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Helen Sherman Griffith

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# A FALLEN IDOL

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A Farce in One Act

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By

Helen Sherman Griffith

Author of "The Burglar Alarm," "The Lady From  
Philadelphia," Etc.

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The Penn Publishing Company

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# A FALLEN IDOL

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## CAST

MISS SPRIGGINS . . . *Principal of Young Ladies' Seminary*  
DORA } . . . . . *Pupils in the Seminary*  
GWENDOLIN }  
MARIE BRUN . . . . . *A French Cleaner*

COSTUMES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHARACTERS

TIME IN REPRESENTATION, FIFTY MINUTES



## A FALLEN IDOL

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SCENE—*A room behind MARIE'S shop, set with "shabby genteel" furniture. On left side a glass case exposing several pieces of fine lace, gloves, etc. A plain Japanese screen at right side has light gown, newly cleaned, hanging over it. Large easy chair in centre. Entrances C. in flat, L. and R. Mirror in some part of room. Scene opens disclosing DORA reading a letter aloud to MARIE, who clasps her hands in ecstasy as she listens, following DORA as she strides about stage.*

DORA (*reading in exalted voice and with appropriate gestures*). "Without the light of your sweet eyes, my life is to me as a night without day (*strides across stage, MARIE following*) day—no (*in natural voice*), I mean a night without stars (*in exalted voice, recrossing stage*), a day without sun! 'The night has a thousand eyes, the day but one' (*lifts her eyes in ecstasy of admiration*), and you, my precious Amabel—" (*Aside, in natural voice*) That's me, Marie. (*Reads in exalted voice, striding across stage.*) "You are that light that illumines my day of love! And now I am actually to see you—to gaze into those deep, tender, soulful orbs (*rolls eyes*) that will be raised so tenderly to mine! Ah (*recrosses stage*), those eyes! I can see them now in my mind's eye! Soon, in a few hours now, I shall drink in their sweet glances—their tender glances—for they will be tender, will they not?" (*Aside.*) Oh, won't they? (*Aloud, reading.*) "They must. Why thy very name, my dear one, whispers of love—Amabel. At three, then, as we agreed, at Marie's. Until then, my dear one, adieu, adieu! (*Kisses letter.*) Thine ever, Romeo." (*Rapturously, folding letter.*) Ah, Marie, is it not beautiful? And I am to see him here to-day—just think, to-day! You are a dear, Marie, to let us meet here, and to have kept all our letters and all, and never tell.

MARIE. Ah, mademoiselle, I am as anxious zat ze madame should not discover ze petite affaire du cœur, as mademoiselle herself. It would—what you call it—dear cost? coute chere—my custom wiz ze young ladies, I fear madame would be so incensed against me if she knew. Is it not so?

DORA. She would be pretty furious. But she is not

going to find out, is she, Marie? (MARIE shrugs her shoulders as if to say, *Not if we can prevent, then takes up duster and dusts.* DORA sits in chair, c.)

DORA. I wonder who he really is? Of course Romeo is not his real name, though it is very pretty and romantic. Can it be that young man who stared so at me on our walk yesterday? He was terribly good-looking, but then, of course he wouldn't stare at me when he don't know yet that I am Amabel. But there (*looking at watch*), I am so impatient for this meeting that I've come nearly an hour too soon. I'll have time to step around the corner to Harris's and look at the bargain counters. (*Rises and kisses letter again before putting it in her pocket, moving in the meanwhile toward door, c. in flat.*) An affair! to think that I have a love affair! Oh, wouldn't the girls be envious! But I haven't dared to take any of them into my confidence, not even Gwendolin, my dearest friend! (*Exit DORA, c. MARIE looks after her, then continues dusting.*)

MARIE (*soliloquizing*). Ah, zese school young ladies! What do zey not think of? To meet a young man in a back shop! Mais ce n'est pas convenable. But what can one do? It ees ze madame's fault. Zey were quite satisfy wiz zere leetle mischiefs an' smuggled bons-bons. Then madame, she say, "Young ladies, no young gentlemens, if you please." So zen ze demoiselles, zey begin to look out for ze young gentlemens! Ah! ze ways of mesdames de teachers, and mesdemoiselles de pupeels, sont drole! But eet is not for me to judge, au moins.

(*Exit MARIE, R., with duster.* Enter GWENDOLIN, C., on tip-toe. She peers around the room mysteriously, then goes to side and calls softly.)

GWENDOLIN (*softly*). Marie, Marie! (*She beckons off, R.*)  
(*Re-enter MARIE, R.*)

MARIE (*in ordinary voice*). Ah, bon jour, mademoiselle. What can I do?

GWENDOLIN (*glancing about*). Sh-sh-sh! (*Catches MARIE by the shoulder and says in sepulchral voice.*) Can we be overheard? Is there any one within earshot?

MARIE (*in natural voice, but puzzled*). Why, no, made-moiselle, zere ees nobody about.

GWENDOLIN (*with exaggerated sigh of relief*). 'Tis well (*In natural voice.*) Marie, I want you to do something for me—a great big favor. You're such a dear, obliging soul, (*MARIE smiles and looks flattered*) and you can keep a



secret, I know. You've been letting the postman leave letters here—

MARIE (*clasping her hands*). Ah, yes, such beautiful letters! From Monsieur Romeo to Mademoiselle Amabel!

GWENDOLIN. Exactly. And now I am going to tell you a greater secret. (*She goes to door, listens, again peers about room, then comes close to MARIE and bending down to her ear, says*) I am Romeo!

MARIE (*starting back in astonishment*). Mais—mais, mademoiselle, you Romeo! Mais, c'est impossible! Romeo ees a gentleman!

GWENDOLIN (*calmly*). Exactly. And that's the favor I want to ask of you. I want you to help me to be a gentleman. Now listen (*as MARIE starts to speak*). Your brother's a tailor, I know. Nothing's simpler than for you to step across to his shop and borrow a suit of clothes. (*Takes MARIE'S arm and leads her toward exit at back*.)

MARIE (*protesting, and drawing back*). But—but, madame, what will—

GWENDOLIN (*keeping hold of MARIE'S arm*). Never mind, madame. Just do as I ask, like a dear, good soul. (*Puts MARIE outside door at back*.) Only hurry, for I have to be ready in half an hour.

MARIE (*outside*). Bien, mademoiselle.

GWENDOLIN (*coming back to front*). There! I do hope she'll keep her wits about her and get a size that fits. I think with this on (*takes package from her pocket and unwraps a false mustache*) I'll be pretty well disguised. (*Holds mustache up to mouth and looks in mirror, turning this way and that before it while speaking*.) I wonder with which of the girls I've been carrying on this violent correspondence, for of course it's one of the girls at the school or there wouldn't have been this mystery about sending the letters here and all. I wish it were a town girl, though. I'd feel so much surer of my disguise. (*She unwraps another package which proves to be a man's hat*.) Now, with my hair tucked under this (*puts on hat*), and my voice disguised—(*Speaks in deep, guttural voice*.) "Ah, my cherished Amabel, at last—at—" (*stops and listens*). Goodness, someone's coming! I don't want my Amabel to see me before I'm ready!

(*Exit GWENDOLIN, R. Enter MARIE, C., carrying suit of man's clothes.*)

MARIE (*breathless*). Mademoiselle. (*Looks about room*.) But she's gone! (*GWENDOLIN peeps through door. Enter GWENDOLIN.*)

GWENDOLIN. Ah, you dear Marie, back already! (*Lays hat on counter, unnoticed by MARIE who is busy examining clothes. GWENDOLIN takes suit from MARIE.*) Aren't they jolly? I hope they'll fit. Here, help me.

(*With MARIE'S assistance GWENDOLIN slips on coat and looks at herself in mirror. MARIE stops, listens, then goes to door at C., opens it a little way, listens again, then closes it hastily and runs back to GWENDOLIN.*)

MARIE (*shrieking*). Ah, mademoiselle, we are undone, we are undone! It ees ze madame who comes. How can we escape? Ah!

GWENDOLIN (*in dismay*). Good gracious! what shall we do? We must hide, Marie. (*Looks about wildly.*)

MARIE (*gathering up waistcoat and trousers*). Here, my room, mademoiselle. Toute de suite. Zis way.

(*They rush off, L., GWENDOLIN forgetting hat. Enter MISS SPRIGGINS and DORA at C.*)

MISS S. (*complacently*). How nice it is that Marie has this little private room where you young ladies can come safely without danger of encountering—ah—objectionable people in the front shop.

DORA (*mceekly*). Yes, Miss Spriggins. (*Aside.*) I only hope Romeo hasn't come yet. It's nearly three.

(*DORA crosses and examines gown hanging over screen.*)

MISS S. goes to counter. Catches sight of the hat.)

MISS S. (*starting back, then bending to look closer, putting up her glasses, aside*). Eh, what's this? Upon my soul, it's a man's hat! A man's hat here in Marie's private room. How horrible! Has Marie been deceiving us all these days? And if the hat is here, the man cannot be far off. (*Looks about room.*) He may even be behind that screen. (*With conviction.*) He is behind that screen, I feel it! And Dora standing there! (*Aloud, advancing toward screen.*) Dora, my dear, see here a moment.

DORA (*innocently looking around*). See how well Janet's dress cleaned, Miss Spriggins. I wonder if that tea-stain came out. (*Dora starts to lift dress from screen, moving toward the side.*)

MISS S. (*agitatedly*). Oh, Dora, dear, come away—don't look behind the screen—I mean, I wouldn't look behind—that is, Marie might not like you to touch the things, you know. (*Gets between DORA and the screen, dropping her shopping bag off her arm unnoticed in her agitation.*)

DORA (*wondering*). All right, Miss Spriggins. But Marie doesn't mind, really. (*Moves away from screen.*)

MISS S. (*aside*). But she must not see the hat, either. Dear me, I'll really have to take her away from here.

DORA (*aside, looking at her watch*). Dear me, why did I go on that errand! I ran bang into Miss Spriggins and I'll never be able to get rid of her.

MISS S. (*starting to look behind screen and drawing back*). I wonder if he is back there. But I must not look, or I will surely scream and alarm Dora. (*Turns away. DORA walks abstractedly across the stage. Aside.*) She will see the hat! (*Calls.*) Dora, my dear, don't go over—I mean come here—ah—Marie seems to be busy just now. We'll return to-morrow for the things.

DORA (*aside*). The very thing! I'll soon be able to shake her off and then come back here to meet Romeo. Ah, Romeo! (*Forgets herself and walks forward with clasped hands.*) Ah, Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou, Romeo?

MISS S. (*aside, in horror*). She has seen the hat and it has turned her head! (*Aloud, expostulating.*) My dear, my dear, what is the matter?

DORA. Oh, I forgot! I was thinking of my letter—I mean my—our Shakespeare class, you know. (*Recovers herself.*) The play of Romeo and Juliet, by Shakespeare, you know.

MISS S. (*going toward door, c. in flat*). Yes, and a very silly play indeed. Come, my dear.

(*Exeunt DORA and MISS SPRIGGINS, C. Enter MARIE, L. Looks out of door after MISS SPRIGGINS and DORA.*)

MARIE (*closing door and coming front*). Such an escape, ma foi!

(*Enter GWENDOLIN, cautiously, L.*)

GWENDOLIN. Have they gone, Marie? Who was it?

MARIE. It was ze madame and one of ze mesdemoiselles—mademoiselle Dora. (*MARIE re-arranges gown on screen.*)

GWENDOLIN (*aside*). Dora! How I should have loved to tell her the joke. But she's such a proper little person and so conscientious that she'd be shocked. Now I'll go back to try on the clothes. (*Bell rings off R.*)

MARIE (*aside*). Ah, zere is a customer in my shop. I must go to wait upon her. (*Exit MARIE, R.*)

GWENDOLIN (*taking up hat*). Marie, may I go into your room to dress? (*Turns and finds MARIE gone.*) Why!

where— (*Hears voices without.*) Oh, she's gone into the shop. Well, she won't mind.

(*Exit GWENDOLIN, L. Voices heard off R., but no words are distinguishable except an occasional exclamation from MARIE. Re-enter MISS SPRIGGINS, C.*)

MISS S. (*coming forward*). Now for the investigation! (*Stops and listens.*) Why, that is the voice of one of my girls! How often must I tell them that they are not to go into the front shop, but to transact their business with Marie here. Though for this once it has proved rather fortunate, for she might have seen the young man! Now I will go in there and see her started safely home before I speak to Marie about that—that hidden creature!

(*Exit MISS S., R. Enter GWENDOLIN from L., still with hat and coat on, but carrying trousers over arm.*)

GWENDOLIN. Marie—(*looks about room*). Why, she isn't back, yet. (*Listens.*) But here she comes.

(*Enter MARIE, R., hastily. In great agitation as she sees GWENDOLIN.*)

GWENDOLIN. Marie, they fit all right—that is, everything except— (*comes close to MARIE and whispers in her ear.*)

MARIE. Eh, bien—too long, you say? (*takes trousers.*) But cannot mademoiselle turn zem up at bottom? (*MISS SPRIGGINS' voice heard without.*)

GWENDOLIN (*in dismay*). Miss Spriggins!

MARIE (*clasping her hands*). Ah, yes, it was that of which I came to warn you. But ze—ze trous—

GWENDOLIN (*excitedly*). But she may come in here at any second, and she must not find me in these things! I'll hide. (*MISS SPRIGGINS' voice heard again.*)

GWENDOLIN. Oh, she's coming! I'm lost. The screen, quick! (*Dashes behind screen, then looks out from behind it.*) But Marie, you will change them, won't you? Get me a shorter pair. I must have—

(*Dodges behind screen as MISS SPRIGGINS enters R. MARIE stands near door C. in flat, holding the trousers folded over her arm.*)

MISS S. (*stepping back with a scream of horror*). Marie, what are you holding in your arms?

MARIE (*looking down, much embarrassed*). Oh, ah,—madame means zese, perhaps? (*holds out trousers deprecatingly.*) Ah, zese are a trifle—a mere trifle. Ah—

MISS S. (*gasping*). A trifle! A mere trifle! Marie, what do you mean! (*Sinks into chair.*)

MARIE. Ah, I would say— (*Recovers herself.*) Why, zese, madame, are my brother's. Zere was a stain—a mere trifle of a stain, madame comprehends, which I was requested to sponge off, and which would not injure ze newness of ze cloth, yes? I am but about to return zem.

MISS S. (*suspiciously*). Your brother, Marie? I did not know you had a brother. (*Rises and comes forward, sternly.*) Marie, you are deceiving me!

MARIE. Ah, no, madame. I have a brother, truly. He is one tailor!

MISS S. (*severely*). Tailors do not leave their business on a Saturday afternoon to call upon their sisters. And I saw a hat here when I came in a little while ago. A gentleman's hat.

MARIE (*looks about for the hat in bewilderment, for she had not seen that GWENDOLIN had left the hat on the table.*) A gentleman's hat, madame? Ah, but no! Zere has been no gentleman's hat here. I swear it! Madame does not believe me? (*Wrings her hands.*) Ah, Je suis desolée! But madame must believe! See, I swear it on bended knee—zere has been no gentleman's hat in zis room! (*Drops on knees before Miss S.*) Madame will believe me now? And zese (*holding out trousers*), zese are my brother's! Madame believes, yes? Madame must believe ze desolée Marie! (*Clasps MISS SPRIGGINS around the knees.*)

MISS S. (*embarrassed and trying to back away*). Don't, Marie! It is so—ah—undignified. Rise, and speak rationally.

MARIE (*rising*). But madame must not do me ze injustice about my brother's trous—

MISS S. (*hastily*). Sh-sh! But (*still doubting*), there is no tailor in the town of the name of Brun.

MARIE (*cooly, casting down her eyes*). Ah, ze madame forgets zat poor Marie is widow. I was née Jacques, madame, and (*eagerly*) madame has surely seen zat sign across ze way. And I was about to return zem when madame entered.

MISS S. (*convinced*). Very well, Marie. I believe you. Only do return them now. Get them back to him at once. (*Turns away.*)

MARIE. Oui, madame.

(*Exit MARIE at C. with trousers.*)

GWENDOLIN (*aside behind screen*). Hurrah for Marie.

MISS S. (*advancing front*). I suppose it is all right, and that was her brother's hat that he left here when he brought her the—ah—the garment. But (*looking about room*), I forgot to ask Marie if she had seen my shopping bag, which I must have dropped here, and I am keeping Dora waiting all this time at Harris's. She will grow weary and go home without me. (*Begins to search room.*)

GWENDOLIN (*aside behind screen*). Gracious! Here's her beastly old shopping bag right over here on the floor. If she comes to pick it up she'll see me. What on earth shall I do? I daren't move the screen; it would attract her attention. (*Takes up yard-stick.*) Perhaps I can poke the bag farther out into the room before she sees it.

MISS S. (*still searching on counter and table*). I was quite sure that I had laid it down here, but I must have dropped it somewhere about the room. (*Begins to search floor.*) Ah, there it is! (*The yard-stick protrudes from behind screen, and thrusts the shopping bag over toward centre of room.*)

MISS S. (*jumping back with scream*). Then there is a man behind there! I must return and investigate. (*Picks up shopping bag cautiously and retreats backward toward door c.*) I will just go and see Dora started safely home. To think that Marie was deceiving me after all!

(*Exit MISS SPRIGGINS C.*)

GWENDOLIN (*coming forward from behind screen*). Here's a how-de-do! Miss Spriggins evidently saw that hat the time I forgot and left it on the counter, and now she suspects that something is up and is coming back to investigate! I'm afraid that settles the chance of my meeting with Amabel, and my jolly masquerade. And Harris's is so near—just around the corner. She'll be back in a jiffy. (*Listens.*) There she comes now! (*Glances at screen.*) I daren't hide there again. I hope Marie will forgive my making so free with her room, but it's the only hiding place left me.

(*Exit GWENDOLIN L., Re-enter MISS SPRIGGINS C.*)

MISS S. They told me at the store that Dora had gone home, so now the coast is clear for my search into this mystery. (*She walks determinedly across to the screen, reaches her hand out to move it, hesitates, and draws back. She looks hastily about the room, peers under table and counter, and then goes back to screen. Clearing her voice and speaking sternly.*) Young man, stand forth. (*Silence. Pause. In same stern voice.*) Young man, stand forth. Conceal-

ment is now impossible. All is known! Stand forth! (*Silence. Pause. In natural voice, with some asperity.*) There is no use in your skulking back there, when I know perfectly well that you are there. If you don't come out at once, I shall be obliged to remove the screen. (*Silence. Pause. Tapping her foot impatiently.*) This is very impertinent, young man. I will give you until I count ten to appear, and then I shall remove the screen. So, prepare! One, two, three. Remember, I warn you! Four, five, six, seven. At ten, I am determined! Eight. (*Counts more slowly.*) Nine. Your last chance! (*Slight pause.*) Ten! (*She draws back screen dramatically and steps back in astonishment.*) Not there! Can he have made his escape already? No, I was gone too short a time. Hark! (*Listens.*) Some one comes. I'll step behind here and await developments. (*MISS SPRIGGINS re-arranges screen and goes behind it, standing so that she can be seen by audience, and goes through appropriate pantomime at all that follows.*)

(*Enter DORA, breathless, c.*)

DORA (*dropping into chair*). Oh, what a time I had to shake off the old lady! (*MISS SPRIGGINS makes motions of anger and indignation behind screen.*) She sticketh closer than a brother or a barnacle. And it's after three! (*Miss S. looks interested.*) I hope my cherished Romeo hasn't got tired of waiting and gone away. (*Looks at watch.*)

MISS S. (*aside, behind screen*). So this is the plot! One of my most highly esteemed and trusted young ladies has an appointment to meet a young man here!

DORA (*still looking at watch*). Quarter past! (*Rises and looks about room.*) Either Romeo's ardor has cooled very quickly, that he couldn't wait fifteen stupid little minutes, or else he's not come yet. I hope nothing's happened to detain him, after all the risk I've taken to keep the appointment.

MISS S. (*grimly, behind screen*). A very great risk, indeed, young lady! Greater than you guess at present!

DORA (*sitting down again, and laughing*). It was hard work shaking the old lady, but it was funny, too. How gullible she is! I told the man at the store to say that I'd got tired and gone home, and she believed it! Believed that I'd prefer the slow, pokey, old school of a Saturday afternoon to sitting in Harris's window and watching the gay crowd go by on the avenue! Why, I'd have waited the whole afternoon for her, if it hadn't been for this appointment. Gone home, indeed! (*Laughs again.*) And

I slipped out to Huyler's, too, and got a pound of caramels—had 'em put in a bag, so the box wouldn't give me away. (*Takes large paper package, with some difficulty, out of her pocket.*) Goodness! what a pity that big sleeves have gone out of fashion. They were so handy for smuggling things in.

MISS S. (*behind screen*). Indeed! I shall remember that when big sleeves become fashionable again!

DORA (*looking longingly at package*). What a feast Gwendolin and I will have to-night! My mouth fairly waters for one this instant, but (*looking about*) Romeo may come in at any moment and I should not like to be caught with my mouth full. That would be a very unromantic beginning to my affair.

MISS S. (*behind screen, scandalized*). An affair, indeed! One of my young ladies to talk of a love affair! (*Holds up her hands in horror.*)

DORA (*jumping up*). But it's getting awfully late. I wonder if he isn't coming. I'll go hunt up Marie and see if she knows anything. Maybe he's been here and has left a message.

MISS S. (*grimly behind screen*). Yes, young lady, he has been here, but I shall receive the message.

(*In her agitation MISS SPRIGGINS jars against the screen, causing it to move slightly, just as DORA turns to exit R.*

DORA sees screen move, shrieks and jumps back, dropping her package, which breaks, and the caramels are spread about on the floor.)

DORA (*clasping her hands agitatedly*). I thought I saw the screen move. (*Looks at screen again.*) I wonder if there could be a burglar or anything behind it? (*Still watches screen intently.*) But how silly of me! It's as steady as a rock. A draught must have waved the dress hanging on it. Whoever heard of a burglar in the middle of the afternoon? And dear me, look at my precious carmels!

(DORA kneels on floor to pick up caramels. The large chair conceals her from any one coming in back, or left. Enter MARIE at back, carrying a pair of trousers. She looks about room but does not see DORA. Knocks at door left. Door opens and enter GWENDOLIN, cautiously. She has on the coat, hat, and false mustache.)

GWENDOLIN (*whispering*). Is it all right? Have you got a shorter pair?



DORA (*listening*). What's that? I thought I heard somebody whisper. Oh, I'm as nervous as a cat!

(DORA glances at screen again, and then rises slowly and peeps over back of chair just as MARIE holds trousers up against GWENDOLIN to measure their length. MISS SPRIGGINS peeps around side of screen at same moment. DORA and MISS SPRIGGINS shriek.)

MISS S. } (*Simultaneously.*) { Marie!  
DORA. } { Romeo!

MISS S. (*sternly, coming forward*). Young ladies, what does this mean?

GWENDOLIN (*with a scream*). Miss Spriggins! Mercy! (*Snatches off hat and tugs at mustache which sticks.*) Ow! how it sticks. (*Succeeds in removing mustache.*)

MISS S. (*stepping back in astonishment*). Gwendolin! (*Sternly.*) In that coat! And that hat! And—and things! What does this mean?

DORA (*reproachfully, seeing through GWENDOLIN'S disguise*). Oh, Gwendolin, were you my Romeo?

MISS S. (*sharply*). What's that? Gwendolin, your Romeo? Dora (*severely*), I was there, behind that screen, and heard you acknowledge that you had come here to meet a young man!

DORA (*faintly*). Oh, Miss Spriggins!

MISS S. (*with increasing severity*). Gwendolin, do you mean to say that you intended to dress yourself as a man? To wear—those things! (*She points dramatically to trousers which MARIE stands holding at full length.*)

GWENDOLIN (*penitently, but with difficulty restraining her laughter*). I—I'm sorry, Miss Spriggins. I—you see it was this way—

DORA (*reproachfully*). Then you did mean to deceive me, Gwen—me, your dearest friend?

MISS S. (*in horror*). You intended to put on those things?

GWENDOLIN (*desperately*). But it was only in fun, Miss Spriggins. A sort—sort of affaire du cœur, you know. It was only a joke!

MISS S. (*turning and catching sight of the trousers*). Only a joke! Oh, Marie, take the immodest things away!

MARIE (*waving trousers up and down as she raises her hands and gives a shrug*). Ah, zese affairs of ze heart! How zey grieve, even when zey are only in jest!

GWENDOLIN. But Miss Spriggins, you know I didn't

really put them on. (MISS SPRIGGINS *shudders*.) And Dora will forgive me. Won't you, Dora?

DORA. Yes, I suppose I must. I was very foolish to be so easily taken in. But you did write awfully sweet letters, Gwen.

(DORA and GWENDOLIN *join hands and kneel before* MISS SPRIGGINS.)

GWENDOLIN. I forswear the—the garments of the other sex, and beseech your forgiveness.

DORA. It is a first offense, Miss Spriggins, and we will be models the rest of the term.

MISS S. (*relenting*). I suppose I must forgive you, if only to keep the other girls from hearing of it. For I must exact a promise that you will never let this scandalous affair be whispered to the rest of the school.

GWENDOLIN } (*together, jumping up*). We promise!  
DORA }

(MARIE *still stands in background holding trousers, and* MISS SPRIGGINS *turns her back upon them with a shudder. GWENDOLIN and DORA embrace, c.*)

GWENDOLIN. And you forgive my intended treachery?

DORA. Yes! To tell the truth, I'm glad that it wasn't really a man.

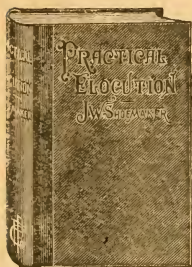
(*They embrace again.*)

GWENDOLIN. Amabel!

DORA. Romeo!

CURTAIN

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