

THE  
PEEP-SHOW MAN.

*A Drama,*

*IN TWO ACTS.*

BY  
THOMAS J. WILLIAMS, ESQ.,

(MEMBER OF THE DRAMATIC AUTHORS' SOCIETY.)

AUTHOR OF

Ici on parle Francais, Turn Him Out, The Little Sentinel, My Wife's Maid  
Tweedleton's Tail Coot, The Trials of Tompkins, Jack's Delight, An  
Ugly Customer, Nursey Chickweed, On and Off, A Race For a  
Widow, I've written to Brown, Peace and Quiet, Ruth  
Oakley, Gossip, Truth and Fiction, Cruel to be Kind,  
The Silent System, A Charming Pair, The Better  
Half, The Desert Flower, Little Daisy, My  
Dress Boots, Pipkin's Rustic Retreat, My  
Turn Next, Found in a Four-Wheeler,  
Larkins' Love Letters, Lion Slayer;  
or, Out for a Prowl! A Cure for  
the Fidgets, Who's to Win  
Him? The Volunteer Re-  
view, A Silent Pro-  
tector, etc., etc.

THOMAS HAILES LACY,  
89, STRAND, LONDON.

## THE PEEP-SHOW MAN.

*First produced at the New Surrey Theatre, (under the management of Messrs. Shepherd and Creswick), on Monday 10th February, 1868.*

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### CHARACTERS.

JACK TRUDGET, { *the "Peep-show Man," late mate of the "Matchless Margaret"* } Mr. E. Shepherd.

N.B.—This part is a "character part," and can be played both by "leading men, and by low comedians professing the serio-comic line followed by Mr. J. L. Toole.

MR. GOODWIN SANDS { *a gentleman of a "speculative" turn* } Mr. E. F. Edgar.

MARK MERTON . . . (a young Squire) . . . Mr. Allbrook.

RAFFLES , (a Stock-broker) . . . Mr. C. Lloyd.

BOB (Waiter at the "Rose and Crown"—low comedy) Mr. E. Terry.

MURKY JACK { *Fishermen belonging to a village on the coast of North Devon* } Mr. Paul

FOULWEATHER BILL { *Fishermen belonging to a village on the coast of North Devon* } Mr. C. Butler

COGNOVIT CROWSFOOT (on "unscrupulous" attorney) Mr. Vollaire  
1ST and 2ND FARMERS.

MARY MAYLAND (a village Milliner's apprentice) Miss G. Pauncefort

GEORGINA (*the "bride"—daughter to Raffles*) Miss M. Davis  
FARMERS, VILLAGERS, GUESTS, &C., &C.

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Place: North Devonshire. Time: Present day.

\*.\*An interval of one month is supposed to elapse between first and second acta.

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### COSTUMES.

TRUDGET.—Rough pea-jacket, blue trousers, sailor's hat, &c.

SANDS.—Fashionable walking costume.

BOB.—"Swell" waiter make-up, enormous white choker, and tremendously large wedding favour.

CROWSFOOT.—Black suit, umbrella under his arm, &c

MERTON.—Stylish sporting "make-up."

MURKY JACK and FOULWEATHER BILL.—Guernseys, jack-boots, sou'-wester, &c., &c.—rough fishermen's make-up.

RAFFLES.—Pompous elderly gentleman's make-up.

MARY.—Plain cotton or muslin dress, neat but unassuming make-up.

GEORGINA.—Elegant "bride's" dress, veil, &c, &c., &c

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Duration of performance—One Hour and Fifty-five Minutes,

## THE PEEP-SHOW MAN.

### ACT I.

SCENE.—*The hall of the " Rose and Crown Inn " (a picturesque old fashioned interior) principal entrance at back—s. of entrance a large glass window, L. of entrance (in flat) another door; each door is numbered. Two doors R. two doors L., over doors are seen large stags heads with antlers. Near centre a table, between doors L. another table—oaken chairs &c. &c.—through c. door (at back)—a distant view of village is seen. At the rising of the curtain loud hammering of table and jingling of glasses accompanied with shouts of laughter heard R. BOB discovered.*

BOB. *(throwing himself into a chair)* Well I'm reg'lar run off my legs, and that's just about the size of it. We *have* got a tidy houseful at the " Rose and Crown " this here eventful day—*(pointing to door in flat)* No. 1—the annual dinner of the " Social Farmers." No 2—*(pointing L. U. E.)* Wedding breakfast, tip top sy  with musicianers and dancing, and all manner of feed  hable capers ; the bar's quite full o' gen'lman's servants as is a consooming every drop o' moisture on the premises, *(fanning himself with napkin)* I declare I ain't been in such a wiolent perspiration ever since I first flourished a dish-kivver !

*Enter MR. GOODWIN SANDS—fashionable morning costume.*

SANDS. *(authoritatively)* I say, waiter how's this ? *(looking at his watch)*—wedding party all assembled on the lawn and breakfast not yet served?

BOB. *(obsequiously)* Which it is a comin' up at this identical moment sir—half-past one was the precise time, sir ; *(looking at his watch)* wants just a minute to the half hour, sir 

SANDS. *(alone—sarcastically)* What a delightful thing it

is to serve one's fellow creatures at sixty per cent, clear profit; the bridegroom is positively maudlin in the expression of his gratitude ; well, he *ought* to be obliged to me, racketty young dog ! but for my timely and (ahem !) *disinterested* assistance, he would have been at this moment in prison: thanks to *me* this ruined spendthrift has secured a wife with a snug fortune. He borrowed five thousand of me, to deposit at his banker's, for a week, (*Jeeringly*) ha ! ha ! as a *decoy* for his worthy father-in-law. I advanced the money, in the way of business, on strong security ; for this little accommodation I charge my young friend the reasonable interest of a thousand pounds; on the strength of which little bonus I have consented to officiate as " best man " on this auspicious occasion, (*with a sardonic laugh*) ha ! ha ! these little friendly speculations pay vastly better than the Stock Exchange !

*Enter RAFFLES, L. U. E.*

RAFF. Ah ! Mr Sands, there you are ! (*pointing off*) they'll make a charming couple, won't they ? Ah ! Mr. Sands, I can never thank you sufficiently for introducing to me so excellent a son-in-law. Ah ! Mr. Sands, what a *good* man you are ! you seem to divide your time equally between business and benevolence. I say, how about that " Coal and Counterpane Society " you so lately started ?

SANDS. (*hypocritically*) My dear Raffles, don't mention it ! The contemplation of the happiness of others, is the only thing that enables me to endure the wearisome tribulations of this mundane existence !

RAFF. (*with a sigh of admiration*) I only wish there were a few more like you !

SANDS. (*aside*) I don't—*too* many of us wouldn't get on!

*BOB, appearing at door, R.*

BOB. (*Flourishing napkin, bowing*) Breakfast on table-ladies and gents is a coming in from lawn !

SANDS. I'm delighted to hear it, for I confess to being ravenously hungry, (*to RAFFLES, sanctimoniously*) Ah ! my dear Raffles, depend upon it, the consciousness of a benevolent action-is a far more exhilarating incentive to appetite, than all the Worcestershire sauce that waa ever concocted by the far-famed Lea and Perrin!

RAFF. (*approvingly*) Right! Sands, right!

(*Exeunt arm-in-arm followed by BOB, R.*)

*Enter at back, c, MERTON, (stylish and, gentlemanly sporting make up.) Velveteen shooting jacket &c.*

MERTON. I wish the Social Farmers and their dinner were at Jericho—my father insists upon my attending, he says its a mark of respect the squire's son owes to the "agricultural interest" of the neighbourhood, (*loud hammering of tables and jingling of glasses heard R.*) Halloa, the Social Farmers seem hard at it; I left home in such a hurry, that I quite forgot to read the letter that reached me just as I was starting, (*producing letter from his pocket*) Staunton's handwriting I declare ! (*reading*) " Dear Mark, The little village milliner is one too many for me—I leave you to try your luck. Vainly have I disguised myself, and assumed the speech and manners of a mechanic." (*speaking somewhat angrily*) The devil he has! (*reading*) "No go ! Hymen's fetters are the only chains she'll ever wear. Meanwhile my creditors are dunning so ferociously, that I have no more time for pastoral courtships, and am compelled to throw myself away on a girl with a slight squint and a snug fortune. Pity the sorrows of an improvident young man, and come and witness his "execution." Yours in deep dejection.—PAUL STAUNTON."

MERT. So ! (*musingly*) Paul gives up the little village milliner does he? By Jove, that's worth knowing. I am neither so scrupulous nor so easily discouraged, and shall renew the pursuit with two-fold ardour. Bewitching little creature! she's worth all the squire's daughters for miles round ! I can think of nothing else, (*renewed hammering of tables R.*) Halloa, the Social Farmers are waxing extra social. I must join them at once, and apologise for my tardy arrival. (*exit L—Characteristic music in orchestra.*)

*Enter at back. JACK TRUDGET—he is attired in a rough pea-jacket, a pouch is slung over his shoulder, he wears sailor's blue trousers, glazed hat with faded ribbon, &c, carries a "peep-show" on his back; in his hand he has a stick—he appears tired and way-worn—a decided flavour of the "nautical" occasionally evinces itself in his attitudes and gestures.*

TRUDGET. (*looking round*) Well, I don't so much like the looks of this here "Rose and Crown"—strikes me it's a cut or two above my usual figure ; howsumever, my purfessiunal exertions ha' given me such a plaguey sharp appetite, I must have a snack o' summat som'w'eres, I don't

care whether it's on the tiles or in the coal-cellar! (*pulls out coppers from his pocket and counts them*) I ain't done a bad stroke o' business this morning—one-and-nine ! The worst o' these here country folks is, they're so plaguey fond o' the " hinstitooshun " that when they gets their heye ag'in the glass there ain't no *indoocin'* 'em to take it away ag'in they arn't got no notion o' the wally o' time in the prowinces ! Why only a minnit ago, a respectable father of a family, in a smock frock, had the imperence to ask if I couldn't let him and his wife, and his fourteen children have a peep for the combined sum of twopence-halfpenny—why, they'd ha' been a *week* over it! But now then—(*thumping table with stick*) Waiter!

*Enter BOB, L.*

BOB. (*aside, looking at TRUDGET*) What a seedy looking customer ! (*aloud, superciliously*) What's for you, my man?

TRUDGET. (*to BOB, suggestively*) Yer ain't got such a thing as a *trotter* ?

BOB. (*aghast*) A *what!*

TRUDGET. You've heard of a *pig*, I suppose ? (*illustratively*) Well, a *trotter* is the part of the *h* animal he generally trots about upon.

BOB. (*disdainfully*) Don't deal in that style o' article at the " Rose and Crown."

TRUDGET. (*disappointed*) That's a pity—trotters is werry nice things, you know, with a baked tater. (*struck by a sudden idea*) I s'pose you ain't got no fried fish at the "Rose and Crown," neither ?

BOB. (*contemptuously*) No, we ain't—we don't lay ourselves out for customers o' *your* sort.

TRUDGET. (*affecting surprise*) Don't you though—that's *another* pity.

BOB. (*superciliously*) We've got some cold boiled beef—that's the only *harticle* in your line as we're *likely* to have.

TRUDGET. (*stroking his chin, ruminatingly*) Ah, bit o' boiled beef will do—boiled beef and a pickled *hingin* —

BOB. (*superciliously*) Beef and pickles, werry good. (*aside, going*) He calls *hingons*, *hingins*. I'll look sharp arter his money ! (*exit R*)

TRUDGET. (*looking round*) This will be a *ninepenny* touch, at the werry least! Ah! I'm always glad when *sprats* is in season, for then you *can* have a " *tightener* " for a penny. I'll just put the " *Institution* " out o' harm's way while I'm a partakin' o' this here ruination festivity! (*takes peep-show off his back and places it on table, R.—*

*ruminating*) To think now that I, Joe Trudget, formerly first mate of the "Matchless Margaret," should be tramping about the country on a woyage o' diskivery, with a peep-show on my back—it's what they call a singular wicissitude o' fortune—howsumever, it's a sacred dooty as I've undertaken to fulfil, and Joe Trudget never shirked *his* dooty by land or sea! (*looking round*) He's a plaguey long time with that bit o' beef.

*Enter* MARY, C. *at back, she is plainly but neatly attired, and carries in her hand a small band-box.*

MARY. (*aside*) No, I was not mistaken—for I saw the very carriage at the inn door, (*earnestly*) He *must* be here ! will deliver this parcel and make further enquiries. (X's to R. *1st wing, and exit.*)

TRUDGET. (*who has been watching her*) Nice looking young party that, with the band-box—strikes me I saw her in the market-place just now, while I was a *hillustrating* the hentertainment.

*Re-enter* BOB, with plate of beef, &c, on tray, R.

BOB. (*placing tray on table*) Beef and *hingins*!

TRUDGET. (*eyes plate longingly*) How much ?

BOB. (*superciliously*) Beef, bread, *hingows*—tenpence-halfpenny.

TRUDGET. (*aghast*) Tenpence-halfpenny ! three-halfpence beyond my wildest anticipations, (*gives money*—BOB *still continues to hold out his hand—uneasily*) What do you want *now* ?

BOB. (*pompously*) A—a—ain't you going to remember the waiter ?

TRUDGET. (*not understanding*) Of course I am—I'll never forget him as long as I live.

BOB. (*contemptuously, aside*) Well, that's a *new* dodge *that is* ! this is a *haristocratic* customer ! (*exit*)

TRUDGET. (*seating himself at table*) They don't seem to set any special wally on my custom at this here " Rose and Crown"—they've put me all among the draughts ; I'll just turn up the collar of my coat, for gen'l'men in my purfession are obligated to be werry careful o' their wocal organs. (*turns up collar of coat, and begins eating voraciously*) I wonder now who that little party with the band-box was—shiver my timbers, as we used to say aboard, she was a neat little craft—so trim built, (*with his mouth full*) Werry good beef this, good but *expensive*! (*ruminating*) Now if I was what they call a marrying man, that little beauty with

the band-box would be Jack Trudget's own partikler fancy to a T. (*eats voraciously.*)

*Re-enter MARY, R. 1 E.*

MARY. (*speaking off*) Very good, I'll come back for the box presently, (*aside, looking anxiously round*) Now where can Paul be, I wonder ? I feel convinced that he is somewhere in this inn.

TRUDGET. (*suddenly perceiving MARY*) Halloa, here she is again ! (*hastily turns down collar, crosses and re-crosses his legs, makes sundry attempts at a graceful attitude, and, while continuing to eat, glances sideways at MARY.*)

MARY. (*still not perceiving TRUDGET—aside, looking off*) I had hoped the landlady would ask me to wait—I am sure I saw the same carriage at the door. (*perceiving TRUDGET*) Ah—a—a—I beg pardon-----

TRUDGET. (*starting up, with a tremendous attempt at the polite*) A—a—don't apologize—you ain't a disturbing me in the least, (*mechanically jumping up and running to peep-show, R.*) A—a—you wouldn't like a peep at the *hinstitooshun*—a—a—" The grand broadsword combat for the championship, between the Emperor Napoleon and the Duke of Wellington, at the battle of Bunker's Hill! "

MARY. (*politely*) No, thank you. (*aside, anxiously*) How can I ascertain whether Paul is here ?

*Re-enter MARK MERTON, L.U. E.*

MERTON. Now then, waiter, where the devil's the waiter ?—there's no wine on the table.

MARY. (*recognizing MERTON, rather alarmed, aside*) As I live, young Squire Merton, who sent me that impertinent letter—a—a—I will avoid him.

MERTON. (*aside*) Confound their strong ale, it has got into my head already. (*perceiving MARY*) Halloa, do my eyes deceive me ? (*triumphantly*) The prudish little village milliner by Jupiter.

TRUDGET. (*aside, surprised*) Halloa, shiver my timbers, the gent in the welverteens is a hyeing the little craft with the band-box!

MERTON. (*who has meanwhile hastily crossed to MARY and seized her hand*) I've caught you at last, have I, you flinty-hearted little creature—why didn't you answer my letter ?

MARY. (*indignantly*) That letter was an *insult*, sir—let go my hand.

TRUDGET. (*aside, approvingly*) Bravo, that's the way to talk to him.

MERTON. (*still retaining her hand*) Ah, that's what you pretty girls always say, but you don't mean it, not a bit of it.

MARY. (*struggling*) Let go my hand, sir!

MERTON. (*retaining his hold*) Never, till you promise to meet me, this evening, near the elm trees at the bend of the river.

MARY. (*indignantly*) I will promise nothing of the kind! (*struggling*) Will you let me go my hand?

TRUDGET. (*who has meanwhile been contemplating the scene, with mute expressions of the most intense interest—aside*) Whenever I sees a female in distress, why shiver my timbers, I feels the British sailor a rewiving in my purfessional bosom, (*rises, and unseen by the others, begins hitching up his trousers, and squaring up slowly in the direction of MERTON.*)

MERTON. (*struck by a sudden idea, aside*) By Jove! I may never have such a chance again—hang the agricultural interest, I'll leave the " Social Farmers " in the lurch, (*to MARY, putting his arm round her waist*) Now come for a stroll—I swear you shall—this is the first time I've caught you alone!

TRUDGET. (*who has meanwhile come forward—tapping him on the shoulder*) And supposing you ain't found her alone?

MERTON. (*starting—turning round*) Eh! who's with her?

TRUDGET. (*slowly and significantly*) There are *two* on us with her; first and foremost, there's *this* individual, (*his little fellow—tapping himself on chest*) and secondly, (*producing stick from behind him, and shaking it significantly*) there's his *partickler friend*—hallow me to introdooce him!

MERTON. (*furious*) Scoundrel! do you dare threaten a gentleman!

TRUDGET. (*drily*) Judging by his actions I wasn't aware I was haddressing one—howaumever, this here's to say that Jack Trudget is nat'rally excitable by natur', and that if you don't leave that 'ere young creetur alone, why it may be just a trifle the *wus* for you!

MERTON. (*with concentrated indignation*) What seedy vagabond is this!

TRUDGET. (*offended*) Wagabond! (*swinging stick slowly to and fro*) Now come, don't get calling names you know; for when this little gen'l'man *does* come down, he's apt to *come down handsome!*

MERTON. (*furious*) This to *me*—why who the *devil* are you?

TRUDGET. (*striking a mock conceited attitude*) Well, I ain't had my cards printed yet, but I'll have a few struck off if you particklarly wishes it. (*aside, hitching up his trousers*) Shiver my timbers, I *can't* stand this—now that I *am* about it, I'll just give welverteens one for himself ! (*throws away stick, pulls off coat, and strikes a pugilistic attitude.*)

MARY. (*alarmed, to TRUDGET*) Sir, I entreat-----

MERTON. (*in a towering passion*) I never was so insulted in all my life—I'll give the fellow a sound thrashing!

TRUDGET. *YOU* will! (*striking a fancy attitude, and "dodging" about scientifically*) S'pose you try ! (*just as a scuffle is beginning,*

*Enter from L. u. E., Two of the " Social Farmers."*

1ST F. Halloa! why dash ma' boottons, here be a mill!

2ND F. Ho! ho! why here be young squire a fighting the peep-show man I seed in the market-place!

MERTON. (*drawing back scornfully*) Peep-show man ! hang it all, I *can't* stoop to *thrash* a *peep-show man!*

TRUDGET. (*sarcastically*) P'raps it's as well you didn't *stoop*—you mightn't find it so easy to *get up again* !

MERTON. (*aside to MARY fiercely*) We shall meet again where none can come between us—for the present (*jeeringly*) I leave you to your aristocratic protector—the *peep-show man!*

1ST F. (*leading MERTON away*) Come along, squire, come along—fighting a peep-show man—ha, ha, ha!

2ND F. Fighting a peep show man—ho, ho, ho !

(*exeunt FARMERS and MERTON, arm-in-arm L. U. E.*)

TRUDGET. (*indignantly*) Peep-show man indeed! in another moment the peep-show man (*striking a pugilistic attitude*) would have astonished *his* weak nerves, and no mistake ! howsumever, he's had a lesson in purliteness—he'll know how to behare to a respectable young female another time, (*looking round at MARY who has resumed the old train of thought and is standing, absorbed*) The respectable young female seems thinkin' o' suramat—howsumever I s'pose I mustn't stop at the "Rose and Crown " any longer for tenpence-halfpenny, or they'll be stickin' it on for *warehouse-room*, or *summat* or other. I must be resoomin' my purfessional dooties. (*looks at MARY, who is gazing vacantly at door, R.*) The proprietor o' the band-box don't look this way much, (*awkwardly*) A—*a*—mornin', miss—the voice o' dooty calls—I'm a going.

MARY. (*hastily turning round*) Going! not till I have thanked you for the protection you so kindly afforded me.

Believe me, sir, your kindness will never be forgotten by—  
(with a slight hesitation) a—a—Mary-----

TBUDGET. (interrupting) Mary, (aside, ruminating) Yes, there's lots o' *Maries*, and plenty o' *Fannies*, and no end o' *Susan Janes*; but it's a *Margaret* as I'm, looking for, and *Margarets* seem scarce—howsumever, I s'pose she'll turn, up some day, which (preparing to depart) reminds me that I must resume my woyage o' diskivery.

MARY. (aside, stuck by a sudden idea) Perhaps this kind hearted fellow might help me to find out Paul, (aloud to TRUDGET) There is something in your face, which, stranger as you are, tells me I may confide in you with safety.

TRUDGET. (aside, flurried) Confide in me ! (aside, flurried) Shiver my timbers, I wonder what's a comin'.

MARY. (continuing) You must know sir— (timidly casting down her eyes) a—a—I am in love !

TBUDGET. (starting) In love! (aside) P'raps she's taken a sudden fancy to me!

MARY. (continuing) In love, and engaged to be married —

TRUDGET. (rather disappointed) Oh ! (aside, vexed) What the dickens does she tell me this for ?

MARY. (getting very confidential) He is a young carpenter of the name of Paul—he works at a factory at a neighbouring town; he told me he had got a little money in the savings bank, and hoped soon to be in a position to marry me.

TRUDGET. (evidently annoyed) A—a—werry satisfactory.

MARY. Oh, sir ! do you know I love him so *dearly*, that if anything were to happen to prevent our union, I could not possibly survive it, and, (sadly) do you know, his visits of late have been less frequent, and now, for nearly a fortnight, I have not seen him at *all*—until this very morning !

TRUDGET. (annoyed) Oh, you *have* seen him this morning ?

MARY. (continuing) Yes, as I was approaching this town, an elegant carriage and pair passed me on the road! I looked round—who should I see inside but my beloved Paul?

TRUDGET. (surprised) A carpenter in a carriage? I can't see how he got there, unless he was a *repairing* on it!

MARY. (hastily) No he wasn't—he was dressed in the most fashionable manner, with a massive gold chain and a flower in his button-hole !

TRUDGET. (suspiciously) Hum! I shouldn't ha' minded the flower in his button-hole, but carpenters don't do much

in the " *massive* " line out o' thirty bob a week—'you're sure you ain't mistaken ?

MARY. (*almost indignantly*) Mistaken ! do you think I could mistake the only man I ever loved ? there was some one with him—quite a gentleman—my heart misgives me, it seems incredible that Paul, a poor carpenter, should be riding in a carriage, side by side with a real gentleman !

TRUDGET. It ain't the *usual* style o' arrangement certainly, (*aside*) This carpenter must have been *chiselling* somebody !

MARY. (*continuing earnestly*) On arriving here, with a little parcel for the landlady, I found the same carriage waiting at the door, (*eagerly*) Paul is at this moment beneath this roof, my heart tells me so !

TRUDGET. (*drily*) But you see hearts is apt to make mistakes.

MARY. (*continuing eagerly*) There's a secret, I'm convinced of it, and now that I *am* here, I'll not leave the house till I know what's going on!

TRUDGET. (*suggestively*) You mean to find out what his little game is ?

MARY. (*eagerly*) Yes, but (*looks round puzzled*) I don't know how to set about it. (*to TRUDGET diffidently*) Perhaps, Sir, you would be so obliging as to enquire for me, if Paul is here ?

TRUDGET. (*starting confused*) I—oh, yes—of course, (*aside*) I wish Paul was in Davy Jones's locker! What a captivating little witch it is to be sure. I do believe Jack Trudget is falling in love, Jack Trudget's nose is burning so—(*aloud*) You'll keep your eye on the " *Institutooshun* " won't you, miss ? (*MARY looks round in token of assent—their eyes meet*) Oh! it's all up with Jack Trudget, I feels it is !

(*exit R. u. E.*)

MARY. (*alone anxiously*) Now I wonder if Paul will be angry with me for watching him thus—nay, he will forgive me—for I am sure he loves me dearly, and yet there was a strange accent in his voice when he last bade me good-bye—(*loud hammering of tables, and jingling of glasses heard, L.*)

*Re-enter TRUDGET, R.U. E.*

TRUDGET. He ain't in the tap-room, and seein' as how he's a journeyman carpenter he can't be among the " *Social Farmers*—" howsomever, I may as well have a look, (*crosses stage, opens door in flat L. and peeps in. Loud hammering of tables, and jingling of glasses repeated at back.*)

L.) The "Social Farmers" seem very social indeed, No ! I don't see anyone at all answering the description of this here *helegant hartisan*.

MARY. (*anxiously*) Not there, where can he be?

*Enter BOB, from L. Hammering of tables, jingling of glasses &c, heard L.U. E.*

BOB. (*approvingly*) Well, by jingo, they *are* a merry party.

TRUDGET. What *another* merry party ?

BOB. In course,—there's a wedding breakfast in No. 1, musicianers from London, and all the delicacies of the season.

VOICES. (*Heard L. U. E.*) Waiter! more wine !

BOB. Coming! (*hastens off*) More wine, coming!

TRUDGET. (*turning to No. 1, E.*) Well, I suppose it ain't of no use looking for a carpenter among all the delicacies of the season.

MARY. The waiter has left the door open—I think I should just like to take a peep.

TRUDGET. A "peep" by all means, I suppose they don't charge nothink. (*just as she is approaching door I. U. E.*)

GOODWIN SANDS' voice is heard, L.) SANDS. (*in a distinct voice*) Gentlemen! I give you the health of my esteemed friend, the bridegroom ! (*prolonged hammering of table, and jingling of glasses, &c.*)

TRUDGET. (*drily*) " The health of the bridegroom! " I hope he's got his *speech* ready.

MARY. (*her hand to her heart*) A strange, vague fear overcomes me-----

BRIDEGROOM'S voice. (L.) Ladies and gentlemen ——

MARY. (*starting*) That voice !

BRIDEGROOM. (*continuing*) I assure you this really is the proudest moment of my life-----

MARY. (*with a burst of astonishment*) Why, 'tis Paul's !!!

TRUDGET. (*surprised*) The *carpenter* ! why he's a returning thanks!

MARY. (*looking through door amazed*) Yes! 'tis Paul! !

BRIDEGROOM. (*continuing*) I thank you in my own name, and in that of—my wife!

MARY. (*convulsively clutching TRUDGET'S arm*) His wife !!

TRUDGET. (*with a burst of amazement*) Why the carpenter's been and got spliced !!

MARY. (*faintly*) His wife! (*falls senseless into TRUDGET'S arms.*)

TRUDGET. (*with rueful serio-comicality, supporting MARY*) The wagabond ! he's been making up to the *pair* on 'em—one for *money*, t'other for *amusement*—he's been and disguised hisself as a *carpenter* to delood the poor village girl's unsuspecting imagination ! Nice notions of amusement these *gentlemen* have—they seem to think a poor girl's heart is a *cricket-ball*, a thing they may knock about just as they please ! (*to MARY, soothingly*) But now then, young woman, *don't* take on in this style you know, the willain ain't worth thinking of. (*shaking his fist in direction of door, L.*) Oh, you wagabond ! I should just like to have you out in a quiet lane for *five* minutes ! (*turning to MARY again*) Now here's a pretty position for a respectable peep-show man—she won't say anything ! What the dickens am I to do with the dear creature ? I feel I'm getting fonder and fonder of her every minute. Say summat will you, miss ? (*anxiously*) I say, young woman ! (*shouting*) Miss Bandbox, ahoy !!! *do* say summat, will you ?

MARY. (*raising her head, and looking wildly round—faintly*) His wife ! my short lived dream of happiness is over—the bitter truth now dawns before me. (*aside*) The sickness of despair is at my heart, (*to TRUDGET*) I thank you, sir, for the kindness you have shown me—(*giving him her hand*)—farewell ! farewell ! (*she turns and gives one long lingering glance in the direction of door, L. U. E., and exit rapidly at back, c.*)

TRUDGET. (*looking after her*) Here I say—stop ! (*running up to door c. alarmed*) She's off ! like a flash of lightning. (*uneasily*) I didn't like the tone of that "farewell" at all. Now where is she "off" to I wonder ? (*altering his tone*) But what is it to *you*, Jack Trudget, where she's off to ? p'ra'ps it's as well she *is* off ! so now then, Jack Trudget, you've a sacred dooty to perform Jack Trudget—the spoony business ain't in your line, so no nonsense, if *you* please, Mr. Trudget. (*seizing himself by the arm*) So move on with the show, Mr. Trudget,—sheer off ! (*approaches peep-show on table R., and begins arranging it.*)

*Enter GOODWIN SANDS, with paletot over his arm, hat, &c, L. u. E.*

SANDS. Those bridesmaids are making such a frightful noise, I can't stand it any longer—it's like a chorus of insane magpies ! I've secured my hat and coat and I'll be off ! (*puts on coat—while doing so, walks backwards against*

table, R. on which peep-show is standing—*angrily*) What the devil's that!

TRUDGET. (R., *peeping over show from other side of table*) What is it! why it's my peep-show, when you've done with it!

SANDS. (*crossing angrily to L.*) Confound these vulgar fellows, they are always in the way! (*puts on coat.*)

TRUDGET. (*coming down and looking wistfully at SANDS*) (*aside*) There's a summut in that ere gen'l'man's face as reminds me o' old times— Howsumever—(*taking up show*) Here's off! (*going.*)

*Enter RAFFLES, L.U. E.*

RAFF. (L.) Now then, Sands, don't leave the festive scene—

TRUDGET. (*starting and turning round*) Sands !

RAFF. Come along, Sands, an interesting toast! (*disappears L. u. E.*)

TRUDGET. (*aside with emotion*) Sands! that's the first time I've heard the name since I left the " Matchless Margaret." (*approaching SANDS somewhat anxiously*) Begging your honor's pardon—a—a—that ere gen'l'man called you " Sands."

SANDS. (*haughtily*) Well, there's nothing very wonderful in being called by one's right name is there ?

TRUDGET. (*with increasing eagerness*) Might I venture to ax what the i'other name is ?

SANDS. (*superciliously*) My name, fellow, is Goodwin Sands.

TRUDGET. (*continuing eagerly*) Of Eddystone Lodge ?

SANDS. (*continuing*) Of Eddystone Lodge-----

TRUDGET. (*with a burst of emotion*) I knowed there was a look o' my old Captain about him—(*aloud*) Well, this is a strange coincidence—I finds myself face to face with the brother o' my dear old captain, (*passing his hand across his eyes*) Benjamin Sands of the "Matchless Margaret."

SANDS. (*surprised*) What! did you know my brother the captain ?

TRUDGET. (*with emotion*) Know him! why bless your heart, didn't he take me aboard his ship and perwide for me when I was a-starving in the streets—didn't he save me from being chumped in two by the jaws of a voracious shark—(*shuddering*)—let mo tell you, that's the sort o' hobligation as a man don't easily forget —

SANDS. (*not particularly interested*) Oh ! so you knew Ben, did you ? (*carelessly*) I suppose he's sailing about—far, far away!

TRUDGET. (*mournfully*) Yes, *very* far, far away !

SANDS. (*not understanding—aside, carelessly*) So much the better—I'm always afraid of his coming back, very hard up, and wanting to borrow money of me—(*aloud*) not likely to come home for a long time—eh ?

TRUDGET. (*mournfully*) Not for a *very* long time.

SANDS. (*aside—slapping pocket*) Glad to hear it—money saved is better than money earned !

TRUDGET. (*producing pocket handkerchief and wiping his eyes mournfully*) He won't be home, never no more—he's *dead!*

SANDS. (*with a careless affectation of interest*) Dead! dear me! poor Ben ! sorry—'pon my life I am—died very poor, I suppose ? rolling stones don't gather much moss-----

TRUDGET. (*significantly*) Well, he wasn't so badly off for moss—he's left twenty thousand pounds !

SANDS. (*starting*) Twenty thousand pounds !!! (*aside—suddenly remembering*) Why I must be his next of kin. (*with feigned emotion*) Poor Ben! Oh, dear—dear! this is *very* sad intelligence, (*produces handkerchief, and gives way to assumed transports of grief .*)

TRUDGET. (*commiseratingly*) I knowed it would be a *shock* to you, but it's of no use giving way-----

SANDS. (*feigning emotion*) I know it isn't—I—I must endeavour to keep up— (*blubbing*) for my *wife's* sake, mustn't I!

TRUDGET. (*commiseratingly*) In *course* you must—what 'ud your old 'ooman do without you !

SANDS. (*with an absurdly violent sigh*) A-a-ah! it's a *world* of trouble, isn't it?

TRUDGET. (*seriously*) It is for *some* on us, and *no* mistake!

SANDS. (*at a loss what to say*) A—a—would you like a glass of something ?

TRUDGET. No, thank'ee, I ain't thirsty, (*vacantly*) A—a—I've just been having some *salt beef*-----

SANDS. (*aside, radiant*) Twenty thousand pounds—'twould be a rare lift just now. (*aloud*) But where did Ben get all the money ?

TRUDGET. (*making knots in handkerchief*) You see while the " Matchless Margaret" was a waiting for cargo, the captain had taken a six months lucky turn on it, at the California gold diggings, and was just a sailin' home, when he fell ill, took to his hammock, and gradually got worse and worse-----

SANDS. (*eagerly interrupting*) But he left a will, eh? (*anxiously*) I'm his heir, of course.

TRUDGET. You ! (*coolly*) And what's to become of his daughter ?

SANDS. (*starting violently—amazed*) Daughter ! what the devil do you wean by daughter ?

TRUDGET. (*surprised*) What do I mean by daughter? why a female hoffspring, of the feminine gender.

SANDS. (*forgetting himself, exasperated*) A daughter! then damn it, I'm done !

TRUDGET. (*aside surprised*) Well, he is a heccentric gent, one moment he's a crying, the next he's a swearin'. (*aloud*) Wouldn't you like a glass o' summat ?

SANDS. (*continuing angrily*) A daughter! but I never heard of his marrying! he must have taken that idiotic step abroad!

TRUDGET. (*looking at him in surprise*) No he didn't—he took that hidiotic step at home—it was what they call a match on the sly ; he never told any one about it, except me, and that wasn't till his last illness.

SANDS. (*aside*) How ! a secret marriage ! (*with significant expression*) All hope is not yet lost.

TRUDGET. (*impressively*) One night, your honour, as the poor captain was a lyin' ill in his hammock, he says to me, says he, " Jack," says he in a mournful tone, " it strikes me as how my time ain't far off—there's a summit on my mind, Jack, as is a chokin' me, and I can't keep it aboard no longer. When I'm gone," says he, "make for Old England, seek out my poor wife---- " " Wife, captain ? " says I, " why I didn't know youhad got a wife !" " Jack," says he, shakin' his head all sorrowful like, " years ago I married a village lass under a false name, the name of Mayland,—a year arterwards I took to sea, and deserted her and her child—of late years, Jack, I've tried hard—hard—Jack—" and the tears rolled down the old captain's cheeks, " to find 'em out, but all in vain; my wife must ha' left her native village." "Maybe she's dead, captain," says I, "Maybe—" says he, "maybe:" and the tones o'his voice showed werry clear that what we calls *fun* in our young days, is a rare rod in pickle for us in our old 'uns. "But the daughter," says he, "our Margaret, find her out, promise me you will, Jack ! I remember," says he, " giving the child a little gold medallion—the mother tied it to a piece of ribbon, and fastened it round the child's neck, saying she should wear it in memory of her father! Find her, Jack," says he, " find her ! on her, on my child, I have settled all I have in the world!"

SANDS. (*aside, angrily*) That's pleasant, that is! It's really shameful of him to forget his affectionate brother!

TRUDGET. (*continuing*) " Jack," says he, and the old captain's voice sank lower and lower every minute, "Jack," says he, " lodge my money and all my property, together with my will, in the hands of the British Consul, at the nearest port we touch at!"-----

SANDS. (*eagerly interrupting*) The nearest port!

TRUDGET (*continuing*) " There's a bag o' money Jack," says the old captain in a faint voice, " beneath this mattress ; it will pay the expenses of your search. Swear, Jack," says *he*; "swear to obey the last wishes of your poor old captain!" (*with voice faltering from emotion*) Well, your honor, (*to SANDS*) I knelt by the hammock and swore to leave no stone unturned till I had found the child of my *kind* protector and *preserver* I (*imitating, in faltering accents*) " Bless you, Jack," says he "Bless you! make for North Devon—the name of the village where our child was born—is—is—is—" the poor old captain's voice sank, he looked at me with a wild stare, and fell back on his pillow—never to rise again! (*reproducing handkerchief, with concentrated emotion*) My poor old captain, the only friend I ever had in the wide world—was *dead*!

SANDS. (*carelessly*) Poor Ben! very sad—very sad indeed ! (*aside*) I'm afraid I shall find this *faithful* individual confoundedly in the way.

TRUDGET. (*resuming his usual cheerful manner*) Well your honor, what with storms and other misfortunes, it was a whole year afore-I reached Old England's shores again ; as ill luck would have it, I was robbed of my stock of money at a roadside inn, so there was I without a *penny* in the world to pay expenses ! Now what would you ha' done in such a position ?

SANDS. (*indignantly*) Done ! why I'd ha' given it up as a bad job.

TRUDGET. (*shaking his head slowly*) Ah! that's what *you'd* ha' done may be, but when Jack Trudget swears to do a thing he sticks to it till it is done; so your honour I earned a little money by hard labour, and bought a peep-show.

SANDS. (*surprised*) Bought a *peep-show* ! (*irritably*) what the *devil* did you do that for ?

TRUDGET. Why you see, your honor, the peep-show is a hinstitntion as pays travelling expenses, and leaves a small balance for the refreshment *hof* the propperietior.

SANDS. (*looking at him in amazement*) And you really intend to persevere in this wild goose chase ?

TRUDGET. (*firmly*) Yes your honor—*on* I goes until I finds my pocket captain's daughter. I devotes one half o' my time to my ambition, the other half to minute investigation.—I enquires at all the post offices and public houses, on the road. Up to the present, nobody ain't even so much as *heard* the name o' Margaret Mayland.

SANDS. (*aside musingly*) Margaret Mayland—I must *book* that name !

TRUDGET. (*lifting "peep-show" on to chair previous to putting it on his back.*) Howsumever, I must be going—my investigations in this here village ain't *half* finished. I ain't got no time to lose because there was a *what* you may call it to the will—a *crocodile*!

SANDS. (*surprised*) A *crocodile* ! (*eagerly*) A *codicil* you mean.

TRUDGET. (*quietly*) Ah! to be sure, a *codicil*—I knowed it was a *fish* o' some sort!

SANDS. (*eagerly*) To what effect ?

TRUDGET. (*quietly continuing*) To the effect that if the daughter warn't found in two years, the property should *rewert*—a—a—to some'un else.

SANDS. (*with eager impatience*) To *whom* ? to *whom* ?

TRUDGET. (*looking calmly at SANDS.*) That's just what I never rightly knowed.

SANDS. (*aside, stamping, in a frenzy of impatience*) The devil take the fellow, he'll drive me out of my mind ! but it must be *myself* that the *codicil* affects; his daughter first, his *brother* next, of course !

TRUDGET. One year and eleven months of the time have passed away, so, you see, I must look sharp.

SANDS. (*aside eagerly*) But one short month—(*aloud*) The property you say-----

TRUDGET. (*suddenly running to peep-show*) But p'raps before I go, your honour would just like to have a peep at the " *hinstitooshun* ? "

SANDS. (*impatiently*) No, no ! you say the property—

TRUDGET. (*relapsing into "showman," suggestively*) Just try the grand broadsword combat for the championship between the Duke o' Wellington and Napoleon Buonaparte, at the battle of *Bunker's Hill*!

SANDS. (*impatiently, pushing away show, aside*) Hang the peep-show ! (*aloud*) You say the will and property are with the British Consul ?-----

TRUDGET. (*preoccupied with show*) At *Bunker's Hill*.

SANDS. (*exasperated*) At *Bunker's Hill*!

TRUDGET. (*correcting himself confused*) No, I *don't* mean

Bunker's Hill — *(just at this moment loud and continued, shouts heard at back, repeated cries of " help, help ! "*

TRUDGET. *(hastily leaving show and rushing up to back c.)* Halloa ! what's up ? *(begins mechanically hitching up trowsers—music, piano in orchestra.)*

SANDS. *(exasperated)* What the devil's that to you? *(following him anxiously)* come here! *(aside)* what a meddlesome devil of a fellow this is to be sure!

TRUDGET. *(looking out at back)* Why there's a mob of people on the river bank, *(renewed shouts—" help, help! " &c, &c.)*

TRUDGET. *(at door c.)* Why—*(shading his eyes with his hands)* there's sum'un a struggling in the water, and the lubbers are standing by and not attempting to bear a hand. *(greatly excited, hastily tears off coat and hat, and dashes them on the ground—hitching up his trowsers, to SANDS.)* Just keep your eye on the " hinstitooshun," your honor, I'll have 'em out before you can say Jack Robinson !

*(Exit running at back, v.)*

SANDS. *(who has meanwhile vainly endeavoured to make himself heard)* Here ! stop ! what the devil are you about ? Confound the fellow, he's going to risk his life before I'm in possession of the full particulars — *(calling after him, in an agony—roaring)* Hi ! stop ! don't let him ! he's out of his mind—there he goes ! Oh, this is *distracting!* *(tumultuous noise heard off stage—continued shouting.)*

*Enter THE BRIDE (Miss Raffles) several of the BRIDESMAIDS, and others of the wedding party.*

Miss R. *(affectedly)* Dear me what a dreadful noise! what *can* have happened ?

SANDS. *(pacing irritably to and fro)* There's one fool drowning herself, and another trying to save her.

BRIDESMAIDS. *(in chorus)* Drowning ? *(all scream)* A—a—ah ! ! how dreadful! *(all rush up to back and look out)*

SANDS. *(aside, exasperated)* Twenty thousand pounds at stake—and the *clue*—the *only* clue to them *(stamping)* at "the bottom of the river !! *(at this moment SOCIAL FARMERS heard L. to strike up a discordant chorus of " Hip—hip—hip—hurrah ! " SANDS, furious)* Ah ! drunken clodhoppers ! *(shaking his fist irritably in direction of FARMERS, L.)* This suspense will drive me out of my mind!

*Enter BOB at back, c, running.*

BOB. *(breathless with excitement)* Oh, please, sir, he's got her—he's got her!

ALL. (*in chorus*) Who's got her ?

BOB. The peep-show man, sir, he jumped in—(*kicking out one leg and imitating the action of swimming*) and fetched her out like so much nothink ! (*looking off, violently excited*) Here they come! here they come! (*loud shouts heard outside.*)

*Enter at back TRUDGET, bearing in his arms the inanimate form of MARY—her hair streams wildly over his shoulder, he is followed by a crowd of VILLAGERS, FARMERS, &c. TRUDGET brings MARY forward and places her in chair L. of table R. Music, which has continued from TRUDGET'S last exit, now ceases.*

TRUDGET. (*shouting with all his might*) Here, quick! Chambermaid ! housemaid! waiter! boots ! somebody! anybody ! *all* of you—give this here young woman a glass of hot brandy and water—d'ye hear—hot!

BOB. (*with great alacrity*) Hot, sir? She shall have it ecstasically hot! (*aside*) The peep-show man's a brier-blowed if he ain't! (*exit running R.U.*)

CHAMBERMAIDS, BRIDESMAIDS, &c, surround MARY and carry-her off, L. 1 E.

TRUDGET. (*radiantly*) To think, now, it should turn out to be the little beauty with the band-box ! I was afeard she meant mischief!

SANDS. (*who has been following him anxiously about*) I say now, don't you go catching cold, you know, (*follows TRUDGET up and down, and rubs him carefully with handkerchief*) Now, go and dry yourself at the tap-room fire, that's a good fellow ! (*anxiously*) A—a—this property, you say-----

TRUDGET. (*looking anxiously off after MARY*) Don't you flurry yourself, water never harmed a true sailor yet! (*picks up pea-jacket, squeezes water out of his shirt-sleeve—SANDS starts hastily on one side*)

Re-enter BOB, R. U. E., *running violently with glass in his hand.*

BOB. (*shouting*) Brandy and water !!! (*rushes rapidly across stage and disappears into room L. 1 E.*)

TRUDGET. (*aside*) Cold! Why, when I think as how I've sayed that 'ere young creetur's life, I bursts out into a glow o' satisfaction as would cure a whole hospital o' the influenza— (*looking off eagerly, L.*) I should just like to have a peep how she's a getting on-----

SANDS. (*hastily seizing him by the arm and turning him*

*round*) But I say, you know, *where* is this property lodged ?

TRUDGET. (*recollecting himself*) In the hands o' the British consul at Baltimore !

SANDS. *Baltimore* ? You said Bunker's Hill! (*aside*) I'll communicate with the consul by the next mail, (*looking askance at TRUDGET*) I don't half like this fellow ; he may, for all I know, stumhle on the girl at the very next village he comes to. (*aside, significantly*) Now, in the good old times one might have had him comfortably knocked on the head and pitched into a ditch— (*bitterly*) and yet we talk of our modern *improvements* !

*Enter* Miss RAFFLES, L. 1 E., *followed by* BOB, *who crosses stage, and exits* R. u. E.

Miss R. Oh, Mr. Sands, the poor thing seems quite delirious,—she talks of nothing but "carpenters."

TRUDGET. (*anxiously*) Carpenters! I should haught she had had enough o' *that* class o' hoperative. (*approaches door L.*)

Miss R. (*continuing*) And oh, Mr. Sands, here's a little blue pocket-book we found upon her. (*unseen by TRUDGET, gives pocket-book to SANDS and exit into room L.*)

TRUDGET. (*aside*) It really is *exzruciatin'* to resoom the peep-show business at such a hagonizin' moment! I 'spose there would be no himpropriety in my just saying good-bye to her—(*follows Miss RAFFLES stealthily into room L. 1 E.*)

SANDS. (*looks at pocket-book*) Little blue pocket-book! What the *devil* do I care for a little blue pocket-book. (*opens it*) Halloa ! (*reading*) "Whoever you may be whose eye this reaches, convey to my mistress at Hawthorndean the intelligence that I am no more. The man I loved dearer than life itself has deceived me—cruelly, bitterly deceived me ! I yield to the wild impulse which urges me to my own destruction." (*speaking*) Silly fool, some stupid love affair, I'll wager! (*reading*) "My real name is *not* Mary Langton, but Margaret Mayland. My father is a sea captain-----" (*stopping short, astounded*) Margaret. Mayland ! sea captain ! Can I believe my senses ? Yes, yes ! this girl who has so narrowly escaped an untimely end is my brother's daughter, the very girl this fellow is in search of ! (*struck by a sudden idea*) Ah, what brilliant notion flashes across my bram? (*with concentrated eagerness*) The peep-show man knows nothing of this—he is about to set forth on his wild-goose chase, while the very object of his search remains behind—ha! ha! (*with a burst of triumph*) and beneath *my* superintendence! (*putting*

*pocket-book in pocket of outer coat*) Fortune, I thank thee for this friendly turn!

*Re-enter* TRUDGET, L. I E., *tumultuously followed by*  
BRIDESMAIDS, &c.

BRIDES. (*in chorus*) She's better! she's better!

TRUDGET. (*with a burst of satisfaction*) Nothing like brandy and water! Another dose of the *invariable*, and she'll do!

SANDS. (*carelessly*) Glad to hear it—poor thing! (*aside, looking askance at TRUDGET*) Twenty thousand pounds! What wouldn't one do for twenty thousand pounds?

TRUDGET. (*aside, looking at SANDS scrutinizingly*) Don't quite know what to make o' this here Goodwin—(*doubtfully*) but *he* must be all right, the brother o' my dear old captain *must* be one o' the right sort! (*nervously fiddling with his hat*) You see, your honour, I'm just off again on my woyage of diskivery, and here's this here young gal left behind to commit any fresh act o' female heccentricity as may come into her young head. You see, yer honor, it doesn't do to leave these young creeturs all to themselves—*young women wants a deal o' looking arter!*

SANDS. (*aside, eagerly*) The very thing! (*aloud, with hypocritical pathos*) My worthy fellow, say no more, a—a we understand each other. My wife has no children,—this poor, misguided girl shall find a home with Mrs. Sands.

TRUDGET. (*overcome with joy*) Oh, thank'ee, your honor, thank'ee! Shiver my timbers, my heart's so full that—a—a—(*utterly unable to control his emotion he suddenly rushes violently at SANDS and throws his arms round him*)

SANDS. (*struggling*) Halloa! (*aside*) Confound the fellow. (*disengaging himself*)

TRUDGET. (*throwing up his hat*) Hooray! I knowed my old captain's brother must be one o' the right sort!

SANDS. (*aside—musingly*) Stay—my brother's daughter—I ought to appear to take an interest in the matter—(*is about to take sovereigns from pocket, but alters his mind*) I have two "fivers" in my pocket-book—the more money he has, the more widely will he stray from the mark! (*takes out pocket-book, but instead of taking his own pocket-book from frock coat pocket, he unconsciously takes from overcoat pocket, the blue pocket-book belonging to MARY, and, without looking at it, gives it to TRUDGET*) Take this, my man, it will aid you in your search.

TRUDGET. (*surprised*) Thank'ee your honour, (*looking at book*) A little blue pocket-book! howsumever, I s'pose it

wouldn't be manners to overhaul it just at present, (*puts book in his pocket.*)

*Enter BOB, at back, c.*

BOB. (*to BRIDESMAIDS*) Please, ladies, the gen'l'men says if you don't come at once, they'll begin dancing by themselves. (*music piano in orchestra.*)

BRIDES. (*indignantly*) O-o-o-oh! (*all make hastily for door R.U. E.*)

Miss R. Stay girls, we *must* see the peep-show map off! (*BRIDESMAIDS all come back.*)

*Enter MERTON, with two or three FARMERS, door in flat L.*

MERTON. (*coming forward—surprised—aside*) Attempted suicide—and that fellow saved her life? where is she now?

TRUDGET. (*to MERTON*) Never *you* mind where she is! (*aside*) she'll be out of *his* reach that's—one comfort—

SANDS. Waiter!

BOB. Yes, sir!

SANDS. A carriage and pair to meet the next train! as soon as this unfortunmate young girl has sufficiently rested, I will convey her home.

BOB. (*mechanically*) "Unfortunate young girl, sir!" yes! sir. (*Exit c.*)

MERTON. (*who has overheard the orders given by SANDS—aside*) Convey her home? (*significantly*) I'll follow them and ascertain their destination— (*walks up.*)

TRUDGET. (*who has now got his peep-show on his back—taking up stick*) And now then off, off, says the stranger—off—off and away! Jack Trudget resooms his woyage o' diskivery. (*to SANDS, pointing L., but looking significantly at MERTON*) You'll take care o' her, won't you, governor? You take care o' *her*, and I'll find your brother's child for you, if I tramp *barefooted* over the United Kingdom!

SANDS. (*banteringly*) That's right, my man, find her, find her! (*aside*) Glorious! the twenty thousand pounds are mine! (*aloud, jeeringly*) I'll advertize—I'll offer a reward—I'll leave no step unturned (*aside*) to prevent *you* from ever hearing of her!

TRUDGET. (*fervently*) Thank'ee, your honor, thank'ee!

BRIDES. Good-bye, peep-show man, good-bye!

FARMERS. (*in chorus*) Good-bye, peep-show man!

TRUDGET. (*who has meanwhile approached door c.*) Good-bye! good-bye! it arn't a easy cruise as lies before me, but I've a stout heart to brave the storm, a strong arm to guide the helm, and Heaven (*lifting his hat and looking up*) will light me on my way! So, fare-ye-well! if ever I

returns at all, I'll bring with me—my old captain's daughter!

FARMERS, GUESTS, BBIDESMAIDS, &C. (*cheering heartily*)  
Hooray ! !! (*loud cheering continued until curtain falls—*  
TRUDGET *bends a farewell glance on room where MARY is*  
*reposing—BBIDESMAIDS wave their handkerchiefs—FARMERS*  
*wave their hats—animated tableau—quick curtain.*

END OF ACT I.

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ACT II.

SCENE FIRST.—*Occupying full extent of stage—a wild landscape in North Devon— at back, a ridge of rocks extending across stage, with rugged footpath descending from top of rocks L. to stage c.—halfway down footpath, is a clump of dwarfed trees, brushwood, &c. Foreground, a ruined tower, the walls, &c, of which are crumbling to decay; the interior of ground floor of tower, (partly divided by the fragments of a wall) is visible to spectator. The sea is seen in the extreme distance. Night—moonlight, characteristic music in orchestra. JACK TRUDGET is seen crossing rising ground at bank, he carries peep-show and stick—stops on rising ground and looks round him, as though uncertain in which direction to proceed; he, at last, descends winding path.*

TRUDGET. (*halting and looking round him*) Well, shiver my timbers, if I know where I've got to—I'm out of my reck'nin' altogether,—I must ha' taken a wrong turning at that last cross road, (*coming forward*) I've been walking on ever since dusk, and the further I goes, the more I don't know where I'm a going to! (*looking round*) It's a rare outlandish place wherever it is—just the sort o' place for a midnight massacre or a interestin' murder, (*perceiving ruins*) Halloa ! what ramshackle old *snuggery* is this ? the last gen'l'man as lived here forgot to shut the door arter him! (*entering ruins and looking up*) Well it has its advantages—there's a fine *draught* for them as likes *fresh air*, and the stars is wisible through the roof, which is as good as having *gas* laid on, and much more economical! (*putting down peep-show*) It's lucky I came across this conwenient old ruin, or I might ha' gone stumblin' about

all night afore I came to a willage, I'll just sit down on the " hinstitooshun " and have a snack o' bread and cheese, and then I'll turn in for the night! ( *produces bread and cheese from a pouch which is slung across his shoulders and commences eating*) I dreams every night reg'lar o' that 'ere *little craft* with the *band-box*; it's just this werry day month I pulled her out o' the water, just as she was sinking to rise no more. Summat must ha' directed my steps to Hawthorndean, that'ere ewentful day, for didn't I have the good luck to run ag'in the brother o' my dear old captain ? Can't think though why he gave me "that 'ere *little -pocket-book!* " Take it," says he, " it will help you in your search," I fancied he meant *five pun flimsies* at least—but when I opened it, there wasn't nothink in it, and *nothink* never helped *nobody*, as ever I heerd on! Ah! it ain't a easy woyage o' discovery as I'm a sailin' on—I've cruised through eight-and-thirty precious willages in the last four weeks and not the slightest symptoms of a Margaret Mayland ! I've come across *two* Margarets, certainly, but one was a *Brown* and the other was a *Hopkins*—so *they* warn't o' no use ! (*dejectedly*) Jack Trudget feels hisself gettin' disheartened, (*earnestly*) Howsomever, I promised my *old captain* I'd find her, and find her I will ! Halloo! what's that? (*listening*) Footsteps coming this way ! (*standing up*) I shouldn't ha' thought there was much thoroughfare about these parts, in the middle o' the night; what sort o' customers are these, I wonder ? I'll keep my weather eye open, and keep a wigilant look out for squalls, (*conceals himself behind ruins*) (*call.*)  
MURKY JACK and FOULWEATHER BILL, (*utter carrying a*

*lantern*) *are seen crossing ridge of rocks from L., they descend rugged path.*

JACK. (*looking cautiously round*) Well, this is a rum start! we've lost all trace on him.

BILL. I can't think where the blazes this blessed Peep-Show man's got to.

TRUDGET. (*listening, aside*) Peep-Show man !

JACK. He must ha' taken the t'other turnin' at that there cross road—anyhow he can't be far off.

BILL. Right, Jack ; we're sure on him anyhow, so *I wotes* we has a *rest* afore we goes any further, s'pose we sits down in the old ruins, smokes a quiet pipe, and talks over how we're to keep the Peep-Show man quiet, when we've smugged him aboard!

TRUDGET. (*aside, astounded*) *Smugged him aboard!*

Why, shiver my timbers, why they're going to smug *me* !  
*(leans forward and listens eagerly; the two fishermen have  
 meanwhile seated themselves on fragments of masonry.  
 TRUDGET is concealed from them by broken wall.)*

JACK. *(producing pipes and tobacco)* It's a mysterious  
 bit o' bis'ness—you see our orders was this here ; we were  
 to lay wait for this here Peep-Show man, prevail on him  
 to drink a friendly glass with us, *hocuss* the liquor, and get  
 him snug aboard our smack the " Jumping Jenny."

TRUDGET. *(aside, surprised)* The *devil* you were !

JACK. *(continuing)* And once we'd got him *there*, we was  
 to keep him *safe* under *hatches* until further notice.

TRUDGET. *(aside)* A werry comfortable way o' bein'  
 purwided for !

JACK. *(continuing)* It strikes me he knows *too much* for  
*somebody*, and they want to get him out o' the way ! eh,  
 Bill?

BILL. Ah, *that's* it, Jack—or maybe it's that pocket-book  
 as the Lunnon chap put us up to.

TRUDGET. *(aside, listening eagerly)* *Pocket-book!*

BILL. *(continuing)* Aye, he said it was a *shabby little blue*  
 'an.

TRUDGET. *(aside, more and more surprised)* That's it sure  
 enough, the one Goodwin Sands gave me !

BILL. The cove said we was to make *sure o' that pocket-  
 book*, whatever we did! well, it's a rum start anyhow;  
 here be we, two fishermen by *name*, and smugglers by  
*natur'*, promised *five pounds each* if we can only smug a  
*Peep-Show cove* ! *(with a gruff laugh)* That's a rum sort o'  
 fish to haul alongside ! ho, ho, ho !

JACK. *(gruffly)* Blowed if I'd care *what* fish it is, as long  
 as it comes to *my* net! wby I'd smug a tax-gatherer for  
 five pounds, let alone a *Peep-Show* man !

BILL. So would I, Jack! I don't care *how* I gets my  
 livin' as long as I gets it *honest* ! business in the smugglin'  
 line is *bad*, there arn't been no *wrecks* lately—why, this 'ere  
 peep-show cove is quite a *windfall*—pass the lantern,  
 Jack, and let's light up !

TRUDGET. *(aside, coolly)* There's foul play a preparin' for  
 Jack Trudget, but *(shaking stick)* Jack Trudget's ekal to  
 the occasion ! *(peeping round the corner)* There's only *two*  
 on 'em, they *looks* rayther awkward customers, but shiver  
 my timbers if one honest sailor isn't ekal to *two* smuggling  
 wagabones! I'll just interdooce 'em to Trudget's owe  
 partikler. *(unseen by FISHERMEN, TRUDGET hitches up his*

*trousers, picks up his stick, and appears to be preparing himself for a desperate encounter.)*

BILL. *(who has meanwhile been lighting his pipe at lantern)*  
The cove's somewhere within half a mile on us—I wonder where the blazes he is ?

TRUDGET. *(who has meanwhile stealthily crept through gap in wall, and now stands between SMUGGLERS, stick in hand)*  
Where is he ? Why, *(in a voice of thunder)* HERE he is !!!  
*(with a vigorous blow of stick he strikes the lantern from BILL'S hand, and attacks FISHERMEN furiously.)*

JACK. } *(together, thunderstruck) Ah! murder!! (they*  
and } *rush out of ruins hotly pursued by TRUDGET. )*  
BILL. }

TRUDGET. *(following them up, and laying violently about him)* You'll smuggle the Peep-Show man, will you ? *(gives JACK a tremendous thump with stick over shoulders. N.B.—Each fisherman should have a piece of board inside Guernsey in order that the blows may resound.)*

JACK. *(shouting)* Oh! what a poke—he's knocked all my wind out! *(rushes off R.)*

TRUDGET. *(wheeling round and turning sharp upon the other FISHERMAN who is close at his heels)* You'll " hocuss " my liquor will you ? *(fetches him a tremendous " whack " with stick.)*

BILL. *(roaring lustily)* O-o-oh!!! he ain't a Peep-Show man, he's the devil!! *(makes for exit but TRUDGET " chivies " him backwads and forwards, till after a deal of dodging, BILL rushes off R., just as TRUDGET gives him, roaring, a final poke with stick.)*

TRUDGET. *(looking after them)* Well! anyhow! I've given *them* the "rheumatics" for the next fortnight! the sneaking scoundrels! But all this is werry mysterious! *Who* is it wants to get Jack Trudget out o' the way ? *(reflecting)* They wanted this pocket-book! I wonder what's in the plaguey pocket-book ? there must be summat partikler hid away in some corner on it, or there wouldn't be such a precious fuss about it! *(picking up lantern which is still alight on the ground—holding lantern close to book)* Here's summat written in pencil, as I never noticed afore! *(soft music in orchestra—reading slowly)* "The man I loved mora dearly than life itself, has cruelly deceived me! *(speaking, surprised)* Oh! he has, has he ? *(reading)* " I yield to the rash impulse which urges me to my own destruction." *(speaking, surprised)* Shiver my timbers, why this is like the little lass I pulled out o' the water.

*(reading)* " My name is not *Mary Langton* but *Margaret M-a-y-l-a-n-d.* *(speaking astounded)* Halloo! can I believe my eyes? *(reading slowly)* "My father is a sea captain on a distant voyage." *(astounded)* "Hawthorndean." *(with a burst of conviction, the truth suddenly flashing across him)* What !!! why shiver my timbers! the *little beauty* with, the *band-box* and my *old captain's daughter* are one and the same *hidentical* person ! the lass I saved from drowning this werry day month! *(utterly overcome)* Oh, lor! oh lor! this is a *conglomeration!* no wonder I felt a sort o' drawing towards her the werry moment I first clapped eyes on her! *(earnestly)* Why *she* was the *unknown port* I was steering my course to—the *distant land* I've been so long a travellin' to dis-kiver, and *here,* *(pointing to pocket-book)* *here* have I been for the last month, with the *correct chart* in my pocket, soundings and all, and never knowed nothing about it!! *(utterly overcome with joy)* Oh lor, oh lor! Howsumever, *(puzzled)* there's breakers ahead, that's clear ! *(struck by a sudden idea)* I'll take this here book back to Muster Goodwin Sands, he *can't* ha' knowed what was *in* it. *(overjoyed)* Oh dear, oh dear! how pleased the kind-hearted gent will be ! *(he enters ruins and, replaces peep-show on his back—during this last speech moon has been gradually declining, sun is seen to rise over the distant sea—picturesque effects of colour, &c. While TRUDGET is inside, the ruins MURKY JACK and FOULWEATHER BILL are seen advancing cautiously down projecting rocks at the back of stage, from R., they point out TRUDGET to each other with gestures significant of a determination to be revenged—they cautiously descend a portion of the winding path, and, unseen by TRUDGET, conceal themselves behind the clump of shrubs and heather about halfway down the path.*

TRUDGET. *(issuing from ruins and looking round)* Ah! the morning breaks! the darkness is clearing away, and the bright daylight is a streaming down to guide Jack Trudget on his way—I ain't had much of a night's rest, but this here diskivery is more invigorating than a fortnight's conseketive snooze! *(railway whistle heard in the remote distance)* Ah! there goes a train—the line's over there ! I'll catch the early " Parly " and be in Exeter before noonday, so now then Jack Tradget, clap on all sail! we steers our course for Eddy-stone Lodge and Goodwin Sands! *(TRUDGET, unconscious of the danger that awaits him, begins to ascend path—no*

*sooner has he reached the chimp of shrubs, than the two FISHERMEN rush forth and seize him in their grasp. TRUDGET struggling) What! at it again, you sneaking scoundrels ! ! (with a desperate effort he disengages himself from their grasp—a short, but violent scuffle ensues, during which MURKY JACK, who is at the extreme edge of the ravine, loses his footing and disappears, with a wild cry, over back of rocks) Ah ! that's your own doing, Mr. Fisherman! you would have it, you know ! (TRUDGET now closes with his remaining adversary, forces him on to his knees, and, with a powerful grasp, holds him in a suppliant attitude, while, with the other hand he raises his stick in the attitude of striking—Tableau, Scene closes in.)*

N.B.—To PROVINCIAL MANAGEKS—This scene can be easily adapted to the resources of the theatre in which it is performed. In small theatres, the *second* struggle (on the rocks) may be omitted—the scene terminating with Trudget's soliloquy and rapid exit, in direction from which the railway whistle has been heard to proceed.

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SCENE SECOND.— *An apartment in Eddystone Lodge (Goodwin Sands' villa), near Exeter,—front scene.*

*Enter MARY, door in flat.*

MARY. The poor lady is asleep; her illness, though not dangerous, is a tedious and lingering one. Mr. Sands seems to take but little interest in his wife's distressing condition. He rarely visits her, and contents himself with coldly asking after the state of her health. Strange conduct this from a gentleman who, in all other respects, seems so benevolent and so good! His poor wife tells me she is happier, since her husband engaged me as her companion. (*thoughtfully*) I notice that Mr. Sands appears embarrassed and uneasy when I am present—he looks at me with a mistrustful glance, in which anxiety seems mingled with something approaching to fear, (*passing her hand across her brow*) So many strange occurrences have, of late, befallen me, that both Past and Present seem to me like a wild, disordered dream! Since the day when, Heaven be thanked, I was so miraculously preserved from the consequences of my rash, sinful act, I have learnt to scorn and despise the man who could so basely tamper with my happiness—his image is for ever banished from my heart!

Yes! my thoughts dwell with gratitude on that generous hearted, fellow who so nobly saved my life, and showed so much interest in my fate and fortunes. I wonder what has become of him. I have oftentimes questioned Mr. Sands upon the subject, but he always hurriedly assures me that he knows nothing about him, and turns angrily away. *(looking off)* Ah, yonder comes Mr. Sands, and with him that wicked-looking old lawyer, who has been here so frequently of late. I know not why, but I feel an instinctive aversion for that man—I will avoid him. *(exit R.*

*Enter GOODWIN SANDS and COGNOVIT CROWSFOOT L.—SANDS' manner throughout this, and the following scene, evinces incessant anxiety and agitation.*

SANDS. *(looking anxiously round)* Then you have heard nothing fresh from Devonshire ?

CROW. *(taking snuff)* Nothing decisive, my respected client, nothing decisive; but, depend upon it, it's all right. My confidential clerk is on the coast superintending the affair.

SANDS. *(anxiously)* Your confidential clerk,—who the devil's he ?

CROW. *(rubbing his hands)* An invaluable fellow. He has secured competent assistance of the " rough and ready " kind, and depend upon it, they are on the peep-show man's track by this time.

SANDS. *(alarmed)* Hush! *(lowering his voice)* I have received full particulars from New York respecting my brother's will, *(anxiously)* The hour is at hand—the prize is within my grasp—*(Looking suspiciously round)* but more of this anon. Modern walls are so confoundedly thin, a man can't open his mouth in his own house !

CROW. *(admiringly)* What a cautious card it is ! But I say, my respected client, between you and me, where is this girl—this lawful heiress, you know ?

SANDS. *(with a crafty look)* Safe, Mr. Crowsfoot, safe! Where neither Peep-Show man, nor any one else is ever likely to look for her !

CROW. Then why so anxious to get the fellow out of the way—eh, Mr. Sands?

SANDS. *(angrily)* Because, like an idiot, I have placed within his grasp the very clue he has so vainly sought for !

CROW. *You have ! (knowingly tapping his nose with his finger)* Ah, I see—the pocket-book you are so anxious to recover.

SANDS. (*eagerly*) Yes ! in size, shape, and substance it exactly resembled my own. I had placed the one in the *inside*, the other in the *outside* coat-pocket, (*illustrating with his hand*) In my hurry to get rid of that accursed Peep-Show man, I put my hand in the *wrong pocket*, and actually gave him the very book that had-just been found on the girl!

CROW. (*knowingly*) Containing, I suppose, some rather awkward particulars ?

SANDS. Awkward! (*lowering his voice and looking anxiously round*) It contains lines written by the girl herself, signed in her real name, and stating her actual birth and parentage. Had the fellow caught sight of those lines, a few hours would have sufficed him to reveal everything!

CROW. (*taking snuff*) Devilish provoking, certainly! You must be more careful about your pockets, my respected client. Take care of your pockets! ha! ha! ha! (*banteringly*) However, I suppose mistakes will happen, especially after wedding breakfasts and champagne—ha! ha! ha! But (*seriously*) don't be alarmed ! (*significantly*) the peep-show man must be pretty well provided for by this time.

SANDS. (*uneasily*) I say, no unnecessary violence, I trust.

CROW. You mean nothing at all likely to get *you* into trouble, (*chuckling*) Ha ! ha ! trust to me, you know *my* cautious style of transacting business.

SANDS. (*anxiously*) But this agent, this clerk of yours, can you depend upon him ?

CROW. *Depend* on him ! Why I saved him from the treadmill only last year, and could have him *transported to-morrow* if I liked—if *that* isn't a voucher for his respectability I don't know what is ! It's strange he doesn't write, but I suppose he's got into some wild part of the country where postage-stamps have never been heard of. (*banteringly*) Ah, Mr. Sands, you're a pretty client for a respectable lawyer like me!

SANDS. (*looking anxiously round*) Hush! Confound you, hush!

CROW. (*lowering his voice, banteringly*) To defraud your unfortunate niece of her lawful inheritance! Why, you're quite the wicked uncle in the story books!

SANDS. (*angrily*) Pooh! nonsense! I'm not even supposed to be conscious of the girl's existence It was by the merest chance I became aware of it,—besides, what would

*she* do with a fortune ? A *milliner's apprentice*—a girl accustomed to eighteenpence a day ! (*sneeringly*) the sudden possession of so much wealth would have undermined the simplicity of the little creature's nature, and have inspired her with a sinful taste for pomps and vanities !

CROW. (*jeeringly*) Why, it's a positive *service* you are doing her! she ought to *stand* something !

SANDS. (*continuing mockingly*) Yes, the arcadian innocence of her disposition shall continue unsophisticated! I'll look her out a stout, wooden-headed farmer for a husband, all *grins* and good nature, and stow her away in a snug corner of the country, beyond the reach of any stray *information* that might otherwise reach her!

CROW. (*admiringly*) I thought *I* was sharp enough, but, hang me, if you don't beat me hollow. Ah, I've a great respect for you, Mr. Sands—you are such a *thorough-going humbug!*

SANDS. (*interrupting, angrily*) What!

CROW. (*continuing, jeeringly*) I say, have you established any more "benevolent societies" lately ? any more "coal and counterpane clubs," eh ?

SAND. Of course I have! What, should I do without my reputation for philanthropy ? But, I say, you'll stay to dinner, of course. I have a large party of friends coming—one of my speculation dinners—meanwhile we will take a stroll in the garden, (*producing document*) I must, show you the particulars connected with the will. We'll stroll down to the river bank!

CROW. (*producing handkerchief*) Ah, where no one can hear us except the fishes, (*admiringly*) What a *cautious* card it is, to be sure! (*in replacing handkerchief unconsciously lets it fall*)

SANDS. (*taking him by the arm*) Come, I've much to tell you and to talk over.

CROW. (*at wing, R.*) Ah, Mr. Sands, you're a wicked sinner, but I'll stick to you faithfully as-----

SANDS. (*interrupting*) As long as I pay you well, I *know* you will. Come along !

CROW. (*as they go out*) You'll tip up handsome, you know.

SANDS. (*impatiently*) Of course I will, (*angrily*) Come along!

CROW. (*turning round*) Stop a bit, I've dropped my handkerchief! (*runs and picks up handkerchief*)

SANDS. (*going after him and seizing him irritably by the*

*arm, roaring*) Confound you, come along!! (*drag shim off R.—static, changes to*

SCENE THIRD—*Occupying full extent of stage. The garden of Eddystone Lodge—at back a lawn, descending to river, which, with distant view of opposite shore, fills up background. Trees, shrubs, &c. in profusion. A portion of the stage laid out in flower-beds and gravel walks, statues of nymphs, &c. R., a summer-house L., opposite summer-house, a thick shrubbery. At commencement of scene, a boat, in which MERTON is standing upright, rowed by a boatman, slowly crosses back of stage and disappears. After an interval, MERTON reappears among shrubs at back, looks cautiously round, and stealthily advances to centre of stage)*

MERT. (*anxiously*) 'Tis about the hour she usually walks alone in the garden ! I have watched daily from the opposite shore—I will await her here. Ah, would that I had never seen this girl ! (*desperately*) All efforts to subdue my passion for her have been vain! A wild, insensate, love has obtained possession of my fevered breast. Absence has but served to increase it. I have traced her hither to the villa of this Goodwin Sands, in whose household site would seem to hold some situation, (*looking round*) This portion of the garden is beyond earshot of the house—should the girl again scorn my passionate appeal, I hurry her to the boat, row quickly to the opposite shore, where a coach with two fleet steeds will quickly convey us beyond the reach of pursuit! 'Tis a rash, desperate act, but my ardent passion has reached the pitch at which reason's dictates pass unheeded by, and nought is listened to save the wild promptings of a guilty frenzy ! Hist! footsteps approach ! Ah ! that shrubbery, (*hastily conceals himself behind shrubbery*)

*Enter MARY, L.*

MARY. All is now ready ! This has been an unusually fatiguing day ! I have been occupied the whole morning in superintending the preparations for the grand dinner party which Mr. Sands is giving to-day, to a numerous circle of friends, (*musingly*) Yes! my life, though scarcely happy, is, at any rate, calm and tranquil—I am, at least freed from the danger which, constantly menaced me while at Hawthorndean.

*Enter MERTON, stealthily from shrubbery, L.*

MERTON. *(to MARY, in a hoarse whisper)* This time you escape me not-----

MARY. *(uttering a half suppressed shriek)* Ah!

MERTON. *(seizing her by the hand)* Hush ! resistance is vain ! *(hurriedly)* Your image has driven sleep from my pillow, has banished peace from my heart,—slowly and with difficulty have I traced you hither ! *(drawing her towards river)* Come! a boat awaits us near the garden steps !

MARY. *(struggling violently,-in an agony of apprehension)* Help ! Alas, the servants are too far off to hear me. Help ! *(calling wildly)*

MERTON. *(fiercely)* Peace I say—you are mine at last *(throws his arm round her waist, and commences dragging her to the boat.)*

MARY. Help! *(clasping her hands imploringly)* Is there no one, no one to protect me? *(just at this moment JACK TRUDGET'S head suddenly appears looking over wall, R.)*

TRUDGET. *(looking over wall)* I heer'd a cry of "help." *(perceiving MARY and MERTON, and at once "realizing" the situation)* Halloa! at it again, are you ? *(bestriding wall)* I'm just in the nick of time, *(unperceived by MERTON he approaches the latter just as he has dragged MARY, struggling, to boat steps—seizing MERTON by collar and twisting him round)* Perhaps you'll leave that young 'ooman alone !

MERTON. *(turning round and perceiving TRUDGET, thunder-struck)* This fellow again!

TRUDGET. *(banteringly)* Yes, the "seedy wagabond" again, *(hitching up trousers)* The " seedy wagabond's" rayther in the way, isn't he ?

MERTON. *(beside himself with ungovernable fury)* Accursed miscreant! a ducking in yon river shall teach you how to interfere !

TRUDGET. *(hitching up trousers)* All right, we'll try a cold bath together ! *(tustle ensues—they struggle desperately to river bank, when MERTON plunges his hand into TRUDGET'S neckerchief with a view to dragging him into river—the neckerchief comes untied, and slips through MERTON'S hands, so that MERTON loses his balance, and falls back into river.)*

MERTON. *(as he falls)* Curses! *(disappears into river.)*

MARY. *(screaming)* A-a-ah !

TRUDGET. *(quietly readjusting his neckerchief—to MARY)* That's the great advantage of a slip-knot, miss! Being

naturally a slippery customer, the ends has slipped through his fingers and he's slipped into the water ! (*looking eagerly dmvn in water*) I say how do *you* like it, eh ? it's werry refreshing, ain't it ? so good for the constitooshun, you know!

MARY. (*alarmed*) But he will be drowned!

TRUDGET. Don't be frightened, miss ! he's destined for a more elewated termination, (*pantomimes hanging*) Besides, he can swim—see, he's a getting into the boat and a pullin' over to the opposite shore with all the welocity of a guilty conscience, (*coming forward*) Ah! that ducking will do him all the good in the world—it will cool his over affectionate natur' for him ! (*looking at MARY fondly*) And how ha' *you* been, miss ?

MARY. (*gratefully*) To your timely and providential arrival I am again indebted for my preservation. Oh ! how can I sufficiently thank you ? (*looking down confused*) This is another service added to my already heavy debt of gratitude.

TRUDGET. (*nervously*) Don't talk about debts o' gratitude, miss, it's a mercy as how I got here in time—I've had a narrow escape on it, miss—I've been as nearly "*hocussed*" as here and there one.

MARY. (*surprised*) Hocussed!

TRUDGET. Yes, miss—two scoundrely smugglers has been a dogging my steps. (*aside, admiringly*) She's just a shade distractinger than she was afore !

MARY. (*gratefully*) I have so often thought of you—so often wondered whether we should ever meet again !

TRUDGET. (*starting—aside*) Oh lor ! she's been a thinkin' o' me. (*aloud*) And that 'ere helegant carpenter, miss!

MARY. (*calmly*) I have recovered from my dream, and have learnt to feel nought but contempt for the recollection of a villain, who could so cruelly deceive me!

TRUDGET. (*eagerly*) Hear ! hear! what's the use o' caring for carpenters, or anybody else, as ain't worthy on you. (*aloud, tying desperately tight knots in his pocket handkerchief*) I know, Miss, as how we can't always help these here fancies—they lays hold o' you all of a sudden like, for all the world like the whooping-cough or the measles. (*shyly*) Ah! it's a horful thing to be in love, ain't it, miss? (*looking round at MARY and sighing violently*) Heigh-ho !

MARY. (*sympathetically, and with something like curiosity*) Have *you* then, Mr. Trudget, ever suffered from an attachment of the kind ?

TRUDGET. (*eagerly*) Have I? (*aside*) Lor ! how lovely them eyes is a twinklin'.

MARY. (*continuing—looking down*) I could hardly fancy that any girl could turn a deaf ear to the appeal of one so good, so kind-hearted as yourself, (*raises her eyes—looks timidly at TRUDGET, then hastily looks at ground again.*)

TRUDGET. (*aside, surprised*) Another of them looks! (*drawing a deep breath*) Every time she gives me one o' them *cork-screw*ers, it goes clean through me, like a flash o' lightning through a powder magazine! (*aloud, timidly looking round at MARY, and tying knots more tightly than ever*) Then you think, miss, that if Jack Trudget, rough-looking, plain-sailing individual as he is—was to form a detachment—for a young person—(*shyly*)—a werry good-looking person, mind you—you think Jack Trudget would stand—a—a—just a sort of a ghost of a quarter of a chance ?

MARY. (*frankly*) I am *sure* he would, (*significantly*) If I thought I could intercede for you with anyone-----

TRUDGET. (*bewildered*) You, miss? (*aside*) What does she mean—why I could almost — (*suddenly remembering*) But dash my wig, I've come to tell her o' that twenty thousand ! (*resuming his old manner*) Jack Trudget! remember your sacred dooty, Jack, and keep it steadily fixed afore your weather eye, Jack ! (*with a violent effort and altered manner—aloud*) And now, miss, (*producing little blue pocket-book*) did this little pocket-book ever belong to you, miss ?

MARY. (*immediately recognizing it*) Yes, 'tis mine—I have not seen it since the day when—when----- (*confused—casts down her eyes.*)

TRUDGET. When— (*kicks out one leg behind, and imitates action of swimming*) Exactly—is these here pencil lines in your handwriting, miss ?

MARY. (*sorrowfully*) They are—I hastily wrote them a few moments before — (*again casting down her eyes embarrassed.*)

TRUDGET. (*suggestively*) Before, before — (*again kicks out leg and imitates action of "taking a header"—reprovingly*) Ah ! rayther a hasty purceedin' that, miss, (*resuming*) In these here pencil lines you say, miss, that your name ain't Mary Langton, but —

MARY. (*interrupting*) Margaret Wayland! (*seriously*) Yes, family misfortunes rendered it advisable for me, on going to my situation at Hawthorndean, to take another

name. My father you must know, Mr. Trudget, deserted us when I was yet an infant----

TRUDGET. (*aside, rapturously*) To think *I* should hear it from her own lips!

MARY. (*continuing*) He was captain of a merchant vessel—I was too young to remember him, but my thoughts of him have ever been associated with this little gold medallion.

TRUDGET. (*aside, agitated*) The gold medallion! the old captain's gift!

MARY. (*producing medallion which she wears round her neck*) During my poor mother's lifetime she has often told me that my father placed it round my neck when an infant, the very night he left us—never to return! (*sadly*) I have worn it ever since, as my only record of a parent, I was never destined to see more!

TRUDGET. (*half pleased, half vexed*) There ain't much doubt about the lawfulness o' *her* claim to the property. (*sorrowfully*) So now then to cut away the last plank I'd got to float by, and to sacrifice the only genuine detachment as ever glowed in Jack Trudget's manly bosom! (*aloud, with a desperate effort*) Miss, I'm sorry to inform you—no, I mean I'm glad to tell you that—a—a—you're lawful heiress to—(*with a tremendous gulp*)—twenty thousand pounds!

MARY. (*astounded, starting back*) Twenty thousand pounds!!

TRUDGET. (*with emotion*) Yes, miss—a—a—I've been looking for you this many a day----

MARY. (*surprised*) Looking for *me*!

TRUDGET. (*continuing*) Yes, miss! Why, it was all along o' *you*, miss, that I took to the peep-show business. (*suddenly remembering*) By the bye the hinstitooshun is round the corner at this moment, miss—the landlord of the "Dog and Gun" is a keepin' his eye on him for me!

MARY. (*with increasing surprise*) You say that it was on *my* account that you----

TRUDGET. (*continuing*) Yes, miss! I swore to the old captain, your father, that I would find his child for him, and that there little gold medallion, as your dear father his self told me on, is the last link as was wanting in the chain o' evidence—Jack Trudget's woyage o' diskivery is over! his poor old captain's child is found!

MARY. This intelligence is really so sudden, so unexpected! I, a poor milliner's apprentice, heiress to a fortune?

TRUDGET. Yes, miss, but (*uneasily*) it ain't all right yet, miss,—the sea looks calm, but there's *breakers ahead*—I can't quite make it out, miss ! but it strikes me there's a regular "gunpowder-plot" a going on somewheres, but they ain't a going to make a Guy Fawkes o' Jack Trudget! I've come here, miss, by the early Parly to have a confab with Mr. Goodwin Sands on the subject—he'll set it all straight in double quick time, (*joyously*) Lor! how delighted he will be when I takes you by the hand and says, (*imitating*) " Governor, allow me to interdoose your long lost niece, your brother's only child ! "

MARY. (*astounded*) He ! Mr. Sands, my father's brother !

TRUDGET. Yes, miss, (*looking off, L.*) Halloa! here he comes.

MARY. (*looking off*) And with him that odious lawyer.

TRUDGET. (*hastily*) Lawyer! (*disappointed*) Oh! bother the lawyer—he'll just spoil it all—stop, miss ! suppose you steps behind that 'ere shrubbery, miss, while I ensconces myself in the harbour, and then as soon as the lawyer's gone, we'll rush out and take the gov'nor by surprise ! my eyes ! how delighted he will be ! (*in great excitement*) Run, miss, run!

MARY. (*running to shrubbery—looking after JACK*) True-hearted fellow! I could almost think, but no, it's impossible (*conceals herself behind shrubbery L.*)

TRUDGET. (*looking after MARY*) She gov' me another of them cork screwers—oh, if it wasn't for the sacred dooty. (*disappears into summer-house R.*)

*Enter GOODWIN SANDS and COGNOVIT CBOWSFOOT in close confabulation, L.*

SANDS. (*holding documents in his hand—looking round*) Here, we are screened from observation, we can now speak without restraint—(*complacently*) that's the great advantage of a large garden-----

CROW. (*admiringly*) What a cautious card it is—I wonder you don't transact all your business in the middle of Salisbury Plain!

SANDS. (*continuing—pointing to document in his hand*) You see, this is the abstract of my brother's will—it seems he actually appointed this peep-show man his executor.

TRUDGET. (*peeping out from summer-house—aside*) So he did!

SANDS. (*continuing*) The New York people have been sending all over the world in search of him, but can't find him anywhere.

CROW. (*knowingly*) Not likely to get hold of his *present* address, at any rate, (*chuckling*) Ha ! ha ! ha !

SANDS. (*anxiously*) Ah ! I hope all's going well yonder ; two ruffians were hardly enough—(*savagely*)—I'd have set a whole band of ticket-o'-leave men at his heels—I would have given half I possessed to have that fellow safely disposed of!

TRUDGET. (*aside—peeping from, summer-house—intensely bewildered*) *What's he say ?*

CROW. (*persuasively*) My respected client, I tell you it's all right—I feel assured that according to the programme set forth in my agent's last letter, your friend the peep-show man is, at this very moment, kicking about in the hold of the " Jumping Jenny."

SANDS. (*fiercely*) Devil, take him ! let's hope so, at any rate!

TRUDGET. (*aside—greatly puzzled*) *Is these my ears as I'm a-hearin' with ?*

SANDS. (*referring to paper*) Here is the abstract of the will forwarded from New York. In the absence of the executor (*mockingly*) John Trudget, Esquire—ha ! ha ! they have, in answer to my application, forwarded the particulars to me as the deceased's next of kin. (*reading—CROWSFOOT looks over his shoulder*) " Abstract of Will, &c.—I, Benjamin Sands, of the good ship "The Matchless Margaret," do will and bequeath to my daughter Margaret—known as Margaret Wayland—the bulk of my property consisting, &c, &c." Ah ! here is the passage—" should all efforts to find the said Margaret Wayland have proved ineffectual, at the expiration of two years from this date, and should no reasonable probability exist of her discovery, I will, that the said property revert to my brother, Goodwin Sands, of Eddystone Lodge, Devonshire."

CROW. (*examining documents*) Clear, straightforward, lucid, satisfactory !

SANDS. The date of the will is precise in the extreme—at six o'clock of this present day the two years will expire—

CROW, (*looks at his watch*) Then, in exactly an *hour*, my respected client will be legally entitled to this very snug property-----

TRUDGET. (*aside eagerly, listening*) An hour ! it's lucky I caught the " early Parly."

CROW. (*banteringly*) Ha ! ha ! I suppose there isn't much chance of the little niece—the lawful heiress, putting in her claim in the brief interval—eh ?

SANDS. (*complacently*) Well, not *much* certainly—ah! I've taken my measures with consummate skill!

TRUDGET. (*aside*) Have you! (*nibbling his eyes*) Well, this is a clearing up shower-----

CROW. (*complacently*) Anyhow ! it was as well we got the Peep-show Man out of the way; as it grew near the appointed time, he might have redoubled his efforts, and with that pocket-book actually in his possession-----

SANDS. (*angrily*) I shall never forgive myself that infernal mistake!

TRUDGET. (*aside*) Ah, you *did* put your foot in it that time!

CROW. (*chuckling*) I say, only fancy the Peep-show Man's surprise when after having his rum and water ""hocussed" by the " rough and readies" he wakes up and finds himself in the hold of the " Jumping Jenny "—ha ! ha! ha!

SANDS. (*chuckling savagely*) All among the fresh herrings ha! ha!

CROW. (*roaring with laughter—giving SANDS a dig in the ribs*) Vastly facetious, ha ! ha! ha!

SANDS. (*laughing in spite of himself*) Devilish funny, ha ! ha ! ha !

TRUDGET. (*aside*) Devilish funny, certainly! (*unseen by the others, slowly advances from summer-house.*)

CROW. (*insinuatingly*) You'll come down handsome my respected client—the rum and water was *my* idea, you know!

SANDS. Don't be alarmed! I'll come down! Stay, I'll just put away this little document----- (*is about to replace document in his pocket, when his hand is suddenly seized by TRUDGET, who, during last speech, has silently advanced from summer-house.*)

TRUDGET. (*snatching paper from SANDS—coolly*) S'pose the exekitor takes care on it!

SANDS. (*turning round, and perceiving TRUDGET, starting back in a paroxysm of mingled fear and stupefaction*) He here! the Peep-show Man! a—a—(*wildly*)—no! it must be a dream!

TRUDGET. (*quietly looking at him*) Ah, to be sure—a vision! s'pose we calls it a *nightmare* !

CROW. (*almost speechless with fear—trembling violently*) The Peep-show Man, *here!* (*his teeth chattering, and his knees knocking together*)—we shall all be transpo-o-orted !

SANDS. (*who, speechless with astonishment and fear, has been quailing beneath the searching glance which TRUDGET*

*bends on him—gasping*) A—a—what business have you here?

TRUDGET. (*calmly*) This business that every honest man has to expose (*lowering his voice*)—a rogue.

SANDS. (*endeavouring to assume an authoritative manner*) This language to me ?

TRUDGET. Yes, to you ! (*emphatically*) You thought you'd stow me away among the *fresh herrings* till the robbery was over, did you? but *you've been too clever for yourself!* If it hadn't ha' been for they two cut throat customers as you sent arter me, I should *never ha' knowed nothink about the matter!* It was *they* as put me up to look into this 'ere little pocket-book! (*producing pocket-book*) sharpers is generally one too many for theirselves, you see !

SANDS. (*agitated betwixt fear and rage stamping*) Curses and confusion!

CROW. (*livid with fear and trembling violently*) I—I—I—I think—I think—I—I'd better be o—o—o—off! (*turns round, and is sneaking off L. when TRUDGET catches sight of him.*)

TRUDGET. (*hastily following him*) Stop a minute, my joker ! (*seizing him by the ear, and bringing him back*) You thought of the " rum and water," did you? (*shaking him, violently to and fro in measured shakes*) To think that my old captain's brother should ever ha' let hisself down to the level o' such a *sneakin', prettyfogging, kidnapping, scoundrelly* rascal as this!

CROW. (*terribly alarmed—aside*) Oh ! he's loosening my false teeth ! (*roaring*) murder!

SANDS. (*aside, in an agony of terror—looking off*) The guests must be beginning to arrive for dinner-----

TRUDGET. (*who has still a firm hold of CROWSFOOT, raising his voice*) You thought you'd lay me in limbo while (*pointing to SANDS*) a disgrace to an honest family was a-plunder-in his own niece ! (*throws Crowsfoot from him.*)

CROW. (*horridly alarmed—roaring*) Murder!!!

TRUDGET. (*turning to SANDS*) Why, Master Goodwin Sands, you're about as " shifty." a customer, as your name sake off Margate!

SANDS. (*horribly alarmed*) Confusion! the guests are ooming this way ! Hush ! for pity sake ! !

*Enter RAFFLES and several other guests, L., ladies and gentlemen arm-in-arm, amongst others GEORGINA. MARY comes forward from shrubbery.*

MARY. (*aside—surprised*) What have I heard ?

RAFF. My dear Mr. Sands, what is all this terrific noise about ?

SANDS. (*aside, despairingly*) Ruined! ruined!

TRUDGET. I was only just a discussin' a legal point with this here distinguished pettifogger, (*points to CROWSFOOT, who presents a picture of abject terror and confusion*) It was all about a-----

SANDS. (*aside to TRUDGET, in tones of suppliant entreaty*) In mercy—peace!

MARY. (*who has approached TRUDGET—aside to him—appealingly*) Remember—he is your old captain's brother!

TRUDGET. (*aside to MARY*) That's saved him, miss! (*aloud—resuming his former manner*) It was all about a noble act o' disinterested generosity as is probably unekelled in history ; you all know the nat'ral goodness o' disposition, and straightforward huprightness o' character o' that ere excellent individual, (*pointing*) Mr. Goodwin Sands ?

GUESTS. (*enthusiastically*) We do! we do!

TRUDGET. (*continuing*) Then now I'm going to tell you a Mnstanse of it, as 'll make your hair curl with downright astonishment and admiration!

GUESTS. (*extremely interested, coming forward*) Oh, my! let's hear it—let's hear it!

SANDS. (*in somewhat of the, "peep-show man," style*) You see, ladies and gen'lmen, the lawful proppyrietor to a large fortune was missin'—in the absence of number *one*, this ere magnanimous gen'lman (*pointing to SANDS*) was next o' kin. (*banteringly*) But such was the nat'ral goodness o' that 'ere noble-minded gen'lman, (*again pointing to SANDS, who turns away in abject confusion*) that he couldn't bear the hidea o' priggin what wasn't lawfully his'n, so ho never leaves off rummaging and furridding, till he diskivers the lawful owner of the propperiety!

GUESTS. (*in simultaneous chorus of admiration*) O-o-oh! O-o-oh! what a worthy man! what an excellent man!

TRUDGET. (*continuing*) And who should the rightful owner be, but the young person I have now the honor to interdoose to your notice—(*taking MARY by the hand and leading her forward*) Miss Margaret Wayland, hotherwise Miss Margaret Sands!

GUESTS. (*surprised, in chorus to each other*) Dear me! Oh my ! Strange ! How very singular !

SANDS. (*aside, grinding his teeth*) The devil take him!

CROW. (*trembling, aside*) He is the devil—I know he's the devil!

RAFFLES. (*approaching SANDS*) I say, Sands, you never told us this young lady was your niece.

SANDS. (*horribly confused*) Oh ! a-a-didn't I? you see, the pressure of affairs—the hurry of business-----

TRUDGET. {(*who has meanwhile been showing document to MARY*) Halloo ! (*approaching SANDS*) I say, governor, here's another " Crocodile." I will and bequeath that should the said Jack Trudget's search for my daughter prove successful, the sum of one thousand pounds be paid him as a reward for his zeal and perseverance !

MARY. (*joyfully*) Oh, Mr. Jack, I *am* so glad! (*earnestly*) I wish from the bottom of my heart it had been *all* yours—you more than deserve it.

TRUDGET. Lor, miss, it ain't the property as I cares about, (*sadly*) What's the use of property to me ? I don't wan'tno property—(*vacantly*) it's *the proprietress* I should ha' liked.

MARY. (*joyfully*) Eh ! (*aside*) I *knew* it!

TRUDGET. (*starting, astounded at his own audacity*) Holloa ! shiver my timbers, I've been and gone and *said* it! (*hastily turning to MARY*) You won't be offended Miss, I—I—didn't mean it-----

MARY. (*half reproachfully*) You didn't *mean* it ?

TRUDGET. (*horribly confused*) *No!* I didn't mean that nayther—because—a—a—for the matter o' that—I *did* mean it! You see, miss, (*stammering violently*) I took such a hawful fancy to you the werry moment I first set eyes on you, that—(*awfully embarrassed*) a—a—I don't know how to say it—I don't, indeed!

MARY. Then let *me* say it for you. (*earnestly*) John Trudget, you have twice preserved me from the lawless rudeness of a villain—you have saved my life at the peril of your own, and *now*, by your untiring energy and zeal, you have secured to me the fortune my poor father left me. John Trudget—will you take me for your wife ?

TRUDGET. (*in an ecstasy of delight*) My wife !!! (*seizing her hand, and covering it with kisses*) the little beauty with the band-box—my old captain's daughter—*my wife!* Oh, lor, this is too much ! (*hesitating*) The advantages is all a one side, miss—poor Jack Trudget ain't got nothink to offer you but a true heart and (*pointing over wall*) the " hinstitooshun."

MARY. (*laughing*) Never mind the " hinstitooshun" (*earnestly*) a true heart is better than untold gold, and the hand of an honest man a worthier dowry than all the fortunes that were ever made.

TRUDGET. (*utterly beside himself with joy, rushing at her and clasping her in his arms*) Oh, ain't she a hangel! Hooray! And all owing to this 'ere pocket-book, (*holding up pocket-booh towards SANDS*) I say, governor, this was rayther a usefule harticle, warn't it? You *said* it would help me in my search, and, by jingo, it *did* help me in my search!

SANDS. (*with a spiteful groan*) A—a—ah! (*turns away with an angry stamp, which comes down on the foot of CROWSFOOT*)

CROW. (*starting with a loud roar of pain*) O—o—oh!!! What the devil did you do that for? (*altercation between them*)

TRUDGET. I'll have this 'ere little book framed and glazed and hung over the chimney-piece in our werry best sitting room! (*approaching MARY*) But, I say, what shall we do with the "hinstitooshun"? We won't desert an old friend, will we? He and I ha' roughed it many an hour together in adwersity, and now that the good time has come at last we'll lay him up snug in harbour; besides, 'twill do to amuse the "litttle Johnny's" with, (*imitating action of nursing baby—MARY looks down and turns aside*) and if, in the meantime (*to audience*) any kind friend would ever like (*relapsing into "showman"*) to try the grand broadsword combat for the championship between Napoleon Buona-partre and the Duke of Wellington, at the battle o' Bunker's Hill, or any other hinterestin' hitem, why just enquire for Jack Trudget—you know where to find him—keep your eye on the "hinstitooshun," and don't forget your old friend

THE PEEP-SHOW MAN!

(*Orchestra to strike up a nautical air on last word of "tag."*)  
Curtain.)