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THE WEDDING TRIP.



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My Neighbor's Wife, farce, 45 min	3	3			
Not Such a Fool as He Looks, comedy, 3 acts, 2 hrs.....	5	3			

T. S. DENISON, Publisher, 163 Randolph St., Chicago.

THE WEDDING TRIP

A COMEDY IN TWO ACTS.

Roderich
Adapted from the German of Benedix by

HILTON BURNSIDE SONNEBORN,

Author of "Who Told the Lie," "The Woman Hater," etc.

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CHICAGO:

T. S. DENISON, Publisher,

163 RANDOLPH STREET.

(1590)

CAST.

SYLVAN DRISSLER.....Professor and Dean of Faculty
at Kikeka College.

CLEOPATRA.....His young wife.

PHILIP BAKER.....His disciple and tutor at Kikeka
College.

DIGBY PUNTS.....a "make-himself-generally-useful" man

DELIA.....A ladies' maid.

Time of playing, about one hour.

PROPERTIES.

Books, and other apparatus of a schoolroom; a large trunk
with ladies' clothing; a skull.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R means right, as the actor faces the audience; *L*, left; *C*,
center; *R C*, right center; *D F*, door in flat; *R U E*, right
upper entrance, etc.

NOTE:—Though this play has full directions for the stage,
it may be played in any ordinary room.

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THE WEDDING TRIP.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Study at PROFESSOR DRISSLER'S house; doors C. L. and R.; in the rear large square table covered with books, and small table covered with books; close to door C. round table covered with books; walls in rear covered by bookcases; bookcase R.; whole rather disorderly.*

PHILIP. (*pacing up and down, book in hand, memorizing.*)
Arma virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris—that meter is abortive—it is misleading, although the rythm is good. Arma virumque cano, hexameter with Iambic measure. Arma virumque cano, Trojæ qui primus ab oris.

Enter DIGBY PUNTS, carrying trunk on his shoulder, R.

PUNTS. Great Scot, what a trunk! Give us a hand, Mr. Tutor. (*With the aid of PHILIP puts trunk on floor, sits down on it and wipes perspiration.*) Pretty tough! lugging that Saratoga up these steep stairs. So the missus is coming to-night? Well! I'm sorry. I didn't mind doing the chores, and blacking the boots, but I can't stand being bossed about by a female. I'll just give myself another week in this place.

PHILIP. Why so? You can perform your work as heretofore. Nobody will interfere with you. Professor Drissler assured me that there would be no change in the management of the household affairs.

PUNTS. Did the professor say that?

PHILIP. Those were his own words.

PUNTS. Time 'll tell. I know better; the innocent professor don't know the power of a young wife.

PHILIP (*naively*). Digby, you are an experienced man. Are women really so bad?

PUNTS. Are they? I'm sorry for you, poor lamb; she'll keep you in hot water and on the go.

PHILIP. Not quite so bad as that.

PUNTS. Lots of men talked just like you, and fell into the trap; after marriage they plead the baby act. I'm sorry for the professor.

PHILIP. Do you speak from experience?

PUNTS. No, siree! I was always too clever to bite at such bait. When I was 14 years old I was put on a training ship, and served Uncle Sam for ten years. I could have been a commissioned officer. But I had enough of it as captain of the foretop. After my honorable discharge I traveled through the country, just to gain experience, and I tell you, many a girl has tried to bewitch me with those enticing looks they give; but it was no go. I only work for bachelors, and remain a bachelor myself.

PHILIP. Then you have really had no experience?

PUNTS. Had no experience—that's just where I've been smart. I've watched others carry the cross. (*Wiping the perspiration off his face.*) You don't like spiders?

PHILIP. No, I'm not fond of that insect.

PUNTS. You hate spiders. I hate women.

PHILIP. How can you compare spiders to women?

PUNTS. Spiders weave nets to catch flies—women weave them and catch men. You're just such a poor fly for whom a net is being made.

PHILIP. Well, if women's nets are not stronger than spiders' nets, one could risk being caught.

PUNTS. Young man, beware! When I look about in this quiet chamber—where Romans and Grecians lie buried beneath the same dust—where immortality alone reigns—and then think of a woman disturbing these old heroes, and making the dust fly from their graves, pah, a chill strikes me!

PHILIP. You are painting this prospective mistress in India ink. Why so black?

PUNTS. You are too young to understand the intricacies of the sex. You were reared in an orphan asylum; afterward adopted by the professor, and educated for a tutorship. You never came in contact with women. Avoid women, says the philosopher. You see, Mr. Philip, there is an inner voice in our own nature warning us against them.

PHILIP. Now you're talking nonsense, Digby.

PUNTS. Nonsense? When you meet a girl, especially a bright, handsome one, don't you feel embarrassed?

PHILIP. Sometimes.

PUNTS. You blush, you hesitate to speak, cast your eyes downward—a peculiar sentiment.

PHILIP. That's true.

PUNTS. You see, that's the evidence of the inner voice that warns you against women.

PHILIP. H'm, h'm. (*Aside*). That peculiar sentiment isn't so disagreeable. (*Aloud*). Well, did the professor heed this warning?

PUNTS. Now he puzzled me; he never associated with women, was a disciple of the late Professor Donke—a jolly bachelor who had never allowed a woman in his sanctum. And master did the same. I've attended to the duties of this household thirteen years, and I know he never took any stock in the so-called gentle sex. He's 42 years old—certainly past the age of indiscretion. All of a sudden, after standing safely on the shores of this dangerous lake, the water of which was constantly receding, he plunges into the mire—gets married. It's very mysterious.

PHILIP. I can shed some light on this mystery.

PUNTS. Well?

PHILIP. He inherited this woman.

PUNTS. Inherited her!

PHILIP. Exactly—the professor's uncle dies, bequeathing his fortune of thirty thousand dollars to his brothers' children—the professor and his cousin—with the condition that they are to marry, the party refusing marriage to lose his share of the bequest.

PUNTS. Of course thirty thousand dollars is a substantial reason for entertaining the idea of matrimony. I don't blame him, but I'm afraid it'll turn out bad. A man with his learning won't humiliate himself to the petty humors of a woman, and for points of etiquette, I assure you, worthy Mr. Philip, he'll have to look up more modern authorities than Sophocles and Æschylus. (*Rises*). Let's carry the trunk into the bedroom.

PHILIP. What do you suppose it contains?

PUNTS. All sorts of foolishness—skirts, aprons, ribbons, soaps, perfumes, powders, and whatever women use.

PHILIP. Did you notice the trunk is open, Digby?

PUNTS. Great Scot! The hasp broke. I hope nothing

fell out. (*Opens the lid*). No, you see everything is in perfect order.

PHILIP. Oh! how tidy and neat!

PUNTS. (*Draws out a veil*). Just look, how transparent. Just like a spider's net. (*Takes out lace cap, collar, chemisette, skirts, etc. unfolding them, and hands them to PHILIP*).

PHILIP. (*Receives them, holds them to the light, and lays them on table L.*) Be careful—you might soil them.

PUNTS. There's no end to 'em!

PHILIP. Pretty patterns! Masterly embroidery!

PUNTS. Nothing but useless stuff.

PHILIP. How elegant!

PUNTS. Superfluous trash.

PHILIP. Magnificent apparel.

PUNTS. (*Holds a curling iron*). What do you call this?

PHILIP. I don't know.

PUNTS. Looks like a sausage.

PHILIP. Where is that worn?

PUNTS. Oh yes, Mrs. Capt. Tarpaulin, on the "Minnesota," had one for crimping her curls.

PHILIP. Don't unpack the whole trunk, Digby. I've seen enough. Let's put everything back in the same order and place.

PUNTS. I'll do it. Hand them to me.

PHILIP. Take your time, fold them just as they were. (*Both trying to put them in old creases*).

PHILIP. How was that folded? (*Business*).

PUNTS. Confounded stuff.

PHILIP. I can't find the old creases.

PUNTS. The trunk is full.

PHILIP. That will never do. Take out those skirts and fold them differently, to give us more room.

PUNTS. You do it. I give it up.

PHILIP. You tore them out. I can't put them back.

PUNTS. It's your fault—you were inquisitive to see them. It takes women to do women's work.

PHILIP. What are you going to say if she notices it?

PUNTS. We'll be in a fine fix—oh, what a row!

PHILIP. You know so much about women, can't you do it?

PUNTS. No, I give it up. You try.

PHILIP. Say, Digby, what can we do? They might come any moment! Can't you get some woman to help us out?

PUNTS. There's cross-eyed Jane who keeps a gin mill on the corner, but she doesn't deal in dry goods.

PHILIP. Don't give it up. Suggest some remedy. The professor will be vexed if he learns about it.

PUNTS. I've got a happy idea. I'll go down to the first flat and ask Delia up.

PHILIP. But—

PUNTS. Never mind, I'll attend to that.. These ladies' maids are used to handling such stuff. (*Exit C.*)

PHILIP. (*Alone*). Wait, Digby. Don't. He's gone. A girl to come into the professor's room, whose threshold ne'er was crossed by woman before. Professor Drissler always says: "A woman has no right in the holy chamber of learning." But his own wife will soon desecrate the sanctuary. (*Takes up a lace cap*). As transparent as a spider web, tis true, but it must look nice when a young smiling face peeps out underneath it. H'm, the professor's cousin is young and handsome. I shouldn't mind a little tyranny. (*Laughing*). How would this cap look on a skull? I must try it. (*Opens closet R. several skulls are to be seen. He places lace cap on a skull and then walks away to admire it at a distance*). Ah! it doesn't look bad at all. Who knows, old chap, whether you had an antipathy for lace caps during your life. Perhaps Mrs. Professor might use it as a model.

Re-enter DIGBY PUNTS, R.

PUNTS. Just come along. I'll return the favor sometime.

Enter DELIA, R.

DELIA. I really ought not. The professor never notices my existence; the tutor makes believe he doesn't see me; and you, Mr. Punts, don't know how to say a friendly word.

PHILIP. (*Embarrassed*). But you shouldn't—

PUNTS. That young man is too bashful to see you—to stare at you; the professor's head is crammed full of Latin and stuff, and even I, if I should occasionally flirt with you, would you reciprocate? But you'll help us, wont you?

DELIA. For the sake of the young gentleman. What am I to do?

PUNTS. I told you—pack all this trash back into the trunk.

DELIA. (*Kneels before the trunk and packs the articles, which are reached to her by PHILIP*). It wont take me but a few minutes.

PHILIP. (*Reaching things to her, aside*). For my sake. And she said it so sweetly, so amiably.

DELIA. (*Reaching for more articles*). Are you dreaming?

PHILIP. (*Astonished*). No. Here you are.

DELIA. (*Still packing*). These things belong to your new mistress?

PUNTS. Yes, just arrived. There's one more trunk to come.

DELIA. Do you expect the bridal couple to-day?

PUNTS. Yes, Miss Delia.

DELIA. Why don't you give Mr. Tutor a chance to answer? He knows more than you. To-day, did you say?

PHILIP. Yes, to-day! The professor's wife lives in Kankakee. The professor arrived there this morning. The wedding took place this afternoon, and he will be here this evening. The train is due here at 6:40—only half an hour more.

DELIA. When will they make their wedding trip?

PHILIP. What?

DELIA. Doesn't the professor intend making a wedding trip?

PHILIP. Why he traveled there for the wedding, and they made the trip back together.

DELIA. (*Aside*). He is too fresh! (*Aloud*) Is there no mention made of wedding tours in those musty old books?

PHILIP. Not a syllable.

DELIA. And expecting you to know anything out of those books would be treason—well, innocence personified in the shape of a college tutor. I've finished the job.

PHILIP. But I forgot this cap.

DELIA. Which one?

PHILIP. (*Walks to the closet and shows her cap on skull*). This one.

DELIA. (*Sees it and yells*). Oh goodness! Oh!—

PHILIP. (*Remains stationary*). What's the matter?

PUNTS. (*Runs up close to her*). Are you going to faint?

DELIA. (*Shaking*). Oh my! how terri— how horrid! Please close that bookcase.

PHILIP. It's nothing but a plain skull—only a faded flower. Take a good look at it.

DELIA. (*Holds her hand up to her face*). That's perfectly hideous—horrible! Please shut the closet door.

PHILIP. (*Remains perplexed*). But—

PUNTS. (*Pinches her arm and pulls her along*). Come closer, look at it, it won't hurt you.

DELIA. (*Gives him a push*). But I'll hurt you. (*Tenderly to PHILIP*). Please close the bookcase.

PHILIP. (*Pulls lace cap off and closes door*). Here! Why are you so afraid of an inanimate object?

DELIA. (*Puts lace cap into trunk*). If the lady knew that her cap had been on a dead skull—

PUNTS. What of it?

DELIA. You shut up. Nobody's talking to you. (*To PHILIP*) Have you everything in readiness for the arrival, or can I be of service to you in any other matter?

PHILIP. (*Puzzled*). We haven't made any preparations.

DELIA. (*Clasps hands together in astonishment*). No preparations, no flowers, no welcome home, no wedding feast, no reception? Why the idea!

PHILIP. I never heard of such things.

DELIA. Your youth redeems you, but the professor and this old codger should have known what's proper.

PUNTS. What are you talking about? Everything is in readiness, beds, tables, chairs, toilet set—every comfort imaginable. (*Sarcastically*). Except a looking glass.

DELIA. I believe you were raised among savages. What rooms will the lady occupy?

PHILIP. (*Opens door R*). Satisfy yourself—look at them!

DELIA. (*Walks to the door*). H'm, rear rooms—a couple of poky holes which we use for storerooms, and right under the roof. Why, it'll be hot enough to roast a pig in here.

PHILIP. (*Bashfully*). Why—? What!

DELIA. Why couldn't you give her front rooms?

PHILIP. Because they are all occupied—one is the professor's bedroom, the other his study, and the third his library.

DELIA. (*Sarcastically*). So? And the rear rooms are good enough for his wife!

PHILIP. I used to sleep in them. But you see I vacated. But that is the only change we will make.

DELIA. Yes, certainly. That is what you say.

PUNTS. (*Aside*). She's not even polite! She criticises all my arrangements!

DELIA. (*Examining the room*). And the bride is to live here? Not even a carpet on the floor (*Laughs*). Not even a sofa—and no dressing case.

PUNTS. (*Aside*). I expected to be ridiculed. How much worse will the real mistress be? Why, she'll turn the house upside down.

PHILIP. I did not know that such things were necessary. It's not my fault.

DELIA. (*Angrily*). Well, what do you know? Have you hired a girl?

PHILIP. A girl! The professor don't want any.

DELIA (*amused*). The professor don't want any.

PUNTS (*aside*). H'm! The missus and a girl—Why, we'd soon have a colony. That would completely knock *me* out.

DELIA. But what does the professor think?

PHILIP. That his marriage will not in any way interfere with his former household. Digby is to attend to those duties, as heretofore.

PUNTS. Yes. I'm going to attend to them.

PHILIP. And I'm to cook the breakfast as formerly.

PUNTS. And good coffee Mr. Philip makes.

PHILIP. Punts brings us dinner from the restaurant.

PUNTS. To get one portion more is all that will be necessary.

DELIA (*sarcastically*). Really? One portion more? I thought you would expect the lady to eat what was left over. That would have been in accord with your other plans.

PHILIP. Why, don't our plans meet your approval?

DELIA. Your mind is, no doubt, affected by over study. But Mr. Tutor, you tell the professor that he should have studied up the "treatment of a wife" before marrying. (*Pointing to PUNTS*). Of course, from this old loon nothing else was to be expected, but I—I gave you credit for more sense. I feel sorry for the poor woman. But she'll teach you manners, I'll bet. But I must be off. H'm, I'll have to tell Mrs. Rosecrans about this farce, and inside of an hour every lady in town will be talking about the elaborate reception Mrs. Professor Drissler is getting, and this will soon infuse some sense of propriety into you fellows. (*Exit rapidly C.*)

PHILIP. (*Lights the lamp*). Hu! How angry she got.

PUNTS. Well, wasn't I right about women, now you've seen an example and can judge the whole race.

PHILIP (*aside*). I wish I knew what really was needed. (*Lights student's lamp*).

PUNTS. Just as if the professor had time to bother about these thousand and one things she'll be wanting. Ha, a

dressing case. I'd like to know what they need a dressing case for. Oh, woman's vanity!

PHILIP. How friendly and pleasant Delia was at first. But why did she get into such a temper?

PUNTS. Those are women's pranks. But she fixed the trunk for us, anyhow. I think I better take it into her room. (*Carries the trunk away, and exit R.*)

PHILIP. A pretty girl—so entrancing. But when she got angry I feared her, although I'm not so easily frightened. The professor's wife ought to be satisfied with those two rooms. I wouldn't want anything better—they would make a splendid study. I wonder if she is nice. (*Walks to window*). A carriage stopping at the door! Yes, here they are. (*Calls DIGBY*). Digby! Digby, they're here.

PUNTS *re-enters R.*

PUNTS. That's them.

PHILIP. I will go down and meet them. (*Exit L.*)

PUNTS (*alone*). I just know how this thing will turn out, confound it. I'll get my walking papers before long. (*Extracts handful of tobacco from a box lying on table and fills up his pouch*) It's too bad. He was a good man, the professor, even if he was a crank. And so punctual with my pay, and never found fault with me. And he smokes fine tobacco. And now I'll have to smoke Yum Yum again—a nickel a package. And all on account of a young woman. Darn the luck! (*Looks off*). Here they come.

Enter SYLVAN DRISLER in black frock, white necktie and blue vest; pedantic walk; affected appearance, C.

Enter CLEOPATRA behind him in cloak and hat, traveling costume; carries a satchel, C.

SYLVAN. Now we're home. And, as we are man and wife, it is proper that in our relations before others we act as married people do, and not appear ridiculous. Cleopatra, I welcome you home. May God bless your entrance! (*Calls*). My coat. (*PUNTS sneaks out on tip toe, L.*)

Enter PHILIP, brings an alpaca coat, L.

SYLVAN. (*Takes off frock and puts on alpaca coat, pointing to R.*) Those are your rooms. You have unlimited freedom

there—can do, and have done whatever you desire—of course as long as it does not inconvenience me, as I am always engaged in scientific and literary researches. I do not, under any circumstances, wish to be disturbed. In fact, I shall continue living exactly as heretofore. (*Puts tobacco pouch which PHILIP brings into his pocket, takes his long pipe and hat*). I am in the habit of going to the club every evening. At 8 o'clock I leave here; at 10 I return—to retire to bed. I shall adhere to this custom, and it being already 10 minutes to 8, I beg to be excused. Good-night. (*Exit C*).

PHILIP. (*Escorts him out and exits C*).

CLEOPATRA. (*Remains standing in astonishment*).

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*The same.* (*Enter CLEOPATRA, in morning wrapper R*).

CLEOPATRA. The first night in my new home. There is a saying that the dreams of the bridal night come true. I did not dream very much, though. But I slept so restlessly. What a life! What will my next experience be? I am married. But to whom? To a man? I rather think to a book. He pleaded indifferently for my hand. He acted uninterested at the ceremony. He sat indifferently at my side during the drive home. Not a friendly syllable, not a confiding word—not the least sociability. He considers women inferior beings—slaves, or perhaps his pupils. Probably he has read such detestable theories in some of these old books. He accords me the worst rooms in the house. He will not change his habits, or be disturbed in bachelor life. Shall I serve him as a maid, or only be tolerated or accepted as an agreeable addition to the inheritance? Would it not have been wiser to have sacrificed this money and to have remained free and unfettered from such bonds? Pshaw, Cleopatra! banish this down-heartedness. Was it not your own free will? And do you want to deny that you felt a desire to be this ingrate's wife—that you felt an inclination for this man since you first saw him—four years ago; that you could not banish him from your heart? Yes, I loved him, but he does not reciprocate it. Well, he does not yet know me

—does not know any woman. He stubbornly believes that women should be treated that way. He thinks he is right. I will have to convince him of the error of his opinion. I shall have to learn to please him. I have evidence that he is pure, and possesses a noble character. Whims and prejudices can be overcome. It will astonish me very much if I cannot convert him, especially if I am resolved to succeed. But I hear something moving in the room adjoining. Now then, Mr. Professor, you like quiet and peace. Just prepare yourself, for your quietude will be somewhat disturbed. We shall soon see whether your methodical bias will gain supremacy over your young wife. (*Exit R*).

*Enter PHILIP, C. He carries coffee pot, a small kettle and several cups. He places the cups on the table, R, starts wood fire in grate and puts on kettle and coffee pot.**

PHILIP. How quiet! They are all sleeping yet. They are probably exhausted from the trip. Well, to-day a new era commences in this house. I feel somewhat anxious and very inquisitive how Mrs. Professor looks and acts. I could not get a good look at her face last night because she was heavily veiled, and I did not dare to intrude later.

Enter SYLVAN, R, dressed in long smoking jacket, with lighted pipe.

SYLVAN. Oh, ho, Philip!

PHILIP. Good-morning, Professor.

SYLVAN. Are you here? (*Sits down at his writing desk, L*). Good-morning. (*Writes*). Did anything happen yesterday in my absence?

PHILIP. No, sir. But there is a meeting of the faculty called for 4 o'clock this afternoon.

SYLVAN. (*Makes note*). At what hour do I lecture?

PHILIP. To-day being Saturday, you lecture at 11.

SYLVAN. Yes! Logic to the sophomores, and then conic sections to the freshmen. (*The bell rings, R*).

SYLVAN. (*Listens*). What is that?

PHILIP. That sound seems to come from your wife's room.

SYLVAN. Oh, yes. I had almost forgotten. But how did

* An oil stove may be used, or, in case none is at hand, a fire screen will serve to make believe.

she get a bell? I did not give my permission, nor did I give orders.

PHILIP. No doubt she brought it with her.

SYLVAN. Probably so. (*Writes uninterruptedly. The bell again rings, R.*)

SYLVAN. What does that ringing mean? Philip, go and see what is wanted. (*PHILIP exits, R.*)

SYLVAN. I will not allow these disturbances. She must get used to perfect quiet. I will, once for all, forbid it. H'm, if one would only read *magis* here, instead of *magnis*, it would convey a more elaborate and easier understood meaning. This conjecture is practicable.

Re-enter PHILIP.

PHILIP. Mrs. Professor wants a maid.

SYLVAN. Muellam quandam? Id est servam ancillam. A girl? For what?

PHILIP. Probably as a servant.

SYLVAN. That cannot be done. Girls are talkative, vain and unreliable. I could not hear of such a thing. Tell her that, Philippe. (*PHILIP re-exits, R.*)

SYLVAN. That would be awful *ancillas*. Maids to have in my house. Such a fickle *genus*. *Dei avertant*. God forbid.

PHILIP re-enters.

PHILIP. Mrs. Professor desires a girl to help her dress.

SYLVAN. To dress? *Mehercule*. I never need anybody to help *me* dress. However, women are the weak, necessitous sex. Go and help her, Philippe.

PHILIP. (*Rushes for the door.*)

SYLVAN. (*Calls.*) Wait a moment. (*Aside.*) But perhaps it is not proper to allow a young man who is intrusted to my care to come in such close contact with a woman. (*Aloud.*) Never mind. I will give her my personal attention. (*Makes a few steps, and then remains standing.*) But no. Should the husband do such services for his wife? *Servae*, slaves helped the Roman women in dressing; presumably also with the Greeks. H'm, perhaps some authority exists on this subject. Still, I do not recall any passages. I will note that and look into it. (*Walks to his desk. The bell rings, R.*)

SYLVAN. Oh yes, my wife calls. Should I? No, that would hurt the dignity of a man. Such services are improper.

Philippe, tell my wife we have no servants to help her. (PHILIP *re-exits*).

SYLVAN. (*thinking, sits down*). This case has never before come to my notice. Perhaps some of the Greek authors refer to this question. H'm, Homer relates in the *Odyssey* that the servants of Penelope prepared a bath, but he does not make any mention of their dressing their mistress.

PHILIP *re-enters*.

PHILIP. Mrs. Professor says she will try to get along without a maid to-day. She will help herself. (*Walks to the grate fire*).

SYLVAN. Clytemnestra prepared a bath for Agamemnon. It follows, therefore, that, with the Greeks, women served their husbands, but not reversely. Still, the Charites attended Aphrodite, and waited upon her in dressing. But Aphrodite was a goddess, and besides, the Charites cannot be compared with ordinary servants. I must read it up. The question is of the highest importance.

Enter CLEOPATRA, R.

CLEOPATRA. Good-morning.

PHILIP. (*Looks at her sideways*).

SYLVAN. (*Does not notice her greeting, is engaged in writing*).

CLEOPATRA. (*Walks to SYLVAN, puts her arm around the back of his chair, bends over him, and pleasantly says*): Good-morning.

SYLVAN. (*Did not notice her approach, frightened and shrinks from her*). Good-morning. (CLEOPATRA *remains in this position as if expecting a more cordial greeting*. SYLVAN *abashed, moves his chair*).

CLEOPATRA (*retreats with dignity*). How did you sleep?

SYLVAN. As usual. (*He seems uninterested, but confused and less autocratic. His behavior is due to ignorance and prejudice, not to rudeness*).

CLEOPATRA (*after they both look at each other, in under tone*). You do not ask how I slept.

SYLVAN. I consider that question superfluous.

CLEOPATRA (*tenderly, and smiling*). Does it seem superfluous for the husband to ask that of his wife?

SYLVAN. The Romans knew no such greeting.

CLEOPATRA. So? And how did they greet their wives?

SYLVAN. Their wives? H'm, I really do not know whether they used anything besides the usual salve (sal-ve). (*Murmurs while writing*). And that is the second important question which has puzzled me this morning. I must make a note of that. How did the Romans greet their wives? (*Writes, and sticks pencil behind ear*).

CLEOPATRA (*aside*). So it is the Romans that stand in my way, and occupy my place as a wife. So it is the Romans which I will have to fight and expel. (*Courageously*). We shall see if a young woman cannot beat these old mildewed Romans. (*Aloud*). Say, dear, did the Romans drink coffee?

SYLVAN (*always appearing learned and important when such topics are discussed*). Nunquam, never! The breakfast of the Romans, prandium, consisted—but, strictly speaking, the prandium of the Romans was different from our breakfast. (*Aside*). More like our lunch. H'm, that is the third question of importance that arises this morning. (*Writes*).

CLEOPATRA. Not wishing to give you any further work, I'll simply ask, do *we* drink coffee?

SYLVAN. Certainly. Philippe!

PHILIP. Professor, at once!

SYLVAN. You will have it in a moment.

PHILIP. In a moment, professor. (*Fetches cups. Aside*). H'm, that old Punts does not know what he is talking about. Why, she is as sweet and tender as an angel.

SYLVAN (*aside*). My wife appears real handsome. She seems very docile and yielding. We will certainly get along nicely.

CLEOPATRA. (*Stands to the R. of table and opens a book*). Until Mr. Philip has prepared the coffee we can talk over some matters. How do you intend keeping house?

SYLVAN. I have already told you that I do not wish any interference in my household affairs.

CLEOPATRA. What are your household affairs?

SYLVAN. They are very plain. Breakfast is prepared by Philippe, dinner is brought by the bootblack, and supper I eat at the club. You can send the bootblack for your supper whenever you feel like eating.

CLEOPATRA (*quietly*). My dear, to those plans I cannot give my sanction.

PHILIP (*surprised*). What?

CLEOPATRA. Your ideas are those of a bachelor. They can not be brought into execution in a house where a woman rules.

SYLVAN. Oh, I am ready to yield somewhat to your wishes, but my work and study require—

CLEOPATRA (*smiling*). Oh, my household will not disturb your study or work.

SYLVAN. What propositions do you make?

CLEOPATRA. Propositions? I think the housewife has not only a consulting, but a deciding voice.

SYLVAN. Deciding? That is too strong a term. The Roman and Grecian women were in the gymnasium.

CLEOPATRA (*calmly*). I did not intend to establish either a Roman or a Grecian, but an American household. I will tell you briefly what I wish: Firstly, I want a cook.

SYLVAN. But what would such a talkative thing do in this house?

CLEOPATRA. Cook, my dear, nothing else. I will look after the breakfast; dinner will not be sent for, but it will be cooked in the house, and it will be better for you to eat your supper at home.

SYLVAN. Never can I consent to such a revolution of my household. Preparation of victuals in the house—the odors, the heat, the noise, never!

CLEOPATRA. My dear, you minister to the Romans and Greeks. I'll attend to the household.

SYLVAN (*rising*). Why, you talk—

CLEOPATRA (*firm and determined*). As a housewife should.

SYLVAN. I will never assent to these plans. The man is master in his castle, and his will is law.

CLEOPATRA. It would have been far better if you had studied the code before marrying. The man is master of his house, but the woman is mistress.

SYLVAN. *Mulier taceat in ecclesia.*

CLEOPATRA. That is Greek to me.

SYLVAN. I beg your pardon, it is Latin, and means "Woman has no voice in church."

CLEOPATRA. In church? All right. But at home the wife does not remain silent. She gives orders, she rules, and this necessitates her talking, and at times very plain talking.

SYLVAN. That proverb is also used figuratively. It means the wife should submit to the will of her lord and master.

CLEOPATRA. And it further means that the husband should not exceed his rights.

SYLVAN. The husband's rights are unlimited, "And *he*

should be thy master," says Moses, and the apostle Paul says: "Ye wives are subjects of your husbands;" why, the wise and noble Penelope even, obeyed her son Telemachus, when he ordered her into her own chamber.

CLEOPATRA. You need not get excited. The wise and noble Penelope acted according to her ideas. I am an American, and act according to the dictates of my conscience, and according to custom.

SYLVAN. What, you dare oppose my commands! H'm, I thought you were obedient and yielding. (*In a pedantic tone*). But I am glad that you display your insubordination, for I can thoroughly demonstrate to you what position the wife must occupy in reference to her husband. Woman is inferior to man in body, as well as in mind, and the husband, therefore, exercises a control over her like a guardian over a minor. Such is the doctrine of the *lex Romana*. And, in accordance with that, the Roman women were confined to their separate rooms, and were not even permitted to appear at the *cœna*, the meal. The best authorities of ancient Greece interpret the law in the same spirit. The most renowned philosophers, even the ecclesiastical writers, determine woman's submissiveness to man. I will not go so far as Simonides, who compares women to foxes, monkeys and dogs. I will not dwell on the unfavorable opinions of Euripides; but the Pythagorean Secundus calls women a necessary evil, and the Saint Hieronymus says they are ignaræ, leves, pertinaces, ignorant, frivolous and stubborn. You will, therefore, perceive what relation you should bear to your husband. You will subject yourself in silent obedience to my wishes, and not force me to make use of my authority.

CLEOPATRA (*having listened attentively*). Your Pythagorean may be correct in calling us ignorant, frivolous and stubborn. I am ignorant, as far as your brutal philosophers and ecclesiastics are concerned, and I thank God that I am not cognizant of their nonsense. I may also be frivolous, and I am glad of it, for it requires considerable frivolity to keep a well balanced mind amid your collection of antique moldy authorities, and, in order to fully indorse the opinion of that Pythagorean, I will also be stubborn, and I will not acknowledge your supremacy in household affairs.

SYLVAN (*excitedly*). You will have to!

CLEOPATRA (*firmly*). But I will not!

SYLVAN. I will force you !

CLEOPATRA. You dare not !

SYLVAN (*madly rushes at her*). You dare me, femininum !

CLEOPATRA (*her hands are folded on her back, and she stares him unconcernedly in his face, after a pause, smiling*). My learned spouse !

SYLVAN (*disarmed by her fearlessness, mutters inaudibly*). Well, we will see.

CLEOPATRA. Let us sign an armistice until after breakfast.

SYLVAN (*sits down, aside*). I will find some means of coercion.

CLEOPATRA (*looking about*). I do not see any preparations being made for breakfast.

SYLVAN. What preparations are necessary? I drink my coffee while at work; yours can be brought to your room. (PHILIP brings SYLVAN a cup of coffee to his desk, and reseats himself at the fireside).

CLEOPATRA. For this once I will consent to breakfast in this manner. (*Shoves all the books on table, R., into a heap*).

SYLVAN (*exclaims excitedly*). Stop ! Those books—

CLEOPATRA. Is not your wife entitled to some room? Mr. Philip, please bring my coffee here. (PHILIP brings her a cup of coffee to table, R.)

Enter PUNTS, C. Remains in the rear, unloads some books, and starts to brushing some clothes that hang over a chair.

PUNTS. Good-morning, ladies and gentlemen.

SYLVAN (*muttering*). Good-morning. (PHILIP sits close to grate fire, and is drinking).

CLEOPATRA (*sitting at table, R., turns about, looks at him in a friendly way*). Good-morning.

PUNTS (*aside*). H'm, ah, that's she. And in the study! (*Shakes his head*).

CLEOPATRA (*having drank*). Phew ! Phi, what do you call this drink ?

SYLVAN (*who is writing*). What is the matter ?

PHILIP (*rises, embarrassed*). Don't you like the coffee ?

CLEOPATRA. Coffee ? You call that coffee ?

PHILIP. Freshly warmed.

CLEOPATRA. Oh, warmed over !

PHILIP. We always cook the coffee a fortnight in advance, and then warm up, each day, the necessary quantity.

CLEOPATRA (*jumps up*). Now, that is too much. (*Laughs heartily and loudly*).

PUNTS (*makes for the door*). Now, the bomb will explode.

CLEOPATRA. And you expect me to drink such coffee?

PHILIP. But I have—

CLEOPATRA (*without taking notice of him, and with a decided rapid motion*). I will show you what coffee is. Is that water in the kettle?

PHILIP. Fresh spring water. I was about to make our two weeks' supply.

CLEOPATRA. Is it boiling?

PHILIP. Not quite.

CLEOPATRA. You will find a coffee pot in my room. Please fetch it. (*PHILIP exits, R.*)

CLEOPATRA. And you, back there, what is your name?

PUNTS. Punts—Digby Punts.

CLEOPATRA. Well, Digby, go to the bakery for rolls.

PUNTS (*looking at SYLVAN*). But I—

CLEOPATRA. Here is money. (*Takes some money from SYLVAN'S desk.*) Here you are.

PUNTS. But I don't—

CLEOPATRA. Vienna rolls. Do you understand?

PUNTS. But Mr. Professor must first—

CLEOPATRA (*angrily stamping her foot*). Will you mind! Go at once! (*PUNTS, puzzled, exit rapidly, C.*)

SYLVAN. What a noise!

CLEOPATRA. Keep cool, you will presently have a cup of coffee.

Enter PHILIP with coffee pot, R.

PHILIP. Here, Mrs. Professor.

CLEOPATRA. Hand it right here. (*Puts it on small bench before the grate*). Who lives in the first flat?

PHILIP. Mrs. Rosecrans.

CLEOPATRA. Go down there and ask Mrs. Rosecrans if she will kindly help me out with cream and butter, as I am not yet quite in order.

PHILIP. I will be back in a moment. (*Exit, C.*)

SYLVAN. But wife, that will never do.

CLEOPATRA (*lovingly*). Poor husband, if you always drank such poor, miserable coffee it does not surprise me that you were so down-hearted. That accounts for your peculiar

whims. Poor coffee makes one anæmic, and produces melancholia and hypochondria. No, dear hubby, I will not allow it. You shall have a strong, nourishing cup of coffee. Oh yes, my spouse. (*Exit, R.*)

SYLVAN. Although she refuses to obey, she is active and quick; that looks well.

Enter PUNTS, all out of breath, with a large package of rolls.

PUNTS. Here I am! Oh, Mr. Professor, how I ran. (*breathes hard like a fat man ; business.*) I fairly jumped!

SYLVAN. Exercise is good for you.

CLEOPATRA (*with small spoons*). At last you have come! Put the rolls on the table. (*walks to the grate fire, pours coffee into the pot, and pours water from the kettle into the coffee*).

PUNTS (*places rolls on the table, R.*) They are perfectly fresh—baked this morning.

CLEOPATRA. I want you to roll that table into the center of the room!

PUNTS. But there's books on it.

CLEOPATRA. Put the books on a chair.

PUNTS. What! Books on a chair?

CLEOPATRA. You are frightfully clumsy and slow. (*puts kettle down and hurries to rear, places books rapidly from table on chair, some of which fall down*). Everything is filled with books; there is hardly room to move about in this cramped up library. Well, now put the table in the center—hurry up. (*hurries to the grate and pours water on*).

PUNTS *carries table in center, but not too close to front.*

SYLVAN (*disturbed*). Oh, you are creating an awful disturbance!

CLEOPATRA. Not at all; you will soon see in what beautiful order everything is.

Enter PHILIP carrying a pitcher with cream and a plate with butter.

PHILIP. Mrs. Rosecrans wishes to be remembered, and hopes you will excuse her non-appearance. Miss Delia gave me these things. (*places everything on table R.*)

CLEOPATRA. On the other table, Mr. Philip!

PHILIP. I beg your pardon!

CLEOPATRA. Now then, just go—never mind; come here. Do you understand pouring the water onto the coffee?

PHILIP (*does it*). Certainly!

CLEOPATRA. That is well done. (*Exit into her room*).

PUNTS. But Mr. Professor, what is going to become of us; what will those ancient chaps say if we carry on in such a manner?

SYLVAN. What are you talking about? You keep mum, and let my wife see to things.

PHILIP. Oh, what a charming housewife! She understands it well.

Enter CLEOPATRA carrying a full coffee set on a tray and a red damask tablecloth and napkins. She places coffee service on table, R., and hands tablecloth to PUNTS.

CLEOPATRA. Set the table, Digby.

PUNTS *sets the table.*

CLEOPATRA. Bring the coffee, Mr. Philip.

PHILIP *sets the coffee pot on table R.*

CLEOPATRA (*pours cream into pitcher belonging to set, places rolls on small bread plates*). This breakfast set is a wedding present from my friend, Ida. Sylvan, you did not pay her the least attention, yesterday. Place the chairs, Digby.

PUNTS *places three chairs at the table, C.*

CLEOPATRA. In my room you will find plates, knives and forks; please fetch them, Mr. Philip.

PHILIP *exit, R.*

CLEOPATRA. You should not eat your meals while at work; it will not agree with you; take your time to everything—even to eating and drinking.

Enter PHILIP carrying plates, knives and forks, and places them on table, C.

CLEOPATRA (*arranges everything and then places coffee service on table, C.*). Is breakfast ready, Sylvan? (*PHILIP places rolls also in center of table C.*)

CLEOPATRA (*walks to SYLVAN and with a feigned bow*). Will you condescend to drink the first cup of coffee which your wife prepares in her company?

SYLVAN (*drops his pen and rises*). Yes, you are very amiable! Ah, and how inviting it all looks! (*sits down at table, C.*)

CLEOPATRA (*pours the coffee*). Mr. Philip, be seated please. (*PHILIP sits down modestly.*)

CLEOPATRA (*hands SYLVAN a full cup*). And here is sugar and cream; help yourself, Digby.

PUNTS. Yes ma'am.

CLEOPATRA. Do you know where the seamstress Mary Dasch lives?

PUNTS. Yes ma'am.

CLEOPATRA. Go there and tell her I wish to see her at noon.

PUNTS. I don't—Mr. Professor, should I?

CLEOPATRA (*forcibly*). Are you not here as a servant?

PUNTS. Yes—but—

CLEOPATRA. Then hurry off at once without your *ifs* and *buts*—when I, the lady of the house, tell you something. And mind you hurry back, for I want you to attend to a great many other matters. Be off now.

PUNTS (*astonished*). All right ma'am. (*Exits.*)

CLEOPATRA (*sits down very pleasantly*). Well, *cher ami*, how is the coffee?

SYLVAN. I will admit never having drunk as good a cup before. Cleopatra, may I have another cup?

CLEOPATRA (*pours him another cup*). Did you never eat anything mornings?

SYLVAN. I was accustomed to munch some crackers while dressing.

CLEOPATRA. Well, permit me to butter a roll for you. (*butters a roll and hands it to him on a plate.*) Eating while walking or moving about produces dyspepsia.

SYLVAN. I think you are right. The coffee is exquisite. Philip, you are not a very apt scholar in the culinary art, you can now take a post graduate course.

CLEOPATRA (*having filled up PHILIP'S cup pleasantly*). In future I release you from your duties as chef, that will be more appropriate for a cook.

SYLVAN. But a cook—

CLEOPATRA. Have another cup dear?

SYLVAN. All right—it tastes so splendidly—I will concede that you are an expert in cooking coffee.

CLEOPATRA. I hope you will find me an expert in all duties of the household. Will Mr. Philip have another cup?

SYLVAN. Philip—*pus!*

CLEOPATRA. May I fill up Mr. Philippus' cup?

SYLVAN. Philippi!

CLEOPATRA. Well, pi. All right, I asked Mr. Philippi.

SYLVAN. Philippum!

CLEOPATRA. You are trying to make a fool of me. Is your name Philippus, pum, pi or po?

SYLVAN (*pedantically*). Those are the four endings of the declension. It hurts a thorough grammarian if the wrong case is used.

CLEOPATRA (*laughing*). Well husband, perhaps you can still teach me the proper endings of the cases. But would you not like to smoke a pipe for digestion?

SYLVAN. That would be capital.

CLEOPATRA (*fetches him a pipe*). I know poor uncle Arno loved to smoke his pipe with his last cup of coffee. Here, Sylvan.

SYLVAN. H'm! H'm! You are so very kind Cleopatra, I find it quite comforting to enjoy a breakfast in peace and quiet—something I had previously not known of—and it does not appear wicked to me to enjoy eating or drinking, for it is not gormandizing. Besides, God has given us food for our gratification and nourishment.

CLEOPATRA. I concur in your version—now light your pipe.

SYLVAN (*looks at the clock*). I would like to (*jumps up*) but oh my! it is already past eleven and I must be off to lecture on logic. How the time flies

CLEOPATRA. Can't you take a vacation on the first day of your married life—I had so much to talk to you about—give those sophomores a holiday—do.

SYLVAN (*doubtful*). I have never missed a lecture.

CLEOPATRA. For that very reason miss one now.

SYLVAN. Well, it being already late and I not being thoroughly prepared, Philip hurry over to the college and post up a notice that Professor Drissler will not lecture to-day.

PHILIP. I will go at once. (*Exits, C.*)

CLEOPATRA *folds a piece of paper and lights it at the grate fire, then hands it to SYLVAN.*

SYLVAN (*not noticing it at once*). Oh! I thank you.

CLEOPATRA (*resumes her seat*). Can you remember our visit at uncle Arno's the first time we met?

SYLVAN (*smoking and feeling more comfortable*). Yes, oh yes—four years ago.

CLEOPATRA. Your memory is good. Poor uncle was such a cheerful man and loved company, but you always remained in the background when all others were having fun. The girls always nicknamed you "philosopher." After that I continually observed you for I did not see the appropriateness of that name. I always imagined a philosopher was an old grey-headed fellow while you were young and good looking.

SYLVAN (*instructively*). Also a young man can be a philosopher. Philosophy is a science—

CLEOPATRA (*flattering*). I pray thee no dissertations on philosophy now. I understand that philosophy is a science of wisdom, but when I think of the sayings of those philosophers which you quoted before, I doubt very much whether they are wise.

SYLVAN. But they are authorities, the wisest men of antiquity.

CLEOPATRA. And you contend that they had sound views (*jumps up*.) The one that compared us women to foxes, apes and even dogs (*bowing before him*.) Look at me—can you see any resemblance in me to a fox or an ape, or—I hate even to express it—

SYLVAN (*admiring her*). My dear child, it is not meant literally. Simonides does not speak of physical similarity but of psychical qualities. These comparisons are called—

CLEOPATRA. Sh! Do not ventilate your wisdom this morning (*sits down*.) Why were you so morose and sullen four years ago when we used to be happy? Do you consider it wrong to be lively?

SYLVAN. Not that, but a sedate young girl should act respectably

CLEOPATRA. Why, were we not respectable?

SYLVAN. Oh! I did not mean that—but—but—I—I am never at home in ladies' company.

CLEOPATRA. Have you associated much with ladies?

SYLVAN. Hardly at all.

CLEOPATRA. Then I have caught you, old man, you do not know women from your own experience—all your knowledge is from those moldy philosophers—and the only reason you seemed so reserved was because you were embarrassed and bashful.

SYLVAN. Bashful? *Quod non*. The man who is dignified never becomes embarrassed. I simply felt myself out of place.

CLEOPATRA. A man who is impressed with his dignity should never find himself out of place. And as you neither know our sex nor the manner in which to treat us, I will be very indulgent.

SYLVAN (*tries to appear dignified but does not succeed well*). You will be indulgent. The wife indulgent to her husband and master. You totally misconceive your position.

CLEOPATRA. You think so? Well, aside from the opinions you expressed about women and the hard things you said to me, after our proposed union was settled I longed for the wedding trip. A wedding trip is an established universal custom. Instead of that you came to me in a monosyllabic way, are married to me in a matter-of-fact way, return here in the same monosyllabic way, bring me to your rooms and walk away. Should I not be indulgent for such treatment?

SYLVAN (*somewhat embarrassed*). The Greeks and Romans brought their wives in the plainest manner to their houses, out of which they seldom went. The ancients knew nothing of wedding trips

CLEOPATRA. We are not the ancients. I respect the Romans and Greeks and their customs, but you know, we Americans have different customs. One of these customs is that newly married couples make a wedding trip (*getting more serious*.) Two persons who unite for their entire lives—who will share joys and sorrows many, many years—who sacrifice the blessed singleness and henceforth only live for each other, must learn to yield to each other, to exchange mutual sympathy and mutual love. Such is a happy wedded life. And is it not a beautiful custom for them to begin their wedlock in some manner foreign to their general routine? A wedding trip is the symbol of the destruction of old cares. They avoid meeting for the first weeks the people they always come in contact with. The short wedding trip is the symbol of the longer trip through life, and during this wedding trip they learn to know each other more intimately and their hearts become more firmly attached to each other. Oh, it is a beautiful custom, this wedding trip, a grand preparation for the joys and sorrows of matrimony.

SYLVAN (*somewhat touched by her graphic description*). In truth you picture it with so much life—

CLEOPATRA (*tenderly*). And had you really so much work that you could not secure a vacation for this wedding trip?

SYLVAN. A vacation would not have been necessary, for tomorrow our holidays begin.

CLEOPATRA (*suddenly animated*). Just so! The ancients did not make wedding trips, therefore we will not. My talk seems to tire you.

SYLVAN. No—no, you speak so sensibly.

CLEOPATRA. Do I, Sylvan? I would like to put a question to you. Did the ancients love their wives?

SYLVAN (*in a learned tone*.) H'm! It is perfectly established that the ancients recognized love. They worshiped a god of love, Amor or Eros, and also a goddess, Venus or Aphrodite. Still the relations between man and wife were entirely different. Women were entirely restricted to their households and had neither influence nor say with their husbands.

CLEOPATRA. Is that so? I have heard some stories of Lucretia, Arria and Cornelia, etc., which go to prove that the ancients esteemed and loved their wives.

SYLVAN (*smiling*). Pretty well posted on ancient history. I am pleased to learn that, and the citation is remarkably well adapted.

CLEOPATRA. I am happy to receive your favorable comment. If then, the ancients loved and you pretend to do as they do—have you ever loved?

SYLVAN (*embarrassed*). Of course later when Christianity appeared the modes of the Romans were metamorphosed. Christianity teaches us love to our neighbor, and that I have always striven to live up to.

CLEOPATRA (*has in the meantime collected the dishes and placed them on the tray, rises and places them on the table R. aside*). Just as I presumed, ignorance and inexperience.

SYLVAN (*aside*). She does everything so neatly, so tidily; what a splendid woman!

CLEOPATRA (*takes hold of table*). Will you help me?

SYLVAN. With pleasure. (*They carry the table to its proper place.*)

CLEOPATRA. This is a very fine flat, especially the front rooms looking on the street.

SYLVAN. Have you seen them?

CLEOPATRA (*smiling*). When you left me last night alone I had ample time to examine every corner and unpack my trunks. Apropos, I must give you the slumber robe, which

cousin Bessie gave us as a wedding present. The present is more appropriate for you, and will look very prettily on your lounge. (*Exits R.*)

SYLVAN. She described the wedding trip in such picturesque terms that I begin to yearn for one. The ancients did not venerate this custom, for they had neither stages, railroads nor steamships, and we certainly have advanced in this respect. A wedding trip to the Rocky Mountains would be very enjoyable.

Re-enter CLEOPATRA, R.

CLEOPATRA. I had quite forgotten. I put it into this closet.

SYLVAN (*angrily*). In this closet, your clothes?

CLEOPATRA (*calmly*). Having no closet in my chamber I was forced to hang them up in here.

SYLVAN. And my instruments and chemical apparatus.

CLEOPATRA. I brought those into my bedroom.

SYLVAN (*very excitedly*). What, my expensive apparatus in that damp room? Why, my microscopes will be rusty.

CLEOPATRA (*tenderly but forcibly*). Ah, my dear, and you knew that my rooms were damp, and still you expect me to sleep in rooms where you would not trust your apparatus.

SYLVAN (*touched by the reproach*). You are right, I did wrong; (*rapidly*) you can at once move into the front rooms.

CLEOPATRA (*amiably*). Then you would be forced to give instructions and study in the damp ones. No, let us rather consider this matter and see how it is most easily arranged and if necessary we can take another flat.

SYLVAN. As you decide, Cleopatra, (*aside*.) How could I put her into those damp rooms and she did not even complain about it? (*aloud*.) It was very wrong on my part, dear Cleopatra, and I hope you will for—

CLEOPATRA. Never mind Sylvan, you did not do it intentionally, it was want of consideration. (*aside, merrily*.) The first time he ever *deared* me. (*aloud, looking about*.) I think it advisable to get a larger flat, and then I can make better arrangements for a kitchen.

SYLVAN. And so you still insist on having a cook?

CLEOPATRA (*firmly*). Mr. Professor, the household belongs to my dominion. What would you say if I contradicted you in reading a passage in Plautus? I am determined to have

another flat. These old Greeks and Romans will feel insulted when they are forced to vacate their quarters. They were as thoroughly acclimated as if they intended to remain forever. (*Making a funny bow.*) Yes my dear friends Cicero, Virgil, Horace, Tacitus, Terence and your bosom chums Sophocles, Homer and Pindar, you shall emigrate.

SYLVAN. Why, Cleopatra, you are quite at home with them.

CLEOPATRA. No! I only have a superficial knowledge of these dead heroes. Just as much as any good Christian woman should know of them, not to get into bad repute.

SYLVAN. One can never know them thoroughly enough.

CLEOPATRA. Yes one can, if it involves forgetting the living. We are living over two thousand years later and we should not adopt their ideas or customs, or else we become antiquated and useless.

SYLVAN. Oh now, you are intruding into my field and I will not retreat from my position. I will fight you with your own weapons. Life is—

CLEOPATRA (*laughing*). Hold on! Do you really believe me silly enough to contest your own stronghold with you? Oh no, you quote theory and I practice.

Enter PHILIP, C.

PHILIP. Mr. Professor, I have attended to it.

SYLVAN. Well?

CLEOPATRA (*much amused*). You wish to imitate the customs of the ancients. Well, just look at yourself in the long smoking jacket, the white muffler and the German student's pipe, and think you were Plato or Socrates. Does it not make you laugh? Or imagine you were Cicero as you were dressed yesterday in a swallow-tail coat rising in the Roman senate to deliver a great oration, or a Roman youth who is being presented with a toga vir—vir—

PHILIP. Virilis.

CLEOPATRA. Virilis. Does it not make you smile?

SYLVAN. You only speak about the dress, but I speak of the manners.

CLEOPATRA. Well, doesn't the dress give some indications of the culture, or have you learned gentlemen different theories?

SYLVAN (*naively*). No.

CLEOPATRA (*seriously*). Well then, I could reply and say

you judge them from the exterior, for you simply live up to their language.

SYLVAN. I would like to hear your further argument.

CLEOPATRA. Oh, how you would love to entangle me in a logical discussion in which you would become the victor and I the victim. No sir, I argue from my own standpoint. If you choose to be a Roman then start imitating the external manners of the Romans. How tasteless a clean shaven lip and a pompadour coiffure. Place such a head with a standing up collar on a Roman statue and see how ridiculous it would appear.

SYLVAN. You say senseless and ridiculous.

CLEOPATRA. Mr. Philippe, please sit down here.

PHILIP. Yes, Mrs. Professor (*takes a chair and seats himself in C of stage.*)

CLEOPATRA (*quickly fetches a comb out of dressing case in closet*). Would a Roman ever have worn his hair like a drowned porcupine? (*Combs PHILIP's hair backward and then makes a pretty part in center, combs hair to each side.*) You call us women vain because we like to arrange ourselves neatly and tidily, and I am sure God gave us this gift because he wants the human beings to appear different from owls. (*Has finished Philip's headdress.*) Now look at that face, the *ensemble*.

SYLVAN. Yes it looks nicer, but Cleopatra, it does not suit a serious man—

CLEOPATRA. What, not to look handsome? (*Looks with funny expression into his eyes.*) And why not? Especially for a newly married man. Tell me candidly: Have you ever desired to please me?

PHILIP *gets up, looks into a mirror, fixes his collar and tie, and appears pleased.*

SYLVAN. Never in dress,

CLEOPATRA. Confess, you never thought of it. As punishment for your thoughtlessness sit down and I will arrange your hair also.

SYLVAN. But Cleopatra, how can you think of such a thing, a dignified professor.

CLEOPATRA (*pushes the chair toward him*). Please, please do.

SYLVAN. You are making fun of me.

CLEOPATRA (*quickly parts his hair in center, smiling*). And did not your ancients make fun occasionally?

Enter PUNTS, C.

PUNTS. The seamstress will be here at noon.

CLEOPATRA. All right.

PUNTS. Oh, how funny!

CLEOPATRA. What is funny?

PUNTS. Mr. Professor has had his hair dressed.

CLEOPATRA. To complete the trio I have a good mind to take you next.

PUNTS. But my wig—

CLEOPATRA (*making a low bow*). Dear Sylvan, take a look at yourself in the mirror.

SYLVAN (*looks at himself*). 'Tis true, it looks well.

CLEOPATRA. Now if you would wear a Prince of Wales collar and a Prince Albert coat and you would take me out walking on the boulevard, people would say what a handsome couple.

SYLVAN. Oh what vanity, I am ashamed of myself.

CLEOPATRA. Vanity? A little vanity goes well, perhaps I can spare you some of mine, for I may be too vain. I confess I have yearned to please you, and in order to please you I fixed myself especially for you yesterday but (*funnily aggrieved*) you never even noticed me.

SYLVAN. Oh yes you pleased me, pleased me very much.

CLEOPATRA. Then that pleasure must have been internal, for it was not perceptible. Why, you never even offered me your arm. Sylvan, did you never offer other girls your arm?

SYLVAN (*sincerely*). Never—why, I never associated with young girls. I was like Poo Bah in the "Mikado," I never spoke to young girls.

CLEOPATRA (*more spirited*). Perhaps, then, you have never kissed.

SYLVAN. How could I have done that?

CLEOPATRA. Perhaps you do not even know how it is done. There you see learned man you can still learn something from your ignorant wife. I will show you how it is done. Mr. Philippus, one moment please.

PHILIP (*walks toward her*). Mrs. Professor—

SYLVAN. What are you going to do?

CLEOPATRA. Show you how one kisses.

SYLVAN (*with increasing jealousy steps between them*). But not on him.

CLEOPATRA. Well, on whom?

SYLVAN. Well if it must be—on—on me.

CLEOPATRA (*dignified*). Would it be proper if I kissed you?

SYLVAN (*slaps his forehead with his hand, walks a few steps and then decisively*). Punts!

PUNTS (*sorrowfully*). Mr. Professor.

SYLVAN. Go to the trunk store and tell them to send me three or four fine trunks at once.

PUNTS (*who always remains standing at the door*). Is the Professor going to travel?

SYLVAN. Never mind what I am going to do; do as you are told.

PUNTS (*in going out*). Just as I surmised, the woman has set them all crazy. (*Exit, C.*)

SYLVAN. Philip.

PHILIP. Mr. Professor.

SYLVAN. Go to Redfern the tailor, and order him at once.

PHILIP. Yes sir. Good day. (*Exits C.*)

SYLVAN (*standing in front of CLEOPATRA bashfully*). Dearest Cleopatra, let us make the wedding trip after all—but at once—we will leave immediately, does it suit you?

CLEOPATRA. Your wishes coincide with mine.

SYLVAN. Loving wife, I met you so coldly, so chilly, so unconcernedly, but I did not know any better.

CLEOPATRA. I understand, these ancient philosophers were wedded to you.

SYLVAN. But you have absolutely divorced us (*with naive embarrassment*.) You are so amiable, I never knew that before.

CLEOPATRA (*lovingly*). Are you serious, Sylvan dear, will you like my cheerful manners, my easy disposition?

SYLVAN (*lovingly*). Yes dear, I would not desire you different (*bashfully*). You complained that I did not offer you my arm. May I offer you my hand (*stretches out his hand*.)

CLEOPATRA (*stretches out hers*). Here!

SYLVAN. The other one too (*takes hold of her by both hands, draws her to him and puts his right arm around her waist, abashed*.) I feel so queer, Cleopatra dearest, will you excuse my awkwardness?

CLEOPATRA (*looking lovingly into his eyes*). Your awkwardness will not hurt you in my eyes.

SYLVAN. No?

CLEOPATRA (*smiling*). Oh no.

SYLVAN. Then promise me—

CLEOPATRA. What?

SYLVAN (*embarrassed*). You wanted to kiss Philip before; although he is only a youth, you should not do that.

CLEOPATRA. Dearest husband, that was only a little farce.

SYLVAN. Really?

CLEOPATRA. You say yourself you are a little awkward. You see I had to excite you.

SYLVAN. And if that had been of no avail, if I had remained cold and distant?

CLEOPATRA. Then the happiness of my life would have been forever destroyed. Marriage without love is like hell on earth.

SYLVAN. And you risked your happiness?

CLEOPATRA. I loved you even prior to uncle Arno's death, for without love, money could have never charmed me.

SYLVAN. You dear loving Cleopatra (*would like to, but has not the courage to kiss her.*) We start on a wedding trip to-day.

CLEOPATRA. And—and your philosophers?

SYLVAN. Are old fools.

CURTAIN.



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