The way up to heaven’s plot.

The story is about a rich lady named Mrs. Foster, who has an "almost pathological fear of missing a train, a plane, a boat, or even a theatre curtain". She is planning to fly to visit her daughter and grandchildren. Her husband, Mr. Eugene Foster, a former businessman who is now retired, seems to revel in taking his time when preparing for this event, much to the distress of Mrs. Foster. Her husband wants to stay at a club in the time she is in Paris, and their servants are given six weeks off, retaining half-pay.

The next day Mrs. Foster is terrified she will be late, and expresses her worries to the butler, Walker. He assures her that she will make her flight, but she persists. In spite of her worrying of being late for her flight, she arrives at the airport on time and soon finds that flights have been delayed because of bad weather. The car she arrived in has since left, and she continues to wait in the airport for further news concerning her trip. Finally, it is announced that her flight has been delayed until 11 am the following day. She calls her husband, returns home and spends the night there.

The following morning as Mrs. Foster prepares to take her car to the airport, her husband announces that he should be dropped off at the club on the way, which terrifies her, it being somewhat out-of-the-way. Before they leave, he pretends to have forgotten a present he had intended for their daughter Ellen, and to Mrs. Foster's dismay he ventures into the house in search of it. As she grows increasingly impatient and anxious whilst waiting in the car, she notices the present - a comb - hiding in the crack of the seat where her husband had been sitting and "couldn't help noticing that it was wedged down firm and deep, as though with the help of a pushing hand ", and tells the chauffeur to call him down. He tries to enter and notices the door is locked. She decides to go herself, but then, with the key in the door she suddenly freezes, as if listening intently. After a few seconds, she returns to the car, says there is no time, and is driven off to the airport. She makes her flight with a few minutes to spare. Things go well in Paris, and she writes to her husband each Tuesday. When she returns to Idlewild Airport she is mildly interested to find her husband has not sent a car to meet her, but she gets into a taxi, arrives home, rings the bell but no answer. She sees the mail has built up and there still is one of the servant's cloths over the grandfather clock, and smells a peculiar odour. Noticing that the elevator is not in order, she calmly dials for a repairman and waits at her husband's desk for his arrival.

The implication is that Mr. Foster was stuck in the elevator, and that despite hearing his pleas for help, Mrs. Foster condemned him to death by leaving as the house was to be unoccupied for six weeks. She knew he could not survive in a stuck elevator for more than a couple of days, never mind six weeks.