

A DREAM
OF
THE FUTURE
AN ORIGINAL COMEDY,

IN THREE ACTS

BY CHARLES DANCE, ESQ.

Author of "The Country Squire," "The Dustman's Belle," "Advice G rati
"Naval Engagements," "Delicate Ground," &c. &c.



Correctly Printed from the Prompt Book, with Exits
Entrances, &c.

FIRST PRODUCED AT THE
ROYAL OLYMPIC THEATRE,

UNDER THE MANAGEMENT OF MADAME VESTRIS.

LONDON.

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1853.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

DRAMATIS PERSONS

Captain Valentine Lovelock,	-	Mr JAMES VINING
Peregrine Mildmay,	-	Mr CHARLES MATHEWS
Mr Harbottle,	- -	Mr FRANK MATTHEWS
Patrick,	- - -	Mr BROUGHAM
Honoria Walsingham,	- -	Madame VESTRIS
Georgiana Walsingham,	- - -	Miss LEE
Watson,	- - - -	Miss MURRAY

PERSONS IN THE DREAM.

Major General Sir Valentine Lovelock, K.C.B.	Mr JAMES VINING
Dr. Mildmay, M.D.	- Mr CHARLES MATHEWS
Old Gentleman,	-
Miss Honoria Walsingham,	- - Madame VESTRIS
Lady Lovelock,	- - - Miss LEE
Mrs Admiral Seagreen,	
Old Lady,	-

A DREAM OF THE FUTURE

ACT I.—SCENE I.

A Room in Captain Lovelock's House in Bath.

Lovelock, Peregrine, and Mr Harbottle discovered over their wine after dinner.

Servant enters with decanter of Port, and places it on Table.

Lov. [To *Ser.*] You are sure you have not shaken it?

Ser. No, sir.

Lov. Not sure, or not shaken it, which?

Ser. Not shaken it, sir.

Lov. It's lucky for you—if you had, I should have shaken you. [*Exit Servant Pushing wine across*] Now Mr Harbottle, do me the favor to taste that—if you like it, there's more where it came from.

Har. [*Helping himself*] My good friend, if I *should* like it, I hope there'll be more where it came *to*, eh? what say you Master Peregrine?

Per. [*Starting from a reverie*] I beg your pardon, I was not exactly attending to what you said.

Har. Never mind [*to Love.*] Upon my life that is a most delicious glass of wine.

Lov. I'm glad you like it sir; come, Peregrine, let us have the benefit of your conversation.

Per. Don't—leave me alone.

Har. Mind what he says Captain, and don't leave him alone.

Per. I'll give you a toast then, if you'll allow me.

Har. With all my heart; pass the wine.

Per. [*rising*] Your beautiful nieces sir; Hon—H on—Hon. Miss Walsingham, and Miss Georgiana Walsingham.

Lov. [*rising*] Mr. Harbottle, your beautiful nieces Honoria and Georgiana.

Per. [*rising*] He bawls Honoria's name out as if he didn't care who heard him, and I have scarcely courage to pronounce it in a whisper to myself

Har. Thank you lads, for the girls and myself, for I love them both.

Lov. And with reason sir.

Har. And you love one of them!

Lov. I sir!

Har. Yes. [*to Per.*] And you love the other!

Per. Discovered!

Har. To be sure you are! I live in rather a winey atmosphere I know, but I am used to it, and I can see clearly through what

people of less experience might consider a fog; as a proof of it—you are both of you invited to the same party that we are going to to night, and you noble Captain have lugged me in here to dine with you, just for the chance of my proposing that we should call at my house for the girls, and all go together

Per. [*aside*] He has found it all out.

Har. The father of those girls—Richard Walsingham—who married my poor sister, was an excellent man, indeed he had but one fault, he wouldn't drink; however, I don't wish to be hard upon his memory for that, we all have our weaknesses.

Lov. Very true, sir [*to Per.*] Come drink your wine, man.

[*Per. drinks*]

Har. [*to Per.*] I'm glad to see you take a glass of wine at last, I began to fear you would die of spontaneous combustion.

Per. I was listening to you, sir!

Har. Oh, I was only going to say, that, Richard Walsingham having made his will when his daughters were very young, directed that they should forfeit their fortunes, which are considerable, if they married before the age of five-and-twenty without my consent; now, if you two can gain *their* consent—

[*looks at his glass Per and Val. show signs of uneasiness*]

Lov. [*Eagerly*] You will give us your's, sir!

Har. [*coolly*] Pass the wine [*They do so, he helps himself deliberately, drinks a part of the wine, smacks his lips, holds it up to the candle, & then proceeds*] Yes, I will.

Lov. Sir! we are for ever indebted to your kindness

Har. Not at all, not at all, my principle is soon explained—I can tell it you in the drinking of a bottle of wine; it is to do as I like, and let others do as they like. Pass the wine.

[*Knock Enter Servant*]

Ser. Mr Harbottle's servant is below sir, with a message for him.

Lov. Tell him to come up. [*Exit Serv.*]

Har. The girls are getting impatient I suppose, ah! they do not sit over their wine as we do, poor things, and they're anxious to get to their dancing.

[*knock*]

Lov. Come in! [*Enter Patrick*]

Pat. [*to Har.*] The young ladies, sir, desire their love to you, and to say that it's almost ten o'clock; and, if you're not ready yet, will you go first and send the carriage back for them?

Lov. I suppose he means—

Har. I know what he means, but he really confuses the Kind's English to such an extent that it's enough to make one fancy one's self half tipsy to listen to him. [*to Pat.*] Have they ordered the carriage?

Pat. They have sir, and the horses are put to, but the coachman hasn't brought 'em out of the stable yet.

Har. Harnessed them, you mean, not put to.

Pat. That's it sir!

Har. Go back, and say—no stay, you'll only make some mistake; get my great coat and hat. [*Exit Pat. L. H.*]

Har. Now lads, I'll tell you what we'll do.

Lov. What sir?

Har. Pass the wine; we'll just buz this bottle, and then we'll all start together.

Per. [*Rising and aside*] At last!

[*Re-enter Pat. L. H. with coat and hat, he crosses to Har. to put them on; while he is occupied in doing so, Lov. rises and comes to Per,*]

Lov. [*aside to Per. C*] Our fortunes are made!

Per. [*L.*] I fear that mine is further removed from me than ever.

Lov. Nonsense ! there was nothing but old *Port Wine* here to fear, and he has consented before we even asked him.

Per. There's a more important consent than his to obtain.

Lov. Poh! that is easily done. What should make you doubt it?

Per. Her perfections, and my own demerits

Lov. Don't you be such a confounded noodle as to go and talk to a woman about your own demerits; she'll believe you. I shall pop the question to Georgiana; do you do the same to Honoria, and, within a week, we'll be the husbands of two girls with pretty faces and pretty fortunes too.

Per. I fear I shall never have courage.

Lov. Hush ! *Port Wine* approaches.

Har. [*overhearing in part*] More port wine do you say ? no, no more; stay, [*going to table*] I don't mind if I do finish with one glass of sherry though, just before going out into the air. [*helps himself and drinks*] Now.

Lov. Well my dear sir, shall we go ? [*rings bell*]

Har. If you please; though I can't say I enjoy moving so soon after dinner. [*Enter Servant, L. H*] Patrick, go you first and open the street door.

Pat. Is it the door of this house you mean sir, or the door of your own ?

Har. How can you open my street door sir, when you'll be outside of it ?

Pat. Sure I can ring the bell, sir. [*Exit, L.H.*]

[*Exeunt Lovelock and Mildmay.*]

Har. [*to serv*] Now, do you remain here and put away your master's wine, and mind, if you drink a drop of it, he'll be very angry with you; that is unless you like it, and then if you don't you're a fool. [*Exeunt all but Servant—Scene closes*]

SCENE 2.

Close Scene.—Mr. Harbottle's House.

Watson *enters* L. H. *with shawls, boas, &c. on her arm, and is crossing the stage, when Patrick enters following.*

Pat. Where are you going to so fast, Mrs. Watson? [*She continues on without attending to him*] won't you answer me Mrs. Watson? [*she still keeps on*] what, not a word to throw at a dog, pretty Mrs. Watson? [*she stops and turns*] [*Aside*] That's brought her round!

Wat. I wish, Mr. Patrick, you wouldn't always be running after me.

Pat. Why you wouldn't have me run before you, would you? bad luck to my manners!

Wat. What do you want with me?

Pat. I want to speak to you

Wat. What do you want to say?

Pat. That's a secondary consideration—the first is the happiness of speaking to you at all.

Wat. Really, Mr. Patrick, your politeness—

Pat. [*interrupting her*] Can only be exceeded by my beauty; I know what you were going to say.

Wat. If you know everything I'm going to say, we may spare ourselves the trouble of conversation.

Pat. Don't mention it, the trouble is a pleasure; where are you going with them things?

Wat. Where should I be going, except to the young ladies? you know they are engaged to a ball to-night, and, if their uncle doesn't come for them directly, they mean to go without him.

Pat. It's all right! Master 'll be home in the drawing of a cork, and the young ladies won't be sorry for having waited a bit, for the Captain and Mr. Peregrine are going to go—that is—they're coming to go with him.

Wat. Bless me! you seem to think it a great catch for my young ladies to secure two gentlemen to go to a party with them; I'll be bound they'd find plenty of others to be civil to them.

Pat. Why, you may find a ten pound note as you go along the street, but it's best to have one of your own in a corner for fear you should'nt.

Wat. Well, I'm sure!

Pat. But come now, leave off speaking to me in this snappish sort of way. Do you think that our young mistress will consent to marry Mr. Peregrine Mildmay?

Wat. Well, do you know I don't think she will.

Pat. Why do you don't think she will?

Wat. Because— I don't know ; but it seems to me that he's what I call too sheepish a lover ; he sighs and stammers too much, and makes too much of her and too little of himself: now, Miss Walsingham knows well enough how pretty and clever she is without his telling her of it so often, and besides, I doubt if young ladies in general think any the better of men for holding themselves too cheap.

Pat. [*significantly*] That's your opinion, is it ?

Wat. It is.

Pat. And do you think that Miss Georgiana will marry the Captain ?

Wat. I have'nt a doubt of it!

Pat. And why ?

Wat. I'll tell you; mind you, I don't think that she really likes him as much as Miss Walsingham likes Mr. Peregrine Mildmay, but la bless you! he's the man for the women—such a fine, dashing, off-hand way of talking about nothing at all! such a nice, bold, impudent, confident sort of manner! Then look at the way he dresses his hair—look at the cut of his coat—look at his patent leather boots. Oh dear! Oh dear! a mere clever respectful lover like Mr. Mildmay would never stand a chance with him.

Pat. I suppose not!

Wat. Oh no! and besides he's got a *janney-se-quaw* with him.

Pat. Who's that?

Wat. It isn't anybody in particular, but it is some French that the young ladies talk, and it means that he's everything he ought to be; and I wish I could say as much for you.

[*Exit R. H.*]

Pat. [*Looking after her*] And if I have'nt learnt *their* sentiments my darling, I've learnt *yours* any way; and so depend upon it the next time I make love to you, I'll forget that I'm an Irishman, and put my native modesty in my pocket.

[*Exit R. H.*]

SCENE 3.

Another Room in same.

A Table on which are books, portfolio of prints, &c.; chairs, and a mantle-piece with looking glass. Miss Walsingham is at the table looking overprints; Georgiana is sitting down and has a book in her hand—both are dressed for a party:

Miss W. How very tiresome it is of my uncle to keep us waiting so long

Geo. I should'nt mind it at another time, but when one's drest for a party, one can't settle to anything else.

Miss W. I wish your rakish military beau had not asked my uncle to dine with him, when he knew that he was engaged to take us to a party.

Geo. Oh dear! don't be in the least alarmed, *your* steady medical beau will have prevented any excess from being committed, I dare say.

Miss W. It's all very well, but Captain Lovelock is quite forward enough without the stimulus of an additional bottle of wine.

Geo. Whereas if Mr. Peregrine Mildmay should be tempted into indulging in an extra glass or two, it might have the desirable effect of making him somewhat less sheepish than he usually is

Miss W. Come, come, Georgy, don't let us quarrel about two he-creatures; the best of the sex is not worth a second thought. Have you made up your mind about Valentine?

Geo. Almost.

Miss W. Do you mean to have him?

Geo. I think I shall.

Miss W. Then you're wrong.

Geo. Of course you'd say that.

Miss W. I say what I think.

Geo. Have you made up your mind about Peregrine?

Miss W. Almost.

Geo. Do you mean to have him?

Miss W. I think I shan't.

Geo. Then you're wrong.

Miss W. Of course *you'd* say *that*.

Geo. I say what I think.

Miss W. You may depend upon one thing, Georgy, if you marry that Valentine Lovelock you'll be sorry for it some day.

Geo. You may depend upon another—if you don't marry that Peregrine Mildmay, you'll be sorry for it a great many days

Miss W. Well, we never agree upon this subject, you are always studying to please the men, while I never care a straw whether I please them or not, so that they please me.

[*Knock heard at Street door*]

Geo. There's my uncle at last.

Miss W. You may well say at last, one might as well not go at all as go at this time of night.

[*Enter Watson 1 E.*]

Wat. Jump up young ladies! here's both your beaux come with master to take you to the party.

[*Georgiana runs to the glass and arranges her hair.*]

Miss W. Both? Do you say both? [*pushing her aside*] Do get out of my way Watson, will you, [*going to the glass, turn-*

ing Geo. *away from it and taking her place*] Come, I think you have had quite enough of that. [*arranges her hair*]

Geo. [*sneeringly*] "While I never care a straw whether I please them or not, so that they please me!"

Miss W. One must put one's hair straight, you little goose.

[*Enter Harbottle, followed by Lovelock and Mildmay.*]

Har. [*to them*] Come in, come in. [*to girls*] Well girls, I hope we have'nt kept you long; but you know I can't be comfortable without two or three glasses of wine after dinner, and my worthy host here was so persevering with his "pass the wine," that I could hardly get away as it was.

[*Lovelock goes to Georgiana, bows to her and shakes her hand: Mildmay, as if determined to follow his example, makes a sort of rush towards Honoria, stops within about a yard of her, puts his hand a little way out towards her. then draws it in again and puts it into his coat pocket as if to feel for his handkerchief; he bows to her, she smiles and curtsseys*]

Miss W. I'm afraid sir, you were most to blame, that "pass the wine" sounds very like you.

Har. How dare you doubt your uncle's veracity, you little rascal!

Miss W. Do you know that it is nearly 11 o'clock sir? and that you are not dressed, and that in this quiet city of Bath, it will be time to leave the party as soon as we get there?

Har. Well, well, I'll soon be ready, [*going*] Boys, make yourselves agreeable while I'm gone.

Lot. We shall do our best, sir.

Har. [*pausing and turning at wing*] Will you have anything to drink before you go?

Per. Oh dear no sir!

Har. Well, just as you like.

[*Exit*]

Lov. Miss Walsingham, while we wait for your worthy uncle, allow me to offer you a chair, [*takes up one, and as he passes Peregrine says aside to him*] Get another for Georgina. [*Peregrine takes up a chair and follows Valentine to R.H. corner, Valentine, turning and perceiving him, says, aside to him,*] Not here, the other side of the room.

[*Peregrine crosses with chair, and places it on opposite side*]

Per. Miss Georgiana, will you allow me to offer you—

Geo. [*advancing*] Thank you. [*he retreats and meets Valentine*]

Val. [*aside to him*] Now, follow my example, and don't be afraid of a woman! [*Valentine takes another chair, places it beside Georgiana and seats himself; Peregrine does the same by Honoria*] Well Georgiana, what do you say to our coming round with your Uncle, on purpose to accompany you to the Ball?

Geo. I suppose I am to say it is very civil of you.

Per. [*aside*] I wish I could hear what he says, and yet, I should never have courage to say anything like it. [*aloud*] It was very kind of you Miss Walsingham, to allow us to come with your Uncle to go with you to-night.

Miss W. Kind of me? How could that be? I didn't know you were coming.

Per. [*aside*] How very unfortunate! I never can begin a conversation with her. [*aloud*] I beg your pardon, very true; but I mean if you *had* known, you *would* have allowed us, and that would have been very kind of you.

Miss W. Stay, let me see; "if I had, I should, and that would;" well, I suppose that is meant civilly, and so I'm much obliged to you.

Per. Oh! Miss Walsingham, if I could let you know *all* my opinion of you, you would be much more obliged to me—no, I don't mean that; of course you must be aware that I *couldn't* mean that.

Miss W. Would it not be as well if you were to say what you do mean?

Per. Ah, there's my difficulty; I only wish you were as awkward in speaking to me, as I am in speaking to you.

Miss W. Thank you; but if I were so, I fear we shouldn't get on at all.

Per. I have but one wish on earth.

Miss W. Then you are a very moderate person. What is it?

Per. To be permitted in some way to serve you.

Miss W. Then your wish shall be gratified.

Per. Do I live to hear you say so! What shall I do?

Miss W. [*carelessly, and looking at her glove*] Fetch me my scissors from that work-box, I want to separate my gloves

Per. [*aside*] Is that all? [*rises and goes to work-box on table*
[*at back*]

Geo. Now pray don't keep whispering so, it seems so odd.

Val [*loudly*] My dear child! I don't want to whisper, I've no objection to proclaiming all I've got to say at the market cross

Geo. Hush! Now don't speak so loud.

Val. Well, there's no pleasing some people.

Miss W. [*aside*] What an impertinent man that is!

Val. [*in a more moderate tone*] If I knew the exact tone you fancy, why of course I should speak in it, because one always gives way when one's making love.

Geo. And never afterwards?

Val. Oh never, at least so you women are sure to say of us, and therefore I think it best to anticipate you.

Geo. Then what we say of you in that respect is not true?

Val. Why it is, and it is not; it's true as to fools—not true as to sensible men.

Miss W. To which of those regiments pray does Captain Lovelock belong ?

Val. [*rising*] Most happy to serve under so able a general as Miss Walsingham in either. [*bows and resumes his seat*]

Miss W. [*sneeringly*] You're very polite I'm sure. [*to Peregrine, rather impatiently*] Can't you find those scissors ?

Per. I have them now! [*coming to her and bringing them*] I could'nt get the drawer open.

Geo. It is only fools then who give way after marriage ?

Val. Certainly ; sensible men know better: but it is'nt worth while for us to argue that question because your fate is decided. You marry me.

Geo. Indeed! I'm sure I never said I would.

Val. No my dear child, no ; but you meant it—you're very fond of me.

Geo. I must say that you have an unusual stock of confidence.

Val. That's why you're fond of me.

Geo. You are mistaken.

Val. No I'm not, all women like confident men.

Geo. Then I'm sure they ought to like you.

Val. There you're right, so they ought—you in particular

Geo. Why so ?

Val. Common gratitude; I love you to distraction—have I never told you so ?

Geo. Pray let us change the conversation [*rises and retires up the stage followed by Valentine, who continues talking to her*]

Per. I was saying just now, Miss Walsingham, that my most anxious wish was to be permitted in some way to serve you.

Miss W. Well, I sent you for my scissors all the way to that table, and very well you fetched them; I'm certain you were not gone above a quarter of an hour.

Per. You trifle with my sufferings.

Miss W. What sufferings have you but of your own creating ? what in the world is the matter with the man ? What do you want me to say, you dreadful fidget ?

Per. I would have you say that you like me.

Miss W. Do you suppose that I would patiently endure so much of your troublesome company if I did not like you ?

Per. Oh! abuse me if you will, but speak to me in that tone. [*hesitatingly*] I would have you go further and own that you love me.

Miss W. No, I thank you; love is a very soft word to hear but a very hard one to say.

Per. Then my hopes have been raised to the skies but to be dashed to the earth! [*In the earliest action which accompanies this, he strikes Miss Walsingham's gloves out of her hand*]

Miss W. And now all you have to do is to raise them up again

Per. I raise them up? No, no, you alone can do that.

Miss W. Do you think that I would stoop to do such a thing ?

Per Stoop, Miss Walsingham? Stoop? Oh! it's cruel of you to add insult to injury. When a man so far forgets himself—

Miss W. [*interrupting*] As to knock a lady's gloves out of her hand, [*pointing to them*] the least he can do is to raise them up again.

Per. [*picking them up and giving them to her*] I beg you ten thousand pardons. I am perfectly sensible that you have suffered rather than encouraged my humble addresses; still, you have suffered them, and for more than four years.

Miss W. Bless me, is it so long?

Per. It is; and since after all that time you can bring yourself to make me such an answer, my mind is made up; I don't go to the party, and so, Honoria—Madam I mean, farewell.

[*Going*]

Val. [*aside to Geo.*] She's tormenting that poor devil again, I'm sure

Miss W. [*aside*] I have gone a little too far, and there's that coxcomb observing us. I'll disappoint *him* at all events. [*aloud and in a familiar tone*] Peregrine!

Per. [*aside and pausing*] Shall I return?

Miss W. Come hither, I want to whisper to you.

Per. [*aside*] Who could resist that tone? [*returns*]

Miss W. [*Speaking loudly, and with studied carelessness*] It isn't worth your while to go alone, although *as you say*, it is so late; my uncle will be ready in a minute, and we may as well all go together. [*In a lower tone and looking kindly at him*] Get my shawl and put it on for me. [*He goes for it to table and prepares to do so. Aside*] I hope the Captain is better.

Val. [*aside to Geo.*] She has affronted him somehow, and now she is pretending to cover it up.

Geo. [*aside to him*] Well, never mind; let them manage their quarrels their own way.

Re-enter Harbottle—Val. and Geo. come forward.

Har. Now boys and girls, come along! We shall be latish for the quadrilles, which I suppose you'll be sorry for, but we shall be in time for supper, which I shan't be sorry for; not that I'm hungry, but I'm dreadfully thirsty.

Val. [*approaching Harbottle*] You must be, I'm sure sir, by this time.

Peregrine, who has put on Miss Walsingham's shawl, perceives Georgiana, whom Valentine has left, putting on her own; he crosses to her as Valentine approaches Miss Walsingham.

Per. Allow me. [*to Geo. and assisting her*]

Geo. Thank you.

Val. [*aside to Miss W.*] You have been at your old tricks, teasing poor Peregrine.

Miss W. It does'nt appear to me that that is any particular business of your's.

Val. Why yes it is, I hate to see a man made a fool of by a woman.

Miss W. Perhaps you prefer a man's being made a fool of by himself.

Val. I wish you were in love with me for a short time.

Miss W. You might employ your time better than in wishing an impossibility.

Val. I'd tame that wild spirit of your's.

Miss W. First *catch* your tiger, noble captain.

Enter Patrick, L.H.

Har. Is the carriage at the door?

Pat. Yes sir.

Har. Come then! [*Exeunt* *all*]

SCENE 4.

Same as Scene 2.

Enter Patrick, L.H.,

Pat. Now for a small taste of love making to Mrs. Watson, according to the improved leaf that I've taken out of her own book ; and here she comes, no doubt accidentally on purpose, to give me a chance.

Enter Watson, R.H. she is crossing.

Wat. [*Stopping on seeing Pat.*] Dear me! who would have thought of seeing you here.

Pat. Mr. Patrick presents his compliments to Mrs. Watson, and requests the pleasure of her company to a *conversationy*, for five minutes 

Wat. Nonsense! [*Crosses and is going*]

Pat. The favor of an answer is requested.

Wat. [*turning and stopping*] I'm engaged

Pat. You're always *engaging*, I'll engage.

Wat. No, but really it's too late; I'm going to the young ladies' room to doze away till they come home, and you ought to go down stairs and go to bed.

Pat. The family's out; the cook's in the arms of murphy; I'm master of the house, and I'll take no denial

Wat. Upon my word, sir, your tone is wonderfully altered on a sudden.

Pat. I know it; I'm grown impudent, and confident, and everything that young ladies likes in a man

Wat. [*aside*] The wretch ! if he isn't turning my own words against me! [*aloud*] I see what you're about sir, but you're mistaken if you fancy it will do with me, I can tell you.

Pat. Faith then I'm not, I'm right this time any way, for it was yourself that taught me.

Wat. What I said had nothing to do with myself, I was talking about young ladies, and I'm a servant.

Pat. Indeed then, there's no more difference between a young lady and a servant, than between a dinner napkin and a jack-towel ; the material is the same, only the quality of one is rather finer than the other.

Wat. Well, Mr. Quality, I wish you a good night. [*Going*]

Pat. Now, don't attempt to go, for I can't allow it.

Wat. What ? you don't mean to say that you'll stop me by force?

Pat. Oh dear no, you'll stop yourself- -by inclination.

Wat. Shall I? you shall see. [*going*]

Pat. Mrs. Watson!

Wat. [*Stopping and turning*] What do you say sir ?

Pat. I don't attempt to stop you, you perceive; you can go if you like.

Wat. But suppose I don't like ?

Pat. That's exactly what I *did* suppose.

Wat. What a provoking man you are!

Pat. [*going to her and taking her hand*] Oh, come, come, nonsense; I'm in love with you darling, and as Captain Lovelock would say to Miss Georgiana, "may the devil fly away with me if I don't believe that you're mighty fond of me! "

Wat. [*withdrawing her hand*] Oh, Indeed! Then sir, as Miss Walsingham would very justly observe to Mr. Mildmay, " be so good as to give us none of your assurance, 'cause I a'int a-going to stand it."

Pat. Sure then it would be more appropriate to your sex, if you was to take up the accommodating tone of Miss Georgiana.

Wat. When I see you as respectful as Mr. Mildmay, perhaps I may.

Pat. And what will you do in the meantime ?

Wat. Listen to the first man that's civil to me.

Pat. You'd far better listen to the last man that's civil to you, and that's myself

Wat. I call you very rude.

Pat. And I'll come to you whatever you call me.

Wat. When I *do* call you, I dare say you will; at present you must go and so must I.

Pat. Not till you've answered me one question.

Wat. Be quick then.

Pat. I offer you my hand in matrimonial consanguinity, will you take it ?

Wat. I can't give an answer now.

Pat. Upon my word you must.

Wat. To-morrow.

Pat. To night.

Wat. I hate you !

Pat. No you don't; any way my mind's made up and I'll know my fate to night, so come, yes or no ?

Wat. I will not be ordered in this way.

Pat. Yes, or no ?

Wat. I've a great mind to—

Pat. Yes, or no ?

Wat. Yes! monster.

Pat. She's mine by the powers, and servant as I am I'll be somebody's master at last. *Is about to embrace her. Knock at street door.*

Exeunt Pat R. Watson L.

SCENE 5.

The Dressing Room of the Misses Walsingham.

Fireplace in centre at back—fire a-light : two sofas, one placed slantingly on each side of the fire-place; chairs, dressing tables, &c.—

Honorina and Georgiana discovered; Watson in attendance.

Miss W. What a miserable fire you keep, Watson.

Wat. [*stirring fire*] Well, I'm sure miss, I call this a capital one

Miss W. Do you ? then I don't; if there's one thing more uncomfortable than another, I do think it is coming home from a party on a winter's night, and finding a bad fire in one's room.

Miss Walsingham and Georgiana go to fire, and sit, one on each side of it. with their feet on the fender; Watson moves about arranging things on dressing tables. &c.

Wat. Don't you think, miss, that a great deal depends upon the sort of humour you come home in ?

Miss W. What do you mean, Mrs. Watty ?

Wat. Oh, nothing particular miss, only if anybody was to ask me how my young ladies enjoyed their party last night, I should say not over much, I didn't think.

Miss W. Indeed!

Geo. Pray, why should you think that with regard to me ?

Wat. Because miss, you seem as low-spirited as if somebody had asked you to marry him, and you had said yes by mistake when you mean't no.

Geo. [*starting*] Watson!

Wat. [*turning*] Yes miss.

Geo. Nothing, never mind.

Miss W. And pray what makes you fancy that I didn't like my party ?

Wat. Because miss, you seem as snappish and as vexed with yourself, as if you had said no to somebody, when you meant to say yes

Miss W. [*starting*] Watson!

Wat. Yes, miss.

Miss W. [*checking herself*] Give me that bottle of salts.
[*Watson hands it to her.*]

Wat. Shall I do your head, miss?

Miss W. No, leave it alone.

Wat. Shall I do your's miss ?

Geo. No! don't tease me now, there's a good soul; suppose we do them ourselves Hony, and let her go to bed.

Miss W. So we will. Watson, yo may go

Wat. What time shall I call you in the morning ?

Miss W. Not at all, we will ring when we want you.

Wat. Oh, but you do lie in bed so late always, when you tell me not to call you ; you'd better say some time.

Miss W. You'd better go when you're desired, and do as you're told.

Wat. [*going*] Well, good night, miss.

Miss W. Good night, good night.

Wat. Good night, Miss Georgiana.

Geo. Good night, Watson.

Wat. [*aside*] This will be a one o'clock job to morrow, I'll lay a silver thimble. [*Exit L. H.*]

Miss W. Are you sleepy, Georgy ?

Geo. Not the least.

Miss W. Lock that door, and then she can't come in in the morning, till we let her; [*Geo. locks door*] and now, let us sit on our sofas and have a little talk, I don't feel at all inclined to go to bed.

Geo. Nor I, [*they put away their chairs and go to sofas close to fire.*]

Miss W. If I must own the truth, I'm very uncomfortable to night.

Geo. I'm sorry you are, and I'm sorry I'm so like you.

Miss W. I'm afraid I have been very foolish.

Geo. I fear I have too.

Miss W. What, have you refused him ?

Geo. Oh no, but I suspect I ought to have done so.

Miss W. To be sure you ought, I forgot whom I was talking about; I'm certain you never can be happy with him, and as for Peregrine—

Geo. Why you never mean to say you have refused him ? [*puts her feet up on sofa*]

Miss W. Indeed, but I have though; now Georgy if you put your feet up you'll fall asleep.

Geo. No, I shant; put yours up too, it is so comfortable; come Hony pop 'em up, it rests one so after dancing,

Miss W. Well just for five minutes, [*puts up her feet*]

Geo. That's right, and now tell me all that Valentine—I mean Peregrine said to you.

Miss W. Well then, you must promise to tell me afterwards, all that has passed between the Captain and you

Geo. Yes, to be sure I will.

Miss W. Well you know, I had danced one quadrille with him.

Geo. Yes.

Miss W. And I had promised to dance another before we came away.

Geo. Yes.

Miss W. And that was to be the first after supper, [*pauses*] I say that was to be the first after supper.

Geo. Yes, I hear.

Miss W. Well, he was absent at the moment it began, and so I stood up with Colonel Middleton— [*pauses*] with Colonel Middleton— [*pauses*] You're going to sleep, Georgy.

Geo. Not I indeed! I hear every word you say.

Miss W. What did I say last?

Geo. The first after supper.

Miss W. There, I knew it! the last I said was Colonel Middleton.

Geo. Now go on, I meant Colonel Middleton

Miss W. I may as well make a short story of it, for I see you can't keep awake; Peregrine came back—took violent offence—and a conversation ensued between us which has ended in his dismissal.

Geo. And now you're sorry for it?

Miss W. I am, I confess it to *you*.

Geo. Then, send for him to-morrow, and tell him so.

Miss W. Thank you; but right or wrong, I have rather too much pride for that.

Geo. I think your pride a mistaken one, and yet, I can't help wishing that I had a little more than I have.

Miss W. I have often told you that it would be better for you—
[*yawns*]

Geo. We find it easier to teach another than to learn ourselves; Captain Lovelock obtained from me to night, I scarcely know how, a more than half consent that I would become his wife; and I afterwards overheard, quite by accident, such a dreadful history of him. that it has made me wretched to think what I have done. [*Miss W. snores*] There, who is asleep now, I should like to know.

Miss W. Not I! You said you were wretched to think what you had done—you must undo it.

Geo. But how?

Miss W. I don't know—somehow

Geo. He will be here to-morrow to claim a renewal of my promise, what can I tell him?

Miss W. [*halfasleep*] Tell him—I only stood up with Captain Middleton, because—because—[*snores*]

Geo. Now, Hony! Hony! [*she makes*] Don't go to sleep without telling me what I had better do.

Miss W. My dear child, I'm sure I would tell you in a minute if I knew; but I can no more help you out of your scrape, than you can help me out of mine. Suppose, Georgy, [*louder*] Georgy!

Geo. Yes.

Miss W. I say, suppose poor dear Peregrine should call for the last time to-morrow, shall I see him?

Geo. Certainly,

Miss W. And what shall I ask him ?

Geo. [*dropping asleep again*] Ask him if all that dreadful history is true.

Miss W. [*very sleepy*] You're asleep again!

[*Her wreath falls from her hand, her hand falls by her side*

[*Music*]

END OF ACT 1.

Act 2,—Scene 1,—The Dream-

AFTER 40 YEARS.

A Party at Mrs Admiral Seagreen's Two or three Card Tables, at which persons are seated playing at whist; circular loo Table on R. at which are six or seven old Ladies and one old Gentleman playing; Music heard at a distance, and quadrilles seen going on in inner apartment.

Knock heard at street door, Mrs. Seagreen comes down R. C. to receive the guests; Servant enters and announces "Sir Valentine and Lady Lovelock !"

Enter Sir Valentine and Lady Lovelock.

Mrs S. [R.] My dear Lady Lovelock, how d'ye do ? I'm quite delighted to see you! I heard you had a cold, and feared you would'nt come.

Lady L. [C.] I ought not to have come out my dear, I assure you, but I was weary of the dulness of home, and could not resist the temptation of so agreeable a change.

Mrs S. You're very good, and how is my friend the General?

Sir V. [L.] Bravely, bravely, charming widow ; thank you, never better, never better.

Mrs S. Ah ! you're more fortunate than poor Lady Lovelock.

Sir V. Poor Lady Lovelock, my dear madam, must not expect impossibilities; she had very good health when she was young, but who ever heard of a woman as old as she is being always well.

Mrs S. Oh! you rude creature.

Lady L. [*affecting a laugh*] Its only Sir Valentine's way my dear, he does'nt mean to be rude ; (*aside to him*) however miserable you may make me at home, Sir Valentine, you might at least preserve appearances before the world.

Sir V. [*aside to her*] Don't worry me, there's a good woman.

Mrs S. Well if I were his wife, and he were to make such a speech about me, I don't know what I should'nt do to him, in the first place, I should—

Sir V. [*interrupting*] now don't invent new tortures for me, it's misery enough to know that you cannot be my wife.

Lady L. [*with affected gaiety*] And this he says before my face

Sir V. Before anybody's face.

Mrs S. Lady Lovelock, what say you; will you join the loo-table, or would you prefer playing a rubber of whist ?

Lady L. [*inside to her*] Anything my dear, that will help me to forget my miseries.

Mrs S. Let me see, in the next room, I think we can make up a table, [*going, with Lady Lov. on her arm*] General, will you follow us ; or had you rather not play cards ?

Sir V. My dear lady, I never touch cards, I thank my stars I have not arrived at that stage yet; no no, I hear music, and see dancing, and my soul's on fire for a lovely partner, and the light fantastic toe.

Passes the loo-table, in making his way towards the dancing room and disappears.

Old Gent. [*at loo table*] The old General's toe must be more fantastic than light, I should imagine. [*ladies laugh.* *[Knock.*

Mrs Seagreen comes down C.

Enter Servant, L. H.

Serv. Doctor Mild may.

Mrs S. [*R. aside*] So, so, the rich Doctor! [*Enter Dr. Mildmay L. H., elderly, fat, gouty, and leaning on a stick. They bow and curtsey*] Dr. Mildmay, I am most happy to see you, it is indeed very kind of you, to join my little party at so short a notice.

Mild. [*L.*] Don't say a word about it ma'am, don't say a word about it, I am delighted to come, and as to short notice you could'nt very well ask me sooner than you did ; for it was only the day before yesterday, that I had the pleasure of being introduced to you.

Mrs S. True, true, you have been resident in Bath but a short time I believe?

Mild. Three days ma'am only !

Mrs S. It is not your first vist to this City surely ?

Mild. For many years, it is; I have avoided it because so many invalids come here, until I am obliged to seek it for the same reason.

Mrs S. What can we offer you in the way of amusement Doctor? do you play cards ?

Mild. No, thank you, never! I find that the gout furnishes my temper with quite as much irritation as it requires, but don't let me keep you from your friends, I beg; I shall be amply amused in looking on at the card playing, besides, I shall soon find somebody I know to talk to, I dare say.

Mrs S. As you please!

[Bows to him and returns to inner apartment. Dr. Mildmay approaches a card table L. H. and looks on. A murmuring of disagreement proceeds from loo-table.

Hon. [*who has been sitting all the time at the table, and playing unperceived by the audience*] I beg your pardon ma'am, no such

thing; you won *one* trick, *I* won two, that was my king of hearts.

A Lady. I know that ma'am, but I trumped it.

Hon. Trumped it ma'am, do you happen to know what were trumps ?

Lady L. Certainly I do, clubs !

Hon. There's your mistake ma'am, they were spades.

Lady. Allow me to state ma'am that I never do make mistakes at cards.

Dealer, Dear me, this is very unfortunate, suppose you refer the dispute to the only gentleman at table.

Lady. I've no objection!

Hon. Nor I!

Gent. But permit me to say that I have; whichever way I decide I must displease somebody, and it's quite disagreeable enough to lose my money, (as I invariably do when I have the pleasure of playing with you ladies) without making matters worse.

Lady. I won't give up the point I declare.

Hon. No more will I, that I'm determined.

Gent. Suppose you cut for it, ladies ?

Hon. [*rising, coming forward and walking up and down in much excitement*] I won't consent to any such thing.

Lady. And if that lady would, I would'nt.

Mild. [*having observed the quarrel and coming to Hon.*] I beg your pardon ma'am, as a stranger perhaps I ought not to interfere, but it is very painful to witness these things, and if I can be of the slightest use—

Hon. You're very kind sir, do you know the game well ?

Mild. What game, madam?

Hon. Loo, sir!

Mild. No ma'am, I can not say I do, I never played it.

Hon. Than sir you can't be of the slightest use.

Mild. I'm sorry to hear it ma'am, but could'nt I fetch you some book that would assist you ? Hoyle's games for instance ?

Hon. Hoyle's games sir! I know the book by heart.

Mild. Is it possible, ma'am ?

Hon. [*to dealer*] I must beg you to retain that pool for the present, and Mrs. Admiral Seagreen will be good enough to decide the point for us, [*goes up C. and exit to inner room.*]

Mild. Do I live to hear a lady avow that she knows Hoyle's games by heart ?

Enter R.H Mrs. Seagreen.

Mrs. S. [*to Dr. Mild.*] A report has reached me, Doctor Mildmay, that some unpleasantness has taken place at the loo-table; I hone it is not so?

Mild. [R] Something very like it I fear; the lady who sat at the corner is one of the principal parties concerned, and she is yonder seeking you now.

Mrs. S. Why that's Miss Walsingham! [*going*]

Mild. [*struck with the name*] I beg your pardon— one moment; I have a particular reason for asking, what name did you say ?

Mrs. S. Miss Walsingham.

Mild. And her Christian name is ?

Mrs. S. Honoria.

Mild. Can it really be so? And have I been actually talking to her? And it is she who knows Hoyle's games by heart?

Mrs. S. You seem moved, my good sir; it would appear that Miss Walsingham and you have met before?

Mild. In former times, Ma'am, often.

[*Honoria returns down C.*]

Hon. [*to Mrs. S.*] Oh, my dear! I have something to tell you which will astonish you.

Mrs. S. I think I can astonish you ; you have been talking to an old friend without recognising him; allow me to re-introduce Miss Walsingham to Doctor Peregrine Mildmay. [*They bow and curtsey profoundly. Aside to Honoria*] I understand that the Doctor has lately had an immense fortune left him. [*leaves them*]

Hon. [*timidly*] It is long since we met, Doctor Mildmay.

Mild. Forty years ma'am, last Christmas.

Hon. I scarcely saw you when we conversed just now, but now I look at you, I should have known you anywhere.

Mild. I'm surprised to hear you say so, and only sorry I can't return the compliment; I had'nt a guess of you.

Hon. Indeed ! am I so *very* much altered, think you ?

Mild. Sadly changed for the worse, ma'am.

Hon. There was a time when Peregrine Mildmay would have answered Honoria Walsingham with less abruptness.

Mild. When Honoria Walsingham could well afford to hear the truth, she slighted it, and called it gallantry ; It has become less pleasing to her ear, and her new title for it is abruptness.

Hon. I was perhaps to blame, but girls you know will be girls, I will even confess—

Mild. Pray madam, spare yourself the humiliation of a confession.

Hon. Surely if I feel that I have been wrong, it is fit that I should own it, and ask for forgiveness?

Mild. Forty years ago madam, I loved you ; forty years ago you slighted me; as I look on your face I remember *both*, and freely forgive you,

Hon. [*aside*] Is that meant for civility? I shall take it so! [*aloud*] you feel no anger against me then ?

Mild. I feel nothing for you, but pity.

Hon. Pity! pity! [*checking herself*] why pity?

Mild. Because you wasted a youth of loveliness in giddiness, flirtation and inconstancy; and have thus brought upon yourself an old age of singleness, cards and irritation.

Hon. [*aside*] This is rather hard to hear. [*aloud and playfully*] "old age" Doctor Mildmay ? old age ? you have indeed forgotten your gallantry.

Mild. I made but a poor hand at gallantry when I was young, and now I have laid it aside for pursuits better adapted to my time of life.

Hon. There are some old friends of yours here, the Lovelocks, have you seen them ?

Mild. No, but I have heard they live very unhappily together.

Hon. It is poor Georgy's own fault I must say; had she listened to my advice she never would have married him.

Mild. Indeed ?

Hon. Yes! and had I listened to *her* advice [*pausing and looking at the Dr.*]

Mild. I beg your pardon, you were saying something ?

Hon. I say had I listened to *her* advice [*looking again at him.*]

Sir Valentine *comes down stage, followed by* Lady Lovelock.

Mild. Why that must be Lovelock, his face is wrinkled and his form is shrunk; but the air is still the same.

Sir V. I'll do no such thing!

Mild. And the manner!

Lady L. It's really very hard Sir Valentine, that you won't take me home; when I tell you, I have a bad head-ache.

Sir V. Poh ! poh ! head-ache; you would have been well enough if you had not lost all your money at cards.

Lady L. And you would have been ready enough to go home, if there had been no nonsensical dancing going on.

Sir V. I came here for *your* amusement, I shall remain for *my own*

Hon. You might give way for once, when you hear her say she's ill ; Oh, I m glad I'm not you wife.

Sir V. You can't be more glad than I am.

Mild. Why Valentine, you and that lady used to quarrel forty years ago, and it seems you have not given it up yet.

Sir V. What! my old friend Peregrine Mild may ? and grown so stout ?

Mild. What! my old friend Valentine Lovelock, and grown go thin ?

Sir V. It's easy to account for both, you are single, I am married ; ah! you had a lucky escape in those days.

Hon. Perhaps Dr. Mildmay did not think so.

Mild. Indeed I did not—

Hon. [*to Valentine*] There sir, you hear ?

Mild. [*continuing*] At the time.

Val. [*to Hon.*] You did'nt wait for the end of the sentence [*to Mild.*] now Honoria carried it off with a high hand at the time, but has been sorry for it ever since.

Hon. Valentine, you are the rudest brother-in-law in the

kingdom, I must throw myself on the protection of Dr. Mildmay.

Mild. Pardon me madam, I make it a rule never to interfere in family disputes.

Hon. But still, I really think that some explanation is due to you.

Mild. Nay madam, painful explanations are best avoided.

Hon. In such a place as this perhaps they are, but we shall have other opportunities; you will call on me to-morrow, and then I shall be able to satisfy your mind that—

Mild. I regret that I cannot have that honor, I have seen so little to satisfy my mind since I came hither, that I leave Bath at an early hour in the morning.

Hon. But not for long ?

Mild. For ever!

Val. [*to Hon.*] It's of no use old lady, you can't hook your fish a second time.

Hon. That I should I've to suffer such impertinence from one man, and such cold neglect from another, [*to Val.*] but it's all your fault sir, your bad example would contaminate the whole sex ; I shall die of vexation—give me a chair [*Mildmay puts one*] I shall choke! I shall faint! [*sinks into chair*] I shall! oh! oh! oh!

[*faints.*]

Lady Lovelock, Valentine, Mrs. Seagreen and Mildmay form a *Tableau in front; dancing is resumed at the back, and curtain closes.*

ACT 3.—SCENE 1.

Dressing Room as before.

Honoraria and Georgiana discovered asleep on the Sofas, as left at the end of Act 1.

[*Knocking at door, Geo. moves—knocking repeated, she gets up*]

Geo. Who's that?

Wat. [*without*] Me, miss, do, pray, open the door.

Geo. [*going and unlocking the door*] Why, what in the world is the matter ?

Wat. [*entering hastily, and then stopping and looking alternately at Hon. and Geo.*] Well, if I didn't think so! why you've never been to bed at all!

Geo. What's o'clock?

Wat. Why it's one o'clock to-morrow.

Geo. Nonsense, you don't mean that?

Wat. Look at the candles, it's a mercy you have'nt both set the house on fire; your uncle's been enquiring for you like anything.

Geo. Go and tell him we shall soon be down, and mind, Watty, if you say one word about our having been asleep on the sofas all night—you'd better not, that's all.

Wat. You need'nt be afraid of me, miss. [*Exit*]

Geo. runs to Hon. who seems uneasy in her sleep, and puts her hand to her throat.

Geo. Hony! Hony! do wake!

Hon. [*speaking in her deep*] I shall choke! I shall choke!

Geo. [*shaking her*] Honoria you frighten me! you must awake!

[*Honoria gets quickly on her feet, stares about & rubs her eyes*]

Hon. What's the matter Georgy? what have I been about!

Geo. Ah! it's a pretty business; we both fell asleep on the sofas this morning, instead of going to bed, and now it's one o'clock in the day.

Hon. How do you know?

Geo. Look at your watch, look at the candles—but you seem ill! your eyes are as red as fire! I do think you have been crying in your sleep.

Hon. I never had such horrid dreams in my life! I fancied I was crying, and fainting, and choking.

Geo. You said something about choking just before you woke, what was the cause of it?

Hon. I can't tell; I have a confused recollection of all sorts of miseries, and yet, I don't seem to remember the cause of them.

[*Knock heard at street door*]

Geo. Who can that be? Not people calling already, surely; and yet I don't know, I forgot how late it is.

Re-enter Watson.

Wat. Here's Mr. Mildmay and Captain Lovelock called, miss.

Hon. [*suddenly recollecting herself*] That's it! that's it! I remember it all. [*Seems lost in thought*]

Geo. [*to Watson*] Tell Patrick to say we are not up yet.

Hon. No, no, not on any account! go Watson, and say we shall be down in ten minutes. [*Exit Watson.*]

Geo. What is all this mystery about? you were never to see Peregrine again, and now you seem all impatience to meet him.

Hon. I am indeed.

Geo. And why?

Hon. Before I tell you why, you must make me a promise.

Geo. What is it?

Hon. That nothing shall ever induce you to marry Captain Lovelock.

Geo. And before you tell me why? this is strange indeed—

Hon. Do you doubt my affection for you as a sister?

Geo. Indeed I don't.

Hon. I knew you hav'nt any real regard for him and I have long been convinced that he seeks you only for your fortune.

Geo. I fear there is too much truth in that.

Hon. Promise me then.

Geo. I do, and now your reason.

Hon. I have had a dream.

Geo. A dream child! of what?

Hon. A dream of the future.

Geo. Now really. Honoria.

Hon. Well, laugh at me if you will; but it has made an impression on me, which nothing can efface.

Geo. Then it must be something out of the common way, do pray let me hear it.

Hon. You shall.

SONG.

Recitation to music, the Orchestra repeating (with mutes on the violins) whatever quadrille, waltz, or polka &c. had been previously played in the Dreamscene.

Now pay attention sister dear,
Your fate may hang on what you hear.
I dreamt that you and Captain V.
As well as I and poor dear P.
All met together at a ball,
But not like that last night, at all;
For forty live-long years had shed,
Their cruel influence o'er my head,
And made me old and coarse and fat,
And grey, and ugly, and all that.
This figure, too, once neat and clean,
Was quite a figure to be seen;
And mov'd, Oh! worst of all disasters,
Just like a round of beef on castors.
No pastime which I loved of yore,
Now seemed to please me as before;
The mazy dance, the music's strain,
Put forth their once lov'd charms in vain.
To all such pleasures I was blind,
For cards engross'd my sordid mind;
But still the worst is to be told,
A man approached me, stout and old,
"Twas Mildmay's self I could not doubt.
And (judge my horror) he'd the gout!
Yet, strange are dreams, for finding he
No longer would make love to *me*,
I laid aside all notions prim,
And (*figurez vous*) made love to *him*.
But here, the feelings of the flirt,
Were doomed to be still further hurt;
For he who once liv'd on my smiles.
Now laugh'd at me and all my wiles.
The rest, by his example tainted,
Laugh'd too, until I scream'd and fainted.

Geo. Do you mean then to marry Peregrine?

Hon. If he can forgive my flightiness.

Geo. Then you are indeed changed from the proud creature you once were.

Hon. I am.

Geo. Well, I would'nt be so much moved by a dream.

Hon. You would, if it concerned you personally.

Geo. You're quite mistaken.

Hon. [*carelessly*] Part of my dream *was* about you.

Geo. [*eagerly*] Indeed ! was I grown old too ?

Hon. Yes, and very ugly.

Geo. Is it possible?

Hon. You were married to Captain Lovelock, who had become a general officer and wore a ribbon.

Geo. That's all very well.

Hon. He had become a shrivelled old beau

Geo. That's horrid.

Hon. With a wig of one and twenty, upon a face of nearly seventy.

Geo. Worse and worse.

Hon. He was running, or rather toddling after every woman he saw.

Geo. Now was he really ?

Hon. And when you were ill and wanted to go home, he positively refused to let you.

Geo. The monster! my dear don't say another word; I'll send him about his business this very day, this very hour. [*Exeunt to inner room.*]

SCENE TWO.

Close Scene—Same as Scene 2, Act 1.

Enter Patrick L. H. preceding Lovelock and Mildmay, Lovelock has hold of Mildmay's arm and almost drags him on.

Pat. If you'll be kind enough gentlemen, to wait in this room for a few minutes; I'll enquire are the young ladies at home to you ? [*looking at them and then aside*] those two horses don't seem to go well together in harness. [*Exit Patrick R. H.*]

Lov. [*R.*] You're too ridiculous, you're as much afraid of this girl, as a lamb would be of a she wolf.

Per. Why insist on my seeing her ? its only distressing my feelings still further—she has given me up.

Lov. I have known people recover, after the *Doctor* had given them up.

Per. This jesting is unseemly, I am wretched.

Lov. I have'nt the slightest objection to that.

Per. You're very kind.

Lov. Now do hear me out, I have no objection to your being wretched if you don't let her perceive it.

Per. But I will; it's the only way to make her feel.

Lov. You really are deplorably ignorant! women are romantic creatures, and in cases of this sort, all they require is a scene; where the man shows too much feeling, they will be stony hearted, if only for the sake of contrast; but if he is cool, provokingly cool, they are sure to be all tears and sensibility.

Per. To have loved her with so much sincerity, and to be thus cast off at last

Lov. And serve you quite right; it's really silly enough to love

any woman for such a very long time; but to let her know it, is absolute madness,

Per. Do you not love Georgiana?

Lov. Oh yes I love her. [*with great indifference*]

Per. Ardently?

Lov. Well, I think I may say ardently.

Per. I should'nt imagine it from your tone of voice.

Lov. Ah! that's because I have acquired a self-command, in which you are sadly, sadly deficient.

Per. And when you are married to her, shall you not be faithful ?

Lov. What do you mean by faithful—I shall be very civil.

Lov. And I suppose you will also be very civil to other women?

Lov. Of course.

Per. More so perhaps than to your wife ?

Lov. Naturally.

Per. These are not my notions.

Lov. No, if they were you would have met with better treatment; sincerity is an excellent thing among men, but take my word for it, it is wasted upon women ; they love a "truant creature" it is so delightful to win him back again!

Per. If your sentiments were generally known, I suspect you would not prosper quite so well with the ladies as you do.

Lov. You're quite mistaken, it's poor devils like you whom they punish.

Enter Harbottle R. H. with hat and stick as if going out.

Mar. Good morning to you boys, good morning; I have not been told you were here, but perhaps your visit is not to me?

[crosses to C.]

Lov. To tell you the truth, sir, it is not.

Har. And to tell you the truth, sir, I am not sorry for it; for I was just going out, and now I shall go, and leave you without ceremony.

Per. I'll go with you, sir, if you'll allow me that pleasure,

Lov. [*pulling him back*] Indeed you shan't

Har. Well, you may do just as you like; I'm going to an auction room, to taste some port wine, that is said to be first-rate.

Per. I would rather go with you.

Har. What? is there anything the matter between you and Honoria ?

Lov. A little bit of a nonsensical quarrel at the party last night, and he is silly enough to believe that she has given him up

Har. Dear! dear! I hope not. [*to Per.*] I consider you to be an excellent young man, and I have looked forward with great pleasure to the prospect of your becoming my nephew,

Per. Sir, you are very kind; now if you would only be so obliging, as to say as much as that to Miss Walsingham, one word from you perhaps—

Har. My good friend, one word from me would make her do just as she pleases; no; no, whatever I may wish, I must leave

you to fight your own battles. I have made the girls mistresses of their own persons and their own fortunes; they behave uncommonly well to me upon all other points and perhaps its partly owing to my never teasing them upon that—[*crossing*] now, good morning to you, for the present, you attend to your women; I shall go and see after my wine. If you have quarrelled, I dare say you'll find the way to make it up; tell the girls to order up the luncheon, and I'll be back presently. [*Exit Harbottle L. H.*]

Lov. Now mark in him an illustration of my constant argument—The bottle is *his* mistress, he's as devoted to her as you are to your's, and she'll shorten his life in return for his constancy.

SCENE LAST,

Enter Mildmay and Lovelock

Lov. Now Mildmay, don't be such a timid hare; do come and take your ground in the middle of the room like a man.

Per. Stand by me then, for you have urged me to the step, and you must support me through it. [*comes to him*]

Lov. Never fear, put a good face on the matter, and you shall see my system fairly put to the proof

Per. I doubt it's efficacy.

Lov. Then watch and be convinced! they approach—Honorina of course dignified coldness to you, Georgiana all impassioned eagerness to me.

Enter Honorina followed by Georgiana—Honorina holds both her hands towards Mildmay and exclaims tenderly "Peregrine."

Georgiana meeting Lovelock's eyes shrinks back & gets behind Honorina, a pause of astonishment on the part of the men.

Lov. [*aside*] Here's some mistake.

Hon. Do you refuse my hand, Peregrine?

Per. [*rushing towards her and taking her hand*] refuse it? I'm all amazement at your kindness!

Lov. And so am I!

Hon. I have that to say to Mr Mildmay, by which Captain Lovelock, with the opinion he has of women, will be yet more amazed.

Lov. Don't trouble yourself, I beg I may not intrude.

Hon. You were witness, last night, to certain behaviour of mine towards one who deserved better from me; I am ashamed of that behaviour and I choose that you should hear me tell him so

Per. Honorina, this condescension—

Lov. May be very delightful to you, but it doesn't interest me,

Hon. [*to Per.*] I have seen my folly, can you forgive me?

Per. Forgive you? You have made me the happiest—the proudest of men!

Lov. I wish you joy of a marriage, which promises to be beautifully dull and domestic; Georgiana and I shall escape such a marriage as that, at all events.

Hon. There you are right; my sister and I have been carefully

considering the offer you have made her, and, in consideration of information which she received last night at a certain party, she declines the honor of your further addresses,

Lov. What information? It's false! I'll shoot the party—

Per. [*to Hon.*] What does this mean?

Hon. Be patient

Lov. [*to Geo.*] Georgiana, speak for yourself; why permit your sister to use me thus barbarously?

Geo. I regret to say, I feel it right to confirm all she has said,

Lov. This is quite absurd! Of what am I accused?

Hon. Of being at this moment in almost daily correspondence with another young lady in London,

Lov. [*aside*] Confound it! How did they find that out? [*aloud*] Well, I never heard such a thing! Why there isn't the slightest particle of truth in it.

Geo. It is useless to deny it.

Lov. I declare to you, upon my honor—

Hon. [*crossing, and aside to him*] Hold sir! You once proposed to abandon my sister for me, and upon my repulsing you with indignation, you whined, and won from me a promise of secrecy; you are about to pledge your honor to an untruth, thinking it, I presume, quite fair to do so—to a woman; now, sir, finish that sentence, and I break my promise of secrecy.

Lov. [*aside to Hon.*] Well, I'm not going to finish the sentence [*Hon. returns to Geo.*] [*aside*] I must try the pathetic. Well, Georgiana, if it is to be so, I presume you will not let me leave you, without saying "farewell."

Geo. [*leaving Hon. and approaching him*] Indeed, Captain Lovelock, I shall always wish you well.

Lov. [*in an under tone to her*] Come, come, take courage and say you will be mine; I can't believe but that you love me.

Geo. 'Tis useless to urge me; I have given my word and I must keep it.

Lov. [*aside*] Now for a touch that no woman can resist, I'll return the locket with her hair, [*aloud*] Very well, Georgiana, very well; use me as you please, listen to others, and be deaf to me; may you never know what it is to want the devotion of a fond and trusting heart, so shall you never suffer for your fickleness towards the most sincere and the most constant of his much abused sex—there, madam, I return you the locket, which I have till this moment worn next my heart. [*hands her locket, which, during the speech, he has broken from a ribbon by which it was suspended round his neck; Hon. and Per. have approached them during the time.*]

Geo. [*looks at the locket, exclaims*] Ah! [*and starts, then holds it towards him*] Look here sir, look here! light hair! light hair [*Lovelock starts and shrinks from it, Honoria and Peregrine both point to locket and form tableau.*]

Lov. [*aside*] Confusion! It's all over now, I have given her

the wrong lock, [*aloud & confused*] Georgiana, Miss Walsingham, Mr Mildmay—Mr Mildmay, Miss Walsingham, Georgiana— [*aside*] damnation! [*rushes off, and as he goes out, runs against Harbottle, who is coming in*]

Har. [*astonished*] That's what I call a bumper at parting.

Per. Excuse him sir, he's confused, I'll explain all to you by and bye, *Enter Patrick.*

Har. Just as you like—what! have you two combatants made it up?

Hon. Yes sir, for life.

Har. That's right, I'm glad to hear it. [*looking at Geo.*] But I thought that two weddings were to be settled in the family to day.

Geo. Only one, sir.

Pat. I beg your honor's pardon, but if you're in want of another couple, I beg to present myself.

Har. How can you be a couple, you silly fellow?

Enter Watson.

Pat. With the assistance of Mrs. Watson, sir.

Har. What! do you want to marry this Irishman?

Wat. He wants to marry me, sir.

Pat. Oh come, none of that, you know you promised to marry me last night, and if you break your word, I'll have you indicted for bigamy,

Geo. Well, Honoria, I may congratulate you at all events.

Hon. Rather let us congratulate each other, for there is, perhaps, more good fortune in escaping a bad husband, than even in obtaining a good one,

Har. What's all this about? Was it you that sent the Captain off in such a hurry?

Geo. A painful discovery, sir, compelled me to do so.

Pat. [*aside to Watson*] She seems to have dropped him like a hot potatoe.

Har. Well, well, I don't wish to pry into your secrets; you do just as you like. As far as I could judge of him, I thought him a good sort of fellow enough; a *leetle* slow in passing the bottle, perhaps, but that was all.

Per. But tell me Honoria, what is it that since last night has brought about this happy change in you?

Hon. You'll smile at me.

Per. 'Twill be the smile of joy,

Hon. Well then 'twas a dream.

Per. A dream?

Hon. Yes, a dream of the future.

Per. Repeat it,

Hon. Not to night, but if you think it will give satisfaction to our friends, I shall have much pleasure in repeating it—on a future occasion.

CURTAIN.