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DELAYS AND BLUNDERS:

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

=====
By FREDERICK REYNOLDS.

=====
J SMEDLEY'S

L O N D O N:

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1803.

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PROLOGUE.

No more for war in foreign climes we roam,
But, fearless, brave election strife at home.
Say, 'midst the thunder of the public voice,
May I present a Member for your choice?

No stranger he, but to each Voter known,
And by adopting kindness made your own.
'Twas his ambition, friends, when very young,
To serve this Borough,—he has serv'd it long:
In life your suffrage has been all his aim,
His only fortune, and his only fame.
Should you the æra not remember well,
The DRAMATIST is still alive to tell.

All Members here instructions must pursue,
And, like camelions, still must take your hue;
Adopt each change, however new or rare,
Or, like camelions, still must feed on air.
Here, by the general voice, we stand or fall,
And one proud franchise is enjoy'd by all.
Cheer us, ye tenants (*the Gallery*) of those high domi-
nions,

Ye boldest Freeholders of free opinions,
Substantial Householders (*Pit*), ah! spare our plot,
Spare us, ye generous sons of scot and lot.
And may our Poet's whim, if not his wit,
Secure a batch of plumpers in the Pit.
Whilst these fair Voters here (*Boxes*), prefer'd to man,
Give us the gentler-suffrage of the fan,
With soft seducing canvass win the soul,
Your shew of hands—and we shall head the poll.

We claim not, o'er you, a septennial right,
We ask your vote and interest for one night;
Nor call that candidate supremely vain,
So oft elected, who puts up again;
Whose constant toil (however it content you)
Has been—most faithfully to represent you.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Sir Edward Delauny	-	-	-	Mr. MURRAY.
Lieutenant St. Orme	-	-	-	Mr. SIDDONS.
Sapling	-	-	-	Mr. MUNDEN.
Henry Sapling	-	-	-	Mr. LEWIS.
Paul Postpone	-	-	-	Mr. FAWCETT.
Privilege	-	-	-	Mr. SIMMONS.
Robert Grange	-	-	-	Mr. EMERY.
Farmer Nightshade	-	-	-	Mr. THOMPSON.
Sternly	-	-	-	Mr. DAVENPORT.
Thomas	-	-	-	Mr. ATKINS.
Groom	-	-	-	Mr. ABBOT.
Landlord	-	-	-	Mr. HARLEY.
Clerk.				
Waiter.				
Gaoler.				
Servant to Sir Edward.				
Postilions:				
Mrs. Sapling	-	-	-	Mrs. MATTOCKS.
Honoria	-	-	-	Mrs. H. JOHNSTON.
Mrs. St. Orme	-	-	-	Mrs. LITCHFIELD.
Lauretta	-	-	-	Mrs. H. SIDDONS.

DELAYS AND BLUNDERS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Outside of County Gaol—Houses and Trees representing the Street in a Country Town—a Bridge in the Centre, and extensive open Country behind it—Stage partly darken'd—LAURETTA ST. ORME seen crossing the Bridge with a Basket in her Hand.*

Enter LAURETTA.

HARK! (*looking back alarmed*) it was the found of feet!—I'm watch'd—I am discover'd!—(*falls against the wing*) Oh Heavens!—my rash imprudent zeal has ruin'd all—no—(*recovering*) 'twas but fancy—nothing but the passing breeze!—and I may venture to proceed.—I know—I'm sure that he'll condemn me; but 'tis a long, long month since I have heard what passes in that dark abode—perhaps his health may suffer by confinement—perhaps his poverty denies him e'en life's common comforts—perhaps—Oh! the suspense is insupportable! and I were not the daughter that he thinks me, if I endur'd it calmly—(*knocks at the prison gate*)—I will but ask, and then again to my retreat.

GAOLER (*speaking through iron grating*).

Who's there at this time of the morning?

Lauretta. One to enquire after Mr. St. Orme.

Gaoler. St. Orme!—the prisoner confin'd for murder?

Lauretta. Ay: as 'tis said, for murder!

Gaoler. You can't see him—begone. (*retiring*.)

Lauretta. Stay sir—spare me but a moment—I will not ask to see him—I only ask that you will give him this. (*Taking a small paper parcel out of basket*.)—'tis a small present from a stranger—meant to revive and cheer him—nay:—if he be guilty, he the more needs consolation—the virtuous fly to conscience for relief—but where!—Oh! where, can such as you describe St. Orme, seek comfort or repose?—then be merciful—and in the hour of distress, you shall have your reward.

Gaoler. Well—I'll take it. (*Opens grating—takes parcel—shuts it again and exit*.)

Lauretta. Thanks—thanks!——and yet those prison gates—Oh! that they'd open wide, and once more give a father to my arms!—then should my humble talents still assist him—then would we seek again that hapless mother, who needs a husband's and a daughter's aid.—But these are idle hopes—the dreaded hour approaches!—the day of trial is at hand!—Oh spare him!—spare him Heaven!

Enter GAOLER from the gate.

Gaoler. So—instead of reviving the prisoner, your present threw him into violent agitation—and here—(*producing a letter*)—he sends you this answer.

Lauretta

Lauretta (reading it aside). “ You have done
 “ very wrong—return instantly to your retreat in
 “ the mountains; and never forget that you alone
 “ were present at the murder—that there’s no
 “ other witness to convict me; ’tis for your sake
 “ and your unfortunate mother’s that I wish to
 “ live—Conceal yourself but four days longer,
 “ and we may still meet and still be happy!”——
 Oh! let me fly to my retreat!——Tell him I
 cheerfully obey his wishes, and thank him for his
 counsel. (*GAOLER exit, and LAURETTA going up
 stage, stops on seeing it lit.*)—Ha! the morning
 breaks, and the broad glare of day will lead to my
 discovery!—unseen, to reach the mountains is im-
 possible!—weak, thoughtless girl!—to risk so
 much for selfish—momentary joy!——What’s to
 be done?——I know——hard by, there is a thick
 impervious wood—there, I’ll secrete myself till
 night, and then set forth again—and if thy safety
 rests on my concealment, fear not my father!—we
 will be happy still. [*Exit.*

*Enter STERNLY and two Servants of Sir EDWARD
 DELAUNY’S.*

Sternly. Come—bustle—to your daily occupa-
 tion lads—search every where for the witness, and
 recollect how near ’tis to the assizes.

1st Servant. We do—But when you recollect
 ’tis now five months since Sir Frederick’s death,
 and that we’ve hunted for this Miss Lauretta every
 day——

Sternly. Ay: plague on her: she got all this
 knowledge of tricks, shifts, and disguises, from
 turning stage player—but the present baronet is
 bent upon revenge, and that the trial may be pro-
 perly

perly conducted, he expects this very morning a great London Solicitor—one Mr. Postpone—fam'd for integrity and talent—and if our only evidence be not forthcoming, how can even he assist us!—so away—lose not a moment, whilst I wait his arrival at the inn. (*Servants exeunt*)—Yes: yes: I must look about me like Sir Edward, for if Mr. St. Orme don't suffer, I fancy somebody else will.

HENRY SAPLING (*without*).

There!—there, you rogues!

Sternly. Hah!—Who comes here?—Surely not the London lawyer already. (*Looks out.*) No—as I live, Mr. Henry Sapling! who has been at sea these four years—the nephew of my old neighbour.—I wonder whether he's the same unsuspecting, simple youth he us'd to be.

Enter HENRY SAPLING in a naval uniform, follow'd by two Post-boys.

Henry (his purse in his hand). There—that's for the chaise and four—and here—here's a guinea for yourselves. (*Exeunt Post-boys.*)—What, Sternly!—my old acquaintance Sternly!—why, how you stare and gape.—I dare say, now, you think this extravagant travelling.

Sternly. To be sure I do.

Henry. Well—it's very likely—but I'm just come from sea, to touch a legacy; and, between ourselves—we sailors are so unus'd to accounts and economy and—in short, I feel money such a load to me, that I see I shan't sail pleasantly till I've chuck'd, it all overboard.—But, I say—how's nunky?

Sternly.

Sternly. Oh—quite a new man since you saw him.—Why 'tis but a fortnight ago, he married Sir Edward's cousin.

Henry. Married is he?—Thank Fortune!—So am not I, Master Steward.

Sternly. Why thank Fortune?—I think I could recommend a wife to you, Mr. Sapling.

Henry. Whose wife?—Not nunky's, I hope.

Sternly. No—his ward—the lovely Miss Honoria, who was brought up with you.

Henry. Psha—don't talk of it—she's a charming creature!—but a wife!—do you know, Sternly, in all the storms and battles I've encounter'd, that was my consolation—says I—“never mind—blow on, my boys!—you're nothing to the gales of matrimony.”—No—give me quiet—independence—liberty—give me Lady Sensitive.

Sternly. Lady Sensitive!—Who's Lady Sensitive?

Henry. Mum—say nothing—met her at the Opera—pick'd up her fan—handed her to her low chariot—receiv'd her card—call'd next morning—neat house in Mary-le-bone—green blinds—flower-pots—singing birds—black boys—white liveries—and she and her maid so fashionably dress'd, that, upon my honour, all their clothes put together only weigh'd two ounces, three scruples.

Sternly. Psha—this is a trick—she'll lead you into dissipation.

Henry. No—she'll make me domestic—she's so fond of me, that if perchance I dine at the coffee-house, she sends me twenty messages before the cloth's remov'd—and if I don't return at the moment she expects me—poor soul! she goes into a fit!—yes, she does—I find her screaming, and the whole house swimming with hartshorn, laudanum,
and

and cordials—there's tendernefs!—there's love for you!

Sternly. Love with a vengeance!—but pray—about the load?—(*pointing to the pocket*). Don't she help you chuck some of it overboard?

Henry. No—there's the worst of her—she's so proud, and so disinterested, that, except now and then allowing me to pay her coachmaker, and her upholsterer, and her milliner.—Oh, yes;—she carries it so far, that t'other day, when her humanity threw her into a spunging house, she didn't let me know it, for a whole half hour, Sternly!—But I forget—I promised to return in three days, and every post overfet the mail with love letters.—And that I may be punctual, now to visit nunky.—(*Going*).

Sternly. Stop—that isn't the way—to divert Sir Edward's gloom, he and Mrs. Sapling keep the honeymoon at Delauny houte—and there you'll find Miss Honoria also—and so, good day—

Henry. Pooh! What do I care for Miss Honoria? I tell you the word “Wife” is to me slavery—chains—leaks—short allowance—sea-sickness—and a press-gang—no—let me be a free man—go where I like—do what I like—stay—Zounds! there's the mail coach—I must make haste with my love-letters, or there'll be more fits, hartshorn, laudanum, and cordials. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE.—*An Apartment at an Inn.*

PAUL POSTPONE (*without*).

Waiter! Waiter!

Waiter (without). Coming, sir—coming.

Paul (without). Where is this room, and the wine, and the sandwiches?

Waiter (without). Here, your honour—all ready.

Enter PAUL POSTPONE in a Travelling Dress—his Clerk with a Bag—and two Waiters, with Table, Chairs, Wine, and Sandwiches.

PAUL (*taking off his Hat, and puffing and fanning himself*).

Pheugh!—What a fagging life is mine!—Never a moment's relaxation!—No sooner the drudgery of term over, than brought from London to slave at the Assizes here—and on a Saturday—the day I always run down to my Brentford villa—but here (*seeing wine, &c.*)—here's consolation—Clerk! sit down, Clerk.

Clerk. Sir, I thank you—but really it is time to go into the cate now—consider, sir, you have so put it off from day to day, that you hav'n't even read your client's instructions.

Paul (having sat down).—Psha—time enough to-morrow—and never—never talk business on an empty stomach, (*eating and drinking*)—Waiter!—tell us something about your town—whose fine feat is that on the hill?

Waiter. Mr. Scrip's—a stock-jobber, sir.

Paul. And the large stone house in the valley?

Waiter. Mr. Shortstuff's, sir—another stock-jobber.

Paul. Two stock-jobbers!—damme, that's too much for one town.—Clerk, here's, “may lame ducks multiply.” (*both drink*).

Enter STERNLY.

Sternly. Mr. Postpone, I understand—happy to wait on a gentleman so celebrated for honesty—industry—(*bowing*).

Paul.

Paul. Sir! (*bowing in return, but not quitting his seat.*)

Sternly. I am sent by Sir Edward Delauny, to beg you'll come instantly to his house, and consult on the case.

Paul. Sir, my compliments to Sir Edward,—and, in the first place, never stir till the bottle's out—and, in the next, bid him not be afraid—I'll bring him off.

Sternly. Bring him off!—why, he's the prosecutor.

Clerk (aside—across the table).—There, sir, I told you how it would be.

Paul (rising). True—true—as you say, he's the prosecutor—and the prisoner's name is Thomson—no—Johnstone—no—but stop—stop—what was I going to ask you?—something very material—oh—does Sir Edward keep hounds?

Sternly. Yes, sir.

Paul. And hunters?

Sternly. Yes, sir.

Paul. And pray—any steel traps in the neighbourhood?—for once at my Brentford villa, my horse was caught by the foreleg, and smash went I—right through a cucumber frame.—Laid me up a whole term—

Sternly. Sir, I'm very sorry; but with submission, we are all most anxious for your opinion; and if our only witness can't be found, what think you of that part of the case, about the Scotch marriage?—of a poor half-pay lieutenant, like St. Orne, deluding thus the noble Miss Delauny?

Paul. Scotch—Oh, ay:—I recollect now—but that won't do—will it, Clerk?—no—there's no legal harm in Scotch marriages; because if the parties chuse to stay there nine months, the first

child is a Northcountryman ; and, to their credit, they always provide for their families.—That's my opinion—and now, let the rest stand over—enough—quite enough for one morning.

Sternly. Nay : Sir Edward is waiting, and Mr. and Mrs. Sapling expect you at their Sylvan fête.

Paul. Sylvan fête !

Sternly. Aye : an entertainment of dancing and singing, given to amuse their host, and celebrate their wedding.

Paul. Come along, Clerk—now the morning's broke in upon, we may as well make a day of it ; and in a few years—Yes : let me work in the hard manner I do now, only a few years longer, and I'll give musical parties !—Though a dealer in discord, I delight in harmony, and, if singing be a requisite—I'll chaunt a bill of costs with any gentleman on the roll.

Sternly. Stay, sir.—One word in private—Sir Edward bid me hint to you, that in case of conviction, your fees should be trebled.

Paul. Then Sir Edward did wrong.—If the poor fellow's guilty, let him suffer—if not, bribes shan't convict him ; law is sufficiently profitable, without a man turning rascal to live by it.—Yes, sir : and, much as I like business, I've no objection to a little pleasure, and how can I feel any if I submit to be corrupted.—Come, Clerk—to-morrow for labour—to-day for mirth and revelry. [Exeunt.

SCENE.——*Delauny House at a distance—Park Gates opening to extensive Park.*

Enter HENRY SAPLING and THOMAS.

Henry. Away to town express—say that I feel her absence insupportable, and will return to-night—yet

—yet stop—what's this you tell me about poor St. Orme?

Thomas. Why, fir—I heard that Lieutenant St. Orme, who sail'd home with us from America, was now in the county gaol.

Henry. Impossible!—but if it prove as you relate, he and his daughter shall not want a friend—no—I will seek Laretta and her father—

Thomas. Seek his daughter!—Lord, fir—you quite frighten me—you forget that Lady Sensitive is so anxious to keep you to herself, fir—

Henry. So she is—'tis a pleasure to think of it—sweet susceptible soul!—don't you remember the day before we left town, Tom, how she burst into tears when I patted her lap-dog?—"I see,"—said she—"your partiality, and either I or that little ugly French monster leave the house, Mr. Sapling!"—and afterwards at dinner, when I prais'd the dressing of some of the made dishes—"I was right,"—said she—and she rush'd down stairs, and discharged the cook instantly.—Oh! these are all proofs of her affection and my happiness—so mind—not a word of St. Orme and Laretta. (*Thomas exit*).—And now to visit nunky at Delauny house here—(*Turns up stage and starts*).—Ha!—Who is that young lady walking and reading in the park?—upon my word, something very handsome and very extraordinary!—I don't think I ever saw any thing of this kind in London—she's certainly very different from Lady Sensitive, and yet—somehow not at all uninteresting!—she's coming this way—'gad! if I thought Tom were out of sight, and her ladyship wouldn't hear of it. I should like just to ascertain—she's here!—So it's no fault of mine—every body sees I can't help myself.

Enter

Enter HONORIA through the Park Gate with a Book.

Honoria. Welcome to England, sir—after an absence of four tedious years, welcome to your native home.

Henry (bowing) Madam!—I—I—

Honoria. What! don't you recollect me?—Nay: that's unkind, Mr. Henry—forget the companion of your early years!—forget Honoria!

Henry. Honoria!—bless my soul—how you are improv'd!—that is, alter'd—that is——I mean how different you are from the London ladies.

Honoria. What!—because you find me reading?—Nay: you wrong them—

Henry. I don't—they never open a book—never—for I know one, a most accomplish'd lady, who reads nothing but the play-bills—and then again, you look so mild—so contented—so healthy.—I dare say now, you have no fits.

Honoria (smiling). Fits!—Never.

Henry. What a blessing!—But if you had a lover, and that lover patted your lap-dog, I hope you'd turn the little ugly French monster out of the house, Honoria.

Honoria. Do you?—Now I should like the little animal the better, and more caress it, since my lover prais'd it.

Henry. 'Gad!—that never struck me—and you are such a charming—fascinating——

Sapling. (without).—“What's life without passion!—sweet passion of love?” (*singing*)

Henry. 'Sdeath! what love-sick blockhead's this, to interrupt us?

Honoria. Why! don't you know your own uncle?

Henry

Henry. That!—that foppish, capering little fellow my uncle!

Honoriam. Yes:—the simple country 'squire is converted into a modern fine gentleman, and, instead of farming and hunting, he devotes his whole time to fashion and frivolity.—Such is the influence of his town-bred wife!

Enter SAPLING, foppishly dress'd, humming tune, strutting, &c.

Sapling. Ah, Henry!—How are you, Henry?

Henry. Sir, I give you joy—not only of marrying a baronet's cousin,—but of your improv'd style of dress and address, Sir!

Sapling. Why, yes: I've got on—thanks to my darling wife and her fashionable lessons—you perceive—I'm almost finish'd.

Henry. Almost!—it strikes me you are quite finish'd?

Sapling. No—there's still room for improvement—for last night at Lady Squeeze's route, I shew'd the most barbarous ignorance—my wife told me if I play'd at cards, I must pay for them—very well!—so far I did right—I pop'd down my half crown for card-money—but, as luck would have it, a man came round with cakes and lemonade, and, thinks I, if Lady Squeeze can't afford to pay for one thing, of course she can't for another, and so, Ecod!—I pop'd down half a crown for them also.

Henry. And I should have done the same—they can get nothing by cakes and lemonade—but I thought they got enough by cards without charging their friends for them.—Well!—and the farm-house, Honoriam? Is the old farm-house as much beautified as its owner?

Honoriam.

Honoria. Quite.—Isn't it, guardian?

Sapling (*with a satisfactory smile*). Yes:—the barn is turn'd into a ball-room—the pigeon-house over it into a billiard-room—the calf-house near it, into a concert-room—and the house for cows and horn'd cattle, into a state bed-room for me and Mrs. Sapling. Then the parlour is so enlarg'd—do you know, it will now sup, a hundred enemies?

Henry. Enemies!—You mean friends.

Sapling. No—I don't—I mean enemies—to be sure I thought as you did, and so I told Mrs. Sapling.—Says I, “Now's the time, my life, to be reveng'd on your enemies—mortify them, by not asking them.”—“No,” says she, “I'll mortify them by asking them!—the delight of visiting people is to vex each other, and my superior rooms will goad them to the soul!—Oh, yes:—and for friends, Mr. Sapling—never enlarge your parlour on their account—a closet will at any time hold them!”—But with all this, marriage has one inconvenience—(*Takes Henry aside*).—I've been obliged to give up hunting, Henry.

Henry. Give up hunting, sir!

Sapling. Yes:—Mrs. Sapling's late husband stupidly broke his neck by it; and now, if I were to ride and risk mine—poor soul!—you can easily enter into her feelings, Henry. (*In a melancholy tone.*)

Henry (*also in a melancholy tone*). I can, sir:—Your estate is in annuity, and if you fall, the whole falls with you.

Sapling. No, sir—that's not her motive—'tis pure unbounded love, sir—and therefore I've conceal'd my passion for horses, and parted with them all—all but my favourite hunter Arabella—I keep her privately from gratitude—but hush!—here's

my wife's friend Mr. Privilege!—not a word of it to him, for they tell one another every thing.

Henry. Indeed!—and you not jealous?

Sapling. Jealous!—that's very well—look who you're talking to; and know, that handsome people are never jealous—besides it's out—it is'n't in fashion!

Enter PRIVILEGE through the Park Gates.

Privilege. Oh, my dear sir—you'll be so fascinated—our charming Mrs. Sapling has composed such a grand duet for to-night's fête—and I'm to sing the principal part, and you and Miss Honoria are to come and hear it rehears'd.—

Sapling. And you also, Henry—and to oblige you as a stranger, she shall play all her other musical compositions—her first part of the essay on man—half Clarissa Harlowe—and the whole of two German oratorios.

Privilege. Aye: and all my love verses to Honoria;—who, by the bye, Sapling, I've at last made up my mind to marry.—I have, upon my soul, Ma'am—this morning I got my own consent, and as to asking yours, or any body's else, that's quite unnecessary—because, you know, I'm a privileg'd man.

Henry. A privileg'd man, sir!

Privilege. Yes, sir: if you or any common jog-trot person were to propose in this manner,—or make love to married ladies, and run away with them—or borrow money, and not pay it—you'd stand a good chance of being scouted, kick'd, and hang'd for it:—but if I do these things, every body laughs and exclaims—“don't mind him—he's a

privileg'd man!"—now, fir, do you comprehend?

Henry. I do, fir—every body laughs at you, and nobody minds you—I hope, uncle, that's your opinion;—but unluckily, I can't stay to hear that, or the music now—no—first let me visit poor St. Orme.

Honoria. St. Orme!—you know him then?

Henry. Intimately.

Honoria. I knew his wife, and therefore feel for him.—If that is your engagement, we must spare you; but soon return—you see, I need your friendship also.

Privilege. Very likely: but I wouldn't advise the gentleman to think of marrying you, or indeed any body—because now-a-days wives are such expensive articles, that none can afford them but privileg'd men. But come, Sapling, we forget the duet, and your wife will be quite jealous at my staying.

Sapling. Jealous at your ———! Oh! it's all right—I'm not suspicious—no—so fond a partner and so true a friend, may play duets as often as they please. You see, Mr. Annuity! (*to Henry*)—this is Honoria's husband!

[*Exeunt—Honoria between SAPLING and PRIVILEGE, and looking back at HENRY—PRIVILEGE strutting and smiling contemptuously on HENRY.*]

Henry (looking after Honoria). 'Sdeath! can she endure one moment such a flutterer? If she does, I'll chop him into messes. I'll—but hold—hold—where's her ladyship all this time?—the tender, the accomplish'd—Zounds! I wonder whether there ever was such a thing as a man loving two

women at the same time?—I'm afraid not. And if there was, could any man ever manage two women at the same time?—there's certainly no living instance—so, farewell Honoria—farewell, thou dear bewitching ——. Oh, damme—what signifies talking here—she can't hear me at this distance—so every body sees going after her is no fault of mine again. [*Exit through the Park Gates.*]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*Inside of the County Gaol.*

Enter ST. ORME.

St. Orme. I cannot rest. Now as the awful hour approaches, my fears accumulate beyond endurance. Life I could yield up manfully; but to part with those, that once—and still might render life a blessing—my wife!—my child!—shall I ne'er more behold them!

HENRY SAPLING (*without*).

Where is he?—Where is Lieutenant St. Orme?

St. Orme. Ha! Who's here?

Gaoler (without). This way, sir.

Enter HENRY and GAOLER.

St. Orme. 'Tis Henry, 'tis my friend!

Gaoler. There sir—there is the prisoner. [*Exit.*

Henry. Charles! (*takes his hand and bursts into tears.*)—Damnation!—I meant to behave like a man, but the word “prisoner”——come back you rascal, and I'll teach you to make a British sailor expose himself.

St. Orme. Nay: your tears become you Henry; and if now they fall, what will they do when in a few short days——

Henry. Don't—if you are guilty, don't utter it. I won't hear it—won't bear it—never will believe that Charles St. Orme—that my friend, would seek the life of any man.

St. Orme. Then you're deceiv'd—I fought Sir Frederick's life, and by this arm he fell!

Henry. Indeed!

St. Orme. Hear—hear my vindication!—'Tis now near eighteen years since my Amelia chose me for her husband; and for this high offence, she was deserted by her father—the rash, yet wrong'd Sir Frederick. We left the country—fled to America—and, by the sale of my commission, purchased an humble farm; which till a year ago supplied our moderate wants.—Then illness drove me from my avocation; and though Lauretta labour'd for our aid, distress so rapidly pursued us, that my fond wife—still clinging to the wretch her family despised—set forth for England; and not ten months past, arriv'd alone, a beggar at that gate, that but for me had ne'er been shut against her.

Henry. Well: go on.—On seeing her, did her father persist?

St. Orme. Oh, yes: with unabating rancour—he never could forgive my poverty and birth. And now observe, and shudder as you hear it!—In a few weeks he wrote me to America, that his wrong'd daughter had detected my intrigues—knew I had sent her home, to carry on a low clandestine love—and maddening at my falsehood and deceit, was fever'd to delirium—was insane! I answer'd hastily I knew not what, and flew to her assistance. I arriv'd—I ask'd for her abode—when—death and shame!—he said the care of her was his alone, and that a perjur'd husband should not see her!

Henry. Not see her!

St. Orme. No; his aim was separation: and to secure it, he defam'd me first—then robb'd me of the power to justify myself, and solace her.—What could I do?—I knew the law would give me ample justice; but burning with impatience and revenge,

was

was I to wait a form so tedious?—No—I rush'd into his presence—my daughter follow'd to detain me—I persisted in my resolution, and demanded satisfaction—this he declin'd—I presented him a pistol—he grasp'd it to defend his life—which I conceiving an acceptance of my challenge, and wild with fury and with wrongs, fir'd!—he fell; and in a few short months—Oh my friend! I see you tremble at my rashness; he was Amelia's father, and I deserve a death more terrible than his!

Henry. No; I tremble from another cause—the proof:—who can give proof against you?

St. Orme. None, but my daughter; and she is purposely concealed: if she remain so till the trial's past, I'm free to trace and rescue her I love; but if she's found, I fall—and she, poor girl—her mother robb'd of reason, and her father by her own evidence!—Oh! I can bear all but this.

Henry. And so can I: therefore good b'w'ye.

St. Orme. Why—where are you going?

Henry. To Sir Edward—to your new antagonist; and I'll ask him civilly—very civilly—not to search after Lauretta;—but if that won't do, and he persists in forcing a daughter to convict her own father—talk of pistols, my dear fellow—I'll fire off all the cannon in the navy. So go; retire to your chamber, and rely on me.—But stop—stop—as I can't get on quickly, owing to this infernal ballast (*pulling out a purse*)—do lighten me, will you?—do take part of a friend's load, Charles.

St. Orme. I thank you: but a stranger has forestalled your generosity. (*produces a letter*)—See—not an hour ago, I received this letter.

Henry. From a stranger! (*reads*)—"One, who pities the unfortunate,—who was the friend of Mrs. St. Orme, and suspects that the present baronet prosecutes you and secretes her, solely

“ to keep possession of the large estate—sends you
 “ the enclosed, in the wish that it may lessen your
 “ afflictions, and assist in restoring you to her,
 “ whose best hope is in your affections.”—Upon
 my word, a charming correspondent!—can’t you
 guess?

St. Orme. Oh, yes: her messenger betray’d her—
 her name’s Honoria Pembroke.

Henry. Honoria! my Honoria!—don’t fancy
 I’m in love with her, Charles—because, you see,
 I’m in love with somebody else;—but I tell you
 what—I wish you’d let me keep this letter—I should
 like to look at it now and then;—and if I thought
 nobody look’d at me, I should like—(*looking round
 with anxiety*) Oh, bless her! (*kissing the letter vio-
 lently*)—and if she were present, and the whole world
 present, I’d serve her in the same manner. But
 adieu!—and with such friends fear not success.

St. Orme. And with such friends I’ve consolation
 if I fail; for the best passport to a happier world is
 approbation from such hearts as yours. Farewell!

[*Exit.*

Henry (still gazing on the letter). Oh! who else
 can write such lovely, such bewitching—what
 other female hand can—Damme, there I go
 again—I forget her ladyship; and though she ne-
 ver honour’d me with any specimens of her penman-
 ship,—further than merely writing “ Pay the bear-
 er”—yet with her elegant, accomplish’d mind—
 Oh! if she writes but as she talks—then is her style
 all tenderness—all—(*as he is going*

Enter ROBERT GRANGE.

Robert. Sir, your very humble servant. They
 told me you were here, and so I did come to ax
 your honour a bit of a question.

Henry. What! a poor prisoner!—

Robert.

Robert. No;—thank you kindly, sir—at present I do outdoor work with farmer Nightshade at Ivy-farm; and he did send me this morning to ax for a new serving lad; and so I did think the best place to hear of such a thing was the public-house—and who should I meet there, but Thomas!—your man Thomas:—and so over a mug of ale—he! he!—by gom!—if it's she, she's a lucky lass!

Henry. Who?—who is lucky sir?

Robert. Why Bell—cousin Bell to be sure. We do think after getting her name chang'd to Miss This, and Mistress That, and Widow T'other, that at last she be come a real downright lady; my lady—oh ay—my Lady Sensible; and you see, I should like to know the truth of the matter: because if Bell a got this prefarment, it was'nt koind and pretty of her, to let poor I stay at plough—or her sister Sal cry matches and sell alincompain—or her brother Jack, for a slight pig affair, be sent out of this very place to Botany-bay.

Henry. Blockhead!—Lady Sensitive your—why, she'd faint at the idea!

Robert. Faint!

Henry. Ay: 'twould so shock her sensibility—

Robert. Sensibili—what! she do sob and scream and laugh and tumble?—by gom! it's she!—Bell always had a deadly turn for fits and feeling and flourishing, owing to—(making signs of drinking)—that's the fact—I know it, you see, because since she left the farm I've been somewhat in the flourishing way myself; but whilst she staid, I had no chance of any sensibility at all.

Henry. Rascal! (collaring him.)—If I wer'n't this moment call'd away, I'd—but I know your master well; and if he don't punish you for this audacious libel on the idol of my affections—on the lovely—the divine Honoria!

Robert. Honoria!—nan!

Henry.

Henry. On Lady Sensitive I mean—plague on't! —to be between wind and water, is one thing—between two fires, another—but between two women!—oh Belzebub himself could not be cool in the contest! [Exit.

Robert (clapping on his hat and strutting.) It's she!—cousin Bell's my lady!—and I—dang it—I wonder what I be; I suppose a sort of a man of honour at least—mayhap, a kind of a half lord; something like the mayor of our town here. But stop now, Bob—don't you be counting your eggs before you are sure the thing's fartin.—And where to learn this?—Oh—from his uncle—I'll go ask him directly; and if I find I'm really of this pretty kind of pedigree, and you come cuffing and collaring, Mister Sapling——I'd better take care though—what with practice and lessons, I dare say Bell has taught him to try my sensibility that way also. [Exit.

SCENE.—*An Apartment in Delauny House.—In the Flat three Gothic Windows formed of Transparencies—the Centre Window exhibiting the Painting of the “Vestal buried alive,” very large and marking—the two other Windows of a less Size, with any fancied Transparencies.—Being Night, the Windows are not illuminated.—On one Side is a Picture not finished, with Apparatus for Painting; on the other a Table, with Books, Papers, and Candles upon it.—Sir EDWARD DELAUNY and PAUL POSTPONE discovered sitting near it.*

Sir Edw. Yes, sir! my conduct needs not vindication; I can avow it to the world.—On my accession to the title and estate, I found this wretch imprisoned for atrocious murder—his wife confin'd
for

for lunacy incurable; and whilst respect for him I represent bids me seek vengeance on the vile assassin, humanity still prompts me to secrete the wretched, lost Amelia.—Am I not justified in both?

Paul. Why, I don't like off-hand opinions, Sir Edward; my plan is to recur to law books:—but I rather fancy you've no power over the lunatic.

Sir Edw. No!—Then read Sir Frederick's will—made on the morning of his death. (*Reads.*)
 “ I die in peace with my unhappy daughter, and
 “ in the case of her recovery bequeath her my
 “ estate for life;—but to preserve it from her
 “ husband's power, I nominate my nephew her
 “ trustee, and on her death devise the whole to
 “ him.”—Now, is she not at my disposal?—and
 if the villain should escape from justice, shall he
 e'er know the place of her confinement?—No—
 never.

Paul. Never!

Sir Edw. No——till they can prove she's restor'd to reason—and that's a hopeless prospect:—none dare arraign me!——But, to prevent his ever interfering, let us secure conviction; and this witness—on whose sole evidence his fate depends—this stage-struck daughter, who professionally knows all arts, all stratagems—oh! if she 'scape our search, is there no other way?

Paul. None! no witness—no verdict.

Sir Edw. Then let me haste again to seek her; and if found——of course you have prepar'd the necessary process.

Paul. What pro——oh! aye:—the subpoena. No; I've been so taken up with other parts of the case——but I'll tell you what—I'll fill it up this moment (*going towards the table*)—this moment—(*music without*). Heh! where's that delightful music?

Sir

Sir Edw. In the next room—and they'll disturb and interrupt you. I'll stop them as I pass.

Paul. Don't, on my account. I like music—often sing a merry song myself—and as there's nothing else, after filling up this little affair—'gad, I'll make one amongst them (*sitting down and beginning to write*).

Sir Edw. You forget—the pleadings are not half prepar'd, and every moment of your time is precious (*as he is going, enter HONORIA*). Honoria! what brings you here?

Honoria. I come by Mrs. Sapling's orders, to paint a copy of that representation of the "Vestal buried alive."

Sir Edw. Well, well, dispatch—for it shall be remov'd—the sight is hateful to me.

Honoria. Why hateful, sir?

Sir Edw. Why?—Oh nothing, nothing—but yonder's my solicitor; and mind that you disturb him not. And now, sir—be but as active and as zealous as the cause deserves, and our success is certain (*Exit. HONORIA previously seats herself, and begins painting, unseen by PAUL—he during the time is writing*).

Paul. I'll be active—I'll———now that I call a complete idle country gentleman, who will let nobody have any pleasure but himself; however, only let me fill up this infernal process, and see if I a'n't in the thick of the musical party; for after such a sag as this, devil's in't if I mayn't enjoy myself; and music's a thing I'm doatingly fond of. So—"Herefordshire to wit" (*writing*). "Lovely, lovely Chloe!" (*singing*.)

Honoria (painting). Upon my word—extremely well—pray sing on, sir.

Paul. Sing on! (*Looks up, sees her, and smiles*),
Bless

Bless my soul—another thing I'm so doatingly fond of!—and look here now—I hav'n't even time to—oh, you little rogue!—I only wish it were the long vacation—but as it is—“Herefordshire to wit,”—“Lovely, lovely Chloe!” (*writing and singing.*)

Honoria. That's right: you've an excellent voice, and I'd rather you'd do any thing than carry on this cruel prosecution (*rises and comes down the stage*). Perhaps by some neglect of his, St. Orme might still be sav'd—I'll try—Oh! Lord, here's my guardian!

Enter SApLING with manuscript music in his hand.

Sapling. Oh, my dear Honoria!—what shall I do?—where shall I go?—whom shall I apply to?—Poor Mrs. Sapling—and poor Mr. Privilege!

Honoria. What's the matter, sir?—any accident!

Paul (*putting the subpoena in his pocket, and coming on the other side of Sapling*). Aye! what's the matter, sir?—any accident?

Sapling. Dreadful!—he's taken hoarse! now—an hour before the sylvan fête, Mr. Privilege is taken hoarse, and there's an end of his and my wife's duet.

Paul. An end of their duet!

Sapling. Yes: I offer'd to take his part here (*pointing to the paper*): but it seems my voice is too natural. They say I'm no singer, because I don't quaver, and jerk, and twist my body, and make horribly ugly faces—and it's very wrong of them—I know it's all affectation—for I'm sure in their hearts, they'd rather hear such a queer fellow as I am, sing “Old Ramjudrah,” than all the fine flourishing songs in the universe.

Paul. So they would—and at the end, applaud, as I applaud at the opera.

Sapling. What! do you applaud at the opera?

Paul. Always—for joy that it's over.—But you want a substitute do you? (*Looking at the music—chuckling and smiling.*)

Honoria. He does: and can't you recommend one, Mr. Postpone?

Paul. I!—Oh fie, ma'am!—I hope you don't insinuate—

Honoria. Speak to him guardian—his voice is only equal'd by his modesty.—Nay: you know it's true:—and by your own account, you've toil'd enough for this day.

Paul. I have—I've work'd like a horse; and if I thought the ladies wish'd it—(*going to take the music from SApLING*)—but no—Sir Edward will be angry.

Sapling. Nonsense!—as master of the house 'twill be doing him a favour.

Paul. Will it?

Honoria. To be sure—and you won't be out of the way you know.

Paul. No more I shall! (*still chuckling.*)

Sapling. And if you refuse, a great singer must be sent for at a great expence.

Paul. So there must—and if I sing a hundred songs, I can but charge 6 s. and 8 d. each!—come along—give me the part—let somebody play it over—and once in my life, I will relax for half an hour.

Sapling. There's a noble lawyer for you!—Oh I wish I had known you sooner—you should have drawn my marriage settlement.

Paul. Never mind—where there's law and parchment before marriage, there's generally law and parchment after; and if any little accident should happen—(*whispers him*)—between ourselves, now-a-days married people are the best clients.—But come;—and don't be afraid of my
being

being natural—no—my voice is like an instrument.

Sapling. Ah! that's the true style. But, begging your pardon, if it be the fashion for fine fingers to resemble instruments, I wish there were instruments to resemble fine fingers:—then they might be had at a less price—would be free from colds and hoarsenesses—and instead of Venice and Naples, they might be manufactur'd at Sheffield and Birmingham. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*A Road.—In the back Ground, large Gates opening to a Park—the Trees at a distance are seen illuminated—an Orchestra also—all marking a Sylvan Fête.—Stage partly darken'd.*

Enter Sir EDWARD DELAUNY and Servant through the Gates.

Sir Edw. Discover'd, say you!—go on—repeat the joyful, welcome tidings.

Servant. Yes sir; we saw her stealing out of yonder wood: and so whilst William staid to watch and to observe her, I came to ask your further orders.

Sir Edw. And you are sure it is Lauretta St. Orme!

Servant. Quite sir; we recollect her on the fatal morning—and see! she comes this way.

Sir Edw. Wish'd for, enchanting sight!—go—inform my solicitor—bid him come instantly, and bring the process that secures her—I'll stay myself, and guard her. [*Exit Servant through the gates.*

Enter

Enter LAURETTA ST. ORME.

Lauretta. Oh, thanks to that sheltering wood, that hitherto has thus preserv'd me; and if I reach again my lone retreat, none but a father's voice—
 ha!—What lights are those?—surely I hav'nt lost—
 oh yes—fear, and the darkness of the night, have quite misled me—Heavens!—let me fly—

Sir Edw. (advancing before her.) Stay—pafs not I command you.

Lauretta. Oh! for mercy!

Sir Edw. Mercy! from whom?—from him who represents Sir Frederick! (*LAURETTA shows violent agitation*)—Ay: behold your mortal, deadly foe; who long has fought, but now will never lose you.

Lauretta (trying to cross him). You cannot—you will let me pass!—consider, by detaining me, you make me guilty of the very crime of which you charge my father.—He gave me life:—will you compel me to destroy his?

Sir Edw. Peace!—I'm resolv'd.

Lauretta (falling at his feet). Look at me—'tis said I bear a strong resemblance to my mother—my poor ill-fated mother!—and shall my rashness rob her of a tender husband's care? Look—do I not remind you?

Sir Edw. You do—and therefore is your presence still more hateful.—Yes:—she first debas'd our noble house's name, by marrying with this outcast.

Lauretta (still kneeling). She!—do you censure her!

Sir Edw. I do;—and to complete the degradation, did she not abroad expose her daughter on a public stage?

Lauretta.

Lauretta. How!

Sir Edw. Train her disgracefully in that low, mimic school—

Lauretta (rising). No, sir—that fault was mine—I saw her perishing for want—my father helpless and infirm—and though, as a woman, most professions are denied me, the stage was still before me!—and I shall ever bless those kind approving hearts that sanction'd my attempts; nor call that path disgraceful, that leads a daughter to support her parents.

Sir Edw. Have a care—dare not to vindicate—

Lauretta. Sir!—the stage requires not vindication—Is it a crime to labour to instruct and entertain?—Is there in Shakspeare's hallow'd lines, such ignorance and vice, that 'tis degrading to repeat them?—No, sir:—the day of prejudice is past—in public life, let there be private virtue, and the poor player will be more respected, than those who censure and despise her!

Enter HENRY SAPLING.

Henry. So she is—and every body should respect actors—because they always pay such handsome compliments to us British sailors.

Lauretta. Heavens! Mr. Henry!

Sir Edw. Ay, sir—what brings you here?

Henry. I came to claim your promise, Sir Edward—as visitor at your house, by my uncle's introduction, you bade me ask for what I like—now I don't ask such serious favours of you, as shooting or fishing on the best part of the manor—because, I've heard, it only puts you country gentlemen to the trouble of whispering your game-keeper, to take

one to your neighbour's grounds—no—in the way of sport, I simply beg leave to carry off this bird of passage! (*taking LAURETTA's hand.*)

Sir Edw. 'Sdeath, sir!—I insist—(*going to part them.*)

Henry. And I insist, sir!—I knew her in a country where there are some savages; but none bad enough to wish her to convict her father—or if there were, do you think I'd suffer it?—no—I'm afraid of only one human being, and as she's at an agreeable distance, I wish you good night, Sir Edward.

Sir Edw. Hold, sir—desist!—(*Noise of stamping with feet without, Sir EDWARD looks round.*) Ha! I defy you now—for here comes one vested with legal power to secure her! Dare you contend against the law?

Henry. No—but I dare run from it—and I'm sure you ought to thank me, Sir Edward: for now you may enjoy your evening's fête—but if I hadn't reliev'd you from this little burthen, (*pointing to LAURETTA,*) all the music of the spheres couldn't have cheer'd you—come, Lauretta—this is the first time I ever fled from an enemy; but if by my retreating you escape, 'twill be the proudest victory I ever gain'd! [*Exit with LAURETTA.*]

Enter immediately from the Park Gate PAUL POSTPONE, the MS. Music in his Hand.

Sir Edw. Now, sir—are you completely ready?

Paul. Quite, sir—“To arms, to arms”——(*Humming tune, and then recollecting himself.*) Oh, I beg pardon, I thought it was Mr. —— but I perceive now; you want the subpœna—here it is—all prepar'd you see.

Sir Edw. I do—and look, yonder goes Lau-
retta—follow her—make sure of her; and, lest her
champion should molest you, and my appearance
may be thought vindictive, I'll seek and send as-
sistance. Away—lose not a moment—my happi-
ness, my reputation—nay, my life depends on
your success. [Exit.

Paul. I'll do it. I'll serve the process in spite
of her and all her champions.—(*As he is going a
flourish of grand martial music is heard.*)—Bless my
soul! it's beginning! the music is beginning! and
now at the moment, when I should have cut such
a figure!—Was there ever such an infernal la-
borious profession? (*looks out.*)—Yes: there they
are all seated—all the sweet beautiful ladies, wait-
ing to applaud my vocal and instrumental powers—
dear! dear! Wouldn't it be time enough to serve
the subpoena early to-morrow morning? I've
often put it off till the last moment; and no man
living has ever lost—I mean, gain'd, more causes
than I have done.—But then, Sir Edward and his
reputation!—Oh—I must go after her.

Enter SAPLING through the Park Gates, hastily.

Sapling. Oh, Lord! I'm so glad I've found you.
Come along—(*taking his arm.*) The sweet crea-
tures are all on the tip-toe of expectation.

Paul. I know it. So am I—but look, look at
that tormenting witness.

Sapling. Witness!—Where?—I see nobody.

Paul. Don't you!—faith!—no more do I.

Sapling. No: whoever they are, they're safely
out of sight for this night.—So—nonsense! stuff!
put it off till day-light; and now it's the assizes,

recollect you've a right to enjoy yourself!—Isn't it a part of the business to have balls—concerts—

Paul. So it is; and if barristers partake of them, why not attorneys?—damme, I won't be the slave I have been!—I'll let my genius take its bent; and if it ordains me musical, it's a better trade than mine—more profit—less trouble—

Sapling. Ay: and as a reward for your labours, applause and repetition; but in law!—now I only ask, Who ever claps a declaration?

Paul. No: or who ever encores a bill in Chancery?—come along.—“To arms! to arms! we heroes cry.—Huzza! to victory!” [*Exeunt singing to grand martial music, which continues after the dropping of the curtain.*]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

SCENE.—*An Apartment in Delauny House.*

Enter Mrs. SAPLING and HONORIA.

Mrs. Sapling. Positively, Honoria, I will not listen to you. You really must marry Mr. Privilege—and soon—very soon!—for my own wedding is gone by, and I begin to want something new dreadfully.

Honoria. Nay, madam : when I've told you that from early life, my heart has been another's——

Mrs. Sapling. Simple thing!—she don't know that hearts have been out, ever since pin-money and separate establishments came in. And surely you don't compare the elegant Mr. Privilege with this barbarous sailor gentleman?—In the first place, the man has no voice.

Honoria. No, ma'am : no more has Mr. Sapling.

Mrs. Sapling. No voice!—my husband!—— Oh, I understand—you mean that I play the first instrument?—Vastly well!—and so you shall find, ma'am—though a widow—though not quite so young and striking as Miss Honoria—there is now-a-days this consolation—old women never go by—and whilst my voice lasts, neither his nor yours shall be heard, I promise you.

Honoria. No, madam : and till my guardian shall

shall assert his rights, I have no hope of happiness or Henry. [Exit.

Mrs. Sapling. None—if 'twere only for his insolent insinuations.—Brute!—monster!—to speak such home truths—to say I dreaded seeing my husband on horseback, because his fortune was in annuity, when every body knows my love for poor little Sappy is so violent—so——

Enter PAUL POSTPONE and SAPLING.

Paul. I say the fault's yours—and so I'll tell my client again and again.

Sapling. Then I say you are a base slanderous person.

Mrs. Sapling. Mercy!—What's the matter, gentlemen?

Paul. The matter, ma'am!—Why the assizes have began; and owing to this seducing deceiver, our only witness has escap'd.—You know it, sir. You bade me put it off till day-light; and now, for the first time; I shall be set down as an idle, dissipated ——

Sapling. And so you ought—for the music didn't content you—no—you must dance also—and play billiards also—and bet against time also.

Paul. Don't you talk of betting against time? Didn't you offer to trot on your own feet against post horses; and draw chaises with your own hands against dray horses?—In fact, didn't you so completely prove yourself a four-legg'd animal, that at supper, when you ask'd for ham and fowl, the company beg'd you'd stand on no ceremony, but call for hay and corn as if you were alone?

Enter Servant.

Servant. Sir, we have trac'd young Mr. Sapling

ling and the lady—they took the road towards Ivy Farm—and Miss Laretta is disguis'd in boy's clothes.

Paul. Disguis'd in boy's clothes!

Servant. Yes, sir—in a green coat—white waist-coat—round hat—

Paul (*writing it down in memorandum book*). Enough; that, with her effeminate appearance, is full description.—Shew the way, and, free from dissipated company, I'll secure her.—(*Looking at SAPLING.*)—Madam, yours.—If at any time you want legal redress—and with such a fashionable husband, the thing's not at all unlikely—there's my card: neat house—and charming accommodation for you and the female part of the family;—but for the male—extremely sorry, but there's no stable on the premises. [*Exit.*

Sapling. Stable! Make me out a four leg'd animal!—Excuse me, my dear—but nobody shall take such liberties with me but yourself. Besides, to suppose I'd even name a horse, when ———

Mrs. Sapling. Oh, the odious creatures!—for Heaven's sake, don't let them make me a disconsolate widow a second time, Mr. Sapling.

Sapling. They sha'n't. You sha'n't be a widow, my darling—and what's more, Honoria shall be a wife—she shall marry Privilege directly; and as for Mr. Henry—leave him to me—I've laid a train that will blow him out of water.

Mrs. Sapling. A train!

Sapling. Mum! He keeps a lady.—Robert Grange, a Yorkshireman, informs me he keeps a cousin of his in London; so what do you think I've done?—sent Robert off express; bid him tell his cousin of Henry's love affair with Honoria—and then you know, down comes her ladyship—she

gives it him one way—Honorina another—Robert another—

Mrs. Sapling (*laughing*). So they do.—Poor wretch!—What will become of him?

Sapling. Aye: he may stand against the cannon's roar;—but two jealous women, back'd by a Yorkshireman—damme, the rock of Gibraltar could not resist their artillery.

Mrs. Sapling. Oh delightful!—Mr. Privilege is now in the park; and I'll immediately inform him.—But though this is very well for such women as Honorina and her self-created ladyship; it won't do in fashionable life—you'll never find me jealous, Mr. Sapling.

Sapling. No—nor me, my dear. When I hint that you sometimes speak and look too kindly on your admirers—it isn't jealousy!—no—it's pity—general pity for mankind.—I wish you to be merciful, and spare those murdering smiles—

Mrs. Sapling. Do you?—Well! Perhaps I will be merciful—adieu!—You really improve every hour, Mr. Sapling. [*Exit smiling.*]

Sapling. I do!—I'm finish'd!—it's very odd, though—if I weren't convinc'd that jealousy was out of fashion, I should be sometimes like Othello—quite black in the face with it!—for here's Mr. Privilege—how can I tell but she may go on pitying him, till every body pities me. Very well!—I know how to be even with her—I can go hunting and break my neck at any time.

Enter Groom.

Groom. Sir!—Sir!—Your favourite hunter—

Sapling. Hush!—lower—or your mistress may hear you.

Groom.

Groom. Sir, your poor mare Arabella, is so low spirited for want of hunting, that I do think the next time I take her to the river, she'll coolly lay down, and drown herself.

Sapling. Poor Arabella!—she's a charming goer; and if your mistress would give me an opportunity, William—but no—she's so loving—so dutiful—so constant——

Groom. Ah!—it's a thousand pities, sir—but perhaps mistress mayn't be always so, sir.

Sapling. No!—Why not, sir?—Have you heard any thing?

Groom. Not at present, sir—but I hope for the best.

Sapling. You do; do you?—Leave the room.—No—stop—follow me to the library, and I'll give you a prescription for the mare:—and as to your wishing your master to be a ——; no, sir, I am sufficiently fashionable without that embellishment. [Exeunt.]

SCENE.—*A lone Farm-House, with much marked Desolation around it.*

*Enter HENRY SAPLING and LAURETTA ST. ORME.
LAURETTA is disguised in Boy's Cloaths.*

Henry. Come, come, cheer up.—Look—yonder's Ivy Farm—the lone sequester'd house we are in search of;—and thus disguis'd, and introduc'd as servant to the farmer——

Lauretta. Aye: but the time—the time!—think in a few short hours, my father will be summon'd to the awful scene, and if he blesses not the daughter who preserves him, he'll curse the parricide whose rashness has destroy'd him.—Oh! I
can't

can't bear the recollection. Hide me from heaven, the world, and from myself.

Henry. No—I'll only hide you from your enemies—Hush—stand aside—somebody approaches. (*They retire behind the wing.*)

Enter from the House STERNLY and Farmer NIGHTSHADE.

Sternly. Enough—I'll tell Sir Edward.—Good day!

Nightshade. Good day!

Sternly. Remember now—be more than ever wary.

Nightshade. Fear not—this secures me (*showing purse, and exit STERNLY*): but plague on't; I can't manage without a servant; and this Yorkshire rascal that I sent for one—what the devil is become of him?

Henry (*looking out from behind the wing*). It's he!—I know him now (*comes forward with LAURETTA*).—So, Master Nightshade, you want a servant, don't you?

Nightshade. I do, Squire Sapling—want one mainly—and sent my ploughman—

Henry. I know it—and I've brought one—see (*pointing to LAURETTA*)—I'm sure you'll take my recommendation.

Nightshade. That I will, sir—and thank you for this timely service;—besides, I like the lad's countenance—he looks discreet and trusty:—come along, boy.—Only this, sir—I hope he don't mind solitude—we see nobody at Ivy Farm.

Henry. All the better—is'nt it, boy?—there—now you're safe, till I inform your father, and return (*aside to LAURETTA*).—Adieu!—You've got a treasure, Nightshade.

Nightshade.

Nightshade. I think I have, fir——— and as to my lazy Yorkshireman—if he don't come home directly, he shan't come home at all.

Henry. And serve him right (*NIGHTSHADE and LAURETTA exeunt*).—Low-lifed, scurrilous block-head!—I dare say he is now all the time at the public-house, boasting that he's cousin to a lady.—Well—with all my heart—I only know it is impossible he can be a cousin to my lady.—Yes:—there's a native elegance—a sort of noble indescribable—and I'd a dream that so reviv'd and rivetted my love—(*going.*)—Heh! who is walking yonder with that coxcomical——By heaven! Honoria, and the husband they design her!—and see—he kneels to her—he kisses her hand—and she permits it!—So, so—she likes him—she prefers him!—Oh! after all, give me the woman who turns off cooks and lap-dogs; not her who selects privileg'd men—and that decides it.—I'm for her ladyship and London.

Enter THOMAS hastily.

Thomas. Sir, Lady Sensitive has sent me post-haste with this letter.

Henry. I'm glad on't. I long to hear from her—I sigh to see her dear delicious hand!—Oh, that—that for the false Honoria's letter (*taking it from his pocket, and throwing it down*).—Now let me dwell on a superior composition—(*reads*).
 “ You know too well my tender nature; and if
 “ you do not set off for London directly, you will
 “ never see me more.”——Sweet innocent! how I have neglected her!—(*reading on.*) “ Never, you
 “ saltwater savage!—Thanks to your uncle, Bob
 “ is arriv'd—my Yorkshire cousin Bob, fir!—and
 “ if

“ if you don't quit this Miss Honoria Thingam-
 “ bob, I'll come down—shoot you—stab her—
 “ and poison myself!—My head goes round and
 “ round—I write this between my fits—and have
 “ already emptied the laudanum, hartshorn, and
 “ all the other bottles in the house.—Your's, &c.
 “ A. Sensitive.”——Pheugh! (*trembles and lets
 the letter fall.*)—I shall have a fit myself—Thomas!
 you don't believe that is her ladyship's hand, do
 you, Thomas?

Thomas. Sir, I saw her write it.

Henry. Did you, Thomas?—Perhaps then I
 didn't read it rightly—I'll just look again—(*Takes
 up HONORIA'S letter by mistake, and reads.*)—“ One
 “ who pities the unfortunate—who was the friend
 “ of Mrs. St. Orme,”———Confusion, shame—
 (*bursts into tears.*)—Oh fool! fool!—And you,
 fir—you, who must have known this gross decep-
 tion——

Thomas. Nay, fir—what could I do?—nothing
 would open your eyes—nothing!—for don't you
 remember, in one of her faintings, when you sent
 for the great physician?

Henry. I do—and 'stead of physic, he prescrib'd
 bank notes;—and on putting a twenty pound one
 into her hand, she leer'd at it, jump'd up—and
 went shopping directly!—Oh, I perceive it now—
 brought up at sea and in the country, I know but
 little of the world, and never shall—seeing no joy
 in guilt myself, I can't conceive how others should
 pursue it.

Thomas. Aye: but how will you stop her, fir?
 she'll come down and kill us all, and —— Oh
 Lord;—here she is—I'm frighten'd out of my
 senses.

Henry. Frighten'd!—-at what, blockhead?
 (*trembling*)

(*trembling and turning away.*)—Look out—does she seem very violent?

Thomas. No, sir—Now I look again, it seems a different person.

Henry (looking). Yes: it is a different person—Honorina flying from her lover! treating him with scorn and indignation!—and look here now—I'm more afraid of her than of the other;—I can't encounter her kind virtuous smiles, because I feel I don't deserve them—I'm all perplexity and fear—pick up the letter—come along this moment; and if you'd never be the wretch that I am, take a wife, Thomas—Oh, there's rapture in the word—a wife to me is a ship well man'd, a prosperous pilot, a successful voyage, victory, prize money, and first lord of the admiralty.

[*Exit with THOMAS.*

Enter HONORINA hastily.

Honorina. Gone! avoid me!—leave me to the mercy of this insulting coxcomb!—Surely it was Henry: but perhaps he saw me not; or if he did, knew not the serious danger I'm exposed to.—Alone, unprotected, and menac'd by an artful wretch, whose heart's unmanly as his form; who, with a look effeminate, conceals a savage and ferocious mind. How shall I shun him?—how reach home in safety?

Enter PAUL POSTPONE and Servant.

Paul. Very well, that's Ivy Farm; and Lauretta is disguis'd in a green coat, white waistcoat, round hat—enough. Tell Sir Edward that the wit-

ness is secure, and, in law or in music, that Paul is first fiddle.

Honoria. Oh, Mr. Postpone, I'm so glad to see you. Now I'm safe—I'm sure you'll give protection to a timid, helpless woman.

Paul. That I will—but as I told you before, it must be in the long vacation—I hav'n't a moment now—unless, indeed—Lord! she's quite overcoming—and, if I thought witness wouldn't escape again—but no, no—away, Cupid!—Remember it's the assizes.—(*Crosses HONORIA to go into Farm-House.*)

Honoria. Then I must protect myself—for yonder's my tormentor, still seeking to insult me—Sir, I shall not reproach you, but when expos'd to insolence and peril —

Paul (*not regarding her, but looking out*). Oho! —are you there, my little — “toll de roll loll.” —(*Singing and capering.*)

Honoria. How! treat me with ridicule and scorn?—Oh Henry! is it not hard that none have feeling to defend and save me? [*Exit.*]

Paul (*still looking out and recurring to his pocket book*). Green coat! white waistcoat! round hat! — “toll de roll loll.”

Enter PRIVILEGE hastily.

(*N. B. Previously to this Scene, he must appear in Green Coat, &c. so as to resemble LAURETTA'S Dress as nearly as possible.*)

Privilege. There she goes. Oh Lord! how I am fatigu'd!—But I'll after her!

Paul (*coming before him, smiling, and putting his hat before his face with one hand, and with the other*

other

other offering the subpoena). Take it, will you?—I'm naturally so modest and ———. Really the very thought makes me blush so, that upon my soul I'm ashamed to look at you. Take it, will you?

Privilege. Ashamed to look at me? Why who the devil are you? and what's this?

Paul. The subpoena, you cunning little rogue! and the next time you disguise yourself, do it better—for to pay you the compliment that's due to you, so far from any thing coarse or masculine, curse me if ever I saw a more feminine delicate creature in my life; never;—and I shan't want gallantry—no, as you are fatigu'd, you shall have a horse; and hark'ye, a nice soft side saddle!

Privilege (*crossing him*). Stand by, sir; this is some contrivance of Honoria's, but it shan't amuse me from my purpose; no, I'll instantly pursue her: and for you, sir; dare not to follow me; dare not to affront a privileg'd man. [*Exit.*]

Paul. Man! that's a good joke; as if nature ever meant such a thing as that, for one of my noble gender?—And as to her strutting and blustering; does she think I don't know one sex from another? Pooh; go where she will, I'll go after her; and bring her before the Court, if it's only for a libel on the nation; for if it consisted of no better men than she is, we should be all Bond-street beaus, men-milliners, butterflies, and jackadandies. [*Exit.*]

SCENE—*Inside of the Farm House, Stairs leading to a large dark-colour'd Door, a great Iron Chain across it, Chairs, Table with a Jug upon it.*

Enter NIGHTSHADE and LAURETTA ST. ORME.

Nightshade. Aye aye, if you like retirement,
this

this is the house for you. In the first place, you are never to stir out; and when I do, you are to expect to be lock'd in.

Lauretta. Lock'd in, sir!

Nightshade. Ay: and you are not to write letters or receive any; and on no account to admit visitors.

Lauretta. No, sir!

Nightshade. No—you are to see nobody, but myself, a nurse, and another person: look at that door, that with the chain across it.

Lauretta. I see, sir; you terrify me beyond description: let me go.

Nightshade. Nonsense!—'t isn't to imprison you; no, 'tis secur'd in that manner for secret purposes; and, when assistance is requir'd, you must be ready to afford it. And now, I've told you your employment, do as your predecessor us'd to do—come, (*sitting down and taking the jug*), enliven me with a song.

Lauretta (*looking at the door with great agitation*). Sir, I——I——

Nightshade. Nay, I am master here, and will not be refus'd—sing, I insist; it will amuse us all.

LAURETTA *sings*—NIGHTSHADE *falls asleep*.

S O N G.

Once happy in a peaceful home,
Of Fortune's gifts I ask'd no other;
A prison's now my father's doom;
And say, oh say, where art thou, mother?

If thou hast press'd a luckless bier
Of victims, Death! Oh take another;
Or, if immur'd in cavern drear,
Boldly I'll fly to save my mother.

(*After*

(*After the song, voice within*). Laretta!

Laretta. Ha! that voice!

(*Voice within*). Help! help, Laretta!

Laretta. My mother, it is my mother's voice!
(*running towards door and beginning to unbar it*).

Nightshade (*waking, starting up, and seeing her*).
Hold—Who bid you unbar the door?

Laretta. Instinct, which impels the offspring
to assist its parent! (LAURETTA *throws back the
chain, door opens and discovers a dreary apartment,
lamp hanging in it; Mrs. ST. ORME falls in LAU-
RETTA'S arms.*)

Nightshade (*advancing to seize Mrs. ST. ORME*).
Stir not, she's my prisoner.

Enter HENRY SAPLING.

Henry (*seizing NIGHTSHADE*). And you're
mine.—If taknig prisoners be the plan, a British
sailor 'gainst the world, my boy.

Mrs. St. Orme. Laretta! though thus dis-
guis'd, I trace each well-known feature;—and that
bounteous power that long since blest'd me with
returning health, restor'd my harass'd and disor-
der'd mind, now makes me feel the blessing ten
times o'er; for I behold and know my child again.
Oh! I'm most grateful!—but that stranger—is he
not a foe?

Henry. Heaven forbid, Madam.

Laretta. No, he's the best of friends, and will
conduct you to my father.

Mrs. St. Orme. Your father!—Never, never!

Laretta. Never!

Mrs. St. Orme. No, his falsehood first derang'd
me; and that he since has doom'd me to captivity,
I have unanswerable proof—His letter; oh, his

letter written to the late Sir Frederick, and shewn me by Sir Edward's agent.—

Lauretta. His letter!

Mrs. St. Orme. Ay, his!—I knew the once lov'd hand too well, and the indelible and cruel words can never be effac'd. "I charge you to confine her; if she escape, my misery is everlasting."—Oh! this from him! from him, the father of Lauretta!

Henry Sapling. Madam, my life on't, he is wrong'd.

Mrs. St. Orme. No, sir; this, with his falsehood, is sufficient proof; and I retort the accusation of derangement—the road to happiness is virtue; those who forsake it are the truly mad, and if this treatment of a doating wife be not insanity, 'tis worse, 'tis vice, and I would rather pity than despise him.

Henry. I say again, he's wrong'd; but this is not a place for explanation; let me conduct you to some safer spot.—And for you, Mr. Solitude—you see that spare room? say two words and I'll shut you there, with no food but your reflections; no company but your conscience: they were this suffering lady's best support—but if you were a navy, they'd sink you, hypocrite!

Enter THOMAS, in great haste and agitation.

Thomas. Sir! sir! (*whispering HENRY*).

Henry. Come! arriv'd!

Thomas. Yes, sir—(*whispering again*).

Henry. At the door! in the low chariot with her Yorkshire cousin! and to catch me with two such lovely———Oh, this will never do, I'll sneak and hide myself (*letting go Mrs. ST. ORME'S hand*).

Lauretta. How! Do you hesitate? Will you at last forsake us?—Look! look on my mother.

Henry. I do—and it's coming—I'm screwing myself up, I'm comparing my own paltry danger with such distress as hers, and——your hand, ma'am, I'm ready for action!—But, at the same time, there can be no harm in your sticking close, Thomas.

Nightshade. Hold, sir—none stir without my leave.

Henry. Your leave!—that's a good joke—when I've made up my mind to engage a seventy-four, do you think I'm afraid of a common cock-boat?—go—go before I insist, sir; and tell the enemy, if they dare fight against two vessels shipwreck'd and distress'd, they must be cowards; and, spite of cuffs, cordials and faintings, I'll convey both to harbour!—I, Henry, the friend of them, of marriage, of Honoria! [*Exeunt.*

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE.—*An Apartment in Delauny House—a Door in the Flat leading to a Bed-Chamber.*

Enter PRIVILEGE.

Privilege. So: I've got clear of him—I've at last escap'd him and his side-saddles, and subpoenas, and I begin to suspect his business now.—It's a writ—he has got a writ against me from some curst taylor or other; and if I'm arrested at this moment, I lose Honoria and her thirty thousand pounds; but she's safe now; I'm sure to catch her, before he catches me.—No—damme! here's the horrid brute again!—Where shall I go? (*tries opposite stage door.*) This door's lock'd!—and yonder's Mrs. Sapling's bed-chamber—she's not in it though; or if she were, my character would there bring me off; but with lawyers and bailiffs—somehow I never could convince them I'm a privileg'd man. [*Exit into chamber.*

Enter PAUL POSTPONE time enough to see him.

Paul. I see you my darling! I see you; and should have come up with you sooner; only I stop'd to look at a cricket match.—He! he! it's pretty sport; (*showing money*) and I should have won more on the runs, than these two guineas, only the dull dogs left off play to go to business.—But now for it—(*goes to the chamber door and tries*

to open it.)—Foolish little thing! as if that would save her.—Holloa! there's the subpoena under the door—that's a good service—and thus the iron hand of law—(*trying to force the door*) But stop; now in Sir Edward's house, and guarded by his servants, she may be safer here than under my protection—she will! so I'll step over to the town-hall, see how cause stands; and then return, and whisk her like a whirlwind to the trial: and after this, let no man charge me with the law's delay. Never was such diligence and zeal.

Enter SAPLING and HONORIA.

Sapling. Come along; I know you meant to elope. I know the letter was from Henry, and when Mrs. Sapling has nam'd a husband for you, how dare you love another man?

Honoria. Nay, sir—because she controls your feelings, is she to command mine?

Sapling. She is; and I'll call her from her bed-chamber—and if you don't instantly marry Mr. Privilege—(*turning up the stage.*)

Paul (*meeting him face to face*). Oh fie! fie! force her to marry one man, when you know she loves another—not that I allude to myself—no—whether I am or am not the happy object of her choice, this she may depend on; I'll release her in the long vacation:—and for you Mr. Sapling; don't trust yourself near that chamber; nor on any account peep through the keyhole; for fashionable as you are, you'll blush—But I can't stay to explain particulars: must step over to the town-hall—so, mum—Don't you go near that chamber. [*Exit.*]

Sapling. Not go near my wife's chamber!—not peep through—Oh Lord! surely—pooh, non-

sense; she only treats poor Privilege as a play-thing: and whilst other ladies make pets of cats, puppies, and monkees on four legs, she chuses one on two legs, that's all.

Honoria. And you'd have me marry a monkey, sir?

Sapling. Why not? Put a monkey on a short coat, long pantaloons, thick neckcloth, cropt wig, large opera hat, and there's as good a husband as the best of them;—and you shall have him—and spite of that fellow's scurrilous insinuations, I'll venture to call Mrs. Sapling—yes—I'll—(*half afraid*) hold, as usual, let me announce my approach by an elegant tap—(*taps at the door.*)

Privilege (within). Is it you, Mrs. Sapling?

Sapling. What?

Privilege (within). Is it you, my dear Mrs. Sapling? or is it that horrid brute?

Sapling. It's he!—he calls me horrid brute! There's the privileg'd man—and here's the finish'd man!—Within there! William! William!

Honoria (not having heard Privilege). What's the matter, sir? What are you doing?

Sapling (not regarding her). When I lov'd and doubted, I was miserable; now I know I'm a horrid brute, I'm completely comfortable.—(*Enter Groom.*) Come William, come and saddle Arabella—to horse! to hunting! to the field, my boy!

Groom. What! Have you got leave, sir?

Sapling. No: I've taken leave.—She has her favourites—I'll have mine;—come, and saddle Arabella; and if being jealous is being ill-bred, so much the better; I hate fashion; I like feeling; she has cut me to the heart, William—now I'll break her's, and we'll be both buried in the same grave!

[*Exit with Groom.*

Honoria.

Honoria. What can this sudden alteration mean? No matter, it gives me momentary safety; and I may once more read my Henry's letter. (*Reads.*)
 " I have so offended Sir Edward, that I dare not
 " venture to his house; but as I hope you take
 " an interest in my fate, I write to tell you, I am
 " at the Star, a small inn on the skirts of the
 " town, where I am detain'd on secret and impor-
 " tant business.—For Heaven sake, if your ene-
 " mies continue their persecutions, remember you
 " may command the friendship, heart, and life of
 " your adorer,
 " HENRY."

Oh! the wish'd for hour is come—at last I know I am belov'd by Henry—and could I 'scape this hated roof—(*Here PRIVILEGE opens the chamber door and peeps out*) then might the husband of my heart be mine; not him whom cruel force decrees me.

Privilege (advancing before her). Very likely; but you shan't escape ma'am—no—(*strutting about, menacing, &c.*) here I am, red hot with wrongs and disappointments—and dread my mighty and resistless anger. Yes: though in form diminutive; in soul, Goliath was a dwarf to me! Answer me; Is he not a sailor, and would you prefer pitch and tar, to the essence of taste and politeness?

Honoria. Sir, I prefer feeling to foppery; manliness to effeminacy; and a poor sailor, with nothing but his fame to recommend him, to one who thus displays the valour that he boasts of—not in the service of his country; no, in insulting unprotected women.

Privilege. And you'd be rash enough to leave the house!

Honoria. I would; the rashness is in staying here—here, where each moment teems with dan-

ger.—Let me pass—let me seek him who is alone my friend, and whom I'll follow through the world.

Privilege (seizing and detaining her.) Hold! recollect where you are—in mine and Mrs. Sapling's power; and till our marriage, this room shall be your prison!—Ay: I'll fight him and his whole ship's company, sooner than—

Enter PAUL POSTPONE hastily.

Paul Come along—trial's on—court waiting—witness call'd for—nay: no delaying—this way you little rogue! this way. (*Takes him in his arms, and carries him off.*)

Honoria. Alone! in safety!—now then for love and Henry! [*Exit.*

SCENE.—*The Outside of the Town-Hall.*

Enter Sir EDWARD and Servant.

Sir Edw. She is secur'd you say!

Servant. Yes, sir; and Mr. Postpone bade me inform you, he was so sure of success, that, no doubt, by this time, the prisoner is convicted.

Sir Edw. Then I am safe. It never can be proved, he died a natural death—(*aside.*) Go, watch the trial, and when his doom is certain, be swift as lightning to inform me. (*Servant exit.*)—Oh yes: Lauretta's evidence is final, for he who proffer'd medical advice, and knew the wound ne'er caused Sir Frederick's death, is purposely abroad.—I live again—my character is unimpeach'd—St. Orme will never meddle or torment me, and his Amelia and her proud estate are still at my disposal.

Enter

Enter PAUL POSTPONE.

Paul. So Sir Edward—Have you heard?—

Sir Edw. I have. I've heard that you secur'd Lauretta, and that secures my triumph.

Paul. No; it don't: for owing to my extreme zeal and activity, instead of a lady in boy's clothes, it turns out, I subpœna'd a little man! and so, for want of evidence, the prisoner is acquitted.

Sir Edw. Acquitted!

Paul. Ay; to the joy and satisfaction of the whole court: for they whisper'd strange stories of Sir Frederick dying a natural death; and when they told them to me, says I: "I'm sorry then I took such uncommon pains, and if Sir Edward is not of my humane disposition, I should regret doing him an injury, but I'd never—never try another cause for him."

Sir Edw. Fool! blunderer! you know not half the danger I'm involv'd in; you've set a lion loose to menace and pursue me.—What's to be done? rescu'd himself, he will release his wife!—I must prevent it—instantly prevent it; and for you—whose folly and delay has ruin'd—has destroy'd me——

Paul. Delay!—it's no fault of mine. When I was told the lady's dress, was I to stare, and pry, and examine?—and if I had, unless this Mr. Privilege would write the word "man" on his forehead, the devil himself wouldn't know him to be one.

Sir Edw. Sir, you've undone me; and that others may not suffer by such wilful ignorance, and gross neglect, I will expose your errors to the world. Nay, sir; if I'm disgrac'd, you shall not pass uncentur'd.

[*Exit.*

Paul.

Paul. Expose my errors! try to knock me up in my profession! when every body knows I've been hurried out of my senses; and that business can't be well done, unless a man has time to do it coolly.—However, I must look about me; I must still give up enjoying myself, and get another law-suit, if it's only to convince him and the whole county, that with a good client, clear case, and strong evidence, no man has more success than Paul——

Enter ROBERT GRANGE.

Robert. Sir, your humble servant—I hope I don't mistake; but if you be the wonderful London lawyer they do talk of, I've a bit of a job for you.

Paul. You have, have you?—talk of the Devil——I'm he! I'm the wonderful London lawyer!

Robert. By gom! I thought so; and I like your looks at first sight; you seem to have so little pride—so little of the gentleman about you, sir.

(*bowing.*)

Paul. Thank you—and I'm happy to be able to return the compliment; but your case; state, state——

Robert. Why, you see, sir, I be not a person of rank myself; but cousin Bell be my lady, though I be none; and poor soul! she a been cast away like a weed by a base deceiver—and when he came out of Ivy farm, I'd certainly have stopt him, and got an understanding; only Bell fitted it beyond her usual mark, and claw'd me so tight by the throat, that he got off; and here I am, as you see, sir, without any understanding at all.

Paul. Enough—see your case at one view—plaintiff, unsuspecting country girl; defendant, rich seducer; domestic peace, parental love, filial affection,

fection, paradise, Eve, Satan, dark night, rope ladder, post-chaise and four, and a thousand pounds damages—only wish she were a married woman, and you her husband—that's the valuable action; but as it is—What's her name?

Robert. Why she do call herself Lady Sensitive; but I suppose that won't do with you lawyer gentlemen; and so, between ourselves, her real name is Bell—Arabella Grange.

Paul. Arabella!—very well—and her seducer's?

Robert. Sapling; and you'll find him yonder, at the Star inn.

Paul. Sapling! Oh ho—thought so—thought this would come of the old fellow's fashionable habits—know him well; and see, if I mistake now—see, if this case don't confirm my reputation; and difficult as it is, I'll get you an understanding (*going*). But stop—let it be moderate—don't expect a great one.

Robert. No: our terms are quite moderate; Bell only requires that he'd settle on her all his own fortune, and all this Miss Honoria Thingambob's; and as to myself, I shall be satisfied if he'll just promote me to the rank of major or colonel—either in the army or navy, I don't care which, sir.

Paul. Don't you?—it's done then.—An hour hence meet me at the Star inn; and bring your cousin with you; and we'll have a bit of dinner; always mix pleasure with business, one helps the other; and only be ready with your evidence—no disguises though—no getting into petticoats—no—come forward as witness—and I'm a wonderful lawyer.—Arabella, a rich lady; and you, a major or a colonel, in the army or the navy! [*Exit.*]

Robert. Dang it—as I said, not a bit of the gentleman about him; but somehow, I'm sorry he do want me as witness; I can't bear the thought of
these

these examinations and cross examinations, ever since they brow beat me so at last 'sives:—"So," says Counsellor Bounce, "your name is Robert Grange, is it? Well! and pray what is your opinion of this case, Master Robert?"—"Why, I take it," says I, "you are paid for your opinion Master Counsel, and therefore I'll thank you for a fee, before I give mine."—"Silence!" says he, "and upon your oath, are you not such a notorious poacher, that you are commonly call'd snaring, thieving Bob?"—"Yes, I am," says I, "by such low chaps as you are; but never by gentlemen; and if you'll step out, and have a snug, friendly round or two, why I'll wager this half guinea"—and then I felt for my purse and couldn't find it; and so I fell a blubbering, and charg'd them all with picking my pocket, and then they laugh'd, and turn'd me out of court!—but I'll to Bell; and if this master lawyer do provide for us, why I'll be so grateful to the whole tribe, that I'll give them my opinion gratis, whenever they ask for it. [*Exit.*]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

SCENE.—*The Outside of the Star Inn.—In the Back Ground an open Country.—Trees at the Wings.*

Enter SAPLING and Groom.

Sapling. Don't you be afraid, William. I'll keep my ground; I'll vex her in my turn. I'll join the hunt, dine with the club, sing, game, and destroy my own health in toasting other people's; and if I drink myself dead, I know she won't survive me: and if I get dead drunk, why, then I'm a philosopher—above her, and the miseries of this life.

Groom. Ay, sir, this is all very well now; but suppose mistress were present.

Sapling. Then I'd avow it to her face. Go, prepare my favourite, whilst I dress in the inn. Oh yes, the chase inspires me! and dogs and horses shall afford that solid joy, that love and wives and monkies would deny me. I'm up!—the lion's rous'd!—an earthquake wou'dn't shake me!
[Exit into the inn.]

Enter HONORIA, with her Hat and Cloak on.

Honoria. Heavens! how my heart beats! Yonder is the inn; and yet I fear that Henry will condemn me. Perhaps he knows not my immediate

diate danger ; but, surely, when he hears it, he'll (*noise without*)—Ha ! all hope is past ; I am pursued, discovered.

Enter Mrs. SAPLING.

Mrs. Sapling. Vastly well !—as I was informed. Caught you in the fact of eloping, on the very eve of setting out for Scotland ! But come, madam ; and if you persist in the excursion, let Mr. Privilege conduct you.

Honoria. Never ! Coward as I am, I will not give my hand but where my heart's dispos'd of : and Henry, generous Henry, is its owner !

Mrs. Sapling. What ! Mr. Sapling hasn't told you then ? You hav'n't heard of this rival ?

Honoria. Rival !

Mrs. Sapling. Oh yes ; there's a mistress in the case. The generous, artless Henry keeps a creature ——

Honoria. I'll not believe it ; the heart that's capable of virtuous love must scorn all baser passion ; and here (*producing a letter*) he tells me he's devoted to Honoria. Look !

Mrs. Sapling (*looking over the letter*). I do ; and it seems, “ he's in that inn, and detained there on “ secret business.” Oh, why secret ? My life on't, because the lady is now with him. I know Mr. Sapling sent for her, and therefore——Land-land ! landlord !

Enter Landlord.

Landlord. Madam !

Mrs. Sapling. Tell me, sir, isn't there a naval officer, a Mr. Henry Sapling, in your house ?

Landlord. There is, ma'am.

Mrs.

Mrs. Sapling. And is he alone? That is, isn't there a lady with him?

Landlord. Yes, ma'am, there is a lady with him.

Mrs. Sapling. There! Now are you satisfied?

Honoriam (*much agitated*). One moment. Perhaps it is Loretta? Pray, sir, is the lady very young? About fifteen, sir?

Landlord. No, ma'am: she seems to be nearly thirty; but very handsome.

Honoriam. And you are sure, quite sure, that it is Henry Sapling?

Landlord. Quite, ma'am.

Honoriam. Come, madam, I'll go home, and do whatever you require of me, and cheerfully; for I'm happy, quite happy (*bursting into tears*); and I'll never think of the false, false Henry more.

Mrs. Sapling. Won't you? Poor girl! (*weeping violently.*) Oh barbarous, inconstant man? (*going.*)

Enter PAUL POSTPONE, meeting them.

Paul. Inconstant man! and in tears! you've heard then?

Mrs. Sapling. We have, sir: his falsehood is detected.

Paul. I thought so. When I gave you my card, I fear'd you'd find him out; but there's this consolation—your damages will be greater than Arabella's.

Mrs. Sapling. My damages!

Paul. Aye; you are an amiable, deserted wife; but Arabella——

Mrs. Sapling. I a deserted wife! Peace, sir! and know 'tis Henry Sapling—'tis his nephew that——

Paul. His nephew! Pooh! that's very well to blind you; but that sort of cover won't do for me.

No;

No; and since my reputation rests upon this case, and I'm tir'd of being libell'd for other people's blunders, I'll have him out, and prove——

Mrs. Sapling. Do, sir: convince yourself, and this distrustful girl, that Henry is this Arabella's swain, and that my doating husband, who never wanders from my apron-strings, and who is now at home waiting with anxious——

Enter SAPLING, from the Inn, strutting, and in a hunting Dress.

Mercy on me! here, in the inn! Speak, sir—how came you— (*SAPLING passes by her, and goes towards the wing.*) Why, what are you doing?

Sapling (*pretending not to see or hear her*). William! Is my favourite ready?

Mrs. Sapling. What favourite? Heavens! Surely you don't mean this creature, this Arabella?

Sapling. I do mean Arabella; and I avow it—boast of it. I have secretly concealed her a long time; but now she shall have more of my company. I'll go out with her every morning, visit her every evening, keep her an additional servant, have drawings, paintings, statues made of her——in short, curse me if I don't think I'll live with her.

Mrs. Sapling. Astonishing! live with her!

Sapling. Why not? She will be careful of my neck, though she has no annuity upon it! And you, Honoria, you shall also share my favour; and we'll return to the farm, and never more quit it for faithless, fickle, cru—(*half crying*). There! I've shewn my spirit. And now, come along, girl.

Honoria. Thank Fortune! Henry's affection is confirmed.

Paul. Thank Fortune! my reputation is confirmed. And that Sir Edward may know of my success,

success—come, madam; I'll attend you to Delauny House!—And, for this little gay deceiver, depend on't, we'll bring him on his knees.

Mrs. Sapling. Ay: he shall sue in vain for pardon; and, for the rest—oh! I wish, with all my heart, my first husband were alive.

Sapling. So do I, with all my soul; then you'd have finished him, instead of me.

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE—*A Wood.*

Enter HENRY, Mrs. ST. ORME, and LAURETTA.

N. B. LAURETTA *is in her own Cloaths.*

Mrs. St. Orme, to Henry. May Heaven unite you to Honoria—hearts such as yours can best reward each other—but, to my purpose; that you, my child, no more may suffer by the frowns of fortune, first let me claim my lost hereditary rights, and then to seek abroad that happiness denied me here.

Lauretta. Abroad!—You cannot; you will see my father.

Mrs. St. Orme. No, he has deceiv'd me once, and may again confine me. Like you, I triumph in his late success, and wish my charges were as groundless as Sir Edward's—but no, his letter is decisive! and therefore come to Delauny House, and there we part, my child.

Lauretta. Part, mother!—Speak, intercede for me, sir.

Mrs. St. Orme. Yes; part, Lauretta! I to some foreign clime, and you where duty and affection dictate—he has no crimes to you, and though I thus

could cling for ever round you, I will not rob him of a treasure he deserves. No, he has accustom'd me to sorrow, and I can proudly wish him happy, happy with his daughter.

Lauretta. Why, why won't you speak, sir?

Henry Sapling. I do, ma'am—don't you see I'm speaking all the time? not with my tongue, that sticks to my mouth; but my eyes, my hands, my heart, are all speaking; and when a sailor's on shore, I don't think it kind of his friends to be always soaking him in this manner with salt water.—(*Weeping.*)—Besides, there's danger at Delauny House.

Mrs. St. Orme. What danger, sir? the estate is mine; I go to claim it for my child; and in such a cause, fear can't assail me.—Come, and when you've found your friend, speak not of me; or, if you do, I will be silent and avoid him.—Oh yes; to him I'm still a coward; but to Sir Edward and his haughty friends, I'm firm as pride, maternal love, and conscous worth can make me.

[*Exit with LAURETTA.*

Henry. Indeed!—I wish she'd spare me a little of her firmness; for between her, and St. Orme, and Honoria, and another lady, I'm fairly flurried out of my senses.—Gad! I don't know which I think most of.—Yes I do, though; her ladyship's is the lasting impression! I shall never forget her! and as a proof she won't forget me, look, here's her curst Yorkshire champion.—Zounds! once in these scrapes, a man never gets out of them.

Enter ROBERT GRANGE.

Robert. Sir, your very humble servant—I—I—Oh Lord! what will become of me? (*bursts into tears.*)

Henry.

Henry. Peace, sir; none of your sham sensibility——

Robert. Nay; it's all downright earnest now: for you mun know, I went to a lawyer about your casting off Bell; and when I got back to the tavern, I found she had cast me off!—Yes, you see she had a knack of never fainting properly, unless there was somebody to look on; and so she got blubbering at the window, and one Captain O'Sash saw her, and nodded, and——dear! dear! I can't contain myself.

Henry. No more can I!—Go on, melodious messenger—proceed, seraphic orator!

Robert. One Captain O'Sash, I say, nodded and tript up stairs; and soon after, Bell order'd the low chariot, and away they both went to a French foreign place call'd Tipperary—yes, Tipperary—and further, I'm sorry I can't tell you.

Henry. And so am I; for I could dwell for ever on that silver sweet ton'd voice—and for this friendly captain——Oh! blessings on him! I'll go see Honoria directly.

Robert. Od dang it! what, won't thee try to bring her back again?

Henry. No, curse me if I do—and that you may not attempt so rash an act, here's money to drink them a pleasant journey. [Exit ROBERT.

And now for that delicious darling hope, a wife, fire-side, children, pure domestic love. Oh, generous, noble captain!

May all his future days be gay and airy
In the sweet bowers of love and Tipperary.

Thomas. Sir, I ax pardon; but, to avoid detection, and get time for escaping, I understand Farmer Nightshade has given out that Mrs. St. Orme is dead.

Henry. Dead!

Thomas. Yes, fir; and Sir Edward believes the report.

Henry. Indeed! let the plot thicken, then. Tell St. Orme, he'll find Laretta at Delauny House.

[*Exit THOMAS.*

And may he there again partake connubial joys.

Enter SAPLING.

Sapling. Connubial joys! That's right, Henry. Come and enjoy them. Come, and marry Honoria directly.

Henry. What! consent! let me have a wife at last!

Sapling. Ay; being in for't myself, the more the merrier, I say.

Henry. So say I. Oh! if every body knew the blessings of matrimony as much as I do, England would treble its inhabitants; and its most valuable property would be old bachelors and old maids; for they'd be taken alive, and shewn as curiosities.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE.—*The Library, with Painting Apparatus and transparent windows, as in 2d Scene of the 2d Act—only, being day-light, the Windows are now illuminated.—LAURETTA is discover'd painting Letters on the Vestal buried alive—at the Top she has already written the words “Edward Delauny,” and at the bottom nearly finish'd those of “Amelia St. Orme.”—Mrs. ST. ORME is discover'd with her.*

Mrs. St. Orme. Desist—desist, Laretta!—this libel on Sir Edward will never vindicate your father.

Lauretta. Nay, dearest Madam, I have nearly finish'd; another letter will complete the work. There! (*comes down*).—Thus let the mystery be solv'd, be this the touchstone of Sir Edward's conduct! And if it prove as I suspect, that he's the real culprit, think of the bright reward—you, mother! you still shall bless Lauretta and her father.

Mrs. St. Orme. Oh! if I thought there were a hope! but no, 'tis past; and therefore to avow my claim——

St. Orme (without). Where is she? Where is my daughter?

Mrs. St. Orme. Heavens! So near me! my shatter'd brain can't struggle with the conflict!— (*Going towards stage door*).

Lauretta. Stay, I implore you, stay.

Mrs. St. Orme. I cannot! dare not! no, within this room I may remain conceal'd; and, since I gain'd admission here unnotic'd, unobserv'd, none can betray me but yourself.

Lauretta. Fear not, for I bless the lucky chance, that thus enables you to hear and judge how you have wrong'd my father.

[*Mrs. ST. ORME exit at stage door.*]

Enter ST. ORME and Sir EDWARD DELAUNY.

St. Orme, to Sir Edward, as he enters. Think not I came to menace or intrude; no, sir, I came on Henry's suggestion, to seek my dear lov'd daughter; and what strange motive brought her to this place, she shall explain hereafter. We owe no favour to Delauny House, and never will! (*Crosses to LAURETTA, takes her hand, embraces her, &c.*)

Sir Edward (aside). And I myself should scrutinize her motive, but that Amelia's death makes

me defy all fear—Oh yes, the dreaded tale died with her; and therefore (*to ST ORME*), take a last farewell of this proud house, that still so galls and irritates——(*Crossing, he sees the transparency, and starts*).—Ha; whose deed is this?—“Edward Delauny!” (*reading and trembling*).

Lauretta. Ay; and “Amelia St. Orme.”—What alarms you? Why should a picture agitate you thus?—I tremble not; no, nor my father!—See, though the story shocks his tender nature, he turns not from it with remorse;—No, the faithful husband and the ardent lover break forth in mingl’d tears of pity and affection!—(*falls on her knees*).—Oh Heaven!—I said—I knew that he was innocent!

St. Orme. Explain, *Lauretta*. What means that——

Lauretta. Means!—That that lovely suppliant is my mother: and that the hand that robs her thus of liberty and life, is her exalted kinsman’s, who treats the stage with scorn and indignation, when but a mimic scene like this can goad the guilty, and reward the good.—Father! you must, you shall be happy! (*embracing him*.)

Sir Edward. Audacious girl! who dare accuse me of such crimes?

Lauretta. I, in the face of Heaven and of man—I will aver, that to retain this splendid edifice and proud domain, you thus immured the best of mothers and of wives—if not, behold the picture firmly, like my father.—See! he dare not—Oh, guilty!—on my soul he’s guilty!

Sir Edward. ’Tis false—and were your mother here, she would accuse another.

St. Orme. What other, sir?

Sir Edward. You know too well. Nay, dare not

to deny it—here's damning proof against you. (*Producing letter, and reading.*)—"I charge you to confine her—if she escape"——

St. Orme. Oh villain!—curst contriving villain!—if that which tenderness and pity prompted, has been perverted to such savage purpose, may every husband's, every father's curse——But no, guilt such as this, is so unparallel'd, that we should pray for mercy, not for vengeance.

Sir Edward. Away, and know she died the victim of her malady.

St. Orme. Died!

Sir Edw. Ay: and by her decease, I sway for ever here:—and mark me, sir; if rashly you revive the charge, this letter shall acquit me to the world.—No other witness can be found——

Enter Mrs. ST. ORME.

Mrs. St. Orme. There can—and I'm that witness!—My life! my husband! after such proofs, shall I delay to clasp you to my heart?—No: the story of your falsehood was contriv'd like this, from treacherous, sordid motives; and henceforth my suspicion is reserved for those who would destroy domestic peace—my love and confidence for him and her, who know no wish beyond it! (*getting between ST. ORME and LAURETTA.*)

St. Orme. Share—share my joys Laurretta; alone I can't support them.—And you, Sir Edward—

Mrs. St. Orme. Upbraid him not: his triumph was to punish, ours is to pardon.—Yes, sir—(*to Sir EDWARD*) the virtuous best resent their wrongs, by deigning to forgive them.

Sir Edw. I see I am betray'd, and need not your reproaches; my own, and that reproachful look are quite sufficient; and thus disgrac'd, I

shall renounce all future claim; for fortune, rank, and life, are equally indifferent!—farewell! (*going*) and to relieve you from those bitter pangs that goad and torture here, know, 'twas the hand of Heaven, not your's, that doom'd Sir Frederick to his grave.

Enter Mrs. SAPLING, meeting him.

Mrs. Sapling. What! going, cousin! now, when I expect the bride and bridegroom! (*Sir EDWARD exit.*)—and leave your company!—You're vastly welcome though (*curtseying to ST. ORME, Mrs. ST. ORME, and LAURETTA*); and I expect my penitent husband, and with him, Honoria married to Mr. Privilege: these are the terms of my forgiveness, and so Mr. Postpone is gone to inform him. (*music without.*) Here they come. I ordered one of my grand marches to announce their arrival,

Flourish of Music, and enter SAPLING, HENRY, HONORIA, and PAUL POSTPONE.

Mrs. Sapling. Oh joy! my dear Mr. Privilege! a thousand joys!

Henry. You're too good—and in return, allow me to introduce to you Mrs. Henry Sapling!

Mrs. Sapling. What!

Henry. Mrs. Henry Sapling; and to save you the trouble of telling her of my past follies, I've told her myself, and she generously forgave me; and for any further information on this subject, I refer you to Captain O'Sash at Tipperary; and for any information relative to the bridegroom you expected, I refer you to the taylor who has just arrested him; so there end his privileges—and here begin mine (*kissing HONORIA*).

Mrs. Sapling.

Mrs. Sapling. Why, Mr. Postpone, hav'n't you explained?

Sapling. He has; he told me how Privilege got into the bed-chamber, and I told him that my Arabella was related to Hambletonian, Rockingham, Ticklepilcher, and Potatoes; but, as usual, he came too late. He stopt to follow the fox chace. So, by his delay, I've lost a dear good wife, and Henry's gain'd one.

Paul. Don't blame me; I told you all along there was no doing business by driving and hurrying.—And twenty attornies wou'dn't be sufficient for such a fashionable family as you are. But, I give you joy, ma'am (to HONORIA); and if I've time, and your husband's leave, I'll visit you every long vacation.—And I give you joy Mr. St. Orme; and should they traduce me for not convicting an innocent person, should they say I'm not a sharp and active lawyer, so much the better—I know I'm an honest one, and I'll *delay* to alter that character as long as I live.

Henry. Come, since we are all united—since, as I hoped, Henry and Lauretta have regain'd their prize—shall nunky have no wife?—Come, madam, come——

Sapling. Mrs. Sapling! my life! my——that's a good sign—silence is a proof of love.

Mrs. Sapling. Indeed! then I fancy few married ladies are in love—but I'm too well bred to wrangle; so, there!

Sapling. And there! (*Shaking hands*)

Henry. And now henceforward copy me uncle;—think not of any Arabellas: or if you do—be it to pity those, who, but for men's seducing arts, had known, like us, the bliss of virtuous love!

Honoria.

Honorina.

Then crown our pleasures with your genial praise,
Blame not our *Blunders*, pardon our *Delays*.
All aid my suit. (*to HENRY.*)

Henry.

Let me your favour court ;
A married sailor begs you won't spoil sport.

Sapling.

So does a fox-hunter (*recollecting and looking at*
Mrs. SAPLING) a finish'd man.

Mrs. Sapling.

Ay, ladies, look—refuse him if you can.

Mrs. St. Orme.

And we entreat you——

Paul.

Yes, and Paul Postpone.
Your smiles are fees for all his labours done.
Each cheering nod demonstrates he has *great* sense,
And every clap's a glorious six and eight pence,
Then, take the hint, and, spite of critic laws,
We'll to an English Jury trust our cause,

END OF THE FIFTH ACT.

EPILOGUE,

WRITTEN BY MILES PETER ANDREWS, Esq.

SPOKEN BY MRS. MATTOCKS,

ONCE more I come my services to tender,
Will you once more receive an old offender?
Who, arm'd with Epilogue's sarcastic strain,
Hath often here indulg'd her sportive vein;
Hath Fashion's sanction'd store presum'd to rifle,
And with your fav'rite follies dared to trifle.

Our Play concluded, shall I humbly sue,
As Epilogue of old was wont to do?
Or, heedless of the Poet and his trade,
Frolic at random, and cry, Who's afraid?

Balloons are now the hobbies that engage;
Certain criterion of a *soaring* age.
The flighty heroine, and the dashing fair,
Whose characters are rather worse for wear,
May scorn dull squeamish prudes, stiff laced and curi'd,
Mount a Balloon, and rise above the world.
How fine th' idea! By the winds alone,
Not by old dowagers, to be blown upon.

But while on air so pleasantly we rise,
Things better hid, perhaps, may meet our eyes.
GILES GRUB the grocer, sailing o'er his shop,
His eye may thro' his parlour skylight pop:
" Good Mounshur Flyaway! do let me out;
" Dickens! what's duck and journeyman about?
" The compter's left—spouse does so love to chat—
" She'll now do nothing else."—" No fear of dat.
" Allons—de French philosophie you learn—
" Leave journeyman—he manage your concern."

Off goes Balloon—all cares are out of sight:
Down in a marsh drops GILES in hapless plight,
And finds himself a happy man e'er night. }

If France in novelties must still have sway,
What dainty dame at home will bear to stay?

Sir

EPILOGUE.

Sir JOHN, a simple knight, nor more nor less,
 Dubb'd for his township's, not his own address;
 Thinks all but Paris now is low and silly;
 So wife, son, self—are cramm'd into the dilly.—
 Chuckfull they go—the door, you scarce can lock it;
 Shawls, drams, pies, pattens—stuff'd into each pocket.
 Sick of rough roads, they're trundl'd down to Dover;
 More sick of rougher seas, they're wafted over.
 On shore, my lady cries, “ Now, dear, d'ye see,
 “ Don't you parley—but leave the French to me!
 “ Here, Mounfur Waiter! *porter* me some beer.
 “ *Plait il, madame?* I say—*Ontong*—d'ye hear?
 “ *Porter de dinné.* Is Paris far? *Bien loin.*”
 “ That's right, my lady—Porter and firloin,”
 “ *Tecray* Sir JOHN. Zounds, mother! change that strain,
 “ Speak in the vulgar tongue, and you'll speak plain.
 “ *Fi donc!* with English we shall not advance:
 “ Plain English truths are not the taste in France.
 “ No, faith—those squibs that we so witty call,
 “ Egad the French esteem no jokes at all;
 “ Nor can one get, so much they hate what's funny,
 “ An English newspaper—for love or money.”
 At home again—one word before we part;
 Our Author claims it from each feeling heart:
 But chief from you, ye fair, whose cherish'd name
 Love crowns with honour, or consigns to shame;
 You will our Poet greet with warm applause,
 Who pleads so firmly in your beauty's cause;
 And to vain man the contrast strives to prove
 'Twixt lawless passion and connubial love.

THE END.

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