Gilbert Warren’s studio was six streets away.

The snow was half a metre deep and the street was very quiet. Sometimes a carriage or a car drove past.

Nevada ran through the storm like a bird in a strong **wind**. She looked up at the tall buildings around her. With the night-lights shining on the clouds around them, the buildings were grey, pink and purple. When she looked at them, she

remembered the mountains of her home in the West in winter and she felt happy – happier than she felt in the hundred-thousand-dollar house.

A policeman stood on the corner, looking at her. “Hello, Miss,” he said. “It’s late for you to be out, isn’t it?”

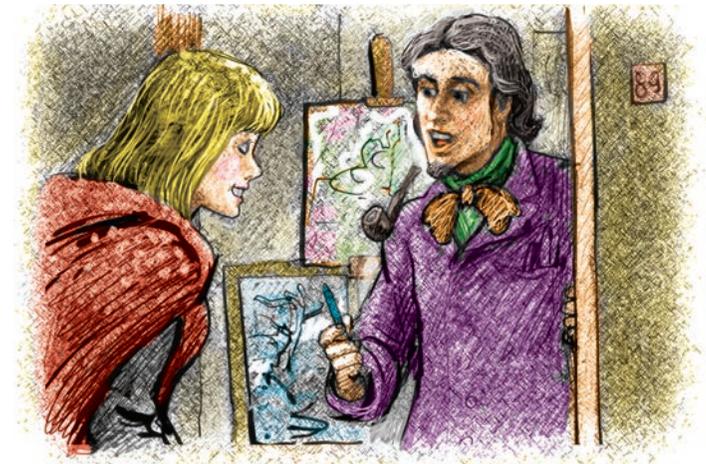
“I’m just going to the **drugstore**,” said Nevada and walked quickly past him.

Nevada turned east. Now the wind was against her, so she walked more slowly. Her feet made zig-zag **marks** in the snow, but she was strong and continued to walk. Suddenly, she saw the studio building. It was a big building, dark and silent. It had an **elevator** which stopped working at ten o’clock.

Nevada climbed up eight **floors** of dark stairs and knocked loudly on the door of number 89. She knew the place well, as she often visited it with Barbara and Uncle Jerome.

Gilbert opened the door. He had a crayon in one hand and a **pipe** in his mouth. His mouth opened in surprise and the pipe fell to the floor.

“Am I late?” asked Nevada. “I came as quickly as I could. Uncle and I were at the theatre this evening. Here I am, Gilbert!”



*His mouth opened in surprise and the pipe fell to the floor.*