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# A RUNAWAY COUPLE

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BY

W. A. TREMAYNE

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# A RUNAWAY COUPLE

*A Farce Comedy in Two Acts*

BY W. A. TREMAYNE

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# A RUNAWAY COUPLE.

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## CHARACTERS.

HORACE SINGLETON . . . . .	<i>A Barrister.</i>
HARRY BERNARD . . . . .	<i>A Young Lawyer.</i>
COL. JOHN MARTIN . . . . .	<i>A retired Indian Officer.</i>
JOHN HOBSON . . . . .	<i>Singleton's Gardener.</i>
MRS. LUCY SINGLETON . . . . .	<i>Singleton's Wife.</i>
AMY STANHOPE . . . . .	<i>Col. Martin's Ward.</i>
MISS HONORIA PONSONBY . . . . .	<i>Mrs. Singleton's Aunt.</i>
JESSIE . . . . .	<i>A Parlor Maid.</i>

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LOCALITY.—Mr. Singleton's villa on the Thames, near Richmond.

TIME OF REPRESENTATION.—Two hours.

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## SYNOPSIS.

AMY, COL. MARTIN'S ward, has eloped with HARRY from MISS PONSONBY'S Seminary. HARRY brings AMY to SINGLETON'S house while he goes to procure a marriage license. MRS. SINGLETON is away from home, but SINGLETON conceals AMY in his wife's room. MISS PONSONBY has traced AMY as far as the village nearby, and comes to SINGLETON'S to rest.

Later she discovers AMY and accuses SINGLETON of having eloped with AMY. COL. MARTIN arrives and also accuses SINGLETON of the same thing. MRS. SINGLETON returns home and is convinced by MISS PONSONBY of her husband's wickedness. HARRY opportunely arrives with the license, and SINGLETON'S entire innocence is fully established.

**COSTUMES.**

**HORACE SINGLETON.** Age about 35. Good-natured, very nervous, has a habit of humming snatches of old-fashioned tunes when embarrassed. Negligé house costume, dressing-gown, etc. Afterwards, summer walking suit.

**HARRY BERNARD.** A good-looking, well-built young man of about 28. Summer walking suit. Duplicate for Act II., torn and muddy.

**COL. MARTIN.** A red-faced, military man about 55. Irritable, very positive, and loud-talking. White duck-suit, pith helmet, or, elderly gentleman's costume, white waistcoat, tall hat.

**JOHN HOBSON.** About 60, very deaf. Rough tweed suit, flannel shirt, half-bald wig.

**MRS. LUCY SINGLETON.** A very nice-looking young matron of 25. Negligé morning costume, very neat. Afterwards, smart summer walking suit and hat.

**AMY STANHOPE.** A slight, very attractive young girl of 18. Very neat summer walking dress, picture hat.

**MISS PONSONBY.** A tall, prim, sour-looking person of 50. Rather old-fashioned black gown, cape, and bonnet. Side curls, black lace mittens.

**JESSIE.** A typical parlor maid of about 20, pretty, and pert. Neat shirt-waist, dark skirt, rather short, trim shoes and stockings, fancy apron with pockets, very small lace cap.

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**PROPERTIES.**

Tray and tea-urn ; silver salver, two telegrams, papers, letters ; tray with teapot and bread and butter ; tray with cake and wine, for **JESSIE**. Satchel and umbrella for **MISS PONSONBY**. Watch, handkerchief, for **SINGLETON**. Watch for **COL. MARTIN**. Ten-button kid gloves and handkerchief for **AMY**.

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**STAGE DIRECTIONS.**

As seen by a performer on the stage, facing the audience, R. means right hand ; L. left hand ; C. centre of stage. Window C. window in centre of rear flat. L. 3 E., entrance at upper left of stage ; R. 3 E., entrance at upper right of stage ; R. 2 E., entrance at right, down stage. UP, toward rear of stage ; DOWN, toward the footlights. XS, crosses.

# A RUNAWAY COUPLE.

## ACT I.

SCENE.—*Reception room in MR. SINGLETON'S villa on the Thames, near Richmond. French window, opening down to the ground at C. of rear flat; garden-scene at rear. Chairs at R. and L. of window; small table at rear L. Table at C. set for breakfast for two; chair at R. and L. of table; vase of flowers and hand-bell on table. Sofa down L. Small work-table down R. with chair at L. of it. Door at L. 3 E.; also at R. 2 E. and R. 3 E. JOHN HOBSON DISCOVERED moving around breakfast table, and putting the finishing touches to it, arranging flowers in vase C., etc., then he steps back and surveys his work.*

JOHN. There, that's all right—Lucky Mr. Singleton's got me to look after things or Lord knows what'd become of the house. Women! Bah! lazy things—and Jessie's the laziest of the lot. Says Mr. Singleton last night, "I shall take a holiday to-morrow, so have breakfast early as I am going out at seven." Here it is seven o'clock and that lazy baggage not out of bed yet—I'll rouse her.

*(He takes breakfast-bell from table and rings it violently—a pause—he rings again. ENTER JESSIE, R. 2 E., fastening her collar—and her hair in curl papers.)*

JESSIE. Good gracious! Mr. Hobson, what is the matter?

JOHN. Breakfast's ready, no thanks to you.

JESSIE. *Breakfast ready!* Why, it's only seven.

JOHN *(hand to ear)*. Eh?

JESSIE. Only seven.

JOHN. *Only seven!* And didn't Mr. Singleton say he was going out early and wanted breakfast at seven?

JESSIE. No; he said he did *not* want breakfast early, as he was taking a holiday and would not go out till after eleven.

JOHN. Well, if he's going out after seven he wants his breakfast first, don't he?

JESSIE. Not seven—eleven.

JOHN *(hand to ear)*. Eh?

JESSIE *(screaming)*. Eleven!

JOHN. Oh, I don't know what you're trying to say. Why don't you speak plain.

(ENTER SINGLETON L. 3 E. and comes down L. C.)

SING. What's the matter, Jessie?

JOHN. Oh, it's all right, breakfast's ready, sir. No thanks to some people—(*looking scornfully at Jessie.*)

JESSIE. He thinks you said you wanted breakfast at seven, sir, he's getting worse than ever.

JOHN. It's a trifle late, *but I did my best.*

SING. Thank you, John—(*Hums nervously to himself and walks up and down*) Dear me—this is very awkward—he makes such peculiar mistakes.

JESSIE. I've no patience with him; sir, he's enough to try a saint. (JOHN goes up stage toward window C., chuckling and rubbing his hands.) And just look how pleased he is with himself, that's what aggravates me.

SING. Come, come, Jessie, don't get out of temper, you're much too nice a girl to do that. (JESSIE *simpers*) Though really—(*Running his fingers through his hair in a perplexed manner as he looks at JOHN.*) I don't know what to do. It's no use speaking to him he never understands. Very embarrassing—very. (*Puts his hands in his pockets and walks up and down humming dolefully.*)

(ENTER MRS. SINGLETON L. 3. E.)

MRS. S. Breakfast ready? Why it's only seven.

SING. Yes, my dear, a mistake of John's.

MRS. S. He's *always* making mistakes.

SING. I'm afraid he is, but they're always with the best intentions.

MRS. S. Oh, I'm quite well aware of that, but if he poisons us all or sets the house on fire—as he's quite likely to do—I'm afraid that a jury would hardly accept his good intentions as an excuse.

SING. I'm afraid they wouldn't, my dear, so let's hope he won't get quite as far as that. At present we've only been deprived of a little sleep and “early to bed, and early to rise—” you know my love—Let's have breakfast.

(*He seats himself R. of table C. MRS. S. sits L. of it. JESSIE EXITS L. 3. E. and returns bringing in a tea-urn which she places beside MRS. S. JOHN comes down back of table.*)

JOHN. Can I do anything more for you, sir?

SING. No thank you, John. (*Aside*) You've done quite enough for one morning.

JOHN. Then I'll go and tend the garden.

SING. All right. (*Raising his voice*) Only don't pull up any more bulbs in mistake for weeds.



JOHN. Oh, don't you fear, sir, I'll attend to the weeding, it's my strong point. [EXIT *through window C.*]

(MRS. S. and SINGLETON *have business of eating breakfast through following scene.*)

MRS. S. (*looking after JOHN*). Really Horace, you ought to do something with him.

SING. My dear, what *can* I do? It's no use speaking to him. If I discharged him to-morrow he'd think I was raising his wages. I'll buy him an ear-trumpet if you like, but I'm afraid it won't work.

MRS. S. You can go, Jessie. I'll ring when I want you.

[JESSIE EXITS R. 2. E *after courtseying.*]

SING. Shall I give you some ham, Lucy?

MRS. S. Thank you. (SINGLETON *begins to carve ham, humming at the same time.*) Horace!

SING. Yes, my dear?

MRS. S. You're humming.

SING. Thank you, my love—force of habit—I nearly got committed for contempt of court the other day.

MRS. S. You should break yourself of it.

SING. I'm trying, but it's hard work. I've done it ever since I was a small boy—used to get awful thrashings for it at school, and then your aunt—she came nearer breaking me of it than anyone—but even *she* didn't do it quite.

MRS. S. By the way Horace, it's her birthday next week.

SING. Dear me, so it is.

MRS. S. We must have her to dinner.

SING. I suppose so. (*Sighing*) I mean of course, my dear.

MRS. S. Think of all I owe her.

SING. I never forget it. (*Aside*) She never lets me.

MRS. S. We must get her a present.

SING. Certainly.

MRS. S. What shall it be?

SING. I think my dear, *you* had better choose it, she never quite appreciated my taste, but what shall we do to-day? I've hardly had a holiday since our honey-moon, and I've taken to-day on purpose to enjoy your society. Where shall we go?

MRS. S. Let's go up the river. It's charming at this time of year. We can have a picnic all by ourselves.

SING. The very thing, hire a boat and go up the river.

MRS. S. Take some cold lunch with us.

SING. And a bottle of wine. Delightful! (*Hums*)

MRS. S. Horace!

SING. I beg your pardon.

[ENTER JESSIE R. 3 E. *with some letters and newspapers in her hand, she puts some beside SING., and some beside MRS. S. and then EXITS R. 2 E.*]

MRS. S. (*opening a letter and glancing over it*). Dear—dear—dear!

SING. (*looking up from a newspaper which he has opened*). Anything wrong, dear?

MRS. S. Everything. It's from Maria. James is away on business. Flossie and May have got the measles, and little Jimmy is teething, she's at her wit's end, and wants me to go to her at once.

SING. And you're going.

MRS. S. I must.

SING. Well, upon my word I call that too bad. My holiday spoiled. Why on earth couldn't they choose a more convenient time to have the measles? It's very inconsiderate.

MRS. S. (*shocked*). Horace!

SING. I mean its very unfortunate, just when I'd been looking forward to a holiday so long.

MRS. S. (*reproachfully*). And don't you think I am disappointed?

SING. Why of course you are. What a selfish brute I am. Never mind, my dear, we must make the best of it, if you insist upon going.

MRS. S. (*rising*). It is my duty, Horace. (*Up C. to L.*)

SING. (*with a sigh of resignation, rising*). Then I suppose there's no help for it.

MRS. S. I'll go and get dressed now, and then I can catch the nine o'clock train. [EXIT L. 3 E.]

SING. (*looking after her*). What a treasure. If she has one fault it's that strict sense of duty and her intense family affection. Now there's her aunt—Miss Ponsonby—she adores her, and I really can't see what for. She brought her up to be sure, but she made the operation as unpleasant as possible; the copy-books that that dear girl has filled with impositions would make a small library. The first time I ever saw her I was calling on Miss Ponsonby about some legal business, poor darling, I think I can see her now sitting on a high stool, her eyes red with weeping, an ink smudge over her left eyebrow, copying out an irregular Greek verb. I fell in love with her on the spot, but it took me seven years to propose and make up my mind to face Miss Ponsonby. I've never forgotten the horror of that time. She *may* be—a good woman, but I can't stand her. Heavens! what I suffered. (*Hums dolefully.*)

(ENTER Mrs. S. L. 3 E. *in hat and walking dress.*)

MRS. S. Good-bye, Horace.

SING. Good-bye, my dear, don't catch the measles. If you don't consider your own feelings, think of mine. Be back as soon as you can. (*Kissing her.*)

MRS. S. As soon as Maria can spare me.

SING. I shall be so lonely without you.

MRS. S. Of course you will, you poor dear. Good-bye.  
[EXIT window C.]

(SINGLETON goes to window, waving his handkerchief.)

(ENTER JESSIE R. 3 E. with tray in hand.)

SING. You can clear away the breakfast things, Jessie, I'm going to dress.

JESSIE. All right, sir. [EXIT SING., L. 3 E.]

[JESSIE puts things on tray. SING. is heard humming an air in the next room.]

JESSIE. There he goes. I believe that man would hum a tune if he was dying or if somebody else was dying for the matter of that. He's making the most of his time while the Missis is away.

(She picks up tray, as she does so and moves toward R. 2 E. she meets HARRY BERNARD who ENTERS hurriedly D. R. 2. and runs against her, she utters a half stifled scream and almost drops the waiter. HARRY catches it and they stand, each holding a side.)

HARRY. Did I frighten you? I beg your pardon, but the truth is I'm excited, and an interview with a deaf idiot in the garden has not helped to soothe me. Is Mr. Singleton in?

JESSIE. Yes, sir.

HARRY. And Mrs. Singleton?

JESSIE. No, sir.

HARRY. Just my luck. Tell your master I'm here.

JESSIE. Yes, sir. (Leaves the waiter in HARRY'S hands, goes up to L. 3 E. and knocks.)

(ENTER SINGLETON L. 3 E. in morning dress, coming C.)

SING. Did you knock, Jessie?

JESSIE. If you please sir.

SING. (seeing HARRY). Why, my dear boy. I'm delighted. (Cross to meet each other R. C. and both draw up, the tray between them.) What on earth are you doing with that?

HARRY. That? Oh, I'd forgotten. I held it for Jessie whilst she called you. Allow me—[Presents tray to JESSIE] I'm much obliged.

[EXIT JESSIE snickering R. 2 E.]

SING. You seem a little upset.

HARRY. I, oh, dear me, no. I'm all right.

SING. Glad to hear it, we haven't seen you for such a long time I thought you'd been sick or forgotten us.

HARRY. Forgotten you? Now, Singleton, you ought to know me better than that—what, forgotten my old chum that I used to

## A Runaway Couple.

fag for at school, who used to fight my battles and punch the big boys' heads when they bullied me.

SING. (*chuckling*). So I did, so I did—bless my soul—seems funny, now doesn't it—to think of me protecting you? If there's any punching of heads to be done now-a-days you don't need a— (*Nudges HARRY in the side and laughs.*)

HARRY (*absently*). Yes—that is no—I mean.

SING. I'm doubly glad to see you to-day, as Mrs. Singleton has just been called away to her sister's—children sick—and as I am taking a holiday I'm all alone in the house.

HARRY. Damn the luck!

SING. Eh?

HARRY. Oh, don't mind me. I'm a little excited, that's all. See here, Singleton, I want you to do me a favor.

SING. A favor? Why, of course I will, if I can. Won't you sit down?

HARRY. Yes, thank you. I suppose I'd better.

(*HARRY runs up to window C. and looks out anxiously, then back again to C. and sits L. of table C. SINGLETON on sofa L.*)

HARRY. Horace, I'm in love.

SING. God bless my soul!

HARRY. With the dearest, sweetest, loveliest girl in the whole wide world.

SING. (*aside*). He's got it bad. I remember the symptoms.

HARRY. You can't tell how I love her. I worship the very ground she walks on, but—

SING. (*aside*). There's always a but—

HARRY. She—she—

SING. She doesn't return your love. My boy, I'm sorry for you.

HARRY. Nothing of the sort, she returns it with the most intense ardor—*she* adores the very ground *I* walk on.

SING. How delightful.

HARRY. It is. The trouble is she has a guardian.

(*SING. rises, crosses to HARRY and shakes his hand affectionately.*)

SING. My boy, accept my deepest sympathy. I've been there. Is it an aunt?

HARRY. No, an uncle.

SING. Thank heaven, there is hope for you.

HARRY. I'm not so sure. He is a perfect ogre. A retired officer at one time in the Indian service. His liver went to the devil long ago, and I think his heart must have gone with it, for company—at any rate he doesn't seem to have one. He told me

I was too young and too poor, and when I replied I was growing older every day, and had expectations, he said I could follow his liver.

SING. What did you do?

HARRY. Interviewed the dear girl and swore eternal constancy.

SING. (*getting excited*). Quite right, quite right, it's expected of you under the circumstances.

HARRY. The next day, Colonel Martin sent my darling, though she's turned eighteen, to a boarding school in the country—I beg pardon, a Ladies Seminary, kept by a female dragon.

SING. Oh, Lord!

HARRY. But I was not to be baffled. I followed her, obtained an interview by bribing the parlor maid, and after some persuasion got my darling to agree to an elopement.

SING. An elopement?

HARRY. Yes. Surely you don't object?

SING. I admire your courage. So far we have travelled the same road, *now* you are getting beyond me.

HARRY. Now, Singleton, I come to the favor I've got to ask of you, or rather Mrs. Singleton. Will you give Amy, her name is Amy, shelter whilst I get the license?

SING. With pleasure, my dear boy, when Mrs. Singleton returns, but you see the duration of her visit doesn't depend on herself but on the measles—I mean on the children's recovery from the measles—but only wait till she returns, postpone your elopement for a day or two.

HARRY (*rising*). But I can't.

SING. (*rising*). Can't?

HARRY. No, it's done.

SING. What?

HARRY. I've eloped already, she's in the carriage at the door.

(*Rushes up to window C. and looks out.*)

SING. Good Heavens! (*Drops into chair L. of table C. and hums violently. HARRY comes down C.*) What's to be done?

HARRY. Oh, it's all right.

SING. Is it?

HARRY. Yes. I'll bring her in and introduce her to you. It will take me a couple of hours to run to London for the license, and you can take care of her till I come back.

SING. I? Oh—ah! (*Hums.*)

HARRY. Yes, you are a married man.

SING. That's just it. I'm afraid my wife might object.

HARRY. Object? Why?

SING. On principle. She's an awful stickler for propriety, even the fact of the elopement would shock her, but I'd have tried to get over that, if she'd been here, for your sake. But a girl that has

eloped left alone for three hours with her husband! Harry, I daren't.

HARRY. Singleton, for Heaven's sake don't desert me. Consider, a young girl's happiness and honor are at stake. When she objected to the elopement, I said,—You shall stay with the Singletons, they will be your friends as they have always been mine, I can answer for them as I would for myself.

SING. Thank you, that was very kind of you, and as far as I am concerned it was all right, but don't you think it was a little rash to answer for Mrs. S.?

HARRY. Not at all, it's the same thing. Husband and wife are one.

SING. (*aside*). Oh, he's got a great deal to learn.

HARRY. And you'll let me bring Amy in, won't you? The delay must have surprised her.

SING. Certainly, certainly. (*Aside*) There's no help for it. (*Aloud*) Be quick, or she may faint or have hysterics, or something, you can never make sure of a woman.

HARRY. A thousand thanks. I'll never forget this. I'll do the same for you some day.

*Rushes out R. 2. E. leaving SINGLETON standing stupefied C. of stage.*)

SING. Do the same for me—What does he take me for? A married man elope? Oh! He's mad—mad—

ENTER HARRY R. 2. E. *leading in* AMY STANHOPE.

HARRY (*coming C. with* AMY). Singleton, this is my affianced wife, Miss Amy Stanhope.

SING. (*shaking hands with her*). My dear young lady, charmed—delighted to meet you.

(*After shaking hands with her he turns up stage nervously humming.*)

AMY (*aside to* HARRY). Harry!

HARRY. Yes, darling.

AMY. How awful he must look when he's unhappy.

HARRY. Hush!—(*Going up to* SINGLETON) Good-bye for the present, Horace! I won't be gone long. I leave her to your care, my feelings are too deep for words, so are Amy's.

(AMY, *who has been looking around the room with some curiosity, tries to assume an intense expression.*)

HARRY. But we will never forget your kindness.

(AMY *takes a candy from her pocket and puts it in her mouth.*)

HARRY *crosses to her.*)

HARRY. Will we, my darling?

AMY (*with her mouth full and trying to look dignified*). Never—

HARRY. And I hope that some day we shall have a chance of showing our appreciation of it.

SING. (*aside*). Make me god-father to the first, they always do it—(*Aloud*) Don't mention it—too delighted—too—

HARRY. And now, my own, I must leave you for a little while.

SING. Oh, dear, I'm not wanted—(*Goes up to window at back C. and looks out*) Um—ah—I'm afraid we shall have rain, well, we mustn't complain, the crops wanted it. (*Stands with his back to them and his hands in his pockets, humming softly*.)

AMY. You won't be gone long?

HARRY. Not a moment longer than I can help—Good-bye—(*They kiss*.)

AMY (*putting her hand into her pocket*). Oh, Harry!

HARRY. What is it, darling.

AMY. I'm out of caramels.

HARRY. I'll buy some.

AMY. It's a long time to wait.

HARRY. The sooner I go, the sooner I'll get back.

AMY. That's true—Hurry.

HARRY. Good-bye.

(*They kiss—just as they are in the act, SINGLETON turns round and sees them, he goes back at once to his original position, humming violently*.)

AMY. Good-bye. (*They kiss. HARRY crosses to R. 2. E.*)  
Oh, Harry.

HARRY (*back to C.*). What is it, darling?

AMY. Tell them to put in lots of chocolate.

HARRY. I will—

(*They kiss—same business as before for SINGLETON—HARRY tears himself away and EXITS R. 2. E. SINGLETON looks cautiously over his shoulder to make quite sure he has gone, and then comes down C. AMY sits left of work table R. her back to SINGLETON, who stands watching her C.—she searches eagerly through a small bag which she carries and also feels in her pockets*.)

SING. Poor child, lost her pocket handkerchief—I'll get one of Lucy's. [EXIT *softly* L. 3. E.]

AMY. I thought that—no—(*Continuing her search*) No, I guess I'm wrong. (*Feeling in bag again*) No I'm not. (*Smiling*) I've got them. (*Pulls out some candy done up in a small screw of paper, puts some in her mouth, and then taking out her handkerchief wipes her lips*.)

ENTER SINGLETON L. 3. E. *with a handkerchief in his hand he crosses R.*

SING. Ahem—Miss Stanhope.

(*She turns round suddenly facing him at the same time wiping her lips with her handkerchief.*)

AMY. Eh?—

SING. (*surprised at seeing her so cheerful*). I—I—(*Hums, and puts handkerchief in coat-pocket.*)

AMY. Have one?—(*Holding out a candy.*)

SING. Er, No thanks. (*Crosses to chair L. of table and sits. Aside*) What an extraordinary young woman.

(*AMY rises, lays her gloves and handkerchief on table R. and then crosses to R. of table C.*)

AMY. It's awfully good of you to have me here, for I know in your heart you must think me an awful case—Now don't you? Running away from home and marrying without the consent of my guardian.

SING. My dear young lady, I feel quite sure that you had reasons and good ones for your conduct, of course it's a little unconventional.

AMY. That's putting it mildly. (*Laughing*) I should just like to hear the Dragon's opinion on the subject.

SING. I beg your pardon—the—?

AMY. Dragon? Oh, I forgot, you don't know her,—well, you've got something to live for.

SING. May I ask who the—

AMY. Dragon is? The head of a young ladies' seminary, and the "author of all my woes," as they say in the novels. (*Sits on side of table C.*) I tell you what, Mr. Singleton, you can't have an idea of what she's like till you've lived with her. (*SINGLETON looks startled*) She's a grand Inquisitor in petticoats. Not that she had it all her own way, Oh, no—(*Swinging her feet and munching another candy*) There are times when even a worm will turn, and if our lives were not a dream of bliss, her life was not a bed of roses. She had one weak point—*Mice*.

SING. *Mice*?

AMY (*nodding her head emphatically*). Er—er—In her wildest flights of eloquence or her most abusive moments, pretend you saw a mouse and you had her at your mercy, and we saw them—frequently. (*Nods her head again and takes another candy.*)

SING. But what will your guardian say, Miss Stanhope?

AMY. Oh, he's all right, when he once knows I'm married and it's no use talking, he'll give us his blessing after the most approved fashion. Oh, he's not half bad, besides—he's a man.



SING. So I suppose.

AMY. Well, you can always coax a man.

SING. Can you?

AMY. Of course. A few soft words, a smile or two, and in extreme cases—well, perhaps a kiss—and you can twist 'em round your little finger. (*Jumps off table and runs up to window C.*)

SING. (*to himself*). What a very extraordinary young woman. (*Looks at his watch*) Only fifteen minutes gone, whatever shall I do to amuse her till Harry comes back. Oh, I wish Lucy was at home. No I don't know that I do. I'm afraid Lucy wouldn't approve of her. I wonder if she plays dominoes—or—or— (*Looks hopelessly at AMY who is standing looking out at window C. whistling*) Oh Lord! it's like a nightmare. (*Runs his fingers through his hair and hums dolefully.*)

AMY. Mr. Singleton, here's a carriage coming up the drive.

SING. A carriage?

AMY. Yes, you're going to have visitors.

SING. Oh, nonsense, a mistake, I don't expect anyone—unless (*with a look of horror*) it's someone in pursuit of you.

AMY. Oh, what fun!

SING. (*aside*). What a perverted sense of humor.

AMY. Yes, it's stopping at the door.

(*Noise of carriage heard R.*)

SING. Really? (*Runs up to window C.*) So it is, and—

(*AMY shrieks and jumps back from window and sinks on chair L. of window. SINGLETON sinks on chair R. of window.*)

AMY. The Dragon!

SING. My wife's aunt.

(*Last two speeches spoken almost together.*)

AMY. I'm lost.

SING. You? Lost! What do you think I am? If that woman finds you here, she'd be capable of instituting proceedings for a divorce.

AMY. Divorce, from whom?

SING. Me.

AMY. But I'm not married to you.

SING. Of course not. (*Half aside*) Thank heaven. (*Aloud*) Who said you were.

AMY. You did.

SING. Did I? Then don't pay any attention to me, I'm not accountable for what I'm saying.

MISS PONSONBY (*outside R.*). I will walk up, you need not announce me.

(*AMY and SING. rise.*)

SING. She's coming. Great Heavens! What are you standing there for.

AMY (*half crying*). Because I don't know where to go.

SING. Of course not. What a fool I am. Oh, this is worse than a nightmare, for there's no waking up. Here, get into my wife's room, quick. (*Pulls AMY across to room L. 3 E., pushes her in and closes the door, just as he does so* MISS PONSONBY ENTERS R. 2 E. *They eye each other for a moment, and then SINGLETON comes down to meet her C.*) My dear Miss Ponsonby, what a delightful and unexpected pleasure. Let me take your satchel and umbrella, let me—

(*Stops short on seeing MISS PONSONBY staring at him fixedly.*)

MISS P. Good morning. (*Down to sofa L. and sits*) Where's Lucy?

SING. (C.). She's not at home.

MISS P. Not at home? I thought I saw her at the window with you as I drove up.

SING. (*laughing faintly*). What a funny idea. No, she went away by the nine o'clock train.

MISS P. Where has she gone to?

SING. To Maria's.

MISS P. What has she gone there for?

SING. The children have got the measles and she's gone to help Maria nurse them.

MISS P. Nonsense.

SING. Oh, but she has.

MISS P. Who said she hadn't?

SING. Really, I beg your pardon, I thought you said—

MISS P. Nonsense. So I did, and I meant nonsense. Why should Lucy be taken from her home duties to help Maria nurse the children. If people can't take care of their own children, they are not fit to have any. Lucy was a fool to go.

SING. (*indignantly*). Miss Ponsonby—

(MISS PONSONBY turns and faces him and he goes on very mildly.)

SING. Don't you think you're a little hard on her? She thought she was doing her duty, and you know what a strict sense of duty you inculcated in her youthful days, and it has always been her aim to live up to that standard. (*Gradually gets down to R. in a line with L. 3 E. where he can watch the door.*)

MISS P. There's a difference between doing your own duty and doing other people's duty. How do you come to be at home?

SING. I was taking a holiday. Lucy and I were going up the river on a pleasure trip, when Maria's letter came and upset all our plans.

MISS P. (*looking at him severely*). You'll end in the poorhouse. The idea of wasting your precious time on pleasure excursions. I'm ashamed of you.

(*A pause. SINGLETON smiles faintly and hums a few notes. MISS P. looks at him suddenly and he stops.*)

SING. To what do I owe the pleasure of this visit?

MISS P. To the most unpleasant and unprecedented incident that ever happened in my seminary.

SING. Dear me!

MISS P. Yes, a girl—I will not call her a young lady—(*AMY opens door L. 3 E.*) has dared to elope with a man, and bring disgrace upon Ponsonby house. I am in pursuit of her.

(*AMY shuts door L. 3 E. with a bang, drawing in quickly. MISS P. turns round, SINGLETON sinks into chair R. and gasps, passing his handkerchief across his forehead. Then as MISS P. again turns towards him he smiles faintly and begins to hum.*)

MISS P. I am glad it amuses you. I should scarcely consider it a subject for joke, but no doubt we view things in different lights.

SING. (*very serious*). My dear Miss Ponsonby, really you are mistaken. I was——

MISS P. Smiling and humming, surely signs of mirth.

SING. Merely a habit.

MISS P. A bad one, correct it. But to go back to my story, I traced her as far as the village, there I lost track of her. (*SINGLETON shudders*) But she need not think that she has baffled me. She is the ward of Colonel Martin, late of the Indian service, and immensely wealthy. I can't afford to lose his patronage. I will find her yet.

SING. (*glancing at D. L.*). Of course you will.

MISS P. I was fatigued with my journey, and I thought I would come on here and rest.

SING. A happy thought, just when I was feeling so lonely too.

(*Door L. 3 E. opens and AMY comes half out and begins to make signs pointing to her handkerchief and gloves on table R. SINGLETON motions her to go back.*)

SING. So you see it is an ill wind that blows nobody any good. Now won't you have some refreshment?

(*AMY points frantically to gloves and handkerchief, but SINGLETON pretends not to see her.*)

MISS P. Well, thank you, I do feel a little faint, and if you will get me a glass of wine and some biscuits——

## A Runaway Couple.

SING. Certainly. (*Crosses to R. 2 E. AMY makes a gesture to him to stop, so he rings bell instead*) This must be a dreadful trial to you.

(ENTER JESSIE R. 2 E.)

SING. Ah, Jessie, bring some cake and wine for Miss Ponsonby, and be quick, Jessie, that's a good girl.

[EXIT JESSIE, R. 2 E.]

SING. Yes, as I was saying it must be a dreadful trial to you. How you go through all you do I can't imagine. I often say to Lucy—

(*Catches AMY'S eye, who has come half out into the room and is trying to draw his attention to the handkerchief and gloves. He stops short. MISS PONSONBY turns on him sharply and AMY goes back into room L. 3 E.*)

MISS P. Horace Singleton, *what* is the matter with you?

SING. With me, nothing—I'—I'm all right.

MISS P. You don't look it, and what's more—(*Rising*) I don't believe you are. I know you of old, you've got something on your mind.

SING. (*laughing faintly*). What an idea. I assure you you are mistaken, never felt happier or better in all my life.

(ENTER JESSIE R. 2 E. *with wine and cake on tray.*)

SING. Ah, thank you, Jessie, thank you. (*Takes waiter from JESSIE and crosses to MISS P. L.*) You can go, Jessie. Now, my dear Miss Ponsonby, make yourself comfortable. (*MISS P. sits sofa L.*) I can recommend this sherry, a splendid brand. I got it cheap from a client. (*Hands her cake and wine*) This cake, some of dear Lucy's own making, I'm sure you'll like it.

(*MISS PONSONBY spreads napkin over her knees, takes cake and wine. As soon as SINGLETON sees her occupied he moves up to L. 3 E.*)

SING. (*to AMY in a whisper*). Go away.

AMY (*in a whisper*). I won't. Get my gloves and handkerchief.

(*MISS P. turns quickly. AMY goes back into room. SINGLETON comes down to table C. and deposits tray, and then putting his hands in his pockets goes up C. humming and trying to appear unconcerned, stands looking out of window.*)

SING. Charming day, charming day! Lovely views round here, Miss Ponsonby, perfectly beautiful. (*Gradually works his way down again to table R., keeping his eye on MISS P.*) When you are rested I'll take you to the knoll, a few minutes walk from

here and show you some fine scenery. (*Gets down R. of table R. and has just reached out his hand to take handkerchief, when MISS P. turns on him suddenly, he takes back his hand, tries to look innocent and begins to hum.*)

MISS P. I shall be very happy to go with you. I shall be here for at least two hours. (*SINGLETON shudders*) I have left word at the hotel for any fresh news to be sent on here.

SING. Good idea, first rate. (*Gradually getting near to handkerchief*) She can't have gone very far, and no doubt you'll get news soon. (*Grasps at handkerchief; just as he is raising it from table MISS P. looks round and catches him in the act. AMY who has been watching him with intense interest draws back into room L. with a scream. MISS P. rises and crosses C.*)

MISS P. What's that? (*Pointing to handkerchief*)

SING. That? That's a—a handkerchief.

MISS P. Whose?

SING. Whose? Lucy's, I suppose.

MISS P. And the gloves. (*Picking them up*) Are these Lucy's too?

SING. I suppose so.

MISS P. Horace Singleton, you know better. Lucy wears a six and a half, I ought to know, I've bought them often enough. These are sixes.

SING. Are they really? Some lady friend's perhaps. She's borrowed them for a pattern.

MISS P. *A pattern*—for a glove?

SING. I don't mean pattern, I mean a sample or something like that. Women are always doing that sort of thing, don't you know. Or perhaps they're Jessie's.

MISS P. A servant with No. six, ten-button Paris kid gloves? Nonsense. Give me that handkerchief. (*SING. hands handkerchief to her*) Is that Lucy's monogram?

SING. I don't know. I don't understand monograms. They always seem to me like Chinese puzzles, and I never was good at Chinese puzzles.

MISS P. I don't like the look of this!

SING. Don't you? I'm not a judge of cambrics, but I dare say you're right.

MISS P. Oh, you think *that's* clever, but take care, Horace, there is some mystery here which I intend to solve, and if I find that you are deceiving the child I confided to your care, I will make you repent it bitterly. (*Throws down gloves on table. SINGLETON goes up to window C. nervously. MISS P. examines monogram, but cannot make it out, shakes her head and puts handkerchief in her pocket*) I will leave my umbrella and satchel in Lucy's room and bathe my head with cologne, it is aching from the excitement

I have undergone. *Then* we will go for a walk. Outside there will be no eavesdropping servants and I can talk to you freely. (*She turns as if to cross up to D. L. 3 E. SINGLETON gets between her and the door*)

SING. No, you mustn't, you really mustn't—you know.

MISS P. Mustn't what?

SING. Go in there.

MISS P. Why not?

SING. Because—er——(*Hesitates*)

MISS P. Because *you* don't want me to go there.

SING. Of course, that is what I mean, Jessie has been busy and it's not tidied up yet. Go to the spare room, it's much nicer.

MISS P. Thank you, I prefer *this!*

SING. Oh, no you don't, I mean it isn't half as nice. You haven't seen the spare room since it was fitted up.

MISS P. I don't want to.

SING. Oh, don't say that, we've fitted it up with a special view to your comfort when you give us the pleasure of your company. So nice and cozy, do come.

MISS P. Horace Singleton, if it were not so early in the morning I should think you were intoxicated.

SING. Bless my soul, what a horrible idea! Really, Miss Ponsonby.

MISS P. As it is, I must look to a still worse motive to account for your conduct. You have some one concealed in that room. Don't deny it. I can see it in your face. Let me pass. I demand it in the name of your injured wife. (*Tries to pass him*)

SING. (*stopping her*). No, really, really you mustn't—stop a moment and I'll tell you all.

MISS P. Ha! I thought we should come to a confession at last.

SING. (*leading her down to sofa L.*). Of course you did, there's no keeping anything from you, is there? Your birthday's next week.

MISS P. What's that got to do with it?

SING. Everything; you see, a few days ago Lucy said to me, "Horace, the seventeenth is aunt's birthday." "So it is," said I. "We must get her a present," said Lucy. "Think of all I owe her," "I can never forget it, my love," said I, "all that we both owe her, for if she had not brought you up in such an exemplary manner you would never have made the delightful companion you do. Let us get her a present by all means." And we did. (*Out of breath*)

MISS P. Well, what on earth has that got to do with your not allowing me to enter that room?

SING. (*gasping*). It's there.

MISS P. What?

SING. The present, a silver—(*Stopping short*) There, I was nearly telling, and I wouldn't for the world. Lucy has set her heart on giving you a surprise, and she would be so disappointed if I let the cat out of the bag.

MISS P. Horace, I believe you are deceiving me, and if you are—(*Grasps umbrella firmly in one hand and bag in the other and marches up to R. 2 E.*) I'll be back shortly. [EXIT R. 2 E.]

(SINGLETON *sinks on sofa L.*)

SING. Oh Lord, oh Lord! who would ever have thought I'd have developed such a talent for lying. The trouble is I can't remember half the lies I've told, and I'm afraid I shall contradict myself. (*Hums dolefully*)

(AMY ENTERS from L. 3 E.; after looking cautiously round comes down behind sofa and lays her hand on SINGLETON'S arm, he jumps up frightened and sees her.)

SING. Oh dear!

AMY. Is she gone?

SING. No, no! Oh, my good girl, for Heaven's sake, go back into that room, if she comes in now—(*Shudders*)

AMY. Isn't she a dragon?

SING. She's a nightmare. Oh, why did you elope, you know it wasn't right!

AMY. Not to escape her?

SING. (*crossing up C.*) Well, that was an extenuating circumstance, but—(*Turning to her*) why did Harry bring you here to disturb the peaceful current of my life. I—I—don't wish to seem inhospitable—(*Looking at her helplessly*) but—I—I wish you were somewhere else.

AMY (*following him up*). You poor old dear, it is too bad, but what could we do? Just you stick to us a little longer and you'll never regret it. Don't desert us now, there's a darling.

(*Stands on tip-toe—puts her arms around his neck and kisses him, and then runs out L. 3 E.* SINGLETON stands looking after her in astonishment.)

SING. God bless my soul, what a *very* extraordinary young woman—

(ENTER MISS PONSONBY R. 2 E.)

MISS P. I am ready, Horace.

SING. At your service, my dear Miss Ponsonby, in one minute. (MISS P. moves up toward window C. SINGLETON crosses to table C. and rings gong) I'm sure you'll enjoy the view when you see it, several people have said it's one of the finest views in the country, so—(ENTER JESSIE R. 2 E.) My hat and gloves,

## A Runaway Couple.

JESSIE—(EXIT JESSIE R. 2 E.) So lovely—so calm—so soothing—  
MISS P. I'm glad to hear it, perhaps under its influence you'll  
act more rationally.

(ENTER JESSIE R. 2 E. *with hat and gloves and two telegrams  
on a salver.*)

JESSIE. Two telegrams, sir.

SING. (*with a gasp*). Ah—(To MISS PONSONBY) Will you  
excuse me a moment? (*Taking hat, gloves and telegrams from  
JESSIE*)

MISS P. I will wait for you in the garden. I have no doubt the  
atmosphere out there is *pur*er.

[EXITS window C. to R. JESSIE EXITS R. 2 E.

SING. (*sits sofa L. and opens first telegram. Reads*). "Child-  
ren not very ill, James has returned, expect me by the three  
o'clock train. Lucy." (SINGLETON *begins rapidly calculating  
on his fingers*) Three o'clock, thank Heaven! Harry will be  
back first.

MISS P. (*off R. C.*). Horace!

SING. (*opening second telegram*). In one moment, my dear  
Miss Ponsonby. (*Looks at telegram blankly, rubs his eyes and  
reads it aloud*) Train delayed by accident, may not be back for  
hours—Harry. Oh lord! (*Collapses and sits helplessly on sofa.*

MISS P. *appears at window C. from R.*)

MISS P. Horace, I am waiting.

SING. Coming, my dear Miss Ponsonby, coming.

(*Thrusts telegrams into pocket, rises, throws on hat very much  
on one side, picks up gloves and goes up C. trying to hum  
cheerfully. MISS P. grasps him sternly by the arm and they  
turn to go C. to R.*)

## QUICK CURTAIN.

### ACT II.

SCENE—Same as ACT I. An hour or so later. As curtain  
*rises* AMY *puts her head out of the door L. 3 E. and looks  
around cautiously.*

AMY. No one here. Oh, dear me, I am so hungry, terribly  
unromantic but intensely disagreeable. I wonder if the servant  
would get me anything? She looked rather suspiciously at me  
this morning as if she were doubtful of my propriety. Never mind,  
if she'll only come I'll try my powers of persuasion. Any of the  
servants at Ponsonby House would have died for me. I'll see if I  
can't charm—Why, I don't even know her name.



(ENTER JESSIE R. 2 E. *with some papers and letters in her hand, she comes down to table R. and places them upon it. She does not see AMY who is up L. C.*)

JESSIE. Afternoon post and nobody here to open the letters. Well, I hope I know my position better than that to criticise my superiors, but *I don't* like the looks of things. It seems strange the moment missis has gone, to smuggle a strange young woman into the house and then hide her away when Missis's aunt comes.

AMY (*down C.*) Ahem. Good morning.

JESSIE (*stiffly*). Good morning, ma'am.

AMY. Er, what's your name?

JESSIE. Jessie, ma'am.

AMY. What a pretty name.

JESSIE. Glad you like it.

AMY (*coming closer*). It belongs to a pretty girl.

JESSIE (*edging away*). Very good of you to say so, ma'am.

(*Aside*) Trying to get on the soft side of me.

AMY. Jessie, I'm afraid you don't like me. Come, confess, you're thinking all sorts of dreadful things about me, aren't you?

JESSIE. I hope I know my place better ma'am.

AMY. Oh, nonsense, thoughts are free to everybody, and I don't blame you for misjudging me. I know I'm in a false position, but—(*Crosses to sofa L. and sits*) Jessie, come and sit down, I want to talk to you.

JESSIE. Thank you, ma'am, I'd as lief stand.

AMY. Oh, no you wouldn't, besides I want you to come and sit beside me, Jessie, please.

(*JESSIE crosses rather reluctantly and sits beside her on sofa L.*)

AMY. Now, Jessie, I'm going to make a confidant of you, and I'm sure when you know all you'll be my friend.

JESSIE (*aside*). I don't like this. The first thing I know I'll be mixed up in a bigamy or a murder or something as accessory before the fact.

AMY. Jessie, did you ever have a lover? (*JESSIE simpers*) Of course you have, a pretty girl like you couldn't be long *without* a lover. Jessie, I'm sure you'll sympathize with me. Did you see that gentleman who brought me here this morning? (*JESSIE nods*) We've eloped.

JESSIE. Gracious!

AMY. Yes. (*Assuming an intensely romantic air*) A cruel guardian wanted to part us, and confided me to the care of a female dragon, but love will find out a way, and so we've eloped. Harry left me in your master's care while he went to get the license, when all of a sudden the female dragon appeared and turned out to be your master's aunt, and she must never find me,

Jessie, or goodness only knows what may happen. So you'll help me, won't you? And if she cross-questions you, you won't tell her anything?

JESSIE. You can trust me, Miss, I hate that old cat.

AMY. Quite right, Jessie, I knew you were a sensible girl, and now will you do me one favor?

JESSIE. Anything I can, Miss.

AMY. Then get me something to eat, for I'm starving. I was so flurried and excited this morning that I didn't eat any breakfast, and I've had nothing all day but a few caramels, and they aren't satisfying.

JESSIE (*rising*). I'll get you something at once, Miss, and bring it round to Missis's room.

JOHN (*off L. C.*). What's come to everybody?

JESSIE. Quick, Miss, back into the room.

AMY. Who is it?

JESSIE. It's John, Miss, he's deaf and half an idiot, and if he saw you he'd—

(*Hurries AMY into room L. 3 E., closes door and then crosses to R. 2 E.*)

JESSIE. This is lovely, just like a story in Bow Bells.

[EXIT R. 2 E.]

(ENTER JOHN, *window C. from L. with some flowers in his hand.*)

JOHN. No one here. I thought I heard voices. That little fool Jessie talking to herself I dare say. Lord, women *are* stupid. Why, only a few minutes ago she came to me and says, Missis has got the measles and gone away to be nursed. What rubbish. Missis is as well as I am. Measles—bah! (*Goes up to small table L. C. at back and begins to arrange flowers*)

(ENTER COLONEL MARTIN, *C. apparently in hot haste.*)

COL. M. Not a soul about. What sort of house keeping do they call this? If I had them in India, I'd show them how to treat servants, yes sir, by George I would. (*Sees JOHN*) Here you, sir, why the devil don't you answer? (*Goes up to JOHN and slaps him on the shoulder*)

JOHN (*turning slowly*). Eh?

COL. M. Eh? Confound his impertinence. What do you mean, sir?

JOHN (*hand to ear*). Eh?

COL. M. Deaf. (*Raising his voice*) Does Mr. Singleton live here?

JOHN. Of course I do.

COL. M. Do what?

JOHN. Live here.

COL. M. Who the devil cares where *you* live. Does Mr. Singleton live here!

JOHN. He's not at home.

COL. M. Does he live here when he is at home?

JOHN. About three o'clock.

COL. M. About three o'clock? What is the chuckle-headed old fool talking about? (*Coming down C. talking to himself*) If I only had you in India, I'd show you, sir, by George I would.

JOHN. If you're talking to me you must speak louder.

COL. M. Louder! I'll burst a blood vessel presently. Louder! I haven't talked so loud since the day I led the charge at Singapore and had to shout my orders above the roar of the cannon.

JOHN. It's no use mumbling like that, I can't hear you.

COL. M. Mumbling! By heavens this is too much. A Colonel of the British army told he mumbles by a servant. Oh, if I only had you in India, I'd show you, sir.

(ENTER JESSIE R. 2 E.)

COL. M. Ah, by Jove, a pretty girl. She'll give me the information I want. I was always a devil amongst the girls, they never could resist me, never. Ahem, my dear, does Mr. Singleton live here?

JESSIE. Yes sir.

COL. M. Is he in?

JESSIE. No sir, he's gone for a walk.

COL. M. Alone?

JESSIE. No sir, with Missis's aunt.

COL. M. Whose aunt?

JESSIE. Missis's, sir.

COL. M. Who is your mistress?

JESSIE. Mrs. Singleton, sir.

COL. M. Mrs. Singleton. Is your master married?

JESSIE. Yes sir.

COL. M. Great heavens! What depths of infamy.

JESSIE. I beg your pardon, sir?

COL. M. Nothing—nothing, my child, for you to know. Where is your mistress?

JESSIE. Away at her sister's, sir.

COL. M. Away? I'd have sworn it. Oh, the designing Don Juan. He has laid his plans well. When will he be back?

JESSIE. He can't be very long, sir, it's past luncheon time already.

COL. M. Then I'll call again. I can't stay in this place, the atmosphere would choke me. (*Up to C.*) Tell your master that—

JESSIE. Yes, sir.

COL. M. No, don't tell him.

JESSIE. No, sir.

COL. M. Say that when I come back, I'll show him, sir, by George I will. [EXIT C. D. to R.]

JOHN (*who through this scene while he is pretending to arrange his flowers has been watching them intently*). What did he want?

JESSIE. I don't know.

JOHN. Eh?

JESSIE (*louder*). I don't know.

JOHN. What did he *say* he wanted?

JESSIE. He didn't say anything.

JOHN. What fools women are. Chattering to him like a magpie for fifteen minutes and don't know what he wants. Bah! Where's he gone?

JESSIE. Into the garden.

JOHN. Where?—

JESSIE. Into the garden.

JOHN. Garden? Why didn't you say so before, he'll be hooking the flowers, first thing you know. *You'll* never have any sense. [EXIT *quickly* C. D.]

JESSIE. Well, did anyone ever hear the like. No sense. Dear me, I'm forgetting all about that poor young lady, and she must be starving. [EXIT R. 2 E.]

(ENTER C. *from* R. SINGLETON and MISS PONSONBY, *both appear very hot and tired, but MISS PONSONBY looks grim and stately whilst SINGLETON seems almost too weak to walk—he comes down to sofa L. and sits. MISS PONSONBY goes to table C. pulling off her gloves.*)

SING. Oh, what a lot of good a walk does you. So much better than being shut up in a stuffy house, I feel quite refreshed.

MISS P. You look it.

SING. (*aside*). I wonder if she intends that for sarcasm. (*Aloud*) I hope you enjoyed the view, Miss Ponsonby. Charming wasn't it?

MISS P. Perhaps. I was thinking of other things.

SING. Really! Now, that's too bad. I had quite set my heart on your admiring it. Why, do you know that only last week, Professor Smith, your old friend, the professor of geology.

MISS P. Botany.

SING. Botany—of course, what am I thinking about. Well, Smith—awfully foolish of me to think it was geology—Smith said he hadn't enjoyed anything so much since he did the continent twenty years ago and went up to the top of Mount what's-his-name in a snow-storm.

MISS P. Indeed, perhaps Prof. Smith's mind was free from care and fit to imbibe the beauties of nature, my case was different.

SING. Of course it was. I'd forgotten *that*. To be sure you must be awfully worried about that unfortunate girl.

MISS. P. I wasn't thinking of *her*.

SING. (*faintly*). No?

MISS P. No, I'm used to that sort of worry.

SING. Of course you are, how silly of me not to think of it, it must be second nature to you.

MISS P. It is. I am used to dealing with headstrong and impertinent girls, but not with designing reprobates. (*Crosses to chair R. and sits*)

SING. (*rising*). I beg your pardon, you said—

MISS P. Designing reprobates—and I meant it. Concealment is useless. You have guilt upon your conscience and you may as well confess it.

SING. (*getting a little nearer to her by degrees and speaking soothingly*). Now, my dear Miss Ponsonby, don't you think that you are a little bit unjust? Don't you think that your judgment—usually so clear and impartial—is a little, shall we say, warped by the worry you have undergone? What have I done that you should think I am concealing a crime?

MISS P. Contradicted yourself seven times during the course of your walk.

SING. (*aside*). I knew I'd do it.

MISS P. Well, what have you got to say?

SING. Don't you think you are mistaken?

MISS P. No, I do not.

SING. Dear me! (*Hums faintly*)

MISS P. (*rising and taking C.*). Yes, in your feverish desire to keep up a conversation, and avoid the questions I was about to put to you, you talked nonsense, Horace Singleton, prevaricating, equivocating nonsense, plunging deeper and deeper at every step into the mire of deceit and hypocrisy. I *would* have given you a chance to confess all and make your peace, but you would not take it, and now my determination is fixed—when your trusting wife returns I shall open her eyes to the true character of the man she has chosen for a husband. I always distrusted you, Horace, now I despise you.

[EXIT R. 3 E.]

(SINGLETON *looks after her with a dazed expression, then sits chair L. of table C. and leans his head on his hand and hums dolefully.*)

SING. Oh, dear, what have I done to deserve all this? Tried to act the part of a friend, made myself a liar in reality and the Lord knows what in Miss Ponsonby's imagination. If I could only—no—that wouldn't do—if—oh—(*Gives a prolonged groan, gets*

*up, runs his hands through his hair, and then walks up and down with his hands in his pockets humming violently*) I must get that miserable girl away, she must hide in the arbor or the tool-house, or somewhere—but go she must. (*He goes up to L. 3 E.*)

(ENTER JOHN C. *from R. cautiously.*)

JOHN. Mr. Singleton!

SING. (*jumping and turning round*). Bless my life, John, how you startled me!

JOHN. Mr. Singleton!

SING. Yes.

JOHN. There's a lunatic here!

SING. God bless my soul, where did he come from?

JOHN. I don't know, I'm a little deaf, worse luck—and he mumbles so I couldn't hear him. I asked him to speak out, but he wouldn't. Jessie was talking to him, but lor, women are no good to find things out.

SING. Is that your experience, John? I wish it were mine.

JOHN. Did you speak?

SING. No, John, nothing of consequence. Where is he now?

JOHN. In the garden. I think he came after the bulbs, but don't you be afraid, I kept my eye on him.

SING. That was very good of you, John. What's he like?

JOHN. He didn't like it at all.

SING. No, no, John. I said what's he like? (*Shouting*) What sort of a man?

JOHN. Not very short, but stout, and has a millingtary air about him.

SING. Military! Colonel Martin, Amy's guardian. This is getting awful! (*Shoves hands in pocket and crosses down L. humming*)

JOHN. I don't like the looks of him. Shall I get the police? (*Turns toward R. 3 E.*)

SING. (*losing his temper*). Police! No, you old fool.

JOHN. Oh, I'll keep cool. It takes a deal more than that to frustrate me.

SING. Oh, he'll drive me crazy! (*Goes up to him*) Here, take this shilling. (*Giving him money*) Go down to the village and get me—

JOHN. Eh? What do you want?

SING. I don't know. Oh, get anything you like, get drunk if you want to, only go! (*Pushes JOHN out L. 2 E., JOHN protesting and trying to explain. He closes the door*)

(ENTER COL. MARTIN C. *from L.*)

COL. M. Mr. Horace Singleton, I believe!

SING. At your service.

COL. M. My name is Martin, sir, John Martin, late Colonel in Her Majesty's regiment of Singapore cavalry.

SING. (*aside*). I thought so. (*Aloud*) Pleased to make your acquaintance, Colonel Martin, can I—

COL. M. I'm sorry I can't say the pleasure is mutual.

SING. Really!

COL. M. Nothing but an imperative sense of duty would make me set foot in this house, and having done so nothing but the laws of an unmanly and effeminate civilization would prevent me from inflicting on you the chastisement you deserve. If only I had you in India, I'd show you, sir, by George, I would.

SING. Would you really? You'll excuse me, but I don't think I quite follow you.

COL. M. Don't you, sir, or won't you, sir—which? Where I come from, sir, we don't waste time in words, we act. Give me my ward!

SING. Eh—you—?

COL. M. Ward, sir, ward, don't I speak clearly?

SING. (*aside*). If he makes that row, Miss Ponsonby will be down, and then—Oh, I must get him out of this. (*Aloud*) Yes, my dear sir, you speak very clearly, and if I might be allowed to say so in rather high key, I don't mind it myself, but there's a sick lady in the next room—and—

COL. M. Nonsense, sir, you are trying to gain time and beg the question. (*Very loud*) Will you give me my ward?

SING. My dear sir, as a military man and a gentleman, respect the slumbers of an indisposed female. Who is your ward, and what makes you think I've got her?

COL. M. (*crossing L.*). This is too much. Don't—don't go too far or I shall forget myself, but—I—I'll be calm. (*Sits sofa L.*)

SING. That's right, it's so much better in this hot weather.

COL. M. Damn the weather, don't talk to me about the weather. Who is my ward, do you ask, sir, and why do I think you've got her? Didn't I trace you and the victim of your perfidy to the village hotel? Didn't I find the cabman who drove you here and who is willing to go in the witness box and swear to it?

SING. My dear sir, I haven't been inside a cab for a fortnight.

COL. M. (*making a rush C.*). Would you dare to call me a liar?

SING. (*getting behind chair R. and keeping it between him and MARTIN*). Now, my dear Colonel, *do* be calm, you said you would, you know—I'm not attacking *your* veracity, but the cabman's. There's a mistake somewhere.

COL. M. Do you mean to say you don't know Amy Stanhope?

SING. (*taken aback*). I—I—

COL. M. Ah—ah—you can't deny it—when did you see her

SING. (*aside*). There's no help for it—I've got to lie. (*Drawing himself up stiffly*) I never saw her in my life. The name is familiar to me through a friend—who—

COL. M. And his name, sir, the name of this friend?

SING. I don't feel at liberty to give it. (COL. M. *bursts into a roar of laughter*) Hush, my dear sir, think of the sick lady!

COL. M. Confound the sick lady, sir, I don't believe there is one. She's a myth, sir, like your friend. I've had enough of this trifling, I'll give you five minutes, then, if you don't answer, I'll go for a policeman and a search warrant. (*Takes out his watch*)

SING. (*aside*). If I don't get him out of the house I'm lost—(*Aloud, in a very dignified tone*) Colonel Martin, I presume you are laboring under the influence of very strong emotions—(*Glances hastily over his shoulder at R. 3 E.*) And therefore, I am prepared to pardon rudeness for which under ordinary circumstances—(*A door bangs, and he starts violently but recovers himself*) under ordinary circumstances I should demand personal satisfaction. (COL. M. *looks astonished and drops into chair L. of table R.*) SING. *looks nervously over his shoulder and wipes his forehead*) I don't know your ward—never heard of her.

COL. M. Never heard of her! Why, just now—

SING. I mean, I never saw her, and I don't want to—at least, not at present. She has done a hasty and foolish thing.

COL. M. How the devil do you know that?

SING. (*aside*). There I go again—my brain won't stand the strain much longer. (*Aloud*) I mean, she *must* have done something hasty and foolish to provoke so much indignation in her natural friend and protector, and if there is anything I can do to forward the interests of the aforesaid friend and protector, I—I—don't you find the room very warm?

COL. M. Eh?

SING. Yes, of course you do. How foolish of me not to think of it before. Let's go to the arbor, we can talk better there. Lovely view of the river, rustic seats, and butterflies and earwigs and all sorts of nice things. Now you must come and we'll have some wine and cigars. (*Seizing COL. MARTIN by the arm*)

COL. M. Sir, this is no time for drinking.

SING. Oh, yes it is. Now really you must allow me. (*Comes to table C. and rings gong*)

COL. M. Sir, I have a duty to perform.

SING. Of course you have.

(ENTER JESSIE R. 2 E.)

Jessie, take some cigars to the arbor and some iced claret! (*To MARTIN*) You like iced claret?

COL. M. Sir, I—



SING. Of course you do. A man of your sort would. Yes, some claret, Jessie, and cigars, and hurry up, there's a good girl.

[EXIT JESSIE R. 2 E.]

COL. M. Mr. Singleton, you are very kind, and if I have misjudged you, I apologize; but—

SING. It's all right, no need of apologies between friends. Come along, now do; I won't take a refusal. (*Going up to window C.*)

COL. M. Mr. Singleton, I protest. I cannot afford to waste time—my ward—

SING. She's all right!

COL. M. How do you know?

SING. I mean she will be all right. Oh, we'll find her, never fear! I'm great on cases of this kind. (*Drags MARTIN up C. and out of window to L. just as they disappear*)

(ENTER MISS PONSONBY R. 3 E.)

MISS P. I can't make it out. I actually believe my nerves are upset and I thought I could stand anything. I could not sleep, and besides, there was such a noise like people quarrelling. Some of Horace's disreputable companions come to visit him, perhaps. (*Putting her hand to her head*) How my head aches. I think a nice, strong, cup of tea would do me good. Anyway I'll try it. (*Rings gong on table C.*)

(ENTER JESSIE R. 2 E.)

JESSIE. Did you ring, ma'am?

MISS P. Yes. I have a bad headache, and I want a cup of strong tea and some thin bread and butter, just as quickly as you can get it.

JESSIE. Yes ma'am—anything else, ma'am?

MISS P. No, only don't keep me waiting. I'm not used to lazy servants.

JESSIE. (*aside at D. R. 3 E.*) Spiteful old thing. Oh, that poor dear young lady, she must be starving. [EXIT R. 3 E.]

MISS P. I don't understand it, there's a mystery somewhere, but I'll get at the bottom of it before I'm an hour older. You *may* be a clever lawyer, Horace Singleton, but you're no match for Honoria Ponsonby when she sets her mind on anything. Oh, my poor head, I believe it's cooler on the terrace. I'll wait there till she brings my tea. [EXIT C. to L.]

(ENTER JESSIE R. 2 E. *with waiter, tea-pot on it—bread and butter, etc.*)

JESSIE. Well, I wonder where she's gone to! (*Looking round*) In such a dreadful hurry for her cup of tea a few minutes ago, and can't even wait for it. Old cat. Well, I shan't try to find her, and if it gets cold it's her own fault. I wonder if the young lady knows she's about, I'll just warn her. (*Up to L. 3 E.*)

JOHN (*off R.*). Jessie—Jessie—come here a moment, or wait—I'll come to you.

JESSIE. No, no, John, I'll come. (*Crosses to R. 2 E.*) What an old nuisance. [EXIT R. 2 E.

(AMY *puts her head in at L. 3 E., looks anxiously around and then comes out.*)

AMY. I wonder if that girl is *ever* going to bring me anything. I'm *famished*. I've been trying to sleep, but I couldn't, I'm too hungry. (*Down to table C. and sees waiter*) Oh, what's this, bread and butter and a cup of tea! How delightful! Perhaps Jessie has put it ready for me—and gone to get some meat, or preserves or something, anyhow, I don't care who it was prepared for, I'm going to eat it. I'm too far gone to stand on ceremony, and if I hear anyone coming I'll seize the bread and butter and decamp. (*Sits herself L. of table, pours out some tea and begins to eat*).

AMY. I wonder what has become of Mr. Singleton and the Dragon and Harry. Harry ought to be back before now. It can't take all this time to get a license.

(MISS PONSONBY *appears C. from R. and seeing AMY, stands for a moment as if horror-struck, and then comes down C. to R. of table.*)

AMY. And those Caramels. I hope he won't forget them. I'm just dying—

(*Raises slice of bread and butter to her mouth and at the same moment looks up and sees MISS PONSONBY just as she is taking a bite. A pause. They both stare at each other.*)

MISS P. So, Miss Stanhope, I have found you.

AMY (*trying to appear unconcerned*). It—it looks like it.

MISS P. Unhappy girl, thank heaven I have come in time to save you.

AMY. From what?

MISS P. Your folly.

AMY. If that's the same thing as marriage don't be too sure.

MISS P. You're not married?

AMY. Not quite, but I expect to be soon.

MISS P. Soon! In a few minutes you will be on the road back to Ponsonby house.

AMY. I don't think so.

MISS P. You refuse to accompany me?

AMY. Most decidedly.

MISS P. Wretched girl, must I tell you all, must I open your eyes to the abyss on the verge of which you have been standing?

AMY (*aside*). The ruling passion, she talks like an essay.

MISS P. I have just saved you from becoming a bigamist.

AMY. A what?—

MISS P. A bigamist. Your lover is married already.

AMY. He isn't.

MISS P. Don't you dare to contradict me.

AMY. Don't you dare to tell such stories about my—

MISS P. Horace, why don't you say it—Horace.

AMY. Horace!

MISS P. Horace. Oh, yes, I know all.

AMY. Why you don't suppose—

MRS. S. (*off* R. C.). Jessie. Jessie! Why, where has everybody got to?

MISS P. Do you hear that voice?

AMY. Yes. Whose is it?

MISS P. The voice of your victim.

AMY. My victim?

MISS P. The woman whose husband you have stolen.

AMY. I haven't stolen any woman's husband. You ought to be ashamed of yourself.

(ENTER MRS. SINGLETON C. *from* R.)

MRS. S. Why, Horace—where—(*Seeing* MISS PONSONBY) Oh, you here, aunt. (*MISS PONSONBY, goes up to her with a commiserating look and puts her arm round her protectingly*)

MISS P. Yes, I am here, my poor suffering child.

MRS. S. Good heavens! Is anything the matter? Horace, is he ill?

MISS P. No my dear, men like him never get ill.

MRS. S. Then what is the matter?

MISS P. Oh, you'll know soon enough. Do you see that young person—(*Pointing to* AMY)

MRS. S. Oh, yes. I met her at Ponsonby house. It is—

MISS P. The woman who has usurped your place in your husband's heart.

AMY. Oh, Miss Ponsonby, how can you tell such wicked—*wicked* stories. Mrs. Singleton I—

MISS P. Silence! How dare you speak to the woman you have wronged?

AMY. I haven't wronged anybody.

MISS. P. Not wronged? Oh, how perverted has your moral sense become. Listen to me, Lucy. This morning Miss Stanhope eloped from my seminary. I followed and traced her as far as the village hotel. Then I lost track of her and came on here to rest. I found you away, and your husband restless, feverish, excited—he refused to let me enter your room, and told me some nonsense about a present for my birthday, which he had got locked up there

took me for a two hours' walk in the broiling sun, equivocated, contradicted, prevaricated, lied and involved himself inextricably in the meshes of falsehood. I bided my time resolved to solve the mystery, and I have done so. Behold the situation. Miss Stanhope elopes from my seminary this morning, this afternoon she is an inmate of your house. There can be only one inference, the partner of her folly is your husband.

AMY. He isn't.

MISS P. Then who is?

AMY (*after a pause*). That's my business. Mrs. Singleton I swear to you it's all a mistake, your husband is the best and kindest of men—(*Very seriously*) I may be headstrong and foolish but I'm not wicked. I have never had anyone but her (*pointing to MISS P.*) to direct or guide me, and she never gave me one loving or tender word. Send her away and I will tell *you* everything, and trust to your generous heart to forgive and help me.

MRS. S. Miss Stanhope.

MISS P. Lucy, don't be foolish.

MRS. S. But aunt—

MISS P. My poor child you are too innocent, and unfit to cope with the deceits of the world—Leave the affair to me.

MRS. S. But aunt—Horace—I must see him.

KISS. P. Nothing of the kind, you must *tear* him from your heart.

MRS. S. (*sobbing*). But I—c—c—c—an't.

MISS P. Don't be a fool—come and lie down and I'll bathe your head with cologne. (*Leads LUCY up to R. 3 E.*) As for you, Miss, go to that room. (*Pointing L. 3 E.*) And don't you dare move out of it till I come. [EXIT *with* MRS. SINGLETON *sobbing and protesting* R. 3 E.]

AMY. I'll do nothing of the sort. I'll get on my hat and run away, and hide—hide—I don't know where I'll hide, but I'll hide till Harry comes, he can't be long. Oh! how I'd like to have a good cry, but I won't give way. Harry wouldn't like it, and I'll be brave for his sake, and wait till it's over. [EXIT L. 3 E.]

(ENTER SINGLETON C. *from L. pauses in window looking L.*)

SING. Thank heaven he's quiet at last. He's drinking my best claret like water, and smoking my best cigars like a bonfire, but he *is* quiet. Oh, lord, my head—if I could only think. (*Puts his hand to his head humming dolefully*) But, I can't. I don't know—

(ENTER AMY L. 3 E. *with hat on, she starts for C. and bumps into* SINGLETON.)

SING. Oh, good gracious, what are you doing here? you must'nt, you know, you really must'nt. You'll spoil all. For heaven's sake get back into that room.

AMY. I won't. I'm going to run away.

SING. Where to?

AMY. I—I—don't know.

SING. (*aside*). She's as bad as I am. (*Aloud*) See here, this can't last much longer something's bound to happen.

AMY. It *has* happened, you don't know the worst.

SING. Don't I?

AMY. No. Your wife's home. (SING. *groans*) And Miss Ponsonby's told her the most awful lot of lies.

SING. Is *she* lying too? Oh, it's in the air.

AMY. She says you're a bigamist, and I've eloped with you—and your wife is to *tear* you from her heart. And oh, (*breaking down and sobbing*) I'm so wretched and miserable.

SING. Of course you are. (*Puts his arm round her, she lays her head on his shoulder*) So am I. There, there, don't.

(ENTER MISS PONSONBY R. 3 E. *She sees them and shriekes.*

SINGLETON *Plunges his hands into his pockets and hums violently.* AMY *sobs and clings round his neck.*)

MISS P. (*calling off*). Lucy—Lucy—!

(ENTER LUCY, R. 3 E.)

There. (*Pointing*) You refuse to believe me, believe your own senses. There stands the shameless man and the partner of his guilt.

(SINGLETON *breaks away from AMY, who sinks into chair L. of window.*)

SING. My darling Lucy, it's a mistake—it's all wrong.

MISS P. I should think so.

SING. I know appearances are against me.

MISS P. Rather.

SING. Well, that's just what I said, but I'll explain all.

MISS P. After what we have seen explanations are superfluous.

MRS. S. Oh, Horace, Horace, I couldn't have believed it of you.

SING. Of course you couldn't, I can hardly believe it of myself, but—

COL. M. (*off L. C.*) Stand out of my way, you deaf idiot.

(AMY *rises and comes down L. C.*)

(ENTER COL. MARTIN C. *from L.*)

COL. M. Singleton, I— (*Sees AMY*) What?

MISS P. Colonel Martin,

COL. M. (*seeing her*). Miss Ponsonby.

MISS P. *and* COL. M. (*together*). What does this mean?

MISS P. It means that that wretched man has abducted your ward.

## A Runaway Couple.

COL. M. It means that he is a consummate liar.

MISS P. A would be bigamist.

COL. M. An unmitigated fraud.

SING. Colonel Martin, Miss Ponsonby this language is actionable.

COL. M. Don't have the unblushing effrontery to talk to me of actions. Haven't you told me falsehood after falsehood. Didn't you say you had never seen my ward.

MISS P. Didn't you tell me you had a birthday present locked up in your wife's room?

COL. M. Didn't you tell me you had only heard of her through a friend?

MISS P. The ten button kid gloves were Jessie's—and the handkerchief with the monogram was Lucy's?

COL. M. It was only pity for my emotions that prevented you from demanding personal satisfaction? Satisfaction? By George you shall have it, sir, whether you like it or not. As a soldier and a man of honor there are only two courses open to me, I'll shoot you or horsewhip you. Take your choice.

MRS. S. Oh, Horace, Horace.

MISS P. Hold your tongue, Lucy.

MRS. S. But aunt.

MISS P. Don't be a fool, he deserves his punishment.

COL. M. Come, sir—which shall it be? (SINGLETON *hums helplessly*) I am glad the prospect amuses you. (*Very loud*) Which shall it be?

AMY (*very quietly crossing to COL. M.*). Uncle John, don't talk nonsense.

COL. M. (*astonished*). What, you dare?

AMY. To stop you making a fool of yourself? Yes. It's all your own fault. I told you if you sent me back to school I'd run away, and I've kept my word.

COL. M. But confound it, madam, you needn't have run away with a married man.

AMY. I haven't, Mr. Singleton has no more thought of eloping with me than he has of flying. His only fault is that he thinks more of his friends' interests than he does of his own. I've got him into an awful scrape and I'm sorry for it. The man I eloped with was—

COL. M., MRS. S., and MISS P. Who?

(ENTER HARRY BERNARD, C. *His hat battered in, his clothes torn, and his face scratched and covered with mud.* AMY *sees him and rushes to his arms.*)

AMY. Harry!

SING. (*going up to him and shaking him violently by the hand.*)

My dear boy, you don't know how glad I am to see you. For heaven's sake tell these people I am *not* a bigamist.

AMY. Tell them I did not elope with a married man.

HARRY. Eh—what? why of course not.

COL. M. Confound your impudence, sir, do you mean to tell me—

HARRY. Come, come, Colonel, no hard words, we're not in India. You told me I should not have Amy and shut the front door in my face. I was determined to get her, so I climbed over the back wall.

COL. M. And like all head strong young fools you never thought of the scandal that might be talked about your future wife.

HARRY. You're wrong, Colonel. Amy's honor is as dear to me as to you. When Amy consented to elope with me I took her at once to the house of my oldest friend, Mr. Singleton, intending to solicit his wife's care for Amy. Unfortunately Mrs. Singleton was from home; in the emergency I left her with Horace himself whilst I went for the license. I was detained for three hours by my train running into a freight. My personal appearance will verify this statement. During my absence it appears that my friend has been inconvenienced and misunderstood. I am sincerely sorry.

SING. Don't mention it, my boy, don't mention it, all's well that ends well.

COL. M. But hang it all, sir, how about those astonishing—romances you entertained me with.

SING. Legal fictions, my dear sir, perfectly justifiable legal fictions. Force of habit. When Harry placed his case—otherwise his fiancée in my hands, he became my client, and a lawyer may always lie for his client you know.

*(During the last few speeches MRS. S. has been talking excitedly with MISS P., she now breaks away from her and runs up to SINGLETON.)*

MRS. S. Oh, Horace, can you ever forgive my horrible suspicions?

SING. Certainly my dear. *(Kissing her)* I always admitted appearances were against me.

MISS P. *And are still.* Lucy you'll never be such a fool as to accept these explanations?

LUCY. Yes I shall, aunt. I think I've lived long enough under your guidance, in future I'll be guided by my own heart—and I think I'll be happier. *(Looking affectionately up at her husband)* Don't you?

SING. Not a doubt of it.

*(MISS P. tosses her head. Crosses to chair R. and sits bolt upright, and very dignified.)*

COL. M. Well, I'm willing to own we've all been a little hasty, and everybody owes everybody else an apology, so the best thing to do is let bygones be bygones and say no more about it, but I can't let my ward marry that young man.

AMY (*going up to him and taking his arm*). Oh, yes, you can.

COL. M. Then I won't.

AMY. Oh, yes, you will.

COL. M. I'll be—

AMY. Oh! (*Putting her hand over his mouth*)

COL. M. Well, I won't.

SING. Now, my dear sir, don't you think, all things considered you'd better consent. Just look at his condition and tell me if you don't think he needs some recompense for all he's gone through? I've known him a long time and really he's a very nice young man. He's got the lady's heart *and* the license.

COL. M. But he's not got a penny to his name.

HARRY. But I've got expectation.

COL. M. Expectation be—

SING. (*interrupting*). Quite right, a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush. Consent to the marriage, Colonel Martin, and I'll see if I can't make room for a junior partner in my office. Is it a bargain?

COL. M. Well, I suppose I must say yes, this confounded climate is weakening my will, but if I was in India—

SING. Thank heaven we're not, my dear sir. (*AMY crosses to HARRY who puts his arm round her*) And now every thing's settled let's get Jessie to put us up some sandwiches, row up the river, eat dinner in the open air and come back by moonlight. What do you say.

MRS. S. AMY *and* HARRY. Delightful.

COL. M. (*nods his head*). All right.

MISS P. Thank you, I don't care to go.

SING. No? Well, perhaps you're right, moonlight and water don't agree with some people, but they're the very things for sweethearts—new—(*Smiling at HARRY and AMY*) and old. (*Giving his wife a squeeze*) and we'll take some champagne with us and drink success and happiness to the Runaway Couple.

(*Kisses MRS. S. and hums "Home Sweet Home" cheerfully.*)

HARRY *embraces* AMY. COLONEL MARTIN, *looks on smiling.*

MISS P. *sits bolt upright and very discontented.*)

CURTAIN.

POSITIONS AT CURTAIN.

COL. M.

SING. *and* MRS. S.

MISS P.

AMY *and* HARRY.



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# JEMIMA

OR

## THE WITCH of BENDER

### COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

By H. ELLIOTT McBRIDE

PRICE 15 CENTS

Four male, four female characters. A farmer, an old bachelor, another farmer and a Yankee; also a farmer's wife, his aunt, a Yankee girl and an aspiring maid. A series of surprises, which are effectual of their purpose. Time of playing, 1½ hours. 1 interior scene.

#### SYNOPSIS OF INCIDENTS.

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Act II.—Bolivar's oil craze. Invoking the Witch. Bolivar's terror. The old maid's resolve.

Act III.—The old maid's despair. Jeremiah and Sarah. The Witch's revenge. The old maid happy. Jemima herself again.

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By S. N. COOK

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Six male, three female characters and a little girl. An old gentleman, plausible rascal, dissolute son, young lover, darkey servant, policeman. Elderly lady and her daughter, widow and child. Time of playing, 1 hour. A tale of oppression and retribution. 3 interior and 1 street scene.

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Act II.—The robbery. Out in the streets. The recognition. At home. The widow's story.

Act III.—The rascal unmasked. The double arrest. The widow comes to her own. A happy wedding.

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JAPANESE WEDDING. 1 Scene; 1 hour.....	3	10	
MATRIMONIAL EXCHANGE. 2 Acts; 2 hours.....	6	9	
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YE VILLAGE SKEWL OF LONG AGO. 1 Scene.	13	12	
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