

PR 4399

.B3 H8

Copy 1

PRICE 15 CENTS.

DE WITT'S ACTING PLAYS.

(Number 3.)

£100,000.

AN ORIGINAL COMEDY,

IN THREE ACTS.

By HENRY J. BYRON.

Author of "War to the Knife," "Dundreary Married."

FIRST PRODUCED AT THE PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE, LONDON, UNDER THE MANAGEMENT OF MISS MARIE WILTON, ON MAY 5TH, 1867.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED

A description of the Costume—Cast of the Characters—Entrances and Exits—Relative Positions of the Performers on the Stage, and the whole of the Stage Business.

New-York :

ROBERT M. DE WITT, PUBLISHER,

No. 13 Frankfort Street.

CASTE. An Original Comedy in Three Acts. By T. W. Robertson, Esq. Price Fifteen Cents.

INDIAN CHIEF'S CHILD. A Comedy in Three Acts. By Van Rensselaer, Esq. Price Fifteen Cents.

NEW PLAYS! NEW PLAYS!

Price Fifteen Cents Each.

NOBODY'S CHILD.

A DRAMATIC PLAY IN THREE ACTS.

By **WATTS PHILLIPS**, Esq., Author of the "Ticket of Leave," "Paul's Return," &c.

This play has been a great success. It has run over forty nights at the Surrey Theatre, London, and still kept the stage at last dates. It is a wonderfully effective drama, abounding in stirring scenes, and beautifully effective Tableaux. Nothing more real and truly popular has been put on the stage in a long time. It has 20 characters in all, including subordinates.

This edition contains every information for easily putting the play on the stage. Costumes, Positions, Scenery, List of Characters, &c., &c.

£100,000.

By **H. J. BYRON**, One of the most Popular English Dramatists.

This is one of the most effective of recent plays. It has had a fine run in London, and is being extensively played in the Provinces. In this country it has been very successfully produced at Wallack's Theatre, N. Y., Selwyn's Theatre, Boston, and other first class Theatres. It has 12 characters in all, including subordinates.

Not only the list of Characters, Costumes, &c., will be found in this edition; but every other possible information as regards Scenery, Properties, Positions, &c., &c., are given in the plainest manner.

C A S T E .

AN ORIGINAL COMEDY IN THREE ACTS.

By **T. W. ROBERTSON**, Esq., Author of "Ours," "Society," &c.

This edition contains full descriptions of Costumes—Properties, Scenery—Stage arrangements, &c.

Copies mailed, postage paid, on receipt of price. Address

R. M. DE WITT, Publisher, 13 N. Yorkford St.

A HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS.

AN ORIGINAL COMEDY

IN THREE ACTS.

BY HENRY J. BYRON,

*Author of "William Tell With a Vengeance," "Lancashire Lass,"
&c., &c.*

AS FIRST PERFORMED AT THE PRINCE OF WALES THEATRE,
LONDON, UNDER THE MANAGEMENT OF MISS MARIE
WILTON, MAY 5TH, 1866.



TO WHICH ARE ADDED

A DESCRIPTION OF THE COSTUME—CAST OF THE CHARACTERS—EN-
TRANCES AND EXITS—RELATIVE POSITIONS OF THE PER-
FORMERS ON THE STAGE, AND THE WHOLE
OF THE STAGE BUSINESS.



NEW YORK:
ROBERT M. DE WITT, PUBLISHER.

No. 13 FRANKFORT STREET.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

Prince of Wales Theatre, London.

May 5th, 1866.

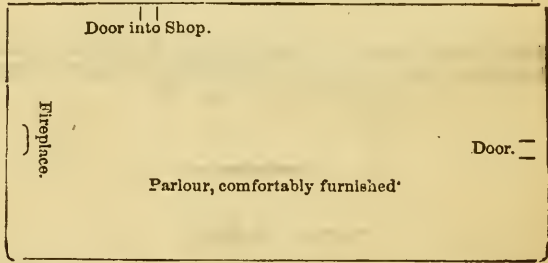
Gerard Goodwin,	-	-	Mr. S. Bancroft.
Major Blackshaw,	-	-	Mr. F. Dewar.
Sir Rumsey Waters,	-	-	Mr. J. Tindall.
Charker,	-	-	Mr. Trafford.
Joe Barlow,	-	-	Mr. Ray.
Pennythorne,	-	-	Mr. J. Clarke.
Pyefinch,	-	-	Mr. W. H. Montgomery.
Mr. Fluker,	-	-	Mr. J. Hare.
Gibbons,	-	-	
Alice Barlow,	-	-	Miss Wilton.
Mrs. Barlow,	-	-	Miss Larkin.
Arabella Bell,	-	-	Miss B. Wilton.
Jane Plover,	-	-	Miss B. Goodall.

COSTUMES OF THE DAY.

PROPERTIES--Stockings, tray, decanter, glasses, table, chairs, sofa, piano.

SCENERY.

ACT I.—Parlor behind Barlow's shop.



SIX MONTHS ARE SUPPOSED TO ELAPSE.

ACT II.—Chambers in St. James's.

SIX MONTHS ARE SUPPOSED TO ELAPSE.

ACT III.—Same as Act I.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.—R. means *Right of Stage, facing the Audience*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of centre*; L. C. *Left of centre*. D. F. *Door in the Flat, or Scene running across the back of the Stage*; C. D. F. *Centre Door in the Flat*; R. D. F. *Right Door in the Flat*; L. C. F. *Left Door in the Flat*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; 1 E. *First Entrance*; 2 E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; 1, 2 or 3 G. *First, Second or Third Groove*.

R. R. C. C. L. C. L.

The reader is supposed to be upon the Stage facing the audience.

G.F7

A HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Parlour behind Joe Barlow's shop, comfortably furnished—door into shop, L. C. ; door, R., fire-place, L.*

MRS BARLOW *discovered sitting, R. C., darning stockings, receiving the visit of* MISS JANE PLOVER *and* MISS ARABELLA PELL, *two tradesmen's daughters.*

MRS. BARLOW. (R. C.) Well, my dears, if you were to talk for an hour, you'd never make me think different. Besides, marriage indeed! what business have two young bits of gals like you to think of getting married?

JANE. (L. C.) La, Mrs. Barlow, what do you suppose we've got to think about?

MRS. B. Oh, go along with you.

JANE. I dare say you did, when you were our age. It's only natural, isn't it, Arabella?

ARABELLA. (L. *a gushing girl*) Of course it is, Jane dear.

MRS. B. Parcel of rubbish. Now you, Jane Plover, now what do you know about housekeeping?

JANE. Well, I can make my own bonnets, can't I, Arabella?

ARAB. Yes, Jane dear.

MRS. B. How about cooking now?

JANE. Oh, when I marry I hope it'll be to some one who can afford to keep me a cook. One marries to better one's condition, Mrs. Barlow, not to be made a negro slave of.

ARAB. I should think not indeed! catch me cooking for any man.

MRS. B. Well, my niece Alice can cook.

JANE. Now you know it's not fair to bring Alice forward as an example. Alice can do everything better than anybody else.

ARAB. Yes, everything!

JANE. Every one owns that, and nobody's a bit jealous of her. I always will say, that if ever there was a loveable, amiable, downright specimen of a girl, Alice Barlow is the identical party; don't, I Arabella?

ARAB. That you do, Jane dear.

MRS. B. Ah, you wheedling young thing, you know how to get round an old woman, not as anything you could say in Ally's praise would be too much; ever since she was so high, she's been a joy and a comfort to her uncle and me.

JANE. Well, Mrs. Barlow, in course of time she'll have to be a joy and comfort to somebody else; it's only natural, you know. As Mrs. Mc Whirler, who gave that lovely lecture at the school-room, last week, on "Woman's Rights," said, with a beautiful sweep of the arm, "Matrimony," says she, "Matrimony is woman's *missive*!"

ARAB. *Mission*, not *missive*, Jane dear.

JANE. Don't catch me up, Arabella, I was close to the lecturer, in the shilling seats, whilst you was at the back, among the "three-pennys."

ARAB. That's a bad habit of yours, lording it over parties who haven't a proper allowance from their pa. It isn't every one's pa who's a master builder, and made his fortune running up terraces, that look as if they'd been built of card paper instead of bricks and mortar.

JANE. Now, Arabella, don't you be annoying.

ARAB. Then don't you aggravate.

MRS. B. There, there, don't quarrel, girls; woman's missionary or not, Alice isn't thinking of marriage.

JANE. Not as far as you know, Mrs. Barlow.

ARAB. By the way, how's your lodger getting on, ma'am?

MRS. B. That's best known to himself, my dear.

ARAB. And he keeps himself to himself, I fancy. I call him a regular mystery. But he's very handsome, isn't he, Jane dear.

JANE. Bless the man! do you think I ever looked at him?

ARAB. There's no harm in expressing an opinion; it isn't every one who's engaged to a cornchandler.

JANE. (*looking at her watch*) Gracious me, Mrs. Barlow, how late it is, we must be off.

ARAB. No, and it isn't every one who has a gold watch to flaunt in the faces of parties whose parents have been improvident. I'll warrant Alice hasn't got a gold watch.

MRS. B. Indeed she has though; her uncle gave her a beauty on her last birthday.

JANE. Besides, don't you know Alice has a fortune coming to her, hasn't she, Mrs. Barlow?

MRS. B. She don't like it talked about; it's no secret that her father left her comfortably off. But, bless my heart, what can have become of Joe? (*the girls get up.*)

ARAB. I suppose you'd think it rude if I was to ask what your lodger is, Mrs. Barlow.

JANE. Arabella, how you can—

MRS. B. Not a bit, my dear, when you see him ask him.

ARAB. La, no, I meant that perhaps you might—

MRS. B. (*crossly*) I know nothing about him. Where can Joe be?

JANE. Well, good morning, Mrs. Barlow; give my love to Alice. (*shaking hands*)

ARAB. And mine too, and a million million kisses. (*shaking hands*)

JANE. How can you be so childish?

ARAB. Do mind your own business, Jane dear.

JANE. It's quite ridiculous in one of your years.

ARAB. Never mind what it is. (*they go off, L. D., wrangling*)

MRS. B. Bless the man, what a time he is always going into the City. Bother the City, why can't he be happy in the Boro.' It's only of late that he's taken to rambling off goodness knows where. Joe never spoke a false word to me in his life, but I must say there are times when I mistrust that "City." Half-past four. (*sits and taps her foot impatiently*) Dear! dear! and there's always a rush of business when he's away, customers seem to pour in just out of aggravation, (*sits R., arm chair*)

Enter JOE BARLOW, C. D.

JOE. Well, old woman. (*observes that MRS. BARLOW is annoyed, winks aside*) A trifle grumpy as per usual. Hum! (*aloud*) What's the matter, misses?

MRS. B. Oh, what a time you've been philandrin' about.

JOE. What's the use of going into foreign languages? I ain't been a philandrin', I've been in the City.

MRS. B. Oh, you're always going to the City.

JOE. Well, it ain't my fault, old woman. It's business. If every one was blown up for being obliged to go into the City it'd come precious hard on a many. Wouldn't the homnibuses catch it, that's all. (*aside*) Twelve per cent. if it's a penny. If she only knew half—but no, she'd object to the risk—she's like the party in the play, "she's got no speckle-lation in her eye." Twelve per cent. if it's a penny, (*turns up stage and takes off his hat, &c.*)

MRS. B. (R. C.) Been buying stock I suppose?

JOE. (L. C.) Ye—es, a little. We're short of soda too. (*JOE puts hat on piano, (L.) and they sit*)

MRS. B. We'll give the City a rest for a bit, Joe, for we've got more in the place than we shall ever get rid of. There's soap enough to see us out if we live to be a pair of Methoosallums.

JOE. Well, there's Alice to inherit it ain't there?

MRS. B. Ah, Alice will never keep the shop, Joe.

JOE. Why not? she's got no lofty ideas, has she? What would you have her do? sell up the business and set up for a fine lady; or take to something light and gen-teel, millinery or something of that sort; or go out for a governess, eh? That's a very agreeable sort of life I've heard, and the number of young noblemen as frequently proposes and is accepted is quite surprising.

MRS. B. (*much annoyed*) Now, Joe, Joe, don't nag—you know I can't stand nagging, Joe. I don't want to appear out of temper.

JOE. Out of temper, old woman! no fear of your being out of it, you'll always have plenty of it by you.

MRS. B. There, that's always the way you come back from the City; you go out quite pleasant, and you come back that rampageous there's no speaking to you. Oh I'd like to give that City a bit of my mind, (*rises.*)

JOE. Oh, my dear, the City don't want it, (*rises*)

MRS. B. Alice has no notion of marrying a young nobleman, or above herself in any way. Look at Pennythorne, what a match he'd be, but she'll scarcely give him a civil word, more especially of late—hem! I say more especially of late, Joe. I say more especially—

JOE. All right, my dear, I hear you. Don't let's have no tautnology. If Alice don't like Pennythorne she's not obliged to have him I suppose. I'm an advocate for letting young people fall in love *before* they get married. It's better than doing it afterwards.

MRS. B. Don't be stupid, Joe; it's according to who it's with. Esteem is the principal thing.

JOE. No, it ain't, love's the sentiment for my money. Bless your heart, when I proposed to you, old woman, I didn't esteem you a bit. But I was over head and ears in love with you in the good fashioned way, and felt miserable, and kep' awake and didn't put no oil on my hair, lost my appetite all reg'lar.

MRS. B. (*rather pleased*) Oh, go along with your nonsense! Pennythorne's rich. Look at the horses and carriages he keeps.

JOE. Yes, to "Let out for 'ire,"—put that in.

MRS. B. She'd have got to like him in time, only there's a certain reason why she doesn't now.

JOE. Oh, the reason's plain enough—she detests him. I'm afraid it's one that'll last.

MRS. B. Yes, but I believe you're so blind that you don't or won't see the real cause.

JOE. Now look here, don't keep a driving about the bush if you've got anything to communicate, speak up.

MRS. B. It was an evil day when you allowed that young man Goodwin to come here and lodge.

JOE. (*whistles*) Oh, well, you made no objection. The room was no use to us; and—and—why I thought you were very partial to the young man.

MRS. B. Oh yes, at first; but—he's very strange. I don't understand him; and—he's dreadfully shabby.

JOE. Shabby? why he's always paid his rent reglar, and William tells me he's given him a shilling a week for cleaning his boots.

MRS. B. Used to do. Now he cleans them himself.

JOE. Does 'em better, perhaps.

MRS. B. No, it's because he's ashamed to shew 'em, I've noticed his clothes getting more and more threadbare. He's as poor as poor can be, Joe.

JOE. Well, I don't suppose he'd select a back bed room in the Borough if he was rolling in wealth. You don't expect to have lords for lodgers, do you?

MRS. B. What convinces me more than anything is, that I've lately missed his watch and chain.

JOE. Well, my dear, so long as you don't miss *yours*, it don't signify.

MRS. B. Then I've seen him go out in the dark with parcels and come back without 'em; that looks suspicious.

JOE. On the contrary, if he had gone *out* with nothing and come *back* with parcels, it might have appeared odd.

MRS. B. Besides, I believe he's half starved; why he's nothing like as stout as he was when he came here, and looks as pale—

JOE. Ha, it's not the colour of his face, it's the colour of his money you're afraid of missing. As for being thin, p'raps he's going in for Bantum. I'm sorry to hear all this; but still I can't see that it's our business; the young man's never asked a favour or borrowed a penny of us, has he?

MRS. B. No, he's as proud as he can be; and the poorer he grows the more distant he gets. That's what annoys me more than all. If he'd come down a bit humble in his way it would only look proper I think. I don't believe in paupers a giving themselves airs.

JOE. Come, come, I say, you're going a little too far. Pauper's a hard word.

MRS. B. Well, never mind, Joe. I shall have him out. He'd better go before there's any bother. Suppose anything should happen—him took ill—and not a penny. Don't you see what a nice set out it would be for us? Haven't you got a head on your shoulders?

JOE. Yes, but I believe I've got a heart underneath 'em. So have you, old woman, and his being poor's not the reason for all this. What was the hint you dropped just now about Alice?

MRS. B. Well, ever since that young man's been here, she's been like another girl. His fine genteel haughty ways turned her head. I can see as far as most, Joe.

JOE. Yes, you can see a great deal further than other folks, and sometimes a good deal more. I've had many a talk with Mr. Goodwin, and though he's a little shy, I believe he's an honest young gentleman—aye, gentleman! As for Alice, I can depend on her, my dear. She'll never cause us a tear. I could trust her anywhere and with anybody—always could; I think any one will allow that, when I declare that at the early age of five I could leave her alone with the figs.

MRS. B. Well, I shall turn him out! (*rising*)

JOE. (*rising*) Where? Into the cruel streets, and him without a friend. You're comfortable off, my dear, and don't know what it is to want a meal; but I was a poor lad once, Sue—a poor lad with no home, and no friends. I've known what it is to drop from sheer hunger, and sob myself to sleep against a door step. It was many a long year before I could count upon a dinner every day. And I might have been a thief. I was very, very near it once, but a friend's hand saved me from that, just in time, and—and—I'll be this young man's friend, and, (*turning to her*) so will you, old woman, so will you, won't you? Eh, won't you? Eh? (*he has got closer to her and puts his arm round her waist.—she is gradually giving way*)

MRS. B. (*half crying*) There, there, have it your own way I only meant it for the best, Joe.

JOE. Bless your dear good heart, I know that. There—there—I'll have a talk with Alice. There—there—we won't turn out the poor lad into the streets.

GOODWIN *appears at door R., pauses.*

MRS. B. (*going, and wiping her eyes*) Oh, Joe, Joe, what a good soul you are, only—only—

JOE. Yes.

MRS. B. Only—

JOE. Well?

MRS. B. I wish you wouldn't go so often to the City.

Exit Mrs. BARLOW into shop, c. door.

JOE. Hah, she'd never do anything harsh if it came to the point, I know. She's always getting hold of some mare's nest or other; but if she knew I'd been investing my savings in a glorious concern that must yield twelve per cent., if it pays a penny, she'd flare up, and—

MRS. B. (*from shop, sharply*) Joe!

JOE. There she is. (*looks over blind into shop*) Yes, struggling with a double Gloucester. (*calls, going*) I can't have that cheese cut for less than a pound mind. It's a first-rate cheese that is and—

Goes off, talking. c. door

Enter GERALD GOODWIN, R. D., and sits in arm chair, R.—he is in the last depths of genteel shabbiness—his boots cracked, and his coat very threadbare.

GERALD. You're quite right, my good Mrs. Barlow, it's time for me to go. I ought to have vacated my highly savoury apartment before this. Heigho? I may try to laugh it off, but it's no joke being next door but one from starving after all. Nature abhors a vacuum. I perfectly agree with nature. I little thought when I used to write down in my copy book that undeniable fact, "Hunger's a sharp Thorn," that I should ever come to feel its point. Did I do rightly in quarrelling with Uncle Desborough—quitting his society—leaving India, and coming to England to seek my fortune, unaided? Well, ye-es, I think I did. It's true I threw away all chance of inheriting his money; but then as he chose to marry again, my prospects were destroyed already. There's sure to be a family, (*rises*) there always is in these cases. But one thing's quite certain—honour, common honesty even demands that I should leave this house. I'll go and see if I can find something even more moderate than my present abode.

Enter ALICE, R. D.

Good morning, Miss Barlow.

ALICE. (R.) You are surely not going out, Mr. Goodwin, it's pouring with rain.

GERALD. (L.) Is it! dear me. I assure you I've no objection to rain. I rather like rain. Rain, I believe is—a—good for the crops.

ALICE. Yes, but as you don't happen to be the crops, wouldn't it be better if you waited till it was over, or took uncle's umbrella?

GERALD. Oh dear, no, thank you. (*aside*) I might be able to stand the rain, but I couldn't survive Mr. Barlow's umbrella. (*aloud*) As you say, I think it would be better to postpone going out for the present. (*puts down hat*) I was only going out to seek some other apartments. I—I am going to leave here. (*uncomfortably*)

ALICE, (R., *suddenly*) Oh, (*a slight pause*) I'm so sorry, if there's anything—not exactly—

GERALD. (L.) Pray don't misunderstand me. I must speak out, and I can do so better to you than to any one else here. I—I am uncommonly poor, and I don't see any prospect at present of obtaining a living, and so I'm—I'm going away.

ALICE. But it appears so strange—you seem so clever, and to know so much, and yet—

GERALD. And yet I can't get any employment, that's what you mean. Exactly.

ALICE. Don't mind my being frank. I assure you I take an int— (*stops abruptly*)

GERALD. Mind your being frank! it's most kind of you to listen to my selfish complainings. It's a great relief to have some one to confide in. You were going to say—

ALICE. (R.) Well, one would imagine that a perfect gentleman—

GERALD. (L.) My dear Alice—I beg your pardon—Miss Barlow, it's astonishing in these cases how difficult “a perfect gentleman” always finds it to gain his bread. Now there's that Pennythorne, a monster of vulgarity—

ALICE. (*with fervour*) So I say.

GERALD. (*aside*) That's hearty.

ALICE. And yet he will come continually, when he knows his attentions are nauseous to me.

GERALD. (*surprised*) Attentions? You don't mean to say he presumes to—

ALICE. He does though, and it's breaking my heart.

GERALD. (*aside*) What's this? How is it that I feel a sudden longing to seize Pennythorne by the collar and shake the life out of him? (*with concentrated rage*) I—I—a—I wonder if it's left off raining. (*just turning up a little*)

ALICE. But it's absurd of my mentioning my troubles to you.

GERALD. On the contrary, after the generous interest you have shewn for my impoverished condition, it would be strange indeed if I didn't exhibit some sympathy for your troubles. Confide in me—tell me all about it.

ALICE. Well, though he must perceive that his attentions are unwelcome, he persecutes me—

GERALD. Persecutes you, Alice—excuse me, I'm carried away by my feelings, and I can't call you Barlow. If the scoundrel dare—

ALICE. Oh, hush! hush! they'll hear you and—

GERALD. You to be sacrificed to such a fellow. You, who Oh, Alice if I had enough to support a wife, I'd—

ALICE. Gracious! What—

GERALD. I can't go without saying it, but I'll be off directly I've done. I'm a poor devil and I'm growing fonder of you every day. I've no business to think of you—still less to tell you that I do. But I can't help it. I love you, Alice, and—(*ALICE turns away*) There, there, of course you're offended. I know it's wrong of me. Perhaps if I'd been able to say this under happier circumstances you might have—but as

it is, it's absurd, of course. Good bye. Shake hands, and forget what I've said. I'm very, very sorry I've offended you.

ALICE. Offended me.

GERALD. What—not vexed with me? Give me your hand, then (*holding his hand out—she takes it.*)

ALICE. It's yours to keep, if you like.

GERALD. Oh, you blessed girl! (*clasps her in his arms.*)

JOE BARLOW *enters from shop, unperceived, and looks at them in dismay.*

GERALD. I'm the happiest man in the world, Alice! No more idling, no more complaining, I will get something to do. I shall have some one to work for now, for look you, Alice, I'll never ask your uncle's consent, until I can do so without a blush. I'll not take you from a comfortable home to share my wretched lot.

ALICE. We can wait, Gerald.

GERALD. Then, when I have a fitting home to take you to, I'll come and ask you of him, and not till then. You shall not begin your wedded life by feeling ashamed of your husband, Alice.

JOE. (*coming a little down*) He—hem! (*ALICE breaks away from him, and rushes into her uncle's arms.*)

ALICE. (R.) Oh, forgive us, Uncle Joe.

JOE. (C.) Forgive you, my child, what for? I've heard what you've said, Mr. Goodwin, you've spoken like an honest man, and there's my hand, sir. (*GERALD grasps it*) You are a gentleman. Don't think too lightly of the old tradesman's daughter, because you've won her young heart so easily. She's fit to marry an emperor. You'll find respectable employment yet, my lad, and you're both young enough to wait ever so long, and—(*bringing them a little forward*) I—a—I wouldn't say anything about it at present to Mrs. Barlow. (*turns up*)

GERALD. I must lose no time now, Alice.

PENNY. (*without*) All right, I'll find her.

JOE. Hallo, here's Pennythorne, as usual.

Enter MR. PENNYTHORNE, he is dressed in a sporting style and is in sufferably snobbish in his general appearance and manner, L. D. ALICE sits, arm chair, R.

JOE. Morning, morning.

PENNY. Holloa, quite a family party, eh! Morning, Miss Alice. (*takes off his hat, bows*) How are you? (*very curtly to GERALD—aside*) Alice looks flushed. Been having a row here, its evident. Hang this fellow, he's always here, he's reg'larly laid on like the gas. (*aloud*) Well, young gentleman, and how's the world been using you?

GERALD. Much the same as they say you use your horses, badly enough.

JOE. Ha, ha, ha! So they do, Pennythorne, that's a fact.

PENNY. (L. C., *mockingly*) Ha, ha, ha! people had better mind their own business, that is when they've got any business. So many fellers one sees about haven't got any business; it's almost a wonder how they manage to live, ain't it, Mr. Goodwins?

GERALD. Goodwin, not Goodwins, Mr. Pennythorne. Don't mix me up with the sands of that name, pray.

PENNY. (*to JOE*) Do you hear that? Pretty insolence! Mix him up with the sands—that's a dig at your moist sugar. Why don't you kick him out? Where's your pride?

JOE. I'm not in the habit of kicking people out of my house; but I—a—(*looking significantly*) don't know what I might do in certain cases. (*aside*) He'd be a nice son-in-law he would.

Exit, C. D.

PENNY. (L., *turns and sees ALICE and GERALD talking, up R., aside.*)

That looks pretty—old Barlow's in his second childhood, to have this fellow about the place.

GERALD. Pennythorne, has it left off raining?

PENNY. Yes, *Mister* Goodwin, it has. (*aside*) Ain't got much on to spoil I should say.

GERALD. Charming as your society is, I fear I must tear myself away.

PENNY. (*aside*) If he tears himself much more he'll come to pieces. (*to* GERALD) Don't apologize: my coming here needn't detain you. (GERALD shakes hands with ALICE, who rises)

GERALD. On the contrary, that's what sends me out. (*aside to* PENNYTHORNE) Make yourself agreeable when I'm away. (PENNYTHORNE grins horribly at being chaffed) You'll find it difficult, but persevere. Good morning. (*seizing his hand and wringing it*) Don't indulge in your usual highflown intellectual conversation; bring yourself down to her level. (*wrings his hand again*) Bless you, my dear sir, bless you! (*Exit at door, L. C.*)

(ALICE sits in easy chair, R. and works.)

PENNY. (*aside*) That fellow's a lunatic. The sooner that chap's off the premises the better.

ALICE. Ah, you don't like him, do you?

PENNY. (*aside*) Well, he's not my sort.

ALICE. No, that he certainly is not.

PENNY. I don't like your clever spoken people, with nothing to back it up. Ready wit's rubbish—ready money's what I respect. You can't get on without money, but you can do very well without being overloaded with brains.

ALICE (R.) You've done very well I believe?

PENNY. (L., leans on ALICE'S chair) Yes, I have, Miss Alice;—I can write my cheque for a tidy sum any day in the week. But I ain't selfish, I'll share it all with the girl of my 'art.

ALICE. Oh, she'll be a happy woman.

PENNY. I've a nice house—top windows overlooking as pleasant a stable yard as you'd wish to see. When the hay comes in fresh of a Monday, it smells quite rooral. I've got as nice a trap—

ALICE. Trap—yes,—baited with—

PENNY. You don't bait carriages, you bait 'orses. (*aside*) What innocence for the Boro'. (*aloud*) Yes, Miss Alice, I've every comfort, every comfort except one, Miss Alice. (*ogles her*)

ALICE. (*aside*) If he looks at me in that way, I shall laugh in his face. I know I shall.

PENNY. When the labors of the day are over, there's no domestic comfort for *me*. No one to welcome me home, except old Jane, and old Jane, though well meaning, has fits about the 'ouse, which is horrible. So I'm drove from my fireside to the parlor of the Blue Lion and there I try to drown it in the bowl. But, Alice, there is some feelings as refuses to be drowned. (*getting close to her*)

ALICE. (*aside*) Oh, this is dreadful. (*rising*)

PENNY. What's the use of beating about the bush? You must have noticed my frequent visits, my languishing looks, my continual sighs, my pining condition. Alice, I love you.

ALICE. Oh, Mr. Pennythorne!

PENNY. It ain't a bad offer. You shall have the best fly whenever you want it, and old Tom Blower, when he's clean shaved, looks like a reg'lar gentleman's coachman. You shall have your pick of the 'orses and there's a little room, without a chimley, looking on to the stables, as shall be fitted up as a boodwor, all to yourself. Add to these the devotion of a faithful 'art, and what more can you desire?

ALICE. Oh, a great deal more, Mr. Pennythorne.

PENNY. Only name it, and I lay it—if procurable, at your feet. Is it jewelry?

ALICE. Mr. Pennythorne, I am greatly flattered by your offer.

PENNY. Name it not, most adorable of your sex. Your path shall be one of roses. Of course I mean as a figure of speech, for roses in our livery yard would be out of place: but still—

ALICE. I appreciate your motives, and thank you, but—

PENNY. Don't say "but"—

ALICE. But I cannot accept your offer.

PENNY. (*suddenly dropping the insinuating*) Why not?

ALICE. I have said I thank you for your kindness, and can only repeat that I cannot accept your hand.

PENNY. You won't, eh?

ALICE. I cannot.

PENNY. Somebody else has—

ALICE. Pray do not continue the subject (*crossing, L.*)

PENNY. (R.) You're flinging away such a chance as you won't get again. Don't be a fool, Alice, (*crossing, R.*)

ALICE. (L.) Mr. Pennythorne, you forget yourself. (*crossing, R.*) Never mention this subject to me again. *Exit, R. door.*

PENNY. (*going up*) You're a fine proud madam, *you are*; a nice haughty aristocratic knock-me-down air *you've* got. Yes, and I like you all the better for it. (*coming down*) I hate your patient docile animals; give me a brute, with a bit of temper, and there's some pleasure in fighting with it, and breaking it, and getting the best of it. And I'll get the best of you, my pretty filly, or I'm much mistaken—She's no lover, I've watched her closely, and I should have known it if she had. Old Barlow keeps no company. I'm young, pretty well off, not so bad-looking, but she won't have me. And yet some folks talk about women equalling us in intellect.

FLUKER. (*heard within shop*) Thank you—thank you very much, but I want to speak to him alone. Thank you—thank you very much.

FLUKER, *a prim little elderly man with a fussy manner, puts his head in then enters door C.*

Yes, he is here, all right. (*closes the door*)

PENNY. (*aside*) Who's this party? (*turns up, R.—FLUKER looks at him through glasses admiringly*)

FLUK. (*down L.*) Ha! Quite ignorant of the event which has so altered his immediate prospects. "Alas! how heedless of their fate the little creatures play." Hem! scarcely an apt quotation perhaps, as in this instance the little creature is *not* playing. (*goes to L., before fire*)

PENNY. (*aside*) Awkward situation—why don't some one come? (FLUKER *goes up to back, coming down, L.*) Take a chair, sir? (*gives arm chair, R.*)

FLUK. (*blandly*) Thank you—thank you very much! (*goes round chair to C.*) Fine day!

PENNY. (*down, L.*) Was raining.

FLUK. (L. C.) Quite right, it was; but not now—*was* raining—is fine. Ha! ha! ha!

PENNY. Who is he, I wonder? (*leaning against mantel piece*)

FLUK. (L. C.—*aside*) There's no mistaking the likeness. There's no object in breaking the news too suddenly; I'll draw him out, and observe his character—it's my way. (*sits and indicates that he wishes PENNYTHORNE to sit too—both seated—to PENNYTHORNE, after looking round*) This is a strange world, sir.

PENNY. (L. C.) You'll excuse me, but you don't consider that an original remark, do you?

FLUK. (R. C.) Ha! ha! ha! Very good! very well put. No, it is far from original. But then what is original, would you be kind enough to inform me now?

PENNY. Well——

FLUK. Thank you, thank you very much.

PENNY. My ostler, Tom Blower, he's original.

FLUK. Ha! ha! just so, just so! very well put! Haven't the honour of Mr. Blower's acquaintance, but take your word for it. (*aside*) Just his uncle's droll way. It runs in the family—runs in the family.

PENNY. (*aside*) I don't feel altogether easy with this party.

FLUK. You'll excuse a stranger but one who I trust is not long to remain so. (*bowing*)

PENNY. (*bows*) Oh.

FLUK. Yes; thank you—thank you very much. You'll excuse me I repeat, if I congratulate you upon the calling you appear to have adopted on being thrown upon an unsympathetic world.

PENNY. (*aside*) What's he driving at? Thrown upon an unsympathetic world! I was never thrown but once in my life, and that was upon Barnes Common.

FLUK. Ha! ha! ha! (*aside*) The same vein of humour as his uncle's. (*aloud*) I mean you seem to have fallen on your legs

PENNY. No I didn't; anything but.

FLUK. You appear to have turned your equine tastes to account; still for a man of your family——

PENNY. Bless you, I've no family; I'm a bachelor.

FLUK. Yes, yes, of course—ha, ha! (*aside*) He's dreadfully livery-stablish in his appearance; but, poor fellow, what could he do? (*aloud*) But it's a long lane that has no turning, my dear sir, and brighter days are in store for us.

PENNY. What, for you and me?

FLUK. No, not for me—for you; quite right to be particular—business-like in the extreme.

PENNY. Now look here—I'm a plain man,

FLUK. You are, you are. Very well put.

PENNY. Then come to the point please.

FLUK. (*after looking round mysteriously and touching his heart*) Excuse me; but all right there—the heart you know?

PENNY. I'm as good-hearted as my neighbors.

FLUK. Not what I mean exactly. You don't suffer from palpitation? You can bear a sudden announcement, I suppose?

PENNY. This is horrid!

FLUK. For I have a communication to make to you of the most overwhelming importance. You—a—(*gets nearer to him*)

PENNY. Yes—speak up.

FLUK. You—a—

PENNY. Well?

FLUK. You had an uncle!

PENNY. (*sits back and stares*) What of it?

FLUK. I was his lawyer. He is no more. I can scarcely expect you to exhibit much grief, since you are, in consequence of the sad occurrence, the possessor of a gigantic fortune.

PENNY. (*gasping*) A gigantic——

FLUK. (*rapidly*) One hundred thousand pounds!

PENNY. (*after looking round bewildered, rises, grasps the back of his chair, and gasps*) Say it again!

FLUK. (*pleasantly and slowly*) One hundred thousand pounds

PENNY. Phew! some mistake may——

FLUK. Our firm doesn't make mistakes, my dear sir. (*sits back, with glasses raised, watching PENNYTHORNE with a bland smile*)

PENNY (*crossing R.*) Me, with a hundred thousand pounds. It was always a question who old Ben Pennythorne, who made a fortune in Australia, sheep farming, would leave his money to. Hooray! A hundred thousand pounds! I'll sell the blessed business. (*crosses R.*) Send Tom Blower to the right about. I'll become a gentleman; it'll give me a good deal of trouble, but I'll do it. (*crossing L.*) I'll marry a regular thorough-bred aristocratic female. A high stepper—I'll—I'll—(FLUKER *rises*) I say, this isn't some practical joke? (*almost tearfully*) It's no confounded cruel lark?

FLUK. (R.) Our firm never larks, sir.

PENNY. Ha! ha! ha! (*shakes FLUKER and turns him round to R., crosses R., and walks up and down excitedly*) A hundred thousand pounds! I knew it. (*crosses L.*) Another always said I should be a rich man; but I must let 'em all know my good luck. Here Joe Barlow! Mrs. B.? Alice! here, all of you, here, hi! What'll bring 'em?—Here, shop—That'll do it. (*shakes FLUKER again and throws himself on sofa. R.*)

FLUK. (*looking at him through his eyeglasses admiringly*) Delightful! He scorns to disguise his joy—excitable and impetuous—like his uncle—charming, charming! PENNYTHORNE *throws himself on sofa and kicks over basket*

Enter JOE and MRS. BARLOW, C.

JOE. (R.) What's the matter? what's up now?

PENNY. (C.) A hundred thousand pounds, that's "What's the matter." Where's Alice?

Enter ALICE, R. door, she comes down R.

Here, I say, a hundred thousand pounds, you know. Ha! ha! (*dances, then sinks into a chair*)

Enter ARABELLA and JANE, C. door, down L.

JOE. He's off his poor 'ead.

MRS. B. (L.) You'd better fetch a doctor, Joe.

PENNY. (*crossing, L.*) Here, Arabella Plover, Jane Pell—the more the merrier—I say, girls, I'm worth a hundred thousand pounds.

ARAB. and JANE. Law!

Enter SHOPBOY, C. door, down R. corner.

PENNY. (*crossing, R.*) Law—yes! I should think it is law—ain't it Fluker? (*digging him in the ribs*) Here, Tommy. (*to SHOPBOY*) Come here, sir. You've always been very civil to me—I've come into a hundred thousand pounds—here's a penny for you.

Enter GERALD, C. door, stands, L. C.

PENNY. (R. C.) Ha! ha! here, you sir, I don't bear malice, you know. I've come into a fortune, but I ain't proud—there—there's my hand, Goodwin.

FLUK. R. C., (*starting violently*) What! Goodwin? Gerald Goodwin—ain't you Mr. Goodwin?

PENNY. (R.) No!

GERALD. (L. C.) I am Gerald Goodwin most certainly. I don't think any one would care to dispute my claim to that unenviable appellation.

FLUK. (R. C. *horrified*) Oh, my dear sir, (*to PENNYTHORNE*) I've made an awful mistake. They told me I should find Mr. Goodwin here; I thought at the first glance that you resembled the late lamented. *He* was short—you were short—he was ugly—you were ugly. It's not you at all—it's you, my dear sir. (*to GERALD*) Your uncle, Mr. Desborough,

is no more, and *you* have come into the hundred thousand pounds. I congratulate you, my dear sir—warmly, warmly!

(JOE and MRS. BARLOW *turn to* GERALD, *grasping each a hand*)

JOE. Congratulate you.

MRS. B. Congratulate you.

ARAB. and JANE. (also *taking his hand*) Con- } (together)
gratulate you, Mr. Goodwin, I'm sure.

FLUK. Congratulate you, indeed.

(MRS. BARLOW and JOE and FLUKER *crowd round* GERALD, *who appears overcome*—PENNYTHORNE *after looking on in stupid amazement, falls into the SHOPBOY'S arms*—ALICE, *a little way apart and in front, looks with an expression of anxiety and distrust at GERALD, as the Curtain descends slowly*—the group surrounding GERALD *congratulate him loudly*)

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE.—A Room in the House of Gerald Goodwin, furnished most elegantly; doors, R. and L.; bay window, R. C.; two easy chairs, R. C.; sofa, L.

PYEFINCH *discovered at table, R. C., putting away breakfast things on to a tray.*

PYEF. Two o'clock. (*looking at his watch*) Master's good for another four hours at least, then I suppose he'll come home and dress—then club—then opera—then grilled bones—then cards, and then far away in the dim future, bed. (*sings*)

There was a party as came from Flanders,
And his complexion it was very fair;
His eyes they sparkled like two salamanders,
And bright and curly was his 'ead of 'air.

This 'andsome party as came from Flanders,
Of his complexion took tremenjous care;
He was took quite sudden with the yaller jarnders,
And his complexion isn't what it were.

Master goes it he does. Not much putting by with *him*, quite right too; for my part, I consider a party as puts by unworthy the name of a man.

PENNYTHORNE *appears at door, L.*

Ah! you there, Mr. Pennythorne? Horntray, mon nammy—Hontra!
Enter PENNYTHORNE, door, L.

PENNY. (L.) Why can't you say "come in." You're so fond of them French phrases—I hate foreigners, I think they come of a bad stock

PYEF. (R.) Ah, you're prejudiced.

PENNY. I should be precious sorry if I wasn't. I'm a Briton, I am! Did you ever see a Frenchman ride?

PYEF. Often.

PENNY. Well, then, how can you respect 'em? Then look at their cookery—what ain't grease is vinegar! I never tried but one French dinner, and I shall never forget it—give me a good honest English beefsteak as lets you know he's there! (*striking his chest*—PENNY-THORNE *crossing*, L.) Look, here's a guinea's worth of swimming in the yead with a foreign name to it. Now, if that was translated it would be dear at two-and-six.

PYEF. Ha! ha! *a party de four grar* at two-and-six.

PENNY. What's a *party de four grar*? Enough for a party of four?

PYEF. No—no! Party's the genteel word for Patty.

PENNY. Is it? I always thought the genteel name for Patty was Martha. Been having a spread, I suppose!

PYEF. No—only Major Blackshaw to breakfast. Him and master are as thick as—

PENNY. Go on, finish the simile. Thieves ain't a pleasant word; but perhaps it's appropriate.

PYEF. Nothing of the kind! The Major's a man of substance, and if you want to speculate you can't do better than invest in anything you see his name to—I have done so with my small savings—sub rosy, of course.

PENNY. Well, nice hours your master keeps—he's out I know, for I sent his 'orse round, the bay stepper, an hour ago. I wanted to recommend him a chesnut mare as is to be had for a mere song. If he sees her he'll buy her, safe as the bank.

PYEF. And what's your notion of a mere song, now?

PENNY. Oh, somewhere between two hundred and thirty.

PYEF. Two hundred and thirty pounds a mere song! I should call that a hintire hopra!

PENNY. When you see it, burst out into rapture; and if your master and me come to terms, I shall be proud to hand you over a fiver. He'll buy it! Oh, you know the old proverb, "Set a beggar on horseback," and setterer.

PYEF. Don't see how it applies, though.

PENNY. (*confidentially*) Bless you, it's not so long ago that your master was hard up—shabbiest chap you ever see—used to live at a cheese and candle shop.

PYEF. I know; Mr. Barlow's a relative of mine.

PENNY. Doose he is!

PYEF. Yes; married a distant relation of mine from Shropshire. When I called in to see him, and described my new master, I thought as Alice would—(*breaks down*.)

PENNY. (R.—*fiercely*) What? Go on!

PYEF. (L.) Look here, Mr. Pennythorne, don't address me as if I was an 'ors—just as if you wanted me to "come over!"

PENNY. (*milder*) Ah, go on, you can tell me; I'm a friend of the family.

PYEF. (*aside*) Happy family! Well, she turned pale and trembled, and then she grew scarlet, and so says I—

PENNY. Spoons, says you—eh?

PYEF. What a man you are to see into a party's mind!

PENNY. Go on, old fellow—go on.

PYEF. Well, dropping in occasional of an evening, and smoking a pipe with Mr. Barlow, I soon began to see it all. Why she's never tired of asking questions about him. It's my belief she'd never leave off talking about him—never.

PENNY. Wouldn't she, though—a pretty jilted, soft-hearted thing!

PYEF. Well, I've a soft heart myself, and when she begged and prayed me to let her come here some morning when master was out, and have a peep at the place he lives in, I hadn't the courage to refuse her.

PENNY. Hadn't you, though? Very kind and nice of you—very (*aside*) Thick-headed fool!

PYEF. I thought it might be some small comfort to her, poor girl; and I've been in love myself once.

PENNY. Only once?

PYEF. Yes, and was cruelly thrown over.

PENNY. Ah! you look it.

PYEF. And it's my belief poor thing, she's pining away.

PENNY. Bah! people don't pine away in the Boro. No, they bow their neck to misfortune, and—take a beershop.

PYEF. Ah! then you don't believe in romance?

PENNY. Romance!—no. I put my money on a 'orse of that name once, but he broke down at the corner. I'd have sooner backed "Matter-o'-Fact;" he was a plain looking brute, but he won easy. (*aside, as PYEFINCII goes up*) I was right about Alice, she cared for him after all, and she loves him more than ever. Well, he's rich so that's natural. And he threw her over—that's natural. And she won't have anything to say to me—that's natural,—No, damn it! that's not natural. Well, I'm of—(*goes up R., putting on his gloves, and comes down L.*) just going to see Mr. Fluker—I employ him now. Pyefinch, by the way, you were talking about your savings; you don't happen to have a few hundreds you'd like to lend on good security? because I know a party who wants money.

PYEF. Ah, everybody knows *him*. No, I haven't at present; I've been spec'latin' a little on 'ouse property lately. There was three little cottages as caught my eye at 'Olloway, and so I—

PENNY. Oh, all right! don't trouble yourself to explain. (*aside*) Me hard up, and everything here actually reeking of ready money! The very vallet going out and collaring of cottages! I'm boiling over with annoyance, and I must distract my mind somehow. I know—I'll go home and blow up old Tom Blower—he's sixty-eight and asmatrical—and it'll do me good. If he ain't in the way, I'll go over to the Boro' and blow up old Barlow; and if he ain't in the way, damnny! I shall blow up myself. *Exit, door L.*

PYEF. (*turning to the table*) Pleasant fellow that—deal of the milk of human kindness there. He's the sort of party as would sell up his father smilin'. (*sings*).

This wretched party as came from Flanders,
Who lost his former complexion rare,
Heloped to Hingia with Heliza Saunders,
Who lived close by to Canonbury Square.

I'm glad he's gone, though; for if that poor disappointed gal was to come when he was here, there might be words.

Enter ALICE, leaning on JOE'S arm, L. door.

JOE. You would come, my dear—you would come. There was no keeping you from it. I think it's very silly of you when a fellow be-

haves like a—(ALICE *looks at him*) Well, there, I don't say anything against him; he's got a conscience. People with a hundred thousand pounds even have consciences I believe; and that'll talk to him harder than I could.

ALICE. (*crossing, c.*) You're sure he's out for a long time?

PYEF. (R.) Yes, or I'd never have consented to your coming here. As it is, I tremble in my shoes.

JOE. (L.) Ah! and very comfortable shoes they are to tremble in, John Pyefinch. There, my dear, you've had your wish.

ALICE. I wished to see the place he lived in dear uncle! When I go away I can picture the whole scene: see him in his handsome rooms surrounded by his friends, who all love him so: see him with his face lighted up with happiness—hear his ringing laugh, his cheery voice, it was a foolish fancy, but it's only for this once, uncle Joe—only this once. (*sinks on to a chair, c.*)

JOE. (*aside*) I do not understand women; I've been married forty year come May, and know nothing about 'em—they're what my Sunday paper calls a terra hincognito.

PYEF. Quite agreed with you as regards terror. (*crossing, c.*)

JOE. They're like spaniels, John, the harsher you are to 'em, the more fond they grow of you. It was a mistake his saying he loved her—he knew she was coming into a tidy property, and as he was hard up, why—

ALICE. (*rising*) Don't speak like that of him—I am sure he loved me—it is not fair to think he could marry one in my humble station—it would disgrace him amongst his friends, who are people of his own class.

JOE. (C) Not many of 'em, I hope, for the sake of society.

ALICE. Besides I should be so out of place as the wife of a rich gentleman; people would look down upon me and laugh at my ignorant ways,

JOE. (C) Ignorant of what! Ignorant of pretence and sham, and fine Frenchified airs.

ALICE. Oh, uncle, you wrong him—you do, indeed! You speak of *your* pride, that pride I share, and though I am not ashamed to tell you that I love him still, I shall remember what is due to you, and to myself. (*sits, R.*)

PYEF. (*down, L.*) Ah! Ill-assorted matches are dreadful things. When I was in the service of old Mrs. Wigsby, Oriental widow, in Bruton Street, with a lac of rupees and one tooth, I might have made a splendid marriage, for the old par-y's life was one long ogle; but "No," I says, "Pyefinch," I says, "better is penury with the girl of your affections, than the silken lap of luxury when sentiments and sets of teeth do not assimilate.

JOE. Well, I don't often come into this neighbourhood so I'll take the opportunity of going to see my old friend Ned Lomax in Princes Street; he's in the oil and colour line is Ned, and going on wonderful. I shall be back soon, Ally, my dear. (*going—aside to PYEFINCH*) Come along, and leave her alone a bit, John—she'll have a reg'lar good cry, and come back to the Boro' quite refreshed. Come along!

Exit PYEFINCH and JOE, door L.

ALICE. (*looking after JOE, and leaning on chair*) Kind, dear good uncle Joe; no sudden access of wealth would have changed *your* simple honest nature. Fortune may smile or frown on *you*; but rich or poor *you* would be the same, I know. But, Gerald, should *I* have acted so? And yet, compared with him, I was actually rich; but he never knew it when he asked me to be his wife. They cannot accuse him of *that* at all events. (*walks down*) It was my own fault, I should have told

him all—have placed the money in his hands, and bid him use it for the best. "You shall not begin your wedded life by feeling ashamed of your husband." Those were his words, and he meant them. Oh, money, money! how I hate its very name!

Enter PYEFINCH, rapidly, down L.

PYEF. Here's master coming down the street with Major Blackshaw. Whatever is to be done?

ALICE. Oh, let me go—let me go! (*rising and going, L*)

PYEF (*stopping her*) Oh, but he's hurrying along, so you're sure to meet him.

ALICE. Anything rather than that. What shall I do? What shall I do?

PYEF. What shall you do? What shall I do? What does he mean by coming back unexpected, and taking a party unawares? There he is on the stairs.

ALICE. (*in alarm*) Oh, why did I ever come? Why did I ever come?

GERALD. (*without L.*) On the contrary, my dear fellow, I'm only too glad I met you.

ALICE. (*tremblingly, and greatly agitated*) Put me somewhere, anywhere. I'd rather die than meet him here.

PYEF. There, there—go in there. They'll go soon.

ALICE hurries into room, R.

PYEF. (*his back to door*) This'll be a warning to me: perhaps a month's warning. Oh, woman—woman! it's my opinion—

Enter GERALD, door, L—he is dressed in the first style of fashion.

GERALD. Come along, Blackshaw, what a slow fellow you are. Come along. (*puts his hat down R.*)

Enter MAJOR BLACKSHAW, door, L,

MAJOR. (*L*) Slow and sure, my dear fellow, slow and sure. If I'd been as impetuous as you, I should never have been worth a penny. (*takes off gloves and sits, looking at PYEFINCH, who is fidgetting about with his back to the door, R.*) Has your man got St. Vitus's dance.

PYEF. Certainly not, sir.

MAJOR. Can't bear fidgetty people.

GERALD. You needn't stay, Pyefinch.

PYEF. (*coming down, L.*) Beg pardon, sir—thought you might want—

MAJOR. Not at present,

PYEF. Very good, sir, (*aside*) The cold water that's running down my back, would float a hiron clad. *Exit door L.*

MAJOR. Besides those stairs are no joke, they're contrived to test people's tendency to palpitation of the heart I should say, like those at the insurance offices.

GERALD. (*R.*) Now, Blackshaw. don't talk shop. It's an extraordinary thing, you never can drop that British and Foreign National Australasian, what is it Company of yours. I can never master the title; what is it for the thousand and oneth time?

MAJOR. Ha, never mind the title, my volatile young friend; it's sufficient for you that you are to be a director. Have a weed?

GERALD. Not at present, thanks.

MAJOR. Should. (*lights cigar*) Smoking steadies the nerves. What would life be without smoke? a dreary blank. *Apropos* of blank, my generally vivacious friend, you don't seem in your usual spirits.

GERALD. Oh, yes, I am, Blackshaw—it's only your fancy.

MAJOR. "Fancy?" Don't deal in the article; leave that sort of

thing to poets, who're all inspired idiots. One of 'em—is'nt it Shakespeare? says, "what's in a name?" He never started a company; unless it was a theatrical one!

GERALD. You profess great reverence for titles, Blackshaw—yet I never see your name at any fashionable gatherings. I should have thought now—

MAJOR. Should you? My young friend, you're new to this sort of thing—I'm not—socially swells bore me—late hours would interfere with business. Business before everything! By the way, you're still of the same mind about the Brittanic and Australasian—of course a few thousands will be a trifle to you. Money makes money, and I shall be able to introduce you to a dozen good things.

GERALD. Oh! I'm in your hands, Blackshaw, and when I get the money—

MAJOR. Ah, Fluker's is a horrid dilatory firm—meanwhile look on me as your banker.

GERALD. Thanks, Blackshaw—I'm deeply in your debt as it is. (*hangs his head dejectedly.*) ✓

MAJOR. (*after looking at him*) You'll excuse me making the remark, but what deuced bad company you are.

GERALD. I know it—bad company for my friends, worse for myself.

MAJOR. Liver.

GERALD. No! no!

MAJOR. Heart perhaps.

GERALD. (*sighing*) That's nearer.

MAJOR. Bad for a man of business. Never fell in love myself—never had time. Excuse me, but are the symptoms always of this depressing nature? I thought Cupid was rather a lively card.

GERALD. I wish I could make light of it, Blackshaw, but I can't. It's very hard to feel that one's a scoundrel!

MAJOR. I suppose it is—I never was a scoundrel myself—never had time.

GERALD. I wish I could say as much!

MAJOR. A scoundrel with a hundred thousand pounds. The thing's impossible. (*aside*) Wants to confide. Young people always do. (*aloud*) You're getting misanthropical. You're too well off. You're suffering from an effusion of affluence on the brain. You've got too much money.

GERALD. (*with passion*) Money—what can money do?

MAJOR. What can't it do, you mean.

GERALD. It can't bring back a man's peace of mind. It can never wipe out the memory of a wicked deed, (*comes closer and becomes more intense*) Blackshaw, when I hadn't a shilling I loved a girl as well and purely as a man could love. I little thought how mean and selfish would that love become, when money came and made a coward of me. Half blind—half mad—I could not hear the voice of honour, it was drowned in the rustle of the notes, and the rattle of the gold; and when the short and feverish dream was over, I woke to find myself with conscience as my grim companion. By night and day it is beside me, taunting me with the recollection of a mean and wretched act. Blackshaw, you talk of money, why man, I'd give every penny I possess to own once more the honest heart I had six months ago.

MAJOR. (*aside*) Very violent symptoms indeed; violent remedies alone are effectual in such cases. (*aloud*) You should get away for a bit; should buy a yacht and do the Mediterranean, or an alpenstock, and go in for mountains. There's rather a run upon Norway, just now. Why not try Iceland? (*aside*) That would cool him.

GERALD. No, I've seen enough of the world—too much.

MAJOR. I presume she was in a humble station!

GERALD. Yes, she was.

MAJOR. (*aside*) They generally are. (*aloud*) A regular case of affection on both sides, eh!

GERALD. She loved me when I was poor.

MAJOR. (*aside*) That was weak. (*aloud*) And you love her still?

GERALD. Better than my life!

MAJOR. (*aside*) He's very young. (*aloud*) You see in your position you can afford to do almost anything—but marry.

GERALD. (*laughs sneeringly*)

MAJOR. Never married myself—never had time. In society you'll find yourself a sort of social target, with everybody aiming at your gold. But you musn't think of marrying.

GERALD. I do not think of it.

MAJOR. That's right. (*hitching chair towards GERALD*) Now, we're men of the world.

GERALD. I'm afraid we are.

MAJOR. You must cast aside all this second-hand chivalry. It's all very well in plays and novels, but it don't do in real life. You've a career before you, and musn't be clogged with a wife. Time enough to think of that in ten years. After all it isn't doing these sort of people a kindness by marrying them. She'd have been out of her element. If your conscience pricks you, and you can't help thinking about her, make her a handson: allowance, and—

GERALD. (*turning towards him*) And what?

MAJOR. Make a lady of her, but not Mrs. Goodwin.

GERALD. (*turning fiercely upon him and seizing him*) Scoundrel! Recall those words! Recall them, Blackshaw, or I'll—

MAJOR. Take your hands off me, you impetuous fool, are you mad?

Enter ALICE, R. door, comes down, R.

GERALD. Unsay them, or I'll shake the life out of you.

MAJOR. Hands off! or I'll—(*goes up, L. C.*)

ALICE. (*coming down*) Help! Gerald! (*she pauses awkwardly*) (MAJOR who has been about to grapple with GERALD, after a pause, bows to

ALICE, and with a look of amazement goes up, R.)

GERALD. Alice! you here.

ALICE. Forgive me. I—I—will never come again. It was foolish and wrong of me. I beg your pardon, Gerald—Mr. Goodwin.

GERALD. (*about to approach her*) Alice.

ALICE. (*proudly*) We are strangers now: may you be happy

GERALD. (*bitterly*) Happy!

ALICE. (R.) We shall never meet again! It was through my own willful folly that we have met now. You cannot regret it more than I do.

GERALD. (C.) I do not regret it, Alice, since it gives me an opportunity of asking your pardon very—very humbly for my conduct—with that pardon grant me one word of hope.

ALICE. You seem to forget that your friend is present. Farewell! (*going*)

SIR RUMSEY. (*heard without*) Ha! ha! capital—capital!

CHARK. (*without*) Ha! ha! not bad I think!

ALICE. (*distressed*) Oh, why did I ever come!

MAJOR. A pleasant affair, this.

Enter PYEFINCH, L. drops down, L.

PYEF. (*announcing*) Sir Rumsey Waters, and Mr. Charker! (*seeing ALICE*) Oh, the murder's out!

Enter SIR RUMSEY WATERS and CHARKER, L., they pause on seeing ALICE.

SIR RUM. Hem, Charker, I'm afraid we're—

CHARK. Yes, Sir Rumsey, I'm afraid we are. Doosid fine girl! (*they go up, L.*)

GERALD. Alice—Miss Barlow—permit me to see you—

Enter JOE, door, L.

JOE. No, thankee—I'll do that!

ALICE. Uncle! (*rushing to him, and hiding her face from the others*)

MAJOR. (R. C., to SIR RUMSEY and CHARKER) Rather unpleasant imbroglio—I shouldn't advise you to joke him about it. (*retires up, L. C. with CHARKER and SIR RUMSEY*)

JOE. (*aside*) I'll break every bone in John Pyefinch's skin for telling us there wouldn't be not a soul here till the evening. This will be a warning to you, Ally, my child. You would come, and a nice mess you've made of it.

GERALD. (R) Mr. Barlow, I am greatly to blame; but not in this instance, believe me.

JOE. Bah! Come, Ally.

ALICE. Uncle, don't part with him in anger. Surely he is free to act as he pleases. You would forgive him if you had heard how he defended my good name against one who would have sullied it.

JOE. Who's that?—where is he? I'll let him see.

(MAJOR makes a slight movement up stage.)

ALICE. No, no, it was only wild and heedless talk, which I had no right to hear, but he would not brook it. Don't part from him in anger, uncle Joe.

JOE. Anger! Ha!

GERALD. Won't you shake hands with me?

JOE. No, sir. I am a very humble common sort of man, but I don't shake hands with *everybody*. You've seen the last of us, sir. We shall never darken your door again. (*softening a little*). I thought I could read a face as easy as a printed book; I fancied I read yours correct. I was wrong, Ally was wrong, and she'll come to know it some day. (*puts his arm around her*). At first it's a little hard for her, perhaps, but she'll summon up courage. (ALICE sobs). You've gone your way—we'll go ours. Good morning, and good bye. (*leads ALICE away, she makes a movement as if to speak to GERALD, but JOE touches her arm, and she exits with a half smothered sob—after a pause*)

SIR R. (*coming down, R., with CHARKER*). I say, I suppose we may speak now. Have you got nothing to offer us, Goodwin?

CHARK. Ha! ha! right, Sir Rumsey.

GERALD. Pardon me, gent'emen, I am ashamed to have detained you. (*aside*) I'll stifle this maudlin sentiment. (*with forced gaiety*). We're all fools some time or other, eh, Waters?

SIR R. Proud and happy to say I've been one myself. Eh, Charker?

CHARK. Not the least doubt of it. (*they go up, R.*)

GERALD. (*to MAJOR*) Blackshaw, forgive my recent outburst of virtuous indignation. I was half mad for the moment.

MAJOR. (L.) You were. Perhaps you'll take advantage of a lucid interval to order in something sparkling—Pyefinch!

Enter PYEFINCH, door, L.

PYEF. Sir.

MAJOR. Something sparkling, sir.

PYEF. Something sparkling? Yes, sir. *Mr. Fluker!* (SIR RUMSEY, CHARKER, and BLACKSHAW sit at table, R. C.)

Enter FLUKER, door L., fussily.

FLUK. Ha, quite a gathering, I declare. Sir Rumsey—you here and Charker too? Bless my soul! quite a gathering—ha, ha, ha! Looks like a board meeting, doesn't it, Blackshaw? Goodwin, my dear sir, I see the mail's arrived, and we shall be able to settle everything at once, I hope.

SIR R. (*up, R. C.*) Hang your law business, let's be jolly. (*sits at table, R.*) He-e, Pyefinch, you villain, be continually bringing intoxicating fluids until you're told to stop, sir.

PYEF. Yes, Sir Rumsey. (*aside*). And there's that poor gal in a dead faint in the house-keeper's room. Oh, this afternoon'll turn my 'air grey!

SIR R. What's this—champagne? bah! only fit for women and fools! Sauterne—ugh! Got any brandy? nothing like it for the nerves.

GERALD. Aye, brandy!

MAJOR. Help yourself—you want it. (*pushes decanter to him.*)

CHARK. Well, for my part—I'm a nobody, and I confess Clicquot's good enough for me. (*GERALD fills and drinks.*)

FLUK. Ha, ha, ha! very well put, Charker, very well put.

MAJOR. What do you say to dining at Greenwich to-day—It'll do us all good?

SIR R. Well thought of, Major. What do you say, Goodwin?

GERALD. (*excited*). With all my heart.

MAJOR. (*rising, with an important manner*). All those who are in favor of this proposition will be pleased to hold up their hands. (*business*) Ha, ha! carried unanimously. (*they rattle their glasses and turn with their backs to Audience, talking together*)

PENNYTHORNE appears at door, L., and beckons FLUKER.

PENNY. (*in a fierce whisper*). Come here, come here!

FLUK. (*in the act of raising to lips*) Bless my heart, Mr. Pen—

PENNY. Hush! come here, I tell you—noose, noose!

FLUK. (*aside*) Noose! Oh, hang it! *Exit, D L., unnoticed.*

SIR R. A capital notion—you always are tumbling over capital notions—the "British and Australasian" was *your* notion, major, and a deuced good one too.

GERALD. Now, Sir Rumsey, drop the "Company." Don't let's have the skeleton at the banquet. By-the-by, talking of skeletons, where's Fluker? (*turning round a little*)

MAJOR. Sneaked home, depend upon it. He shied at the Trafalgar—a close-fisted old hunk! Like the knights of old, "a stirrup cup, and then to hors!"

GERALD. Bumpers, my boys; remember I'm host to-day.

SIR R. and MAJOR. No, no!

GERALD. But I insist, sir. Confound it! don't cross my humor.

SIR R. The Trafalgar by all means. The old room, Blackshaw—the snug one with the bay window.

MAJOR. Yes. 'Twas in Trafalgar Bay! Ha, ha, ha! (*they all laugh*) During the laughter, re-enter FLUKER, very pale and greatly agitated—he advances towards GERALD, touches him on the shoulder—GERALD turns towards him—PENNYTHORNE appears watching the scene at door)

FLUK. Mr.—Mr. Goodwin—

GERALD. Bad habit that of tapping people on the shoulder, Fluker—thought I was arrested. What's the matter?

MAJOR. Ha, ha! You arrested with your wealth, that's a grand idea.

FLUK. Just come aside a moment. Pshaw! (*wipes his brow with his handkerchief, much agitated, and goes down with GERALD*)

MAJOR. Take care. Goodwin; avoid consultations with our friend there; there's six-and-eightpence in his every syllable.

FLUK. (*to GERALD*) My dear sir, bear it—bear it like a man. Life's made up of disappointments—bitter disappointments!

GERALD. (*seriously*) Well, sir?

FLUK. The hundred thousand pounds—

GERALD. Yes. (*the GUESTS who have risen and come down a little, R., begin to listen*)

FLUK. We thought the evidence of your uncle's death would prove indisputable. This mail was to bring ample proofs, so that everything might have been concluded; but it hasn't brought anything of the kind—on the contrary it's brought—

GERALD. Well?

FLUK. Your uncle himself. (*pause*)

GERALD. You—you are certain of this?

PENNY. (*at door, L.*) I am, for I've seen him.

GERALD. You, sir?

PENNY. Yes, *me*, sir. I was at Mr. Fluker's office on business, when Mr. Desborough walked in, all alive, oh; and a pretty rage he's in about people killing him when he only had a jungle fever. He used pretty strong language about you, and said—

GERALD. Enough, sir. (*PENNYTHORNE retires up, L.—GUESTS crowd round him*) And so the bubble's burst! (*sits, R. C., with his head in his hands*)

FLUK. Don't take it to heart, my dear sir—don't tak it to heart.

MAJOR. Hem! Goodwin this is horrible! (*coming down*) How about my numerous advances?

FLUK. (*aside*) My numerous advances too. And the bills you've run up on the strength of the money. Oh, this is awful!

CHARK. (*coming down, R.*) And by gad, sir, I introduced him to my tailor.

SIR R. (*down, L.*) And I thought I was doing Dregs, the wine merchant, a good turn when I told him not to think of sending in his bill to him—the impostor!

PENNY. And there's a tidy sum owing to me too, for horses' keep; and my friends, Tippen and Burns, of Long Acre, they've been let in nicely. Him a ordering a mail pheeaton, and a brougham, and a patent dog cart on a new principle, and then never paying for them.

SIR R. That's not at all a new principle, my friend.

MAJOR. Fluker, you've behaved like a lunatic! How dare you allow your friends to be let in like this? How dare you, sir?

FLUK. Damme, sir—don't lully me. We all know why *you* lent him money.

MAJOR. Do you dare to insinuate—

FLUK. Do you dare to raise your hand threateningly to me, sir? (*snaps his fingers at the MAJOR, then turns from him indignantly, with his hands under his coat tails*)

SIR R. Come! come! come! This is disgraceful!

FLUK. Then how dare he—

MAJOR. What does he mean by—(*retires up, c.*)

PENNY. Oh! it's downright abominable! reg'lar robbery! Swindler! impostor! (*crosses, R. C.*)

PYEF. (*without*) No, no, you musn't.

ALICE. (*without*) Let me pass, I say! I will see—I will speak to him
(*at the sound of her voice GERALD appears struck with shame*)

PENNY. Alice here. What's the meaning of this?

Enter ALICE and JOE, door L.

JOE. Ally! Ally! my dear.

ALICE. What's this I hear? Tell me—tell me, some one. (*looking round*)

PENNY. Mr. Goodwin here's no more right to the hundred thousand pounds than I have. His uncle's alive, and here he's been a flinging money about as didn't belong to him, a getting into debt, and me and the rest of the creditors won't get a copper.

ALICE. (L. c.) Mr. Goodwin—Gerald, is this true?

GERALD. (R. c) Yes, every word.

ALICE. And you will be disgraced, imprisoned perhaps—Oh! how much does it all come to—all that he has to make good?

MAJOR. (*back, R.*) Three or four thousand pounds, if it's a penny.

ALICE. Uncle Joe, you are well off—and my money comes to more than that. Gerald, I have enough to clear you. He shall have it every shilling!

JOE. (L.) No, no! you don't know what you are saying—You don't know what you are doing! (*half aside to her*) You haven't got the money,

ALICE. Yes, my father left it you in trust for me, and he shall have it.

JOE. But I tell you it's go—(*stops suddenly*)

GERALD. (c., *seated*) Spare your words, Sir, I have not yet fallen so low as to accept money from the woman I have wronged.

ALICE. (L. c., *to JOE*) You hear him—he rejects my offer; he never thought of money when he said he loved me. Look at him, uncle Joe—deserted and despised by the friends who so recently fawned upon, and flattered him. There is not one amongst them who would move a step to save him from contempt and misery; you stood aloof from him when he was rich; now that he is poor, despised, a ruined man—oh, uncle Joe, won't you—*won't you give him your hand now?* (*JOE gives his hand to GERALD, who clasps it with his head bowed—ALICE with a convulsive sob falls upon her uncle's breast, L.*)

GUESTS *grouped,*
R.

GERALD.

JOE.

ALICE.
L.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE.—*Same as Act I.*

MRS. BARLOW *seated at accounts, back at table, R, c.*—JOE *paceing the stage*—JANE and ARABELLA *seated, R.*

JOE. (L.) Bah! Parcel of women. Love! Fiddlesticks! no such thing as love after eighteen—very well for school girls; sensible women think of a home, and a comfortable future. Love in a cottage is pretty enough to talk about, but it don't pay.

JANE. (L.) Oh, you know you don't mean it, Mr. Barlow! There isn't a warmer hearted man in the Boro' than you, I know. Is there, Arabella?

ARAB. (R.) That there isn't, Jane dear.

JOE. Nothing of the kind—I'm not good-hearted. If ever I have been I'm not going to be so any more. It don't pay, Jane Plover, it don't pay. (*during this he is pacing stage*)

JANE. Who was it but you who advised me not to have anything to do with young Rawkins, the cornchandler, who kept his gig, and was quite the gentleman? Who was it but you who told me he'd come to no good, and that I'd better marry a poor man, if honest, and industrious, than all the cornchandlers in the world? Yes, and when I said no, and he married Jenny, didn't the wheel come off the gig only the very next week, and pitch on his head and poor Jenny's a widow, and me, still in the market; and you to say you haven't a good heart too. Why it's quite rich, Mr. Barlow.

MRS. B. (*at table at back, r.*) That's right; give it him, girls, he deserves all he gets, every bit. (*a little soured*)

JOE. (*stopping*) There, there, my own flesh and blood a revolting against me. Go on, go on; I can bear it, my back's broad enough. (*paces again*)

JANE. Then look at the way you took that young man Goodwin by the hand, when he hadn't a friend, and him to turn round like an ungrateful fellow and despise—

JOE. (*turning sharply*) Hold your tongue—hold your tongue, Jane Plover—an I don't talk about things you don't understand.

JANE. Well, I'm sure, Arabella.

ARAB. I think we're *dee tro*, Jane dear.

MRS. B. Oh, don't be surprised, my dears, he's just as rude to me He's a changed man is my husband. Don't look for any civility from him.

JANE. (*offended*) We don't, mum.

MRS. B. Look at him, he's as different as possible from what he was a year ago—he's always got a scowl on his face and a cross word for every one. Why, bless my heart! he don't even comb his hair as he used to. (*JOE's hair is stubby, rough, and uncomfortable*) —

JOE. You leave my hair alone, Mrs. Barlow; if it is untidy it's my own.

MRS. B. That's a hint to me, dear, which if I am drove to a front it's my misfortune, and not my fault, coming as I do, of a bald family.

JANE. Of course, and no *man* would throw it in your face.

JOE. Ha, ha! I am not a man, I am a monster.

ARAB. Many a true word spoken in jest, Mr. Barlow. Come, Jane dear, let's continue our prommynade.

JOE. Ha, ha! prommynade! Gals don't take a walk now—they prommynade. Ha, ha! (*the GIRLS go towards door*)

JANE. Good morning, Mrs. Barlow.

ARAB. Good morning—good morning, Mr. Barlow, and may your temper improve.

JANE. Not likely, I'm sure.

ARAB. Far from it.

MRS. B. Good morning, we all have our trials.

JOE. There—there, continue your prommynard. *Hally vous ong—hally vous ong.* (*the GIRLS go of, MRS. B. looking at JOE, and JOE looking at her.*)

MRS. B. (*her arms akimbo*) Well, sir?

JOE. (*ditto*) Well, inum?

MRS. B. P'raps you'll inform me how long this is to last?

JOE. Well I should say about a week, at the end of which time—enter the brokers, off goes the goods, and down comes the curtain: that's the pro-grame

MRS. B. And then ?

JOE. Then there's nothing for us but to walk.

MRS. B. Walk !

JOE. Or, if you prefer it, *prommynard*. What's done can't be undone. (MRS. B. *sits and rocks her chair in grief, R*) There—there you are at it again ; can't you sit still and look ruin in the face like a sensible woman.

MRS. B. Oh, Joe—Joe! to think it should come to this after all these years. If you'd only confided in your wife, instead of taking the advice of a parcel of adventurers, this would never have happened.

JOE. That's right—revile me when all I did, I fancied was for the best. Alice don't say a word against me, though she might have me up as a robber if she chose.

MRS. B. (*frightened*) Oh, Joe, don't talk like that !

JOE. It's true—wasn't the money left to me in trust for her, with the understanding it was to be invested in certain securities—and didn't I go and put it all into a concern as was only a swindle after all ?

MRS. B. (*with fervour*) With your own, Joe—your own went with it, recollect that—you've lost every shilling as well as she.

JOE. Well, that ain't any consolation !

MRS. B. Oh yes, it is, Joe, oh yes it is. (*determinedly*)

JOE. I could have bore this, if it had only been us, but to think my Ally—the best girl that ever breathed should have lost every penny.

MRS. B. What do you mean ? She's young and got the world before her. If she was willing to give up her money to one who treated her like Gerald Goodwin, I hope she don't grudge it to her own uncle, who nursed her in his arms when she was an infant and who always loved her so, and treated her so well. If her father did leave her some money, who helped him to make it but you ? Didn't you do all you could for him when he hadn't a friend ?—besides, she can marry somebody with money, which you can't.

JOE. (*aside*) That's very well put.

MRS. B. And she's going to, like a sensible girl.

JOE. (*sighs heavily*) Ah !

MRS. B. What's that for ? I know you're going to begin your old complaints against Mr. Pennythorne ! Mr. Pennythorne's behaved like a man of honour ! He didn't go tumbling into a sham fortune and cry off—no, he's been a friend throughout, and more so than ever of late.

JOE. (*aside*) Ah, if he knew my awful position !

MRS. B. And though he knew all about Alice's fondness for another, he's renewed his proposals like a gentleman—Alice must marry him of course ?

JOE. Well, he has stuck to his colors, that's certain, and he's always saying he despises money, too, which is lucky ; but still when I think of his marrying my Ally—

MRS. B. Oh ! you must put your feelings in your pocket, Joe.

JOE. Well, as I've got nothing else to put there, I 'spose I must. Now I'll be off and see Ned Louax—perhaps he can lend me a hand till things right themselves a bit. There's generally some fragments of the worst wreck, and if I could but keep afloat for a few months we might carry on. Five and twenty years ago I lent Ned eighty pound—wonder if he remembers it now. He's got a country house, and keeps his carriage.

MRS. B. Then he don't remember it.

JOE. Mrs. Barlow, I wouldn't have such an opinion of human nature as you've got, not to be made the Emperor of Russia—and that's saying a good deal for a tallow chandler. (*going to door, c.*)

MRS. B. Well, good-bye, Joe—wish you luck, old man—hope your friend Ned'll send you home in his carriage.

JOE. Oh—oh, you—you Mackyvelli!

Exit, door, c.

MRS. B. Mackyvelli, indeed! I wonder who *she* was. Ned Lomax lend any one a shilling, that's not likely. He was always a hard-hearted fellow was Lomax, even when he was a young man, and hearts are like Dutch cheeses, the older they grow, the harder they get. However, to give the what's his-name his due, I will say Mr. Fluker—

FLUK. (*putting his head in door*) Might I—a—

MRS. B. (*starting*) Law, Mr. Fluker! what a turn you gave me, sir. Talk of the old gentleman, and—

FLUK. (*L., pleasantly*) And a lawyer appears. Ha! ha! thank you—thank you very much. (*comes down, and looks through his glasses very mysteriously.*)

MRS. B. (*R., aside*) I'm not over fond of lawyers. I don't feel quite easy. Perhaps he's come on disagreeable business.

FLUK. Hem! Mrs. Barlow—is a—Mr. Barlow in?

MRS. B. No, he's not. (*aside*) Don't like this manner. He's trying to ogle I do believe.

FLUK. You'll excuse this visit I'm sure.

MRS. B. (*in a downright way*) Yes; if it's on business.

FLUK. Very well put. Hem, no; it isn't exactly on business. (*looking at her with his head on one side*)

MRS. B. (*aside*) What can he mean? I'm all of a tremble.

FLUK. Mrs. Barlow, you'll pardon my putting the question, but are you partial to foreigners?

MRS. B. (*looking at him*) 'Ate 'em.

FLUK. (*smiling*) No, no, no.

MRS. B. But I do. Mr. Pennythorne's opinions and mine on the subject are identical.

FLUK. Now, Mrs. Barlow, I've a proposal to make to you.

MRS. B. Go on, sir, but don't forget I'm a married woman.

FLUK. Oh, you are, you are—very much so. But—a—perhaps I'd better call him in. Have I your permission to call him in?

MRS. B. Call who in?

FLUK. The Count. Count, would you step this way.

MRS. B. Oh, Joe wouldn't allow this, if he was at home.

Enter the COUNT (MAJOR, disguised).

FLUK. Mrs. Barlow, this is Count Grawbouski. Hem! Count Grawbouski, Mrs. Barlow. (*the COUNT shrugs his shoulders and bows, Mrs. BARLOW gives a sort of half courtesy, half bob, confused and rather irritated*)

FLUK. Look at that noble wreck. (*MRS. BARLOW looks a little contemptuously at the COUNT, who strikes an attitude, R.*) Mrs. Barlow, that man is indeed a patriot.

MRS. B. I never knew but one patriot, and he took away father's boots. But what do you want me to do?

FLUK. To come to the point, Mrs. Barlow, you have a two pair back—don't deny it, madam, for I see it in your eye. I have a distinct remembrance too of it's being let to Mr. Goodwin. It is not elaborately furnished, Count; but conscious virtue can sleep anywhere. (*COUNT shrugs his shoulders, and expresses his acquiescence in pantomime.*)

MRS. B. Bless the man, what's he doing? Can't he speak English?

COUNT. (*with a shrug*) Leetel.

FLUK. Leetle, Mrs. Barlow, leetle. Understand me, ma'am, that I am responsible for the Count's rent.

MRS. B. But what makes you bring him here of all places?

FLUK. I will not deny, ma'am, the Count is at present under a politi-

cal cloud. He wishes his whereabouts to be a secret. It would be as well, perhaps, if you called him—say Brown.

MRS. B. What, Count Brown?

FLUK. No, no, with the magnanimity of true greatness, the Count will undertake to waive his title for the present.

MRS. B. (*aside*) Well, it's wrong to refuse money, especially at a time like the present. (*looking at COUNT*) He don't look as if he'd give much trouble, and Alice could talk to him in his native language. Well, I shouldn't like to be an outcast in a foreign land myself. He shall have the room. (*to FLUKER*) Well, sir, if the gentleman don't object to the room being rather small. (*COUNT shrugs his shoulders and shakes his head*)

FLUK. He is satiated with the gilded salons of the continent, Mrs. Barlow, and pines for the solitude and security of the British bedroom.

MRS. B. And don't mind the Saw Mills at the back? (*COUNT repeats action*)

FLUK. He prefers Saw Mills at the back.

MRS. B. And can put up with the smell of vinegar in the store room, just by. (*COUNT in exaggerated action expresses his utter contempt for the trifling annoyance*)

FLUK. (*proudly*) What's the odour of vinegar to a Grawbouski. Eh, Count? (*COUNT snaps his fingers contemptuously*) Oh, I think we may settle terms at once, ma'am. Would you step this way. (*moving, towards shop door*)

MRS. B. (*going, then stopping abruptly*) Wait a minute, my mind misgives me about one thing—cookery. Foreigners are so very particular.

FLUK. Make your mind quite easy, madam! I think, Count, I express your culinary sentiments, when I assure Mrs. B. that you are content with the (*with shrug and strong French accent*) Bif-tek, la chop, le sausage, (*the COUNT expresses his satisfaction at each article*) Oh yes, ma'am—plain roast and boiled.

MRS. B. Then we can make the gentleman comfortable, I've no doubt.

FLUK. Of course: step this way, ma'am! (*going door. c.*) Yes, very quiet person—yes, yes.

Exeunt MRS. BARLOW and FLUKER into shop; the COUNT watches them off, then takes off green spectacles, discovering BLACKSILAW.

MAJOR. Hang me if I could have stood it much longer—I'm not used to this masquerading—still I'm in Fluker's hands, and I can't help myself—he says I must keep out of the way, and certainly he has shewn some ingenuity in his selection of a hiding place for the unlucky Chairman of the British Australasian Joint Stock Discount and General Loan Company, who is temporarily "up a tree." I couldn't help the affair going wrong—misfortunes will happen in the best regulated companies! Pleasant to take up a newspaper, and find oneself called a defrauder of the widow and the orphan, and all because the affair turned out a mull. In the great world of speculation it's all a toss up whether you're "a man of great commercial enterprise," or "a monster in human form"—I've come into the latter category. Who's this coming in now? The figure seems familiar. He's chucking a lady customer under the chin—the figure seems very familiar. (*goes up, R.*)

Enter PENNYTHORNE, from shop.

PENNY. (*talking as he comes in*) Sorry he's out, but he won't be long I dare say! Pleasant series of misfortunes I've had, and no mistake—well, it can't go on much longer; what on earth's come to the business I don't know; and then to put all my eggs in one basket—and such a basket. It's some consolation to know I can't be worse off than I am

though ; and it's another to know that old Barlow thinks I'm well to do. The old fox thinks he's hooked a rich husband for his dainty doll of a niece. It'll astonish a few of 'em when they find out I haven't a shilling. It'll teach her a lesson too ; a stuck-up, satirical madam. I'll bring her down a peg or two. If it hadn't been for that scoundrel Blackshaw, and his precious Discount Australasian thing-a-my-gig, I could have carried on. But I'll lay my hand upon him some day, the vagabond. (*suddenly finds himself beside BLACKSHAW, who is standing perfectly still, PENNYTHORNE gives a roar of alarm, and starts back*) Now then, what do you mean by startling parties like that ?

COUNT. (R., *shrugging his shoulders*) Pardon.

PENNY. (L.) Oh, you're a foreigner, are you. I'll let him see. I haven't stayed at Bologne for the month together for nothing. Quel est votre business ? Who etes vous ? (COUNT *shakes his head*)

PENNY. What ignorant fellers foreigners are. Don't seem to know his own language.

Enter MRS. BARLOW, C. door

MRS. B. If you'll step this way, sir, I'll shew you the room. (*going towards R. door*) You'll excuse us, Mr. Pennythorne. (MRS. BARLOW, *going towards R. door, motions the COUNT to go first*)

COUNT. (*placing his hand on his heart and bowing*) Non, non. Places aux dames. (*repeats "Places aux dames," with very English accent*)

MRS. B. (*aside*) Well, I don't think much of his language.

Exit MRS. BARLOW, R. door.

COUNT. (*turning to PENNYTHORNE and bowing*) Au revoir, Monsieur Pennisornes.

PENNY. (*loftily*) Oh, tooter twor, tooter twor. (*Exit COUNT, R. door* PENNYTHORNE *takes out his book*) A nice mull I've made of my bets too ; I'd have laid my life on "Swindler," bar none, but the brute disappointed the knowing ones, and I stand to lose a little fortune ; at least I shan't *stand* to lose it, for if I can't square old Barlow, I shall be off like a shot. Three thousand pounds would set me right, and Alice has all that. (*muses over his book*)

Enter JOE BARLOW, C., door.

JOE. (*entering*) No go, old woman. Ned's abroad. Oh, you're not there. (*loudly*) Well, Pennythorne ! (*clapping him on the back—PENNYTHORNE starts and hides his book*)

PENNY. (R.) Oh, it's you. What a start you gave me. (*aside*) I'll strike whilst the iron's hot. (*turns up, R.*)

JOE. (L.) Pennythorne's my last chance—he's rich, and might assist me. I must get 'em married out of hand, and then, as he's feathered his nest well, a thousand or two will be nothing to him.

PENNY. (*sitting, R.*) I say Barlow, let's come to the point about Alice

JOE. With all my heart. (*aside, taking a chair, R.*) What do you propose ?

PENNY. Well, for my part, I hate long engagements.

JOE. So do I—so do I !

PENNY. (*aside*) He's in a good humour—it's all right (*aloud*) Some people, now, wou'd want marriage settlements and lawyer's bills, and rubbish ; but between friends—

JOE. O's, absurd absurd ! (*aside*) That would expose me at once.

PENNY. (*aside*) I couldn't settle anything.

JOE. And after all, what's money ? You're well to do, and can keep my niece like a lady ; but still—

PENNY. Yes—yes, and with Alice's trifling fortune—

JOE. He, hem, ha ! Whoever get's Alice, gets a treasure.

PENNY. (*aside*) I knew she had a tidy lump, but I daren't press him. (*aloud*) For my part I despise money—it's Ally I want not her property.

JOE. (*seizing his hand*) Pennythorne, my worthy friend, your sentiments do you honor! I don't look for a rich husband for my niece—give me an industrious steady man like yourself before all your wealthy folks.

PENNY. (*seizing him by the hand*) Joe Barlow, you're a credit to human nature! (*aside, turning off, R.*) He won't care a button when he knows everything. (*puts back chair*)

JOE. (*turning off, aside*) When I explain all to him he won't mind it a brass farden. (*puts back chair*)

Enter ALICE, door R.

JOE. Mr. Pennythorne's been speaking again about his marriage and he's determined not to wait any longer. (*ALICE starts slightly*)

PENNY. (*advancing to her*) What's the use of putting it off, we don't get any younger, Alice. (*as PENNYTHORNE speaks to her, JOE watches her, L., anxiously*) Come, I haven't behaved badly, many a thin-skinned chap would have had no more to say to a girl, after such conduct as yours; but I'm willing to overlook the past, and I ask you to be mine. It's your uncle's wish. Ain't it, Barlow? Why don't you back a party up when he's breaking down?

ALICE. (C.) Is it—is it your wish, uncle Joe?

JOE. (L., *speaking with an effort*) Yes, yes, Ally. (*aside*) I can't look her in the face. (*aloud*) If you marry him, Ally, you'll—you'll be doing your old uncle a great service, my dear.

ALICE. (R. C., *coldly*) Then it shall be as you wish.

PENNY. Hoorah!

ALICE. (*to PENNYTHORNE*) Do not hope that I could ever love you.

PENNY. (R) you'll learn to. People who know me thoroughly positively adore me. Uncle-in-law, as is to be, I'll run down to Doctors' Commons at once. Strike whilst the iron's hot. (*crossing C., almost with quiet ferocity to JOE*) Don't you let her change her mind. I won't be trifled with.

JOE. (*fiercely turning on him*) Who's going to trifle with you?

PENNY. There, there, I didn't mean it, Ta, ta, Alice, love. (*kisses his hand to her*) I shall be back soon. (*sings*) "Love was once a little boy, heigho! heigho! fal de ral la." *Exit C. door.*

JOE. (*in a fidgetty way*) Ally; you were always a good and noble girl. I've loved you like my own child, and if you really shrink from marrying him, I'll brave want—disgrace—anything rather—

ALICE. Listen to me, uncle Joe, now that we are alone; in your hearts of hearts, do you wish for this marriage?

JOE. Don't ask me in that way, Ally—I don't want you to marry Pennythorne—but—nothing else can save me from ruin.

ALICE. And you had so many friends.

JOE. The only friend we have in the world is you, Ally.

ALICE. It must be so then. I will try my best to do my duty by him, but you will be near me, dear uncle Joe. (*takes his hand*) to comfort me upon my cheerless path. I shall see you often, and hear your kind and encouraging voice. You won't leave me, uncle Joe—you won't leave me. (*clasps her arms around him*)

JOE. Don't take it to heart so, my child. I'm sure you'll be happy.

Enter GERALD, at door, L.—he is very quietly dressed.

JOE. (L. C., *who has been caressing ALICE, and stroking her hair*) Gracious! Mr. Goodwin! (*ALICE shudders*)

GERALD. (R) I beg your pardon. I fear I have called at an inopportune moment.

JOE. (L.) No, no (releases ALICE and shakes her hand, aside as if to re-assure her)

GERALD. But I heard that I should find you in, from Mr. Pennythorne, whom I met as I was coming here. (looks at ALICE, who shuns his gaze, drooping her head.)

JOE. You've found your way here at last then.

GERALD. I fear I am an unwelcome visitor even now; but I will only inflict my presence upon you for a very short time. I am about to go abroad. (ALICE, R., gives a slight start) for some years. I could not leave England without one word—(with emotion) one word of farewell. Alice. To that farewell, I may now add a deep and fervent wish for your happiness in your (slight pause) married life. I can scarcely think this match is one of your own choice, still that choice I had no right to question.

JOE. Gerald Goodwin, I'll be plain with you. My niece loved you deeply—truly. You said you loved her—you know how you behaved? Then when, with the forgiving heart of a loving woman, she offered all her little fortune to retrieve your honor, you kept away from her—forgot her.

ALICE. (touching his arm, aside) Uncle Joe!

GERALD. I never knew she had a farthing till that moment. Was it for me when I was once more a beggar to come and seek her? No! Could I, after the way in which I had treated her, come and pray to be forgiven? What would you have said then? But enough of this—Alice, farewell!

ALICE. (to JOE, aside) He never knew till then that I had money, uncle Joe. He does not know now that we are poor.

JOE. (aside) Well, well, it's best as it is—it's best as it is.

Enter Mrs. BARLOW, hurriedly, from R., in a great state of agitation.

MRS. B. Joe, Joe—oh, Joe! (sits on sofa, up R., and appears faint).

JOE. Here, fetch your aunt a glass of water, Ally. What is it, my dear?

MRS. B. No, never mind. Oh, Joe, the disgrace! the disgrace! (buries her head in her hands)

JOE. What disgrace? Speak out?

MRS. B. It's an execution, Joe—the bailiffs. Oh, to think that I should live to see this day!

JOE. (R., overcome, aside) It's come! It's come! (patting her on the back) Never mind; cheer up, old woman—it'll all come right.

MRS. B. (R. C., clasping his hand) Oh, Joe, you never told me it was as bad as this.

GERALD. (L.) Mrs. Barlow! Alice! what does all this mean?

JOE. (R.) It means that I have been a scoundrel.

ALICE. (L. C.) It means that uncle Joe has been unfortunate—very unfortunate—that we are—beggars.

GERALD. Why I have always understood—

ALICE. (L. C.) I know! I know!—you were mistaken. My money has been lost, and uncle Joe's as well.

JOE. Every penny, Gerald Goodwin, every penny; and the bailiffs a sittin' like a inkybus in the shop.

GERALD. I'm in a maze! Oh, this must not be—shall not be! Uncle Desborough, though a strange and headstrong man, has a good heart, and he shall know of this at once. He heard of your noble conduct, Alice, and he will never suffer this. (crossing, R. C.) Bear up, my kind old friend! Alice, cheer them both; and, take my word for it, this

misfortune shall be averted. (*excitedly*) Alice! Alice! I've got a thousand things to say, but I can't say them now—wait just a little; I'll soon be back. Here, get out of the way! (*pushing aside GIBBONS, who has entered, L.*)

GIBBONS. We're in no particular hurry, Mr. Barlow, and we'll wait in the shop till you're more composed. (*aside to ALICE, who has followed GERALD to door*) Tell him to bear up, miss; bless your innocent 'art, it's nothing when you're used to it. (*Exit C.*)

ALICE. Don't be cast down, uncle Joe; something assures me that Gerald can assist you through it. You saw how pained and surprised he was at the sudden discovery of your misfortune.

JOE. Ah, there was a reassuring tone about his manner, Ally, and he may be able to do something. His voice sounded cheery, old girl, and it's a pleasanter voice than—

PENNY. (*heard in shop*) All in, eh! that's all right.

JOE. A pleasanter voice than Pennythorne's.

Enter PENNYTHORNE—ALICE'S back is towards him—MRS. BARLOW'S head is in her hands, and JOE is sitting looking at the ground.

PENNY. (*L., singing*) "Oh, there's nothing half so sweet in life as love's young dream." I flew away in such a precious hurry on the wings of love, Alice, that I forgot Doctor's Commons would be shut afore I could get there; when I found how late it was, I turned back to come and spend a pleasant evening. (*sings*) "For there's nothing half so sweet in life as love's young dre"—well, you're a lively family group, you are. (*pause*) Blest if you ain't like the Chamber of Horrors at Madame two-swords. Now then, you rollicking old ile and colour-man, what's the matter?

ALICE. (*C., comes to him*) Mr. Pennythorne, since you left us just now, we have suffered a great blow.

PENNY. Who's been hittin' any of you? Only tell me—don't mind confiding in me, I'll stick by you.

JOE. (*in chair, R., aside to MRS. BARLOW*) Pennythorne says he'll stick by us. He don't care for money. He's a good fellow after all's said and done.

MRS. B. (*in arm chair*) I always said he was, but you never believed me.

PENNY. I hate your unsympathetic humbugs. Give me the heart that can feel for another. (*aside*) Some near relation popped off, I suppose.

ALICE. (*L. C.*) You see uncle Joe meant all for the best; but he has been unfortunate, very unfortunate.

PENNY. (*aside*) Unfortunate with *his* money!—these things will happen.

ALICE. He meant well, but we are all liable to mistakes, and poor uncle Joe made a great and fatal one, when he speculated beyond his means.

PENNY. (*countenance changing*) Speculated beyond his—go on, go on.

ALICE. You are his friend—his old and valued friend—you will not add to his present anguish by one unkind word—you will stand by him now that he is well nigh broken-hearted—now that he is ruined. You have always said you did not care for money. You have been prudent and lucky, and you can assist poor uncle Joe in his present trouble. (*with downcast looks*) I have often spoken to you harshly, rudely, and I ask your forgiveness—If—if—you care for me as you have always said—you will—(*looks at him*) stretch forth a generous

hand and help—(*the expression of PENNYTHORNE'S face stops her—she pauses.*)

PENNY. (*after a slight pause, in a quiet voice*) Is this real or sham? It's no get up to try me, is it?

ALICE. It is too real. We have lost every shilling, irretrievably, and are little better than beggars.

PENNY. (*still in a constrained quiet tone*) And your money?

JOE. (*at back*) Gone, Pennythorne, gone—every farthing!

PENNY. (*with his hands in his pockets, and in a loud voice*) Well, you're a nice lot! This is pretty disgraceful abominable conduct, this is. You'd have tricked me beautiful, I don't wonder at your wanting to hurry on the match; no, nor you either, with your palavering speeches, now it's no longer any good playing the high and mighty. (*ALICE is dumbfounded, and unable to speak.*)

MRS. B. Joe, I must speak.

JOE. Be quiet. (*to PENNYTHORNE*) Why you always declared you despised money.

PENNY. And you been in business for forty years and fool enough to believe me! I can't find words to express my contempt for you.

MRS. B. Joe, I will speak.

JOE. Be quiet, you silly woman, you.

PENNY. You're a parcel of swindlers altogether, pretending to have money when you haven't a shilling. Tell you what it is, Mr. Barlow, you're an impostor, that's what you are. (*approaches almost menacingly to JOE*)

ALICE. (*interposing and turning upon PENNYTHORNE*) Leave the house sir! (*pointing to door*)

PENNY. Eh!

ALICE. Leave the house, I say and never dare to set your foot in it again; yonder lies your road; take it, ere I summons those who will thrust you like a cur into the street. Go!

PENNY. (*abashed and slinking towards door*) I'm—I'm going. (*aside*) What a fury! (*to ALICE who has retired up*) Good bye, you—you hyæna—you—A nice time I should have had with you too. (*finds himself close to GIBBONS who has entered c. door*)

GIBB. I beg your pardon. Is your name Pennythorne, Livery Stable-keeper, and setterer?

PENNY. Course it is.

GIBB. Sorry for it, but I must arrest you at the suit of Slangem & Co.

PENNY. What?

JOE. (*crossing, R. C.*) Arrest him! There's some mistake. He's a wealthy man.

GIBB. Well, his creditors will be only too happy to 'ear it. He's up to his eyes in debt with all his tradesmen, his paper's everywhere, he got a bill of sale on his furniture, and won't he find a precious long list of detainers, after he's been an hour in Cursitor-street, that's all. Wealthy, why he's only been staving off people by telling 'em he was going to marry an heiress.

ALICE, (L.) Can it be possible.

JOE. (R. C. *jumping*) Why, you rascally swindler, what do you mean? Pretending to have money when you haven't a shilling. I tell you what it is, Mr Pennythorne, you're an impostor, that's what you are.

MRS. B. (R., *quietly*) Pennythorne, I always thought you were a scoundrel.

JOE. " (R. C.) Ho, ha! ho! That's good. (*to PENNYTHORNE*) Ha, ha! I don't wonder at your wanting to hurry on the match. Ha, ha! we're well rid of each other, my worthy friend. (*crosses, R.*)

PENNY. (*C., back*) That's right, trample on me. Kick a fallen tower when he's down. Lead me to your Spousing Establishment, Officer of the Sheriff, where you charge eighteen pence for a sheet of note paper and half-a-crown a day for the pen and ink. But you won't get much out of me. I don't want to play the swell at a guinea a minute, and shall go to prison, I shall feel at home *there*, so

Farewell, Barlow, till we meet,
Within the walls of Whitecross Street.

Exit PENNYTHORNE and GIBBONS.

JOE. There's a mean-spirited 'ound, a letting himself down to talk poetry.

ALICE. Never mind him, uncle Joe, he isn't worth your anger.

Enter PYEFINCH, hurriedly and out of breath, door L.

PYEF. (*down, L.*) Here, I say! Where's—where's Mr. Goodwin?

ALICE. Has anything happened?

PYEF. Anything? Ha, ha! its according to what you call anything. I should think so. But where is he?

ALICE. He left here some little time back, promising to return shortly

PYEF. I heard he was here, and master's sent me post haste after him.

Enter COUNT, door L.—he pauses abruptly on seeing PYEFINCH.

COUNT. (*aside*) Why, that's Goodwin's man—I've tumbled into pleasant quarters here. It's like everything that Fluker does, he always makes a botch of it.

JOE. I thought his uncle never wanted to see him again.

PYEF. So everybody imagined. But blood is stronger than water, and Mr. Desborough's a good sort notwithstanding his odd temper. Look at his taking me when his nephew bust up, and making me his own man. Lucky thing, too, after I'd lost all my savings in that atrocious Blackshaw's twenty per cent. paying swindle. You see Mrs. Desborough the young wife as master married in India—

ALICE. Yes.

PYEF. Well it was an ill-assorted match from the first, and Mrs. Desborough, not to put too fine a point upon it, has—

JOE. Well.

PYEF. (*L.*) He-loped. Well, you see, master is sixty-six or so, and his wife not more than twenty-four. Take twenty-four from sixty-six and what remains?

COUNT. (*aside*) Mrs. Desborough doesn't, evidently.

PYEF. (*turning to him*) I beg your pardon, what did you remark? wasn't aware that strangers was present. (*speaks aside to JOE*)

ALICE. (*down R. a little*) If they should be reconciled once more, and Gerald not go abroad but stay at home, and— but no, that can never, never be now.

Re-enter GERALD, C.

PYEF. Here he is.

GERALD. (*L. C.*) I haven't been to Harley Street, but I have seen the agent who is directed to pay my passage money and allowance; and for the present that may suffice until we can arrange matters.

PYEF. Beg pardon, sir. Letter, sir—your uncle. (*gives him letter*) Most important. Hem! most important.

GERALD. My uncle? He is not—not—

PYEF. Oh dear no, sir, more alive than ever, especially to the fact of having a nephew.

Exit L. door

GERALD. (L.) What can this mean? I feel a strange foreboding of more ill fortune, I cannot read it.

ALICE. I'll read it for you, then.

GERALD. Do, Alice. (*aside*) What further blow can fate have now in store for me?

ALICE. (*reads*) "My dear nephew Gerald,—My short delusive dream of happiness is over, and I awake to the bitter and sorrowful reality. I am alone now—alone with none to turn to but *you*, my poor wronged boy. I spurned you—you my dead sister's only child; and in my shame and grief I pray you, I implore you, to return to me. I may yet in some measure atone for the past; to do so will be the sole aim and object of my remaining years. I can write no more than this; forgive and *come to me.*" Oh, you will go to him, Gerald—you will comfort him in his bitter shame and sorrow—do not hesitate. You will overlook his past neglect—you do not know what influences may have been at work. You will forget and forgive, Gerald, and go to him at once—at once.

GERALD. Yes. (*taking her hand*) I will on one condition—it is that you go with me, Alice.

ALICE. (C.) Gerald.

GERALD. (L.) It would be mere pretence were I to feign blindness to the tenour of that letter; fortune once more smiles upon me, but it will be valueless indeed unless shared by you. I have suffered long and bitterly for my wicked folly of a year ago, you urge me to return good for evil; set me the example, Alice, and once more say that you will be my wife.

ALICE. (*looking timidly round*) Oh, dear, before everybody too.

JOE. (R. C. *turning to* MRS. BARLOW) there! what do you say to that, old lady? if that isn't your notion of nobility of soul, I should like to know your idea of what is?

MRS. B. Bless his heart; *I always loved him from the first.*

JOE. He—hem! Ally. (ALICE *goes to* JOE) Now, Ally my dear, don't beat about the bush—out with it.

ALICE. Gerald! (*giving him her hand*)

GERALD. My own love! (*embraces her*)

JOE. (*embracing* MRS. BARLOW) My blessed old Susan!

(COUNT *comes down* L. of GERALD)

COUNT. (*aside*) It's an ill wind that blows nobody good, and nothing venture nothing win. (*taps* GERALD *on the shoulder*—GERALD *turns*, COUNT *takes his arm and leads him a step or two* R., and *whispers in his ear*) I'm Blackshaw—hush! I came here to hide from my creditors, but I've tumbled into a hornet's nest. Don't believe all you hear against me. It was all Charker's doing, and I haven't had a shilling of the money—the scoundrel threw me over with the rest. I lent you a trifle once—you've got your passage money and some of your allowance in your pocket. You're on your legs again—I'm in Queer-street. Lend me the money and I'll go to Australia instead of you. Your honeymoon will be none the less happy from the knowledge that you've done a kindly turn to a poor devil down on his luck.

GERALD. (R.) You're right, Blackshaw. May you live to retrieve the errors of the past.

MAJOR. You shall not regret this generous act, Goodwin.

GERALD. You shall pay me back—when——

MAJOR. Yes——

GERALD. When you've earned it.

MAJOR. Never earned anything in my life. Never had time. (*goes up*, L.)

Enter FLUKER, door, C.

FLUK. (L. C.) Charker's captured! Captured, sir, at Dover, just on the very point of starting for the Continent, "One foot on land, and one on shore," as the poet says.

JOE. (R. C.) That feller a Count? Why I thought he was the man in possession.

FLUK. Yes, a woman was at the bottom of it all. It certainly is very remarkable that you should be here.

GERALD. (R. C.) Why?

FLUK. Well, he was always at Mr. D. sborough's—never away from the house—fishing after the hundred thousand pounds, you know; but your uncle never liked him—no, he never took your uncle—never; but he—a—yes—he—a—took your aunt.

GERALD. Impossible!

FLUK. Only as far as Dover. The creditors will get most of their money; and he's had the honesty to absolve Blackshaw—Blackshaw he declares, is as innocent as a lamb.

COUNT. (*throwing off his wig &c., dancing*) Does he? Then off, villainous disguise! "My foot's upon my native heath—my name's McGregor!"

JOE. Look here, who is he; first he's a bailiff, then he's a count, then he's McGregory. I calls him a regular Hovid's Metamorforus.

MRS. B. (R.) Joe—Joe, we've been forgetting all about our trouble.

JOE. Eh! Ah, bless me, so we have.

GERALD. (L. C.) So you shall. We'll have no talk of trouble now—a happy future lies before us all.

JOE. (R. C.) You'll never be happy with a hundred thousand pounds!

ALICE. (R. C.) Your uncle shall keep his wealth; Gerald, we shall be happy if we are not too rich. We have seen what money does, so let us be contented with a little—we'll have no grand home; you wouldn't wish your wife to feel strange and out of place—nor shall we desire to dazzle old friends with new display.

(*to Audience*) Old friends are truest, such as those we see,

Who joy with us at our prosperity;

Whose kindly cheer to us more welcome sounds,

Than even, oh, *Ten* HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS!

CURTAIN.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 458 580 A