

DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

A farce,

IN ONE ACT.

MARK LEMON,

AUTHOR OF

" *The Ladies' Club*," " *Self-Accusation*," " *A Moving Tale*,"
" *Gwynneth Vaughan*," " *Jack-in-the-Green*,"

THOMAS HAILES LACY,
WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND,

*First Performed at the Royal Adelphi Theatre, Thursday.
Nov. 8th, 1849.*

Characters.

JOHN GRUMLEY	Mr. WRIGHT.
SERGEANT TOM BROWN	Mr. C. J. SMITH.
JOEY (<i>Grumley's Son</i>)	Master WOODWARD.
MRS. GRUMLEY	Mrs. F. MATHEWS.
MRS. SHACKLES	Miss E. CHAPLIN.
MRS. KNAGLEY	Mrs. LAWS.
PEGGY BROWN	Miss HUNT.
SALLY 	Miss ROBBINS.



Time in Performance, Fifty Minutes.

Costumes.

GRUMLEY—Labourer's coat, breeches, and boots.

BROWN—Sergeant's uniform; one arm.

JOEY—Corduroy suit.

MRS. GUMLEY—Plain cotton dress, apron, cap.

THE OTHER FEMALES—The same, of different colours.

DOMESTIC ECONOMY.

The Scene represents a Chandler's Shop R., and a Room adjoining L.

MRS. GRUMLEY *discovered washing JOEY, R.H. side of the stage, in the room next the shop.*

MRS. G. Stand still, Joey, do. There never was such a tiresome boy to be washed.

JOEY. The soap's in my eye.

MRS. G. The soap's in your eye? and serve you right, sir—you should stand still. There are many things in this life we should shut our eyes to, and soap is one of them. As if I hadn't enough to do in an ordinary way, what with the shop and the house, (*brushes JOEY'S hair*) and one thing and another.

Shop bell rings, and MRS. SHACKLES enters.

MRS. G. (*calls*) Coming, di-rectly!

MRS. S. (*in the shop, loudly*) Oh, don't hurry, Mrs. Grumley. it's only Mrs. Shackles. Fine morning.

MRS. G. Ve-ry, after the rain.

MRS. S. Yes. Wind's rather high.

MRS. G. Yes, it is high, and it's high time that something should be high, for everything's been very low latterly. (*to JOEY*) There now, keep yourself clean and tidy till dinner-time, and I'll give you a bull's-eye. (*she goes into shop*) Now, ma'am, what can I do for you?

MRS. S. A quarter o' pound of bacon, and streaky, if you please.

MRS. G. You shall have it so, ma'am, (*shows bacon*) That's a lovely side, ma'am—ten and a half, and as you like it, ma'am—streaky as a tulip.

MRS. S. Yes, ma'am, that seems all right.

MRS. G. If I didn't know it was prime, you shouldn't have it. It's a bit of Mrs. Knagley's pig.

MRS. S. (*warmly*) There, don't, Mrs. G.—don't cut that for me. I couldn't swallow her bacon to save my own, if I was longing for it. Any other will do, ma'am—quarter of a pound, ma'am. Mrs. Knagley's? No, no—not if I knows it.

MRS. G. Dear me! Why, I thought you were friends?

MRS. S. Used to be, ma'am, I grant you—used to be; but when a woman offers to mangle small things at a penny a dozen less than the reg'lar price, she's no longer a friend of Sarah Shackles.

MRS. G. I'm sure I'm very sorry to hear this.

MRS. S. I'm sorry to say it, ma'am. Oh, the friend I've been to that woman! The pearlash and soap I've lent her, nobody knows; and when she broke the rope of her mangle, wasn't mine at her service? But do a good turn, even with a mangle, to anybody, and you make them your mortal enemy. It's the way of the world, ma'am.

MRS. G. Ah, I'm afraid so. Twopence three farthings, ma'am.

MRS. S. There's the money, ma'am. Never mind the change; I'll take a farden's worth of cakes, as it's my Billy's birth-day, and I promised him a feast. Eight years old to-day, ma'am. Good morning, ma'am. Dear me, how the wind blows. (*as she goes out*) How do you do, Mrs. Jones? Fine morning. Wind's rather high, &c.

Exit.

MRS. G. What a woman that is to talk, to be sure! Her tongue's like our dog's tail at dinner-time, it's always wagging.

JOEY, *during the above dialogue, has been trying to get the drawer out of the table, at last succeeds, and falls backward into a washing-tub, which is in front of the fireplace and the table.*

JOEY. Oh, mother, mother.

MRS. G. (*enters room*) Why, what's the matter now? (*pulls JOEY out of tub, and boxes his ears*) Why, you good-for-nothing little monkey—right on the top of your

father's Sunday shirt, besides wetting yourself to the skin. There, go to bed, do. (*driving JOEY up stairs R.H.*) If your father was to see you, he'd storm the house down.

JOEY. Ugh, ugh ! I didn't go to do it. Ugh, ugh !

MRS. G. There, go along.

Exit JOEY upstairs.

—(*looking at clock*) Dear me ! five minutes to eight, and John's breakfast not ready. He'll be sure to be here at the hour,—his appetite's like a prize chronometer, it never loses a second. (*bustles about*) He'll make such a row if everything's not ready for him. Good gracious ! I've forgot to put his bacon down. (*runs into shop*) John must eat Mrs. Knagley's pig, though she has ruined the mangling.

She cuts rashers, returns into room, and puts, bacon into Dutch-oven, which she places before the fire—
CLOCK STRIKES EIGHT.

Enter JOHN GRUMLEY—He takes off his " Jerry hat" and outer coat, and places his hoe near the table.

JOHN. Now, Mary, breakfast ready ?

MRS. G. In a minute, John, I'll be ready.

JOHN. In a minute ! Why ain't you ready *now* ?

MRS. G. There, don't be cross. I've had so much to do.

JOHN. Much to do ! Well, that's a good 'un. You're like Banks's mare, that was too lazy to eat, and died 'cos they wouldn't feed her with a spoon.

MRS. G. Oh, that's right—grumbling again ! I don't think you could live without it. How you must like thunder. (*shop bell rings*) Coming ! There, John, turn the bacon.

She enters shop, and serves customer.

JOHN. I sha'n't ~~turn~~ the bacon. There it is, fizzing away like the biler  a steam-engine. It's getting as black as a coal. There, now the fat's in the fire, and it's all in a blaze. I sha'n't put it out. Why wasn't it ready afore ? It ain't my place to cook the bacon,—my place is to eat it.

MRS. G. (*re-enters, takes Dutch-oven from fire, and looks at bacon*) Why, John, the bacon's spoiled, I declare. (*places it on a plate, quite black*)

JOHN. I suppose it is,—that ain't my fault; I ain't the fire, and I ain't the bacon, and I ain't Mrs. Grumley—*(louder)* I'm Mr. Grumley come home to breakfast, after hoeing taters since six o'clock in the morning.

MRS. G. It don't look nice, does it ?

JOHN. No, it don't. I ain't going to eat that, after working like a horse as I do. I ain't going to make my breakfast off bread and cinders. Who ever heard of *ashed* bacon ? There, give us some tea.

MRS. G. Good gracious—if you haven't flurried me so that I've forgot to make it! *(prepares tea hurriedly, takes tea-pot and makes tea ; kettle from fire-place, &c.)*

JOHN. Ugh ! Now I've got to wait for that till it draws, and a precious long time that'll be. Dang me if I ain't a mind to go down to the Red Lion, and have a gallon of ale for breakfast. *(rising)* I will, too.

Goes into shop—she brings him back.

MRS. G. *(pushing him back into a chair)* Now, John, don't be so unkind, don't. It will be ready in a minute. *(pouring out a cup of tea)*

JOHN. That won't make a chap nervous. If it wasn't for the look of the thing, I'd as soon drink water. *(drinks and coughs)* Ugh, ugh ! You call this tea ? I wonder you ain't ashamed to look a tea-pot in the face. It's nothing but birch-broom, and here's a bit big enough to make a cribbage peg.

MRS. G. La, John, how disagreeable you are this morning !

JOHN. Disagreeable ? Well, I like that.

MRS. G. I know you do.

JOHN. When a chap's been hoeing taters, and comes in to have his wittels, and finds none ready, of course he's likely to be agreeable. A man ain't a balloon, Mrs. Grumley. He requires to be filled with something besides nothing. I don't know what you do with your time, for my part.

MRS. G. I don't think you do.

JOHN. Nothing, as I can see.

MRS. G. Why, I'm a perfect slave, I am. If I were a regular Ethiopian, I couldn't be wearing out my bones faster.

JOHN. You ! What do you do, I should like to know ?

MRS. G. When I get up, I light the fire—

JOHN. Well, you couldn't do that lying in bed. What next ?

MRS. G. Open the shop, sweep up the house, and clean the door-step—

JOHN. What is there to boast of in opening the shop, that you are so proud of it, and so go on ? You're like the shutters, and want taking down a peg.

MRS. G. Make the beds, wash Joey, and comb his hair—

JOHN. Comb his hair ? That's nothing to *hoeing taters*.

MRS. G. Get the breakfast—

JOHN. Not always.

MRS. G. Mind the shop, and serve the customers.

JOHN. Serve the customers indeed ! And how do you serve me ? If you give them as short weight as you give me short commons, we must be making a rapid fortune. And that's all you'll do to-day ?

MRS. G. No it is not, Mr. Grumley. I've washing to do, pudding to make, taters to peel, and—

JOHN. That's nothing to hoeing on 'em.

MRS. G. Grate to clean, hearth to scrub—

JOHN. Hearth to scrub ? Why, I'd do all your work in an hour, any day in the week.

MRS. G. You would—you would, John Grumley ? Then do it, John Grumley, do it !

JOHN. And so I will, and you shall hoe the taters.

MRS. G. And I'll do it, I'll do it, John Grumley, I'll do it ! You shall do my work, and I'll do yours. (*puts on hat and coats*) I can stand this no longer. I can hoe the taters as well as you, I'll be sworn. Now, John Grumley.

JOHN. And now, Mary Grumley. I can make a pudding as well as you, I'll be sworn. I wasn't in the Militia three years for nothing.

MRS. G. Then do it to-day, John ; and I wish you joy of your job, John.

Exit through door into shop.

JOHN. I say, what are you going to hoe the taters with ?

MRS. GRUMLEY *returns for the hoe.*

MRS. G. Oh, I had forgot that.

Exit L.

JOHN. (*calling after her*) I say, dinner ready at twelve o'clock; if you ain't back in time, I shall begin without you.—No, she won't frighten me. A man who has served three weeks' campaign on Wormwood Scrubs can turn his hand to anything. What shall I do first? I may as well wash up the tea-things. (*takes the tea-kettle, pours out hot water, puts cup into the bowl, and scalds his fingers—drops the cup*) Mrs. Grumley mustn't know of this, for every piece will provoke a row.

JOEY *appears at the top of the stairs.*

—I'll say Joey did it.

JOEY. Then mother won't give me any more bread and treacle. Oh, oh, ho!

JOHN. Hallo! I thought you were in school. Why ain't you in school?

JOEY. Because I've been in the wash-tub.

JOHN. What do you mean? Come down—come down directly.

JOEY *descends—he wears a pair of his father's knee breeches.*

JOHN. Why those are my Sunday smalls. By the law of Nature you may tread in your father's shoes, but you have no right to get into your father's what's-'em-names. But since you're at home, make yourself useful. Fetch me a pitcher of water.

JOEY *takes brown pitcher, and exit through shop.*

—I may as well go on with the wash. (*places washing-tub on chair, and begins to wash—Shop bell rings*) Coming. (*goes into shop*)

Enter a little GIRL at shop door.

—What for you, my dear?

GIRL. A red herring, if you please, Sir.

JOHN. Soft roe or hard one? Oh, you don't mind which, eh? There's a prime one, just come up from Yar-

mouth by the railway—only three weeks coming by the Eastern Counties—three ha'pence. Good morning.

Exit GIRL.

—(*returns to the room, R.H.*) Hallo! (*calling*) This isn't a penny, this is a dump. Hi, hi! I expect there's a loss on this transaction—

A crash at shop door.

—What's that? Why, if Joey hasn't broke the pitcher!

Enter JOEY *with a broken pitcher.*

JOEY. Oh father! the pig run between my legs, and here's the jug. (*shows handle and neck of pitcher*)

JOHN. You're a going it—neck or nothing. But if you'll own to the tea cup, I'll give you a ha'penny.

JOEY. Give me the ha'penny, father; mother's sure to thump my head for the pitcher.

JOHN. Thump his head—so much for capital punishment. As he's sure of the worst he don't mind the amount of his transgressions. (*begins to wash*) It's a great thing to be able to turn your hand to any thing— (*bell rings*)

Enter little GIRL, *shop door.*

—Coming, (*dries his hands*)

JOEY. Father, Peggy Brown wants two-pen'orth of brandy balls.

JOHN. That's a wholesale order. (*enters shop and takes brandy balls from tin box*) Two pen'orth, Peggy? There, and take care the brandy don't get into your head. (*counts out brandy balls, receives the money*) No more dumps I hope.

PEGGY. Oh, thankee, Mr. Grumley, thankee! How very good-natured of you, to be sure. Thankee, Sir.

Exit.

GRUMLEY *and* JOEY *re-enter room.*

JOEY. (*laughing*) Ha, ha, ha!

JOHN. What are you laughing at? Good-natured?—what for?

JOEY. 'Cos brandy balls is four a penny, and you give her six. Ha, ha, ha!

JOHN. (*boxes JOEY*) Then why didn't you say so? Do you wish to see your parent a bankrupt, with his certificate refused for reckless trading? (*goes to the tub*) I hope Mrs. Grumley is getting on better with the taters. (*wrings out the shirt and, hangs it up at the fire place on a line*) Talking of taters puts me in mind of the pudding. (*goes to the cupboard and places rolling-pin, meat on a plate, bason, &c., and begins to make a pudding*) Few things better than a beef-steak pudding. Oh, here's the dough, all ready. Mrs. Grumley always makes it over night, as she has it ready for the morning. She says it makes it lighter. Joey, you put the saucepan on the fire. (*kneads the dough, rolls it, takes bason, and makes the pudding*) I wonder who discovered a pudding. It must have been Captain Cook, when he found out the Sandwich Islands. (*puts meat, pepper, salt, a little water into bason, peels one or two potatoes, and puts them on the top*) Potatoes, too! Aye, they're a real blessing to parents, for children's appetites are like the Income Tax—there's no end to 'em. (*bell rings*)

Enter MRS. KNAGLEY.

—(*goes into shop*) Good morning, Mrs. Knagley. What for you, ma'am?

MRS. K. Bless me, are you shop-keeper to-day?

JOHN. Yes, ma'am—Mrs. Grumley's gone out to look after what she hoes.

MRS. K. Going out will do her good, she sticks close enough at home in a general way.

JOHN. Yes, ma'am, we are in a *general way*. So what do you want, ma'am?

MRS. K. An ounce of black tea.

JOHN. (*serves her with small paper parcel*)

MRS. K. Why, that's not tea, Mr. Grumley.

JOHN. No, it's not, it's black lead. Oh, here's the tea, done up in cartridge paper—to make it look like gunpowder, I suppose.

MRS. K. If it's gunpowder, Mr. Grumley, it don't seem to go off.

JOHN. Well, ma'am, that's no affair of yourn, so you can go, ma'am. I say, don't you pay for that?

MRS. K. No, put it down to me. Good morning, Mr. Grumley.

Exit out of shop.

JOHN. Very well, ma'am, you gets no more arter Saturday. (*re-enters room*) That's a bore— (*bell rings*) Coming. What do you want?

Enter little GIRL.

GIRL. Please to give me change for sixpence?

JOHN. Can't, haven't got so much in the house.

Exit GIRL.

Nothing to be got out of that— Why, dang it, the fire's out, and it only wants a quarter to eleven—

JOEY, *as he stands on the chair, pulls the flour tub all all over him, from the top of the cupboard.*

—Why, what's the boy arter now? (*picks him up, and brings him down*) Here's a sight for a father—a walking cauliflower! Where's the rolling-pin? I'll dust your jacket for you.

JOEY. (*runs up the stairs*) Oh, don't ye, father,— don't ye!

Exit.

JOHN. I fancy Mary's berth is not a bed of roses, after all. (*Shop bell—He is going to the door, but stops*) No, I'm dang'd if I do. (*takes his pipe at fire place, R.H., and sits*)

Enter MRS. KNAGLEY at shop door, L.H., at the same time
MRS. SHACKLES—*They enter room.*

MRS. S. I'm surprised at you, Mrs. Knagley.

MRS. K. I'm surprised at you, ma'am.

MRS. S. But after your conduct about the mangling— but however, no matter.

MRS. K. The gentleman at the Red Lion—

MRS. S. Asking me to call on Mrs. Grumley.

MRS. K. I deny it, ma'am. "Ma'am," says the gent—

MRS. S. Addressing me.

MRS. K. No, mem, me.

MRS. S. You!—No, mem, *me!* You was at the bar, drinking gin and peppermint.

Mrs. K. That's false, mem—prove it, mem—prove it.

MRS. S. Your present excited state would be proof enough for any unprejudiced jury, mem.

MRS. K. Say that again, mem, and I'll throw a pound of butter at you! (*going into shop*)

JOHN. (*coming forward*) Hollo! stop! stop! I can't stand that.

MRS. S. Mr. Grumley, I beg to apologise for Mrs. Knagley.

MRS. K. Don't apologise for me, mem, I beg.

JOHN. Dang me, if I don't think both on you have been drinking gin and peppermint.

MRS. K. The fact is, Mr. Grumley—

MRS. S. There's a gent—a milingtary gent—

MRS. K. At the Red Lion, drinking red Port wine—

MRS. S. Asking after Mary Brown—Mrs. G.'s maiden name, I believe—

JOHN. Brown was her name, mem.

MRS. S. You see, Mrs. Knagley—

MRS. K. And said he should be glad—

MRS. S.	}	<i>(together)</i>	}	And said he should be glad—
<i>and</i>				if you'd step down to the Red
MRS. K.				Lion, and speak to him on par-

ticular business, and drink some red Port wine with him. There—there, mem.

JOHN. A stranger drinking red Port wine a asking arter me? I can't leave the shop, and I won't send for Mary. Tell him, if you please, that I should be glad to see him here: we have some good table beer on tap, and if he don't like that he can bring a bottle of red Port with him, and I can borrow a corkscrew.

MRS. S. }

and } Very well, Mr. Grumley.

MRS. K. }

As they go out both stop at the door.

MRS. K. Mrs. Shackles—

MRS. S. Mrs. Knagley—

MRS. K. Follow your betters, ma'am.

Exit at shop door.

MRS. S. My betters, ma'am—they're not in your shoes, ma'am.

Exit.

JOHN. Who can this be ? Somebody wants me—a drinking red Port wine. I don't know any body as drinks red Port wine. I wish Mrs. Grumley would stop at home and mind her own business.

A voice within, at the window, R.H. 2 E., " Mr. Grumley! Mr. Grumley!"—He goes to the window.

—Mrs. Tufish, my next door neighbour. What does she want, I wonder ?

VOICE. Oh, Mr. Grumley! here's your pig has got into my garden.

JOHN. Oh, you old brute!

VOICE. Ah, ah!

JOHN. No, not you, ma'am—the pig. I'll fetch her out directly.

Takes the poker and exits at the shop door.

Enter MRS. GRUMLEY and SERGEANT TOM BROWN.

MRS. G. Now, my dear Tom, do be quiet, do, pray.

TOM. I shall not, Mary—I shall speak my mind. (*calling*) Here, you Mr. Grumley.

MRS. G. Now do be quiet, Tom. Why, where is John ? Out—oh, that's lucky.

TOM. Where is he ? I'll not let any man make a beast of burden of my sister. Here I comes home, after ten years' absence in India, and finds you, my darling little Betsy—that I love better than drinking and fighting—here I comes home, and I finds you a hoeing of taters, whilst your lout of a husband is snug in quarters. Why, I—

MRS. G. Now do be quiet. He is one of the best husbands that ever lived, only he grumbles a little, now and then—but he loves me dearly.

TOM. Don't tell me. No man as loves his wife makes her *unfeminine* herself that way. (*points to her Jerry coat and hat*)

MRS. G. Why, they tell me this is all the fashion with the London ladies, now-a-days. But, my dear Tom, it's all my own fault; we had a little tiff this morning— But stay, Tom—a thought strikes me: it will be a good bit of fun, and help to convince you what a good husband mine is.

TOM. Well, what is it ?

MRS. G. You shall see. Here, step into the yard—*(door c.)*—John will be here in a minute. There he is—coming towards the window. Away with you!

Exit TOM, C. door.

MRS. G. *(looking about and laughing)* Good gracious! what a mess the place is in, to be sure. Ha, ha, ha! The fire's out, and the pudding's never been put into the pot. What a capital maid-of-all-work you are, Johnny! Here he comes!

Enter JOHN, shop door, L.H., and to the back room, R.H.

JOHN. Dang that old brute! I've had a pretty hunt to get her out of the garden. *(seeing MRS. G.)* Hallo, missis!

MRS. G. *(seated in chair at the table, R.H.)* Lunch time, Johnny—just come in for a snack. Come, lad, where's the bread and cheese? And come, a sup of beer.

JOHN. Oh, I'm to get them am I?

MRS. G. Of course. I always got them when I was in your situation.

JOHN. That's true. *(goes to cupboard for bread and cheese)*

MRS. G. Now, don't dawdle, Johnny. Come, a knife—come! for I want to get to work again. Bread—cheese—that's right! Now, lad—come, bustle, bustle, lad. *(imitating JOHN'S tone and manner)* Why, I do as much in an hour as you do in a day.

JOHN. So I would—so I will. Don't come any of your bounce over me! You're a nice one, you are! *(goes into shop for beer and returns)*

MRS. G. What, grumbling again, John? Well, unpleasant things do turn up for the best sometimes. I thought I couldn't have the heart to tell you; but now that I see how easily you take it, I won't hesitate.

JOHN. Take what easily?

MRS. G. I dare say there are a great many better wives than I am; I know it, and hope, John, in your next venture you may have the good luck to find one.

JOHN. My next venture! What do you mean? It ain't my good luck to be rid of you yet.

MRS. G. Yes it is, John—or Mr. Grumley, I should say.

JOHN. What's the woman talking about? You're not used to beer in a morning, and it's got into your head.

MRS. G. No, it's not, John; but circumstances have occurred of a most wonderful nature, that will be as good as Doctors' Commons to us.

JOHN. Don't talk of such horrible things as Doctors' Commons! What do you mean?

MRS. G. When we met first, John, you know we were fellow-servants at Mr. Mountjolly's.

JOHN. Yes, I know we was. You was the cook, and I was the gardener. You cooked the goose and I found the stuffing.

MRS. G. You know, John, you never told me till a very long time after that we were married that you had been a soger—did you, John?

JOHN. No, I didn't, 'cos you always said you never would marry a soger.

MRS. G. NO more I never would, John, and for one very particular reason. Now, John, you had your secret, John, and I had mine.

JOHN. Why, what's a-coming? Nothing under the Police Act, I hope.

MRS. G. No, John, I hope not, too.

JOHN. Hope not! My hair's gitting like a paper of pins! Well, what is it?

MRS. G. Why, John, as I have heard you say a hundred times that you'd never marry a widow, John, I never told you I'd been married before.

JOHN. Oh! don't say as you was married afore—don't tell me so now—don't say as you ever loved another—don't say your heart was a second-hand one!

MRS. G. It's not that, John—it's because I've come to be his property again, John.

JOHN. Who's his?—what's his?—where is his?

MRS. G. John, I thought he was dead. He was a soldier, and his name was Tom Brown. We read in the newspaper that a Tom Brown was dead—killed in battle—and we all agreed that it was my Tom Brown, and that I was a widow—and—and—so I married you, John.

JOHN. Mary, you've been a good little 'oman to me, though you was a widow. (*whimpering*)

MRS. G. But I ain't a widow, John.

JOHN. Why, you must be somebody's wife, or somebody's widow.

MRS. G. I am somebody's wife, John. Tom Brown *wasn't killed!* and he's come back to claim me, and he's now down at the Red Lion.

JOHN. (*seizing rolling-pin from table*) He'd better have been in the Red Sea!

MRS. G. Why, John, hasn't he come to take a bad bargain off your hands?

JOHN. Bad bargain! there never was such a piece of goods as you are! Don't own him,—tell him he's out of the statute of limitations.

MRS. G. (*coughs*)

Enter TOM BROWN, C. door.

—What, you do love me, then, John?

JOHN. Why, to be sure I do. Does not this look like it, Mary Grumley?

MRS. G. Not Grumley now, John, but Brown, John.

JOHN. *No, Grumley! Grumley!* Brown—never! Let him take all I have—tea, coffee, tobacco, snuff—take all, so that he leaves me my little 'oman! I hoped we should have enjoyed together a green old age, but how can we do that, if you're *Brown* after all? (*embraces and kisses MRS. GRUMLEY*)

TOM. (*coming down*) Hurrah! hurrah! kiss her again, kiss her again, and let me see you do it!

JOHN. Who—a-are you?

TOM. Tom Brown, of the 197th, as Mary, my darling, here can testify.

JOHN. 197! is there any more on yer? I tell you what it is, Tom Brown—arms is not my profession *now*; but, before I'll part with that little 'oman, I'll die upon the spot! So come on, Tom Brown.

MRS. G. No, no; this is brother Tom, of whom we have talked a hundred times. He saw me at work in the garden, and though I told him it was all my own fault, he thought you did not care for me; and I have played you this little trick to convince him that, with all my faults, you do love me dearly. You forgive me, John?

JOHN. Forgive you! to be sure I will. To know that you ain't married—I mean, to know that you ain't married to nobody else but me. I say, Tom Brown, you won't mind the rolling-pin—you'll excuse it? (*shakes hands with rolling-pin*)

TOM. To be sure, brother John.

MRS. G. But where's Joey? Brother Tom hasn't seen our Joey. We have got a Joey. Joey!

JOEY *appears at the top of the stairs, R.H.*

JOEY. Yes, mother.

MRS. G. (*screams*) Oh! what's the matter?

JOHN. Oh, nothing, my dear; he has only made himself—what you always said he would be—the flower of the family.

MRS. G. Dear me, how he frightened me! But come, sir, there's your uncle, Joey—go and embrace your uncle.

TOM. (*embraces JOEY, and of course is covered with flour*)

MRS. G. Dear, dear, what a happy day this will be! But come, John, it's time now for dinner.

JOHN. Come, let's all sit down.

All go up to the table, and GRUMLEY sees the pudding still there.

—Egad! I've forgot to put the pudding into the pot.

MRS. GRUMLEY *and all laugh.*

MRS. G. Ha, ha, ha! Oh, John, you are a capital maid-of-all-work!

JOHN. Ha, ha! I say, Mary, the fire's out, and so is the pudding. I've been very wrong; but henceforth I'll mind my own business. I've a rough outside; but, la bless you, I've a warm heart within. As for us husbands, you'd find us capital chaps—provided we have everything all our own way; and if you women warn't quite so frumpish, there would be a much better state of Domestic Economy.

Curtain.