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# THE CIGARETTE,

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IN ONE ACT,

—BY—

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AUTHOR OF "A THRILLING ITEM," ETC.

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THE CIGARETTE.

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CHARACTERS REPRESENTED.

---

REGINA VON RUREMONDE.

TCHERITA,—*A Javanise, Regina's slave, slightly copper colored, and wearing an Oriental costume.*


MAURICE DE PRENIL.

MIDDLEBOURG.

DE MONSQUET.

A SERVANT.

---

 This Comedy was first produced at the Theatre Gymnase Dramatique, Paris, France, April 20th., 1878.

---

COSTUMES—MODERN.

---

TIME OF PERFORMANCE ONE HOUR.

TMP92-008828

## The Cigarette.

SCENE I.—A Javanise Salon in a Paris apartment, elegantly furnished.  
Tcherita discovered smoking—seated on a cushion.

*Enter a servant, R. 1 E.*

*Servant.* M. Maurice de Prenil.

*Tcherita.* M. Maurice? You are mistaken, I am not the person he desires to see. It is Madam Regina von Ruremonde, your mistress and mine. Say to M. Maurice that Madam is not at home, that she is undoubtedly in the Bois de Boulogne, and he will certainly find her in one of the walks where she is accustomed to promenade.

*(exit servant, R. 1 E.—Tcherita recommences smoking)*

*Re-enter servant, R. 1 E.*

*Servant.* M. de Prenil insists. He says it is with you and not Madam that he desires to speak.

*Tcherita.* Very well, ask him to come in. *(exit servant, R. 1 E.)*

*Enter M. Maurice, R. 1 E.*

*Maurice.* Good morning Tcherita.

*Tcherita.* Good morning. If you take pleasure in smoking, you know that my mistress permits it. Sometimes she even sets us the example, by smoking herself.

*Maurice.* Yes, I know.

*Tcherita.* Only do not take one of the cigarettes, which are on the mantel piece.

*Maurice.* And why not?

*Tcherita.* Because, those cigarettes have been prepared by me according to the custom in my own country.

*Maurice.* According to the custom of Java?

*Tcherita.* Yes, the custom of Java, which exposes the persons who smoke them to some little inconveniences.

*Maurice.* *(smiling)* Ah, they die, do they not, die suffering the most intense agony—

*Tcherita.* Oh no, it is not so bad as that.

*Maurice.* What then does happen to the unhappy persons who have the imprudence to smoke one of these Javanise cigarettes?

*Tcherita.* Nothing but telling the truth, but they will tell that in spite of themselves. If they have at the bottom of their heart a secret, which they wish to conceal, it is at that secret they will commence, nothing stops them, neither prudence nor fear, they talk and talk—you do not believe me?

*Maurice.* Certainly, certainly.

*Tcherita.* You say certainly, certainly, but you do not believe me.

*Maurice.* I believe that your cigarettes are made from the leaves of dried Indian hemp, otherwise called hashish—believe that those who smoke hashish are impelled to speak a great deal, and those who talk much may tell everything even the truth. I believe that, with all my heart.

*Tcherita.* That and nothing else? Well take one of these cigarettes and your first word will be to tell me that you love my mistress.

*Maurice.* I do not need to smoke one of your cigarettes to tell you that, because it is very true that I love her as much as one can love, and that is really what discourages me.

*Tcherita.* Why does that discourage you?

*Maurice.* Because, this very day I am going to leave her, to leave her forever. I came to bid her farewell.

*Tcherita.* Farewell?

*Maurice.* Farewell to her and to you. To you first, since I find you alone. It has always seemed to me Tcherita, that you hold kindly feeling for me.

*Tcherita.* Yes, indeed. But what is that you were saying to me, you are going away?

*Maurice.* Yes.

*Tcherita.* And why are you going away?

*Maurice.* Because I must.

*Tcherita.* And why must you? We will not be satisfied with that excuse.

*Maurice.* It is now four months that I have known your mistress. In seeing me during these four months living in the same manner that she lives, she who has thirty millions, you have no doubt come to believe me rich, very rich.

*Tcherita.* I confess that I have concerned myself very little about the matter, but really if I had concerned myself about it I would have believed you rich.

*Maurice.* Well you would have been wrong. The day I met your mistress, I was on the point of departing for America. I have a cousin there who has promised to make my fortune. I was about to leave, but I saw her and in order to see her again, I postponed my departure until the next day, I postponed it again to the day after, and have continued to do so from day to day until four months have passed, four months during each of which I have spent twenty thousand francs, so that on the day I first met her I had a little more than eighty thousand.

*Tcherita.* Twenty thousand francs a month?

*Maurice.* Yes, yes. It is very expensive living in Paris at the side of the richest heiress of Botavia, at the side of a widow, whose nabob of a husband left her at his death a fortune of thirty millions. It is expensive but I do not regret my ruin—I have not quitted her during these four months, for four months I have been able to see her daily—I have been constantly at her side, have breathed her air, I have had my share in this perpetual intoxication, in which her fortune and her beauty permits her to live. It amuses her to design—she permits me to give her lessons, and that privilege has only cost me twenty thousand francs per month. But it is nothing, Tcherita, it is nothing; if instead of four months, my happiness had lasted only fifteen days, still I would not think I had any right to complain.

*Tcherita.* And now you have nothing left?

*Maurice.* Oh, I have still enough to pay my passage to go and find my cousin in America, that cousin who has promised to make my fortune.

*Tcherita.* But I thought you told me just now, that you loved my mistress—

*Maurice.* Certainly, I said so.

*Tcherita.* Then why do you not marry her instead of going away?

*Maurice.* Marry her?

*Tcherita.* Yes.

*Maurice.* (*shaking his head*) It is impossible, entirely impossible.

*Tcherita.* Many men have asked her hand. She has turned a deaf ear to all of them so that now only three suitors remain to the field, the amiable M. de Monsquet, Middlebourg the banker, and yourself—the first two, you know as well as I do, are clowns who only serve to amuse her. Here only remains then—

*Maurice.* No, *Tcherita*, no, I will not marry your mistress. In order to marry her, I would naturally have to tell her that I love her, and I would no sooner have said that, than the idea would occur to her, that it is her fortune with which I am in love. (*Tcherita moves uneasily*) If that thought would not come to her at once it certainly would some day or other. No, you see, in order for me to marry her, we must—

*Tcherita.* What must you?

*Maurice.* Well, I mean—we must exchange places, it must be for your mistress to break the ice and declare that she adores me.

*Tcherita.* Oh!

*Maurice.* And as such a declaration would be very unusual, it is decidedly better that I should depart.

*Tcherita.* You do not love my mistress.

*Maurice.* Certainly, *Tcherita*, I love her and with all my soul, but my love for her does not prevent my being an honest man, and having common sense. I have spent in her society the four happiest months of my whole life. Now, my happiness is at an end—I knew beforehand that it must end someday.

*Enter the servant, R. I E.*

*Servant.* M. Middlebourg, M. Baron de Monsquet.

*Tcherita.* (*to Maurice*) Your two rivals. I am charged with a commission for them, which will probably not make them laugh. Do you care to assist in the scene?

*Maurice.* No—I remember that your mistress needs a few little articles to complete a certain costume that she desires to wear. I am going for them.

*Tcherita.* (*showing him a door, L. I E.*) Pass out this way. Of course you will return?

*Maurice.* Certainly, I will return, I go away—I do not escape.

*Tcherita.* You will not be gone long, then?

*Maurice.* I will be back soon.

(*exit, L. I E.*)

*Tcherita.* (*to servant*) Show in those two gentlemen.

(*the servant goes out, R. I E.*)

*Enter Middlebourg and Baron de Monsquet, R. I E.*

*De Monsquet.* How do? Javanese, how do?

*Middlebourg.* How do you do?

*Tcherita.* Good morning gentlemen. Be seated I pray you, I have something to say to you on behalf of my mistress, which will please one of you.

(*they sit*)

*De Monsquet.* One of us?

*Tcherita.* Yes.

*De Monsquet.* Which one?

*Tcherita.* Ah, I do not know.

*De Monsquet.* This is annoying, for that is just the point we would desire to know.

*Tcherita.* You both love my mistress, do you not?

*De Monsquet*

and

*Middlebourg.*

} (*together*) Ah!

*Tcherita.* You both desire to marry her, do you not?

*De Monsquet.*

and

*Middlebourg.*

} (*rising with a bound*) Ah!

*Tcherita.* Well then, what I have to say to you is, that my mistress has resolved to take one of you for a husband.

*Middlebourg.* One of us?

*Tcherita.* Yes.

*Middlebourg.* Which?

*Tcherita.* Ah, I do not know.

*Middlebourg.* That is annoying for this is just the point——

*Tcherita.* Perhaps you are surprised that from among so many adorers, the choice of my mistress should have settled on you two.

*Middlebourg.* Not at all, I am not surprised, as for me——

*De Monsquet.* No more am I, Javanese, no more am I.

*Tcherita.* Her first idea you know, was never to marry again, and this she has very plainly declared to all the aspirants for her hand, young or old, rich or poor, who have not ceased to surround her since the day of her arrival in Paris. Some of them took the hint and discreetly retired. The others did not understand so easily, but they finally finished by abandoning the suit. You alone have not given up—neither rebuffs nor mortifications have succeeded in discouraging you.

*De Monsquet.* What does she say?

*Tcherita.* And your perseverance has finally touched her.

*Middlebourg.* Good enough!

*Tcherita.* Unfortunately she is not able to marry you both. It was necessary at any cost to prefer one to the other—this has appeared impossible to her.

*De Monsquet.*

and

*Middlebourg.*

} (together) Oh, but I would have thought——

*Tcherita.* Entirely impossible. Both of you by different merits have produced impressions on her heart exactly equal. She has decided therefore that the simplest way out of the dilemma was to impose a test on both of you, and marry him who came out of that test successfully.

*De Monsquet.* A test?

*Tcherita.* Yes.

*De Monsquet.* What is it?

*Tcherita.* I will tell you in a moment, and now if you will be kind enough to excuse me——

*Middlebourg.* Is it difficult, what we will have to do?

*Tcherita.* No.

*Middlebourg.* Ah, so much the better.

*Tcherita.* It is the simplest thing in the world, and yet when you have done this thing which is the simplest in the world, you will certainly have given to my mistress the greatest proof of love that a man can give to a woman.

*Middlebourg.* The greatest proof of love?

*Tcherita.* Yes.

*Middlebourg.* Do you understand De Monsquet? I certainly do not.

*De Monsquet.* No more do I.

*Tcherita.* Excuse me—I will not detain you long.

(*exit, L.*)

*De Monsquet.* This is indeed singular, for I had imagined that he who, after myself stood the greatest chance of pleasing Madam von Ruremonde, was this M. Maurice de Prenil who never leaves her side.

*Middlebourg.* My idea exactly. I thought that if she did not decide to marry me, she would without doubt marry M. Maurice.

*De Monsquet.* And now I find that you are my rival——

*Middlebourg.* Yes indeed, just as I find that you're my rival, my only rival——

*De Monsquet.* I am delighted at this discovery.

*Middlebourg.* So am I.

*De Monsquet.* Because, at last between Madam von Ruremonde and myself, there is only you——

*Middlebourg.* At last you are my only rival.



*De Monsquet.* Now I think I will have no trouble—without wishing to appear conceited at all I—

*Middlebourg.* That is just what I was about to say myself.

*De Monsquet.* There is only one thing that perplexes me, and that is this test.

*Middlebourg.* Oh yes, the test.

*De Monsquet.* What can it be?

*Middlebourg.* Something very easy, Tcherita told us.

*De Monsquet.* Yes very easy, and yet when we shall have gone through it, we will have given to her mistress the greatest proof of love that a man can give to a woman. Perhaps it has something to do with these cigarettes.

*Middlebourg.* Ah yes, these famous cigarettes, compounded by Tcherita and which compels one to tell the truth.

*De Monsquet.* I have nothing to fear from these cigarettes.

*Middlebourg.* Neither have I, I am not afraid of them.

*De Monsquet.* I will smoke one of them, I will smoke two of them, I will smoke three of them, and after each puff I will tell her it is herself and not her fortune that I love.

*Middlebourg.* I will smoke ten, I will smoke twenty, I will smoke thirty and then I will say to her that I love her fortune and not—(recovering)—no no, that is not what I wish to say.

*Enter Tcherita, L., followed by a servant — the servant carrying a platter on which are two cups and a sugar bowl.*

*De Monsquet.* At last, we are about to discover—

*Tcherita.* (to the servant) Place the platter on the little table, draw forward these two chairs—that will do. (exit servant, L.) And now, gentlemen—

*Middlebourg.* Now—

*Tcherita.* You will see, it is very simple. But first have the kindness to be seated. It is very simple I assure you, each of you take a cup, drink—and the one who is alive a quarter of an hour from now will marry my mistress within fifteen days.

*Middlebourg.* What is that you say?

*Tcherita.* You do not understand? I am not surprised at that, I speak the language of Holland passibly, but I am not at all sure of my French. I will begin again. These two cups have been prepared by me.

*De Monsquet.* By you?

*Tcherita.* Yes, by me.

*Middlebourg.* Ugh!

*Tcherita.* You will each drink the contents of one of them—

*De Monsquet.*

and

*Middlebourg.*

} Yes—

*Tcherita.* And the one that is alive a quarter of an hour hence, will marry the thirty millions of my mistress within fifteen days. Do you understand this time? Have I spoken French?

*De Monsquet.* It is not extraordinary French but it can be understood.

*Tcherita.* You see, it is very simple.

*Middlebourg.* Very simple, very simple. So in one of these cups there is —?

*Tcherita.* Yes.

*Middlebourg.* Prepared by you?

*Tcherita.* Yes—I was born at Java, you know—

*De Monsquet.* We know. And in the other cup?

*Tcherita.* There is nothing in the other cup—nothing at all.

*De Monsquet.*

and

*Middlebourg.*

} (together) Ah!

*They both rise, make a half turn around the table and find themselves De Monsquet in Middlebourg's place and Middlebourg in that of De Monsquet.*

*Tcherita.* If you prefer—

*De Monsquet.* This is funny. Just now it seemed to me that I preferred the other, and now—

*Tcherita.* You may put sugar in it if you wish.

*Middlebourg.* Hey?

*Tcherita.* I say you may use the sugar. Do I not make myself understood?

*De Monsquet.* This is a joke, confess now that it is only a little joke.

*Tcherita.* I do not know. (*a carriage is heard*) But my mistress is here and you can ask her herself.

*Middlebourg.* I would have preferred the cigarette, I would have very much preferred—

*De Monsquet.* So would I.

*Enter Regina, R. 1 E.*

*Regina.* Good day, gentlemen, good day. (*to Tcherita who relieves her of her hat, her fur trimmed cloak, etc.*) Well, it is done?

*Tcherita.* No mistress, not yet.

*Regina.* What! These gentlemen have not drank! (*to De Monsquet and Middlebourg*) You have not drank?

*Tcherita.* No, mistress.

*Regina.* You were wrong to let it cool. It is no longer worth anything.

*De Monsquet.* Ah, then when it is cold—

*Regina.* The effect is still the same—ah. Yes, there is no change in the effect. But in relish I mean, it is not good at all when it is cold, is it *Tcherita*?

*Tcherita.* It is not so good, but still it is agreeable.

(*exit L. carrying Regina's hat cloak and gloves*)

*De Monsquet.* Come, Madam, come.

*Regina.* Where is it you want me to come?

*De Monsquet.* You certainly were not serious, when you proposed that we should—

*Regina.* Certainly I was very serious. Have you not told me a hundred times, that if you ever had an opportunity, you would gladly die for me.

*Middlebourg.* I have said that, I was the one.

*De Monsquet.* Yes, it was I, I have said that.

*Regina.* Well, you have that opportunity now.

*De Monsquet.* But you did not understand. I said that I would willingly give my life to make you happy, well suppose I should take one of these two cups, and that I should not take the right one. He would marry you.

*Regina.* Without doubt.

*De Monsquet.* (*with force*) I know it, "you would not be happy?"

*Middlebourg.* That is what I was about to say, if he had not said it I should have said it. (*pointing to cups*) Suppose that I should have taken the wrong one, and that I should have—then he would be the one you would marry. So that I would have made you unhappy. I do not wish that, I do not wish that.

*Regina.* Indeed, you think that with the Baron—?

*Middlebourg.* (*in a low voice, leading Regina to one side*) The Baron, what Baron? he? come now! He has himself called the Baron de Monsquet, but he is no Baron, and his name is not De Monsquet. It is Fusil. If you marry him, you will not be the Baroness de Monsquet, you will be Madam Fusil.

*Regina.* (*with pride*) Well, but—

*De Monsquet.* (*approaching*) What is he saying to you?

*Regina.* Nothing—nothing—I assure you.

*De Monsquet.* Do not marry that man. He is a rascal. I know it is the custom at Paris to call all men that have money, rascals, but it is not in

that sense that I call him a rascal. When I tell you that he is a rascal, it is the same as saying, that he is really a rascal. If you marry him, you will be the wife of a rascal, and with your fortune, there is no necessity for that.

*Middlebourg.* (who during the last speech has examined the cups) And then, the more I think of it, the more impossible it appears. You are good at heart—Fusil will bear me witness.

*De Monsquet.* Fusil!

*Middlebourg.* No, I mean to say De Monsquet. De Monsquet will bear me witness that you are good at heart, and it is impossible that this idea, that this savage idea should have occurred to you. I am sure it is this Tcherita.

*De Monsquet.* So am I. I am sure of it.

*Middlebourg.* She was born at Java, the wretch.

*De Monsquet.* At Java, the birth place of diabolical decoctions.

*Middlebourg.* She must have seen in us, an opportunity to realize the knowledge she received from her family.

*De Monsquet.* She must have wished to place the drug which her mother—

*Regina.* It is true that this idea occurred to me, after talking with Tcherita

*Middlebourg.* You do not know to what you expose yourself. Suppose we had accepted the test.

*De Monsquet.* Suppose that, listening only to our love, we had drank the contents of these two cups.

*Middlebourg.* Suppose that one of us should have fallen there, at your feet.

*Regina.* (frightened) Oh, I beg of you.

*Middlebourg.* What then would you have done?

*Regina.* (changing her tone) I would have had him carried out.

*De Monsquet.* It would have been very kind in you to have had him carried out, but that would not have been the end of it. The matter would have been spoken of abroad, and one fine day the justice would have come to ask your account.

*Regina.* (laughing) As for that, I assure you that if the justice came to ask my account, I would have a very simple reply to give him.

*Middlebourg.* What reply would you make.

*Regina.* I would very quickly call Tcherita. (calling) Tcherita!

*Enter Tcherita, L.*

*Tcherita.* Mistress.

*Regina.* You will see how simple my reply would be. Take one of these cups, Tcherita. These gentlemen have not touched them.

*Tcherita.* Oh no, mistress I can guarantee you they have not touched them.

*Regina.* Take one of the cups, I will take the other, and we will drink together. (they drink) There.

*De Monsquet.*

and

*Middlebourg.*

} (together) Oh!

*Regina.* Decidedly, I was right, when allowed to get cold, it is not good at all.

*Middlebourg.* Madam.

*Regina.* Well, do you believe that after this, justice could ask anything more of me?

*De Monsquet.* You have been trifling with us, Madam.

*Regina.* And whose fault is it? You had only to drink and heaven only knows the embarrassment I would have been in. I would have been obliged to marry you both. But Tcherita, assured me that you would not drink.

*De Monsquet.* Ah, Tcherita, you did ?

*Tcherita.* Yes, I was sure, perfectly sure that you would not drink, and I said so.

*Middlebourg.* Very well, do as you please, Madam. And now I think the only thing left for us to do, is to yield our claims to M. Maurice de Prenil.

*Regina.* M. Maurice——

*De Monsquet.* It is not difficult to see that after having treated us in this way——

*Middlebourg.* This turn of affairs is curious to say the least—and in order to prove to you, that I bear no resentment towards you, I will give you a piece of good advice. In case you desire to marry M. Maurice de Prenil, I advise you to do it very soon—the poor boy can not wait any longer.

*De Monsquet.* He is at the end of his rope.

*Middlebourg.* He had a hundred thousand francs, but he spent it all in four months, in trying to make you believe that he was rich.

*Regina.* Trying to make me believe——

*Middlebourg.* Yes, trying to make you believe that he was rich.

*De Monsquet.* In which object, I ignore him.

*Regina.* Ah !

*Middlebourg.* That, Madam is what I had to say to you. Are you coming De Monsquet ?

*De Monsquet.* Yes my dear friend, I am coming.

*Middlebourg.* (to *Regina*) Marry M. de Prenil, madam, marry him—and I advise you—again, marry him quickly. (to *De Monsquet* in making him pass before him) Why didn't you drink ?

*De Monsquet.* It was your place to drink, I would have drank after you.  
(*exunt, R. I E.*)

*Regina.* Insolents ! (after a silence) Tcherita !

*Tcherita.* Mistress.

*Regina.* Do you think it would be possible to find in the world a woman more unhappy than I ?

*Tcherita.* That would be difficult.

*Regina.* Say impossible, Tcherita.

*Tcherita.* No. I can not say impossible, but——

*Regina.* Say impossible, I wish it, I wish you to say that it would be impossible.

*Tcherita.* (coldly) Yes, mistress. It would be impossible to find in the world a woman more unhappy than you.

*Regina.* Very good. Thus it is that I alone can never be loved. When a poor girl listens to her lover, she does not doubt, she knows that he is sincere, she knows well it is herself that he loves and not her fortune, because she has no fortune. Because my husband, because M. Van Ruremonde of Batavia has left me thirty millions I never can be, never, never, never ! When I enter any place, people say, "here comes thirty millions," and if any one is kind enough to observe that there is also a little woman there, they reply, "oh yes, it is true there is a little woman, but what is a little woman along side of thirty millions ?" Therein lies my unhappiness. And never, whatever I may do, will it be possible for me to escape it.

*Tcherita.* Oh, if you wished, there would be a very simple way.

*Regina.* (quickly) A way, a way ?

*Tcherita.* Nothing, strictly speaking, obliges you to keep that fortune. You could very easily disembarass yourself of it.

*Regina.* What do you say ?

*Tcherita.* I say, that if you wished, it would be a very easy matter to disembarass yourself.

*Regina.* Of my fortune ?

*Tcherita.* Undoubtedly !

*Regina.* (with conviction) No, indeed. The idea !

*Tcherita.* Ah!

*Regina.* What? You seriously propose to me to renounce my fortune? What you say is absurd.

*Tcherita.* It is not absurd—but I confess—

*Regina.* Certainly, it is absurd. Say that it is absurd—I want you to say it is absurd.

*Tcherita.* (*coldly*) Yes mistress, it is absurd.

*Regina.* Very well. (*silence*) *Tcherita!*

*Tcherita.* Mistress.

*Regina.* This M. Maurice, this M. Maurice de Prenil—did you hear, *Tcherita*, did you hear what those two gentlemen who have just left said of him?

*Tcherita.* Yes, mistress, I heard perfectly. They said—

*Regina.* (*violently*) It is not true, is it? These two men have basely slandered him. Tell me that they have lied.

*Tcherita.* No, mistress, they told the truth.

*Regina.* *Tcherita!*

*Tcherita.* Those two gentlemen told the truth.

*Regina.* This hundred thousand francs spent in four months in order to make me believe him rich?

*Tcherita.* It is very true that M. Maurice de Prenil has spent all he had, but it was not to make you believe that he was rich.

*Regina.* Why then?

*Tcherita.* Simply because it is expensive to live near you, mistress, and he desired to live near you as much as possible. Four months ago M. Maurice de Prenil met you for the first time. He saw you and he loved you.

*Regina.* (*ironically*) Yes, yes, I know, no one can see me without loving me. That is understood.

*Tcherita.* You are rich, fabulously rich—he was almost poor. So his first thought was to separate himself from you—to go away, but as he loved you—

*Regina.* He remained. It always happens like that. One wishes to go away but does not go. Continue, *Tcherita*, continue. He wished to go away and he remained—

*Tcherita.* I will wait, said he, I will live happily as long as I can. It will be time to depart, when I have nothing left.

*Regina.* And he spent all that belonged to him—all, all, absolutely all, for the sole pleasure of not leaving me, of seeing me every day?

*Tcherita.* Yes, mistress.

*Regina.* That is a very pretty story, and when did he relate it to you?

*Tcherita.* This very day, not an hour ago.

*Regina.* Indeed! And presently he will return, will he not? and now, that you have had time to relate to me what he has told you, now that I am prepared, he will fall at my feet, and will play his great farce out to the end.

*Tcherita.* No, madam, no, he will come presently, it is true, but he will not fall at your feet. He will tell you he is going away, that is all, he will tell you he is going away, and he will go.

*Regina.* Will he?

*Tcherita.* Yes, mistress.

*Regina.* Seriously?

*Tcherita.* Seriously.

*Regina.* And do you believe that?

*Tcherita.* Yes mistress, I believe it.

*Regina.* But this is madness—it is—say that you do not believe it. I want you to say that you do not believe it.

*Tcherita.* I cannot say that mistress, for I really do believe it.

*Regina.* He will fall at my feet, I tell you.

*Tcherita.* That is just what I advised him to do—yes, mistress, when he

was here, I advised him not to leave, and as he loved you to tell you so simply and honestly, 'no,' replied he, 'I will not tell her that, if I did, the idea would occur to her at once that it was only her fortune—'

*Regina.* Hum!

*Tcherita.* And he was not mistaken. You already have that idea. 'In order to make it possible for me to marry your mistress, it would be necessary'—but no, I cannot repeat what he said. It would make you angry.

*Regina.* Tell me, I wish you to tell me.

*Tcherita.* 'It would be necessary', he said—it was very evidently a joke. 'In order to make it possible for me to marry your mistress, our parts must be exchanged, and she herself must declare to me that she wishes to be my wife.'

*Regina.* (*excited*) I?

*Tcherita.* 'And yet' he added, 'as such a declaration would seem very unusual, so that—'

*Regina.* He said that. He dared to say—

*Tcherita.* Yes mistress.

*Regina.* (*furiously*) But why then does he not come? It is really wrong in him not to come then,— let him come.

*Enter Servant, R. 1 E.*

*Servant.* M. Maurice de Prenil.

*Regina.* Ah!

*Tcherita.* (*endeavoring to calm her*) Mistress—

*Regina.* (*to servant*) Yes, yes, show him in, show him in immediately. (*exit servant, R. 1 E.*) You shall see, Tcherita, you shall see, how well he has done to tell you all these pretty things.

*Enter Maurice, R. 1 E.*

*Maurice.* Madam!

*Regina.* (*in a brittle, irritated voice*) Is what Tcherita tells me, true, Monsieur? She tells me you are going away.

*Maurice.* Yes madam, it is true I am going.

*Regina.* You are going to America to seek your fortune?

*Maurice.* Yes madam, I have a relative, there.

*Regina.* And you are going?

*Maurice.* This very day. This evening I take the train at six o'clock for Havre, to-morrow morning I take the trans-Atlantic.

*Regina.* To-day! Can't you put it off?

*Maurice.* No, madam, it is impossible.

*Regina.* Absolutely impossible?

*Maurice.* Absolutely.

*Regina.* So you are going away, and you advise me of it at the last moment. I see how it is, you have foreseen that I should be sad, and you have wished my sadness to last a short time as possible. I thank you for it. What have you there in your hand?

*Maurice.* (*confused*) In my hand?

*Regina.* Yes. Is it improper to ask you? If it is improper—?

*Maurice.* No, madam, it is not at all improper—you desire a costume of the eighteenth century for the ball on Saturday—

*Regina.* You will not be there, at this ball?

*Maurice.* No, I will not be there, and here are some engravings, which you can make use of for your costume.

*Regina.* Thus you concern yourself about me up to the last moment, that adds still more to my regret, but as you have all your time to make your preparations, I would not pardon myself for detaining you. Adieu Monsieur.

*Maurice.* Adieu, madam.

*Regina.* Life is long, and since the discovery of steam the world is very small, we must hope to meet again some day or other.

*Maurice.* I hope that as sincerely as yourself. Adieu Tcherita, adieu madam.

*Regina.* Adieu Monsieur. (*exit Maurice, R. 1 E.*) He is gone.

*Tcherita.* Heavens! mistress, after so gracious a reception?

*Regina.* It is impossible, he will soon return.

*Tcherita.* He has crossed the yard, he is going away and does not appear at all disposed to return.

*Regina.* (*very much agitated*) Tell a servant to run after him, to bring him back, go quickly.

*Tcherita.* Yes, mistress.

(*exit, R. 1 E.*)

*Regina.* (*seated on a pile of cushions*) No, I repeat it, it is not possible to find in the world a woman more unhappy than I.

*Re-enter Tcherita, R. 1 E.*

—Tcherita?

*Tcherita.* Mistress.

*Regina.* I love him.

*Tcherita.* I know that very well, mistress.

*Regina.* I have set my heart on him, he is the one I have chosen.

*Tcherita.* I know that mistress, so does he love you, he adores you. If it were otherwise do you suppose I would have permitted—

*Regina.* He does not return. He does not wish to return.

*Tcherita.* You are mistaken, mistress, he is here.

*Enter Maurice, R. 1 E.*

*Regina.* (*very much agitated*) Monsieur—

*Maurice.* Madam—

*Regina.* (*aside to Tcherita*) What was I going to say to him?

*Tcherita.* (*aside*) Indeed I do not know.

*Regina.* Monsieur—

*Maurice.* Madam—

*Regina.* Ah! (*she rapidly unrolls the roll of engravings, which Tcherita places in her hand*) I have looked at these engravings that you have had the kindness to bring me, they are very well, there are here the elements out of which to construct a very pretty costume, but the costume itself is not here, we must have a design, you design very nicely, you—

*Maurice.* But madam, it seems to me that you too, design very nicely.

*Regina.* Oh, no, no. I draw very badly, very badly—you have told me so yourself often enough.

*Maurice.* I?

*Regina.* (*very agitated and very tender*) Certainly you have told me that, you were very merciless with me—very merciless, I have always been spoiled, when I was little I used to draw good little men, they were very ugly, but were pronounced very pretty, because I was little—later in life I have continued to draw good little men, they were still very ugly, but people continued to pronounce them pretty, because I have always been spoiled, I repeat it—it should not be forgotten, and if I design badly, you should not expect too much of me—I ought to be pardoned.

*Maurice.* (*very much agitated*) Madam.

*Regina.* Well?

*Maurice.* I am not of your opinion. I find that you design very well.

*Regina.* You say that in order not to do what I ask you. But you have time enough since you do not leave until six o'clock.

*Tcherita.* (*seated on a pile of cushions*) There is also a train at midnight.

*Maurice.* (*interested*) That is so.

*Regina.* Well then, I think that I will not wear that costume when you are gone, I will have but little heart to do so. But that makes no difference. I want this design, I want it very much.

*Maurice.* Well, I will go home and—

*Regina.* (*interested*) No, no, here. I do not want you to go away, I would rather not have you go.

*Maurice.* Madam—

*Regina.* There in that chamber, where I amuse myself in drawing, you will find crayons, colors, everything necessary. Will you be kind enough?

*Maurice.* (*warmly*) To serve you? Oh!

*Regina.* You say—

*Maurice.* (*coldly*) I go to design this costume madam, and I will try to design it well. (*exit into chamber, l. 3 r.*)

*Regina.* Do you say now that he loves me, Tcherita? It is not true, he does not love me.

*Tcherita.* Certainly mistress, he loves you.

*Regina.* Why then does he not tell me so? Did I not furnish him an opportunity? And here, a moment ago, when I spoke of my good little men, could he not understand?

*Tcherita.* I told you that he loves you, mistress, but I also told you that he will never confess it. He loves you and he will go away.

*Regina.* He will go away, you think?

*Tcherita.* I am sure of it, mistress.

*Regina.* But I do not want him to go away. I do not want it. There ought to be a way to prevent it.

*Tcherita.* Hum!

*Regina.* I wish there was one.

*Tcherita.* You might, as an experiment, try that which he has indicated himself, invert the usual custom, and tell him that you love him.

*Regina.* That I love him?

*Tcherita.* Yes.

*Regina.* It seemed to me that I just told him that a moment ago.

*Tcherita.* Oh, but perhaps not in a way that he understood you. Perhaps he desires that the statement should be made in express words.

*Regina.* In express words? That I should say to him in express words, —Do not go away, I love you?

*Tcherita.* Yes.

*Regina.* You talk nonsense. It is nonsense and then it is unbecoming, say that it is unbecoming, I wish you to say it.

*Tcherita.* Yes, mistress, it is unbecoming, but then—

*Regina.* And then has he not said that very possibly after that, the step might appear risky to him, and then—

*Tcherita.* That can be so arranged that the step will not appear risky to him at all.

*Regina.* And how is that?

*Tcherita.* How is that?

*Regina.* Tell me quickly and do not make me repeat.

*Tcherita.* Ordinarily, mistress when you return from the Bois you take a cigarette and smoke, why not to-day as you do every day, take a cigarette, one of these, see?

*Regina.* Ah! your famous cigarettes?

*Tcherita.* Yes, mistress.

*Regina.* Do you really believe in them?

*Tcherita.* Try one of them, mistress.

*Regina.* (*aside*) Yes, in that way I can say all I have to say and no one can reproach me for it. (*resolutely*) Well give me one of them, which ever you wish, it is all the same to me. (*Tcherita goes for a cigarette on the mantel*) Well!

*Tcherita.* Here it is, mistress, here it is.

*Regina.* (*seated on the sofa*) You know that I have no faith at all in your cigarettes.

*Tcherita.* We will see.

*Regina.* (*commencing to smoke*) They have an excellent flavor.



*Tcherita.* Yes, mistress, and very mild true cigarettes for a pretty woman.

*Regina.* They are excellent, but as to their power, I have not a particle of faith in that.

*Enter Maurice, from chamber with a drawing.*

*Maurice.* Here is a rough sketch, madam, and—

*Regina.* Ah! There he is.

*Tcherita.* (*aside to Regina, smiling*) At least, do not say that you detest him, madam—

*Regina.* Who knows?

*Maurice.* Here is a rough sketch, madam, and I came to ask you—(*Regina looks at the sketch laughing*) I came to ask you if this sketch—(*fresh burst of laughter from Regina, more marked—aside to Tcherita*) What is the matter with her?

*Tcherita.* My cigarettes, you understand—she has just taken one.

*Maurice.* Oh, heavens, at least there is no danger.

*Regina.* (*who during these two speeches has been looking at the design brought by Maurice*) She is curious enough, your little woman here, but surely she is not much better designed than my little men.

*Maurice.* What?

*Tcherita.* The truth, I have told you the truth.

*Regina.* So you are going away.

*Maurice.* Can a person speak to her? will she understand?

*Tcherita.* Yes, yes, she understands, but in a quarter of an hour she will not remember anything you have said to her.

*Regina.* Oh, yes I will remember it.

*Tcherita.* No mistress, you will not remember it, you will very soon become unconscious, and when you return to yourself you will have no recollection of what you have said.

*Maurice.* She will become unconscious? There is danger then, she must not—we must prevent her— (*Regina throws away her cigarette*)

*Tcherita.* Oh, she does not need to smoke anymore. The effect is produced. All that she thinks, all that she has in her heart she will now speak.

*Regina.* Yes, I will speak. So you are going away, and you are very proud of it and say to yourself, that in going away you are doing your duty as an honest man.

*Maurice.* Regina!

*Regina.* It is very curious, but I have another idea of honesty. It would seem to me, that after having for four months, allowed a woman to think that you loved her—(*after a pause*)—after winning her love in return—

*Maurice.* Regina!

*Regina.* After having accustomed her to the idea that she had there at her side assured happiness, an existence that belonged to her, it would seem to me, that honesty consisted above all in not deceiving that hope. I thought that when an honest man loved a woman, it mattered little to him, if she were poor, or even if she were rich. It appears that I have been mistaken, since you who are an honest man, think otherwise. You do not wish it to be said, that you were the first to speak. Then I must be the one to say—well be content. I love you. That is the way I ought to say it, is it not? I love you.

*Maurice.* (*on his knees*) Oh Regina, Regina!

*Regina.* It rests with you now to reply. If you do not love me, go away, go at once, but if you love me do not go, remain, remain.

*Maurice.* Regina, I am a fool, Regina, I am a wretch.

*Tcherita.* Go, go. I have told you, that very soon she will forget everything.

*Maurice.* But I repent, and I ask your pardon. I love you Regina, I adore you. (*indicating Tcherita*) She knows well, that the day I first saw you I loved you, and each day since, that I have spent near you, has added to my love.

*Tcherita.* (*aside*) How he goes on, and he says all that without a cigarette.

*Maurice.* Regina, do you not understand me? I love you. Ah, good heavens, she turns pale, she is losing consciousness.

*Tcherita.* Have no fear. Take her hand, she will return to herself, and will not remember that you have said that you love her.

*Maurice.* Then I will repeat it.

*Tcherita.* And you will do right. (*Regina opens her eyes*) Well mistress, well?

*Regina.* What has happened to me? It seems as if I had been talking, talking, talking. And then I felt very happy, but no happier than I am now, Maurice.

*Maurice.* I love you, Regina, I love you.

. Enter servant.

*Servant.* Messieurs Middlebourg and De Monsquet ask if Madam will be kind enough to receive them.

*Tcherita.* Oh yes, mistress, receive them, I am very curious to know what they have to say.

*Regina.* Ask the gentlemen to come in.

Enter Middlebourg and De Monsquet.

*De Monsquet.*  
and  
*Middlebourg.* } (*together*) Madam?

*Regina.* Good day gentlemen, good day.

*Middlebourg.* De Monsquet and I have reflected.

*De Monsquet.* I was going to say, we have reflected, Middlebourg and I, and there is a test that we ask nothing better than to accept these cigarettes prepared by Tcherita.

*Tcherita.* (*laughing*) Ah! Ah! (*goes to mantel*)

*De Monsquet.* These cigarettes which force one to speak the truth. All we ask is the privilege of smoking them before you, you will then see that we are sincere.

*Tcherita.* My mistress accepts. Here. (*giving them two cigarettes*) But I ought first to inform you that my mistress, having had the imprudence to smoke one of these cigarettes, has confessed to M. Maurice de Prenil, that she loves him, so that now the marriage is well under way.

*Middlebourg.* (*laughing*) Having had the imprudence to smoke one of these cigarettes.

*De Monsquet.* (*laughing*) One of the cigarettes that were there on the mantel?

*Tcherita.* Yes.

*Middlebourg.* (*exploding with laughter*) But they were only ordinary cigarettes.

*De Monsquet.* As we mistrusted ourselves under their influence, we took them away and put others of our own in their place.

*Maurice.* How?

*Regina.* (*smiling*) Yes, my friend, and I saw them do it. But what matters it? You have said to Tcherita, that you would remain absolutely firm.

*Maurice.* Ah, my love, how can I prove it to you. (*changing tone, enthusiastically*) Hold, I would be willing for you to be twice as rich as you are.

THE CIGARETTE.

*Regina.* (*smiling*) And you would marry me all the same?

*Maurice.* Without hesitation.

*De Monsquet.*

and

*Middlebourg.*

{ (*together*) So would we, if it comes to that, so would  
we.

*Regina.* (*to Tcherita*) You know that I have no faith whatever in your cigarettes.

*Tcherita.* And you are wrong mistress, for you see that even when others are put in their place, they compel one to tell the truth none the less.

CURTAIN.

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32	My Wife's Relations, comedietta, 1 act, by Walter Gordon.....	4 4
90	No Cure No Pay, Ethiopian farce, 1 act, by G. W. H. Griffin.....	3 1
61	Not as Deaf as He Seems, Ethiopian farce, 1 act.....	2 0
37	Not so Bad After All, comedy, 3 acts, by Wybert Reeve.....	6 5
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54	The Two T. J.'s, farce, 1 act, by Martin Beecher.....	4 2
7	The Vow of the Ormani, drama, 3 acts, by J. N. Gotthold.....	8 1
28	Thirty-three next Birthday, farce, 1 act, by M. Morton.....	4 2
108	Those Awful Boys, Ethiopian farce, 1 act, by A. Newton Field.....	5 0
63	Three Glasses a Day, temperance drama, 2 acts, W. Henri Wilkins.....	4 2
105	Through Snow and Sunshine, drama, 5 acts.....	6 4
4	Twain's Dodging, Ethiopian farce, 1 act, by A. Newton Field.....	3 1
5	When Women Weep, comedietta, 1 act, by J. N. Gotthold.....	3 2
56	Wooring Under Difficulties, farce, 1 act, by J. T. Douglass.....	4 3
41	Won at Last, comedy drama, 3 acts, by Wybert Reeve.....	7 3
70	Which will he Marry, farce, 1 act, by Thomas E. Wilks.....	2 8
58	Wrecked, temperance drama, 2 acts, by A. D. Ames.....	9 3
111	Yankee Duelist, farce, 1 act, by A. Newton Field.....	2 2



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