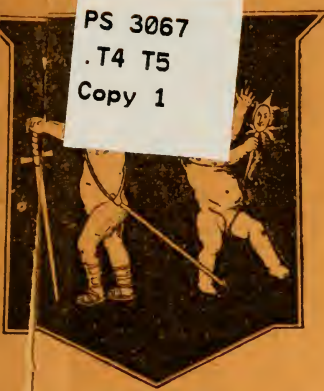


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1895

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

JOHN FRENCH *Nouveau riche.*
MRS. CHURCHILL *A young widow.*
MARIE *Mrs. Churchill's maid.*

Costumes modern and appropriate.

THAT PATRICK!

SCENE. — MRS. CHURCHILL'S *drawing-room*. MARIE *discovered arranging flowers in vase*.

MARIE. Flowers! flowers! always flowers! The gardener of Mr. French, he give me flowers; and the coachman across the street, he give me flowers; and the milkman, he leave them on the back steps; and the postman, he throw them over the hedge. If only now the one or the other would bring me a head of lettuce, or a good cabbage, — ach! Sauer-kraut — die liebe sauer-kraut! das liebe Vaterland! (*Sighs*.) The butcher, however, he please me; “Marie, I bring you a garland,” say he — “make your eyes to!” and when I open my eyes, there is a whole string of sausages round my neck. Ach! — der ist ein Mann! And the dairyman, he bring fresh eggs. However, my mistress, die gnädige Frau, she like the flowers, and to her I gives them. (*Through window appears a bunch of flowers on the end of a pitchfork. MARIE does not notice till prong slightly pricks her shoulder.*) Ach, Himmel! (*Sees flowers.*) Again flowers? That Patrick! Roses — it is the gardener of Mr. French, our neighbor. So shy is that Patrick! Six bouquets has he give me in six days, and always thus, at the end of a pitchfork. (*Takes roses. Pitchfork is withdrawn.*) Alas! Where another vase? — all full!

(*Enter MRS. CHURCHILL.*)

MRS. C. Good morning, Marie!

MARIE. Good morning, madame!

MRS. C. How gay we are with flowers! More tributes from your admirers? They will help us to forget that we have no breakfast this morning.

MARIE. Breakfast? One instant, gnädige Frau!
(*Exit.*)

MRS. C. Poor little thing! Or, rather — poor me! One of the hardest things about my reverses is that I shall have to part with her. It will be lonely in this great tumble-down house without her. She has been with me six years now. But with all these ardent admirers, she will be better taken care of than I am.

(*Re-enter MARIE with tray, which she places before MRS. C.*)

MARIE. Eggs! — fruit! — tea! — bread! — butter! *Guten appetit* — *gnädige Frau!*

MRS. C. But, child, where did all this come from?

MARIE. Madame will commence with a few grapes?

MRS. C. I thought you told me there was not a scrap in the house!

MARIE. The egg! — shall I break it for madame?

MRS. C. Marie, I insist on an explanation! I have told you not to run up bills.

MARIE. Madame need have no fear. As for the eggs and cream, the dairyman, he is a friend of mine.

MRS. C. But the tea?

MARIE. The tea? Oh, the grocer, he is a very good friend of mine.

MRS. C. And the bread?

MARIE. That baker boy, he always think he make such nice bread — he would have me try it.

MRS. C. And these exquisite hot-house grapes?

MARIE. Oh, the gardener of Mr. Sutton, he pass by this morning! Has madame no appetite?

MRS. C. (*rising*). Marie, this is too much! That I should be living on the bounty of your friends! Take it away! I shall not touch a mouthful!

MARIE (*opening her eyes innocently*). Oh, madame! what would you? The men, if they will give me eggs, and flowers, and tea — is it my fault?

MRS. C. (*severely*). But, Marie, don't you know it's very wrong to encourage so many men at one time?

MARIE. Encourage? It is they that have the courage — I do nothing! I but says, "Thank you!"

MRS. C. (*laughing*). Well, I see it's of no use! For this once, especially as I'm half faint with hunger, I will eat your breakfast. But mind, Marie, it is never to happen again! I expect a remittance this evening. I have been speaking to Mrs. James about you, Marie, and as I shall no longer be able to keep you in my service —

MARIE. What! Madame will marry again?

MRS. C. Marry? What has put that into your head?

MARIE. The neighbor of madame, Mr. French, he has had that in his head for a long time. He is very rich. His father make a fortune — a large fortune.

MRS. C. (*taking up roses*). But these are the very prettiest flowers of them all. Where did they come from?

MARIE. Oh, a friend of mine — but there is no vase. Madame will wear them — they suit her complexion.

MRS. C. Wear those tender tokens? No, indeed! you shall wear them yourself.

MARIE. If madame would but do me the honor!

MRS. C. I'm too old and grave for such vanities, Marie.

MARIE. Oh! gnädige Frau! (*She pins roses on MRS. C.'s dress.*)

MRS. C. Well, I will wear them for your sake. What I should have done without you I do not know! (*Bell heard without.*) What! a caller so early! I must run and change my breakfast-cap. (*Exit.*)

(*Exit MARIE with tray. Leaves fruit. Re-enter MARIE, carrying bundle of onions.*)

MARIE. Ach! But they smell good! I will make a nice stew. That was the gardener of Mr. Baker that leave them — no visitor for my mistress. These American men! they very good to me. People say men is so bad, so selfish, so cruel. I do not find it. (*Proceeds to dust room. Song, if desired. After song, pitchfork appears at window with note on prong. MARIE perceives it.*) Ach! again that Patrick! (*Takes note.*) Ach! a poetry! (*Pitchfork withdrawn. Reads:*)

“The roses I send thee,
Oh, do they offend thee?
Ah! cruel one, bend thee,
And look on my woe!”

Ach, Himmel! wie schön! How beautiful! How splendid! How — nice! That Patrick — he write poetry. No one ever write poetry to me before. (*Looks pensive, and sighs.*) Now, if my mistress marry the master of Patrick! — (*Bell without.*) Ach, it rings! (*Exit.*)

(*Enter FRENCH and MARIE. Exit MARIE.*)

FRENCH. Fine old house! Pity it's so out of repair! No wonder that Mrs. Churchill is proud of it and of her family. H'm! My paternal mansion! Still, she accepts my roses! What a handsome woman she is! Those eyes of hers — whenever she looks at me, I know she is thinking,

"Your father, sir, was a pedler!" Still, she accepts my roses! At least, she doesn't refuse them. She never thanks me; but then, perhaps, that's all the better. There's a good deal in silence.

(Enter MARIE.)

MARIE. Madame will appear soon. Madame presents her compliments, and hopes that Mr. French will be seated. The ball Madame attend last night, and the attention she receive, and all, have tire Madame. Madame sleep late.

FRENCH. Attention! I know it! all the swells admire her!

MARIE. Will Mr. French not graciously refresh himself with a few grapes. (*Presents grapes.*)

FRENCH (*waving them off*). Thanks, no.

MARIE. Mr. French will find them excellent.

FRENCH. No, thank you!

MARIE. The grapes of Mr. Sutton; they are famed through the country.

FRENCH. Sutton? What! How! These grapes came from Mr. Sutton?

MARIE. From the hot-house of Mr. Sutton. (*Places them by him on the table.*)

FRENCH (*aside*). So! Sutton's paying court, is he? H'm! I always said she was a handsome woman. H'm! Grapes from Sutton's hot-house!

MARIE. But the peaches of Mr. Belmont! they, too, are fine. (*Places peaches by grapes.*)

FRENCH. Belmont! Belmont! What Belmont? Not that hulking old —

MARIE. Mr. Belmont, of Belmont Park. Will Mr. French not try a peach?

FRENCH (*aside*). Why, he's the stingiest old curmudgeon in the district. They say his own mother has never tasted a peach of his raising. So Belmont sends Mrs. Churchill peaches, does he?

MARIE. But yet it is flowers that are most beautiful, after all. These lilies, now. Mr. French is a judge of lilies. (*Places dish of lilies on table.*)

FRENCH. Judge of lilies? I hate lilies. (*Aside.*) I always said there was not a woman in America who could hold a candle to her. (*Aloud.*) Lilies, h'm! These grew on Mrs. Churchill's place, I presume.

MARIE. Oh, no, sir.

FRENCH. No? H'm! (*Aside.*) Close little piece! I must find out where those lilies came from. I know by her reticence this is the man. (*Takes out coin and slipping it*

into hand.) Oh, by the way, where did you say these lilies grew?

MARIE. I said not, sir.

FRENCH (*violently*). The deuce you didn't! (*Giving another coin.*) Don't you think you could remember?

MARIE (*meditatively*). Lilies? Come they from Mr. Graves? No, it is these tuberoses that come from Mr. Graves. (*Adds vase of tuberoses to row on table.*) Mr. Forrest, perhaps. Ach, but I am stupid! It was these chrysanthemums that came from the place of Mr. Forrest. (*Adds chrysanthemums to row.*) And these orange-blossoms!

FRENCH (*starting*). Orange-blossoms.

MARIE (*adding them to row*). Orange-blossoms.

FRENCH. No, not even in Italy, in Rome, did I ever see a pair of eyes like Mrs. Churchill's! I always said so. And how she can put up with the devotion of these Suttons and Belmonts and Graveses! But of course their fathers were not pedlers. Where the dickens can she have stowed my roses? I told Patrick to deliver them into her own hands. She probably threw them out of the window. I know she threw them out of the window. She can't forget that my father was a pedler. She's — Oh! she comes! Heavens and earth! — she didn't throw them out of the window; she's wearing them!

(*Enter MRS. CHURCHILL. Exit MARIE.*)

MRS. C. Good morning, Mr. French; pardon me for keeping you so long.

FRENCH (*confused*). Not at all; it only seemed a second. I — I mean it seemed a whole year. It seemed — I —

MRS. C. Don't stand. Why, what a strange arrangement Marie has made of the flowers. With your permission, I will rearrange them. But, first, will you not take a peach?

FRENCH. Oh, no, I thank you.

MRS. C. They are very sweet, and were given to me by the most generous-hearted person in the world.

FRENCH (*aside*). The dickens! Old Belmont!

MRS. C. As for these grapes, they fairly melt in one's mouth.

FRENCH (*aside*). Sutton's grapes!

MRS. C. Where do you think these tuberoses would look best? Here, against this deep red background?

FRENCH. Yes, certainly; yes. (*Aside.*) She gives them

the place of honor! Forrest, was it, who sent the tuberose? Mr. Graves? But, still, she is wearing my roses.

MRS. C. And the chrysanthemums I will put here.

FRENCH. By all means. (*Aside.*) How carefully she lifts them. Forrest's chrysanthemums. I am convinced it's Forrest!

MRS. C. And these lilies — these lovely lilies —

FRENCH. Those confounded —

MRS. C. I beg your pardon!

FRENCH. As you say, — those lovely lilies —

MRS. C. I will put a little in the shadow. So.

FRENCH. Yes — by all means in the shadow. (*Aside.*) She kissed them — I swear I saw her kiss them when she was pretending to smell them!

MRS. C. And the orange-blossoms —

FRENCH. There is no place left for the orange-blossoms; you will have to wear them.

MRS. C. Wear them! oh, no! I like my roses better. You had not noticed my beautiful roses?

FRENCH. Beautiful? You honor them too much!

MRS. C. But they *are* very beautiful.

FRENCH (*charmed*). Mere weeds!

MRS. C. (*hotly*). I never saw more exquisite roses.

FRENCH. Weeds, Mrs. Churchill, mere weeds.

MRS. C. Really, sir, your taste in flowers is most extraordinary. I tell you they are exquisite and rare roses, and were given me by a dear friend.

FRENCH. Ah!

MRS. C. It is true I do not often wear flowers, but, for the sake of my friend, I put them on.

FRENCH. Oh!

MRS. C. Some people might condemn me for speaking so frankly; but, though the Churchills have always been proud of their family, I for one make no distinctions of rank. In whatever grade of life I find a true and loyal heart, I press it to my own.

FRENCH (*aside*). How my heart beats. She doesn't leave me much to say, though!

MRS. C. (*excitedly*). Yes, wherever I find a loyal heart I clasp it to my own. Away with all distinctions of rank. The rank is but the guinea's stamp!

FRENCH (*seizing her hand*). Madame, you express the inmost feelings of my soul.

MRS. C. Sir!

FRENCH. I understand you. I appreciate your delicate consideration of my scruples —

MRS. C. The man is mad!

FRENCH. Your womanly frankness merely makes me, if possible —

MRS. C. You will leave the house.

FRENCH. And to see you wearing my roses —

MRS. C. Your roses!

FRENCH. Every one of which was plucked and kissed by my own hands — lips — no, plucked by my hands, and kissed by my lips —

MRS. C. (*ringing*). There is some strange mistake here. (*Enter MARIE.*) Marie, where did these flowers come from?

MARIE. From the end of a pitchfork, madame.

MRS. C. } A pitchfork!

FRENCH. }

MARIE. Through the window!

MRS. C. } Through the window!

FRENCH. }

FRENCH. And who, pray, was at the other end of the pitchfork?

MARIE. That Patrick! It is the way he have of give me flowers. So shy is he.

FRENCH. Bringing *you* flowers! The flowers were for your mistress. I told Patrick to bring them this very morning. (*To MRS. C.*) Ah, I see! So it's for Patrick's sake you are wearing these flowers, and *he* is the loyal heart in a lowly rank of life —

MRS. C. Mr. French!

MARIE. Ah, madame! take my flowers, my sausages, my fresh eggs — anything — but leave me my Patrick!

(*Pitchfork appears at window, with ring on one of its prongs. All run toward it. FRENCH seizes it.*)

MARIE. Ach, mein Herr! for me — that is for me!

FRENCH (*presenting it to MRS. CHURCHILL*). Permit me, madame, to offer you this tribute from the lowly heart you spoke of but now.

MRS. C. I know nothing of that ring.

MARIE. Ach, that Patrick! Madame, take my all, but leave me the ring — and my Patrick!

FRENCH (*examining ring*). By Jupiter! this ring! By Jove! this is my ring — the very ring I bought yesterday, meaning to ask you, — meaning to present, — I missed it out of my waistcoat pocket. I see it all! Patrick found it, and offers himself to you.

MARIE. No — to me, to me! Look! these roses; they, too, are my — they comes from Patrick! I give them to my

mistress, and behold (*taking out verses*), also, poetry from Patrick!

“The roses I send thee,
Oh, do they offend thee?
Ah! cruel one, bend thee,
And look on my woe!”

FRENCH (*snatching paper*). My own verses! They were in my waistcoat with the ring. I missed them, too.

MARIE. Ach! That Patrick!

FRENCH. Madame, I do not know what to say to you. Your acceptance of the roses which for the last two months I have been sending gave me courage to hope —

MRS. C. Roses! I never had the chance to accept. I never received a rose from you!

FRENCH. But I sent them by Patrick. Marie, what does all this mean? You and Patrick —

MARIE. Ach! That Patrick!

MRS. C. So you have been keeping the roses yourself!

MARIE. Madame, a thousand pardons. He say nothing — that Patrick! — so shy is he. He present the roses through the window, on the end of garden fork. How do I know? The men, they give me so many things. I thought —

MRS. C. (*laughing*). There, Marie, take your Patrick, — and you, Mr. French, your roses. (*Gives roses.*)

FRENCH. And leave you to wear Mr. Forrest's chrysanthemums or Mr. Graves' tuberose!

MRS. C. You labor under some strange mistake These flowers belong —

MARIE. H'st! madame. It is best he think them your lovers'!

MRS. C. These flowers and this fruit were sent to Marie by various gardeners and coachmen of her acquaintance.

MARIE. Ach, madame! Mein Herr, believe her not! Behold, as you send her roses through Patrick, they send her lilies and grapes through me. Do you not see? It is as plain as the ears on a rabbit. (*Aside.*) If Patrick hear I take all these things, he never speak to me again.

MRS. C. But, Marie, if you cared for Patrick all the time, why did you give me his flowers?

MARIE. Ach, madame! if I give you all the other's flowers, and only not Patrick's, you would know that I — that I — that —

MRS. C. Ah, I see! you are a regular woman, Marie.

(MARIE *retires.*)

FRENCH. May I not hope that you will at least take back these roses?

MRS. C. Mr. French, I —

FRENCH. I say nothing about the — verses — and the — the —

MRS. C. Oh, no! On no account say anything about the verses and the — the —

FRENCH. I picked them for you myself. I know it is a great liberty. I — (MRS. C. *takes the roses.*)

FRENCH (*emboldened*). And perhaps later we may talk about the verses and the — the —

MRS. C. But for the present we shall do better to confine ourselves to

MARIE (*at window*). That Patrick!

MRS. C. } (*running to window*). Yes, that Patrick

FRENCH. }

CURTAIN.

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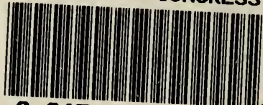
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