Morton, Thomas

The Children in the Wood

A musical piece

in two acts.

THE

# CHILDREN IN THE WOOD:

*A MUSICAL PIECE,*

IN TWO ACTS,

BY THOMAS MORTON, ESQ.

As performed

AT THE NEW-YORK THEATRE.

From the prompt-book—by permission.

*second edition.*

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Copy 2.

Joseph D. Vance,

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

| | |
|---|---|
| Sir Rowland, - - - | Mr. Hallam, junr. |
| Lord Alford, - - - | Mr. Tyler. |
| Walter, - - - - | Mr. Hodgkinson. |
| Apathy, - - - - | Mr. Johnson. |
| Gabriel, - - - - | Mr. Martin. |
| Oliver, - - - - | Mr. Burd. |

Ruffians, Servants, Mutes, &c.

| | |
|---|---|
| Helen, - - - - | Mrs. Melmoth. |
| Josephine, - - - | Mrs. Darley. |
| Winifred, - - - - | Mrs. Hogg. |
| Boy, - - - - - | Miss Petit. |
| Girl, - - - - - | Miss Delamater. |

Female Servants, &c.

*SCENE*—lord Alford's castle and neighborhood.

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MEMORANDUM—*the passages distinguished by inverted commas, thus* (") *are omitted in the performance.*

# CHILDREN IN THE WOOD.

## ACT I.

SCENE I—*a hall.*

APATHY, *discovered with books, a bottle and glass.*

*Apathy.* What a set of fools are philosophers, who advise you to study away life for the benefit of posterity; that is, die while you live, that you may live when you die. Ay, these things (*shewing books*) may do well enough to garnish the brains of fools, but this is the feast of reason. (*drinks*) As tutor to these orphans, I have a tolerable easy life :—I pimp for their uncle, my patron; that's no difficult matter :—muster latin enough to puzzle the parson; that's no difficult matter;—teach children idleness, that's no difficult matter;—go into the cellar for an hour or two; that's no difficult matter; come out again; that's no difficult—yes, that's sometimes a very difficult matter. (*drinks*)

*enter* JOSEPHINE.

*Jos.* Mr. Apathy—shame on you—drinking in a morning!

*Ap.* Why, my dear, sir Rowland ordered me to plead his passion for you; so I was taking a drop to inspire me.

*Jos.* I wonder sir Rowland can be so foolish to talk of love to a poor girl like me.

*Ap.* So do I; but he says he's unhappy, and how a man who has such a cellar as sir Rowland has, can be unhappy, is to me amazing;—but have you no feeling!

*Jos.* I am sure you have none. Dont you remember when poor Walter, the carpenter's house was burnt down?

*Ap.* I have a shrewd guess, that Walter has drilled a hole through your heart.

*Jos.* Dont you remember. I say, that your first inquiry was after the safety of the sucking pigs, and never shed a tear for the fate of the poor family : was that feeling ?

*Ap.* No, that was philosophy.

*Jos.* Philosophy !

*Ap.* Yes, *my* philosophy ; and this is the fount from whence it springs (*pointing to the bottle*) By eating we attain the highest promotions of church and state. How do you acquire the dignity of lord mayor ? you eat your way to it. And by drinking, we approach the gods, who never walk'd—they slid (*staggering*)

*Jos.* (*looking*) Ha ! yonder comes my dear Walter ; I wonder how he got admission. Go to the children mr. Apathy.

*Ap.* What shall I say to my patron ?

*Jos.* I dont care what you say—only go (*pushes him out*)

SONG—JOSEPHINE.

When nights were cold, and rain and sleet
  Full hard against the window beat ;
Then many a long and weary mile
  My Walter travelled to behold me ;
His toil repaid to see me smile,
  And sweetly in his arms enfold me ;
And through the night we'd sit and chat ;—
  Alas ! there was no harm in that.

How sweet his words, whene'er he spoke !
  But O ! when he his passion broke !
Upon his lips, the falt'ring tale
  More grace received from his confusion ;
And now by turns his cheeks look'd pale ;
  Or crimson'd o'er with mild suffusion ;
Our beating hearts went pit-a-pat ;
  Alas !—there was no harm in that.

Sir Rowland tries our bliss to move,
  Though we so oft have sworn to love ;
His cruelty our vows would break—
  I'll hie me to some shade forsaken ;

Where only of my love I'll speak—
To prove my faith and truth unshaken,
I'll wander where we both have sat—
Sure there will be no harm in that.

*enter* WALTER, *with caution.*

*Walt.* My sweet Josephine.

*Jos.* Oh, Walter, should sir Rowland find you—

*Walt.* Oh, curse that master of yours. I tell you what, Josephine—consent to run away from this castle, or I shall think you listen to him.

*Jos.* Walter, dont be a fool. I'll not leave the castle, while the dear orphans remain here. I must ever fulfil the parting injunction of my dear lady Helen, when she went to India to meet her husband, lord Alford. Says she, 'Josephine, thy affection for my dear infants is my greatest comfort; should fate separate us, my faithful girl, protect them.'

*Walt.* Oh, we have given up all hope of seeing lord Alford, and his sweet lady. Heaven rest their souls—heigho! but I did not come here to cry.—I say Josephine, it's devilish hard to be so poor; I, that everybody says, am such an industrious clever fellow. Now a coffin: I'll make a coffin with e'er a carpenter in Norfolk. And the farmers' wives say, that at a bed, I'm the thing. I'm making a bed for us, my girl, all right and tight.

*Jos.* I have no notion of your making beds for farmers' wives, indeed!

*Walt.* To be sure I have had temptations; but I never found any perfect, but Josephine.

SONG—WALTER.

There was Dorothy Dump, would mutter and mump,
And cry'd, 'my dear Walter—heigho!
But no step she could take, could my constancy shake,
For she had a timber toe.

There was Deborah Rose, with her aquiline nose,
Who cry'd, 'for you, Walter, I die!'
But I laughed at each glance, she threw me askance.—
For she had a gimblet eye!

There was Tabitha Twist, had a mind to be kist!
And made on my heart an attack:
But her love I derided, for she was lop-sided!
And cursedly warp'd in the back!

There was Barbara Brian, was always a crying,
'Dear youth, put an end to my woes!'
But to save in her head all the tears that she shed,
Nature gave her a bottled nose!

Josephine came at last, to nail my heart fast—
Firm as the oak will I prove to my dear;
And when parson Tether, has tack'd us together,
Some chips of the—block may appear!

*Jos.* Well that's all very well Walter, but I must have you all to myself, recollect Walter.

*Walt.* Well to be sure you shall, oh, this cursed sir Rowland, he'll make you give yourself airs like a fine lady—egad I'm half jealous of him already.

*Jos.* Ay, ay, Walter, if I thought after we were married you'd be jealous, I'd never marry you at all.

DUET—JOSEPHINE AND WALTER.

*Jos.* The jealous man wont you assume when you marry?
And wont you frown, mutter, and plague me with doubts.
*Walt.* And wont you, whenever your point you would carry,
Have fits, fret and whimper, and be in the pouts?
*Jos.* No bouncing: but zounds! ma'am, pray alter your plan—
*Walt.* No whining and crying, you barbarous man!
*Jos.* But you love me?
*Walt.* Yes, yes!
*Jos.* And be constant?
*Walt.* No, no!
*Jos.* What! not constant?
*Walt.* Yes, yes!
*Jos.* Did you mean—

*Walt.* No, not so.

*Both.* I'm sure we're agreed—no more words—let us marry ;

Love's meaning no aid wants from language I know.

*Wall.* And wont you before folks, be fond, coax and flatter,

While turning behind give a lover your hand ?

*Jos.* And wont you when I'm in a humour to chatter,

Cry, 'oh! I'm so sleepy I can't understand ?

*Walt.* No smirking, and squeezing, my dear, and all that.

*Jos.* No yawinng and gaping, when I want to chat!

*Walt.* But you love me ?

*Jos.* Yes, yes, &c. &c.

Sir *Row.* *(without)* This way Oliver.

*Jos.* Hush, sir Rowland's voice.

*enter sir* ROWLAND, OLIVER, *and two ruffians.*

Sir *Row.* Walter here !—slave, your business ?

*Walt.* My business ! oh my business was, your honor, was a job.

Sir *Row.* A job, was it ?

*Walt. and Jos.* Yes, sir, a job.

Sir *Row.* Seize that fellow !

*(ruffians seize Walter)*

*Walt.* Oh dear, here's a pretty job !

*Jos.* Oh, sir, have pity ! *(children laugh without)*

Sir *Row.* Silence these brats, and prepare them for the visit they must pay their gossips. (*children laugh*) Silence them I say. (*exit Josephine*) Soon their silence shall be eternal. My brother being concluded dead—that 'lustrious orb being set in night, shall these his pigmy sattellites eclipse me now ? no, that fellow I am sure of (*pointing to Oliver*) he shall dispatch them, while on this seeming visit. Yet to venture him alone will breed distrust , from his eye remorse is banished, and unmasked murder lowers upon his brow. Were it not well to ply this Walter ? relief from present fears, the hopes of Josephine, backed with tenements and bribes, will surely palsy the conscience of a hind. I'll

about it, and use him as the peaceful scabbard to conceal the murdering blade. Oliver, I've found you a companion for our purpose; be ready. (*to Walter*) Slave, follow me. [*exeunt*

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SCENE II—*a room—Apathy discovered asleep on a chair—a book lying open at his feet, and the children playing about the room.*

*enter* JOSEPHINE.

*Jos.* Mr. Apathy asleep! oh fie! (*awaking him*)
*Ap.* I've had a very comfortable nap.
*Jos.* The children are going to visit their godfather.
*Ap.* With all my heart. What's o'clock.
*Jos.* Exactly mid-day.
*Ap.* Is dinner ready?
*Jos.* It is not ordered yet.
*Ap.* Not ordered! talk to me of children and nonsense, and the dinner not ordered—here! cook! cook! [*exit*
*Jos.* (*to the boy*) Have you learnt my song yet?
*Boy.* I'll try to sing it, if you'll help me.
*Jos.* Come then, follow me.

DUET—BOY AND JOSEPHINE.

*Jos.* Young Simon in his lovely Sue,
Beheld a darling treasure;
*Boy.* Young Simon, &c.
*Jos.* The toilsome day before him flew;
For love makes labor pleasure.
*Boy.* The toilsome &c.
*Jos.* O fie, dear boy can't you discern,
Tis love makes labor pleasure;
*Boy.* O yes, dear girl! I soon shall learn,
That love makes labor pleasure.
*Jos.* O fie, dear boy!
*Boy.* Oh yes, dear girl!
*Jos.* Oh fie! cant you discern?
*Boy.* Oh yes, dear girl, I soon shall learn,
That love makes labor pleasure,

RECITATIVE.

*Boy.* But I am loath to sour sweet music's strains;
Shall we begin ?
*Jos.* Yes.
*Both.* We will begin again.

DUET:

*Jos.* Young Simon in his lovely Sue, &c.
*Boy.* The toilsome day, &c.

(*during this duet the girl remains at the top of the stage playing withher doll, &c.*)

*Jos.* Well are you perfect in your song yet?
*Girl.* Yes.
*Jos.* Then sing it.

SONG—GIRL.

When first I slip'd my leading strings, to please her little Poll,
My mother bought me at the fair, a pretty waxen doll ;
Such sloe black eyes, and cherry cheeks, the smiling dear possest,
How could I kiss it oft enough or hug it to my breast.

No sooner I could chatter too, as most young misses do,
Then how I long'd and sigh'd to hear my Dolly prattle too ;
I curl'd her hair, in ringlets neat, and drest her very gay ;
But yet the sulky hussey—not a syllable would say.

Provok'd that to my questions kind, no answer could I get,
I shook the little hussey well, and whipt her in a pet ;
My mother cried, oh, fie for shame, pray let your Doll alone,
If e'er you wish to have a pretty baby of your own !

My head on this I bridled up, and threw the play thing by.
Although my sister snub'd me for't—I know the reason why ;
I fancy she would wish to keep the *sweethearts* all her own,

But that she shan't depend upon't when I'm a woman grown.

*Boy* (*coming down*) Is your song done?

*Girl.* Yes.

*Boy.* I'm glad of it.

*Girl.* Ar'n't you my darling? (*to her doll*) If you are good when I am gone, you shall have a lord mayor for a husband; so my dear mama said to me when she went away. And when I am gone, Josephine, dont you listen to the naughty men, my mama said that to you too.

*Boy.* Who goes with us to our godfather's?

*Jos.* Oliver, my dear.

*Boy.* I won't go with Oliver.

*Jos.* Why, love?

*Boy.* Because of what I heard Walter say.

*Jos.* What was that?

*Boy.* That Oliver was a damn'd black looking rascal.

*Jos.* Heavens! my dear, hush, I shall scold Walter for talking so wickedly.

*Girl.* I dont think you will.

*Jos.* Why, child?

*Girl.* Because last night, when you were asleep, you cried, 'oh, Walter, how I love you!' oh you did; and now I'm sure its true, because you blush so.

*Jos* Fie, you little tell-tale. (*sees Walter in earnest conversation with sir Rowland*)

*Girl.* Oh, here's my cross uncle, let's run away; I wish, Josephine, you were my uncle instead of him.

[*exeunt*

*enter sir* ROWLAND *and* WALTER.

*Walt.* What, your honor?

Sir *Row.* The children's death! that's my purpose—the reward, Josephine.

*Walt.* Their death your purpose! the reward, Josephine! tempt me with the form of an angel, to do the act of a devil—murder innocents! who—dam-me, I've a great mind to throttle him. Eh! but if I refuse? I'll seemingly consent: and if I can but save them—the very thought makes me cry for joy.

Sir *Row.* What, whimpering, fool?

*Walt.* Why, you see, sir, I'm not much used to butcher children—it's rather out of my line.

Sir *Row.* What's your determination?

*Walt.* I must not consent too soon. (*aside*) Why, if, sir, my honor—

Sir *Row.* Honor! it's a worthless metal; yields no advantage to the holder, and is sullied by the slightest breath of malice. Wise men plate it over with gold; that gives it currency, and repels envy's corroding tooth.

*Walt.* Why, that's very true; very true to be sure. But then to be scorned—

Sir *Row.* Look through the world:—where points scorn his finger? at ermined guilt? no, at ragged honesty: not at cannopied oppression—but at houseless merit. Be wise, be wise.

*Walt.* Why, that's true again, your honor; I consent; and if I dont—

Sir *Row.* Hush! Oliver will accompany you.

*Walt.* Zounds! that blood thirsty villain! you had better let me do it alone.

Sir *Row.* Silence! take this sword—but first swear—

*Walt.* I never swear, my lord, never swear; it's a very bad habit.

Sir *Row.* No trifling, fool—swear when next we meet, it shall be sheath'd with blood.

*Walt.* Well for once, I will swear: by my hopes of mercy, it shall be sheath'd with blood. (*takes the sword*)

Sir *Row.* Now, follow me. [*exeunt*

---

SCENE III—*an apartment in sir Rowland's castle.*

*enter* JOSEPHINE, CHILDREN *and* WALTER.

*Walt.* My dear Josephine, I have such news to tell you! I'm high in favor with sir Rowland; I am going with the children.

*Girl.* I'm glad you are going, Walter.

*Boy.* And so am I.

*Jos.* Here's your mamma's picture.

*Boy.* I'll have it.

*Girl.* I'm sure I ought to have it; for I am a very puny little girl, and ought to be made a pet of.

*Jos.* (*putting the picture on the girl*) She was an elegant woman.

*Girl.* And every body says I am very like her.

*Walt.* Josephine, I have something to tell you will make your hair stand on end. You must know—hush!

*enter sir* ROWLAND *and* OLIVER.

Sir *Row.* My little prattlers, how do you do?—What delighted with your journey?

*Boy and Girl.* Oh! yes, uncle. (*go up the stage with sir Rowland—Oliver remains rather up*)

*Jos.* (*comes forward with Walter*) Walter you have got on a sword!

*Walt.* A sword, have I? yes, it is a kind of a sword to be sure.

*Jos.* What are you going to do with it?

*Walt.* What am I going to do with it? oh, Josephine. I've such a—hum!

Sir *Row.* (*coming down with the children*) Take leave of Josephine.

*Girl* Good bye, Josephine; kiss us. Dont cry—we'll soon come back. Shan't we, uncle!

Sir *Row.* By all means, sweeting. (*Walter takes the children in each hand*) Farewel, my little cherubs, and heaven take you to its care.

*Walt.* (*going off*) Amen!

[*exeunt Walter leading the children, Oliver following*

*Jos.* Heigho! I shall be quite uneasy till they return: I can't bear melancholy.

Sir *Row.* How cruel then to inflict it?

*Jos.* Pray, my lord, cease your importunities:—were your passion such as with honor I might listen to, I could not love you.

Sir *Row.* Josephine, hear me.—I see persuasion is in vain.—Mark! what has hitherto been entreaty shall now be will. Though love and gratitude be dead in you—fear, I perceive, exists. My purpose is determined—resolve then quickly, and choose—my love or hate.

*enter* APATHY *with a bill of fare.*

DUET—JOSEPHINE *and* APATHY.

*Jos.* Great sir, consider, to my honor I'm steady.
*Ap.* Great sir, consider, the dinner is ready.
*Jos.* An humble domestic is now worth your care.
*Ap.* Dear sir, give me leave to present the bill of fare.
*Jos.* Take a lady——
*Ap.* Here's tongue——
*Jos.* With honor——
*Ap.* And mutton.
*Jos.* If handsome and young——
*Ap.* What a feast for a glutton!
*Jos.* Dress'd in bodice so fine, and in kirtle so tasty.
*Ap.* With bittern, and quails, and a fine ven'son pastry—
*Jos.* But ah, sir, beware of jealousy!
*Ap.* And mustard.
*Jos.* Else you will prove by your care——
*Ap.* A goose and bustard.
*Jos.* Your love is too hot.
*Ap.* The mutton's overboil'd.
*Jos.* My fame you would blot——
*Ap.* And the pig will be spoil'd.
*Jos.* Believe me, great sir, to my honor I'm steady.
*Ap.* And believe me, great sir, the dinner is ready.
[*exeunt*

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SCENE IV—*a wood.*

*enter* OLIVER, *looking around, and beckons to* WALTER, *who enters with the children through cut wood.*

*Oliv.* This place will do delightfully.
*Walt.* I dont like the place.
*Oliv.* This shall be the place.
*Walt.* Well, if you insist upon it: there (*to the children*) go and play, I want to talk to Oliver. (*children retire to the back of the stage*) I tell you what, Oliver, I know you have one failing.

*Oliv.* Ay, what's that?

*Walt.* You are too tender hearted—you are indeed—now I am so hard hearted a dog, I could murder for amusement. So do you go back to the castle, get the reward, and leave the job to me.

*Oliv.* What, you'll despatch them, will you?

*Walt.* Yes! yes! you are too tender hearted—One may see it with half an eye. So, good bye. I'll do for them. Good bye, Oliver.

(*attempting to force him off*)

*Oliv.* Why you must think me a pretty scoundrel.

*Walt.* (*aside*) I do, for that matter.

*Oliv.* To receive money for doing a bit of work, and not completing it, but I'll—

(*attempting to pass to the children*)

*Walt.* (*stopping him*) Stay, a little—eh!—I see you can't bear the thought of it; this is all put on. Your heart melts, (*aside*) how savage he looks!—and there's a tear standing on the corner of your eye. (*wiping one from his own*) Oliver, how pity becomes you! I say, Oliver, suppose we were—suppose we were—just to save them?

*Oliv.* What!

*Walt.* I say, my dear fellow—suppose we were—how pretty and innocent they look—suppose we were to save 'em?

*Oliv.* To save them, eh!

*Walt.* Yes! oh very well, we will—you wish it, and I consent.

*Oliv.* Why should we save 'em?

*Walt.* I dont know; there are two or three trifling reasons to be sure. First, it is not very manly to murder helpless babes—and then, the thought of it, afterwards, might give one ugly pains about here, (*pointing to his breast*) and then we shall be damn'd for it—and—

*Oliv.* Now, are you not a pretty rascal?—but I'll—

(*Oliver makes towards the children, who run from him, then kneel, and implore Walter's interference*)

*Boy and Girl.* O Walter, save us!

*Walt.* (*seizing Oliver's arm*) Only two questions more.

*Oliv.* Well!

*Walt.* And have you the heart to it?

*Oliv.* Yes!

*Walt.* And have you an arm strong enough to fell me down, you damn'd dog?

*Oliv.* Fell you!

*Walt.* Ay! for you must, before you shall touch a hair of their heads. (*draws his sword*)

*Oliv.* Indeed! we'll try that.

(*Oliver and Walter fight—Walter drops his sword, which is taken up by the girl and given him—the fight is renewed, and Walter pursues and kills Oliver—during the fight, the children are up the stage*)

*re-enter* WALTER *with his sword, and his hand bloody.*

*Walt.* I never knew I had so much pluck in me. Damme, how I laid about his timbers. Come forth my little tremblers. I am your champion.

*Girl.* Have you killed Oliver?

*Walt.* Dead as a door-nail.

*Boy.* Go, kill him again.

*Girl.* Such a rogue as he cannot be too dead—let's go back to my uncle.

*Walt.* Poor innocents! you must not go there.

*Girl.* Oh, poor Walter, your hand bleeds; come, I'll kiss it, and make it well. (*kisses his hand*)

*Walt.* I'm the happiest fellow in christendom. Hold, what's best to be done? eh! I have it: I'll leave them here, return to that rascal their uncle, get my reward and Josephine, and carry them all from the reach of the Herod. My dears, will you stay here till I return?

*Girl.* We'll do any thing Walter bids us.

*Walt.* Look, here's a pretty arbor; and here's my cloak to sit down upon; and here are cakes for you Now dont wander; I'll bring Josephine to you—dont stir. Good bye.—Oh, lord! oh, lord! if doing one worthy action gives such joy, how happy might the

great be, who have opportunities of doing them daily. [*exit*

*Boy.* Look sister, what clusters of nuts and blackberries there are yonder.

*Girl.* Let's go and pluck them; we can soon find our way back again you know; they are nicer than the manchets Walter left us.

*Boy.* I should like to live here always; to have nothing to do, but play all day, catch birds, and eat berries.

SONG—GIRL.

See, brother see, on yonder bough
The robin sits;—hark! I hear him now:
Listen, brother, to the note
From pretty robin red-breast's throat;

Sweetest bird that ever flew,
Whistle, robin, loodle loo,
Loodle loo, sweet robin, &c.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

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## ACT II.

SCENE I—*a room in sir Rowland's castle.*

*enter sir* ROWLAND, *followed by a servant.*

Sir *Row.* To speak with me! is it Oliver or Walter? heaven forfend harm should have reached my children.

*Serv.* I never saw this man before, sir He says his business is urgent.

Sir *Row.* Admit him. [*exit servant*

*enter* GABRIEL, *drunk.*

Ha! my brother's servant. Should he be alive? Gabriel, I'm glad to see you.

*Gab.* The joy is mutual, your honor; but your honor looks a little pale;—your countenance has not that rosy healthful appearance mine has.

Sir *Row.* Grief, Gabriel.

*Gab.* Ay, your honor, and grief brings on drinking, and then what is man? oh never drink!

Sir *Row.* Now to know my fate. (*aside*) I shall soon meet my brother, where grief can never come.

*Gab.* True, you'll meet very soon.

Sir *Row.* All's safe. (*aside*) Where are my brother's sad remains?

*Gab.* Remains! oh, he remains a little way off, your honor.

Sir *Row.* Gabriel, this drunken guise little becomes your mournful errand.

*Gab.* Why you see, your honor, I was sent before to get every thing ready; but living on salt provisions at sea, gave me such a confounded thirst, that I was forced to stop every mile, just to moisten my mouth with a draught of ale; so on the second day's journey, my master overtook me. So, says he Gabriel.

Sir *Row.* Says!—who says?

*Gab.* My master.—Gabriel, says he, I discharge you; but my sweet mistress begg'd I might stay. So my master only gave me a kick, and sent me forward again.

Sir *Row.* Ideot! wretch!—he's dead—

*Gab.* Dead! I could show you the mark he made with his foot; and if you call that a blow for a dead man to give, why—however, if you won't credit the mark of his foot—here's the mark of his hand.

(*shows the letter*)

Sir *Row.* (*snatching it*) Damnation!

*Gab.* Damnation! a comical way of expressing joy, that.—Your brother's arrived, says I:—Damnation, says he.—I hope your honor has taken care of the children?

Sir *Row.* Ay, ay, they are taken care of.

(*poring over the letter*)

*Gab.* If that cursed thirst had not seized me, I had been here yesterday.

Sir *Row.* Oh! had you but come yesterday!—begone! leave me, drunkard.

*Gab.* Your honor, I'll to the cellar; for I feel a kind of dryness on my palate yet.—Your brother and lady will soon be here, your honor; they were not far behind me; and I have a notion I did not come quite straight. [*exit reeling*

Sir *Row.* Confusion!—ruin! yet—if the hand of heaven has been stretched forth to save the innocent—if the children live——

*enter* WALTER, *with caution.*

Say, quick! (*Walter advances, draws his sword and shows it bloody*) It is concluded! where's Oliver?

*Walt.* Gone, heaven knows where. I've fulfill'd my oath. Just mention the reward. your honor, Josephine, your honor; the purse of angels, your honor, the——

Sir *Row.* Wretch! murderer! avoid me. Take my curses. Such ever be the reward of villany.

*Walt.* So say I. (*aside*) But, your honor, consider I kill'd——

Sir *Row.* Slave, dare but to name the foul act—by hell, thou shalt be rewarded—a halter, villain!—go from the haunts of men, and devour thy heart in misery and contempt.

*Walt.* I should be a devil of a fool to do that.—Make a companion of my conscience! does your honor find yours so pleasant a one?

Sir *Row.* Leave me, fellow, or——

(*laying his hand on his sword*)

*Walt.* I go. I am so happy. Heigho! (*putting his hand on his heart*) what would he give to do that? now to steal something from the pantry—endeavor to find Josephine, and away again to the children. Ay, fret and fume—they say villains inflict misery on their fellow creatures; but I think they can make none so miserable as they make themselves (*aside*) [*exit*

Sir *Row.* Lost beyond hope!——how shall I act?

how, but on——my purpose was my brother's family should meet in heaven, and it shall be accomplished. I'll exhaust my coffers, and, to some thriftless vassals, throw down the dazzling ore; and while their senses are misled by the damning dear delusion, I'll lead them to destroy this hated brother. Fortune, continue dull and blind:—now for happiness or perdition.

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SCENE II—*a wood.*

*enter the children*—BOY *supporting the* GIRL.

*Boy.* How do you do, sister?

*Girl.* Very tired, and very hungry. I could eat some of the cakes Walter left us.

*Boy.* I wish we had not left the place;——let's try to find it.

*Girl.* I cannot, indeed I cannot. I am so sleepy, and the wood turns round.—But, brother, as we may sleep a long time, look, I put my mama's picture here;—— (*kisses the picture. then gives it to her brother to kiss, and then puts it in her bosom*) for Josephine told me, if I were sick, and should sleep a long while, I should go where my mama is—so she'll know us by the picture.

(*thunder—children appear frightened, and cling together*)

*Boy.* Are you frightened?

*Girl.* No, not much. (*trembling*)

*Boy.* Look, yonder is a place to hide us.—I'm sure the thunder can't shoot us there.——Come, sister.

*Girl.* I cannot walk—indeed I can't—I am so sick—dont cry, my brother!

*Boy.* I dont cry. (*thunder*) Now do try to walk a bit—there—there—see, I'll help you—very well, very well. (*thunder and rain*)

[*exeunt the boy supporting the girl*

SCENE III—*another part of the wood.*

*enter* WALTER *with a basket.*

*W lt.* Zounds, what a peppering storm! sweet souls, how glad they'll be to see me.—The cunning rogues have got under the cloak, and, I dare say are fast asleep. (*sets down the basket, withdraws the cloak, and starts at not seeing them—then runs to the front of the stage*) What a damn'd villain I am! (*runs up the stage and looks about*) gone! murder! murder!—oh, they have hid themselves to frighten me. I see you. I see you so, you may as well come. I see you. (*pauses*) They are gone, they are gone, I can never sleep more——eh! the print of a foot. (*pursues the step and exit—re-enters greatly alarmed at not finding them*) What the devil do I stand here for? I'll search every inch of the wood. I'll hallo! hallo! hallo! [*runs off*

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SCENE IV—*a road.*

*enter sir* ROWLAND *with a mask, and two ruffians armed.*

Sir *Row.* Look out.

*Ruffian.* The travellers have gained the hill, and have dismounted.

Sir *Row.* Tis well; behind that thicket wait their approach;——be firm——here's encouragement. (*throws them his purse*) This way— [*exeunt*

*enter lord* ALFORD, LADY, *and a servant.*

*Alf.* Thou art weary, Helen.

*Lady.* In truth most sadly; but let's on.

*Alf.* No, here rest a while; this place is most dear to my remembrance When my good falcon urged on his quarry to this forest's verge; reclined beneath that aged oak, I first saw thee, my Helen.

*Lady.* Ah, those times, my Alford, what were then our hopes and fears; the remembrance is strong within me still.

AIR—LADY.

(*written and sung by mrs. Melmoth*)

Mark, my Alford, all the joys
  Attending on a wedded life,
Heart-felt bliss, which never cloys
  The supremely happy wife.
The man she loves always possessing:
Caress'd—oh bliss! and ay caressing.
May we never cease to prove,
The delights of wedded love.

Look around, my Alford dear,
  How kind nature points the way;
Each little chirping songster here,
  So blithsome, sport from spray to spray.
Oh may we, my dearest treasure,
Ne'er forego this virtuous pleasure.
May we never cease to prove,
The delights of wedded love.

*Lady*. Look, my lord, this avenue displays our castle's stubborn turrets. The western tower contains our lovely children; oh, how sweetly fancy, passing the bounds of vision, pictures to me my babes, at great nature's bidding, stretching forth their little hands to clasp a mother. The thought is rapture. On, my dear lord. You never saw the youngest; indeed it is most like you, the image of Alford. Pardon these foolish tears, they are a mothers' joy. (*going*)

*Serv*. Master defend yourself!

(*Alford puts Helen behind him, the ruffians rush on him and his servant—one of the ruffians, with sir Rowland, attacks Alford—the other ruffian attacks his servant and is beat off*)

WALTER *enters from the wood.*

*Walt*. What, two to one! (*attacks sir Rowland, wounds him, and drives the other ruffian off—Alford retires into the wood with Helen—the two ruffians enter,*

*and support sir Rowland*)

*Ruff.* Are you hurt, sir?

Sir *Row.* Heed not that. Have you succeeded?

*Ruff.* No, sir. The travellers escaped into the wood.

Sir *Row.* Providence, I thank thee!

*Ruff.* Shall we pursue them?

Sir *Row.* No, on your souls, forbear! convey me to the castle.

*Ruff.* Shall I fly for assistance?

Sir *Row.* Hold, I'll none. Do as I order you.

[*exeunt ruffians, bearing off sir Rowland*

*re-enter* WALTER.

*Walt.* What the devil does all this mean? where are the people I have been fighting for? or, where are the people I have been fighting with? I'm pretty sure I drilled one of them——damme, now my hand's in, I suppose I shall be killing a man every day.——But these poor children—no finding them——I am almost mad—night's coming on; ha! another——

[*runs off as in pursuit*

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SCENE V—*a wood—moonlight, children discovered seemingly dead, folded in each other's arms, laying on the bank, with leaves strewed over them.*

*enter lord* ALFORD *and* HELEN, *from the top of the stage,* ALFORD *supporting her.*

*Alf.* Dont droop, my love. We are safe. Here we'll remain to-night.

*Hel.* Twas most strange!—spoil was not their aim, but blood; a thousand fears press on me.—The visor'd ruffian, had an air methought——

*Alf.* Dearest love calm thy troubled mind, rest on that verdant bank. (*Helen reclines on a bank*) My servants ere this have gained the castle—I'm sure my brother's anxious care will find us ere the morning.

SONG—lord ALFORD.

"When first to Helen's lute
"I sung, as she play'd to me;

"How came there then to shoot
"A thrilling sense all through me?
"O, twas love, twas love!
"In my eyes it glisten'd;
"Twould inspire a brute
"To sing, if Helen listen'd,
"O, my love, my love.
"Why cull I with delight
"This ditty's plaintive numbers?
"To wrap my fair in night,
"And sooth my Helen's slumbers!

"Oh, tis love, tis love!
"Lullaby, my dearest;
"Care from thee take flight,
"And peace thy heart be nearest!
"O, my love, my love!"

*Alf.* She sleeps. I'll forth, and under covert of the friendly shade, descry if danger be aloof. (*advances where the children are, starts at seeing them*) Heavenly powers!—what's here?—two infants!—and cold even to death! poor wretched babes! poor wretched parents!—what pangs must rend their hearts? how shall I thank heaven for giving mine a brother's fostering care? (*takes the girl in his arms*) cold, cold and breathless. Hold! life seems newly ebbed. (*puts his hand upon her breast, and pulls out the picture—comes forward, and looking at it, exclaims*) Merciful powers, my own children!

*Hel.* (*alarmed, awakes*) My Alford! (*advances and snatches the picture from him, when looking at it shrieks*) My child! my child! (*falls on the bank, and embraces the girl*) my darling girl dead!——(*taking her in her arms—lord Alford takes up the boy*)

*Alf.* How chilling cold!—brother!—barbarian! monster!

*Hel.* Hush! (*feels for pulsation, and describes by her manner she perceives it—with great anxiety turns her eyes on the girl, who, after a short pause, opens them*)

Oh, God! she lives! she lives! my husband---oh I fear to ask-- how is the boy?

*Alf.* He will recover.

*Hel.* How came they there? but let's away.

*Alf.* At the eastern extremity of this forest stands an humble cot. There we'll hasten---thy feeble arms cannot sustain---

*Hel.* Away, away! under my own disasters I might droop; but a mother's fears give amazonian strength---away my lord!

[*exeunt, bearing the children off*

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SCENE VI---*inside of* Walter's *house.*

*enter* WINIFRED *and* JOSEPHINE, *bringing in a table, on which is placed three wooden trenchers, a roast fowl, knives, forks, &c.*

*Win.* (*speaking as she enters*) I thought so.---Well, and so---

*Jos.* And, goody, a servant came to the castle, and sir Rowland ordered him to be confined in the dark tower; and do you know, old Stingo says it is a servant of lord Alford's.

*Win* I thought so.---Well, and so---

*Jos.* Why, goody---then sir Rowland went out disguised, with four men---and in the confusion I slipt out.---But, goody, where's Walter?

*Win.* Oh, heaven knows whether we shall ever see the dear boy again.

*Jos.* Oh dear, you frighten me; why goody?

*Win.* Why! do you know I saw a spider crawling up the side of the chimney; and the horse-shoe was last night taken from the door.

*Walt.* (*without*) Hollo!

*enter* WALTER *at the door and shuts it.*

*Jos.* Here is Walter.

*Win.* I thought so.

(*Walter in extreme dejection, pale, &c. takes a chair, brings it forward, and sits down*)

*Win.* (*looking at him*) Why, child, what's the matter? have you seen a ghost? sit cross-legg'd, my dear boy.

*Walt.* There, will that please you? (*Josephine taps him on the shoulder, he jumps up alarmed*) Oh, Josephine, is it you?

*Jos.* Well, Walter, where did you leave the children?

*Walt.* Under a tree; and I told them only to stay there till I---

*Jos.* Under a tree!---oh, in the gentleman's garden---

*Walt.* No, no. (*recollecting himself*) Yes, yes, to be sure, where else? should I leave them in a wood, where they might be starved?

*Jos.* No, that I am sure you would not.

*Walt.* I never was afraid of goblins; but to-night I thought every cow a ghost, and took old jowler for the devil.

*Win.* Ay, ay, old Tab did not scratch under her left ear for nothing; a sure sign somebody will be hanged!

*Walt.* Damn old Tab.

*Jos.* Fie, Walter, you have been drinking.

*Walt.* My own tears then. (*aside*)

*Win.* But come, here's a capon for your supper.

*Walt.* Oh, if the dear children had that capon---

*Jos.* Lord, Walter! why they have plenty.

*Walt.* Plenty have they? (*recovering*) to be sure they have; I know that as well as you I suppose. (*pertly*)

*Jos.* Had I known how cross you would have been---I would not have come. [*weeps*]

*Walt.* I beg your pardon, Josephine---dont cry my girl---I am almost mad. (*sits down at the table and throws down the salt*)

*Win.* (*sitting behind the table*) Oh, he's spilt the salt!—and I vow there's a winding sheet in the candle.

*Walt.* Damn it mother, dont frighten me so—Josephine, my dear girl, sing me a song—I can't eat—I'm not well.

*Jos.* (*sitting down*) I'll sing you what I bought of the old blind pedlar, who passed by this morning. It's en

titled and called the Norfolk tragedy, showing how the ghost, a murdered babe—

*Walt.* [*alarmed*] No, no——dont sing that!

*Win.* Yes, yes, sing it, Josephine.

JOSEPHINE *sings.*

A yeoman of no mean degree,
For thirst of gain and lucre he
A pretty babe did murder strait,
By reason of its large estate.

To vex him to his heart's content,
To him the murder'd babe was sent;
Full blue appear'd the candle flame,
And a knocking at the window came,

(*knocking without at the window---all start up from the table, alarmed*)

*Jos.* Walter, why do you tremble?---are you frightened?

*Walt.* Me frightened---bless your soul---go on---nonsense.

JOSEPHINE *sings.*

His conscience sorely smitted him,
And made him tremble every limb;
With that the ghost began to roar,
And straitway bursted ope' the door.

(*knocking at the door without, at which they all start up from the table---the door is burst open, Winnifred and Josephine retire greatly alarmed--Walter remains near the table, trembling, and fearing to look towards the door*)

*enter lord* ALFORD, HELEN *and the two* CHILDREN.

(*Walter seeing the children, who run immediately to him, falls on his knees, hugs and kisses them, then says*)

What alive! o lord! o lord! o lord!---what, my honor'd lord and lady too!---oh, its too much. Josephine come here, down on your knees---

*Hel.* My faithful girl, explain these wonders.

*Jos* I cannot, lady, Walter can.

*Walt.* The---I know nothing---yes, I know every thing You see, my lord, your brother ; ah, you little rogues to run away. And so, my lord, your brother, and Oliver, and I, my lord---I can't tell you know.

(*kissing the children*]

*Girl.* I'm very hungry.

*Walt.* Hungry are you! [*snatching up the children and seats them at the table with signs of extravagant joy*]

*Ap.* [*without*] Let none pass.

*enter* APATHY *and two constables.*

*Ap.* Seize that murderer of innocents !

[*Walter laughs*]

Do you laugh, you hardened---

*Walt.* Laugh ! look there--- [*showing the children*]

*Ap.* Bless my soul, there they are at supper-- a capon, I declare ! very pretty eating. [*seeing lord Alford and his lady*] Oh, my lord, your brother is dying ; he has confess'd he employed Oliver and Walter here, to murder your children

*Walt.* True ! and I killed Oliver

*Alf* My gallant fellow !

*Ap.* He then planned your destruction---

*Alf.* O cursed ambition ! wretched brother !

*Ap.* And went out with armed ruffians to attack you.

*Hel* But heaven sent an unknown hand to rescue us ---Walter, couldst thou but find --

*Walt.* Why, my lady, I believe I could find him.

(*with modest hesitation*)

*Hel.* Sure that look ! Walter you protected us ?

*Walt.* Why I believe I did.

*Hel.* My preserver !

*Alf.* My friend !

*Walt.* Dear, my lord---sweet dear lady, dont kill me with kindness : I can't bear it. I'm too happy.—— Could ill-gotten wealth do this ?

*Hel.* Name some reward.

*Walt.* A treasure !

*Alf.* If India can produce it, it is yours.

*Walt.* My lord, you need not go so far; there's the treasure I want-- give me my little Josephine, and I am happy.

*Hel.* My good girl, receive from my hand your faithful Walter; it shall be my anxious care to reward his virtues.

*Walt.* I'll serve, madam, with my latest breath;--but, I trust, the CHILDREN IN THE WOOD, will to-night, find better friends, than poor Walter.

FINALE.

WALTER.

I have saved this girl and boy:
  I'st so understood, sirs?
May I hallo now for joy,
  Are we out of the wood, sirs?

CHORUS.

Have we saved, &c.

lord ALFORD.

Providence has smiled on me,
  Happy as I may be;
O father see---at either knee,
  A rosy dimpled baby.

CHORUS.

Have, we saved, &c.

HELEN.

Fullest mine of mother's bliss,
  Fuller nought can make it;
Since all to-night who witness this,
  Seem kindly to partake it.

CHORUS.

Have we saved, &c.

JOSEPHINE.

Now my Walter I shall wed,
Gay my heart and light, sirs :---

WALTER.

And I, my girl, have made a bed,
To fit us right and tight, sirs,

CHORUS.

Have we saved this girl and boy?
Is't so understood, sirs?
May I hallo now for joy!
Are we out of the wood, sirs?

END OF CHILDREN IN THE WOOD.