

THE  
**SMOKED MISER;**  
OR,  
THE BENEFIT OF HANGING.

*A Farce,*

IN ONE ACT,

BY

**DOUGLAS JERROLD,**

AUTHOR OF

*"Black-Eyed Susan," "The Rent Day," "Law and Lions,"  
"The Housekeeper," "Beau Nash," "Doves in a Cage,"  
"The Painter of Ghent," "The Schoolfellows,"  
"Tower of Lochlian," "Statue Lover,"  
&c., &c.*



**THOMAS HAILES LACY,**

89, STRAND, LONDON.

THE SMOKED MISER.

*First performed at Sadler's Wells Theatre, June, 1823.*

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**Characters.**

SCREW ( <i>the Miser</i> ) .....	MR. WILLIAMS.
NAIL ( <i>his Friend</i> ).....	MR. STRICKLAND.
CAPTAIN DARING .....	MR. ROGERS.
GOLIAH SPIDERLIMB ( <i>the Miser's Man</i> ) ...	MR. VALE.
GILES SOWTHISTLE ( <i>a Farmer</i> ).....	MR. YARDLEY.
ANNE ( <i>Ward to Screw</i> ).....	MISS VINCENT.
SALLY CERES ( <i>a Waiting-maid</i> ).....	MRS. VALE.

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**Costumes.**

SCREW.—Old man's brown suit, stockings and buckles.

NAIL.—Black square cut coat, black vest, black breeches and stockings, hat and stick.

CAPTAIN DARING.—Short smock frock, leather breeches, blue striped stockings, and lace-up boots, round hat and red neckerchief *Second Dress:* Officer's undress suit.

SPIDERLIMB.—Green waistcoat with black sleeves, fitting very tight, tight black pantaloons and stockings, shoes, black neckerchief.

GILES SOWTHISTLE.—Countryman's dress.

SALLY.—Flowered chintz gown, small black apron, bonnet with ribbons, &c.

ANNE.—White muslin modern dress, bonnet, &c.

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*Time in Representation—45 Minutes.*

[Performance Free]

THE  
SMOKED MISER.

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SCENE.—*A Room in an old-fashioned Cottage. Large antique fireplace; everything denoting meanness and penury.*

OLD SCREW *and* OLD NAIL, *discovered sitting.*

SCREW. But you have 'em all safe, brother Nail, the will and everything?

NAIL. Snug, snug, I assure you.

SCREW. That's right. I've been waiting anxiously for your arrival. To whom, do you think I mean to marry her?

NAIL. Can't say.

SCREW. Oh, such a match! so well contrived! She knows nothing yet of the matter; but I've promised her to my friend File—conditionally, that we all snack in her fortune.

NAIL. Good ! Very politic ! We must get rid of her, it's plain, for she has some time since been of age.

SCREW. But she's not exactly aware of that. I have ever told her she's not so old as she really is, and that's no difficult story to make a woman believe. But the greatest reason to get her off hand is, there's some spark hankering after her. I've kept him from her as yet, I believe—when she's married that's her husband's business.

NAIL. A spark, eh! How's that.

SCREW. Why, I kept Miss Anne a close prisoner in the country here for three years, and, fearing to leave her behind, in defiance of double travelling expenses, I in-

dulged her with a jaunt to London with me when unavoidable affairs called me thither. 'Twas there she met this swain in the coach. He's been a source of trouble to me ever since, saying nothing of the costs for bolts and bars. He is now, I believe, in the neighbourhood.

NAIL. Then there's no time to be lost—we must make the best of her at once. In fact it our duty, brother, as being her guardians—for we are old, Screw, and life is uncertain.

SCREW. Eh; don't talk so, brother Nail, for as our accounts have not been very regularly kept here, it is ten to one if, at the casting up, the balance will be in our favour.

NAIL. Pshaw ! I begin to suspect you. Why, you are not growing honest ?

SCREW. Heaven forbid ! that is—upon my honour, no—I like a consistency of conduct.

NAIL. Well, then, there's no fear of your being a scoundrel to the end.

SCREW. Self-concern, brother, self-concern. But when will you bring the deeds ?

NAIL. Why, this evening. But as I think we had better have advice on them, if you know any one that can make a great deal out of a little-----

SCREW. I have it—Swindle, my lawyer.

NAIL. Can he, think you ?

SCREW. Can he ? ask his clients.

NAIL. But may he not be honest ? what character does he bear ?

SCREW. He's my very particular friend.

NAIL. That's quite sufficient, he'll do.

SCREW. Then you'll be sure to bring them ?

NAIL. Certainly—have I not travelled on purpose, a long way too, for me. But this is the last time we shall meet, brother, for when I get home, no one shall stir me from there again.

SCREW. Oh yes, brother, the devil will have his due

NAIL. Will he? then we shall meet again, certainly. But good-day for the present.

SCREW. Here, Goliah Spiderlimb! Goliah ! Where's the lazy rascal that I keep ?

SPIDER. (*entering R.*) He's not in the house, sir.

SCREW. Not in the house—why, you scoundrel, don't I keep you ?

SPIDER. I can't persuade my stomach that you do, sir.

SCREW. What! you ungrateful lout! you live too high !

SPIDER. I am sufficiently punished sir, for the enormity.

NAIL. Ah ! Screw, servants are knaves, and they are fools who maintain them. I know many who keep twenty fat, cheating villains, that-----

SPIDER. I beg pardon, sir—but could you recommend me to such a place? And if to be thin is to be honest, I certainly bear evident proofs of a most unexceptionable character.

NAIL. You are saucy, sir! hold your tongue ; you give too much to your master—

SPIDER. Do I ? then you must allow he makes me a bad return for my liberality.

SCREW. Go out of the room, sir. Shew Mr. Nail the door, then return, I'll talk to you.

SPIDER. Better talk to me, sir, by the proxy of a mutton chop, if 'twere only for the novelty of the admonition.

SCREW. Begone, sirrah—attend Mr. Nail.

SPIDER. Yes, sir. This way, Mr. Nail, this way, don't be afraid, you'll not run against the pantry.

NAIL. To-night, then, I'll come.

*Exit NAIL and SPIDERLIMB, L.*

SCREW. That's all right—when I get the will and papers in my possession, I think it will be hard if, with my friend Swindle's contrivance, I can't outwit brother Nail.

*Re-enter SPIDERLIMB, L.*

Come hither, sirrah ! don't you think that you are a very ill-bred young man?

SPIDER. I'll-bred  can't say my appearance denies the accusation.

SCREW. Pshaw! I hate your jesting.

SPIDER. Why it's on a poor subject, I must confess.

SCREW. You know, Goliah, when I am dead, you'll find I've left you something very handsome.

SPIDER. I shall be very happy to experience your liberality, sir.

SCREW. And you must likewise remember that, during my life-time, I have been very kind to you.

SPIDER. Future expectations prevent my answering.

SCREW. You are a worthy intelligent lad, and so-----

SPIDER. You give me humble merit's livery—*rags !*

SCREW. Nonsense ! What's in the clothes ?

SPIDER. Nothing; a shadow—the skeleton of a man—an outline of a bone.

SCREW. Be contented, be contented! your reward shall come at the last.

SPIDER. If it is long coming, the reward will come like the thief's halter, when it's not wanted. *(knocking)*

SCREW. Go to the door. Dear me, who can that be !

SPIDER. Not the butcher, sir, you may be assured. Oh, how happy I should be to shake hands with the knuckle end of a leg of mutton ! *Exit SPIDERLIMB, L.*

SCREW. Some of my tenants, I suppose.

*Re-enter SPIDERLIMB, concealing two fowls behind him, L.*

SPIDER. Oh, sir, such an arrival!

SCREW. An arrival! Who is it ?

SPIDER. Mrs. Wrinkle's little maid.

SCREW. Is that all ?

SPIDER. Heaven forbid ! No, there were others with her.

SCREW. Others ! have you ever seen them before ?

SPIDER. Yes, but never in this house—quite strangers here.

SCREW. Strangers! What, are they great people ?

SPIDER. *(looking at fowls)* Not so great as I could wish, sir.

SCREW. Not so great as—Why, what are they?

SPIDER. A pair of the most beautiful fowls, sir. *(showing them)*

SCREW. Fowls!

SPIDER. Quite a phenomenon, isn't it?

SCREW. You impudent rascal! a pair of fowls a wonder?

SPIDER. To me, sir, and I've been your head-cook, made your gruel, boiled your eggs, and toasted your cheese, these three years.

*Enter SALLY CERES, L.*

SCREW. Ah, Sally, I am glad to see you, you look charming.

SPIDER. Never better in my eyes.

SCREW. And how is my old friend Mrs. Wrinkle.

SALLY. Very well, sir, I thank you. She has sent a present of chickens for your honour.

SCREW. She's very good.

SPIDER. Very! She'd been better had they been turkeys.

SALLY. And my mistress says, she hopes you'll not think the less of the present because it is so trifling.

SPIDER. Oh, dear, no; my master will make the most of them, be assured—unfortunately.

SCREW. Hold your tongue, sir, what right have you to speak? (*to SPIDERLIMB*)

SPIDER. Sir, I feel it impossible to be silent on this happy occasion. It's quite an intestine jubilee.

SCREW. (*aside*) Fowls! expensive cooking. My dear, my thanks to your mistress, and as I have an invitation, she will excuse my accepting the-----

SPIDER. Sir, sir, consider—what an affront.

SALLY. Really, sir, the lady would be so disappointed.

SPIDER. And so would the gentleman, I'm sure. Consider, sir, the lady's feelings, and your own gallantry—and, sir, should you be engaged, sooner than anything like a return should take place, I'd eat the fowls myself, and it is not an undertaking I've been accustomed to, heaven knows!

SALLY. I'm sure, sir, my mistress would be very much offended, to suppose you rejected her small offer—it might too, prevent her making a greater.

SPIDER. It might, sir. Consider, liberality is scarce—I speak from experience.

SCREW. (*aside—considering*) Prevent giving greater! that's a hint—the widow's a woman of substance. Yes, I think I-----

SPIDER. If you've done arguing, sir: pray has my stomach the majority?

SCREW. I have considered, my dear; and as it may

offend the lady, I will receive them, though they'll be lost here.

SPIDER. I beg your pardon, sir; don't underrate my ability.

SCREW. You scoundrel! You have the greatest appetite that-----

SPIDER. The more shame for you to keep talent unemployed. I haven't said grace this twelvemonth. Oh, Sally! if the thanks of a hungry man will induce your mistress again to make you the bearer of joys inexpressible, give mine as-----

SCREW. I'll kill you, you rascal !

SPIDER. After dinner, if you please.

SCREW. Be quiet, villain ! Yes, my dear, you'll not fail to give my respects to your mistress. I shall have the fowls dressed to-day.

SPIDER. A pair of fowls! Celestial banquet!

SCREW. And as I have a great esteem for Mrs. Wrinkle—

SPIDER. Oh, she's a dear soul !

SCREW. And feel such gratification in her society-----

SPIDER. To be sure ! The endearing woman !

SCREW. I shall be happy of her company to dinner.

SPIDER. The devil! One, two, three, and—oh, sir, it's more than one pair of fowls can bear.

SCREW. Will you be quiet, sir ? Remember, my dear. She'll be sure to come, I hope.

SPIDER. Oh, yes! there's no perfect pleasure in this world!

SCREW. Now, be cautious, my dear; and don't fail to express my respects.

SALLY. But I'm afraid, sir, my mistress will not be able to come, for she's not very well.

SCREW. Not well! I must call and see her then.

SALLY. No, not so ill as that sir,—only a cold—a-----

SPIDER. A cold ! consider, sir; it would be dangerous—her coming would certainly bring on a consumption.

SCREW. Pshaw ! I shall expect your mistress. I have no doubt she'll attend. And, Spiderlimb, get the fowls ready.

SPIDER. Yes sir. (*taking fowls from basket*) Ah! these fowls are birds of paradise to me !

SCREW. Well, sir, what do you stand handling them about for ?

SPIDER. Always treat a stranger with becoming politeness. Oh, look at them, sir, are they not fine ones ? Juno's birds are owls to them.

SCREW. They are, indeed, pictures.

SPIDER. Pictures ! By your kitchen and dining room, you don't seem to encourage the fine arts.

SCREW. Begone, sir. What do you stand staring at ?

SPIDER. Novelty strikes the vulgar, sir. *Exit, L.*

SCREW. Where are you going, Sally?

SALLY. Only to take a nosegay to Miss Anne, sir. I must make haste.

SCREW. Stay—as I shall be very busy, can't you, my tulip, be so kind, as you go home—I believe you pass his door—to tell Mr. Swindle, my lawyer, to come to me this evening?

SALLY. Oh yes, to be sure, sir.

SCREW. That's a good girl. Now go, for I shall be very busy with some of my tenants.

SALLY. I dare say, sir. I overtook one coming to you, Giles Sowthistle, sir.

SCREW. Giles Sowthistle! Oh! ah! his father took the farm for him. I've not seen him yet.

SALLY. Yes, sir, he's a very nice young man, indeed, sir. I'll be sure to call on the lawyer, sir—and now to give my letter to Miss Anne. *Exit, R.*

SCREW. Yes, I certainly will marry the Widow Wrinkle. Her last husband was very warm, and she's been a very frugal woman. So I certainly shall-----

*Re-enter SPIDERLIMB, L.*

SPIDER. I've been considering, sir, that perhaps it might not be proper for a lady to visit a single gentleman to dinner.

SCREW. And why not, sir ? Where can be the impropriety of a lady dining with a single gentleman off a pair of fowls?

SPIDER. Why that's very true. *One* lady to a *single* gentleman—but when there happens to be another lady

and gentleman, it is not consistent with my ideas of good living. (*knocking at door*)

SCREW. Go to the door, sir.

SPIDER. (*goes out, L.—returns, showing in DARING, L., disguised as GILES SOWTHISTLE*) One of your tenants, sir. You haven't come to dinner, have you ? (*to DARING*)

SCREW. (R.) Oh, sit down, young man—I'm very glad to see you.

SPIDER. (L., *aside*) Yes, it's quarter day.

DARING. (C.) You be cruelly purlite—I'ze sure, zur.

SCREW. Spiderlimb ! Hem ! Bring out some wine.

SPIDER. What ! the half-pint, sir ?

SCREW. You scoundrel, I'll-----a bottle of the best I'll have....

SPIDER. Here it is, sir. (*coming forward with bottle, C.*)

SCREW. Are you sure this is the best I have ?

SPIDER. Oh yes, sir, (*aside*) and the worst.

SCREW. Drink, sir, drink. Your name is-----

DARING. Giles Sowthistle, zur, of Allweed Farm—your health, zur—your's Mr. Spiderleg. (*drinks*) Curse the stuff, it's poison. (*aside*)

SCREW. There, sir, I hope you admire its flavor.

DARING. Never tasted anything like it in all my mortal days.

SPIDER. Perhaps Mr. Giles would like another glass.

DARING. Not a drop more, sir. I never takes more than does me good.

SCREW. You villain! Would you wish to ruin me ? Go out of the room, sir—or perhaps you would like to take a glass.

SPIDER. I thank you, sir, I fetched it.

SCREW. Go down stairs, look to the door. I've sent for Mr. Swindle, the lawyer.

SPIDER. To dinner, sir ?

SCREW. No, sir—and what if I had ?

SPIDER. If you had, sir. I shouldn't have heard the knocker. *Exit, L.*

SCREW. Of all plagues, servants are the greatest.

DARING. Just what I tells my ploughboys, zur.

SCREW. But I hope, Mr. Sowthistle, the farm turns out to your wishes.

DARING. Middling, zur; all the crops have been very full—all sold well—and the live stock are kicking—but nothing more.

SCREW. Oh ! nothing more. (*aside*) Must raise his rent to a certainty—then, of course, you get on pretty well—you haven't much of a family either ?

DARING. Not much, zur. A wife, an old grandmother or two—six young children, and a brother—not a leg more, zur.

SCREW. Oh, very trifling that! And your brother of course assists and takes half of your family cares.

DARING. Oh, eez ! he works like a ox.

SCREW. And now, sir, for business. I'll write you out your receipt for your rent.

DARING. (*aside*) Eh! he's quick. I was in hopes of evading this, till—rent, zur,—oh, ees of course. Pretty fine weather we've had lately.

SCREW. Very seasonable indeed. The receipt is——

DARING. Good for young ducks, zur.

SCREW. I dare say ; but the paper here will-----

DARING. Be worth something in three months' time.

SCREW. Doubtless—but by paying me you will——

DARING. Fatten a hog in-----

SCREW. Mr. Sowthistle, excuse me, but I'm in haste If you can settle the rent-----

DARING. Oh, you mean rent, sir—certainly— (*still evading payment*) I had a fine litter of pigs, last week, zur.

SCREW. You are very impertinent, sir, and-----

DARING. I think I shall send thee one.

SCREW. My dear sir, you are very kind; but I've business upstairs, and must leave you for a little time, so if you will first settle, I-----

DARING. (*aside*) Going up stairs—must not lose this opportunity, cost what it may. To be sure—that is the receipt, very well, zur. I'll count out the—I believe that be right, zur. (*gives money, takes receipt, and goes up stage*)

*Enter SPIDERLIMB and GILES SOWTHISTLE, L.*

SPIDER. Another of your tenants, sir. (*whispers to GILES—to SCREW*) He has had his dinner, sir. *Exit, L.*

GILES. Ees domt  n! there he be. I hasn't the heart to speak to him.

SCREW. Who's this, I wonder—one of my tenants' sons, I suppose. Good day, young man, sit down—take a glass of wine.

GILES. Ees, zur. (*drinks*)

SCREW. And now, your business-----

GILES. Dang it, I ha'n't the heart to tell him. I'll take another drop, zur. (*empties the bottle*)

SCREW. You are very much at your ease, my friend.

GILES. Not much, zur—being as how I can't pay my rent.

SCREW. Can't pay your rent, you barefaced rascal, and to have the impudence to drink my wine !

GILES. Poverty should never be a bar to politeness, zur.

SCREW. Not pay your rent ? but I'll make you pay it.

GILES. I shall be very glad if you can, zur. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, to have taken in an unsuspecting speculating infant like myself wi' a farm that wouldn't bear a meal's victuals for a dead horse. And all the live beastes that died as soon as I had agreed to keep 'em.

SCREW. All your own fault, I dare say, you scoundrel! But what farm is it ? and who are you ?

GILES. Why, it be Allweed Farm—and my name be Sowthistle.

SCREW. Sowthistle! Oh, his brother, I suppose, (this fellow wants to swindle me)—then you are a tricking impertinent knave, for your brother informs me that it's an excellent property.

GILES. My brother!

SCREW. For shame, you lazy villain ? Go home—go, and help to provide for your grandmothers and the six children.

GILES. Provide for my grandmothers! He! he! why, old Mattock, the parish sexton, ha' done that long ago and as for children, I never was feyther to a child in my life, except Polly Chickweed's little 'un that I stood for in church.

SCREW. And you've no children ?

GILES. None that I know of.

SCREW. Nor any family?—what is meant, what do you purpose by this deception? I'll expose you, sir! Mr. Sowthistle, pray walk forward. (*drags DARING down stage*) Now, impostor, can you deny it to your brother?

GILES. No, zur, I can't, seeing as how I never had one.

DARING. (*aside*) Phew!—The devil!—Blown!

SCREW. And you will deny this to be your relation?

GILES. Ees, zur. I has nobody but a sister, and he don't look like she.

SCREW. Not your brother!—why he's paid your rent—what is he then?

GILES. Paid my rent! Dang it, he *is* my brother—(*crosses to him*) give us thee fist—I'ze happy to meet with you—hope I may meet thee again next quarter-day.

SCREW. (*to DARING*) I suspect you are a cheat, sir!

GILES. Don't say that. A very civil gentleman I'ze zure.

SCREW. Spiderlimb!

*Enter SPIDERLIMB, L.*

Go for a constable, kick him—(*pointing to DARING*)—down stairs, Spiderlimb.

GILES. Stand away! if you touch my brother, old Screw, I'll ha' no more mercy on you than on a eft or a sparrow.

SCREW. Go out of my house, Mr. Daring. I know you, sir.

DARING. Yes, sir, and I trust we shall be better acquainted.

SCREW. Begone, sir! but stay, young man, and pay your rent.

DARING. I have paid it—there's the receipt. (*giving it to GILES*)

SCREW. That matters not. I'll have my due.

GILES. And so you shall—you swindling old varmint!

SCREW. What! Spiderlimb, did you ever hear-----

SPIDER. So much truth in so few words?—never!

SCREW. You too—but go out of my house! and if ever I catch you here again! My ward shall be married----

DARING. Yes but I am the chosen, old Screw—

there's two to one against you—and with the assistance of my newly acquired friend, here, I hope yet to defeat you.

GILES. I'll stick by thee, mon. I say, ould one-----

SCREW. Begone, rascals!

GILES. The receipt, ha! ha !

SCREW. Begone. Come here, Spiderlimb, and-----

SPIDER. No, sir, I'll go down stairs with them. The fowls are on the table.

GILES. Take back the farm! take it back—the rent's paid—ha! ha!

*Exeunt* SPIDERLIMB, DARING, and GILES, L.

SCREW. I declare I'm so astonished! Oh ! she must be married.

*Re-enter* SPIDERLIMB, L.

Are they gone, Goliah ?

SPIDER. Oh, yes, sir.

SCREW. Spiderlimb, be watchful, there's a good lad.

SPIDER. Lord, sir, I think it will be impossible to keep that chap away. Such a desperate fellow—to pay another man's rent.

SCREW. Very right—I know what I'll do—(*goes to closet*) Here's a blunderbuss, loaded to the muzzle with powder—it will frighten the rascal, if it don't hurt him.

SPIDER. Never fear me, sir, I'll watch him.

SCREW. That's right—you're a jewel of a servant

SPIDER. A jewel, in the rough, I think, sir.

SCREW. Now I have something particular to do. I must go up stairs, and don't let me be disturbed till the widow comes, and the dinner is ready. You can light a fire here—this room will be the best. Now, be cautious, be cautious. *Exit, R. U. E.*

SPIDER. And if I didn't hope that death would stand my friend, you might be watch-dog to your own bone for me—Ah! but here comes Plenty in petticoats.

*Enter* SALLY, R.

Oh, my dear, it wouldn't be safe for you to come here often as to day.

SALLY. And why not ?

SPIDER. I should love you so unmercifully.

SALLY. You make love—did you ever look in a glass ?

SPIDER. Not since I lived here, I never could muster resolution. I know I'm something of the sparest, but that's my honesty.

SALLY. I didn't think honesty was of so frightful an appearance.

SPIDER. Yes it is, when it overcomes interest, then its reward is, a word, and that is but poor living, therefore starve in the victory of my rectitude.

SALLY. Then before you turn lover be knave.

SPIDER. An indispensable progression, truly! But Sally, divine Ceres, oh ! they knew nothing of starving that pictured your ancient namesake. For my part I'd give fifty Cereses in the straw for one Ceres with capons—fancy decorates the offering with all the immortal ap-purtenances of sausage, oyster-sauce, sherry, ham, and brown gravy. Oh, Ceres, I know what it should be—but " penury repressed the noble rage," else turtles had been scarce, and aldermen had mourned. I'm quite *au fait* at Mrs. Glasse.

SALLY. For shame, Mr. Goliah; you ought to be ashamed of yourself to mention such things.

SPIDER. They are fond recollections of my youthful hours, when I superseded a dog that ran mad  became a turnspit to my Lord Mange-comme-quatre, at Heliogabalus Hall! After that I was errand-boy, shoe-black, and whipping post to Stoic Stripbreech, a castigating Lycurgus of juvenile irregularities—after that-----

SALLY. And what can all this be to me ?

SPIDER. Why, I thought you might like to hear about my young beginnings, but no matter—I wish to make enquiry as to the present state of affairs. Pray, my dear Sally, not that I wish to pry into domestic concerns, but what kind of an appetite has your mistress ? lady-like, and delicate, I trust—because two or three with a pair of fowls may do—but hang it, four are no company at all.

SALLY. If that is all, you may be certain that my mistress will not come.

SPIDER. Do you think not ? I admire her discretion—depend upon it, I shall honour her absence.

SALLY. But pray, has one Giles Sowthistle been here ?

SPIDER. Not only one but two Giles Sowthistles. Do you know them ?

SALLY. Know them ? yes.

SPIDER. Then I'm sorry I turned your friends out—for had I known they were intimates of my little Sally, the bearer of joyful intelligence to my internals, I-----

SALLY. Really, Mr. Spiderlimb, you appear extremely happy at my mistress's present. I am afraid *I* should not meet with so much warmth as you have bestowed upon a pair of fowls.

SPIDER. Why, my love, I can't say. I admire the tender passion—I admire Cupid especially—his appearance is so plump and chubby,—I wonder at what inn he puts up.

SALLY. O, I can't stand talking to you! (*aside*) As he's failed in this, something else must be attempted directly. So good day. *Exit, L.*

SPIDER. Good day. My respects to your mistress. Tell her to be careful of her health, and—my dinner. This certainly is an era in good living. But I must lay the fire, yes everything snug. The fowls are all ready. How unfortunate that they are so formed by nature as to keep me honest. Had it been a round of beef, or any other solid felicity, I might have exercised a cook's privilege. All right now—I have only to set fire to it, and then to dinner. Dinner! What harmony!—well there is in music something extremely agreeable.

*Song, &c.—Exit, L.*

*Enter ANNE, R.*

ANNE. Worthy Daring! possessing such a lover—hope combats against my present distress, This is his letter—(*reads*) " Dearest Anne, I have suborned the waiting maid of your guardian's acquaintance—have taken the empty cottage next door, and must beg leave to pay you a visit—(*at this instant, DARING is lowered down the chimney in a basket*)

DARING. Through the chimney—and here I am, my charming girl! (*speaking up the chimney*) I say, Sowthistle, my fine fellow, when I jerk the cord, you and your friends pull away like old scratch-----

SOWTHISTLE. (*above*) We wull, zur.

ANNE. Oh, Daring, should we be discovered.

DARING. Discovered, nonsense—if danger threatens egad, you shall fly up the chimney with me.

ANNE. Oh, my guardian ! he's coming ! fly ! fly!

DARING. Fly! oh, I can't fly yet.

ANNE. He's on the stairs—your basket—oh, it's too late.

(*ANNE runs off, L., and DARING stumbles against the closet door and goes in*)

*Enter SCREW, R. U. E.*

SCREW. I'm sure I heard my—Eh, dark! Here's mischief going on. I'll—where's the blunderbuss, I'll shoot him—I'll—surely I heard a noise in the chimney—(*he stumbles over the basket—falls into it, and catching at the cord, he is instantly drawn up, crying*) Murder! Oh! the devil! Murder! Witchcraft! Pardon my sins.

*Enter ANNE, R.—DARING comes out; they open the window.*

ANNE. Where is my guardian?

DARING. By jingo he has fallen into the basket, and is drawn up the chimney!

SCREW. (*up the chimney*) Oh! Murder, murder !

ANNE. For heaven's sake! he'll be killed.

DARING. Never fear! Sowthistle will take care of him. Fortune favours—allons!

ANNE. I will but step to my apartment, and return instantly. *Exit, R.*

DARING. Haste, haste ! Now then, victory is certain. and-----

*Enter NAIL, L., in a violent hurry.*

Confusion ! Who's this ?

NAIL. Servant, sir. Where's Mr. Screw ?

DARING. Mr. Screw, sir? Mr. Screw can't be seen.

NAIL. Can't be seen. What, has he left you ?

DARING. Just at this instant. Quite unexpectedly, I assure you. He was obliged to go.

NAIL. No matter; you, being his lawyer, will do.

DARING. His lawyer! Oh, yes, sir.

NAIL. I am called to my friend Skinem, who is dying. I thought I had now better leave the deeds and will

belonging to Miss Anne; they will be quite safe with you, I suppose?

DARING. Oh, quite safe, sir.

NAIL. That will do then. But has my friend Screw gone out far?

DARING. Not very far, sir.

NAIL. Perhaps ! may meet him.

DARING. I don't think that very likely.

NAIL. Well, no matter. He'll explain what's to be done with the papers. I shall return as soon as possible. Make the most of them—make the most of them. Good-day—good-day.

*Exit, L.*

*Re-enter ANNE, R.*

DARING. Love favours his votaries. See, here are the deeds that free you from the villainy of those two rascals.

ANNE. How came you by them?

DARING. They were given to me this instant, in mistake, by old Nail, I suspect. But come, for this is dangerous ground. Good-bye, Old Mercury. Good-bye, Old Black-bird.

*Exeunt, L., pause.*

*Enter SPIDERLIMB, with a light, L.*

SPIDER. There's been that old chap after master. I told him he was out, for fear he might ask him to dinner. Now, I'll light the fire, and—eh ! Who's been disturbing it? Oh, only my fellow sufferers the rats, I suppose. *(lights fire—the chimney smoking)* Eh! How the chimney smokes; it should have been swept, and-----

SCREW. *(up the chimney)* Oh! the chimney ! Fire ! Fire!

SPIDER. Oh, lord! There's master up stairs. He smells the smoke.

SCREW. Fire ! Spiderlimb! Chimney!

SPIDER. Oh, dear, the chimney's a fire. And, oh, what a passion master will be in when he comes down.

SCREW. Oh, oh ! Fire, fire!

SPIDER. Oh, what an unlucky dog I am. *(Goes to the window)* Fire, neighbours ! Fire!

*Re-enter NAIL, L.*

NAIL. Why what's the matter? Fire! Where's your master?

SPIDER. Up stairs, sir. Don't go after him—pray don't

SCREW. You scoundrel, Spiderlimb, I'll-----

SPIDER. *and* NAIL. Here ! Fire, neighbours, fire!

*Enter* GILES SOWTHISTLE *and* NEIGHBOURS, L.

GILES. Why, what can be the matter ?

SPIDER. The chimney! Fire !

NEIGHBOURS. Oh, water! Water!

GILES. Ah, I'll throw a pailful. Come along, lads.  
(*aside*) Dang it! he's the first hog that's been smoked there for some time. Come along, lads.

*Runs off with* VILLAGERS, L.

SPIDER. Oh, what shall I do? My dinner! The chimney ! The fire! Fowls ! (*water is thrown down—*  
SCREW *re-commences his cries*)

SCREW. Oh, you scoundrel! Spiderlimb ! Villain !  
The chimney! You-----

SPIDER. Oh, dear, it's not out yet. What shall I do?  
—eh—I have it. (*he runs to closet—brings out blunderbuss*)

*Re-enter* NEIGHBOURS, L.

This will bring it down, soot and all. (*he fires the blunderbuss up the chimney—SCREW is dropped—he is covered with soot—all, amazed, exclaim :—" Master Screw ! The devil! The devil!"*)

SCREW. Oh, stay—stay, I'm dying—I'm dead.

NAIL. Brother Screw, how came you up the chimney ?

SCREW. Witchcraft! Sorcery !

NAIL. Why, who did it?

SCREW. Oh, I've been a wicked sinner. I'm dying!

SPIDER. Are you, sir ; where's your will ?

*Enter* DARING, ANNE, *and* SALLY, L.

SCREW. You! Why, how now? Baggage and sirrah ! Scoundrel, how dare you ?

NAIL. Scoundrel ! Why, is this not Swindle, your lawyer? I have given him the deeds, and-----

SCREW. What! We're ruined! Oh you villain!—Come back. (*to* ANNE)

ANNE. No, sir, having already experienced your fare, you must excuse my accepting a further invitation.

SPIDER. I must say that shows her taste. But, pray master, how came your enquiring mind to lead you up the chimney—how came you in that basket?

DARING. I descended in that carriage, and your master falling into it was-----

GILES. Pulled up by me, zur; I se'd who you was,  
and so very kindly let you hang down half-way.

SPIDER. And master, you've hanged till you are black  
in the face.

SCREW. I'll prosecute you all.

DARING. Let me advise you to be silent. You have  
unjustly imprisoned this young lady. I have many proofs  
of your villainy, and can swear to it.

SPIDER. You needn't, sir—no one doubts it.

SCREW. Nail, Nail! Why did I scheme with a fool?

SPIDER. Because Nature, having designed a pair in  
most things, couples the fool with the knave.

DARING. Come, my worthy guardians, be but silent  
yourselves, and you need not fear me.

SCREW. Being political to make the best of bad—and,  
as I can't do otherwise—have her.

DARING. That's right. Your present forbearance in  
some way atones for your past injustice. I'll forgive you,  
and will eat my wedding dinner with you.

SPIDER. I'd rather sir, you'd remain indignant—because,  
as one pair of fowls-----

DARING. Fear not, there will be hearty cheer for all,  
and the reigning toast shall be-----

SPIDER. May every miser be smoked out of villainy.

*Finale.*

DARING. And now, good sirs, we'll end the strife,  
The chimney be commended;  
For by its means I've gain'd a wife,  
And roguery suspended.

*Chorus*—And now, good sirs, &c.

SPIDER. 'Tis very well; yet, by that joke,  
Which caus'd this wedding pother,  
'Tis like, that people join'd in smoke,  
Are apt to live in smother.

*Chorus*—And now, good sirs, &c.

SALLY. And master Screw, just born, though old,  
To worthier desire,  
Is like his hoarded mis-used gold,  
Quite purified by fire.

*Chorus*—And now, good sirs, &c.

NAIL. } But now to dinner let's begone,  
 SCREW. } And gaily end this frolic,  
 SPIDER. } But if one fowl there's two dine on,  
           I shall be melancholic.  
           *Chorus—And now, good sirs, &c.*

**Curtain.**

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SPIDERLIMB'S SONG. (*page 16*)

*Tune, " Good old Days of Adam and Eve."*

The days of Adam and Eve, I mourn, sir,  
 Days, I think, 'fore we were born, sir;  
 When to live was easier for each station,  
 And there wasn't no surplus population;  
 When want of food was well prevented,  
 And no tax gatherers had been invented.  
 House rent was low, and was paid soon, sir,  
 And folks hadn't then to shoot the moon, sir.  
       Sing hey, sing ho, I can but grieve, sir,  
       For the good old days of Adam and Eve, sir.

When men they didn't act so queer, sir,  
 As try to stop our drop o' beer, sir;  
 But if you let them so attack ye,  
 Next they'll stop your beer and backey.  
 You mustn't go by train on Sunday,  
 Nor yet be thirsty on that one day;  
 Through all the week to work must try, sir,  
 On Sunday stop at home and cry, sir.  
       Sing hey, &c.

When young chaps went a pace to last, sir,  
 And wasn't then so very fast, sir;  
 When gentlemen, if poor or rich, sir,  
 Always then behaved as sich, sir.  
 There were no swells, propriety scorning,  
 Kicking up rows at five in the morning,  
 Didn't whack the police—were always quiet,  
 Didn't go to Cremorne, and kick up a riot.  
       Sing hey, &c.

When highwaymen, with ease and sprightly,  
Robbed you of your purse politely;  
Took all you got, then let you go, sir,  
With many thanks, and a genteel bow, sir.  
In those days there wasn't no garotters,  
Who come and knock you off your trotters;  
Not alone your cash they make a martyr;  
They half-kill you first, and rob you arter.  
Sing hey, &c.

When joint stock banks were things unknown,  
And the cash you'd saved they didn't bone, sir  
You didn't hear, if them you trusted,  
The very next day, they'd been and busted.  
No Limited Liability Act, sir,  
That men your money might extract, sir;  
To their own pockets might make it dance, sir,  
Then bolt, and spend it all in France, sir.  
Sing hey, &c.

When paupers were in better case, sir,  
And poverty weren't such disgrace, sir;  
When poor and honest, without fail, sir,  
Were not worse fed than thieves in jail, sir;  
When workhouse diet wasn't skilligalee, sir,  
Nor prison food so rich and free, sir;  
Now prigs to quod, I tell you pat, sir,  
They goes in lean, and comes out fat, sir.  
Sing hey, &c.

When women dressed, I won't say how, sir,  
But wore no crinoline, as now, sir.  
Gals now no shape, my mind it rankles,  
Nothing but hoops, and a pair of ankles.  
When a chap, a gal could walk beside her,  
Without ever wishing the pavement wider,  
And when gals' clothes, it's true, I tell'ee,  
Didn't wiggle-waggle just like a jelly,  
Sing hey, &c.