

**THE THUNDERBOLT; AN  
EPISODE IN THE HISTORY  
OF A PROVINCIAL  
FAMILY; IN FOUR ACTS**

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The thunderbolt; an episode in the history of a provincial family; in four acts by Arthur W. Pinero

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**ARTHUR W. PINERO**

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# The Thunderbolt

An Episode in the History  
Of a Provincial Family

In Four Acts

By  
ARTHUR W. PINERO

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# The Thunderbolt



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# The Thunderbolt

## THE PERSONS OF THE PLAY

- JAMES MORTIMORE.  
ANN, *his wife*.  
STEPHEN MORTIMORE.  
LOUISA, *his wife*.  
THADDEUS MORTIMORE.  
PHYLLIS, *his wife*.  
JOYCE } *The Thaddeus Mortimores' children.*  
CYRIL }  
COLONEL PONTING.  
ROSE, *his wife, née Mortimore*.  
HELEN THORNHILL.  
THE REV. GEORGE TRIST.  
MR. VALLANCE, *solicitor, of Singlehampton*.  
MR. ELKIN, *solicitor, of Linchpool*.  
MR. DENYER, *a house-agent*.  
HEATH, *a man-servant*.  
*A servant girl at Nelson Villas.*  
*Two others at "Ivanhoe."*

*The scene of the First Act is laid at Linchpool, a city in the Midlands. The rest of the action takes place, a month later, in the town of Singlehampton.*





# The Thunderbolt

## THE FIRST ACT

*The scene represents a large, oblong room, situated on the ground floor and furnished as a library. At the back, facing the spectator, are three sash windows, slightly recessed, with venetian blinds. There is a chair in each recess. At the further end of the right-hand wall a door opens from the hall, the remaining part of the wall—that nearer to the audience—being occupied by a long dwarf-bookcase. This bookcase finishes at each end with a cupboard, and on the top of each cupboard stands a lamp. The keys of the cupboards are in their locks.*

*On the left-hand side of the room, in the middle of the wall, is a fireplace with a fender-stool before it, and on either side of the fireplace there is a tall bookcase with glazed doors. A high-backed armchair faces the fireplace at the further end. A smoking-table with the usual accessories, a chair, and a settee stand at the nearer end of the fireplace, a few feet from the wall.*

*Almost in the centre of the room, facing the spectator, there is a big knee-hole writing-table with a lamp upon it.*

*On the further side of the table is a writing-chair. Another chair stands beside the table.*

*On the right, near the dwarf-bookcase, there is a circular library-table on which are strewn books, newspapers, and*

*magazines. Round this table a settee and three chairs are arranged.*

*The furniture and decorations, without exhibiting any special refinement of taste, are rich and massive.*

*The venetian blinds are down and the room is in semi-darkness. What light there is proceeds from the bright sunshine visible through the slats.*

*Seated about the room, as if waiting for somebody to arrive, are JAMES and ANN MORTIMORE, STEPHEN and LOUISA, THADDEUS and PHYLLIS, and COLONEL PONTING and ROSE. The ladies are wearing their hats and gloves. Everybody is in the sort of black which people hurriedly muster while regular mourning is in the making—in the case of the MORTIMORES, the black being added to apparel of a less sombre kind. All speak in subdued voices.*

[*Note: Throughout, "right" and "left" are the spectators' right and left, not the actor's.*]

ROSE.

[*A lady of forty-four, fashionably dressed and coiffured and with a suspiciously blooming complexion—on the settee on the left, fanning herself.*] Oh, the heat! I'm stifled.

LOUISA.

[*On the right—forty-six, a spare, thin-voiced woman.*] Mayn't we have a window open?

ANN.

[*Beside the writing-table—a stolid, corpulent woman of fifty.*] I don't think we ought to have a window open.

JAMES.

[*At the writing-table—a burly, thick-set man, a little*

older than his wife, with iron-gray hair and beard and a crape band round his sleeve.] Fiew! Why not, mother?

ANN.

It isn't usual in a house of mourning—except in the room where the —

PONTING.

[*In the armchair before the fireplace—fifty-five, short, stout, apoplectic.*] Rubbish! [*Dabbing his brow.*] I beg your pardon—it's like the Black Hole of Calcutta.

THADDEUS.

[*Rising from the settee on the right, where he is sitting with PHYLLIS—a meek, care-worn man of two-and-forty.*] Shall I open one a little way?

STEPHEN.

[*On the further side of the library-table—forty-nine, bald, stooping, with red rims to his eyes, wearing spectacles.*] Do, Tad.

[*THADDEUS goes to the window on the right and opens it.*]

THADDEUS.

[*From behind the venetian blind.*] Here's a fly.

JAMES.

[*Taking out his watch as he rises.*] That'll be Crake. Half-past eleven. He's in good time.

THADDEUS.

[*Looking into the street.*] It isn't Crake. It's a young fellow.

JAMES.

Young fellow?