



THE  
**ARTFUL DODGE**

A FARCE

IN

O N E   A C T

BY

E. L. B L A N C H A R D ,   E S Q .

AUTHOR OF

*The Road of Life—Faith, Hope, and Charity—Adam Buff—Pork  
Chops—Angels and Lucifers, &c. &c.*



**THOMAS HAILES LACY,**

39. STRAND

*(Opposite Southampton Streets Covent Garden Market,*  
LONDON.

# THE ARTFUL DODGE.

*first produced at the Royal Olympic Theatre,  
February 2, 1842.*

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## CHARACTERS.

MR. GREGORY GRUDGE.....MR. TURNOUR.  
TMOTHEUS TRUNDLE.....MR. ROSS.  
TOM TODDLE.....MR. THOMPSON.  
THE HONOURABLE FREDERICK FLAM-  
WELL FITZ FUDGE.....MR. FITZJAMES.  
DEMOSTHENES DODGE, ESQ.....MR. G. WILD.  
NUDGE.....MR. ROGERS.  
BUDGE.....MR. WALTON.  
EMILY WILTON.....MISS FITZJAMES.  
SUSAN SMUDGE.....MISS ARDEN.

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## COSTUMES.

GRUDGE.—Blue or brown modern square-cut coat, waistcoat, breeches and gaiters low crown black hat, dressing-gown for the First Scene.  
FITZ FUDGE.—Black coat. *Last Scene*—A drab one.  
TRUNDLE.—Short tail livery coat, (modern) breeches, white stockings, and shoes.  
NUDGE.—Broad brim black hat, black wig and whisker, cut away coat, breeches and top boots.  
TODDLE.—A groom's dress, frock coat, breeches and gaiters, or top boots, &c. &c.  
DODGE.—Dark coat, check trousers. *2nd dress*—Drab coat, old man's hat.  
EMILY.—Modern.

# THE ARTFUL DODGE.



SCENE FIRST.—*A Chamber (1st grooves). Table and two chairs, c.*

*Enter* TIM TRUNDLE *and* SUSAN SMUDGE, R.

TRUNDLE. Well, now, isn't this some of the blessings of early rising, Susan ? Haven't we been ever since seven, a sitting by the kitchen table without as much as disturbing our *tatur treat*, as the French say, by getting up to dust the furniture ?

SUSAN. Ah, Tim, but master will be *down* presently, and then when he's *up* to you, what do you think *he'll* say ?

TRUNDLE. Oh, never mind what *he'll* say, listen to what *I* say. Now, as I told you before, Susan, I've got twenty pounds, what I have saved out of my wages and *perkwisites* screwed up in an old worsted stocking.

SUSAN. Lord, Tim, then, don't put your *foot* in it.

TRUNDLE. YOU know, when I comed into Mr. Grudge's service I found you Susan Smudge.

SUSAN. Yes, Tim, I know. You *found* me Susan Smudge, but I hope you ain't going to *leave* me Susan Smudge. I wants to change my name, but missis, you know, is in love with the Honourable Mr. Frederick Flamwell Fitz Fudge.

TRUNDLE. Yes, I knows she is, but master don't. I expect he'll find it out, though, and when he wants to cut the connection, he'll say—

GRUDGE. (*without*, R.) Tim, where are my razors ?

TRUNDLE. (L.) Oh, there's master—I must go up to him. One kiss, Susan, afore we part, by way of a morning draught.

(*kisses her and crosses, R.*) Ah, I don't know what parliament wanted to take the duty off sugar for when there's so much of it to be had here for nothing. *Exit, R.*

SUSAN. There he goes. What a blessed little fellow it is! He's as clever as Tom Thumb, and as valiant as the "Seven Champions" rolled into one. Well, master will want his breakfast, I suppose, (*laying cloth on table*) so I had better set the things at once. Missus always breakfasts in her own room, so he can enjoy his bachelor's comforts as much as he likes. (*postman's knock, L.*) There's the postman! Now he's got a letter for somebody. I'll be bound it's another *billy do* from Mr. Fudge for Miss Emily, I shouldn't wonder. Well, as no one seems inclined to answer the knock, I suppose I must. And as Tim has begun to *adore* me, I think I had better go to *a door* myself. *Exit, L.*

*Enter GRUDGE, followed by TRUNDLE, R.*

GRUDGE. Tim!

TRUNDLE. Sir!

GRUDGE. Nothing—I shan't tell you. Breakfast ready?

TRUNDLE. Yes, sir. Please, sir, should I—

GRUDGE. NO, certainly not. Bring up the urn.

TRUNDLE. I will, sir. Hadn't I better get—

GRUDGE. NO you hadn't. Bring the toast.

TRUNDLE. I will, sir. (*aside*) That's so like master. Just the very thing I was going to ask him if I *should* bring.

GRUDGE. What's that you're muttering, sirrah? Do as I order you—bring the morning paper.

TRUNDLE. Yes, sir. (*aside*) I hope it will be damp enough to make him sneeze for a fortnight. *Exit, L.*

GRUDGE, (*sits R. at table*) Phew! there's one plague got rid of—now to encounter another. Here I am at last, comfortably established in my villa at Highgate, left to enjoy all my little eccentricities as I like, and though my wealthy brother-in-law did leave me his daughter, Emily, to take care of, yet, knowing my dislike for feminine society, she generally humours my peculiarities, and leaves me in all the enjoyment of a bachelor's life, without participating in any of its annoyances. Oh, here comes that rascal, Tim, with the paper.

*Enter TRUNDLE, with breakfast on tray, and newspaper, and letter, L.*

Well, Tim, what makes the paper so late? (*taking it*)

TRUNDLE. Please, sir, the newsboy, who brought it, says there was a long debate in the house last night.

GRUDGE. Ah, they talk a great deal there, Tim. Ministerial speeches are like country roads in the winter time, generally very *long* and very *dull*.

TRUNDLE. Yes, sir, and very often like the passengers, they get stuck in the mud. Ha, ha, ha !

GRUDGE. Who told you to laugh, sirrah ? Ah, this, now, is one of the delights of London, to be able, alternately, to devour a piece and a paragraph is the very height of luxuries. Now for the news, (*reads*) " Greenwich Fair—One-tree Hill." Let me have a roll, Tim. (TIM, *who stands L. of table, hands it*) Ah! " Shipping Intelligence. Isle of Wight—Arrival from *Cowes*." Where's the milk, Tim ?

TRUNDLE. Here it is, sir. But it's my opinion, that the milkman's a regular teetotaller.

GRUDGE. Why so?

TRUNDLE. 'Cause he's so werry partial to water, sir, and doesn't like to see the milk *drunk*.

GRUDGE. Come, that's not so *bad* though the milk is, but let me look again at the paper. " Rise in Bread—Latest News from the (Y) east—Preparation for war." More hot water, Tim.

TRUNDLE. Yes, sir. (*goes off, L. 1 E., and immediately returns with hot water and letter*)

GRUDGE. " Herne Bay."

TRUNDLE. There's the *urn*, sir—the *bay's* in the stable.

GRUDGE. " Do you *bruise* your own oats ? "

TRUNDLE. NO, we *brews* our own. beer.

GRUDGE. Silence, sir. " Fashionable Arrivals—the Turkish Ambassador and Suite." More sugar, Tim. (TRUNDLE *gives it*) " Grand dinner at Liverpool—Health of the Queen." (*taking up toast*) Is this the same toast as usual, Tim?

TRUNDLE. Yes, sir.

GRUDGE. Buttered blankets browned—indigestible as the last new novel. But what have we here? " Novel and Extensive Mode of Swindling" Bless me ! " Yesterday afternoon—well-dressed man—goes by the name of Brown, but whose real name is supposed to be Dodge, called at house—sent up card—shown into parlour—walked off with property." Why, what a horrid world, Tim, this is. No one is really safe, I declare!

TRUNDLE. Wouldn't it be as well to leave it, sir ?

GRUDGE. There, take away the things. But what have you got in your hand ?

TRUNDLE. Eh ? Yes—a letter, sir, the postman left it this morning.

GRUDGE, (*taking letter*) A letter !—for *me* ?

TRUNDLE. NO, sir—for Miss Emily, (*crosses to R.*)

GRUDGE. For my ward ? A love letter, now, I'll be bound.

TRUNDLE. Yes, sir, I shouldn't wonder but what it is. Ha, ha, ha !

GRUDGE. *You* wonder! What business have you to wonder, sirrah ? Go and send my ward here directly.

TRUNDLE. Certainly, sir. *Exit, R., taking off tea urn.*

GRUDGE. An impertinent fellow. I suppose because he has heard of my having been a pawnbroker once, he thinks I can take in any impudence he thinks proper to spout. But here comes Emily.

*Enter EMILY, followed by TRUNDLE, who crosses to L., taking breakfast things.*

EMILY. YOU have a letter for me, dear guardian, I understand ?

TRUNDLE., (L.) I told her you got it.

GRUDGE Yes, and now you've got it. (*kicking him*) Yes, my love. *Exit TRUNDLE, L.*

And as I hate deception, here it is; but let me caution you against these pen and ink missives of Cupid. A letter, my dear girl, is too often like the quill that indites it—the production of a goose.

EMILY, (*aside*) Then he must know this comes from Fitz Fudge!

GRUDGE. I am not angry—let me know who this is from, . and I am satisfied.

EMILY. YOU shall know all. The writer of this letter is a professed suitor of mine, and his name is—

*Enter TRUNDLE, L., announcing.*

TRUNDLE. The Honourable Mr. Frederick Flamwell Fitz Fudge.

EMILY. Frederick, here ! then I must retire. *Exit, R.*

GRUDGE. The *Honourable!* Oh, desire the gentleman to walk up immediately. *Exit TRUNDLE, L.*

The Fudges are a very numerous and a very ancient family, although I can't say a very noble one.

*Enter FLAM WELL FITZ FUDGE, L.*

FLAM. My dear Mr. Grudge, I cannot describe the pleasure this interview affords me.

GRUDGE. Pshaw, sir! I am an old man, and as some say, a crusty one, and compliments to me are like strawberries in winter time, deuced cloying, and a great deal out of season. You, sir, I believe, are the last of your race?

FLAM. Yes, sir, unfortunately I am—but the rest of my family got the start of me, and though I may say the name of Fudge has been well known at every court throughout Europe, particularly the county courts, with me I'm afraid the *race* will be *run out*. But my business here, sir, is to solicit your consent to my marriage with your lovely ward, and such I trust I may obtain.

GRUDGE. Harkye, sir, having, in my early life known what it was to experience poverty, I am determined no one shall possess the hand of my ward without possessing a fortune adequate to the one at her disposal. Now if you can prove to me that you possess this qualification, she shall be yours; but until that is done, you must excuse me if I forbid you the house.

FLAM. Sir, I pledge you my word—

GRUDGE. Sir, I have done with pledges—I have shut up shop!

FLAM. (*aside*) 'Sdeath! what's to be done? I must resort to my old dodge of fudging. (*aloud*) Thanks to fortune, sir, I am not so unhappily circumstanced—I have a spacious mansion at my disposal, whenever I choose to honour it with my presence. (*aside*) That is to say the Queen's Bench, when I'm arrested.

GRUDGE. Well, sir!

FLAM. An ample park and pleasure gardens, sir, with ornamental waters, and aquatic birds to diversify the scene, and charm the eye of the spectator. (*aside*) St. James's Park is *public* property, therefore I've a right to it.

GRUDGE. Good, sir—proceed.

FLAM. A gallery of paintings, unequalled for the beauty and variety of its collection, and which the natural liberality of my disposition induces me to place at everybody's disposal. (*aside*) That's true enough—for the National Gallery *is* open to everybody.

GRUDGE. Then, sir, for lands—

FLAM. They are as broad as they are long. I go over my Acres every day. (*aside*) Long Acre and Pedlar's Acre.

GRUDGE. And your mowed property ?

FLAM. Such that its impossible to count or have any idea of.  
(*aside*) At least I never had.

GRUDGE. One question more, and I have done. Pray may I ask from whom you derived all this property ?

FLAM. (*aside*) Now for a crammer. Oh, from my father, of course—he's living down in Devonshire, on his estate, now.

GRUDGE. Why, I thought you said you were the last of your race ?

FLAM. Oh, yes, sir, so I am the last—the last but one—but dad's of no consequence—quite, forgot dad. A hale old chap! hearty old buck! quite an Old Parr!—indeed, my sister always called him *Pa*.

GRUDGE. (*crossing to L.*) Well, sir, now if you will have the goodness to introduce your respected parent to me, I have no doubt we can manage matters—and on that day my ward shall be yours.

FLAM. But my dear sir—

GRUDGE. I have done, Mr. Fudge. You have my answer, and I don't wish my motives to be called in question. Till further arrangements are made, I wish you a very good morning, sir. *Exit, L.*

FLAM. NOW all this comes from my foolish propensity to romance. But obtain Emily I must, and will, though to get a wife I must first procure a father. Where the deuce I'm to get one I haven't the slightest idea ! Zounds! I must borrow a father of somebody.

*Enter TOM TODDLE, L.*

FLAM. Well, sir, what do you want here?

TOM. Nothing, sir. I thought, sir, perhaps you wanted something.

FLAM. So I do—I want a father, as Byron says, "a most *uncommon* want." Toddle, you must assist me.

TOM. YOU never said not nothing about finding fathers when you engaged me at two pound ten a-year, and find my own tea, sugar, blacking, and top boots.

FLAM. That's true, Toddle, no more I did. I found you, I remember, wasting your sweetness in the desert air.

TOM. That ere being the sanded floor of the " Jolly Sand Boy."

FLAM. True, it was in the tap room of a public house.

TOM. Yes, sir, and then you made me your tiger, and forgot my *feeding time*.

FLAM. Psha, Toddle! what's the want of a dinner now and

then ? You should throw off vulgar prejudices—you should turn from the *grub* state to the chrysalis. However, if I had but a father, my fortune is made.

TOM. I see, sir, you haven't got *apparent*—a father.

FLAM. NO Toddle, that's not it, I haven't got a father *apparent*

TOM. Then your *apparent* father is farther off than ever.

FLAM. Nevermind, but come along, Toddle, (*crosses to L*)  
Let me go like " Japhet in search of a father."

TOM. GO—where to, sir?

FLAM. Where to ? Why, to *Bag-dad*, to be sure. Come along. *Exit, L.*

TOM. Well, I may go farther, but I can't fare worse. *Exit, L.*

SCENE SECOND.—*Primrose Hill. Distant View of London. Bank, R.*

DEMOTHESES DODGE *discovered, sitting on a stile, eating a penny roll.*

DODGE. Here's a pretty go ! Go? Stop—I should say no go, for go I can't. (*comes down*) Well, I know now what people call a *stylish* appearance, and a fine field for reflection that displays too. What a confounded appetite this air gives one! and here's a paltry breakfast for a man of genius like myself. Some poet has said "Man wants but *little* here below," but poet or no poet, he never could have breakfasted off a penny roll. Eh ? who have we here ? A gentleman in an excited state of mind, evidently. Guardian of good luck send that it may be some one that I can dodge out of a dinner. (*retires up*)

*Enter FLAMWELL FITZ FUDGE, R. 1 E., excited, without noticing*  
DODGE—he *paces thoughtfully and frantically up and down the stage.*

FLAM. What the deuce shall I do for a father ?

DODGE. (*aside*) A father !

FLAM. *With* one I obtain Emily and her fortune—without one I lose a wife and gain a bailiff. Rather an unpleasant reflection that!

DODGE, (*coming forward, L.—aside*) A gentleman in difficulties, I perceive. May I be permitted, sir, to inquire whether I can be of any service just now ?

FLAM. (R.) That voice sounds familiar to my ear. I think

you and I have met before. Let me see, were you not one of the directors of that extraordinary joint stock association for extracting sunbeams from cucumbers, with limited liability ?  
(*pause*) It was a swindle.

DODGE. Very likely, sir, for my lie ability is unlimited, and you, I remember, were solicited to become a shareholder, but refused.

FLAM. True—the wisest thing I ever remember doing. But what became of you and the association afterwards ?

DODGE. Why, sir, the association, " with a capital of one million," expecting to be arrested for the rent of the room, walked off, and I, as one of the *directors*, naturally followed them. Since then I have lived on my means.

FLAM. Which *means*, of course, having no *means* at all. But explain yourself.

DODGE. Why, sir, for the last few years I have subsisted by different kinds of " Dodges," or in other words, by swindling upon philosophical principles.

FLAM. Ha, ha, ha! well, I never heard of anybody swindling philosophically before. How do *you* manage ?

DODGE. Why, sir, the world, you will at once perceive, may be divided into two classes—the *victimisers*, and the *victimised*.

FLAM. A novel distinction, at least.

DODGE. Then, sir, as the public debt is public security, so private debt must be private security. In other words, the *victimiser* benefits the *victimised*.

FLAM. Sound logic, certainly, but difficult to prove.

DODGE. Not at all. I go to a tailor, and order from him a suit of clothes, of course never intending them to be paid for. Well, the tailor gets the cloth, that benefits the woollen draper, foreman makes them—benefits foreman—he, on the strength of the wages he will receive, orders another joint of meat for home consumption, that benefits wife and family—the joint comes, benefits butcher—it's sent to be baked, benefits baker—he gets jolly, brandy and water, benefits publican—friend drops in, benefits friend—both get drunk, go to station-house, benefits station-house—morning comes, fined ten shilling, that goes to the queen, benefits queen. And so, by actually ordering a suit of clothes, I diffuse happiness over a whole neighbourhood.

FLAM. Upon my word I never knew getting into debt was so interwoven with philanthropy before. (*aside*) A thought strikes me—this fellow would make an excellent father. Pray were you ever on the stage ?

DODGE. Which stage, sir, Richmond, or Greenwich?

FLAM. Psha! I don't mean a stage coach—I mean the stage of a theatre.

DODGE. What, was I ever an actor you mean? I believe you.

FLAM. But were you ever a father?

DODGE. Don't ask me, sir, it's a tender point.

FLAM. Not a real one—I mean a father in a play.

DODGE. Oh, many a time. Burnt cork, and white pocket handkerchief business—with a sudden start in the corner, and an " Ah! Rosalva, my long lost child! come to my arms! " I understand, sir. (*hugs him in the energy of his affection*)

FLAM. Capital—nothing can be better. But before we put the grand project into execution you must execute a little commission for me. I want this note left, as directed, at a house close by.

DODGE. It shall be done, sir.

FLAM. My tiger has gone upon another errand, and the atmosphere of that neighbourhood is rather too *warm* for me ; you understand—I'll wait your return here, (*going, L. 2 E.*)

DODGE. I'm off, sir. Where do you dine to-day? I beg your pardon!

FLAM. Where you shall dine with me.

DODGE. Shall I, though? Fish?

FLAM. Yes.

DODGE. Flesh?

FLAM. Yes.

DODGE. Fowl?

FLAM. Yes.

DODGE. Everything else ?

FLAM. Yes.

DODGE. Nobody else ?

FLAM. NO.

*Exit, L.*

DODGE. That's the dodge! Ah! what a world this is ! everybody's dodging, and we're all dodgers together.

SONG.—DODGE.

AIR,— " We are all Noddin'."

We are all dodging, dodge, dodge, dodging,

We are all dodging in country and in town.

This world is but a dodge, when from boyhood we begin,

To swindle with impunity, and take each other in ;

And life is like a pack of cards, with knaves and honours ;

but

The game that's played is cribbage, where they shuffle,

deal, and cut.

For we're all dodging, &c.

We are all dodgers, dodge, dodge, dodgers,  
 We are all dodgers, though in a different way.  
 The politician dodges for a pension and a place,  
 And very oft in parliament we artful dodges trace.  
 They nail us for our income tax, but well I know he'll be  
 An uncommon artful dodger who can get a rap from me.  
 For we're all dodging, &c.

Everybody dodges, dodge, dodge, dodges,  
 Everybody dodges in their own peculiar way.  
 The debtor is a dodger who his creditor defies,  
 And well he eyes the victim that he means to victimise.  
 The lover is a dodger who to gain a wealthy spouse,  
 Like other precious puppies to his mistress bows and wows.  
 So we're all dodging.

We are all dodging, dodge dodge, dodging,  
 We are all dodging, wherever we may be.  
 The other night a hat that did from the gallery go  
 Was picked up by a dodger who was sitting there below;  
 But surely we can't wonder at the cause of such disasters,  
 For dodging must go smooth enough, since here it runs on  
 casters.  
 And we're all dodging, &c.

The manager's a dodger, a very artful dodger,  
 The manager's a dodger who to please the public tries.  
 In dodging after novelty he passes most his days ;  
 And though it may seem singular, works hardest when he  
 plays.  
 His house indeed's a public house, good spirits here he draws;  
 But the greatest dodge of all is that which gains him your  
 applause.  
 And we're all dodgers, &c.

*Exit DODGE, L. U. E.*

*Re-enter FUDGE, L. 2 E*

FLAM. Egad! that fellow's a genius — he'll make a  
 capital father! Well, there are no confounded creditors of  
 mine to annoy me here—all is delicious solitude and quiet  
 suburbanism. The very place seems to invite you to contem-  
 plation and reverie. So, whilst that father of mine that is be  
 is away, let me consider what is best to be done.

*(meditates, his hands clasped behind him.)*

NUDGE *and* BUDGE, *two bailiffs, appear at back, L., during the above, watching.*

NUDGE. There lie is ! he shan't escape me now. Slip this noose (*showing it to BUDGE*) round his wrists, and then we shall have him safe enough.

FLAM. (*thoughtfully*) As for that fellow, Trinket, he must wait for the settlement of his little account; I shall have so much *on my hands* shortly, I shan't know what to do.

NUDGE. That's very probable, (*coming forward cautiously with BUDGE, watching his opportunity.*)

FLAM. And Emily, too, she who feels the *strength of my attachment*—

NUDGE. You'll soon feel the *strength of our attachment*, I'm thinking.

FLAM. Ought never to forgot that there are ties which—

(NUDGE *and* BUDGE *throw a rope round his hands—he struggles.*)

NUDGE. Them ere are the *ties*, if you like, Mr. Fudge. Now, escape us if you can. You floored two bailiffs last week, you know, so this time we took good care to keep your hands from striking first.

FLAM. 'Sdeath! you, rascals, unhand me, or—(*struggling*)

NUDGE. Now, don't be agitated, and we'll take every possible care of you. Budge, go and call a cab—I'll take care of my gentleman till you returns. *Exit BUDGE, R. U. E., over stile.*

FLAM. I say, you body snatcher, what's your name ?

NUDGE. Ned Nudge! -

FLAM. (L. C.) Then, Mr. Nudge, if you will unfasten one of my hands, it will enable me to get at *my* waistcoat pocket, and put a sovereign into *yours*.

NUDGE. (R.) It won't do. (*feeling his pockets*) Empty. I've been gammoned before.

FLAM. Confound, the fellow ! I say, at whose suit, eh ?

NUDGE. Mr. Trinket's, the jewellers—he sends his wery best respects. (*retires up R.*)

FLAM. Does he ? now, if Dodge would but return—

*Enter DODGE, L. 1 E.*

DODGE. Right as a trivet. Eh ? why—ha, ha, ha! here's an adventure—bailiffs—arrest—hands tied—what a dodge!

FLAM. (*showing his hands are tied*) I can't shake hands with

you, but I'm glad to see you nevertheless, Dodge, You've got your hands at liberty, use them—you understand!

(*aside to DODGE—showing that he is tied.*)

DODGE. I do. (*crossing to R., menacing NUDGE*) Trot!

NUDGE. Why, here's a rescue. Do you know what you are liable to—

DODGE. Trot!

NUDGE. (*calling*) Budge, here !

DODGE. Yes, and you budge there! come, be off!

NUDGE. Vell, I'm a going gradually. Von't I drop von upon your tibby, *when* I catches you, that's all!

(*DODGE drives him off R. 1 E.*)

DODGE. There goes a bailiff in a perspiration. Now, sir, to release you.

FLAM. Thank'ye, Dodge—you came just in the nick of time—it was a hard race between us, I assure you.

DODGE. Yes, and it was a *tie* at last. (*turning him round*)

FLAM. Bless me, here's Mr, Grudge coming this way for his usual morning walk. Make haste, or else I shall be undone.

DODGE. I wish to goodness you were, for I can't undo you.

FLAM. What, is it *not* unfastened.

DODGE. NO, it's fastened in a *knot*.

FLAM. Zounds! what's to be done? I would not have him see me in this predicament for the world. I *must* speak to him, and yet can't use my hands. How can I manage ?

DODGE. I'll show you a dodge, sir. (*putting his arms through the arms of FUDGE.*) There, all you have to do is to speak—leave the action to me.

FLAM. Admirable! being rather short sighted, he will not discover the imposition. Ah, here he comes!

*Enter GRUDGE, L. 1 E.*

FLAM. Good morning, sir. (*DODGE takes off Fudge's hat*) Quite delighted to see you looking so well.

GRUDGE. Ah! Mr. Fudge, I thought it was you, waiting for your father, I suppose, by the earliest train.

FLAM. True, sir! (*DODGE pulls out watch*) It is now nearly twelve, I declare. Bless me, how time flies—it's quite astonishing, really.

GRUDGE. I hope, sir, you have no dishonourable intentions towards my ward ?

FLAM. (*DODGE puts his hand to Fudge's heart*) Dishonourable! On my word and honour as a man, none—(*DODGE*)

*(pulls up shirt collar)* I flatter myself, sir, that as a gentleman, I know too well how to conduct myself.

GRUDGE. Well, well, I don't doubt you, so we'll e'en let the subject drop for the present. Do you do anything in this way ?  
*(crossing to him and offering snuff-box.)*

FLAM. Sometimes. *(DODGE takes snuff-box and gives the nose of FUDGE a pinch of snuff)* This is excellent rappee, upon my word. *(DODGE pulls out pocket handkerchief and wipes nose)* Thank you, sir, I'm very much obliged. *(DODGE returns snuff-box)*

GRUDGE. (L.) Wonderful *improvements* they are making about here, to be sure.

FLAM. *Improvements*, sir! call bricks and mortar improvements upon nature ? I'm astonished !

*(DODGE holds up hands in amazement.)*

GRUDGE. But then, Mr. Fudge, you know—London must have its wants attended to.

*(DODGE taps one hand against the other furiously.)*

FLAM. Hang it, sir, it needn't want to swallow up every green field we have left. The very *trees* themselves will soon be obliged to pack up their *trunks*, take their *leaves*, and emigrate in self-defence.

GRUDLE. Ha, ha, ha ! well, I won't argue the point with you now, for I must endeavour to finish my usual distance before dinner. *(crossing R.)* Mr. Fudge, good morning.

FLAM. The same to you, sir! *(DODGE takes off Fudge's hat)*

GRUDGE. I shall expect your father this evening.

FLAM. He will be ready to attend you.

GRUDGE Well, I must be off—good day. *Exit R. 1 E.*

FLAM. A pleasant walk to you, sir—ha, ha, ha!

*(coming forward, L., business.)*

DODGE. That's what I call the Artful Dodge.

FLAM. Dodge, give me your hand! you're the very king of dodgers. Oh, I forgot. Well, in my left hand waistcoat pocket there's a penknife which before escaped my memory—and then before these rascally bailiffs return, we'll—

DODGE. Cut it, sir—I understand.

*(takes penknife and releases him.)*

FLAM. And now I am once more at liberty, let us hasten to accomplish our plan, and trap the old gentleman into his consent.

*(takes stage and looks off, R. 1 E.)*

DODGE. (L.) With all the pleasure in life, sir.

FLAM. Dodge, look there, (R. 1 E.) who are those fellows coming over the field yonder.

DODGE. Bailiffs—I'd swear to their trot.

FLAM. (*crossing L.*) Then there is no time to be lost. Run!

DODGE. Run! I will, sir, like a barrel of beer on half cock.

FLAM. Curse your similes—this way. *Exit L. 1 E.*

DODGE. Bailiffs come—out of breath—no one here—debtor bolted—*that's* the dodge! *Exit L. 1 E.*

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SCENE THIRD.—*An Apartment in the House of Mr. Grudge—same as First Scene.*

*Enter SUSAN SMUDGE and TIM TRUNDLE, R.*

SUSAN. La, Mr. Timotheus Trundle, I wishes as how you wouldn't keep a following me about so, making such a noise. You're as bad as the elderly lady at *Banbury Cross*, who, as *the story books* say, had rings on her fingers and bells on her toes.

TRUNDLE. Yes, and you're as bad as a flat candlestick with an *extinguisher* to it, for directly I begins to *blaze* away—you're sure to drop upon me and *put me out*.

SUSAN. Ah! I wish to goodness you were as good a boy as little Jack Horner; but no, you won't be, for instead of remaining in a corner eating a Christmas pie, you keeps a walking after me like one of them ere ogres as we reads of in English history. So go away!

TRUNDLE. I will, Susan, but not for long. *Exit L.*

SUSAN. La, I wish I was a lady! A gipsy did once promise me that I should be. Oh, if I were!

SONG,—SUSAN. (*Introduced*)

Hush! here comes missus.

*Enter EMILY, R.*

EMILY. Has Mr. Fudge left any note since he called this morning, Susan?

SUSAN. NO, miss—he and his *tiger* has been as quiet as the *babes* in the *wood*.

EMILY. I wish, Susan, you'd leave off that silly habit of

yours, mixing up everything with what you read in nursery literature.

SUSAN. Well, miss, it comes nat'ral like just as *Jack the Giant Killer killed the Giants*, because he couldn't help it—but bless me, I had nearly offended again.

EMILY. Trundle!

*Enter TRUNDLE, L.*

TRUNDLE. Yes, ma'am!

EMILY. Just step down to the milliner's, will you, and give her this note ?

SUSAN. Well, Tim, why don't you go ?

TRUNDLE. Oh lor' ! I'm a reg'lar lapdog to this establishment—I do nothing but *fetch* and *carry* from morning till night. *Exit L.*

EMILY. Are you sure, Susan, that Mr. Fudge didn't call whilst I was out?

SUSAN. Lord, miss, I haven't seen the ghost of his shadow.

EMILY. What can be the plot that he is forming ? (*crosses R.*) That Frederick loves me I doubt not; but that his scheme will be successful I doubt much. I never heard of his having a father down in Devonshire.

SUSAN. (*looking out, L.*) Here he comes, ma'am, as punctual as the Wood Demon, and as handsome as Robinson Crusoe.

*Enter FLAMWELL FUDGE, in fashionable drab coat.*

FLAM. (C.) My dear Emily, what joy it gives me to see you !

SUSAN. (L.) Bless him, he talks like a dictionary.

EMILY. Did you come on foot, Frederick ? (*he kisses her hand.*)

SUSAN. I should think he came with a 'buss.

EMILY. Susan, you may leave us.

SUSAN. (*crossing, R.*) Yes, ma'am! (*aside*) That's always the way whenever there's a nice little bit of of love making going forward—I'm sent out of the room, as if there was as much mystery going on as in the cave of the Forty Thieves. I'm going, miss, (*aside*) I'll listen at the keyhole for all that, and that's as the French would call being on the *qui vive*. *Exit R.*

FLAM. (L.) My dear girl, everything is now arranged, and before another day is over I shall have the inexpressible felicity of calling you mine—ay, and with your guardian's consent, too—

EMILY. Oh, Flamwell, I am afraid your great fault is that of romancing.

*Enter* SUSAN, R.

SUSAN. Please, miss, here's the milliner come; and Mr. Grudge wishes to see you in the library.

EMILY. My dear Frederick, I must leave you, and although I wish you every success, do not compromise either my character or your own honour in what you are about to do. Once more, farewell! FUDGE *kisses her hand—exit* EMILY, R.

SUSAN. (*who has got round L., aside*) They'll never forget sending me out of the way. I didn't leave them long together. (*crosses to R., looks at FUDGE—business for SUSAN, who exits, R.*)

FLAM. Confound it! my resolution is shaken. Hang it! they shan't say Fudge was a rascal, however numerous his follies may be. I will go to Grudge, throw myself on his benevolence, and confess—

*Is going, L., when DODGE rushes in, dressed in a white great coat, white bushy wig, &c., with old man's cane—runs up against FUDGE.*

How now, sirrah ! who are you that bolt into gentlemen's houses in this way ?

DODGE. Who am I? come, that's a good 'un. Don't *you* recognise me ? I know it's a wise child that knows its own father ; but the deuce is in it if you don't know a father of your own making.

FLAM. Ha, ha, ha! What, Dodge!

DODGE. Yes, here I am, coat, stick, and all.

FLAM. Well, do you think you can play the part you have undertaken ?

DODGE. I should think so, sir. What sort of old man should I be ? There's the very old style, with his (*imitating*) " Let me see—five and sixty years ago, when I was a little boy—" And then there's the funny old man with his double mock laugh—" Ha, ha ! a capital joke—that puts me in mind when I was—ha, ha ! drawn for the militia in the year '78." And lastly there's the the seur old man, with his " Bah! I hate these new fangled customs—they're too like the French puppies to please me, and I hate French—I hate puppies, and I hate everything and everybody." Now which will you have, sir ?

FLAM. (L.) Oh! do it your own way, so that you don't forget the lesson I've taught you.

DODGE. The *less-on* that subject the better.

FLAM. Remember, you must fall in with the old gentleman's peculiarities.

DODGE. Oh, I'll fall in with him, sir, if he don't fall *out* with me.

FLAM. Then the sooner the affair is decided the better. He is very fond of reading, and is now in his library.

DODGE. Then you may consider him *booked*.

FLAM. Oh, Dodge—but go at once, nor wait for more delay.

DODGE. " My soul's in arms, and eager for the fray."

*Exeunt* DODGE, R., FUDGE, L.

SCENE FOURTH.—*Library in the House of Mr. Grudge, (2nd grooves). Door, c, books, &c, table and two chairs.*

GRUDGE *discoverd, sitting R. of table,*

GRUDGE SO! Fudge hasn't sent me his father yet—zounds! I dare say the fellow never had a father at all. Well, if my ward, Emily, likes him, all very well ; and if he really has some property so much the better; and now there is no one to interrupt me—let me—

SUSAN, (*knocking at door without, C.*) Please, sir, may I come in ?

GRUDGE. Oh! it's Susan—yes, come in, Susan.

*Enter* SUSAN, C.

SUSAN. Please, sir, he's come !

GRUDGE. He—who's *he*?

SUSAN. Mr. Fudge's father, sir—he's such a funny old man—he's got a red nose and a great stick like Baron Munchausen.

GRUDGE. Well, shew him in, Susan. (*rising*)

SUSAN. Stick and all?

GRUDGE. Yes, stick and all.

*Exit* SUSAN, C.

A fine old country gentleman, I'll be bound—some English squire—some—

*Re-enter* SUSAN *with* DODGE, C.

SUSAN. This way, if you please, sir—there's Mr. Grudge.

*Exit, C,*

DODGE. (L., *slapping him on his back*) How are you, my hearty ?

GRUDGE. (R.) Rather a vigorous old gentleman, indeed,

(*aside*) Quite well, sir—Susan, give Mr. Fudge, senior, a chair.

DODGE. (*taking chair*) Glad to hear it—I'm tol, lol, myself.

GRUDGE. (*sits, R.*) You received your son's letter, I suppose, and came immediately by the rail.

DODGE. Why, to tell the truth, I was on the *rail* when Fudge first saw me.

GRUDGE. Ah, I see! but for travelling, that style is nothing to be compared to the old plan.

DODGE. I don't know about the travelling, but I found that *stile* very comfortable, I assure you.

GRUDGE. Well, sir, after your journey, permit me to offer you some refreshment. Susan, some wine.

(SUSAN *brings decanter and glasses on tray, and exits C.*)

DODGE. Ah, that's your sort!

GRUDGE. Yea, sir, this is my sort, but would you prefer a light wine.

DODGE. Why, I'd rather have some *heavy*, if it makes no difference.

GRUDGE. This sherry you will find excellent, (*pointing to wine*)

DODGE. Well, give us hold, (*takes glass and drinks*)

GRUDGE. Yes, this is *old*; twenty years in my cellar, I assure you.

DODGE. Then it's devilish little of its age. But I have some in Devonshire more ancient than this.

GRUDGE. Indeed! what wine may that be?

DODGE. Why, elder wine, you old fool.

(GRUDGE *has the glass up to his mouth at this time, and through laughing, upsets part of the wine*)

GRUDGE. Ha, ha, ha! very good! Umph! now, sir, permit me to speak about the subject more immediately next our hearts. You are quite agreeable to the proposed union, I presume?

DODGE. Oh, quite.

GRUDGE. It has been mentioned to me that the greater portion of your estates *lie* in Devonshire.

DODGE. Yes, my estates lie there. (*aside*) I lie here.

GRUDGE. Freehold, I presume?

DODGE. Oh, perfectly free.

GRUDGE. (*rises*) Then, sir, this satisfies me. I'll just step to a notary's, who is a friend of mine, and we will arrange matters. You'll excuse me for a short period, and in the meantime, I leave you to the management of the bottle.

DODGE. You couldn't have left it in better hands.

GRUDGE. Good, day, sir.

*Exit, L. 1 E.*

DODGE. Same to you, and many on 'em. Well, it's all right now. The contract will be signed—Mr. Fudge will marry the heiress, and I shall get something for my trouble—that's a dodge. Well, here's success to dodging in all its various branches.

*Enter SUSAN, C, cautiously, listening.*

*(turning round)* Ah ! how dare you, you feminine Paul Pry, listen to what I wasn't saying to anybody ?

SUSAN. La, sir ! you're as voracious as the wolf with little Red Riding Hood !

DODGE. (L.) NOW don't tell anybody anything, and I'll give you something. There's a kiss on account. Master's gone out, the wine is in, and so we'll enjoy ourselves.

DUET,—DODGE AND SUSAN.—Air—" Garry Owen."

DODGE. Odzooks! sure a dance is the best of delights.

SUSAN. It lengthens our days, while it shortens our nights.

DODGE. But there's never no pleasure in dancing with frights,  
Or those that are ugly and bony.

SUSAN. A Waltz,

DODGE. Quadrille,

SUSAN. A hop,

DODGE. Or ball—

SUSAN. A reel—

DODGE. Gallopade.

SUSAN. Whether short—

DODGE. Long, or tall.

But just look at me, and you'll find in them all,  
I'm a regular male Taglioni.

Tol lol, &c.

DODGE. For your new fangled dances I don't care a pin,  
Since your master is out, and his wine is within;  
I'll just show you how I intend to begin.

SUSAN. That care in our hearts shan't be lodging.

DODGE. Upon the light fantastic toe,  
What I can do I soon will show.

SUSAN. And that will be—

DODGE. With a pirouette so,  
The best of all possible dodging !

Tol lol, &c.

*Chorus and dance—Exeunt, R.*

*Enter* GRUDGE, FLAMWELL FITZ FUDGE, EMILY, *and* TIM TRUNDLE, L. 1 E.

GRUDGE. Well, Mr. Fudge, your candour in acquainting me with this frolic, and I must add, imposition, before it had gone too far, enables me to overlook everything else.

FLAM. Sir, I—

GRUDGE. NO thanks—she is yours, and may you make her the excellent husband she deserves.

DODGE. (*without*, R.) But I tell you I'm not.

*Enter* DODGE *between* NUDGE *and* BUDGE, *and* SUSAN.

I'm awake! Nabbed on account of the rescue, eh? Well, here, just speak to my master about it.

FLAM. (R. C.) What, Dodge!

DODGE. Yes, sir, the Dodger's dodged at last. Whilst I was enjoying myself with a duet, these fellows were getting ready to join in a catch.

NUDGE, (R.) Yes, and if Mr. Trinket hadn't made it all right, that gemman would have been nabbed too.

DODGE. HOW could you have nabbed two, when you were only after one.

GRUDGE. (C.) Stay, on a day like this, when all should be joy, I'll have no cause for sorrow, (*throws purse to* NUDGE) That, perhaps will make some amends.

NUDGE. Sir, it's a *purs-onol* reflection, and as such I takes it—thankye.

DODGE. NOW trot. (*business*)

*Exeunt* NUDGE *and* BUDGE, R. 1 E.

GRUDGE. And now harkye, Mr. Dodge *alias* Fudge, how dared you impose on me with an account of your estate in Devonshire?

DODGE. I didn't impose. I have got an estate there—Dartmoor.

GRUDGE. Psha ! that's a common.

DODGE. Well, I know it's a common—and what is common belongs to everybody, and what belongs to everybody, belongs, of course, to me, and that's a dodge.

GRUDGE. Skilfully made out, fellow.

DODGE. (R.) Ah, I wasn't a fellow, though, when I was at school with old Mother Skinflint, at Pentonville, with my little brother, Tim, playing about like a juvenile mop, with a body to it.

TRUNDLE. (*comes down, L.*) Skinflint—Tim ! Why, you surely ain't the Bill that went away to seek his fortune?

DODGE. Why, yes, I believe I was a dishonoured Bill at that time—but you—

TRUNDLE. I'm Tim, little Tim, that you used to swindle out of his sugar plums and marbles.

DODGE. Come to my arms, (*embraces him*) I've lost a son, but I've gained a brother.

SUSAN. (*comes down, L.*) Ain't you going to marry me, Tim ?

TRUNDLE. To be sure I will, as sure as eggs is eggs, and that's what I call setting a good eggs-ample to society.

FLAM. (C.) Dodge, you have been of some service to me, though not perhaps as was first intended. Quit your present life, and you shall have a speedy opportunity of benefitting yourself.

DODGE. Depend upon it, it shall be done, sir.

FLAM. And now I have but one thing more to do, and that is—

DODGE. Stop a bit. If there is anything or anybody to be done, pray let me have a hand in it.

(*business of DODGE, putting his arms through as before.*)

FLAM. Oh, certainly. Ladies and gentlemen, our Dodges for this evening are over—it is for you to say whether they have proved successful. Dodge has kindly lent me his arms, perhaps you will not refuse to favour me with your hands. Should you be willing to come here on any future period, and be robbed of your smiles in the same manner, I can conscientiously lay my hand on my heart—(*business for DODGE*) and assure you that we shall be at all times happy to practice again

THE ARTFUL DODGE.

R.

L.

CURTAIN.