

THE  
TICKET-OF-LEAVE MAN'S WIFE;  
OR,  
SIX YEARS AFTER.

**A New and Original Drama,**  
IN THREE ACTS.

*Being a continuation of Mr. Tom Taylor's Drama of the  
"Ticket-of-Leave Man."*

BY  
CHARLES SMITH CHELTNAM,

AUTHOR OF  
*A Lesson in Love; More Precious than Gold; A Fairy's Father;  
Mrs. Green's Snug Little Business; Slowtop's Engagements;  
A Lucky Escape; Aurora Floyd; Deborah;  
Dinner for Nothing,  
&c, &c.*

THOMAS HAILES LACY,  
THEATRICAL PUBLISHER,  
LONDON.

NOTE BY THE AUTHOR.

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THE happy idea of continuing the interesting story embodied in Mr. TOM TAYLOR'S renowned "*Ticket-of-Leave Man*" originated with Mr. SEFTON PARRY, the liberal and spirited Proprietor and Manager of the *New Greenwich Theatre*, and, prospectively, of the *Prince's Theatre, Holborn*. At his suggestion, and in consultation with him, the present Drama was constructed and written. The literary and dramatic treatment of the piece is entirely my own. I further avail myself gladly of this opportunity to acknowledge the obligation I am under to Mr. TOM TAYLOR, for the ready courtesy with which he gave me permission to adopt the names of a large portion of the *dramatis persona*; of his Drama.

CHARLES SMITH CHELTNAM.

HAMMERSMITH,  
*April 19th, 1866.*



NAT SADDLER ... .. (alias the Diver, an Area Suck)  
 POLICEMAN X.L. ... ..  
 ETHIOPIAN SERENADERS ... ..  
 THEODOSIUS GREEN JONES ... ..  
 MAY BRIERLY ... ..  
 MRS. GREEN JONES ... ..  
 MRS. WILLOUGHBY ... ..  
 SERAPHINA ... .. (Mrs. Sam Willoughby elect)  
 BALLAD SINGER ... .. MISS MARIE SCOTT.  
 MISS ANASTASIA CELINA ST. EVREMOND ... .. ANNA MARLA (a Maid-of-all-Work)  
 MISS ANASTASIA ... ..  
 Olive Branches of the St. Evremond Stock, Seven, Six and Five Years old, Crowd, Policemen, &c., &c.

... .. MR. RICKETS.  
 ... .. MF. WARRENER.  
 ... .. MESSRS. HUNT, WATSON, &C.  
 ... .. MASTER MACLEAN.  
 ... .. MISS BESSIE FOOTE.  
 ... .. MISS S. TURNER.  
 ... .. MRS. DOWTON.  
 ... .. MISS M. FOOTE.  
 ... .. MISS JENNY LYNN.  
 ... .. MISS LILLY LEE.

The action of this Drama is supposed to take place six years later than that of "The Ticket-of-Leave Man." An interval of six months occurs between the First and Second Acts; and another interval of three months between the Second and Third Acts.

### Programme of Scenery and Incidents.

#### ACT I.

### SCENE I. Parlour of the Rat-in-the-Hole, Borough, Mint.

The Receiver and his Dupes—The returned Convict.

### SCENE II. MRS. WILLOUGHBY'S HOUSE.

Matrimony in perspective—Sam's intended.

SCENE III. 'BRIERLY'S SHOP.

"Wherever you are, May, there's sunshine for me."

SCENE IV. MELTER MOSS'S LODGINGS. Honour amongst Thieves!

SCENE V. Greenwich Pier on a Summer's Day.

The Detective on the Watch—A musical Party—An unexpected Recognition—The Conspiracy—The Robbery and the Accusation!—HUNTED DOWN AGAIN.

An Interval of Six Months is supposed to have occurred.

ACT II.

SCENE I. A BILL-BROKER'S OFFICE IN THE CITY.

A broken-down Man.—The Appeal and the Result.

SCENE II. BRIERLY'S FORMER HOME.

"We told you so years ago—Honesty don't Pay." Brierly Falls into the Trap—May's Resolve.

SCENE III. MR. GREEN JONES ST. EVREMOND AT HOME.

Learning the Banjo under Difficulties—A Large Small Family, and a Slight Disturbance.

SCENE IV. **TIM CAMALBANK**  
OVERLOOKING KENSAL GREEN CEMETERY.

**THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE!**

ACT III.

SCENE I. **DEAR OLD MRS. WILLOUGHBY'S.**

SCENE II. **A TAVERN PARLOUR.**

The Good Samaritan. Hawkshaw's little Game. The Plot. ONE CHANCE MORE.

SCENE III. **A STREET IN LONDON.**

Mr. and Mrs. Green Jones and the Olive Branches.

SCENE IV. **EXTERIOR OF MRS. WILLOUGHBY'S HOUSE.**

Jem Dalton, Melter Moss, and Mr. Alec Nicols.

**The Discovery! Retribution! Death of Jem Dalton!**

"Let me go to that free land—Where none will stab me to the heart with fingers pointed in scorn at

**THE "TICKET-OF-LEAVE MAN'S WIFE."**

COSTUMES.

BRIERLY.—*First dress:* Light trousers and waistcoat, black frock coat, grey hat. *Second dress:* Seedy black coat, dark trousers, old felt hat.

DALTON.—*First dress:* Worn Tweed suit, billycock hat. *Second dress:* Respectable black walking suit, white cravat, black hat. *Third dress:* Same as first.

MØSS.—*First dress:* Long-tailed rusty black coat, buttoned up, black trousers, old black hat. *Second dress:* Quakerish suit of pepper-and-salt coloured Tweed. *Third dress:* Same as first.

HAWKSHAW.—*First dress:* Dark suit of Tweed, billycock hat. *Second dress:* Officer's pea-jacket with gilt buttons, blue cloth full trousers, glazed hat, and black silk neck-tie. *Third dress:* Ragged velveteen coat, patched close fitting trousers, greasy cap, side curls.

SAM.—*First dress:* Light trousers and waistcoat, black velvet coat, handsome scarf, grey hat. *Second dress:* Suit of dark Tweed. *Third dress:* Same as first.

GREEN JONES.—*First dress:* Ethiopian serenader's dress. *Second dress:* Handsome walking suit.

Mr. GIBSON.—Black frock coat and trousers, light waistcoat.

Mr. TOTTY.—*First dress:* Black frock coat, dark trousers and waistcoat, coloured neck-tie, white hat. *Second dress:* Suit of grey Tweed.

SIM COOPER.—Cut away black coat, close-fitting dark trousers, fancy waistcoat, loud pattern scarf with big horseshoe pin, heavy gold watch chain, &c, billycock hat. The whole make-up flash and horsey.

FINCH.—Old velveteen coat, corduroy trousers, close-fitting cloth cap.

BIGGLES.—Velveteen shooting jacket with wide pockets, horsey trousers, battered grey hat.

SADDLER.—Ragged coat, patched trousers, cap.

BALLAD SINGER.—Ragged suit.

THEODOSIUS.—*First dress:* Long nightgown and nightcap. *Second dress:* Cloth suit, smart hat.

MAY.—*First dress:* Elegant walking dress. *Second dress:* Worn dark stuff gown, black shawl, straw bonnet. *Third dress:* Neat cotton gown.

Mrs. WILLOUGHBY.—*First dress:* Handsome walking dress, gorgeous bonnet and shawl. *Second dress:* Smart gown and cap. *Third dress:* Night dress with shawl over it.

SERAPHINA.—*First dress:* Handsome walking dress. *Second dress:* Ditto.

Mrs. GREEN JONES.—*First Dress:* Faded evening low dress. *Second dress:* Smart gown, bonnet, and mantle.

SERVANT GIRL.—Dirty cotton gown with short sleeves, dirty apron.

ANASTASIA CELINA.—*First dress:* Nightgown and nightcap. *Second dress:* Smart frock, mantle, and hat.

Time of Representation—Three Hours.

THE  
TICKET-OF-LEAVE MAN'S WIFE;  
Of,  
SIX YEARS' AFTER.

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ACT I.

SCENE FIRST.—*Private Parlour at the " Rat-in-the-Hole," Mint, Borough. A dirty-looking room, the walls of which are adorned with prints of dog and prize-fights, interspersed with broad-sheet accounts of the execution of famous criminals. Tables round the sides of the room. A pair of green baize-covered doors, c.; in flat; a table, apart from the others, near the front, R.*

*At the opening of the scene* SIM COOPER, DICK FINCH, BILL BIGGLES, MAT SADDLER, *and other thieves discovered, smoking and drinking—they represent different classes of thieves, from the Swell-Mobsman to the Area-Sneak. COOPER sings, the others joining in the chorus.*

*Song—THE PRIG.—Air "Slap! Bang! "*

Let them as finds a honest life  
Agree with their complaint,  
Enjoy it; but the sort of thing,  
For my complaint it ain't;  
I never found it jolly, O!  
But folly, O! but folly, O!  
That made me melancholy, O!  
So I took to priggeree.  
I crack a crib, with a ha! ha! ha!  
With a ha ! ha! ha!  
I fake a cly, with a fal, lal, ah! fal, ah!  
With a fal, lal, &c.  
Slap ! bang !—as merry as a grig,  
Up to ev'ry rig—sleek as any pig—  
Slap ! bang!—the flashy dashy prig.  
What a jolly dog is he !  
*Chorus: "Slap! bang!" &c.*

MAT SADDLER. Bra-vo, Skimmer!—yer vawbles as neatly as yer twistes off the bow of a thin alderman's fat gold ticker.

OMNES. Bra-vo, Skimmer!

COOPER. As much as yer like ; only don't go telling nobody how yer sees me blushin' arter it!

OMNES. Ha, ha, ha!

COOPER. Leastways, don't tell my wife; cos why—she wouldn't believe yer.

OMNES. Ha, ha, ha!

BILL BIGGLES. You ought to be proud o' that woman, you ought, Sim !—sharp as a thorough-bred tarrier and plucky as a bull-dog, she is.

COOPER. Well, I *am* proud on her; though I say it as learned her all what she knows. There aint her equal at shop-liftin'. To see her sail into a draper's it's a treat, I can tell yer. Blest if I wouldn't back her to nail a box o' velvets, or even a full-sized Turkey carpet, while a counter-gent was a servin' her with a ounce of darnin'-cotton. She ought to be here now—after taking carriage exercise (*with a wink*) for the benefit of her health, in a omblibus or two, promiskus.

DICK FINCH. Ah ! you're lucky to have a wife as can earn her own livin'; I've got one as is nothing better than a mill-stone about *my* neck,—always ailin'.

COOPER. Perhaps if yer had such a woman as mine—she wouldn't stand yer knockin' her about so much! I only say *perhaps*—yer know.

OMNES. Ha, ha, ha!

DICK. Ah ! I dessay I should *see* about that. It ain't my way to let no woman sarce me without teachin' her who's the master, whatever *your* way may be, Sim Cooper. .

COOPER. Well, I'll tell yer what one' o' my ways is, Dick Finch; never to quarrel with a pal if I can help it, and so—here's my respects to yer. (*drinks*) I'll tell yer a rum go as happened to my misses on'y yesterday morning. She sees a female come out of a bank in the city holdin' something in her pocket—her puss, in course my misses concluded. In her other band she 'as a bag. She gets into a bus ; my misses gets into it with her, on her pocket side. She never once takes her hand out, and my misses begins to get a little uneasy. But suddenly she thinks of a dodge to get her to take her hand out of her pocket.

OMNES. Ha, ha, ha !

COOPER. " Would you be so kind as to pass this two-shilling piece to the conductor? " my misses ses to her. " With pleasure ! " she says, pulling her 'and out of her pocket, and getting half out of her seat to 'and the money and get the change ; and when she sat down again my misses 'ad got her puss as right as a trivet.

OMNES. Ha, ha, ha ! Bravo, Mouser.

COOPER. Then my misses ses to a old party sittin' next the

door, " Would you be so kind as to stop the omblebus ? " Out she gets, and cuts down the first street she comes to; but she hadn't stept it a hundred yards afore she hears a female behind her calling out " Stop ! " " What do you require ?" my misses says ; " I think you've got my puss," she says. " How dare you say such a thing! " my misses says. " I'm sure it was you as took it out of my pocket. Where's the police ? " she says. " Never mind about where's the police," says my misses; " I'm a respectable married female, and I'll go with you to the nearest station-house, and have your wicked charge inwestigated afore I part from yer, you bad woman!"

OMNES. Ha, ha, ha !

COOPER. It wasn't no laughing matter for my misses, I can tell you, when she ses: " Go to the police-station with you I will." But my misses ses, quite owdacious, "This is the nearest way, then," and sets off with her down all the quietest streets she know'd of, until she came to a public as had its cellar-flap up. Then—what do yer think my misses did ?

BILL. Pitched the party into the cellar ?

COOPER. That's all!—then bolted to the nearest cab-stand, and come home to dinner as fresh as a bird.

OMNES. Ha, ha, ha !

BILL. The Mouser always was a honour to her perfession.

DICK. What was in the pus?

COOPER. Three fivers, and twelve-pun-ten in gold.

OMNES. Bra-vo, Mouser!

DICK. Ah! I wonder when my wife will do such a mornin's work as that for me !

COOPER. Yes, my misses is a wife as any feller may be proud to call his'n. There's a Regatta at Greenwich this afternoon, an' she an' me are off there, as soon as ever we've squared accounts with that old blackguard, Melter. Why ain't he here with the tin ?

*Enter MELTER MOSS, door in flat, c.*

Moss. Good morning, gents all! I'm a little late—had difficulties in the money-market; had to raise money at an awful sacrifice; but here I am, ready to settle with *you* to the utmost farthing—the utmost farthing; though another or two more such settling-days will settle your poor old Melter. I try to live by my losses, but I find I can't do it. (*sits at table, R., and produces from his pockets a book and a bag of money*)

COOPER. Oh! don't waste such first-rate chaff on us, Melter; you might be glad of it at some time, to butter down a beak.

BILL. Tip up what you've got to give us—that's all you've got to do; and look sharp.

COOPER. When you catch Melter looking anything else—go and engage a neat bit o' ground in a cementary for him to retire to for the rest of his days.

OMNES. Ha, ha, ha!

Moss. Have your little laughs while you can—while you can; but don't interrupt business. Talking of business—has anybody seen the Tiger this morning ?

COOPER. Hasn't been here since I've been here.

Moss. (*having opened his book and emptied his bag of money*) Now, then ; who's to be first served ? The lady ?

COOPER. Oh! no soft soap with me, Melter. What's my misses's figger?

Moss. A very pretty one ! three pound five for a Paisley shawl.

COOPER. Paisley, you old humbug ? Cashmere! My misses 'nd be ashamed to make such a mistake! Paisley!

Moss. Well, three pound five is the price—and I lose eighteen-pence by the transaction, (*counting out the money*) Take it or leave it, but don't interrupt business.

COOPER. (*indignantly snatching the money and sweeping it into his pocket*) The next Cashmere my misses brings yer, don't yer tell me it's Paisley.

Moss. Good morning, Skimmer! I always said your judgment was better than mine.

COOPER. Bosh!

Moss. The next: that's you, Ferret. (*DICK goes to talk*) A bale o' silk, five hams, and a firkin o' butter—rancid: four pound, fifteen, and three pence, (*counts out money*)

DICK. (*staggering back—the others express astonishment*) Four pound !

Moss. Fifteen and three pence ! Nobody shall ever say I keep back even the odd three pence!

DICK. But for a bale o' silk!

OMNES. Oh!

Moss. Prigging and selling never was the same thing. I only wish *I* had been a prig; I might then have stood a chance of making a fortune.

DICK. Come, come! Four pound for a bale o' silk! Look here! I've got a sick wife and children.

Moss. More shame for you! *I* could never maintain a wife, much less afford such luxuries as children. Now, don't, interrupt business. Take your money, and bring me something better than bales o' silk if you want me to make anything by my dealings with you. (*DICK takes up the money sulkily and returns to his seat*)

OMNES. Oh!

Moss. If you, any of you, think you could do better with

your swag, try and do it; but don't interrupt business, (*counting out money*) Where is the Gnat ?

BILL. (*slouching to table*) Here he is—buzzing.

Moss. Emerald scarf-pin, one pound three and six.

BILL. One pound three and six be-----

Moss. That's the price. If you want to do any good for yourself, the next flat you hocus in a skittle ground, see that he hasn't got a emerald scarf-pin, because it isn't worth the trouble of priggging it. (*counts out the money*) One, three, and six.

BILL. (*taking up the money*) So help me! I'm a good mind to-----

Moss. Very likely. Only you know it mightn't be good for you to do it, when a word from the best friend you has can send you to the gallows. (BILL *makes a gesture as if to hit him, but hesitates, and, goes sulkily back to his seat*) At your service, Skimmer, (*reading from book*) Gold repeater : three pound one and eleven pence, (*counts out money*)

COOPER. (*advancing to table*) What! for a gold repeater worth forty pound ?

Moss. Well! you surprise me! That a first-rate prig like you should think of taking a repeater worth nothing but the weight of the case!

COOPER. Stow your gammon with me, Moss; I was fly to all that sort o' patter before I'd cut my eye-teeth. You're shaving it too fine !

OMNES. Bra-vo, Skimmer! give it the old scamp hot! Let's smash him. (*they all spring up with threatening gestures*)

Moss. (*springing up, at the same moment putting his money-bag in his pocket*) Which of you is going to be the first to do it ? Let me see which of you wants to take a turn at Portland?

OMNES. He darn't do it. Down with him! (*turmoil*)

Moss. This is your doing, Sim Cooper.

COOPER. (*pocketing his money*) Serve you right, you old blood-sucker! It's such as you as is the ruin of priggery. Why, if a prig was to bring you the Bank 'o England, you'd offer him a pot o' beer for his swag.

OMNES. Yah ! Take it out of his bones ! Pitch into him ! Yah ! (*they are about to fall upon him*)

*Enter JEM DALTON, door c in flat.*

DALTON. (*springing between Moss and the others*) Drop it, you fools! without you want the peelers to be o' the party. There's two of 'em outside.

Moss. Wait till I settle accounts with you again, my excellent friends!

COOPER. You'd better settle a little more handsomely next time—or look out!

Moss. I shan't forget your kind advice, Sim Cooper, depend on it.

DALTON. Cut it! You can't any of you hit Melter without breaking your own knuckles, take my word for it,—and I've known Melter-----

Moss. And highly respected him-----

DALTON. As a matter of course, longer than any of you. *(they all go back to their places, except COOPER)* There, that's all serene again, *(to Moss)* Now, what are you going to invite me to drink? *(sits at table)*

Moss. Anything but bottled liquids; I can't afford 'em. These beggars are fleecing me to ruin.

DALTON. You're going out, Skimmer; tell 'em to send in a pint o' the best cognac to Mr. Moss.

COOPER. All right, Jem, I'm going to look after my missis. We're to work the regatta together at Greenwich this afternoon, and it won't do to leave her, perhaps to mix her liquors, so early in the day. *Exit, door in flat, C.*

Moss. Well, how are you getting on?

DALTON. Ain't getting on at all. Since we came back from Portland, I've never had a chance. I'm six years older, and the thundering peelers have got the pull of me too much.

*Enter POTMAN, with brandy, which he places on table, R., and exits.*

There's only two things I much care for now—brandy and the hope of serving out that Bob Brierly, if ever I have the luck to come across him. *(drinks)*

Moss. *(helping himself to brandy)* You're wrong, Jem. You're too violent. You always were. Why don't you copy me. *(drinks)*

DALTON. *(filling his glass)* I can't do it; so don't aggravate me by talking about it! I've thought of having revenge ever since the night he sold us, when we cracked old Gibson's crib in the city, and got lagged by Hawkshaw and his pal; and I shan't die easy till I've had it. *(drinks)*

Moss. Well, I only say you're wrong. If I'd made up my mind to be revenged, it wouldn't be by violence, *(refilling his glass, and drinking)*

DALTON. I dare say not. But let's drop the subject; it does'nt do me any good to talk about it. *(drinks)* I want you to lend me a fiver.

Moss. *(refilling)* A fiver! Come, I'm glad to hear you chaffing again!

DALTON. Stow your chaff! I can't stand it. I'm cleared out,

and want a fiver to go on with, till I can turn my hand to something.

Moss. If you were to coin me where I sit you wouldn't get so much out of me ; but if you want some money, I know a party as will lend me fifty bob for a week—only he'll want a pound for the accommodation. You'd better do without it.

DALTON. Do without it ? how can I do without it ?

Moss. Well, don't be violent, Jem. I'll get it for you—to-morrow.

DALTON. To-morrow! I want it to-day! now! (*drinks*) I haven't a mag in the world—thanks to Bob Brierly! Damn him!

Moss. Look here—don't be violent, and I'll tell you what I'll do; I'll advance you the fifty bob, out of a little money I've been saving to buy myself a warm great-coat for the winter, (*taking bag out of his pocket, and counting out the sum*)

DALTON. Oh! (*putting the money in his pocket*) You are kind! a regular pelican! I think I see your kindness oozing through the top button-hole of your waistcoat!

Moss. It's been the ruin of me all my life ! You won't forget there'll be a pound interest to pay to my friend? (*drinks*)

DALTON. All right! tell your *friend* not to lay awake o' nights thinking of it!

Moss. I'll be sure and tell him ! (*finding the brandy measure empty*) You'll stand something, now you've got the tin ?

DALTON. (*rising*) Not this morning. I'm going down to Greenwich, to see whether anything besides fogies is to be picked up there.

Moss. I'll go with you? I haven't had a country out since we were at Portland. You won't mind standing the price of a railway ticket, will you? I've given you all my ready money!

DALTON. Come on! Ha! ha! There's one thing I should enjoy almost as much as having my revenge on Bob Brierly before I foot it out of the world, and that is to get the best of Melter Moss, Esquire, in a money transaction.

Moss. Take my word for it, the sensation wouldn't agree with you Jem; at least, I never knowed anybody as it *did* agree with, (*at door*) After you!

DALTON. Couldn't think of such a thing—before such a master of rascality!

Moss. Oh, if you stand on etiquette —  
*Exit Moss, followed by DALTON, door in flat, c.—scene closes in.*

SCENE SECOND.— *Entrance Hall of Mrs. Willoughby's House.*

*Enter SAM and SERAPHINA, both smartly dressed, as if going out holiday-making, speaking as they enter, L.*

SERAPH. A-done, Sam! Now see what you've done to my bonnet.

SAM. What's that to what you've done to my heart ? No looking into a glass will ever set that to rights.

SERAPH. What a fellow you are, Sam ; always talking such nonsense! Is my bonnet right now ?

SAM. (*pretending to adjust her bonnet*) Only wants just one more—kiss ! (*kisses her, then runs away, she after him*)

SERAPH. (*catching him, and pretending to thump him*) I declare, I've a good mind to take back my word, and say I won't marry you after all, you tiresome fellow. A pretty life I shall have of it, if you are always going on in that way.

SAM. Seraphina, calm your apprehensions; one kiss every other fortnight is all I shall require to keep me from despair, and other objectionable tendencies of a social and convivial nature, which are the bane of matrimonial felicity, and destruction alike to the constitution of one's country and the curl of one's hair!

SERAPH. What are you talking about ?

SAM. (*tragically*) Love, Seraphina! passionate, rapturous, wild, maddening love! What else could I talk about when left alone with thee ? removed from all the world—its cares, its crimes, and its confectionary! desolate upon a door mat, counting the never-to-be-repeated moments as they pass, and wondering—how much longer granny is going to be before she's ready to start! (*calling off, L.*) Granny !

SERAPH. I think you are rather out of your senses to-day.

SAM. (*singing*) " No by heaven ! no by heaven ! I am not mad!" (*seizing her, and waltzing round with her*) I seize her " dancing in the hall!"

SERAPH. Sam ! Sam ! be quiet! you'll bring down all my back hair! (*getting away from him*)

SAM. " Down with the tyrant!" (*pretends to seize her back hair*) " I have it not, and yet I see it still!"

SERAPH. If you don't let me alone I'll scream !

SAM. Do ; scream for granny to look sharp. I'm dying to run down One-Tree Hill with thee, my beautiful, my bride that is to be, as soon as old Gibson comes down with the rise of salary he's promised to give me next quarter.

SERAPH. If you don't behave yourself better, I won't be in any hurry for quarter-day to come. And I'm not going to run down One-Tree Hill, so don't expect it.

SAM. Go to Greenwich and not run down One-Tree Hill ?

it couldn't be done! You might as well try to go to Gravesend without having shrimps for tea—to Richmond without devouring " maids of honour."

SERAPH. I don't care what people may do with " maids of honour" at Richmond, but I'm determined I won't run down that horrid One-Tree Hill.

SAM. (*sings*) I've been to de East, I've been to de West,  
I've been to South Carolina,  
But nebber lub'd anything half so best  
As runnin' down dat hill with Seraphina.

SERAPH. I won't.

SAM. Your *will* is law. Then we'll sit at the bottom, and watch other couples enjoying themselves, and envy them their falls and their felicity.

SERAPH. Indeed, Mr. Sam, we'll not do anything of the kind. There's plenty to be seen in Greenwich Park besides *that*. For my part—(*checking herself*)—nothing.

SAM. Seraphina, speak out like a man—or any other man ! Let not concealment, like a worm in the bud, damage your intelligibility!

SERAPH. Don't be so stupid! you know very well what I was going to say.

SAM. Do I? Then I take you at your word, (*kisses her*)

SERAPH. A-done! (*calling out, L.*) Mrs. Willoughby! I wish you'd come and keep Sam in order!

SAM. (*calling*) Yes, come along, granny! Here's Seraphina tearing some other fellow's back-hair with impatience to get to the top of One-Tree Hill, and the steamboat all the time blowing up the captain for backing and stopping and turning her astarn, in defiance of her feelings and the state of the tide ! Come on ahead, easy, granny!

*Enter MRS. WILLOUGHBY, L., smartly dressed and flustered.*

MRS. W. (*speaking as she enters*) Very well it may be for you, to say, "Come along!" (*to SERAPHINA*) as you'll know, my love, when you've been a grandmother as many years as I have, though bound I am to say, a better grandson than Sam have been to me, couldn't be—enduring roomytics in every part, to say nothing of Mr. Higgles the 'air-dresser disappointing you of your best front at the last moment with humble apologies, which is of no use to go out in for a holiday to Greenwich nor anywhere else that I know of—you'd find it not so easy as it seems to " come along," try 'evens 'ard as you may to get your things on without putting yourself into a pressperation, which is on all 'ands admitted to be about as bad for roomytics as anything can be, even hot-water and

brandy, which taken separately I can safely say have never done me one bit of good—and how often I have tried it I should be afraid of eggsaggerating.

SAM. Never mind your roomytics to-day, granny, (*rings*)  
" Be auld acquaintances forgot  
With the days of auld lang syne."

No hurry, but off we go !

MRS. W. Which hurry me I'm sure you need not, Sam, when it's only a stone's-throw round the corner we have to go to join the Brierly's at their own house, and take some little refreshment before starting for the steambot altogether, which I am sure I stand in need of more than you can tell, though no one can say my 'abit it have ever been to need more than was good for me, whatever may have been the hour of the day or night. And, after all, I've come down them dratted stairs without my gloves! No, goodness be thanked, here they are upon my 'ands! But flustered I am to that degree, that whether standing I am at this moment on my head or my feet, is what I could not exactly tell, even if life and death was in the ballast! And, as true as I'm alive, I *have* forgot to bring down my Sunday umbrella! (*going*)

SAM. (*stopping her*) Hold hard, granny! Don't think of flying in the face of the weather-glass with an umbrella in your hand. I've arranged all about the weather. There's to be no rain until the day after yesterday was a Friday fortnight, and you safe at home and asleep, reading the back page of the " Family Herald " upside down. Come along, with a hip ! hip ! hooray ! (*taking her arm and placing it on his*) Down with everything and up with everything else! One-Tree Hill for ever!

SERAPH. Sam, I declare I won't.

MRS. W. What it is you *won't*, my love, I don't know, but it it's anything to do you good-----

SAM. When taken to be well shaken. Come along.

MRS. W. I'm sure I've forgotten something! (SAM *hurries*, *them out at R. laughing*)

SCENE THIRD.—A *Street in Marylebone*.—A *shop (a corner one)* L. I. E., *on the front of which is painted* " Brierly, Ironmonger, &c.;" *on the right of the stage a public-house; at the back, crossing the stage horizontally, the railing of the Marylebone burial-ground*.—Bright sunlight.

*On the opening of the scene church-clock strikes twelve*.—PEOPLE *cross and recross at back; three or four shouting SCHOOLBOYS enter L. I. E.; one of them is pushed down against the private door of BRIERLY'S house; the others scatter and rush out at*

*back, R. and L. ; the one who was pushed down follows limping.—SERVANT-GIRL comes with beer-jug from public-house, and exits L. 1 E.—POLICEMAN comes down slowly from back, R., wiping his forehead; exits L. 1 E.—Enter BEIERLY and MAT from the private door of their house, they do not come beyond the doorstep during the scene; both are dressed as if to go out holiday-making.*

MAY. (*looking up the street*) I really begin to be afraid they're not coming, it's getting so late. I hope poor dear old Mrs. Willoughby hasn't been seized with an attack of her roomytics, as she calls it.

BRIERLY. No fear of that love, or Sam would have been here to let us know. More likely some accident to her best "front"—one of her favourite curls singed off by a careless and heartless young barber's apprentice. That's the sort of calamity *you'll* be exposed to one of these wedding days!

MAY. (*laughing*) Indeed, Mr. Impudence, it's not, for I give you fair warning, *I* never intend to grow old.

BRIERLY. You never will, dear, in my eyes.

MAY. Oh, that's very pretty! Why didn't you think of saying it before we came out on the door-step?

BRIERLY. I dare say we could find our way back again in-doors.

MAY. No; the bright sunshine seems to agree with you so well, I'll not take you out of it.

BRIERLY. You couldn't.

MAY. Why couldn't I?

BRIERLY. Because wherever you were, there'd be sunshine for me.

MAY. My dear! you'll make my cheeks so hot with blushes, that—that—they'll take all the colour out of my bonnet-strings, and then what should I do?

BRIERLY. Ha! ha! ha! Buy yourself a new pair, and bless your stars at having a husband to give you the opportunity and the excuse at the same time.

MAY. If you don't mind, my entire bonnet will be in danger of conflagration next.

BRIERLY. Then I rush to the rescue instantly; for I'm sure if the one you have now on were destroyed, it would be impossible to find another that would become you half so well.

MAY. I declare I think I'd better call for the police. I'm sure you meditate robbing me of my heart. Ha! ha! ha!

*Enter SAM, MRS. WILLOUGHBY, and SERAPHINA at back, R.*

BRIERLY. You are saved, then—at all events, for a time.

SAM. Here we are again! as the pantaloons said to his grandfather as soon as he was born, (*shaking hands with MAY*)

MRS. W. Which that is just the way he has been going on every step of the road here, (*shaking hands with BRIERLY*) You're both well, my dears, I can see with half an eye, and as I was saying, though we are a little late, I'm certing I've forgotten something; but as to recollecting anything when Sam's going on all the time like that, to say nothing of the sun shining down on new shoes, which however I must say they pinch me as little as ever I know 'em do on a first wearing, and in spite of roomytics, which have kept me often for months at a time in carpet slippers with double cork soles, and (*to MAY*) strongly I recommend 'em to you, my dear, if ever you're a martyr to that complaint, and a worse you can't have, at least such is my experience, which, as you know, though you don't know half what I have gone through with it, is more than I ever wish you to go through—Sixpence I'd give to anybody to tell me what it is I've forgotten!

SAM. A shilling to anybody who will make granny forget all about having forgotten anything! 0 yes! 0 yes! 0 yes!  
(*ALL laugh heartily*)

MRS. W. (*laughing*) Drat your impudence, Sam!

BRIERLY. You must leave him to Seraphina.

SERAPHINA. Oh! he's beyond me! I can do nothing with such a wild goose.

MAY. Yes, you can; roast him!—that's the way I should serve him.

SAM. You'd find I should never get tired of being basted by *you*.

MRS. W. Did you ever!

SAM. Not quite. I almost ventured once, but wasn't sure whether it would bear—so *didn't*.

BRIERLY. Why Sam, I fancy you ought to have been clown in a circus, instead of clerk to a bill-broker.

MRS. W. Giddy enough I'm sure he is, without going round and round in a ring.

SAM. Hooray for granny's pun!

MRS. W. (*laughing*) I only wish I had my umbrella.

SAM. Hollo, there above the chimney-pots!—no atmospheric tricks with granny!—no rain without clouds or hocus-pocus of that sort!—"Fair is foul," and fowl is meat—and rain in sunshine is no treat!

MRS. W. That's it! goodness! what is to be done? such a beauty as it was, too. I knowed I'd forgotten something!—the cold fowl, Sam!—and all along of your hurrying me, packed up ready as it was, with half a Welchfalian 'am, and a crusty cottage loaf, and four bottles of Edingborough ale, in a

travelling-bag which I borrowed of my first floor, thinking how we should enjoy it in the park.

SAM. But forgetting how it was to be got there!

MRS. W. Strong as you are, you might have carried it easy.

BRIERLY. Never mind the travelling bag and its contents, that will all be to the good when you return home. To-day—my seventh wedding-day—I stand treat, and if you have set your heart on a cold fowl—and Greenwich can furnish the brother or sister of the one in the bag—I undertake to say that you shall have it! But, in the mean time, let's have some lunch before we start.

MRS. W. But it's such a little way back to my house—Sam could run and fetch it.

SAM. The house ? granny! Do you want to see me taken up for house-breaking ? for I should be sure to let it fall on the hard highway ! (*all laugh*)

MAY. No, no. We won't have the party broken up, now that it is assembled.

SAM. And Seraphina wondering whether any young girl ever gets to the top of One Tree Hill!

SERAPHINA. She wasn't thinking of anything of the sort. How can you be so tiresome.

MRS. W. Well, I can only say a greater picture I never see cooked!—and I never shall forgive myself if I find it is not good—though the 'am I know will keep, and the bread don't matter about getting a little stale where there are a servant kept with an appetite that ferocious that door-keys is hardly safe from it—and that with good wages and everything found—and I don't know greater plagues than they are, even if they have small appetites.

MAY. Well, if they had my husband's at this particular moment, I'm sure I don't know what you'd say. Ha, ha, ha! So pray let's give him some lunch, before he has time to think of devouring us.

MRS. W. I beg his parding, I'm sure, for keeping him waiting, but when I recollected that beautiful fowl, and the Welchfalian 'am.

SAM. (*sings*) "Roses and lilies its cheeks disclose—"

MRS. W. Exactly what it looked like when it was fresh cut. But don't keep Mr. Briery famishing for his lunch, which well I know nothing can be worse—

MAY. I'll lead the way, and then I shall keep you next me, Mrs. Willoughby. Come along! mind the step.

MRS. W. Thank you, my dear, for reminding me of it—for—with my roomytics—

MAY leads her in, still talking; BRIERLY follows.

SAM. Seraphina! quick ! your parasol! rain !

SERAPHINA. Gracious! and my bonnet's bran' new!  
(*spreading her parasol in alarm*)

SAM. Like my hat! (*gets under parasol*) No ! false alarm!  
shower passed over to the other side of the way! But parasol  
still useful! (*kisses her, then hurries with her into house, both  
laughing*)

*Enter* POLICEMAN, L. 1 E., *wiping his forehead. He saunters  
by the public-house—looks in at the door, but passes on regrets  
fully wiping his lips with the back of his hand, and goes out at  
back, R. The door of BRIERLY'S house opens, a smart Servant-  
girl with large beer-jug in her hand, runs across to public-  
house as the scene closes in.*

SCENE FOURTH.—*Melter Moss's Lodgings.—A bare room;  
doors, R. c. in fiat, and L. 1 E.*

*A low tapping heard at door, L.—MELTER MOSS, without either  
coat, waistcoat or collar, appears at door, E. c, in flat, and  
listens ; knock repeated.*

Moss. (*coming from door*) That isn't Jem's knock, and I  
don't like the sound of it! (*knock repeated*) Yet it isn't like a  
peeler's. Besides, I can't be wanted for any thing—I never  
prig so much as a penn'orth o' walnuts, (*knock repeated*) It's  
somebody that doesn't seem inclined to take " not at home" for  
an answer, (*goes to door, L., and speaks in a disguised voice*) Is  
— aw—anybody—aw—there ?

DICK. (*without*) Yes; it's me!

Moss. I—aw—havn't the honour of—aw—knowing any  
party of that name.

DICK. It's all right, Mr. Moss—it's the Ferret!

Moss. (*aside*) Dick Finch ! what does he want ? can't have  
brought any heavy swag at this time in the day; but he may  
have nailed something portable, (*aloud*) Excuseme for keeping  
you so long on the landing, Finch ; but, the fact is, I'm *ong  
dishabilly*, If you'll oblige me by waiting there a moment or  
two longer, while I add a trifle to my costume, I'll open the  
door. (*retiring from door*)

DICK. Be as quick as yer can, please.

Moss. Oh ! depend on me not to keep you waiting a moment  
longer than is absolutely necessary, (*aside*) There's something  
decidedly odd about his manner of speaking! Isn't up to no  
little game of " you and I and nobody by," is he ? I should  
think *not* with such a friend as me ! (*goes in at door, R. C, in  
flat, returns in a moment wrapped in an old dressing-gown, into  
the pocket of which he puts a pistol as he crosses to door, L., and  
opens it. DICK FINCH enters quickly*) This is quite an agreeable  
surprise. To what do I owe the pleasure ?

DICK. Do you remember what I told you this morning about my wife ?

Moss. I think you did say something about Mrs. F. and the little F.'s; and I think I said something on the same subject, not with any intention of hurting your feelings, Finch.

DICK. Oh! feelings be blowed! You may say what you like. The question with me is—what will you do? Look here, Mr. Moss ! When I got home just now with the four pound odd you gave me, I found a execution in my rooms for six pound rent.

Moss. Well, if anybody had told me such a thing had happened to you, I wouldn't have believed it.

DICK. Wouldn't a-believed what ?

Moss. That you would ever have been so green as to have waited to see your crib taken possession of by a broker. I'm amazed at yer!

DICK. Don't talk thundering nonsense like that. I'd a-been off long before it come to that if my wife hadn't been too bad to move off her bed! Of course I should! Don't aggravate a fellow by tellin' him he can't do what everybody can do!

Moss. Well, let's drop the subject,—with all my heart.

DICK. But I didn't come to drop the subject; I come to ask you to lend me enough to pay out the brokers. That bale o' silk-----

Moss. Oh! I'm to be pumped on account of that, am I ? Now, let me tell you something. Don't bring any more bales o' silk to me, because I won't have anything to do with 'em, as this is your way o' doing business. Coming here to me, after all my books are made up, and expecting me to alter figures ! Why, I'm astonished at yer!

DICK. Damn it! Melter Moss, don't drive me too far! A couple of pound is all I want of you.

Moss. And, on principle, I won't give you a couple of shillings.

DICK. I don't want you to *give* me anything; I only want you to lend me the two pound.

Moss. What security can you bring me ?

DICK. Security !

Moss. That's the word. I never lend a penny without good security. Go to the Bank of England and tell 'em you've got an execution in your rooms for a paltry six pound; then ask 'em for a loan, and see what *they'll* say about security!

DICK. Melter! you'd better not try to humbug me in this style! It wouldn't be safe at any time, but now least of all! (*he glares savagely at Moss, and puts his hands to one of his pockets significantly*)

Moss. (*quickly putting his right hand into the pocket of his*

*dressing-gown*) What! you dare to threaten, do you, Dick Finch!

*Enter JEM DALTON, L. door, he is thoroughly disguised as a highly respectable-looking elderly gentleman.*

DALTON. Hollo ! what's up now ?

DICK. Nothin' perticular. (to Moss *gloomily*) You'll be lucky if you never need a helpin' hand, Melter Moss !

Moss. I never shall need it—while I've got a hand of my own to help me, Dick Finch.

DICK. Take care you don't dip it into another man's swag once too often.

DALTON. (to FINCH) Cut it, you fool!—you can't afford to quarrel with Moss.

DICK. Perhaps not—at this moment; but I may be better off, some day ! (*aside*) And may a limb of my body wither every day that I forget the debt I owe you, Melter Moss! (*aloud*) Good day, Jim! keep both your eyes open; for the time may come when Melter will want "security" even from you. *Exit, L. door.*

Moss. Now that's a warning to you, Jem, to mind the sort of fellow you try to befriend! (*aside*) If I don't draw your sting, Master Dick Finch, I'll give you leave to stick it into me ! (*going towards door in flat, R. c.*)

DALTON. Never mind him, poor devil! Why arn't you ready? What are you going to wear? Don't come the gorgeous.

Moss. (*going in at door in flat, R. c.*) Wait till you see my get up; I think you'll own it's a sweet thing for the purpose.

DALTON. You always were a splendid hand at a get up.

Moss, (*out of sight*) I say !—you don't want to borrow any more money, do you?

DALTON. Not as I haven't got any " security" with me.

Moss. Don't recal that fellow's rubbish !—you know, Jem, that so long as I've got a shilling—or know where to get one—you've only to ask for it !

DALTON. (*aside*) And wish I may get it! (*aloud*) Oh, yes! —I've always found you generosity itself.

Moss. Always !

DALTON. (*aside*) When I didn't want anything of you.

Moss. It's my generosity that keeps me so poor.

DALTON. Don't make me weep, Melter,—without you've got a fresh shirt-front ready aired for me; you know how easily you make my tears flow, when you talk like that!

Moss. I know,—I might of had bottles full, if I'd thought of collecting 'em as curiosities. Remind me to hold your head over a water-butt, the next time it happens.

DALTON. I will: and then will be a good opportunity for you to wash out your conscience—that is to say, if it happens to be a nice drying day.

Moss. Too tender, Jem! too tender! Wouldn't bear the friction of rubbing!

DALTON. Not with a good deal of your own soft soap ?

Moss. I shouldn't like to venture it—knowing how delicately organized the article is ! (*enters from door in flat, R. c. completely disguised in a Quaker's dress*) There, friend Jem !—what dost thou say to that for a get up ?

WALTON. Say ? why, that Hawkshaw himself, if we met him, wouldn't know you!

Moss. Verily, then, James ; I'd face the devil himself!

*Exeunt, laughing, L. door.*

SCENE FIFTH.— *Overlooking the Thames at Greenwich; at back, the entrance to the steamboat pier, &c.; on the right the Ship Tavern; on the left Greenwich Hospital, &c.—The rigging of ships, &c, seen over the iron railings at back, gaily dressed with flags.—Bright sunny afternoon.*

*On the opening of the scene a crowd discovered at back, eagerly watching the progress of a boat-race; shouts; excited cries of " Here they come!" guns fired; more shouts and cries of " Red wins !" " No, it's White !" " Hooray ! it's Blue !" &c; the crowd gradually breaks tip into knots, apparently discussing the events of the race.—Enter COOPER from the pier at back.*

COOPER. (*coming forward*) Bra-vo! I never see her work so beautiful since I've 'ad the honour to own her! Three, and they're all heavy ! We mustn't be seen together—with them three pusses in my pocket. If I come handy across the Tiger I'll tell him to keep on the quiet, too. Hawkshaw's down here.

*Enter HAWKSHAW, R., meeting COOPER, who is going out.*

HAWK. (*aside*) The Skimmer! Just parted with his wife, the Mouser! Have they done any business ? (*aloud*) Pleasant afternoon, Mr. Cooper.

COOPER. If it was me you addressed, my good fellow, you are mistaken; my name is not Cooper.

HAWK. I beg pardon; I forgot you were on duty. Pleasant afternoon, Skimmer!

COOPER. I don't know you from the unborn beak; but if you mean anything to drink, give your liquor a name, and I ain't above taking my share of it at the bar of the nearest public-house. What is it to be ?

HAWK. Nothing to-day.

COOPER. Well, if you *want*, I 'm off to town.

HAWK. My compliments to the Mouser! Good day!

COOPER. She'll be so sorry she didn't come down to Greenwich when I tell her I met Mr.-----

HAWK. Brown. Good day! You'll just be in time to catch the next up train. Take care of yourself.

COOPER. You're very polite, I'm sure, Mr.-----

HAWK. Brown!

COOPER. Brown ! I'll take great care of myself, (*aside*) I thought it was all up with me! I shall never be able to wait until I get to the Rat without something to drink. *Exit, R.*

HAWK. (*looking after him*) One of the cleverest thieves in London ! He hasn't come down here to see the boat-racing. Well, if there's been anything particularly neat done in the way of pocket-picking, I know the Skimmer's town address. I'll take a turn towards the Park; I may light on a stray black sheep or two that need the shepherd's care! (*he saunters out, L.*)

*Enter JEM DALTON and MELTER MOSS at back, from the pier.*

DALTON. I tell you it's him! I should know him out of a thousand. Damn him !

Moss. Well, I don't say it isn't him ; I only say don't be violent.

DALTON. Say what you like, but I won't lose sight of him till I've paid him what I owe him! Why did you come between us just as I was going to pitch him into the river?

Moss. Because he'd have been got out again before we could have got off the pier, and then he might have recognized you.

DALTON. What do I care! I'll have my revenge if I go to the gallows for it!

Moss. Don't use such dreadful bad language, Jem! Have your revenge, but, (*shudders*) ugh! pray, don't talk of paying for it in that way! Listen to me, and don't be violent. I've thought of a way by which you may settle with him without running any risk at all.

DALTON. Tell me how.

Moss. By striking him through his wife.

DALTON. Speak plainly. What do you mean?

Moss. They're coming this way! Come with me.

DALTON. I tell you I won't lose sight of him!

Moss. I don't want you to; I only want him not to see us. This way and I'll tell you my plan, (*leads him off, R., as BRIERLY, &c, enter*)

*Enter, from the pier at back, BRIERLY and MAY.*

BRIERLY. (*laughing*) That's a pair of gloves to me, May

and a lesson to you not to back the best looking young waterman the next boat-race you bet on.

MAY. I know they didn't row fairly, or he would have won ! so I don't consider I have lost.

BRIERLY. (*still laughing*) Why, I declare you're a regular Welcher?

MAY. I don't know what being a Welcher is; but if it's feeling so happy I don't know what to do with myself, I'm the Welchest of women!

BRIERLY. Bless you, May! you can't feel happier than I! Misfortune is hard to bear, but the remembrance of it makes happiness the more delightful when it comes. This day seven years ago, when, in spite of the misery that lay before us, you bravely went with me to the church we had thought to enter so joyously-----

MAY. And which we entered with tears in our eyes, but with our hearts fuller than ever of love for each other, knowing how much more than ever each needed the support of the other's love!

BRIERLY. Yes, darling; and heaven only knows whether, but for the trials of that day and the dark time that followed it, we should ever have learned to love each other so very dearly.

MAY. So very, very dearly. I'm kissing you a thousand times! Don't you feel my kisses falling like a shower on your lips ?

BRIERLY. If the sun would only go out for a moment and leave us in darkness, my lips should give yours the only fitting answer. Ah, my love! I wish to heaven everybody's trials ended as happily as ours have done !

MAY. I wish so, too, with all my heart.

BRIERLY. If there were more such men in the world as Mr. Gibson, many an unfortunate might be saved from utter ruin, and the chance given him of being happy. But for him our life might, even now, be one of hardship and misery. I know he himself says that in setting me up in business he has only made me a small return for the services I rendered him by saving his office from robbery, six years ago; but it is not every one who would have measured his obligation with so generous a hand.

MAY. He is a good man and I never forget him in my prayers; but what I am most grateful to him for, is his belief in your innocence of the crime for which—for which you were unjustly condemned. But to-day we are entitled to forget our past sorrows, and think of nothing but our present happiness.

BRIERLY. Our perfect happiness.

MAY. Crowned with the delight—of my winning a pair of gloves on the first boat race I ever betted on. Ha! ha! ha!

BRIERLY. A pretty specimen of a debt of honour! Ha! ha! ha! May-, you're an awful example of the depraving influence of gambling. Ha! ha! ha! But what are Sam and his grandmother stopping behind for? Ah! here they come.

*Enter SAM, SERAPHINA, and MRS. WILLOUGHBY from pier at back.*

MRS. W. Well, my dears, how you can tell which won and which lost, with all that crowding and shouting and gun-tiring; and what they want to shoot guns at the men for, rowing and rowing as they were as hard as they could and to that degree of presspiration my 'art was all in a trimble for them, knowing what roomyticks is so well as I do, is what nothing, I'm sure will ever make me understand.

SAM. Never mind, Granny, it's all right. A long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether, with the long odds and the tide against you, and there you are, sailing under bare poles down One-Tree Hill, with Seraphina and her heart's delight, Sam-u-e-l Willoughby, Esquire, before you know where you are, who's trumps, or what the man in the moon has for breakfast on Sunday evenings! Heave ahead! No; hawl down your main-mast, clew up your binnacle, and cast anchor! Here's a jolly B.B.B. coming.

MAY. A what?

SAM. A Band of Blacklead Brothers!

MRS. W. (*fondly*) Drat you, Sam! how you are always a mystifying everybody. What *do* you mean by Blacklead Brothers?

BRIERLY. Ha! ha! ha! I see! Ethiopian Serenaders!

SAM. (*laughing in nigger manner*) Yah! ah!—ah!

SERAPH. (*admiringly*) How can you be so ridiculous, Sam!

SAM. Bless your soul, it's the easiest thing in world! Never saw me dance a hornpipe on my head, did you? I'll give you that delight at once! (*pretends to prepare to stand on his head*)

SERAPH. (*alarmed*) Good gracious, Sam! pray don't! I know I shall faint if you do!

SAM. Ladies who insist on fainting, to provide their own smelling salts and *sal volatile!* Exhibition of topsiturvicular saltation just about—*not* to commence! Walk down! walk down! walk down!

SERAPH. (*delightedly*, to MAY) Isn't he a mad fellow?

ALL. Ha! ha! ha!

*Enter a party of Ethiopian Serenaders, led by GREEN JONES,*

as " Tambourine;" they range themselves, L.—crowd gathers round them; GREEN JONES makes a space—in doing so recognises BRIERLY and the others ; they recognize him.

MRS. W. Why, my goodness ! if it isn't!-----

GREEN. (*aside to them*) Don't notice me, please! Emily's been out of an engagement six months, and there's five little mouths to feed, and soon there'll be—don't notice me, please, or I shall break down.

BRIERLY. (*giving him card*) Come and see me—to-night—tomorrow—as soon as you can.

GREEN. God bless you, Mr. Briery; I will come to you now; I—I didn't like before-----

MRS. W. And let me know, too, where I can see Mrs. Green Jones—I mean St. Everymonday.

BONES. (*calling*) Now den, Pompey, we're all berry much inclined to begin de woculisation, when you hab quite done wid de public.

GREEN. Emily will be so happy, when I tell her I've seen you! Good bye ! (*he goes back to the Serenaders*)

*Enter from the door of the Ship, R., MR. TOTTY ; he wears a large gold chain, and appears very slightly tipsy—he stands close to MAY while the Ethiopians are singing.*

BRIERLY. (*to MAY*) Hard lines for this poor fellow ! but, thank heaven, we may be able to lend him a helping hand !

MAY. Poor Emily!

TOTTY. (*who has reeled against MAY*) I beg your pardon, madam! quite unintentional, I assure you.

MAY. Don't mention it, sir!

BONES. Now, massa Pompey, what yer got to tell de white ladies an' geblams ?

GREEN. Fust,—jist you tell me why am de knumdrum what I'm *not* gwine to ax yer like a billy doo in de Dead-letter Office?

BONES. Tell yer dat? Why, ob course I can, wid my eyes shut. It's because—no, it aint—

GREEN. Yer gib it up ?

BONES. Twice runnin'!

GREEN. Wall, dat's de sensiblest ting you've done nebber since I know'd yer before yer was born! Why, de knumdrum wot I'm *not* goin' to ax yer am like a billy doo in de Dead-letter Office is becuse der am no answer to it.

BONES. I want to go home to my nearest relatives on my maternal uncle's side!

GREEN. I see by de paleness ob yer countenance yer not berry well. Yer may leave off work for all de rest of yesterday

to get up yer strength for de first part of de serenade, which am  
DE GEE-WOEFUL BALLAD OF ZEPHIRINA SNOW\*

*Air—" Tapioca."*

When I was libin' down in Ole Virginny,  
I lub a gal called Zephirina Snow,  
'Case I hab no wife nor little piccaninny,  
Which am nebber what a nigger ought to *do*.  
But, ah! dat Zephirina am a hussey,—  
She gib dis nigger's heart a dreffful blow,  
Which he didn't gib her back again, becus he  
To take offence am al'ays berry slow.  
Tapioca! tapioca!  
Serb her right wid half a hundredweight to choke her !  
Ah—a—ah! naughty-aughty Zephirina Snow!  
How dat blow afflict me, speshumly my nose!  
Kader hab de hoopin' cough or measles !  
O my ! O my !  
Zephirina am de wussest gal I ebber know!  
O my! 0 my!  
Ah-a-ah! golly golly! folly folly! melancholy, 0!  
But now I recumlect I habn't I to'd yer  
What dat wicked Zephirina gone an' did,—  
Took up wid a onety-one first foot so'jer,—  
Wish him bagnet in him buzzum-front was hid!  
Afor' dat beast come back from killin' armies,  
Zephirina habn't got no lub but me;  
Used ter meet me in de hollow whar de farm is,  
An' bring me pumpkin-pie enuff for three.  
Tapioca! tapioca!  
Briny tears she ought to shed enuff to choke her!  
Ah-a-ah! fickls-ickle Zephirina Snow!  
When I'm dead and buried, serb de critter right  
If I come and haunt her eb'ry Sunday!  
O my! O my!  
How I lub dat pumpkin-pie an' Zephirina Snow!  
O my! 0 my!  
Ah-a-ah! jolly folly! melancholy! golly golly, 0 !

*(Just before the conclusion of the song MELTER MOSS and  
JEM DALTON enter, R., and take places in the crowd next  
MR. TOTTY; DALTON, covered by MOSS, steals TOTTY'S  
watch and drops it into MAY'S pocket; the two then mingle  
with the crowd; one of the Ethiopians goes round with hat,  
and BRIERLY and SAM give him money.*

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\* Published by METZLER & Co., Great Marlborough Street.

SAM. Now then, Seraphina, hey for the mounting and ho for the valley ! I see you are dying for that run down.

SERAPH. If you don't give over your silliness, I won't go into the Park at all with you, I declare.

SIR. W. Quite right you are, my dear, for—though your crimoline is not so large-----

MAY. We'll have no running down hills, Mr. Sam ! so that point's settled.

BRIERLY. And Mr. Sam is settled with it.

SAM. Never felt more unsettled in the whole course of my undistinguished career

*(they all laugh and go out L.—the moment they are gone JEM DALTON and MELTER MOSS go up to MR. TOTTY.)*

Moss. Thou hast been robbed, friend, I fear, *(aside, recognising him)* Totty!

TOTTY. Eh ? *(instinctively feeling for his watch and finding it gone)* Bless my soul! my watch is stolen !

DALTON. You'll find it in the pocket of the woman who was standing next you half a minute ago. I saw her put it into her pocket. The man who is with her, I know, has been a convict and ticket-of-leave man.

TOTTY. Bless my soul! Police! police ! I'll follow them ! Police ! *(he hurries out, L. followed by part of the crowd)*

Moss. *(aside)* Totty! and didn't know me from Adam ! *(aloud to DALTON)* What do you say now to my little game ?

DALTON. Wait till we've seen it played out. *(they retire behind crowd atback)*

*Re-enter* MR. TOTTY, BRIERLY, MAY, MRS. WILLOUGHBY, SAM, and SERAPHINA— a POLICEMAN keeping close to MAY ; CROWD presses closely round.

TOTTY. I charge her with stealing my watch.

BRIERLY. Good heavens, man! does my wife look like a woman who would steal a watch ?

GREEN. *(forcing his way through the CROWD)* Mrs. Brierly ! *(to TOTTY)* You are making a shocking mistake, sir ! this lady is highly respectable. I know her well.

POLICEMAN. *(contemptuously)* Do you, now? *(the CROWD laughs jeeringly)*

TOTTY. Most likely this is a confederate.

BRIERLY. Sir, sir! you will repent of every word you are now uttering.

TOTTY. I have reason to believe that this man is a discharged convict.

BRIERLY. How dare you! *(aside in a tone of agony)* My God! those fearful words once more. Is it possible that I am again to be hunted down ?

MAY. Oh, Robert! what are we to do ?

TOTTY. (*to POLICEMAN*) See that she does not make away with the watch ; she has it now in her pocket.

MRS. W. If in her pocket this gentleman's watch is, of course it will be easy to find it there, (*to MAY*) Let me turn your pocket outside in, my dear, to satisfy the gentleman he's mistaken, (*she puts her hand into MAY'S pocket, then utters a cry and staggers back*) Oh, Sam, support me !

SAM. (*supporting her*) What's the matter, granny ?

MRS. W. Oh, don't ask me !

BRIERLY. For God's sake, speak! May, my darling! feel in your pocket.

MAY. (*puts her hand into her pocket and takes out Totty's watch*) Merciful heavens! what is this ?

POLICEMAN, (*taking watch from her*) Pretty clear what it is, I should think ! (*CROWD yells*) Come along !

MAY. (*shrieking*) Oh, Robert, save me! save me ! I am innocent!

BRIERLY. Sir, sir, this is some frightful mystery!

POLICEMAN. Don't you attempt to impede me in the execution of my duty, or it'll be the worse for you ! (*to MAY*) Just you come along quiet!

MAY. Mercy, mercy! (*to TOTTY*) Oh, sir, I am innocent!

TOTTY. Psha! Policeman, I look to you to secure her.

MAY. (*wildly, as the POLICEMAN is about to lay hands on her*) Oh! don't let him touch me, Robert! don't let him—don't! (*she faints and falls into BRIERLY'S arms*)

BRIERLY. (*in a tone of agony*) What can I do ? What can I do? (*CROWD yells*)

DALTON. (*coming down, R., behind the CROWD, aside to Moss*) I'm even with him now !

Moss. And you see without violence.

BRIERLY. Oh, surely I am accursed! I never raise the cup of happiness to my lips but it is dashed from them by an unseen relentless hand ! And now the blow is struck through her—my wife ! my love ! Would to heaven I were rather stricken dead at once! dead! dead! (*Tableau*)

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

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An interval of Six Months between Acts One & Two.

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## ACT II.

SCENE FIRST.— *Waiting Room of Mr. Gibson's Office in the City.**SAM discovered, putting on his overcoat.*

SAM. (*looking at his watch*) Shades of evening ! ten minutes to five, and governor Gibson not come back ! and Seraphina on the hob of impatience, no doubt, stewing herself to violin - strings; while her heart's delight, S. Willoughby, Esquire, this side up with care, to be delivered immediately, is doomed to play the active but monotonous *role* of the solitary white bear in the Zoological Gardens, without anybody at hand to shy even a biscuit at his head to keep up his drooping spirits! (*looking off. L., and starting*) Eh ? by jingo ! if it isn't granny! Hollo, granny! (*enter MRS. WILLOUGHBY, L.*) Why, what *are* you at in the Money Market, running about among the City Intelligence unprotected! You haven't come to Mr. Gibson to do a little accommodation bill, have you?

MRS. W. You're at your nonsense again, I know; but if you mean getting aches and pains in all my limbs to that degree that anybody else would cry out with 'em, I'm sure it isn't to your good master I need come to do it.

SAM. That relieves my overcharged mind of a load of anguish! But what have you come for, then, granny?

MRS. W. To take you to the the-a-ter !

SAM. Here! hi! hollo ! hold hard, granny! this 'll never do! plunging into vortexes of dissipation at your immature age! Ha, ha, ha!

MRS. W. Drat you, Sam! if I didn't think I'd done something dreadful!

SAM. (*kissing her*) Only just a little awful—that's all. But what's put it into your head to go to the theatre to-night ?

MRS. W. Mr. Chuckles, the third floor back—which he is engaged at a theatre.

SAM. As low comedian.

MRS. W. Nothing shall ever make me believe *that!* for-six months he have been in my house, and a more genteel young man I never wish to have for a lodger, though he have got a little behind with his rent, and his hours is not quite so early as I should wish them to be, but his principles is good—as I said to myself when he come to me this morning and ses, " Mrs. Willoughby, you've acted handsome by me, and I feel it my duty to return you alike compliment; it is not in my power to pay you what I owe you in money, but I take my anniwal benefit this evening, on which occasion I am a thinking of sustaining the part of Hamlet, and I will let you have as many

tickets as you require without any advance of price, as a acknowledgment of my great obligations to you, Mrs. Willoughby;" and as I'm a living woman, Sam, I saw the tears come into his eyes.

SAM. I can judge of his emotion by my own at this trying moment! Chuckles as Hamlet *will* be a treat!

MRS. W. So I'm told, Sam; and Capting Sly, as has the drawing-rooms, when I asked him what sort of a play the character of 'amlet is in, assures me that whenever he's in the blues and wants a 'arty laugh he goes and sees it; so on his recommendation, I've took three tickets, which Mr. Chuckles let me 'ave as the last he 'ad, for Seraphina and you and me ; and I've come to fetch you, so that we mightn't find all the seats in the theater taken up by being late, which Mr. Chuckles was good enough to have printed on the cards, "Come early."

SAM. But where's my lovely Seraph ?

MRS. W. Which is not the name Ehe was christened, as I know, which were her godmother at the time ; but, of course, knowing as it would not have been proper to have brought her here amongst the business hours—though why it shouldn't be is what I cannot see, 'ighly respectable as she is on both sides of her parents—I've left her at a confectionater's on Cornhill, and—oh! good'evens, Sam! you haven't been a-doin anything wrong, 'ave you ?—Mr. 'Awkshaw!

*Enter HAWKSHAW, L.*

HAWK. Mrs. Willoughby! quite an unexpected pleasure. I hope I see you quite hearty, ma'am ?

MRS. W. In health, I thank you;—but, oh, Mr. 'Awkshaw ! if my grandson have done anything wrong——

SAM. Come, I say, granny, take the first convenient turning on the right.

HAWK. (*laughing*) Oh, no, ma'am, your grandson's been brought up in too good a school to go wrong.

MRS. W. I'm thankful to hear you say so, Mr. 'Awkshaw; though not the best I should have wished to send him to, the best it was I could afford.

HAWK. And quite good enough it was, ma'am, I fancy. But when I spoke of the school he'd been brought up in, I was thinking of the things he'd learnt in this office, and what reminded me of it was, that not long ago I saw that poor devil, Brierly, hanging about outside. In fact, that's what made me look in, seeing the office open late, to ask your grandson whether he or you had happened to have heard anything about the Brierlys lately.

MRS. W. Sorry I am to say it, ever since poor Mr. Brierly

had his business took from him by his 'ard-'arted creditors, he have never come near me; and I know it would have broke poor Mrs. Brierly's heart to have seen me in her prison, though my own 'art have bled for her, never believing as I will that guilty she was of robbing that 'ard man of his watch.

HAWK. I've always had doubts about that affair myself, though the case looked complete enough when it was put to the jury. It was Brierly's having been previously convicted that told worst against her. At one time I thought I'd got a clue to the mystery : I fancied a prig whom I met down at Greenwich on the afternoon of the robbery might have taken the watch and slipped it into Mrs. Brierly's pocket, thinking it was his wife's; but I could make nothing of it. I shall keep my eyes and my ears open still, however, and something may come of it yet. Things been going on all right here—none of those Australian bonds been offered, I suppose, or I should have heard from the governor ?

SAM. All has been perfectly serene here. You know about the little affair round the corner ?

HAWK. I hardly hear of anything else. Everything I'm concerned in, somehow, happens " round the corner !" Good day, ma'am, (to SAM) My respects to Mr. Gibson, (going)

MRS. W. Which, if you were agoing my way, Mr. 'Awkshaw----

HAWK. Just the way I *am* going, ma'am, whichever way it is.

MRS. W. Then I will get you to see me safe across the road; for them dratted Hansom cabs, which I never could see their 'andsomeness, for my part, seem to take a pleasure in wanting to run over me whenever I try to cross a road alone.

HAWK. They won't do it, ma'am, while I'm with you.

MRS. W. Kind it is of you to say so, I'm sure.

SAM. And, as a favour to me, Mr. Hawkshaw, see that none of those dreadful child-stealers attempt to carry granny off.

HAWK. Make your mind perfectly easy on that account, Mr. Willoughby.

MES. W. I'm sure it's very kind of you to say so—and which the name of the confectionater's is—is—mind you don't forget it, Sam—is Puzzles.

SAM. All right; I know the party, granny. Tell him to cool me all the coffee he's got ready in his coppers against I come.

MRS. W. And that's just the way he goes on, Mr. 'Awkshaw, even when he comes back from church on Sundays.

*Exit with HAWKSHAW, L.*

SAM. That's because (singing) " I always are so jolly oh! so jolly oh!" (looking at his watch) Quarter past five! Gibson hasn't gone and drowned himself in the sinking fund, I hope. (speaking off, L.) Hasn't come back yet, Mr. Totty.

*Enter MR. TOTTY, in a hurry, L.*

TOTTY. Hasn't he ? that's infernally awkward, for I wanted him to give me the money for that bill to-day—three hundred of it I want for wages to-morrow, in fact, *(looking at his watch)* Everybody will have left the city. You'd better give me the bill back.

SAM. Mr. Gibson may be in in two minutes time.

TOTTY. But he mayn't come back at all.

SAM. Sure to return before he goes home to dinner, I think, sir.

TOTTY. No, I don't think I'll risk waiting.

SAM. I'll get you the bill then, sir. *Exit, R.*

TOTTY. Confound it! I hope I shan't have to go to that old thief, Moss, after all.

*Re-enter SAM, with bill, R.*

SAM. *(handing bill)* Here it is, sir. Mr. Gibson will be sorry he was not at home.

TOTTY. *(putting bill in pocket book)* Unfortunate, but can't be helped, *(puts book in pocket, and then looks hurriedly at his watch)* Twenty minutes past five ! *(aside)* I'm afraid Moss is my only chance! *(aloud)* Good day ! *Exit, L.*

SAM. This is peculiarly jolly ! Seraphina, thinking I've gone off, and superstitiously married the vinegar merchant's niece, and poor little Chuckles in agonies at the non-arrival of his audience of three, to witness his performance of Shakespeare's highly popular extravaganza of " Hamlet, Prince of Dunstable!" *(looking off, L.)* Who the deuce is coming in now—Brierly ?

*Enter BRIERLY, L., seedily dressed, pale, and wretched-looking*

BRIERLY. You may well hardly recognize me; I'm changed—greatly changed, I know—since you saw me last.

SAM. It's not only that, but, I say, old fellow, it's not the thing for you to come to me here, with the chance of doing me a mischief! Mr. Gibson wouldn't be best pleased if he thought I-----

BRIERLY. Hush, Sam! hush! I've too much to bear already, without hard words from you. My innocent wife in prison, my business swept away from me, my home destroyed !

SAM. I don't want to say anything to hurt your feelings, but I know what Mr. Gibson thinks.

BRIERLY. He thinks my poor wife guilty, and that I made her so ? It is to endeavour to remove that impression that I have now come. I saw him go out an hour ago, but had not the heart to speak to him then.

SAM. You'd better not see him at all. Take my advice-----

BRIERLY. I must, I must see him, and make one more

attempt to move him to believe in my May's innocence. In all the world he is the only man from whom I can hope for assistance.

SAM. Look'ee here; if you are in want of money, and a few shillings-----(*putting his hand in his pocket*)

BRIERLY. For God's sake, spare me, Sam! You mean kindly, I know, but such words from you drive me to despair! Mr. Gibson's coming. Leave me alone to speak to him.

SAM. I will. But you'd better take-----

BRIERLY. Leave me! pray, leave me.

SAM. (*aside*) Well, I hope the governor won't think *I've* had any hand in it! *Exit, R.*

*Enter Mr. GIBSON, L.*

GIBSON. (*speaking as he enters*) Confound gossiping men of business! I shall be late home to dinner! (*seeing BRIERLY, and slightly starting*)

BRIERLY. I beg your pardon for intruding on you, Mr. Gibson, but-----

GIBSON. Certainly I thought I had made you understand that my wish is to have nothing further to do with you.

BRIERLY. Oh, sir! if I only had the means of proving to you the innocence of my poor wife!

GIBSON. For her sake, I should be heartily glad to hear that the proof of her innocence had been established; but, until it is, I can only think with the Judge who tried and the Jury who convicted her—and only remember that, unfortunately, she is the wife of a man who has himself been convicted of a serious crime.

BRIERLY. Convicted, but yet innocent, sir, God knows!

GIBSON. You know I tried to believe it.

BRIERLY. Indeed, indeed, sir, in that you only did me justice.

GIBSON. I thought so, until the conviction of your wife. However, I once more tell you I'll not be any further mixed in your affairs. I have my own reputation to preserve. In return for the service you rendered me in saving my office from being plundered, and under the impression that I might have previously treated you somewhat harshly, I gave you the means of retrieving your character, and of winning competence for yourself and wife.

BRIERLY. You did for me all that kindness and generosity could do; and if you could only know how great was the happiness I and my poor wife were enjoying, as the fruits of your goodness, you would know how impossible it is that she or I could have been guilty of such a crime as that for which she is now suffering punishment!

GIBSON. Guilty impulses are often inexplicable, even to those who are under their influence. If ever you are in a position to prove conclusively your wife's innocence and your own, no one will be more glad than myself; but until you are able to do that, I decline all further intercourse with you; and all just-thinking men will say that I am bound to take this course.

BRIERLY. I have no hope of being able to prove our innocence, and can only appeal to your compassion. To-day or to-morrow my wife will have completed the term of her imprisonment, and will learn—for I have not had the heart to tell her—that her home has been destroyed, and that, with my character once more blasted, I am cut off from all honest means of winning her another—at least in this country. O, sir! trust me and give the means to take her to Canada, where I may begin life anew and unfettered by the curse of a stained name, which here paralyzes all my efforts and tortures me to despair!

GIBSON. What I have said has not been said without consideration; I can only repeat, therefore, that until you are able to prove your wife's innocence and your own, I peremptorily decline to do anything more for you.

BRIERLY. I know not what more, then, I can say to move you, sir.

GIBSON. To say anything further would only be giving yourself and me useless pain. I ought to have refused to enter into conversation with you at all; it would have been kinder to you, perhaps, had I done so.

BRIERLY. Forgive me, sir! I should not have pained you, but for my poor May's sake! God help us! Homeless, characterless, what is to become of us! (*he bursts into tears and staggers out, L.*)

GIBSON. (*uneasily*) Confound it! everything seems to have gone wrong to-day. I wonder what time it will be when I sit down to dinner, and I wonder how much appetite I shall have left. That poor wretch has thoroughly upset me. I'd willingly give a hundred pounds to anybody who would restore this couple to my confidence; but after the evidence on which she was convicted, I fear the thing's impossible. Confound that Jabbers for holding me by the button-hole! But for him I might now have been sitting down to dinner, and with the appetite of a cormorant! *Exit, R.*

SCENE SECOND.—*A Street in Marylebone, (same as Scene 3, Act I.,) on a winter's night; a shop, (a corner house,) L. 1 E., on the front of which is painted "Smith, Ironmonger," &c. ; on the right of the stage a public house, the windows of which*

*are strongly lighted; at back, crossing the stage horizontally, the railing of the Marylebone burial ground; snow upon the ground.*

*On the opening of the scene a slatternly SERVANT-GIRL with beer jug comes out of the public house, crosses to the privatt door of the shop, L., and enters it; WORKMEN, GIRLS, &C, cross at back, R. to L., and L. to R.; a LAD comes from the shop L. and puts up the shutters; distant street organ heard; POLICEMAN enters L. 1 E., crosses to public house, looks in at the door and passes out at back, R.; GIRLS, &C, cross at back; enter a BALLAD SINGER, R. U. E., followed by two very small CHILDREN in comforters, he looks into the public house, clears his voice and sings a street song, in the midst of which he is interrupted by the POLICEMAN, who returns and orders him to move on.*

LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOUR AS YOURSELF.

*Air, " Paddle your own Canoe"\**

O, I don't mean to say that my case is sad,  
 Though of troubles I've had my due;  
 But I know that it wouldn't have been so bad  
 If I'd always known what to do.  
 On the ocean of life I've been often at sea,  
 And the same may have happened to you,  
 If you've trusted like me in such fiddle-de-dee  
 As " Paddle your own Canoe.!"  
 But love your neighbour as yourself;  
 It's an excellent thing to do ;  
 And there's hardly a doubt but you'll quickly find out  
 That you're learning a good deal that's new.

O, of course there are different ways of life,  
 And some of them mightn't suit you ;  
 But it's gen'rally best, if you have a wife,  
 Not to cudgel her black and blue.  
 The magistrates sometimes object to such fun,  
 As even your wife might do ;  
 And no one would say, though you'd five pounds to pay,  
 It was liberal, very, of you.  
 But love your neighbour as yourself;  
 It's a generous thing to do;  
 And if Smith or Brown is in want of a crown,  
 Don't scruple to send him two.

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\* Music published by HOPWOOD & CREW, 42, New Bond Street.

O, a friend always make of whoever you meet,  
 Never mind whether false or true ;  
 For so long as he finds that you stand a good treat,  
 You'll find he sticks close as glue ;  
 But, of course, if you don't diddle him, he'll conclude  
 You invite him to diddle you—  
 Which he mayn't think *wus* than expressing a *cuss*,  
 Or paddling his own canoe.  
 Then love your neighbour as yourself,  
 Whatever else you may do ;  
 And if he's a scamp of the dirtiest stamp,  
 It's—rather unlucky for you.

O, in fact, it's by no means unlikely you'll find,  
 As the world you journey through,  
 Your kindness is seldom returned in kind ;  
 But, perhaps, that's no more than you knew.  
 If ever the thought in your mind should arise  
 That your neighbour may not love you,  
 Reflect that your neighbour may not be unwise.  
 But paddles his own canoe.  
 Then love your neighbour as yourself;  
 It's the best thing you can do;  
 And though, ten to one, you'll get awfully done,  
 Think how good it'll be of you.

POLICE. What! I've got to speak to you again, have I ?  
 Now, just move on, will yer ? and don't let me have any more  
 of it.

BALLAD S. I aint a interruptin' the traffic—ain't gathered  
 no crowd, worse luck.

POLICE. Don't give me no cheek. I tells yer to move on,  
 and you've got to do it, that's all. (*to the children*) Hook it  
 home, you youngsters, or I'll walk *you* off to the station.  
 (*they run out at L. frightened*) Now, *are* you goin' to move on ?

BALLAD S. It's werry hard. I ain't took three halfpence  
 all this blessed night, (*retreating up, R.*)

POLICE. (*following him up closely*) I tell yer, I won't be  
 sarced!

BALLAD S. (*still retreating*) I aint a sarcin' of you.

POLICE. Very well, then don't do it. (*hustles him out, R.—  
 the clock of Marylebone Church strikes 8*)

*Enter MAY, L. 1 E.*

MAY. My heart sinks with every step that brings me  
 nearer home, as with the presage of some new calamity. For  
 three months—out of the six I have passed in that terrible

prison—he has neither been to see me, nor written to me! Oh! what can have been the reason? not neglect, for he loved me too dearly to neglect me, when, too, he knew that I had nothing but his love to keep me from despair. Can any fresh misfortune have befallen him? (*looking up at house, L.*) The house is all in darkness! Great heaven! can he be—dead? Faintness is stealing over me, but I must not faint, (*staggers towards door of house, L.*) My limbs almost refuse to sustain me to my door. Oh! take pity on me, heaven! and, whatever of further suffering I may have to endure, let me find my husband living to receive me into his arms! (*after a pause, she knocks falteringly at the door*) How the sound of the knocker thrills me! (*she listens—a light is seen at the fan-light over the door*) A strange footstep in the passage! I can scarcely breathe! (*the door is opened, and the slatternly SERVANT GIRL, with a lighted candle, appears—MAY totters back a step, speechless*)

SERVANT. Did you knock at the door, m'm?

MAY. Yes; Mr. Brierly—

SERVANT. Don't live here now, m'm.

MAT. Doesn't live here?

SERVANT. No, m'm: havn't liv'd here these three months. (*MAY totters*) You don't seem quite well, m'm?

MAT. Yes—quite well. Do you—know what has become of Mr. Brierly?

SERVANT. Well, m'm, I only know what I've heard from my young man, which is assistant to the butcher just round the corner, and 'ighly respectable; he it was as told me Mr. Brierly's creditors sold him up about three months ago, after his wife was cast and sent to prison for picking of pockets.

MAY. (*aside*) Heaven help my poor Robert!

SERVANT. My young man have told me that Mr. Brierly was himself a ticket-of-leave man, and that he forced his wife to thieve for him, poor thing!

MAT. My good girl, never, never repeat this cruel story; it is utterly untrue.

SERVANT. I beg your parding, m'm; but my young man, which is not in the habit of telling falsehoods, 'ad it from the best authority!

MAY. I assure you, it is not true—I know that it is not.

SERVANT. Oh, indeed! Well, then, m'm—if you know so much about it, I needn't tell you any more; but my young man, which served the Brierly's with meat for years, ought, I think, to be allowed to know *something* about the matter! However, if you don't want to ask anything more—I'm having my supper, and I've got a potatoe in the ashes which I'd rather not leave to be burned up to a cinder. Good night, m'm! (*shuts the door*)

MAY. (*staggering from the door*) Am I really in my right senses? My husband ruined—driven from his home—oh! what wild terror is this that comes over me? For three months I have not seen him, or heard from him in all that time—where has he been? what has he been doing? Ah! if he should—should have found the load of his misery too heavy to bear, and destroyed himself! (*wildly*) Oh! no—no—no—the thought is too terrible! I will not even think it possible he could leave me to endure the weight of such an affliction. But where am I to seek him? Robert—husband—how am I to find my way to you? Let me collect my thoughts—To whom can I apply to direct me in my search? To Mrs. Willoughby—yes, to good old Mrs. Willoughby! *she* believed me innocent, and will not have turned her back on my poor Robert. Heaven give me strength to reach her house, and grant that I may there learn tidings of my husband!  
*Exit at back, L. 1 E.*

*Enter* POLICEMAN, R. U. E., *he saunters down to public house door, looks in, then gives a low peculiar whistle and waits, looking up at houses, L.; the public house door is slightly opened, and a pint of beer handed out to him; he drinks it, hands back pot, wipes his mouth with a handkerchief which he takes from his hat, and saunters out L. 1 E.—Enter* MELTER Moss and JEM DALTON with BRIERLY *between them, R. U. E., he hangs his head dejectedly, and appears slightly intoxicated.*

Moss. We told you so years and years ago—honesty's like keeping race horses. You must be rich to afford such a luxury.

BRIERLY. Keep your devil's reasoning out of my ears, if you want to keep the hold you've got of me! I know, better than either of you, that honesty may starve while roguery fattens in prosperity.

DALTON. I've always preferred my bacon fat.

Moss. And have generally known where to get it fresh and fresh, eh, Jem? thanks to following my advice.

DALTON. Add, given gratis.

Moss. To friends—only to friends!

BRIERLY. Tell me what you want with me.

Moss. To put a hundred pound into your pocket.

BRIERLY. (*starting*) A hundred pounds!—How?

DALTON. Melter will tell you over a glass of brandy in here. (*pointing to public house door*)

BRIERLY. Yes, give me some more brandy, that I may listen to your infernal temptings without being able to think of what I am doing—come! (*he is about to enter the door, but starts back and looks wildly at the house, L.*) Devils! did you know where you were bringing me?

Moss. To one of the quietest and most highly respectable cribs I could think of—knowing how fond you always were of respectability.

BRIERLY. I'll not go in there—they know me!

DALTON. Well, everybody hasn't the same taste ; now me and Melter prefer always to take our social glass at a crib where we *are* known.

BRIERLY. Look at that house facing us; six months ago it was mine—my home was there—a home into which it seemed impossible that misfortune could come.

DALTON. But it *did* find its way in? Misfortune always was a stunning clever cracksman !

Moss. Does wonders with the skeletons! But look here, my esteemed friend, sentiment without something warm to sip with it is apt to lie cold on the stomach, and my stomach is very susceptible to the influence of cold ; so is Jem's, I know.

DALTON. The sensitive plant's a fool to it!

Moss. That being the case, suppose we cut sentiment and come again to business ?

BRIERLY. You've prepared your bait well, by showing me the home I have lost—and with it hope ! Tell me what you would have me do. I'm desperate enough for any work you can have on hand. I cannot be more wretched guilty than I am innocent! I might even feel the sting of suffering less galling, did I know that I had deserved the infliction ! What do you want me to do ? Speak quickly, or I may come to think it better to end my misery at once than stay and listen to you!

Moss. Don't excite yourself, it's so bad for your nerves; that was always my advice to Jem.

DALTON. And good advice it was, in my case.

Moss. Saved him from making many dreadful mistakes in his business.

BRIERLY. Cease your cursed patter and tell me what I'm to do.

DALTON. All you've got to do now is to say you'll join us in a little go we've got coming off to-night; that's about the dimensions of it, isn't it, Melter ?

Moss. Couldn't be much nearer if you'd used a foot-rule to measure it. And there's three hundred pound to be had for the taking—share and share alike.

DALTON. That's a hundred a-piece.

Moss. In gold. I taught Jem his arithmetic.

BRIERLY. A hundred pounds ! It would take me and my wife to Canada—to Australia!

DALTON. (*aside*) If you were *very* lucky.

BRIERLY. Tell me what's to be done to get this money ?

Don't beat any more about the bush. I'll tell you I'm reckless—desperate! All good means have failed me! honest people shut their doors and their hearts against me!

Moss. Just what Jem and I have had to complain of in our time.

BRIERLY. Your piece of villany—what is it?

DALTON. Well, the fact is, Melter's heard of a party-----

Moss. Heard of him through a distant relation-----

DALTON. Oh, very distant!—and this party is going to receive three hundred pound to-night.

Moss. Having something to do with paying wages tomorrow, on account of a contract in connection with the London, Chatham, and Land's End Extension works.

DALTON. And now you know. Do we work together?

BRIERLY. You've told me nothing; but perhaps it's better I should not know what I'm going to do.

Moss. That's the very sort of thing I expected you to say. You won't step in here and wet the bargain? Don't if it wouldn't be perfectly pleasant to you.

DALTON. Then, now we'd better settle where we're to meet.

Moss. Our esteemed friend will be good enough to be on Paddington Green as the clock strikes nine, and whichever of us he sees first cross that beautiful open space he will follow without seeming to recognize him. I hope I make myself understood?

BRIERLY. Oh yes; I'll be there.

DALTON. Ta-ta then, for the present. We'll part here, and take different roads. Don't forget the direction—and no tricks, Bob Brierly!

Moss. My dear Jem, you do our friend's sentiments an injustice. Tricks? and a hundred pound to lose with the first he plays! (to BRIERLY) As the clock strikes nine, on Paddington Green.

BRIERLY. I'll be there.

Moss. I knew you'd say so. Which way are you going, Jem? Because whichever way you're going I'll go the other, leaving our friend to go which way he likes.

DALTON. All right. I'll go this way. (*goes up and exit at back, L.*)

Moss. Then I'll go this. (to BRIERLY) Don't forget our little engagement at nine o'clock. *Exit, L. 1 E.*

BRIERLY. If I think I shall go mad, or make away with myself! I daren't meet my poor girl and have to tell her that we are outcasts; that the bread of honest toil is denied me; that I am homeless, penniless, and a hundred times more wretched than the ruffians from whom I have just parted! No! I cannot, I will not, bear to drag on a life of hopeless

misery ! In England a curse is on us ! Money will take us to a new land ! I'll have it, come whence it will! I'll have it! (*goes hurriedly up, L.,; starts and staggers back*) May!

*Enter MAY, R. U. E.*

MAY. (*recognizing him, with a cry*) Robert! Husband! (*throws herself into his arms and sobs hysterically*)

BRIERLY. Oh! this meeting has been my worst dread !

MAY. Speak to me, Robert! I have been seeking you almost heart-broken and dying with terror. Why—why have you so long left me in doubt ? Why have you not been to see me, or written to me ?

BRIERLY. I had not courage to tell you the wretched story of our ruin.

MAY. You were wrong, very wrong, Robert, and have caused me months of anguish and terror. But I forget all now in the happiness of holding you again in my arms. Heaven be thanked, you live!

BRIERLY. Heaven knows whether you have anything to be thankful for in finding me alive!

MAY. Hush ! O, hush!

BRIERLY. It might have been better for you, perhaps, if I had never lived!

MAY. Oh! do not say that! Whatever trials Heaven pleases that you should endure, I pray that I may be permitted to bear the half of them. Say nothing, Robert, that can make me think my love has lost the power to soothe and support you in your troubles. I have counted the long hours, and, at last, the weary minutes, that stood between me and the moment of my return to you, dreading, till my dread was almost madness,- to find you struck down by sickness—or worse ! But—again I thank Heaven !—you live, and I am with you, once more to love, and cheer, and help you!

BRIERLY. To help me ?—to starve in the bitter streets! What have wretches such as we to do with love? we who have not a roof to shelter us, not even a cellar to crawl into to hide our misery!

MAY. Robert! Robert! you will break my heart! Oh! if you have had much to bear, think what I, too, have had to endure!

BRIERLY. No, no! I daren't think of it; it turns my brain ! May, do you know what is said ? That *I* have corrupted you—that *I* have been the cause of your imprisonment—I the returned convict, the ticket-of-leave man!

MAY. Let who will say it!

BRIERLY. Let it be said ! Do you know what such sayings mean ? They mean that I am considered an outcast of society,

something worse than a common felon; doomed to a life of misery and degradation, into the foul depths of which I must drag you!—you !

MAY. Wretchedness we may have to endure, Robert, but not degradation. We may be misjudged, but we know the *truth*.

BRIERLY. The truth! Can we shelter ourselves behind it when the winter winds cut into our flesh ? will it save us from starvation, if we have nothing else wherewith to buy bread ? The truth! it is a curse and not a blessing to us; since it serves only to torture us with the knowledge that our sufferings are undeserved!

MAY. Oh, Robert! through all the agony of doubt and dread I have endured in the long months I have been separated from you, my sole support, the only thing that gave me courage and strength to bear my heavy load of sorrow was the hope of rejoining you, and lightening your trials by sharing them. Do not—do not make me hopeless !

BRIERLY. *I am hopeless!* All that I have relied on has broken under me like a bruised reed ! Ten years ago, I came to London young in heart as in years, without a thought of doing any man a wrong, and unsuspecting of others: chance threw me into the company of rogues, and I was condemned to four years of penal servitude for a crime of which, heaven knows, I was as innocent as the judge who sentenced me! Freed from prison, I tried to earn my living by honest labour; but the stamp—the plague-spot—the felon mark—was upon me—the right to earn honest bread was denied me. I struggled hard to win back the trust of my fellow-men, and seemed to have succeeded ; but again the damning taint of felony is cast upon me! What have I to hope for ? to feel the light of happiness once more about me, and then be driven forth again into darkness and misery ?

MAY. Trust in the justice of time.

BRIERLY. How can the justice of time compensate us for lives blasted in their prime? It cannot! it cannot! the dead could be as easily recalled to life !

MAY. Robert! Robert! have mercy on me, if you will have none on yourself ! such words from you drive me to despair! Oh! do not cast away from you the blessed privilege of hoping that our misfortunes may—that they *will*—be remedied!

BRIERLY. I daren't hope!

MAY. Husband ! I implore you, by all your recollections of the happiness we have shared together, not to abandon hope ! for there *is* hope while there is life!

BRIERLY. May! May! you set my brain on fire! to remember my past happiness is to remember how it was torn from me! Why do you torment me ?

MAY. Robert! Oh, husband—you are cruel!

BRIERLY. Cruel? too likely—for I hardly know what I am saying. Leave me. Don't question me, but leave me. Go to Mrs. Willoughby—she will not refuse you a night's shelter; and to-morrow I will come for you.

MAY. Leave you, Robert?

BRIERLY. Only till to-morrow; to-night I—I have no home to take you to.

MAY. Wherever you are is my home, Robert.

BRIERLY. May—May—I cannot have you with me to-night.

MAY. Oh, Robert! what fresh misery—what new mystery is this?

BRIERLY. Don't question me, I tell you; but do as I bid you. I'm trying to make a home for you, and to-night!—Leave me, I've no time to lose!

MAY. (*aside*) Gracious heaven! what has happened? what is the meaning of his strange language? (*aloud*) Do not seek to send me from you, Robert, when, more than ever, my place is by your side.

BRIERLY. Oh! you'll drive me mad! I tell you you *must* leave me to myself—do you hear? *Must!*

MAY. Robert! (*she attempts to hold him—he releases himself*)

BRIERLY. Be silent, woman! (*aside*) Oh! if I don't tear myself away from her, I shall dash my brains out on the pavement where I stand!

*Rushes wildly out, L. 1 E.*

MAY. My poor Robert! have his troubles destroyed his reason? Merciful powers!—if he should be gone to kill himself! (*she utters a cry of terror*) Let me not lose him for a moment from my sight; if I cannot save, I can at least die with him.

*Exit, L. 1 E.*

(*a convivial party in the public house strike up*) "Slap! bang!"  
Enter POLICEMAN, L. 1 E., dragging in BALLAD SINGER,  
and followed by a noisy CROWD, in the midst of which  
are the two small CHILDREN

BALLAD S. (*resisting*) I aint done nothin', and I won't go quietly!

POLICE, (*pushing him*) Won't you!

BALLAD S. No, I won't—not for you, nor half a dozen of you! (*SERVANT-GIRL and SHOP-BOY come to the door of the house, L., and look out*)

POLICE. Then I must make yer! (*roughly dragging him out, R. u. E., the CROWD groans and follows—the rear brought up by the two small CHILDREN, who shout "Hooray!" The last words of the convivial party's song, "Such jolly dogs are we!" heard as the scene closes in*)

SCENE THIRD.—*Green Jones's Lodging. A dingy Room; wings closed in door, R. C. in flat; another door, R. 1 E. ; fire-place with small fire in grate, L. 1 E.; a table, with feeble candle and common yellow jug, L. c.; two chairs and a stool.*

*Enter GREEN JONES from door in flat, R. c., a banjo in one hand and a piece of music in the other; he is dressed in Ethiopian Serenader's shirt and trousers, and enters very cautiously, pausing to listen at the door.*

GREEN. (*shutting door gently*) The little ones are all quiet at last. How they do fight against sleep as if it were a dose of physic! The more you hush-a-bye a baby it seems the more it won't be hush-a-byed! and when it's twins you might as well attempt to hush-a-bye the Lord Chancellor off his woosack as try to get them off to sleep ! They're awful troubles, bless 'em! Somehow one cares for them more than one cares for one's self, (*arranging music and supporting it against the jug*) I am always glad when I can get them all off to sleep before Emily comes home from the " Bridgewater Arms." Poor girl! she's enough to do without coming home to nurse the children, though her spirit's amazing! To see her doing the " Dark Girl Dressed in Magenta" only two hours and a half before Constantine and Anaximander were born ! Even old Maltby had the good taste to own it was a wonderful sight to see her take the *encore*, and do the whole eighteen verses, with a dance at the end of every one of them, all over again, without flinching ! I wish I could do more to help her to supply the cupboard; but street-serenading, even in fine weather, is done to death, and in bad weather buried. Besides, I'm not great at the tambourine, except it's at breaking my nose with the rim, and the public doesn't seem inclined to give anything for seeing that done, and it runs into money for sticking-plaster. Emily's advised me to take to the banjo for security, but I'm afraid I shall be a long time before I become an extremely brilliant performer; my opportunities for practice are of irregular occurrence, and not altogether assured from interruption, (*seating himself and tuning banjo*) I fancy I should succeed better with music written all in flats. I find those very easy to play, (*striking chord, very flat*) Now, let me see. (*studying music and striking the note as he reads*) Four notes in a bar. " A " flat, (*strikes note*) I remember Emily once said that was me ! Bless her ! I'm never so happy as when she's in good spirits! "B" sharp; (*striking note*) I wish to heaven I could! to the extent of getting back some of the thousands of pounds I fooled away before I learned to know the value of money, (*a bump, followed by a scuffle, heard at door in flat, R. c.*) Good gracious ! there's one of the chicks

tumbled out of bed ! (*taking up the candle and hurrying to the door. The moment he opens the door a pillow is thrown out, and extinguishes the light*) Here! hallo ! what are you about there ! who is it ? Theodosius, how dare you, when you know what trouble I've had to get Constantine and Anaximander to sleep? Don't let me find one of you out of bed by the time I've got a light! (*goes to fire, L., and re-lights candle, then goes to door in flat, L. c, and looks in*) Now, then ! I'm very angry ! Which of you----- (*aside*) If the young monkies aren't all pretending to snore! (*aloud*) Well, there I don't make any more noise, and go to sleep, (*shuts the door and goes back to his music*) I can't be angry with 'em for their tricks, (*striking note on banjo*) " B " sharp—I fancy Theodosius *will* be, he's so full of mischief! (*a crying baby heard*) Eh? that's Constantine awake! (*rising*)

*Enter* MASTER THEODOSIUS *in his night dress, door R. C. in flat, carrying a BABY..*

MASTER T. Constantine's awake, pa.

GREEN. (*taking BABY*) That's your doing, sir!

MASTER T. No, pa, I didn't wake him—he woke himself.

GREEN. Well, go back to bed and mind you don't wake your other baby brother.

*Enter* Miss ANASTASIA, *also in her night gown, and carrying a BABY.*

MISS A. Anaximander's awake, too, pa.

GREEN. You deserve a good—scolding, both of you; but run back to bed and go to sleep instantly, there's dears, (*takes BABY on his other arm*)

MASTER T. Mayn't we sit up and nurse babies to sleep ?

GREEN. And catch your death of cold ? —get along with you.

MISS A. Mayn't we stay up till mamma comes home ?

GREEN. Don't let me hear another word from either of you, or I'll give you both a severe—there, come and kiss your baby brothers and then go to bed like good children.

MISS A. I don't want to!

MASTER T. We haven't been allowed to sit up for a long while.

GREEN. Theodosius! how dare you stand there debating the question in your night shirt! Anastasia Celina, go back to bed this moment! (*he offers to move towards them, but they scurry out at door in fiat R., jostling each other in the door-way*) The irrepressible young owls! one would suppose they found going to sleep as uncomfortable as having their faces washed. (*hushing the babies to sleep*) Why these pets so much prefer to take their sleep in the daytime is a difficult problem to solve—

especially when one has banjo practice to get through at night. (*looking fondly at them*) Bless 'em! they look as if they were going off now. (*takes his banjo*) I must try and play very pianissimo, (*strikes a note*) " B" sharp ! (*one of the BABIES cries loudly*) My precious! (*the other BABY cries louder still*) My little Philippines—ray plumpers ! don'tee cry as if papa's " B" sharp had run into you like a naughty pin. (*walking about with them, and singing to them*) " Some gave 'em white bread, some gave 'em brown, and some gave 'em----- "

Miss ANASTASIA, *bursting in at door in flat*, R. C.

Miss A. (*at door*) Pa, I wish you'd speak to Themistocles !

MASTER THEODOSIUS *bursting in*.

MASTER T. Don't you tell stories—I didn't!

*Three smaller CHILDREN in their night dresses burst in, one of them crying—all noisy.*

Miss A. He got out of bed and came and pinched me, pa.

MASTER T. Ah ! tell-tale ! (*the others cry*, " No, he didn't!" " Yes, he did!" *the BABIES cry louder than ever*—GREEN JONES *appears almost bewildered*)

GREEN. Silence, every one of you! (*they do not heed him, but wrangle and kick up a great buzz, in the midst of which MRS. GREEN JONES enters, door R. 1 E. They instantly stop their noise and surround her. She is poorly dressed, and has a roll of music in her hand*)

MRS. G. My gracious, Green, dear! what are you doing with the children all up at this time of night—just upon ten o'clock?

GREEN. I assure you, Emily, I've been trying to get them to sleep nearly ever since you went out at seven o'clock.

Miss A. Have you brought us home anything, mamma ?

MRS. G. No ; and if I had I wouldn't give it you, for being so naughty.

MASTER T. You said, a long while ago, you'd bring us home some jumbles.

MRS. G. The only jumbles you'll get to night is to be jumbled into bed. Away with you! (*she takes one in each hand and hustles the others before her out at door in flat*, R. C. *They exit murmuring loudly*)

GREEN. Poor Emily's a little out of temper to-night. I hope nothing's happened at the Bridgewater Arms to vex her. (*hushing the babies*)

*Re-enter* MRS. GREEN JONES, *without her bonnet, &c.*

MRS. G. (*sinking wearily into a chair*, L., *by the fire*) Give me the babies, Green, and get and get your supper beer.

GREEN. You'd better take a rest first, dear; you're tired—out of sorts, I'm afraid.

MRS. G. And good cause I've had to-night.

GREEN. You don't say that, dear! What?

MRS. G. Well, I thought to-night, for a change—and as I hadn't sung it for a year or more—I'd try "The Maniac's Tear."

GREEN. It always used to be a hit.

MRS. GREEN. To-night some young fellows in the hall hissed me!

GREEN. The brutes!

MRS. G. I shouldn't have minded, but that Maltby—who gets harder the more he prospers—told me as I was coming away, "It mustn't happen again." But, never mind, give me the babies; they'll do me good: and go and get your beer. *(takes the babies)*

GREEN. I don't think I'll have any to night, Emmy.

MRS. G. DO you want me to break down?—then go and do as I tell you.

GREEN. I will, if you'll let me bring you in a little something to sustain you. *(takes jug off table)*

MRS. G. I don't need anything.

GREEN. Sixpen'orth of brandy?

MRS. G. When we can afford it. Go along; and let me get babies to bed, and then get you your supper, *(postman's knock heard)*

GREEN. *(at door, R. 1 E.)* That's a sound to help you! eh? *(speaking off)* for me? *(coming back to table with black-bordered letter in his hand)* Black-bordered.

MRS. G. Lor', Green, who can have died? Why don't you open the letter and see!

GREEN. *(opens the letter, and reads hastily)* Aunt Clytemnestra!—from the family lawyer—inviting me to hear the will read. She never forgave me—

MRS. G. For marrying me.

GREEN. And I never forgave her for her obstinate prejudice and cruelty; but I forgive her now. I dare say she meant well.

MRS. G. Oh, Green, dear! suppose—suppose-----

GREEN. She relented before she died?—and left me-----

MRS. G. Wouldn't it be nice to have means again! Only yesterday I saw in a shop-window two of the darlinest white satin babies' hats!

GREEN. If I could only send Theodosius to Eton or Rugby!

MRS. G. Don't let's talk about it! it's put me all in a flutter! I think, dear, you *may* bring me in a tiny drop of brandy.

GREEN. I'm sure it 'll do you good, Emily.

MRS. G. I think perhaps it will. And I don't mind owning that, as I came by that nice cook-shop round the corner, I was tempted by the look of some smoking-hot sucking-pig.

GREEN. Is it to be with stuffing ?

MRS. G. And gravy—in a basin. But don't bring much, because I know it's dear.

GREEN. Huzza! Em'ly's herself again! Give me a kiss! (*kisses her*) If Aunt Clytemnestra has cut up properly, my pet, you shall have sucking-pig for supper every night in the year!

MRS. G. Not if she was ever so rich! But get along with you, and don't forget to take a basin.

GREEN. And shall I bring the chicks in a pen'orth of jumbles ?

MRS. G. Yes, if you like. And, as they're all awake, we'll move the table alongside of their beds, and have a family feast. But, oh, Green, dear ! if we come into any more property, let's try and not run through it this time. Take hold of the table.

GREEN. (*taking hold of one end of the table*) A neat brougham for you and the little ones is all I shall care about.

MRS. G. Oh, Green, don't! I shan't be able to eat a morsel of the pig, if you go on in that way! But, I declare, if we ever *have* a brougham of our own, the first thing I shall like to do with it is, to drive up to the Bridgewater Arms, take a private box in the middle of the hall, and let that brute Maltby see how thoroughly I despise him !

GREEN. Bravo, Emmy f I always said it wasn't a trifle that would conquer your spirit! (*the children appear at door, R., and shout " Hooray!"*) Bless 'em!

*Exeunt, carrying table, &c, door, R.*

SCENE FOURTH.—*The towing-path of the Grand Junction Canal, overlooking Kensal Green Cemetery; in the foreground, L., a dilapidated open wooden shed; an old pollard willow, R.; between the shed and the tree runs a field-rail, broken down for a few feet next to the tree; beyond the rail the towing-path, slightly raised, and beyond that the canal, above which rises the high bank on which the boundary wall of the cemetery is built; the monuments, &c, of the cemetery seen in the back ground. —Night; the ground is covered with snow, and the scene dimly lighted, as if by the light of the moon veiled by mist.—On the opening of the scene a clock is heard to strike ten.*

*Enter JEM DALTON, stealthily, L., followed by BRIERLY.*

DALTON. (*looking cautiously into the shed*) All right. This

is the spot, and there's ten o'clock. Our man won't be many minutes.

BRIERLY. It's time, then, you told me what work we are here to do.

DALTON. To ease Moss's friend, Mr. Totty, the railway sub-contractor, of three hundred pound Melter has kindly lent him to-night to pay his navvies to-morrow.

BRIERLY. Diabolical!

DALTON. If *you* like to call it so.

BRIERLY. A highway robbery!—perhaps a murder!

DALTON. Whether there's a murder will depend on yourself, Mr. Robert Brierly; for, so help me, if you attempt to play me false this time I'll shoot you down like a dog!

BRIERLY. (*aside*) My God! I have been mad to place myself in this miscreant's power!

DALTON. I don't trust you. I didn't when I first spoke to you about this affair. I knew half a dozen pals that I could have trusted, and that would have given something handsome to have been allowed to be in with me and Melter to-night; but I chose you for a peculiar reason.

BRIERLY. For what reason?

DALTON. Not to put a hundred pounds in your pocket, and set you up in Canada or Australia to do the respectable.

BRIERLY. With what motive, then?

DALTON. With this: to get you into my power—into the same boat with me—so that, if ever I come to grief, you come to grief too! It's my way of settling for the six years at Portland I owed to your kind offices!

BRIERLY. (*aside*) I seem as if I were awaking from a dream!

DALTON. And now that you know exactly how we stand, I'll tell you what you've got to do here, (*goes to the tree and reconnoitres the towing-path*)

BRIERLY. (*aside*) What can I do? I may throw away my own life without being able to save that of the man who is coming! The man who prosecuted my poor May, too!

*Enter MAY, timidly, L.*

MAY. (*in a whisper*) They must have come this way! Oh! what horrible mystery am I blindly searching into? (*she looks cautiously round the side of the shed, sees BRIERLY and JEM DALTON, starts back and crouches in the shadow of the interior of the shed; listens*)

DALTON. You will be able to crouch behind this tree and keep out of sight till your man is opposite this opening in the rail.

BRIERLY. What then?

DALTON. Let him pass the opening a step or two—then

spring upon him from behind, throw your arms round his neck, and don't let him cry out; you'll easily do it; he's not at all strong.

BRIERLY. And you ?

DALTON. I shall plant myself here, in the shadow of this shed, ready to help you to ease him of his money, when you've throttled him; or to send a bullet through your body, if you shew the least sign of playing false.

MAY. *(in a terrified whisper)* Merciful heaven !

DALTON. Now you'd better take your place!

BRIERLY. All-seeing powers, take pity on my poor wife if I am never again to return to her in life ! *(he crouches behind the tree, R.)*

DALTON. *(looks carefully over the rail and listens)* He's coming! Remember ! *(he crouches in the shadow of the shed, close by the rail, and draws a crape over his face—MAY searches for and finds a crevice in the side of the shed, through which she looks in terror)*

Moss. *(speaking without, L.)* Good night, Mr. Totty! take care of yourself.

TOTTY. *(without)* Good night, Moss! I'm not so likely to meet anybody on this path as on the high road; and I haven't far to go to the new works.

Moss. *(without)* I must come down some day and see 'em.

TOTTT. *(without)* Ah, do ! Cost an awful lot of money! Good night!

Moss. *(without)* Good night!

*Enter TOTTY, on the towing path, L., muffled in a great coat, his hands in his pockets.*

TOTTY. No one, if it isn't one of my own people, is likely to be about here, *(he has barely reached the opening in the rail)*

BRIERLY. *(springing before him)* Sir, sir! you are in danger of being robbed ! take care of yourself !

TOTTY. Briery! I will ! *(he pulls a life preserver from his pocket, strikes BRIERLY down, and stands over him in an attitude of defence—DALTON raises a pistol and is about to fire, when MAY utters a loud shriek and rushes from the shed calling for help—at the same instant, Moss springs forward, stealthily seizes her and drags her off, L.—a moment afterward a stifled shriek is heard, followed by a splash—the moonlight becomes clear and falls brightly on the canal, on the surface of which MAY is seen floating insensible—Moss steals on L., and crouches in the shadow of the shed trembling with alarm—Tableau)*

## ACT III.

SCENE FIRST.—*A Room in Mrs. Willoughby's House; door in flat, L. c.; fireplace, R.; table with candle, R. c.; a few chairs.*

MAY *discovered, seated in front of the fire, she looks pale, as if recovering from an illness—Enter BRIERLY, door in flat, L. C., his hat in his hand.*

MAY. Is that you, Robert ?

BRIERLY. Yes, dear, (*putting his hat on table and going to her*) Do you still feel better?

MAY. Oh yes. Have I been sleeping long?

BRIERLY. Not long, dear. Is there anything you need ?

MAY. No, nothing.

BRIERLY. Anything you are likely to want ?

MAY. (*slightly starting*) You are not going out ?

BRIERLY. Yes ; I'm obliged to go.

MAY. So late ?

BRIERLY. Don't question me, May. The errand I'm going on I cannot tell you before I've accomplished it

MAY. What do you mean, Robert. Oh, do not hide anything from me.

BRIERLY. I would not, darling, but for your own sake.

MAY. Dear Robert! my mind fills with alarm at the bare thought of your being engaged in any business which you cannot confide to me ! All the terrors of that dreadful night, three months ago, return upon me ! Those horrible men.

BRIERLY. Do not think of them.

MAY. I cannot help doing so. Oh, you are not—not going to meet them again ?

BRIERLY. Trust in me, May, I am doing all for the best. To-night I am going to meet Mr. Totty, the man who so bravely and generously risked his life to save yours, when I was helpless, and who afterwards consented, at my solicitation, to refrain for a time from tracing his assailants. That is all I can tell you now, dear ; but if all turns out as I hope, from to-night some part at least of the cloud that overshadows us may be cleared away.

MAY. Tell me that you run no new danger ?

BRIERLY. None that I can foresee, (*a tap at door in flat, L. C., heard*) Hark!

MRS. WILLOUGHBY *opens the door, she is smartly dressed, and carries a tray on which is a decanter of wine, three glasses, and a plate of wine biscuits.*

MRS. W. (*at door*) May I come in ? (*comes forward and sets tray on table*) I heard your voices, so I knowed you were not

gone to bed ; though I must say, better you might be in your bed, than sitting up with such a wretched bit of fire, as if no coals there were in the house, or both of you had the roomytics too bad to lift the scuttle—which 'ave been my own case I won't say how many times—and angry I ought to be with you for not making of yourselves more comfortable.

BRIERLY. God bless you for all your kindness! but for that, it would have gone harder with me and my poor May than I dare to think of.

MAY. If heaven will only give us the opportunity to repay you, dear Mrs. Willoughby !

MRS. W. Well, upon my word! if I had thought you were a-going to burst out upon me with such torrients of I don't know what to call it nonsense, I wouldn't have come up those dratted stairs, and how I am to get down 'em again is more than I know, though, somehow, I dare say, I shall manage it, as I generally do—sideways most likely. But do pray hold your tongues, and let me give you each a glass of sherry wine. *(pours out wine)*

MAY. You are too good !

MRS. W. I only wish I were, but which I never expect to be in this world, and can't expect to be in the next, where goodness knows there'll be enough of it and to spare of every sort; leastways I'm sure I hope so, and that's the worst wish of my 'art. *(setting wine before them on the table)* And now drink your wine, and I'm a-going to take one glass with you, and when I've seen you empty your glasses, I'll empty mine, but not before, if the Emperor Napoléon was to say from his throne, and dressed in all his jewels and robes; " Mrs. Willoughby, I command you."

BRIERLY. To your health, then, dear Mrs. Willoughby! *(drinks)*

MAY. And may your happiness be equal to your kindness ! *(drinks)*

MRS. W. Well, I declare ! if you two ain't nearly as bad as my Sam, and the way he goes on is perfectly dangerous when you listen to his nonsense with roomytics—which, thank goodness, I have not had to-night, or I'm sure he and Mr. St. Everymonday would have shook me to pieces no bigger than pins' heads. And that reminds me-----

MAY. It must not make you forget to drink your wine.

MRS. W. It shan't, my dear—nor to fill you another glass.

MAY. No, indeed! you *must* excuse me.

MRS. W. Well, if you'll promise to make up for it in sweet biscuits? *(places plate before her)* But Mr. Brieryly won't refuse me, I know. *(fills)*

BRIERLY. It must only be this one more, and that after you.

MRS. W. *(taking her glass)* Well, there, then; *(drinks)*

though I really don't know whether I ought to drink sherry wine. However, it's no good talking about it now; and, as I was saying, the St. Everymondays—with all their dear little ones, and them twins, though I can only pronounce one of their names, which is Constantinople, I never saw finer, and took their vaccination like angels! have all been spending the evening with me and Sam—with his sweetheart, of course, on purpose to tell me of their good fortune, which is two hundred a-year, and nobody can be more glad that they've got it than I am, I'm sure—from Mr. St. Everymondays' only aunt, though Mrs. St. Everymondays says it ought to have been a good deal more. I knew you'd be glad to hear of it. Mr. St. Everymondays wanted to come up stairs and see you, and Sam wanted to come up and fetch you down to spend the evening with us; but I said, my dear, as you'd been so very ill, and goodness knows you have, and Mr. Brierly didn't like leaving of you.

MAY. I'm so much obliged. You are delicacy and thoughtfulness itself.

MRS. W. And so will you be when you've kept a lodging-house as many years as I have. Thoughtful! my dear, if you don't think of everything when you keep a lodging-house—no matter what your own sufferings may be in regard to roomytics or other complaints—you'll soon find out what the mistake is you've made, and wish you could see the money back you've laid out in looking-glasses and carpets, and how *they* get damaged you'll find quite enough to break your 'art till you get used to it! But before I go down-stairs again, *do* let me see you put on some more firing and make a cheerful blaze. (BRIERLY *does as she directs*) There, that's something more like a fire! and now, good night! Before you go to bed, take another glass or two of the sherry wine, which Mr. St. Everymondays, who was born to drink wine, says is equal to I don't know what, it's so good!

MAY. Thank you very, very much.

(*clock without strikes ten*; BRIERLY *starts*)

MRS. W. Ten o'clock! Bless my 'art! how this evening 'ave gone! I must go down, and them dratted kitchen stairs are the worst of all, to see after the supper; for the St. Everymondays won't like to be late with all them dear little ones to get home—though better behaved children I never have seen, nor twins more like the picture of waxwork. Good night, my dears, and hoping to see you out and about again, (*kissing* MAY)

MAY. (*rising*) With such care as you and Robert have taken of me I ought to be quite well—and I am, nearly.

MRS. W. Don't fancy yourself well too soon, that's all, my dear. I've known what it is to do that with the roomytics, and dreadful I've paid for it. (*at the door*) Good night! *Exit.*

MAY. Good night!

BRIERLY. (*taking his hat*) I must now leave you, darling. Be tender no apprehension for my safety if I am late, and do not sit up for me.

MAY. Oh, Robert! my mind would be more at ease if you would tell me.

BRIERLY. Do not press me, dear. I can only tell you that I am engaged with Mr. Totty, Mr. Gibson, and Hawkshaw, in an attempt to bring to justice the two miscreants who have been, at least, the first cause of all our sufferings.

MAY. Ah! my terror is not without foundation ! Such an attempt cannot be made without danger. You know that these wretches will hesitate at no crime! On the bare suspicion of your being engaged in such a business they would kill you !

BRIERLY. I have told you too much. O, May! you must not question me, nor seek to dissuade me. This is my only chance of getting free from these men, and of recovering the means of earning honest bread and shelter for you. Hawkshaw, Mr. Gibson, and Mr. Totty, are now waiting for me, and if I fail to go to them, or to do whatever they require of me, they may believe me guilty, and have me arrested for the attempted robbery of that night!

MAY. Oh ! anything but that!

BRIERLY. You have said it; anything but that! Let me go, then; and pray Heaven that I may come back to you freed from the horrid suspicion of guilt that now clings to me like a moral blight! If we can only get to Australia! But I hardly dare to hope !

MAY. Oh, yes, dear! hope ! It is the last treasure misfortune can snatch from the wretched ! Hope! While we have that we can bear the worst affliction! In the darkest hour of our trials I have never ceased to hope. Had I done so I must have died—and left you, Robert, to bear a double load of misery!

BRIERLY. God bless you, May I my better light! my guardian angel! standing between me and utter despair! Oh! Heaven grant that, in a new land, where we have no past to overshadow our daily lives with fears of the future, I may make the happiness you have so deserved! (*he embraces her fondly.*)

MAY. God bless you, dear! Do nothing rashly. I will pray for your return!

BRIERLY. I feel something of my old strength come back to me ! Dare I trust it as a sign of Heaven's favour ?

MAY. Trust it, Robert! trust it with all your soul, as I do!

BRIERLY. I will, dear! I will! Farewell! (*he moves towards the door, then turns, and MAY rushes into his arms ; after a long embrace they part out together at door in flat, L. c.*)

SCENE SECOND.—*Parlour in the Bridgewater Arms; doors in flat, c. and L. ; fireplace, with paper ornament in front of the stove, R.; tables on either side, with settees and chairs.—An ELDERLY GENTLEMAN in spectacles discovered, seated at table, R., reading a newspaper ; a half-emptied glass before him; he puts down paper, looks at his watch, rises, buttons up his coat, puts on his hat and gloves, then empties his glass.*

*Enter HAWKSHAW, door in flat, C.*

HAWK. (*aside*) Not come yet. (*looks at his watch*) Eleven twenty-five! These unprofessional parties always run the time too fine! (*goes to table, R.*) Quite done with the paper, sir? (*takes it up*)

OLD GENTLEMAN. Quite, thankee. Remarkable weather for the time of year.

HAWK. Very, (*retiring to table, L.*)

OLD GENT. Oldest inhabitant of Slowgo-in-the-Fens, writes to the newspaper to say he never remembers to have seen so many tiddlebats in his part of the country on the first of April. Very extraordinary observation that, don't you think, sir ?

HAWK. Astonishing!

OLD GENT. Deeply interesting from a scientific point of view. Not scientific yourself, perhaps ?

HAWK. No.

OLD GENT. You lose a great deal, sir—a great deal! Most fascinating pursuit, science, sir; but we haven't all the same tastes, sir. Good evening! *Exit door in flat, c.*

HAWK. Good evening. Science may be a very fascinating pursuit, but I think thief-taking beats it. (*looking at his watch*) Eleven thirty! this is aggravating !

*Enter MR. GIBSON and MR. TOTTY, door in flat, c.*

GIBSON. We're rather late I'm afraid, Mr. Hawk-----

HAWK. (*rising*) Smithers!

GIBSON. (*laughing*) Ah, yes ; I remember.

HAWK. Well, gentlemen, if you please, we'll get to business at once; we mayn't have any time to spare.

TOTTY. Have you seen Brierly to-night ?

HAWK. No ; he ought to have been here by this time.

GIBSON. I hope he isn't going to turn out wrong after all.

HAWK. I shouldn't like him to hang back; it would have an ugly look.

TOTTY. There's been something in his manner throughout the affair that gives me confidence in him. When I looked at the matter coolly, I had very little doubt that what he told me was true—that when he sprang towards me on the towing path, it was to put me on my guard, though I misunderstood him, and knocked him down with my life preserver. Then his wife

being thrown into the canal to prevent her raising an alarm, was a sort of confirmation of his story.

HAWK. It's pretty clear, at all events, that what he and his wife did, saved you from being robbed by the Tiger and Melter Moss.

TOTTY. I fancy they may have saved me from being murdered as well.

HAWK. If it was the one, it was very likely the other, as you showed fight. But you'll excuse me, Mr. Totty, for putting straightforward questions; they're part of the tools we work with. How is it you made no stir about that affair?

TOTTY. I don't mind telling you now. The fact is that I was in a devil of a fix for want of money to carry on the works I'd contracted for, and, as a last resource, I went to that old Scoundrel, Moss, with whom I'd had some money transactions years before. To have let "everybody" know the shifts I was put to at that time would have lost me my contract—in fact doubled me up; so I kept quiet. But I am now quite ready to lend a hand to bring Messrs. Dalton and Moss to book; and shall be glad if, in so doing, we can right that poor fellow Brierly, in whom I can't help taking an interest.

GIBSON. I've always felt strongly interested in both him and his wife, and I don't know anything that would please me better than to have their innocence established. That affair of your watch, I own, staggered me.

HAWK. I'm pretty clear in my own mind that there was more in that matter than came out. I've tried it over in various ways, but, so far haven't been able to get at the kernel of it. We'll hear what Brierly has to say for himself. *(looking at his watch)* Eleven thirty-five. His not being here begins to look fishy.

TOTTY. Confound it! I hope he isn't, after all, going to own himself in with those scoundrels.

GIBSON. By the way, Hawk-----

HAWK. Smithers.

GIBSON. *(laughing)* By the way, *Smithers*, you haven't told us the nature of your plan for laying them by the heels.

HAWK. If you wouldn't mind leaving it to me, I think it might, perhaps, be as well for you not to know anything about it. What I'm going to do is partly to oblige Mr. Totty, who doesn't want to prosecute openly, and partly to pay Jem Dalton the second half of a debt I owe him, for causing the death of a friend and pal of mine, years ago. The whole thing isn't perfectly regular; but I'm willing to take the responsibility. All right; here's Brierly.

*Enter BRIERLY, door in flat, c.*

BRIERLY. I beg your pardon, gentlemen, for keeping you waiting.

TOTTY. Better late than never. I hadn't given you up.

GIBSON. I'm very glad you've come.

BRIERLY. Thank you for saying so, sir.

HAWK. Well, look here; this is what we want you for—to give us a true account of all you know about the attempt to rob Mr. Totty, and then about your wife's affair of the watch—the truth, mind you, and nothing else, or you may as well go back home again without opening your lips. Do you understand me?

GIBSON. Understand that while the truth, whatever it may be, may serve you, untruth-----

BRIERLY. Oh, Mr. Gibson! if you had believed me ~~no~~, no; I will say, if you *could* have believed me, six months ago, when, heaven knows, I would have told you the truth! At this moment I can tell you no more than I could tell you at the time my innocent wife was tried and convicted. Mr. Totty's watch was found in her pocket, placed there by the hand that stole it; but *why*, is for ever likely to remain a mystery. My wife was thought to have been the tool of a corrupted husband—a man stamped with the ineradicable brand of felony! You know, Mr.-----

HAWK. Don't mention names.

BRIERLY. You know that I was convicted of passing a forged note. As if these were the last words I had to speak, I declare before heaven, it was not until after I was captured that I had the least suspicion the man who used me to change the note was a notorious thief—James Dalton. I was green from the country, almost out of my senses with the excitement of the life I was leading, ripe for the plucking of any villanous hand that might be held out for me to grasp.

HAWK. Well, now about Mr. Totty's affair?

BRIERLY. I'll tell you all I know, begging you'll take no offence, Mr. Gibson, if I say anything that may sound like a reproach to you; I shall not intend it to be so, sir.

GIBSON. Think only of telling us the exact truth.

TOTTY. That's what we want to come at, as much as anything, for your sake, mind you.

BRIERLY. I'll tell the truth, gentlemen—whatever the consequences to myself may be.

HAWK. (*aside*) I don't quite like that bit about consequences!

BRIERLY. (*to GIBSON*) You, remember, sir, my coming to you on the evening of the attempted robbery of Mr. Totty? I came to you, sir, as a last resource, to beg you to assist me to take my wife to Canada, or, indeed, anywhere out of England, where nothing but hopeless misery was before us. You refused to aid me, and I wandered hardly conscious of what I was doing, on to London Bridge. I had not courage to go and

meet my wife, who was that day to be discharged from prison; but I stood looking down upon the river and thinking it might be better for her if I were dead. I had almost determined to throw myself from the parapet of the bridge, when I was accosted by Dalton and Moss. I have little remembrance of what they said to me or I to them; I only recollect they took me to more than one public-house, gave me brandy, and gradually worked on my despair till I agreed to join them in a crime they had planned; they would not tell me what it was,  was too desperate to insist on knowing. Then they left : under promise to meet them later on Paddington-green. I *did* meet them, and they took me—or rather Dalton took me—to the spot by the side of the canal where the robbery was to be effected. Then it was, for the first time, I was told that a highway robbery and possibly a murder was contemplated. I seemed to awake as from a dream to the consciousness of my position. What I said made Dalton suspect me ; but I resolved (to TOTTY) to put you on your guard, sir, even if it cost me my life. You mistook my intention when I sprang towards you.

TOTTY. Indeed I did, and I'm thankful I didn't hit you so hard as I intended.

GIBSON. But how came your wife to be on the spot ?

BRIERLY. I had met her earlier in the evening, near the house that had been our home, and the conversation I had with her made me almost frantic. The wildness of my language filled her with terror; and when, at last, I rushed away from her, she thought that I was going to make away with myself, and followed me with the intention of dying with me if she could not save me.

GIBSON. Poor May! poor May!

HAWK. That's about all you can tell us, then ?

BRIERLY. I have told you all—concealed nothing from you. If you think that it was a crime to have yielded to the importunities of these two villains, I can only say that when I committed it misery had nearly overthrown my reason.

TOTTY. What do *you* say, Hawk—Smithers ?

HAWK. The story holds very well together, (*to BRIERLY*) while you were down by the side of the canal with Jem Dalton, waiting for Mr. Totty, where was Moss ?

BRIERLY. I don't know; but his voice, bidding Mr. Totty " good night," was a signal to Dalton.

TOTTY. Quite correct. Moss was with me, and walked with me down to the towing-path. The old scoundrel had made difficulties about getting me the three hundred pounds, and arranged to meet me, at eleven o'clock, at a public-house near the cemetery, if he was " successful in the attempt to raise the sum."

HAWK. (*to BRIERLY*) You have no doubt that it was Moss who threw your wife into the canal ?

BRIERLY. My wife is certain it was he.

GIBSON. The infamous old scoundrel!

HAWK. I'm satisfied. Now, look here, Brierly. Keep up your spirits and go home, but don't go to bed, and be ready to lend me a hand about one o'clock, if you should happen to hear any disturbance in front of Mrs. Willoughby's house. That's all.

GIBSON. Good night, Brierly. Go home and follow Hawk—Smither's directions. I sincerely hope that when we meet again I may conscientiously be able to hold out my hand to you, and to congratulate you on the thorough re-establishment of your innocence and that of your wife.

TOTTY. Mr. Gibson has expressed my feelings exactly.

BRIERLY. My heart's too full to thank you properly, gentlemen!

HAWK. Upon the whole that's rather lucky, because I want you out of the way. Go out through this room, (*pointing to door, L.*)

BRIERLY. Good night, gentlemen! (*aside*) Oh! if this hope should fail me ! *Exit, door, L.*

HAWK. So far, so good. Now I must leave you for a few minutes, while I speak a word or two to the proprietor of this establishment—an old acquaintance of mine. I want him to let you wait in the bar-parlour till you see me go out with Dalton and Moss, whom I expect here shortly.

GIBSON. Dalton!

TOTTY. Moss!

HAWK. That's all I want you to know at present, in case of accidents. When I come back, if there happens to be anybody else in the room at the time, don't notice me, but go out at this door, (*pointing to door, L.*) and wait in the bar-parlour ready to follow.

TOTTY. Very good!

GIBSON. (*laughing*) Really, you detectives-----

HAWK. (*significantly*) Hem ! *Exit, door, L.*

TOTTY. (*laughing*) I don't know how you feel, Gibson, but I'm positively getting to enjoy this sort of thing!

GIBSON. My enjoyment is, I hope, to come, in seeing these poor Brierleys restored to respectability and comfort. It's rather an ugly impression to have—that one may have even unintentionally been the cause of driving a fellow-creature into crime!

TOTTY. Metaphysics! By George, Gibson, if you rush on to those quicksands, I'll bet you a bottle of wine you sink out of your depth long before you know where you are

GIBSON. I need not plunge very deep to discover that my

refusal to assist Brierly was the indirect, if not the direct, cause of his joining in the plot to rob, and perhaps to murder you.

TOTTY. And that brings you plump into the entanglements of the law of compensation. If Brierly hadn't been driven to join in the plot, it would, most probably, have been carried out by Moss and Dalton alone, who might neither of them have thought it polite to give me warning of their intention to rifle my pockets, and cut my throat if I was inconsiderate enough to offer any opposition.

GIBSON. There's, no doubt, something in that.

TOTTY. I fancy if you had been Sam Totty, sub-contractor, with three hundred pounds in your pocket, under those particular circumstances, you would think there's a good deal in it.

*Enter DICK FINCH, door in flat, c. He looks about him uneasily, and remains near the door.*

GIBSON. (*aside to TOTTY*) Can this be one of Haw—I mean Smithers's visitors ?

TOTTY. (*aside to him*) It isn't Moss.

GIBSON. Nor Dalton.

DICK. (*aside, sitting down awkwardly at table, R.*) The Nailor not here ! What's he mean by that ? It ain't a plant, is it ? (*he plays with his hat, and looks suspiciously at the others*)

*Enter HAWKSHAW, door in flat, c. thoroughly disguised, wearing a large rough coat with pockets outside, his throat tied up in a thick shawl, a close-fitting cap on his head. He makes a sign aside to DICK PINCH, then saunters over to table, L., and takes up paper.*

HAWK. Not using the paper, are you, gents ?

GIBSON. (*starting*) No, not at all. I and my friend are going.

TOTTY. (*aside*) By George! I never was more surprised.

*Exit with MR. GIBSON, door L.*

HAWK. Now then, have you done it ?

DICK. All right! they'll be here almost afore I can tell yer. Don't forget—you're my brother-in-law—my wife's brother.

HAWK. And what's my name?

DICK. Alec Nichols. I've told 'em that it's nearly all up with my wife, that I've turned the job over to you, and that you know all about it—only that yer won't be able to go up the ladder, 'cause ye're lame o' one leg. They'll bring all the tools.

HAWK. Where do I come from last ?

DICK. Liverpool. Mind what yer answer if they question yer about it. Jem knows the Gouger.

HAWK. All right, I know all about *him*. Now, hook it, and take care of yourself; this affair only squares us up to the present time, mind you.

DICK. I'll take my chance, as I've always done, like a man—I only want to make sure of spotting that old devil, Moss! I've owed it him for ten months, and swore I'd pay him some time or other.

HAWK. He won't complain this time of not being paid in full.

DICK. And it'll be in his own coin, too, the old varmint. Good night, Mr.-----

HAWK. Spriggins. Go out by this door, (*indicating door, L.*)

DICK. Good luck to you, sir! I feel happier in my mind than I've done for many a night. *Exit, door L.*

HAWK. Poor devil! pretty nearly born a thief—he's not far from due at Portland, (*sits at table, L., and takes up paper*)

*Enter JEM DALTON and MELTER MOSS, door in flat, c.—both look enquiringly at HAWKSHAW, then seat themselves at table, R.*

DALTON. (*aside to Moss*) Do you think this is our man ?

Moss. (*aside to him*) Can't say—we'll sound him. (*to HAWKSHAW*) Take the newspaper after you, sir.

HAWK. (*in an exceedingly thick tone of voice, in which he continues to speak to the end of the scene*) I've quite done vith it. Vos you gents expectin' to meet any party here ?

Moss. Well, now you mention it-----

DALTON. Perhaps you're the party ? (*rising*)

HAWK. If y're friends of the Ferret—I dessay I am.

Moss. (*crossing with JEM DALTON to table, L.*) DO you know the Ferret ?

HAWK. Veil, I had ought to—I'm his brother-in-law.

DALTON. What's your name ?

HAWK. Yer means my *own* name ? Alec Nichols.

Moss. (*after interchanging looks with JEM DALTON*) Been working in London long, Mr. Nichols ?

HAWK. No; *this* here is my first job, and that ain't to say *mine*—ony my sister's so bad, Dick didn't like to leave her, so he sent me to crack the crib with yer in place of hisself—that's how it is.

DALTON. Where did you work last ?

HAWK. Liverpool; in the Gouger's school.

DALTON. Oh ! you knew the Gouger ? What sort of a party was he ?

HAWK. One-eyed cove—six foot—all bone and sinner—got ten year last assizes.

DALTON. That's about his likeness—eh, Melter ?

Moss. Close as a *carte-de-visite*.

DALTON. (*holding out his hand*) Tip us the cracksman's

twist—and then we'll have in a mouthful of brandy while we settle how the job's to be done, (*shakes hands vnth HAWKSHAW in a peculiar manner*)

Moss., (*shaking hands also*) Proud to make your acquaintance, Mr. Nichols.

HAWK. You've got the tools, I hope, 'cause I vos obliged to leave mine behind me when I come away from Liverpool.

DALTON. We've got the tools all right; but before we drink together, Alec Nichols, I've something to tell you—it is, that whenever I catch a pal of mine trying to double on me, it's a bad day's work for *him* ! They call me the Tiger !

Moss. But, bless you, while you do the thing that's right by my excellent friend, Jem, the touch of his paw is as soft as a kitten's, and his teeth are as tender as a pup's. Shall I ring for the brandy ? (*rising and going to bell pull*)

DALTON. Yes ; I think we all understand one another.

(*Moss rings bell*)

HAWK. I can only say as it ain't my way to double on no pal o' mine. My pals I stick to through life, and, sometimes, arter it!

*Enter a WAITER, door in flat, C, as the scene closes in—tableau.*

SCENE THIRD.—*A Square near Mrs. Willoughby's House.*

MRS. GREEN JONES *heard without, L., calling anxiously, " Stop! stop !"* MASTER THEODOSIUS *and Miss ANASTASIA dash on, propelling perambulators, the first containing two babies, the second, one, and as if they were racing.* MRS. GREEN JONES *follows, excitedly, with one of the twins in her arms—they stop before going quite off, R.*

MRS. G. You naughty children ! Theodosius, how dare you! Anastasia, I've a good mind to smack you ! (*they dodge her round the perambulators*) I'll never bring you out again, if this is your behaviour.

*Enter GREEN JONES, L., carrying the other twin, and very slightly tipsy, followed by SAM and SERAPHINA, all laughing.*

GREEN. Don't spoil the race, Emmy. Two to one on the filly! Again, chicks! up to the next lamp-post—a fair start!

SAM. Weight for age allowed!

MRS. G. (*to the children, who are about to set off again*) You dare to move ! Green, you ought to be ashamed of yourself! Mercy on me ! do look how you're holding Anaximander!

GREEN. He's all right, somewhere under some of the shawls.

SERAPH. Let me take the little darling, Mrs. Jones.

GREEN. (*handing baby*) Mind his back ! that's what Emmy always says to me when I take him ; so I know it's the correct thing to say on this occasion.

MRS. G. If I didn't watch you closely, I don't know what you'd do to the babies!

SAM. Kill 'em two or three times a day, most likely! Seraphina! the baby! mind! you've got him wrong end uppermost!

(MRS. GREEN JONES *screams*; SERAPHINA *starts and looks anxiously at the position of the baby in her arms*)

SERAPH. I haven't! How could you say such a thing!

(GREEN JONES and SAM *laugh heartily*)

SAM. I see, now. I must have been looking at him the other way.

MRS. G. You men! I'm sure if there were no women in the world to look after the poor things, I don't know what would become of all the children!

SAM. My plan would be, to feed 'em with a pepper-mill, bring 'em up with a birch-broom, and cultivate their intellects with a rake and a watering-pot! How do you think the system would answer, Jones?

GREEN. *[Yellow box]* complicated: my idea is—to boil 'em!

MRS. GREEN. How can you say such things! You don't deserve to be a father at all! Good gracious! there's Quintilian gone off to sleep in the perambulator, and his hat-strings choking him black in the face! Do take hold of Constantine!

SAM. No; let me. Knowledge is power.

GREEN. And practice makes perfect, doesn't it, Miss Higgs?

MRS. G. Well, be very careful, and don't press it too hard. *(hands baby to SAM)*

SAM. About sixty pound and three-quarters to the square inch—or the round, as he's so fat—that won't hurt him? *(he pretends to let the baby fall: MRS. GREEN JONES and SERAPHINA scream)* Stop! don't scream yet; *that* was only accidental! presently I'm going to drop the pretty poppet on purpose, if Seraphina won't catch it. Now! one, two, three! look out! *(he pretends to pitch the baby to SERAPHINA; both the women scream; GREEN JONES laughs)* There! now you've gone and waked him with your noise! *(trots about, pretending to be hushing the baby to sleep, and imitating its cry)* Won't-ee—don't-ee! Did he want a nice little pinch! *(imitates a sharp cry)* Wants one a little harder, did he? then he *shall* have everything he wants! *(baby's cry louder and sharper)* Hush-ee push-ee, while I find-ee pind-ee a beautiful long pin-ee win-ee to run into him! There! *(baby's cry louder and sharper still)* Wasn't the naughty pin long enough? Quick! lend me a curvilinear hair-pin, Seraphina, to run into the little darling!

SERAPH. For shame, Sam! What can put such horrid ideas into your head?

SAM. She calls those horrid ideas!—Mrs. Jones, how can you trust that little angel in her arms after hearing her give utterance to such a frightful opinion?

GREEN. (*tragically*) Perfectly agonizing! (*taking baby from SERAPHINA*) *My che-ild! my che-ild!*

MRS. G. Don't be absurd, Green. Theodosius! let your brother be.

GREEN. Be *what*, Emmy?

MRS. G. Green, I'm certain you drunk a quantity of that sherry when I wasn't looking. Give me Anaximander; I'm sure he isn't safe in your arms, (*takes baby from him*)

GREEN. (*tragically*) Tears from a fond father's waistcoat his beloved *che-ild!*—Oh, odds and evens! has it come to this! The struggle's o'er! Music, tremolose—"A father's love!"

MRS. G. Are you going out of your senses?

SAM. Capital idea! Let's all go out of our senses.

GREEN. Emmy shall sing us the "Maniac's Tear."

MRS. G. Not if I know it. The moment we came into our little property—not half so much as it ought to have been, even Green allows—I'd done with "Maniac's Tears." But do let's get on; I know all the children will be fast asleep before we teach home, and then what shall we do?

SAM. Double up your perambulators, and roll your children instead, (*to THEODOSIUS*) You'd enjoy that sort of fun, wouldn't you?

MASTER T. Yes.

MRS. G. HOW dare you, sir, think of such a thing, in your new clothes!

Miss A. Give us a ride on your back, papa.

MASTER T. (*to SAM*) And *you* give me one.

SAM. All right! Bank! City! over-the-way! round-the-corner! nothing there and back! Here, Seraphina, catch the baby, (*pretends to toss baby to her; she screams, starts, and takes it from him*) There you are! wrong way again! Never mind its back. Head downward and feet anywhere; it'll soon get used to it!

SERAPH. Don't mind him, Mrs. Jones.

SAM. Very well! if it cuts its teeth through its socks, don't blame me, that's all.

MRS. G. Much you know how children cut their teeth. (*laughing*) Through their socks, indeed!

SAM. Don't they, really? Oh! then, of course, I stand corrected till next time—or the time after.

MASTER T. Ain't you going to give me a ride?

SAM. Of course I am. Which side is it to be—outside or in?

MASTER T. There *isn't* no inside.

SAM. Then I'd advise you to have a double quantity outside. (*he stoops, MASTER THEODOSIUS clammers upon his back, and he does the restive horse*)

Miss A. Ain't you going to take me on your back, pa?

GREEN. No ; I think you shall ride me home on the perambulator ! *(he pretends to sit down on perambulator)*

MRS. G. *(in alarm)* Green! mind Quintilian's legs!

GREEN. Don't be alarmed, Emmy—I haven't smashed 'em much, *(to Miss ANASTASIA)* Come along then, if you mustn't give me a ride home, *(he stoops to take her on his back)* Hey ! Now then, Willoughby, I'll race you—and we'll each drive a perambulator. One, two, three! *(he takes a perambulator, SAM the other)*

MRS. G. Green! Jones ! I know some of the children will be killed before I get them home.

SAM. We'll be very careful of the plug-holes. One, two, three!

GREEN. And away! *(he gallops off, R., driving a perambulator, followed by SAM, also galloping, driving the other)*

MRS. G. Good gracious, what a mad state they're in ! Now you know something of what you'll have to go through when you're married. It's the lamp-posts that terrify me ! Come along, dear, *(screams)* Oh ! *Exeunt, R.*

SCENE FOURTH.—*The exterior of Mrs. Willoughby's House; the front of the home, L., occupies about one third of the width of the stage; joining the house, and running across the remaining width of the stage, is a garden wall, in which there is a practicable door; over the wall the side of the house is seen in perspective ; a balcony (practicable) projecting from a window on the first floor; steps leading up to street door; area, &c., &c. ; one of the upper windows practicable. Night.*

*On the opening of the scene, a distant clock chimes the quarter, then strikes One. Enter POLICEMAN, R., furtively smoking a short pipe, which he carries concealed in his closed hand—he turns his bull's-eye on to the door of Mrs. Willoughby's house, then saunters out, L. Enter, R., JEM DALTON, HAWKSHAW, and MELTER MOSS—HAWKSHAW affects to be lame.*

HAWK. *(speaking thickly, as before)* This here's the crib, and that there winder with the balcony is the one as belongs to the room where the money's kept, in the drawer of a chiffonier, or so'thing o' that sort; leastways, them's Dick's directions.

DALTON. This is the garden door then ?

HAWK. That's it. It's got no lock to speak of, Dick says, an' no bolts.

DALTON. Turn on the gas, Moss, and give us hold of the toothpicks.

Moss. *(turning on the light of a dark lanthorn, and handing skeleton keys)* What are you going to do towards it, Mr. Alic ? precious little, it seems to me, my respected friend.

HAWK. I ain't able to do much since I broke my leg, three months ago, droppin' from a eighteen foot wall.

Moss. Then what was the good of the Ferret sending you at all?

HAWK. 'Cause he didn't want you to say as he'd done nothin' for his share o' the swag.

DALTON. (*picking the lock*) Stow it, Melter, I don't want any help. When we get into the garden, there's a ladder that reaches to the balcony, isn't there?

HAWK. So Dick told me.

DALTON. All right, (*he opens the door*) Come in with me, and help me to raise that ladder, while Melter looks out. Give me the darkee. (*takes lanthorn from Moss*)

Moss. (to HAWKSHAW) Is there anybody sleeps on that floor?

HAWK. Dick didn't say as there was.

Moss. Don't be violent, Jem, if you *do* tumble over anybody.

DALTON. (*snappishly*) All right—all right! Yon look sharp after the peelers, and leave me to do my work in my own way. (to HAWKSHAW) NOW then, come on, and lend me a hand with that ladder, (*goes into garden with HAWKSHAW, while Moss keeps watch—a ladder is seen to be raised against the house, by the side of the balcony*)

Moss, (*quickly, at the door*) Don't go up yet, Jem, there's somebody coming, (*looking eagerly off, at L.*) No, it's all right; cut in.

(DALTON, a black crape over his face, is seen to mount the ladder and get upon the balcony—he unfastens the window bolt and carefully opens the window)

DALTON. (*on the balcony*) All right ?

Moss. (*after looking carefully in all directions*) All right !

(DALTON disappears into the house—HAWKSHAW comes from the garden, pretending to tie up his hand in a handkerchief)

HAWK. Just like my luck !

Moss. (*suspiciously*) What have you come away from the ladder for?

HAWK. I've tore my hand with a thunderin' nail!

Moss. I tell you what it is. my friend, I don't half trust you for a pal; but, take my word for it, if you're not acting on the square, this is the last night's work you'll do. Go in and hold the ladder for Jem. (*a cry*  *in the house*) Eh—what's up ?  
(*noise, as of a struggle, heard in the house*)

HAWK. (*in his own voice, and springing upon Moss*) It's all up with you, Melter Moss !

Moss. Hawkshaw! a plant! (*calls*) Jem! Jem! come down ! it's a plant! (*they struggle violently; at length HAWKSHAW gets*

him down, and puts a pair of handcuffs on him—at the same moment DALTON appears at the window endeavouring to escape from BRIERLY'S clutch)

BRIERLY. Who are you? I will see your face !

DALTON. Brierly, let me go or I'll do for you !

BRIERLY. Dalton!

DALTON. Take your hand off me!

BRIERLY. Never! till-----

DALTON. Take that, then ! (*strikes him down and attempts to get over the balcony; BRIERLY instantly rises and is about to seize him again, when the outside of the balcony gives way, and DALTON is precipitated into the garden, uttering a cry of terror as he falls; BRIERLY looks over the balcony for a moment, horrified, then disappears from the window*)

Moss. (*calling*) Jem! Jem! I'm nabb'd! Look out for yourself!

HAWK. Silence ! or I'll give you a rap on the head! (*sounds a police whistle*)

(MRS. WILLOUGHBY, in her night-dress, and without her "front," opens one of the upper windows and puts out her head)

MRS. W. What is it ? Oh, lor'! fire! murder! *polige !*

HAWK. Don't be alarmed, ma'am.

MRS. W. Which well I know your voice,—but begging your parding, I *am* alarmed. *Polige !*—and me in this figure, and suffering from roomytics, as I do!—*Po-lige !* (*disappears from window*)

(BRIERLY supports DALTON from the garden and places him on the ground, C.)

DALTON. It's all over with me this time! My back's broken!

Moss. Jem, we've been sold !

DALTON. Sold ! Who by ? Brierly ?

HAWK. No ; by me !

DALTON. Hawkshaw!

HAWK. I told you to-night, Jem Dalton, that I stick by a pal of mine through life, and sometimes after it. I promised poor Joe Skirret to be even with you for what you did to him. You see I've been as good as my word.

DALTON. You have. I'm dying!

BRIERLY. Oh, Dalton ! before you die do one act of justice. Say that I was innocent of the crime for which I was sent to Portland.

DALTON. Who's speaking? I can't see you. Is it you, Melter?

BRIERLY. (*kneeling by him*) No, it is I, Robert Brierly. He does not hear me !

*Enter a POLICEMAN, MR. GIBSON, MR. TOTTY, and SAM,R. ; at the same moment MAY and MRS. WILLOUGHBY come from house door.*

HAWK. (to POLICEMAN, *pointing to Moss*) Look after this one.

SAM. (*crossing to MAY and MRS. WILLOUGHBY, L.*) All right, granny ! Nothing to be afraid of but roomytics.

MRS. W. And quite enough too, I can tell you.

MAY. Are you hurt, Robert ?

BRIERLY. No, dear, (*to DALTON*) Speak, Dalton! Tell these gentlemen that I was innocent.

DALTON. Melter! remember—remember—to settle with the Ferret for this! Remember—remem----- (*dies*)

BRIERLY. (*rising, and in a half-despairing tone*) He is dead! and he could have cleared me!

Moss. Poor Jem ! Mr. Hawkshaw, a word with you. (*aside to him*) Can't we square this ? I could *borrow* a hundred—or even two—to make it all right with you.

HAWK. Don't talk nonsense, Mr Moss. The only thing you can do that will serve you at all in this—is to tell me and these gents all you know about Mr. Brierly's affairs.

Moss. What will you do for me if I tell ?

HAWK. Well, I'll keep back everything that doesn't bear on to-night's little bit of business.

Moss. Do you *really* know anything ?

HAWK. Enough, with this, to bring your next spell at Portland up to ten years, without a chance of a ticket.

Moss. I know you wouldn't deceive me on such a delicate point, Mr. Hawkshaw. I'll tell you and these gents all I know.

HAWK. Very well; it's a bargain, (*aloud*) Gentlemen, Mr. Moss has handsomely consented to tell us all he knows about Mr. Brierly's connexion with the Tiger, (*to Moss*) Now ! about the forged bank note he was convicted of passing ?

Moss. Jem, in spite of all I could say, I assure you, planted it on Mr. Brierly, who had no more suspicion of it's not being all right than the unborn babe. As to the watch-----

BRIERLY. The watch ! do *you* know then ? Oh, May!

Moss. That, too, was Jem's doing; he was always spiteful. He swore he'd serve you out for gettin' him lagged, and, seeing you and Mrs. B. down at Greenwich, he stole a watch from a party, who happened to be my excellent friend, Mr. Totty—and dropt it into her pocket.

BRIERLY. My poor May !

GIBSON. A diabolical revenge!

Moss. Made *my* flesh creep, when he told me what he had done.

HAWK. About Mr. Totty's affair by the canal ?

Moss. That, too, was all Jem's doing I never could get at

the rights of it. By the bye, while I think of it, Mr. Totty, that bill will be presented to-morrow through a highly respectable firm — John, Abrahams and Co., general exporters, Petticoat-lane.

GIBSON. (*holding out his hand to BRIERLY*) There is my hand, Brierly; I once more implicitly believe in your and your wife's innocence, (*shakes hands with both warmly*)

TOTTY. And I, too ! (*shaking hands with both*)

Moss. (*aside to HAWKSHAW*) Look here, Mr. Hawkshaw, I dessay I could raise as much as *three* hundred, if that would suit you.

HAWK. I wouldn't go an inch from my bargain if you were to offer me a thousand.

Moss. I think you're wrong, I do indeed! but of course, you know how to play your own cards best.

BRIERLY. I can only thank you, gentlemen.

MAY. Heaven bless you, Mr. Gibson ! and (*to TOTTY*) you too, sir.

TOTTY. Look here, Brierly, you've said you wish to go out to Australia, where you think you'd have more elbow room to work. You saved my life, and as a small return for a large obligation, I'll undertake to pay your and your wife's passage to Melbourne.

BRIERLY. Oh, sir!

GIBSON. And I'll advance you a sum sufficient to stock you a good farm, or set you going on a sheep run, as soon as you are ready to invest it.

BRIERLY. A thousand, thousand times thank you, gentlemen.

MRS. W. Bless you, my dears! I always believed you'd come right at last. (*MAY kisses her tenderly*)

SAM. And if granny, and I and Seraphina should happen promiscuously to walk in to breakfast with you, some fine broiling December evening, don't forget to invite us to sit down after our journey (*pointing downwards*) through the world.

BRIERLY. (*heartily wringing his hand*) That would complete our happiness, Sam. Meanwhile, may heaven give me courage and strength to do my best in that free land where none will dare to deny me the right to labour for my bread, or stab me to the heart with fingers pointed in scorn at, " The Ticket-of-Leave Man's Wife." (*Tableau*)

**Curtain.**