

THE
PRETTY HORSEBREAKER.

An Apropos Sketch,
IN ONE ACT.

BY
WILLIAM BROUGH AND ANDREW HALLIDAY.

Author of "The Census."



THOMAS HAILES LACY,
89, STRAND,
(*Opposite Southampton Street, Covent Garden,*)
LONDON.

THE PRETTY HORSEBREAKER,

*First performed at the Royal Adelphi Theatre,
(under the management of Mr. B. Webster)
on Monday, July 15th, 1861.*

Characters.

MAJOR LOLLIPOP.....		Mr. PAUL BEDFORD.
MR. UPTON SPOUT		Mr. J. L. TOOLE.
FOOTMAN		Mr. PAGE.
LADY CREAMLY STILTON		Mrs. CHATTERLEY.
CHERUBINA	} <i>(Her Ladyship's Unmarried Daughters)</i>	Miss KATE KELLY.
SERAPHINA		Miss LAIDLAW.
ANGELINA		Miss EMILY THORNE.
SYRENA		Miss FOOTE.
GEORGINA		Miss HAYMAN.
CLEMENTINA		Miss BENNETT.
CONCERTINA		Miss STOKER.
BELLA SUNNYSIDE <i>(their Country Cousin)</i>		Miss WOOLGAR. (Mrs. Alfred Mellon.)
LADY'S MAID.....		Miss ALDRIDGE.

COSTUMES OF THE PRESENT DAY.

THE PRETTY HORSEBREAKER.

SCENE.—*Breakfast Room (Belgravia)*—LADY STILTON *and her DAUGHTERS discovered*—LADY STILTON *at breakfast-table, reading 'Post'*—DAUGHTERS *about the room, on sofas, chairs, &c.—one practising at piano and counting time*—GIRLS *yawn, drop their books, and show weariness.*

SERAPHINA. (*from sofa, throwing down book*) Disgusting book! The hero and heroine don't get married after all.

ANGELINA. And I've got half through the second volume, and there's no sign, that I can see, of any serious engagement yet.

CHERUBINA. My blessed sisters, I don't see any sign of serious engagements or marriage anywhere.

LADY S. Don't say that, Cherubina—novels, my dear, only reflect the age in which they are written. There are plenty of marriages, but not of the right sort. Here are the marriages in the *Morning Post* crowding the births and deaths right out into another column, and yet not one name among them that we know.

CHERUB. It's very sad, ma', isn't it?

LADY S. Sad, my dear; it's disgraceful. What the rising generation of the masculine gender and of eligible condition are about, I don't know. Think, my dear children, of the way in which I have brought you up—the high-priced governesses I have engaged for you—the parties I have given for so many seasons. Cherubina, love, how many seasons is it since you first came out?

CHERUB. Mamma, I'm astonished at your asking such a question!

LADY S. Well, my dear, I'm not about to go into unpleasant particulars; but I know I have brought out one a season regularly for some years past, and you are all still on hand—not one of you has gone off, nor do I see the slightest chance, unless this new-fledged millionaire, young Upton Spout, should take a fancy to one of you. My dears, I am told he is a most estimable *parti*.

CHERUB. Oh, he's a darling, ma!

ANGEL. He's well enough, as young men go.

LADY S. As young men go, my love! Are you aware of the scarcity of the article? Why, there's hardly a young man

left—that is, what we may call a young man—one of condition and of matrimonial tendencies.

SERAPH. But mamma, dear, I'm in no hurry to get married—I can wait.

LADY S. My sweetest Seraphina, don't let me hear such dreadful sentiments from you again. It is clear, my love, that you are singularly insensible of the ambition which should animate a member of a high-born and numerous family of daughters. Don't want to marry, indeed! Where would you all have been, had I entertained such sentiments in early life.

ANGEL. But surely, mamma, there is no great hurry.

SERAPH. }

CONCER. } No, mannna, there's no great hurry.

ANGEL. }

CHERUB. My blessed sisters, speak for yourselves—I quite agree with our respected parent—it behoves us all to make an effort.

LADY S. Cherubina, my love, I have no fault to find with you—you have made efforts—you have been making efforts for some years.

CHERUB. Well, mamma, I've done my best during the three seasons I've been out.

ANGEL. Three seasons—you mean eight!

SERAPH. Twelve.

CHERUB. You wicked stories.

LADY S. My sweetest infants, pray don't quarrel. An opportunity now presents itself for one of you. I can't say which; but union, my dears, is strength. You must all unite your forces upon Mr. Upton Spout, and, in fact, give a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether.

CONCER. (*coming forward*) Must I pull, too, ma'.

CHERUB. Don't be ridiculous, child.

LADY S. My dear Cherubina, it is very wrong of you to repress the zeal of your youngest sister in the good cause. Yes—youngest blossom on the old ancestral tree—you are fourteen next birthday, and you may pull away. (*aside*) I shall take her out of frock and trousers at once.

CHERUB. Do you think, ma, we shall see Mr. Upton Spout this morning.

LADY S. I've no doubt of it. Our dear friend, Major Lollipop, has promised to bring him round to take you for a ride in the Park; so go and get ready—you, Cherubina, Seraphina and Angelina, get your habits on; the others dress for the carriage. Mr. Upton Spout, as you are aware, is an accomplished horseman, and I think my three eldest jewels, when well mounted, will shine with a lustre that will dazzle even his eyes.

CONCER. Let me have my pony, ma ! I can ride just as well as Cherubina—cousin Bella taught me, and she can ride better than any of us.

CHERUB. Cousin Bella, indeed ! It strikes me she's only fit to be a riding mistress.

CONCER. Oh, is she! She plays the piano better than you; and she can talk French better than you; and she's kinder than you!

LADY S. There, there, no words, my sweetest cherubs; go, girls, and dress, and remember what I told you, that these gentlemen, who are fond of horses, like to be talked to in their own vernacular. So mind, dears, you must call the left the "near side," and the right the "off side." When your horse "jibs," you mustn't call it "bolting," and you must bear in mind the difference between "shying" and being "skittish."

CHERUB. Oh yes, we've got all that by heart, mamma!

LADY S. Very well; go and get your habits on, for Mr. Spout, though a most worthy gentleman, is, I am told, impatient, and doesn't like to be kept waiting.

CONCER. I won't be a minute, ma'!

CHERUB. Hold your tongue, do, child. Come along, my blessed sisters. *Exeunt R.*

LADY S. That child really possesses more *savoir faire* than all her other sisters put together. If she were only a year or two older, I would, in sporting parlance, declare to win with her against the entire field !

BELLA. (*singing without*)

" I love the merry, merry sunshine,
It makes the heart so gay."

Enter BELLA, R.

LADY S. Upon my word! what right have you to love " the merry, merry sunshine ?" A poor relation, and a dependent—one whom I have introduced to good society—to come into my presence in this boisterous manner. It was all very well to conduct yourself in this way when you lived in the country, but you should now learn the deportment of a young lady.

BELLA. Well, my dear aunt, I beg your pardon; I do beg your pardon for being happy in the home you've given me, but you know I'm naturally fond of fun. I can't repress my spirits, but I'm sure I'm very grateful to you for your kindness.

LADY S. And very prettily you show your gratitude—galloping away with Mr. Upton Spout yesterday before my very eyes in the Park.

BELLA. Oh, aunt, I didn't—the horse you were kind enough to lend me was a more spirited one than I expected, and it ran

away with me—the gentleman followed to see that I didn't come to harm, though what his name was I never knew to this moment, for you never introduced me.

LADY S. Introduce you, indeed ! Let me tell you, Miss Sunnyside, that though you are related to our family, I take you out to act as companion to my daughters, not as their rival-----

BELLA. Their rival, I-----

LADY S. Understand me, once for all, the charms you have, as my niece, entitle you to a home here.

BELLA. Well, if I'm in the way, aunt, I can get my own living as a governess.

LADY S. What, a relation of the Stilton's acting as a governess—I'm ashamed of you! I expect you to stop here and superintend the education of your cousins—a governess indeed !

BELLA. Well, aunt, I'm very happy as I am.

LADY S. Well then, mind for the future, when we have visitors, or when we meet anybody out of doors, you are not to obtrude yourself. *Exit, R.*

BELLA. Oh dear no, Lady Stilton, it would never do for any member of your high and illustrious family to be a governess—by no means—at least, that is, a paid one. Your poor relation may do all the drudgery of governess work if she is not paid. That makes it quite a different matter. However, why need I care? I know for her own pride's-sake, she'll never let me leave her, and if she did—what then ? I can do very well without her help. And so the little gentlman, who galloped after me, is Mr. Upton Spout. I fancied I had seen him somewhere before. And now that I remember, he is the identical little gentleman, who pulled me out of the ditch the day I was out with the Berkshire hounds, and had that tumble. It wasn't romantic to be pulled out of the mud ; but I suppose I ought to be just as grateful as if it had been the ocean. As for Lady Stilton, I shan't let her ill temper damp my spirits, so in the absence of her prim ladyship I repeat—

" I love the merry, merry sunshine,
It makes the heart so gay."

Enter FOOTMAN, L.

FOOTMAN. Major Lollipop.

BELLA. Go and tell her ladyship the Major is here.

Exit FOOTMAN, R.

Well; I'm not to intrude myself when company calls, and in the present instance, I must say obedience is a pleasure. That horrid old Major, I hate the very sight of him, with his eternal " How d'ye do, my dear madam, how d'ye do, how d'ye do, how d'ye do." So I'll leave the coast clear for him, merely

remarking before I go, as I think I observed before—(*sings*)

" I love the merry, merry sunshine,
It makes the heart so gay." *Exit, C. door.*

Enter MAJOR LOLLIPOP, in yachting dress, L.

MAJOR L. (*imagining LADY S. present*) How d'ye do, my dear madam, how d'ye do, how d'ye do ? Why, the dear creature isn't here.

Enter LADY STILTON, R.

MAJOR L. Ah, here she is! How d'ye do, my dear madam, how d'ye do, how d'ye do.

LADY S. My dear Major, what on earth is the meaning of this costume ?

MAJOR L. Well, the fact is, madam, our young friend Spout is a regular Turk. After keeping me half the night at billiards, he roused me out of my first sleep at seven o'clock this morning. He's an early bird, Mr. Spout, and detests every one who is not as early in their habits as himself.

LADY S. You don't say so. (*rings bell*)

Enter FOOTMAN, L.

Remove these breakfast things immediately. (*he does so, L.*)

MAJOR L. Yes, my dear madam, he roused me at seven to go yachting, and we military men, however brave on the tented field, are not at all at home on the briny deep. The fact is, my dear madam, if you will excuse the vulgarity of the confession, I feel queer—queer—here-----

LADY S. But you told me Mr. Spout intended going out on horseback to-day.

MAJOR L. What our friend Spout intends, my dear madam, is one thing, and what our friend Spout does is quite another. Never knows his own mind half-an-hour together, which he is perfectly entitled not to do, my dear madam, being a man of wealth and family.

LADY S. Family, did you say, Major?

MAJOR L. Family — undoubtedly, madam. As you are aware, Mr. Upton Spout's grandfather was a pawnbroker, so we may pronounce his family quite the ticket. His ancestors came over with-----

LADY S. The Conqueror, I have no doubt.

MAJOR L. Provided the Conqueror was short of ready money, I should say they did. Our friend, Upton Spout, is descended from the illustrious family of the Lombards, and carries three golden balls on his escutcheon. I have never seen his crest, but I have no doubt it was a weasel, from that animal's inveterate habit of going pop.

LADY S. Yes, yes; I am aware that Mr. Spout's grandfather was engaged in commerce; but I believe some of his relations were very high people.

MAJOR L. Right, madam; the elder Spout stood in the relation of uncle to some of the most distinguished persons in fashion, literature, science, and art.

LADY S. And he is not going out on horseback this morning?

MAJOR L. No; he's changed his mind, and is going yachting. He's breakfasting at his club, and will be here to fetch the ladies directly.

LADY S. Well, Major, between you and me, I'm rather glad of it, for I am afraid the people young men are brought into contact with in Rotten Row-----

MAJOR L. Yes, I know—you mean the Pretty Horsebreakers—very dangerous, my dear madam, to young men of property, and it strikes me that our young friend has already been attracted in that quarter.

LADY S. Good gracious, I hope not. (*rings bell*)

Enter MAID, R.

Tell the young ladies to take off their habits instantly—we're going on the water.

MAID. Yes, my lady.

Exit, L.

LADY S. Major, you'll excuse me I know, I think I had better see to the girls myself—*au revoir*, Major! *Exit, R.*

MAJOR L. *Au revoir*, my dear madam, *au revoir*. He's a good fellow, our friend Spout—his fortune, I'm told, is something fabulous, and he is just the sort of man who ought to settle down in life, give pleasant little dinner parties, and keep a good cellar of old port for his friends.

Enter FOOTMAN, L.

FOOTMAN. Mr. Upton Spout!

Exit FOOTMAN, L.

Enter SPOUT, L.

MAJOR L. How d'ye do, my dear Upton, how d'ye do? (*shakes hands*)

UPTON. Well, much about the same as when you left me half an hour ago. (*disengaging his hand*) There, that'll do. Now, where are the ladies?—not dressed yet—I told you to get them ready half an hour ago.

MAJOR L. (*aside*) He orders me about like a nabob! (*aloud*) All right, my Upton, all right—the dear creatures will be here directly. When I came in, they were just dressing for a ride-----

SPOUT. A ride—don't talk of riding—it brings back the memory of that angel in a blue riding habit—that galloped off with me and my affections in the Park yesterday.

MAJOR L. Yes, yes, you told me all about her, my dear boy.

SPOUT. What nonsense you are talking; Major, I never told you all about her, I never could tell you all about her. She was something to see, sir, not to tell about. She sat her horse, sir, like a rock.

MAJOR L. Yes, many of them do, dear boy.

SPOUT. No Ascot jockey could beat her style of riding—not even Rarey himself, the famous horse breaker.

MAJOR L. Ah, that's it, dear boy, these pretty horsebreakers, beware of them—they're breaking the hearts of all the young fellows about town.

SPOUT. Now look here, Major, I'm not going to be lectured. If I choose to have my heart broken by a pretty horsebreaker, it's my own look-out. Besides, if my heart is broken, I have money enough to buy a new one. The best thing you can do, if you are my friend, is to find out who this girl is—there, get along, don't spare expense, I'll stand the racket.

MAJOR L. Pooh, pooh, dear boy, it's somebody that expects to pick you up.

SPOUT. Pick me up ? If I thought she wanted to pick me up, I'd tumble down directly. Oh, Major, such eyes; such teeth; such a mouth ; such a nose, and such a pork-pie hat—that pork-pie hat settled my hash.

MAJOR L. Ah, dear boy, beware of the pork pies !

SPOUT. And you should have seen her loose habit flowing in graceful folds.

MAJOR L. Yes, dear boy, that's the worst of it, the loose habits of these pretty horsebreakers are only too graceful.

SPOUT. And didn't she go along at a spanking rate, and when I called out to her, if I should stop her horse, she turns round in her saddle like Dick Turpin, and says to me, " No danger, old fellow, I've been on horseback before to-day." That's the sort of girl for me, a girl that can ride and talk—talk sense. (*slaps MAJOR in the stomach*)

MAJOR L. Don't do that, Upton, I've been upon the water you know, and I feel queer.

SPOUT. Well, there go and tell the man to bring the yacht round to the bridge. I suppose I must escort these ladies since I promised. I'll come round with them to the point.

MAJOR L. Yes, come to the point with the girls, dear boy, come to the point with them-----

SPOUT. Hollo ! here I say, Major, it strikes me you want to hook me into marrying. If I thought that, I'd go away without seeing these swell friends of yours.

MAJOR L. My dear boy, you wouldn't break through all the rules of good society.

SPOUT. Bother the rules of good society.—If I break them, I suppose I can afford to pay for them.

MAJOR L. No doubt, dear boy; but I'll be off and see about the boat. Don't forget to bring the dear girls to the point.

Exit, L.

SPOUT. I don't feel half comfortable in these gilded salons—salons—that's the word. I feel as thirsty as a coalheaver, and I suppose I daren't ask for beer if it was to save my life. I would ring the bell for some, if I weren't afraid of a tremendous red-hot flunkey coming in and frightening me. I can't think how it is, but in the presence of one of those magnificent specimens of servile humanity, I always feel that I'm a little boy, and he's the beadle. Why the deuce don't those girls come ? I shan't wait for them. Stop, I'll just send word to them to make haste. I'll ring the bell and chance the flunkey. (*rings bell*) Ha, the garden, and a lady among the flowers—charming sight! Eh, what?—no it is'nt—can it be—do my eyes deceive me ? Yes it is—as I live, it is the very girl that bolted from me in the park. Hi, miss, you, what's your name?—here, come up.

Enter FOOTMAN, L.

FOOTMAN. Did you ring, sir?

SPOUT. Hold your tongue, you scoundrel, do; how dare you speak to a gentleman of property when you see he is in this frantic state of excitement. (*calling out of window*) Here, I say, come up—hi—by Jove, she's bolted from me again—I'll give chase. (*gets on chair to go out of window*)

FOOTMAN. Sir, consider-----

SPOUT. Hold your tongue, sir, I tell you !

FOOTMAN. The chair, sir.

SPOUT. Well, I suppose I can pay for washing it.

(*begins to get out*)

FOOTMAN. (*trying to stop him*) Sir, sir, you'll break your neck.

SPOUT. Well, I can pay for mending it. (*jumps out*)

FOOTMAN. The gentleman's evidently cracked — he'll be smashed to pieces. I'll go and pick up what's left of him. *Exit, L.*

Enter SPOUT, dragging in BELLA, C. door.

SPOUT. No, no, you don't get away from me this time as you did yesterday. Come along, I've got you.

BELLA. Don't sir—this rudeness is unpardonable. Are you mad?

SPOUT. Mad—mad as a score of hatters. You—you have run away with all the wits I ever had.

BELLA. Oh, nonsense; this language to one who is a perfect stranger to you!

SPOUT. Stranger ?—not a bit of it. Don't you remember me in the park yesterday?

BELLA. On the high-mettled bay ?

SPOUT. Yes, on the high-mettled bay.

BELLA. In a white hat and pink tie?

SPOUT. White hat and a pink necktie. Yes, that was me. What did you think of me ?

BELLA. (*laughing*) Well, if you want the truth, I thought you as comical-looking a little gentleman as I had ever seen.

SPOUT. Ha, ha—and would you like to know what I thought of you?

BELLA. I should be afraid to ask.

SPOUT. Don't—I thought you a stunner.

BELLA. Oh, be off with your nonsense.

SPOUT. It's no nonsense. I repeat it. You are stunner—a perfect stunner. Look here—I offer you my hand and heart on the spot.

BELLA. Do you wish me to call Lady Stilton?

SPOUT. Oh, no; we can get on quite as well alone. Come, come, don't be angry—give us a kiss, and make friends.

BELLA. A kiss, you impertinent little man? I should like to see you try and take one.

SPOUT. Should you ?—then here goes.

BELLA. If you come near me, I'll box your ears.

SPOUT. Do, do, I should like it—with that hand.

BELLA. Are you aware, sir, to whom you are talking?

SPOUT. Not in the least—that's the very thing I've been anxious to know since yesterday. Who are you?

BELLA. Had I been honoured with a proper introduction, you might have learnt; but under the circumstances, perhaps, you had better find out for yourself.

SPOUT. Well, judging by your yesterday's performance, I should be inclined to set you down as connected with the horse-breaking interest; but the costume you have on at present would induce me to pronounce you of the gardening persuasion.

BELLA. Well, well, I shall leave you in your ignorance. I think I ought to be very angry with you—if I were a proper young lady, I suppose I should.

SPOUT. But ain't you a proper young lady, then ?

BELLA. Everybody tells me I'm not—they say I'm a regular hoyden; however, I forgive you—I know you meant no harm, and a little bit of nonsense is quite refreshing now and then, in this stiff, fashionable society. (*going*)

SPOUT. Well, give us a kiss before you go.

BELLA. Oh, you really must excuse me that; but there's my hand to show that we part friends—excuse the garden glove.

SPOUT. (*seizes hand*) Oh!

BELLA. What's the matter ?

SPOUT. You asked me to excuse the glove, but you didn't tell me there were thorns in it.

BELLA. Thorns? I'm so sorry ; but I've just been gathering some roses.

SPOUT. Have you? Give us a rose, and I'll forgive the thorn.

BELLA. Are you so fond of flowers, then ?

SPOUT. I dote on them. Don't you ?

BELLA. I adore them—but in crowded towns you never see flowers in perfection.

SPOUT. Don't you, by Jove-- there's a flower show on to-day, will you come ?

BELLA. Oh, couldn't do it!

SPOUT. Oh yes, you can—look here, if you won't promise to come, I'll kiss you.

BELLA. Will you!

(runs away from him—he chases her round the room, jumping over chairs, &c.—she escapes through door, C., and slams it in his face)

SPOUT. Oh, come I say, open the door.

Enter LADY STILTON, R.

LADY S. Why, Mr. Spout, whatever is the matter?

SPOUT. There, don't bother me. (*turning, sees* LADY STILTON, *and immediately assumes the tone of a drawling exquisite*) Ah, beg pardon, Lady Stilton, delighted to see you, how d'ye do ? (*aside*) That's the way to talk to the swells.

LADY S. I thought I heard a noise in this room.

SPOUT. Noise—ah, y-a-a-s—I—a—dropped my handkerchief—ah, came down with a twemendous bang, I assure you.

LADY S. I hope he has not been romping with any of the maid servants in my house—but young men will be young men!

SPOUT. Young ladies pretty well this morning ?

LADY S. Thank you, Mr. Spout, they are very well, and here they are to answer for themselves.

Enter DAUGHTERS, R.

Cherubina, Seraphina, Angelina, Syrena, Georgina, Clementina and Concertina. (*they all curtsy*)

SPOUT. Remarkable fine family. (*aside*) I don't mean handsome but numerous.

LADY S. Oh, sir, you flatter my dear girls.

SPOUT. Not all all, your ladyship.

LADY S. You see, Mr. Spout, that all my daughters are most accomplished girls, they have had a most expensive,

education, and I am so fond of them all, that I shouldn't like to lose any of them-----

SPOUT. No, of course not. (*aside*) She might lose two or three, without missing them from the flock.

LADY S. You know I'm not one of those match-making mothers, that are always on the look out for husbands for their daughters.

SPOUT. Obviously not, your ladyship.

LADY S. Some mother's notions are so extravagant! *My* idea of the provision for a young lady settling down in life is an exceedingly moderate one.

SPOUT. Ah, yes, yes—couple of hundred pounds pin money. What do you think, Miss Cherubina ?

CHERUB. Yes, a couple of hundred might do with proper management.

SPOUT. Ah ! and a house in Town, another in the country-----

LADY S. Of course.

SPOUT. Box at the opera—three or four carriages—two saddlehorses—two lady's maids, and something under—say three score servants, male and female.

LADY S. Ah, Mr. Spout, how well you know the requirements of a respectable *menage*—but I'm afraid I'm keeping you from your excursion on the water ?

SPOUT. Oh, not at all— (*aside*)—but she's keeping me from the flower show, where I mean to take that pretty horse-riding gardener girl, spite of what she says.

CHERUB. Is the wind favourable this morning, Mr. Spout ?

SERAPH. Will it blow on the off side of the boat ?

ANGEL. Or on the near side ?

SPOUT. Excuse me, ladies, "starboard" and "larboard," if you please; "near" side and "off" side refer to horsemanship, ladies, not to navigation.

CHERUB. How stupid of you, girls, and you all so fond of yachting.

LADY S. Oh yes; my darlings dote upon the water.

OMNES. Oh, that we do!

CHERUB. I love the water better than anything in the world.

SPOUT. Sorry to hear it; for the fact is, I have changed my mind. What say you to the flower show ?

OMNES. Oh, delightful!

CHERUB. Oh, much better than boating!

OMNES. Much better, of course!

LADY S. Oh yes; my darlings dote so upon flowers. There, come along up stairs, girls, and take those ridiculous jackets off immediately. Mr. Spout, you will excuse me for a moment, won't you?

SPOUT. Oh certainly, your ladyship-----with pleasure.

Exeunt LADY S. and her DAUGHTERS, R.

SPOUT. (*resuming his natural style*) So much for that. Doing

the swell is fearfully fatiguing. Bother this major, making these appointments for me. I should have liked to go alone to the flower show, with that pretty horsebreaker, or whatever she is. Two hundred a-year pin money, house in town, another in the country, carriages, horses, servants, opera boxes—oh, it wouldn't run to it!

BELLA. (*singing without*) "I love the merry, merry sunshine."

SPOUT. Hollo—that voice—I know that voice—its my semi-equestrian, semi-floricultural divinity.

Enter BELLA, C., in riding dress.

And, by Jupiter, in the identical blue riding habit.

BELLA. Hollo—I beg your pardon—are you here still? I thought you had gone out with the ladies.

SPOUT. What young man of spirit and property would go out with ladies, when he can enjoy the society of a pretty horsebreaker, by stopping where he is.

BELLA. A horsebreaker—what you mean?

SPOUT. A horsebreaker—a heartbreaker—a general smasher up of me and all belonging to me—in that pork-pie hat and blue riding habit. Oh!—give us a kiss—I should so like one in that dress.

BELLA. Don't be ridiculous, little man.

SPOUT. Little gentleman, if you please—gentleman of property. Well, do give us something—a lock of your hair—(*she waives him off*)—a little bit of the blue riding habit, as a keepsake—or a quarter of your pork-pie. You won't give me a quarter of your pork-pie, and you see the state of starvation I am in.

BELLA. Starvation?

SPOUT. Yes; starving for true love and affection. Give us a kiss, or a box on the ear, or a black eye, or some other mark of your affection.

BELLA. Now, little man-----

SPOUT. Little gentleman—gentleman of property.

BELLA. Well, little gentleman of property, what is your little motive?

SPOUT. Ah, that's the way to talk—that's what I call sense. She meant what is the little gentleman of property's little game? Yes, that's it—here, take a chair, take a chair, and the little gentleman of property will tell you his little game. (*they take chairs*)

BELLA. Well now.

SPOUT. Well, give us a kiss before we begin.

BELLA. Sir, you really seem to be strangely ignorant of the usages of respectable society.

SPOUT. Respectable society! Well, if you call this respectable society, I don't think much of it. What do *you* think of high life? Don't you think it is rather starched and stiff?

BELLA. Well, it is rather starched and stiff as you say. I'm a country girl myself, and you know in the country, folks don't mind a little bit of romping ; but that won't do here—but when people are at Rome, they must do as Rome does.

SPOUT. Yes, but we're not at Rome, and if you could only tell me of any country where folks *could* enjoy themselves as they please, the sooner we take two first-class tickets to the happy spot the better—I'll pay the passage-----

BELLA. This joking has gone far enough, Mr. Spout, I'll bid you good day.

SPOUT. Don't go for one moment. Just tell me what are your notions about settling down. Settle down now and tell me.

BELLA. Notions about settling down ?

SPOUT. Yes, in life. Would two hundred a-year pin money, a house in town, another in the country, two or three carriages, a box at the opera-----

BELLA. Oh dear, oh dear, don't talk of town and country houses. If I ever thought of settling down, the height of my ambition would be to have a nice little cottage-----

SPOUT. Near a wood ?

BELLA. Yes, if possible.

SPOUT. Within an easy carriage drive of town.

BELLA. That I don't care about—so that the folks that I really loved were near enough for me to drive round and see them in my little pony phaeton—and then I should like a little farm.

SPOUT. Yes, when a little farm we keep-----

BELLA. And a little cow-----

SPOUT. Yes, and a little sheep-----

BELLA. And a little lamb-----

SPOUT. And a little mint sauce-----

BELLA. And some little cocks and hens-----

SPOUT. Yes, little cocks and hens-----

BELLA. So as always to have a good supply of fresh eggs-----

SPOUT. And bacon ! so you'd want a little pig!

BELLA. Oh, lots of little pigs.

SPOUT. Yes, lots of little pigs, and one little pig that goes squeak, squeak, squeak, all the way home-----

BELLA. And keep ducks and drakes !

SPOUT. Yes, instead of making ducks and drakes of one's money. Ah! that's the sort of thing. Better than keeping regiments of flunkeys dressed like beadles, carriages, saddle horses-----

BELLA. Stop, stop ! I must confess a weakness for a saddle horse.

SPOUT. By Jove, I should think so—in that blue riding habit, saddle horses I look upon as a necessary of life.

BELLA. Are you so fond of horse riding, then?

SPOUT. Oh, mad for it! (*rides in chair*)

BELLA. So am I! Nothing like a glorious ride across country, over hedges, ditches-----

SPOUT. Stone fences, battlements, turnpike gates-----

BELLA. Brooks, canals, railway cuttings-----

SPOUT. Electric telegraph wires, church steeples, agricultural labourers—anything that turns up-----

BELLA. With the hounds in full cry leading you on-----

SPOUT. Everybody round you shouting out like maniacs. Tally-ho! Yoicks! yoicks! tally-ho!

BELLA. That's the style!

SPOUT. Yes, that's the style—give us a kiss, and we'll go out for a ride.

BELLA. Oh nonsense—ride with you, indeed! I only put my habit on to-----

SPOUT. Oh, that blue riding habit!

BELLA. To go out for a ride while the young ladies were away—you know that you're engaged to take them out.

SPOUT. I cancel all engagements on the spot. Let us take a ride together instead.

BELLA. (*laughing*) What in that dress?

SPOUT. You're right! Never shall that blue riding habit be degraded by the inappropriate companionship of this villainous pea jacket. Wait half a minute, and I'll come back dressed like Nimrod.

BELLA. Nonsense, I tell you I mean to ride alone.

SPOUT. You shall—and I'll go with you. Will you wait until I have changed my dress?

BELLA. Certainly not!

Enter MAJOR LOLLIPOP, L.

MAJOR L. Ah, how d'ye do—how d'ye do?

SPOUT. The very man I want! Here, Major—look after this young lady—don't, for your life, let her go out of your sight till I come back. *Exit, L.*

MAJOR L. What's the matter with the dear boy?—eh, what do I see? Blue riding habit and pork-pie hat. Surely, she's not the pretty horsebreaker.

BELLA. (*tries to go*) Major Lollipop, I'll trouble you to let me pass.

MAJOR L. Couldn't think of it, dear girl. My friend Upton ordered me to keep you here till he came back.

BELLA. Major Lollipop, if you attempt to stop me, I shall horsewhip you.

MAJOR L. Horsewhip a major in the army?—impossible!

BELLA. Well, I suppose you wouldn't have me call you out, would you?

MAJOR. Well, but dear girl, consider Mr. Spout.

BELLA. I shall take Mr. Spout into due consideration, don't be afraid. (*pushes past him, he tries to stop her—she horsewhips him, and exit, C.*)

MAJOR L. She's gone—what will the dear boy say ? I shouldn't wonder if he cut me.

Enter LADY STILTON, R.

MAJOR L. Ah! How d'ye do, my dear madam, how d'ye do?

LADY S. Why, where's Mr. Spout ? I suppose he's gone to change his dress. And you, Major—surely you're not going to the flower show in that pea jacket.

MAJOR L. Flower show, my dear madam, I thought we were going yachting.

LADY S. Oh, that's all altered. Our friend is going to take the dear girls to the flower show instead.

MAJOR L. What a fickle person our friend is; he's as changeable as the weather; but as a man of property, he has a perfect right to be fickle, and to change his mind as readily as he would a ten pound note.

Enter SPOUT, dressed for riding, L.

SPOUT. Now then, Major. Hollo—where—where is she?

MAJOR L. Where's who, my dear boy ?

SPOUT. She—she—where is she ?

LADY S. Which of them did you mean, my dear sir. They're all ready, waiting in the next room. Come in, my dears.

Enter YOUNG LADIES, dressed for flower show, R.

Here they are, sir—Cherubina, Seraphina, Angelina, Syrena, Georgina, Clementina and Concertina, all ready for the flower show.

SPOUT. Bother the flower show! I'm going riding.

CHERUB. }

SERAPH. } Oh, ma', and you made us take our habits off!

ANGEL. }

SPOUT. Major, I left a treasure in your charge. What have you done with it? Refund. (*collaring him*)

MAJOR L. Well, but my dear boy-----

SPOUT. Go instantly and find her, if you prize my acquaintance or your own breath. Find her, or I shall cut the one and stop the other.

MAJOR L. Find whom ?

SPOUT. My pretty horsebreaker—be off! *Exit MAJOR L., C.*

LADY S. Your what—your pretty horsebreaker? I trust, sir, you will introduce nothing of the kind within this circle!

CHERUB. Hadn't we better leave the room, mamma?

SPOUT. Well, I don't want to be rude, but perhaps you had, and be kind enough to take your mother with you.

LADY S. This insult! Mr. Spout, in one word, let me inform you, that your attentions towards my family have been remarked. In common justice to me, sir, and my station, I must request that you will immediately inform me, to which member of my family those intentions are directed ?

Enter MAJOR LOLLIPOP with BELLA, C.

MAJOR L. I've got her, dear boy, I've caught the pretty horsebreaker!

LADY S. She! Bella Sunnyside, how dare you? Leave my house this instant!

SPOUT. Yes do, Bella Sunnyside, and come to mine.

LADY S. I'm horrified !

GIRLS. Oh !

BELLA. Don't be angry, aunt—and you, my dear cousins.

SPOUT. Aunt—cousins—are you one of the family, Bella?

BELLA. Well, yes I—I am a country cousin.

SPOUT. Huzza ! Lady Stilton, I obey, I make choice of one of the family—I choose—*(all the GIRLS come forward)* my pretty horsebreaker. *(goes and offers his hand to BELLA.)*

BELLA. Me! You don't mean it ?

SPOUT. Don't I! Major, be off and get a license—take my purse—no matter what the cost may be, get the very best they've got. There, Bella, does that look like meaning it?

BELLA. But you haven't asked me yet if I'll have you.

SPOUT. Well, I'll ask you now—will you have me? Say yes-----

BELLA. Well, you don't seem a bad sort of little man.

SPOUT. Little gentleman—little gentleman of property.

BELLA. And I suppose I owe you some return for pulling me out of the ditch that day in Berkshire.

SPOUT. Ditch! Berkshire! was it you, then? I thought I'd seen you somewhere. Then you will say yes.

BELLA. Well—yes.

LADY S. I'm disgusted !

(GIRLS turn away)

SPOUT. That's all right—and we'll be married at Saint George's, Hanover Square, to-morrow morning and your cousins will be bridesmaids—and when they see the happy couple standing at the altar-----

BELLA. Yes, when they see us standing at the altar, they may learn this lesson—that the surest way to catch a husband, is not to run after him, but to let him run after us—as you ran after me in the Park yesterday.

SPOUT. And a very good moral, too. What do you think ? *(to Audience)* Don't you think it's a good moral? say yes. *(to BELLA)* Now then, after that, you can have no objection to give me a kiss. *(he is seen struggling with her for a kiss as the curtain falls)*

Curtain.