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DRAMAS  
FOR CHILDREN



Mrs. GEORGE MACDONALD





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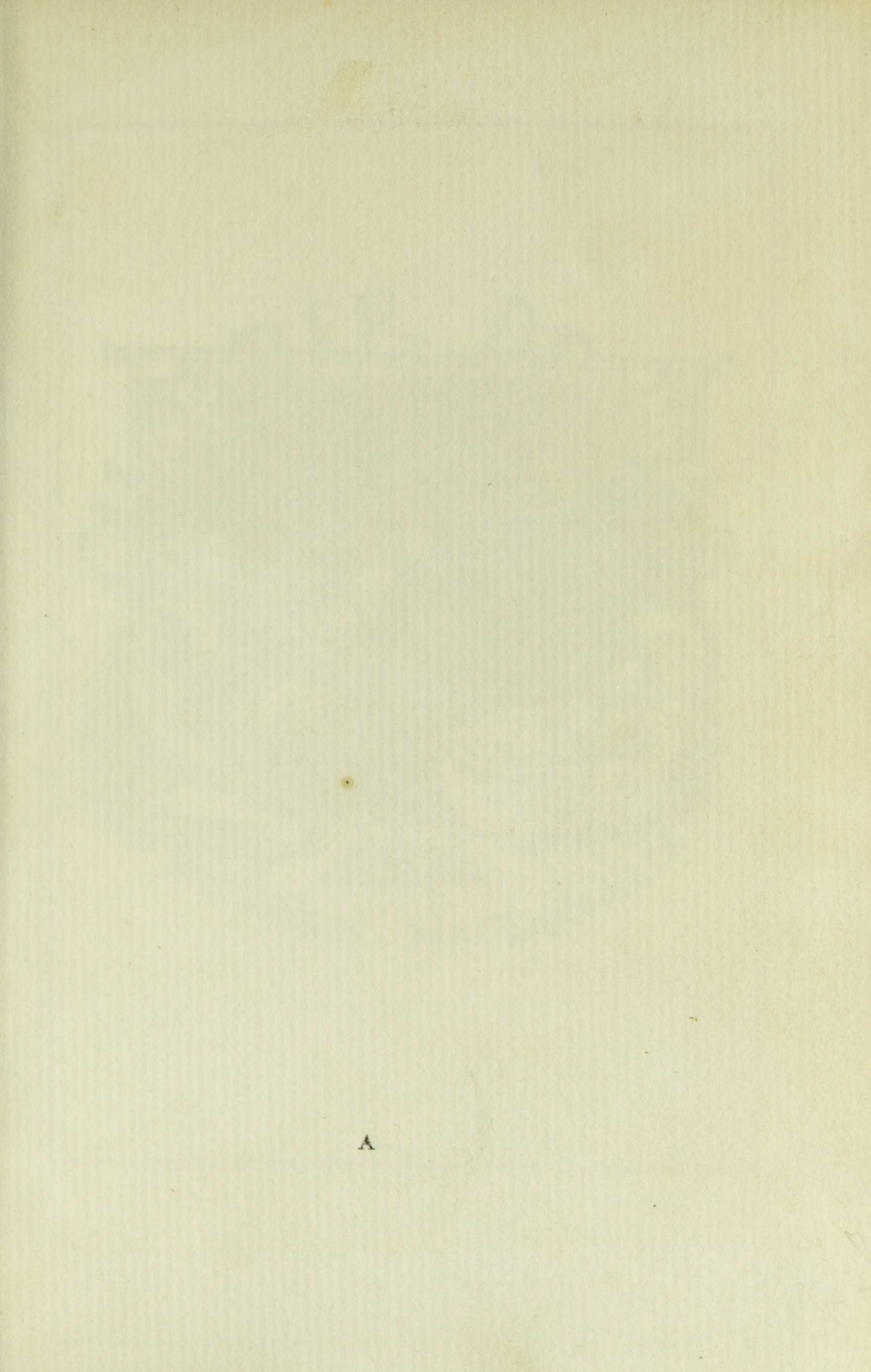
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# CHAMBER DRAMAS

*For Children*

BY MRS. GEORGE MAC DONALD



STRAHAN & CO., PUBLISHERS

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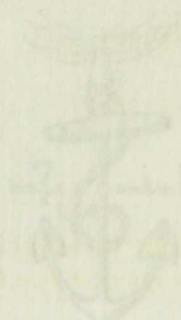
1870

# CHAMBER DRAMAS

REV. CLARENCE

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BY MRS. GEORGE MAC DONALD



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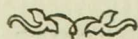
*Mr. Dickens kindly gave his consent to the use made in this  
play of part of his story of THE HAUNTED MAN.*







CINDERELLA,  
OR THE GLASS SLIPPER.





DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The PRINCE.

ADAM.

*Trumpeter and Dancers.*

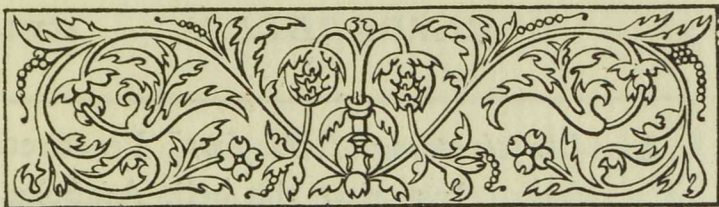
LUCRETIA TINKLETON.

ARABELLA TINKLETON.

CINDERELLA.

FAIRY GODMOTHER.

DUCHESS OF RATTLETRAP.



CINDERELLA,  
OR THE GLASS SLIPPER.

ACT I.

SCENE I. *A Dressing-room.*

LUCRETIA, ARABELLA, CINDERELLA.

*Lucretia.*



WELL! I wonder how much longer we shall have to wait for that child? Here we have been sitting ever since the hairdresser left.

*Ara.* I dare say she is only staring at herself in the glass. Do you know, Lucretia, I believe she thinks herself pretty, the little ape!

*Luc.* [*With stamp of the foot.*] I'm tired of waiting. Just ring the bell, Arabella, we shall be late for the ball!

*Enter CINDERELLA with dresses on her arm.*

*Cin.* Oh! I am so sorry, sisters, I've been so long. I hope you haven't been waiting for me.

*Ara.* Waiting! Why, what did you expect us to be doing? Dressing ourselves, I suppose, while you were admiring yourself in the glass.

*Cin.* You forget, I think, how long it takes to iron such dresses as these: besides, I had to clear away dinner; and to make up the fire, to get you some tea before you go out.

*Luc.* Oh! yes, you are *so* good, are you not? We'll have you sainted in the next holy calendar. Come, get my shoes, and take my boots away; and mind they are cleaned before you go to bed to-night!



*Ara.* Come, child, how slow you are! I want my dress fastened—this minute.

[*Lucretia pushes Cinderella down.*  
*She begins to cry.*

*Luc.* Yes, that's right; you are very much hurt, ar'n't you.

*Ara.* What a baby you are! You'll make your eyes red, and you've no beauty to lose, I can tell you.

*Luc.* I wonder whether you know what a fright you are.

*Cin.* I am sure it would not matter to any one if my eyes were ever so red.

*Luc.* The fact is, you haven't work enough. Arabella, we had better give her something to do while we are out. Mend those six pairs of black stockings before to-morrow. If not done, remember—no breakfast for you.

[*They dress as fast as possible. Exit*  
*Lucretia and Arabella.*

## SCENE II.

CINDERELLA, *throwing herself down on the rug, begins to cry.*

*Cinderella.*



H dear! oh dear! What shall I do!  
what shall I do! What would my  
dear father say, if he could see how they  
treat his darling? I wonder if I have grown  
so very ugly since he went away. (*Cin-  
derella goes to the glass and looks at herself.*)  
I dare say if I were to be dressed out like  
my sisters, I should not look so very bad;  
but ah! I must not think about it (*sighs*), I  
must do my work. (*She sweeps the hearth.*)  
How shall I do it all? There are those  
stockings to mend, the grates to clean, the  
cinders to sift—else how they'll scold me!  
and there's my own frock to mend, that I  
burnt a hole in this afternoon. How fright-  
tened I was for fear they should see it.  
(*She looks at her dress.*) Oh dear! how



big it is! how *can* I mend it? Oh dear!  
oh dear! [Bursts out crying.

*Enter* Fairy Godmother.

*Fairy G.* Cinderella! Cinderella! Cinderella!  
[*Cinderella looks up.*

*Cin.* Oh! oh! oh! Who wh— are you?

*Fairy G.* Don't you know me, Cinderella?

*Cin.* No, no! I do not.

*Fairy G.* But I know you, though I haven't spoken to you since you were a baby. I am your godmother. I have watched you and loved you, and I have been pleased with you, especially since your poor father's death. You are not happy, are you, my dear?

*Cin.* Not very.

*Fairy G.* Well, cheer up, my love. There are brighter days in store for you. Do what I tell you, and all will yet be well.

*Cin.* I will, I will! But what can you do for me?



*Fairy G.* Trust me, and obey me ; I have seen you can obey. Mind all my directions.

*Cin.* Yes, yes! What shall I do?

*Fairy G.* Would you like to go to the ball to-night?

*Cin.* Oh yes, *so* much ; but how could I go? I have no dress to wear. Fancy me going into that grand room—(*holding up her burnt frock*)—with such a dress as this!

*Fairy G.* Gently, gently, little maiden! Did your father never give you any beautiful frocks?

*Cin.* Ah yes, godmother ; but think how young I was then—only about six years old, and now I'm seventeen ; and I have had no one to give me any pretty clothes since then.

*Fairy G.* Let me see them.

*Cin.* Oh, but they are of no use but to look at, to remind me how my father loved me and petted me.

*Fairy G.* Cinderella! Remember. Obey. Fetch me them.

*Cin.* They are all in that box—but my sisters have got the key.

*Fairy G.* Do you suppose that makes any difference to me? Look!

*[Fairy Godmother makes signs with her wand.]*

*Cin.* There they are! See how tiny and are they not dainty? Oh, my dear dear father, how kind you were to me!

*[Holding up a dress.]*

*Fairy G.* Now put them back, and shut the box. Look at me.

Si hum, si sing,  
Yo yum yi ying;  
Rapa, rapa ree,  
Open up and see.

*[Cinderella opens the box. She stoops, and draws a ball dress out of the box.]*

*Cin.* Oh! godmother, is that for me? I thank——

*Fairy G.* No thanks, my dear; not a word. Now dress, and go to the ball. It is at the house of the Duchess of Rattletrap,



and you will see the Princess and the Prince there.

*Cin.* But, godmother, how shall I get there? I have no carriage to go in, and no servants to take me, even if I could walk there in this bright dress.

*Fairy G.* Foolish child; do you suppose I am not able to provide you with a carriage and men servants to protect you? Listen and obey:—

Out of the garden a pumpkin bring;

Out of the larder four mice;

Two bees from the hive, take care they  
don't sting;

Chaise, horses, and men you shall have  
in a trice.

When you are ready dressed you will find this equipage waiting for you at your door. At the house of the Duchess I shall be ready to introduce you to her Grace. There is one more point to obey me in; mind you are home again by twelve o'clock. This *must* be! and if you neglect it you



will find the miserable consequences of your disobedience. All your fine clothes will vanish, and the poor, grimy Cinderella will be standing in that gay crowd. As the clock strikes twelve. Remember!

*[Curtain drops.]*





## ACT II.

### SCENE I. *The Ball-room at the DUCHESS OF RATTLETRAP'S.*

*Enter Fairy Godmother with CINDERELLA on her arm. Fairy Godmother advances and introduces CINDERELLA to the DUCHESS OF RATTLETRAP. Music and dancing cease; every one turns and looks at CINDERELLA. After a pause, the music and dancing proceed. The Prince leaves his former partner, LUCRETIA, and advances to meet CINDERELLA. A new dance commences, in which LUCRETIA and ARABELLA obtain no partners. After the dance the Prince promenades with CINDERELLA.*

*Prince.*



AY I have the felicity of engaging you for the next waltz? Unfortunately I must go through the next dance with that ancient damsel in green.

*[Looking towards Arabella.]*

*Cin.* Whom do you mean?

*Prin.* That withered-looking wallflower there. But one must be polite as well as enjoy oneself at a ball, you know. It is a great bore, is it not? But if you will waltz with me afterwards, the thought of that will sustain me in my dull work.

*Cin.* Oh, I should like it so much: but it is so long since I waltzed,—suppose I can't do it?

*Prin.* Never mind; I'll soon teach you. You are so light I could carry you about, and no one would know we were not flying. Oh, how happy I shall be. *[They waltz.]*



*Cin.* Oh, do let us sit down now. I am sure we are being looked at.

*Prin.* Who could help looking at you? (*Presses her hand and leads her to a seat, the Prince stooping towards her.*) May I take you down to supper? Promise me that I shall.

*Cin.* What o'clock will that be?

*Prin.* How should I know anything of the flight of time, with you so near me?

*Cin.* If you cannot really tell me, I had better leave at once, for I must be home at twelve o'clock.

*Prin.* Indeed you must not. I will prevent that.

*Cin.* Oh, you don't know what you're saying. You must let me go, or I shall never see you again.

*Prin.* Tell me why, then? Where is your home? Who are you going with? May I ask what is your name?

*Cin.* I cannot tell you anything. If you are kind, you will not ask me. If you will let

me go now, I shall see you again, perhaps, to-morrow, at the palace, if you will let me come. So now, good night.

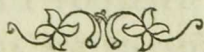
*Prin.* I shall see you to your carriage. Shall I fetch the old lady you came with? Is she your mother?

*Cin.* No; alas! I have no mother; but she is my godmother, and is very good to me. But she is gone, I know, so let me go alone.

*Prin.* I must and *will* conduct you to your carriage.

*Cin.* (*looking at the timepiece.*) Be quick, then, be quick! Oh, pardon me for being so hasty; but—if you knew all!

[*She goes out; he follows her; the clock strikes twelve. The curtain drops.*]





SCENE II. *The Sisters' Sitting-room.*CINDERELLA (*sitting alone*).

**H**ERE I am again—the poor Cinderella! Is it all a dream? But what a dream! Ah well! I will work all the better for my bit of play. Now for the cinders to sift. [*Goes to the fireplace.*] Oh! they are all done! and how clean the grate is! Well, but there's those stockings. [*Gets her basket, snuffs the candle, and takes a stocking in her hand; lets it lie on her lap; muses.*] Oh! is not the Prince handsome? and how very kind he was to such a poor girl as I am—but then he did not know who I was, and I dare say he thought I was *somebody*. Heigho! I must not think of him. [*Looking at the stockings.*] Oh! they are all mended! Now then, for the boots. [*Finds them cleaned.*] Oh, you dear, dear godmother! this must be you.



*Enter the Sisters.*

*Luc.* Well, Cinderella, have you done your work?

*Ara.* Come, Lucretia, don't begin about her work directly—I'm sick of it! If she has not done it, why you know she'll have no breakfast—that's all! Now tell her about the delightful party we have had.

*Luc.* Well, we both danced with the Prince, and he was so polite, and really quite affectionate to us both—was he not, Loo? I quite expect we shall have him calling here soon.

*Cin.* Did he dance with you often? Is he handsome? Do tell me about him.

*Luc.* And what do you want to hear for? I suppose you think we shall let you go some day. Oh Arabella! what a guy she would look in a ball-room!

*Ara.* Fancy Cinderella in the same room with that lovely creature we saw to-night!

*Luc.* Do you know, I believe she was a

princess, or the Prince would never have talked so very much to her.

*Ara.* Did you speak to her?

*Luc.* Yes, and her voice and manners were still more charming than her face.

*Ara.* She talked a great deal more to me than she did to you, and hadn't she a fascinating dress! I think I shall have one like it next year.

*Luc.* You, indeed! it would suit my complexion much better than yours. Did you hear her name, Arabella?

*Ara.* No, I don't think any one did. I heard the Prince asking her, and she would not tell him even.

*Cin.* (*Looking mysterious.*) I think I could guess who it was.

*Both together.* You indeed! you little monkey! Go off to bed. [*Exit Cinderella.*]

*Luc.* That's what comes of talking to her, the stuck-up little puss, putting in her word!

*Ara.* Well, we'd better go to bed now, or

we shall not be fit to be seen to-morrow night. I declare I'm so excited! Shan't you dream of the Prince and that lovely little beauty?

[*Curtain drops.*]







ACT III.

SCENE I. *The Ball Room.*

*Music.* *Company promenading, Prince  
with CINDERELLA.*

*Prince.*



YOU will not forget that you  
promised to sit by me at sup-  
per?

*Cin.* On one condition, you  
know.

*Prin.* Yes, but why that condition? how-  
ever, I kept my word last night, and you  
must have been home quite in time to please  
any old godmother. I suppose you have to  
tuck her up in bed and give her her gruel.

She might get some one else to put on her nightcap—the dear old soul! just for once.

*Cin.* But you are quite mistaken about her. She does not live with me. I wish she did.

*Prin.* Whom *do* you live with? Tell me now, my dove, before you fly from me again. Where can I find the dove-cote? Does no one cherish you? Does no one care for your sweet life?

*Cin.* Alas! no one takes care of me.

*Prin.* But you do not live all alone?

*Cin.* No, not alone; but no one loves me.

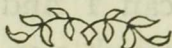
*Prin.* You are wrong there, for I do, and I shall never love another. Tell me where I can find you. I will come and cherish you, and you shall live on such love as none ever knew before! Could you love me? Say, sweet dove.

*Cin.* Oh! don't put such visions before me,—to make my life the darker when the



dream vanishes. You don't know who I am, and I cannot tell you.

*[Cinderella hears the clock begin to strike, and rushes away. Loses her shoe, which the Prince picks up, and after gazing at it, he kisses it, and puts it into his pocket. Curtain drops.]*



SCENE II. *A dark Night. The Prince, looking out into the night, gazes about.*

*Prince.*

**W**HERE can she be gone? It is only an instant since she left the palace. Her carriage cannot have driven away yet. Where is she? Perhaps it did not come for her, and she has gone on foot; but no! I should see her then; *(turns to his servant)* Adam, did you see a lady pass the door?

*Adam.* Please your Royal Highness, no.



*Prin.* But I believe you did. I think I heard you speak to some one this minute.

*Adam.* May it please your Highness, I was only telling that girl there—not to be loitering about.

*Prin.* Which girl?

*Adam.* That there grubby girl down there.

[*Pointing to Cinderella crouching in a corner.*]

*Prin.* (*Going up to her.*) Why, girl, what are you doing there? Are you asleep? What, no bonnet and no shawl on! How cold you must be?

*Cin.* Please sir, I'm in trouble. I've lost my way, and was just going to ask your servant to tell me whereabouts I am.

*Adam.* Whereabouts you are, you huzzy! Why, you know as well as I do, you have just come out through this door. (*Turning to the Prince*)—But I can't for the life of me tell what rooms she came from.

*Prin.* Come, get up and tell me where you want to go, and how it is you have lost your way? Where's your home?

*Cin.* Please, sir, I'm servant to some ladies who are at the ball to-night, and I've come out without their knowing it. Oh! please don't tell them. I came because I wanted to see some of the company; and it was so nice looking at the beautiful people that I forgot myself, and have stayed too late. *[She cries.]*

*Prin. (aside).* How much her voice sounds like *hers*! How can it be? But what a fool I am! It is only that I am so filled with thoughts of her; that voice rings in my ears like the music of a silver bell. (*To Cinderella*)—Well, girl, get up; where is it you want to go? Tell me, and don't look so frightened; you shall get home before your mistresses; and remember, don't be so silly another time, or you may get turned away; but this time I'll say nothing about it. Who are your ladies?



*Cin.* They are the Hon. Miss Tinkletons, of Tinkleton Hall. Oh, please, sir, I don't know how I'm to get home before them. How could I be so silly as to come!—(*in distress*).

*Prin.* Adam, send my aunt's coachman here—the Duchess of Rattletrap's, you know. (*Aside.*) They won't be going yet, for an hour, I dare say. Poor girl, I am sure she must be good as well as in trouble, with such a voice as that. I feel sorry for her. (*To Cinderella*)—Here, my poor girl, take my cloak, and don't tell the man who you are. Jump into the carriage, and you'll be at Tinkleton Hall in a quarter of an hour.

*Cin.* Bless you, sir, and a thousand thanks to you. [*Curtain drops.*]





## SCENE III.

*Breakfast Table. LUCRETIA and  
ARABELLA.*

*Lucretia.*

**H**OW late you are, Arabella?

*Ara.* I don't believe you have been much longer down than I have, so you need not make such a fuss.

*Luc.* But where is Cinderella?

*Ara.* Oh, do leave the child alone, and let us have our breakfast in peace. She has got it all ready, and we don't want her here, I am sure.

*Luc.* She's getting quite saucy. She asked me last night, when she was undressing me, whether that little lady was there again that we liked so much (*sneeringly*).

*Ara.* What had she to do with it, I should like to know? We must keep her down, Lucretia. I think we have been making too much of a friend of her lately.

*Luc.* Wasn't it odd that the Prince never came into the supper-room at all last night? I wonder where he was.

*Ara.* Lord Lovel told me he went wandering about the corridors, looking at a little shoe he held in his hand, and watching the ladies' feet as they went out.

*Luc.* Oh, yes; didn't you hear?—the beautiful little lady lost one of her slippers as she went hurrying out, and he is trying everywhere to find out the owner of it.

*Ara.* I can't help thinking there's some enchantment about her.

*Luc.* Enchantment. Fiddlesticks! She's nothing but a very pretty little girl, that's kept very close at home by that queer little old grandmother of hers.

*Ara.* Listen, Loo! What's that noise?

[*Sounds of a trumpet. Trumpeter's voice heard. Arabella throws up the window.*]



---

*Proclamation.*

Oh, yes! Oh, yes! This is to give notice, by order of his Royal Highness, that his Royal Highness intends visiting at every house in his kingdom where dwells a maiden, be she high or low, rich or poor, for the purpose of discovering the owner of a shoe left last night in the palace. Prepare, all maidens, prepare for his reception! Whoever can wear the shoe his Royal Highness will wed!

*Ara.* Oh, Lucretia!

*Luc.* Oh, Arabella! I wonder whether he'll come here! I know my foot will wear any shoe. I shall make believe I lost mine.

*Ara.* I'm sure it's only done to find out about that pretty girl, and I know she was only a ghost or a sprite. I believe I'm nearer her size than any one in that room last night; so won't I put it on, and then you'll have to do court to me as the Princess, Madam Lucretia.



---

*Enter CINDERELLA with a Tray.*

*Luc.* Dear me, how prim and neat you look, to be sure. What have you been getting yourself up in such a very nun-like style for?

*Ara.* Perhaps she expects the Prince to try the shoe on *her* foot!

*Luc.* (*with a laugh*). Ah, I shouldn't wonder. That's a good idea, isn't it, Cinderella? You'd like that.

*Cin.* If he should say he wishes it, of course I must, sisters; and you know that the proclamation says all maidens are to prepare, high or low.

*Luc.* Well, Arabella, this is too absurd. You conceited little puss, do hold your tongue.

*Ara.* Did I not tell you she was getting unbearable? Mind you keep in your own place, amongst the ashes, miss, when the Prince does come.

*Luc.* Yes, you'd better take care he does

not see you. You shall be punished if you show your little silly simpering face while he is here. The gardener will open the door.

*Cin.* Oh, sisters, do let me see him. I have heard he's so handsome; and I'm sure I should not trouble him.

*[A loud knock heard; Lucretia and Arabella push Cinderella out.]*

*Enter Prince with flourish of trumpets.*

*Ladies make court-courtesies.*

*Prin.* Good morning, ladies. How blooming you both look to-day.

*Luc.* Good morning to your Highness.

*Ara.* Good morning *(with a courtesy)*.

*Prin.* This sweet morning is quite exhilarating. One can but feel happy on such a day.

*Ara.* Our happiness is enhanced by the light of your presence.

*Prin.* But I, alas! have a great anxiety at my heart. I have lost a treasure, ladies



—the greatest treasure I ever possessed. I had no sooner found it than it vanished. If I do not recover my treasure, my happiness is gone for life.

*Luc.* How sad, how mournful you look !

*Ara.* Can we do nothing to repair your loss ?

*Prin.* I fear not. It is to be repaired only with the treasure itself. No substitute would avail.

*Luc.* Tell us—What is it you have lost ?

*Prin.* It is my love—the only woman I ever loved.

*Both.* Your love ! A lady do you mean ?

*Prin.* Yes, a lady. She was very fair. Will you help me to find her ?

*Luc.* We will do our very best.

*Ara.* I dare say she's not so very far off.

*Prin.* I have only one clue to finding her. This shoe (*holding it up*) she dropt as she left the palace. I know it will fit no other foot ; therefore I am travelling through the length and breadth of my



kingdom to find her who can wear it. She will be my Princess, for she loves me, I know, and I love her more than tongue can tell. (*Looking up, and turning to Luc.*), Lady, will you permit my gentleman in waiting to try the shoe upon your foot?

*Luc.* Your Royal Highness has but to command. My foot has always been considered *very* small; but I am scarcely worthy the honour consequent upon wearing *that* shoe.

*Prin.* Madam, let us wait the event. (*Enter the Usher bowing. Lucretia seats herself. The shoe will not fit.*)

*Luc.* There must be some mistake. Allow me to try myself.

*Prin.* Pardon me, madam; it cannot leave the hand of the usher. (*Turning to Arabella.*) Will you favour me by taking your sister's chair?

*Ara.* I flatter myself that my foot is some *inches* smaller than that of my poor sister. (*Looking tenderly at the Prince.*) I

knew you understood which it was! (*The Usher tries to put it on, but it will not fit.*)  
—Your Highness is too just, and too kind to submit to any trickery:

*Prin.* That is just why I came here myself, that no fair lady, be she ever so beautiful, might impose either upon herself or upon me. Ladies, good morning (*bowing as if to depart*).—But before I go, I must perfect my vow. I have sworn to try this shoe on every maiden, high and low, rich and poor in my kingdom. You have a young girl in this house.

*Luc.* No; I assure you.

*Ara.* No one lives here but ourselves and the gardener, except, indeed, a faithful old cook.

*Prin. (interrupting).* Excuse me. I have seen your maid, and have spoken some words to her. I could not forget her voice, though I scarcely saw her features. I am sure she is not old. Call her, and she will tell you whether or not she has seen me



before. I did her a kindness she will not have forgotten. (*Turning to his Usher.*) Call the little maid of all work—as I suspect she is. [*Exit Usher.*]

*Luc. Ara.* Indeed you are mistaken, indeed, indeed.

*Enter the Usher, accompanied by Fairy Godmother and CINDERELLA. The Prince gets excited ; one glance at each other, and both are calm.*

*Prin.* My child, what is your name ?

*F. G.* They call her Cinderella. Shame to say, she is their sister. She has been like an angel to them, patient, true, and loving, but they have treated her with—

*Cin. (stopping her Fairy Godmother.)* Oh ! don't, dear Godmother ; don't be unkind to them.

*Prin. (advancing.)* Excuse my interruption, my impatience will admit of no delay. (*Taking the shoe from the hand of his Usher.*) Cinderella, will you sit there, and



let me see if your foot ever wore this shoe?

*Cin.* I—I—May I, sisters? (*Turning to them.*)

*Prin.* Cinderella, don't you know that I am the Prince, and princes are wont to be obeyed without hesitation. (*Cinderella sits down; the Prince kneeling, places her foot on his knee, and instantly the shoe goes on. Cinderella draws the other glass slipper from her pocket; he gazes for a moment into her eyes, and then clasps her in his arms.*) My bride! my Princess!

[*Curtain drops.*]







# BEAUTY AND THE BEAST





DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The PRINCE (*afterwards transformed  
into the Beast*).

BEAUTY'S FATHER.

BEAUTY.

GEORGIANA, }  
SOPHIA, } *Sisters to Beauty.*

OLD AUNT.

A FAIRY.

GENII.



## BEAUTY AND THE BEAST.

### ACT I.

*The Prince smoking.*

*Prince (dashing down his cigar).*



BEGIN to hate cigars even; I declare they disgust me. Smoking is of no use! It used to soothe me; it doesn't now. Bah! Everything is so slow. There's nothing I have not tried, and so I am sick of everything. Vanity of vanities—that old Solomon said. Ah, yes, I see! He was a King—and I am a Prince. It's all one. I'm not surprised he found it out.

It is an awful bore to be a Prince. You haven't time to wish for a thing before you've got it. It makes life so precious dull. [Yawns.]

*Enter Servant.*

*Servant.* May it please your Highness, the musicians wish to know at what hour they shall wait on your Highness to-day? Shall they play when your Highness dines?

*Prince.* No. I don't dine till to-morrow. —(*aside.*) By that time I may be hungry for once.

*Servant.* And may it please your Royal Highness——

*Prince.* It does not please me. Nothing pleases me. Go!

*Servant.* But the Lady Valentina——

*Prince.* Go, I say! (*Exit Servant.*) Ah! the Lady Valentina! A bal masqué! a fête champêtre! or a kettledrum! Those girls are pretty—one of them is handsome. They amused me once: but for a warm,



simple, true heart, I have never met one yet. But how is a prince to know when a girl's heart is all right? I would be a student or an artist, and go courting, like any lucky, unprincely fellow, of them all; but bother it, there's that Lord of Burleigh staring me in the face! Better go on with this dreary life than make a woman miserable. Powers above! I would give up all I have—pomp, name, ay, and beauty—for I know I am handsome—I would give them all up to know I was really loved for my own self, and not for the sake of what I've got. I *could* love, if only——

*Enter Fairy.*

*Fairy.* If only—you are sincere.

*Prince.* Sincere! Godmother, I am glad to see you; but you doubt me!

*Fairy.* Only half. Will you do as I please?

*Prince.* I will. I am tired of having no one to order me about.

*Fairy.* I heard you say you would give up your name, your pomp, your beauty, for the sake of one true love. Will you really do so? Are you sincere?

*Prince.* I am.

*Fairy.* So be it then. You shall keep your pomp, but I will take away your beauty and your station. If you find there might be a harder lot than that of a handsome prince with nothing to do——

*Prince.* Nothing could be harder; I am satisfied of that.

*Fairy.* Remember that you have said so. And now—listen! (*She waves a wand above his head; he lies down. She takes off her cloak, and throws it over him.*) For seven years remain what I make you, unless before that you win a good woman's love. Succeed in this, and you shall return to your true form.

[*She lifts the cloak again, and a Beast crawls off the stage moaning.*]





ACT II.

SCENE I. *Breakfast.*

Father, Old Aunt, SOPHIA, GEORGINA,  
and BEAUTY.

BEAUTY *making tea.*

*Enter Father.*

*Father.*



WELL, my little Beauty, how do  
you do this morning? Good  
morning, sister.

*O. A. Good morning, sir.*

*Father.* My Beauty! You look as bright  
as ever, you dear little chicken!

*O. A.* I wish you would request her to  
give *us* a little of her bright looks, when  
you are away.



*Father.* Then, Beauty, do you only look happy for me?

*Beauty.* Indeed, my dear Father, I try to be cheerful and please my aunt, but it is not easy to be gay when you are on such a long journey.

*Father.* Where are your sisters?

*O. A.* In bed, of course, sir.

*Beauty.* O, they'll be down soon, I dare say; but they were so tired last night after our dinner-party. You know we had dancing after dinner. They kept it up till quite late, or rather till early this morning.

*O. A.* You call it early, do you? I call it late. I rose when you went to bed.

*Father.* That accounts for your not being in the happiest frame of mind, my dear sister.

*O. A.* I don't see how one is ever to be in a happy frame of mind with three such

girls to look after. There's no getting them up in the morning.

*Father.* Ah, I daresay you are all tired after it, then. Thank you, my pet, for getting up to wait on your old father.

*O. A.* I never get thanked for anything I do; and I shouldn't, I suppose, not if I worked my fingers to the bone.

*Beauty.* But, father dear, this will never do; you must make a good breakfast; do have some beef, or a bit of this nice ham.

*While BEAUTY is helping him, enter  
SOPHIA and GEORGIANA.*

*Father.* Oh, you are come now, are you, girls? I'm glad to see you before I go.

*Soph. and Geo. (drawl out together).* Are you going away, Father?

*O. A.* Affectionate children! you didn't know you were going to lose him!

*Father.* Yes, my dears, I must leave you for a time: you know we are not so rich as we were, and I am anxious to retrieve our



fortune and position in society, for your sakes, my darlings; and, my sister, I do not forget your needs.

*O. A.* Oh! pray don't put yourself out on my account; a crust of bread and a stuff gown is quite good enough, any day, for me—at my time of life! Enough is as good as a feast, brother.

*All.* But where are you going?

*Father.* I'm going to the great golden city, on the other side of the green forest, to meet my ships from the east; I hope to return to you a rich man.

*Soph.* O then, if you are rich, you'll bring us something beautiful, won't you, sir?

*Father.* Yes, that I will, Sophia. What would you like?

*Soph.* Well, I should like, if you please, sir, a rose-coloured satin dress, with a velvet train, and purple and white ostrich feathers.

*Father.* You shall have them; and you, Georgiana?



*Geo.* Oh, I want some jewels—let me see—a necklace and a coronal of diamonds, with bracelets to match; or, if you like, I've no objection to opals and emeralds.

*Father.* And you, little Beauty, what do you say? What is your father to bring for you?

*Beauty.* I really want nothing more than I have. You always supply me so well; but if you see a nice white rose you could bring me I should be so pleased, for we haven't any in our garden, and I have longed for one ever since I saw them the day we went to the castle gardens.

*Father.* Very well, love, I'll remember.—  
(*aside*) Always simple and modest in her tastes, sweet darling!—And now good-bye to you all. Give me my knapsack and my cloak. Good-bye, girls.

*Beauty.* Good-bye, dear Father, do take care of yourself. I wish you would not go, I am sure we have plenty of money.

*O. A.* Good-bye, brother. I am not asked

what I should like ; all the same, I shall be content if you will bring me back a little more consideration for my position and my services !

*Father (sighs).* Ah sister, sister,—good-bye. *[Kisses her hand.*

*Geo.* Don't forget my jewels ! I think I should like opals and emeralds best, after all.

*Father.* I'll see what I can do. Good-bye to you all. Farewell. *[Going.*

*Soph. (calling).* Father, mind you get *quite* a rose-colour ; if you don't see a beauty that colour, I could wear a yellow satin—if it really were quite a gold colour.

*Beauty.* Give me one kiss before you go. Good-bye, dear Father !

*[The Sisters turn away while he embraces Beauty. Curtain drops.*







### ACT III.

SCENE I. GEORGIANA *doing fancy work.*

SOPHIA *playing with cat and singing a song.* BEAUTY *making a shirt.*

*Sophia.*



ELL, this is weary work, sitting up so many nights for papa, and he doesn't come.

*Geo.* I am so anxious to see those loves of jewels he has promised to bring me. (*Yawns.*) I wish he would come. I do want to have them before I see Harry Wormbooke next. I know he would ask me to marry him if he saw that my father was rich enough to buy such handsome gifts for me.

*Soph.* Oh, you silly thing! I'm sure I wouldn't marry Arthur Mousey if I thought he cared about my being rich. But I do



want him to see my rose-coloured satin dress. I think it will make him look at *me* instead of always admiring himself in the mirror as he does.

*Beauty.* I wish it weren't such a wet night; I am afraid Father will get wet, and that will bring on one of his attacks of rheumatism.

*Geo.* And wouldn't it be a pity if your rose fell to pieces, Miss Beauty, if *it* got wet!

*Soph.* I'm sure I hope he won't have one of his horrid attacks of gout when he first comes home.

*Geo.* We shall never get a sight of our presents if he does.      [*Knock at the door.*]

*Enter Father.*

*Father.* O dear me! children, how damp and chilly it is to-night—and I am so tired! so worn out, so wretched!

[*Throws down a bunch of roses.*]

*Beauty goes to help him off with his coat.*

*Beauty.* Are you ill, dear Father?

*Father.* No, love.

*Beauty.* Not ill! What's the matter, then?  
you look so pale!

*Father.* Do I, dear? Well, I've had trouble enough to take all the colour out of me.

*Beauty.* Oh, do tell me—(*stroking him*).

*Father.* Poor child.

*Beauty.* I'm not poor child, now you are come back. You must get some supper and some wine, and then you will soon be better.

*Father.* I can't eat, child, no, I cannot eat. You had better all go to bed.

*Geo.* Oh! but father, won't you give us our presents first?

*Soph.* Or tell us about them? What have you got?

*Father.* My daughters, I am very sorry; but I have not brought anything at all for you,—stay—except for you, Beauty. There are your roses, and they nearly cost me my life.



*Soph.* Oh! didn't you bring me a dress?

*Geo.* You know you promised us both something pretty. You could remember what Beauty wanted, it seems!

*Father.* Georgiana, I have returned a poorer man than I was when I went away. Instead of coming home rich, laden with purple and fine linen, and jewels and gold, I am penniless—and—moreover—doomed—to die— [Groans deeply.

*Beauty.* Father, what do you mean?

*Geo.* Papa, what do you mean?

*Soph.* Papa, what do you mean?

*Father.* I can't tell you. I don't know how to tell you, and yet I must, Sophia and Georgiana.

*Soph. and Geo.* Oh! do tell us.

*Father.* Well, first of all, my ships are sunk. In sight of land they went down to the bottom of the sea!

*Geo. and Soph.* To the bottom of the sea!

*Father.* In sight of land they went down—

*Geo. and Soph.* Oh, Father!



*Father.* I cannot bear the thought of it, but it is too true. Gold and silver, precious stones and silks, all down at the bottom of the sea !

*Geo.* Oh ! misery, misery !

*Soph.* Oh, what a shame ! oh, Papa, dear !

*Beauty.* Never mind, dear Father, if that is all !

*Father.* Ah ! my child !

*Soph.* It is too bad, though. I call it cruel.

*Beauty.* But indeed, Father, we are happy enough with the little we have—(*Georgiana and Sophia begin to cry, Beauty strokes her father's face*).

*Father.* Ah ! but that's not all ; that is the least part of my trouble.

*Beauty.* What else then is the matter ? do tell us.

*Father.* Well, you must know I spent several days in useless efforts to recover some of my merchandize, then I prepared to come home——

*Geo.* Did all the money go down ?

*Father.* Yes, Georgiana ; but I was going to tell you, I mounted my horse, and trusted him to carry me safely to you, believing that he would know the road as well as I did.

*Geo.* And did he lead you wrong ?

*Father.* You shall hear. I forgot all about the road, when suddenly the horse stood still ; I could neither make him move on nor go back.

*Soph.* What was the matter with him ?

*Father.* I couldn't tell.

*Beauty.* Whereabouts were you, Father dear ?

*Father.* That was what puzzled me. I did not know where I was. I saw trees all about me ; and as to the horse, I supposed that he, like myself, was cold, tired, and hungry. Move him I could not. And I began to think I must pass the night in the solitary wood, when, with a sudden start he turned sharp round, and I saw myself at the bottom of a long avenue, at the other end of which was a house brilliantly lighted up



*Soph.* Oh, how delightful!

*Beauty.* It was cheering, wasn't it?

*Father.* It seemed so, certainly; and the horse seemed to be of your opinion, for he now needed no urging, but galloped up the avenue, wisely stopping at an open stable door.

*Beauty.* But I hope you didn't stop in the stable all night?

*Father.* No, child; but well would it have been for me and for you had I done so.

*Beauty.* How, Father?

*Father.* Listen, you will hear all too soon. Having seen my horse well supplied with oats and hay, I shut him in, and turned to the house. I was just going to knock, when the door flew open.

*All Three.* Oh, father!

*Father.* Immediately a door opposite to that, across a magnificent hall, flew open also. I entered, and found a beautiful room, with a delightful fire, and the table spread with dinner for one, as if I had been expected.



*O. A.* You must have been truly thankful to get something to eat.

*Father.* I hesitated to partake of it at first ; but as no one appeared, and as I was very hungry, I sat down, and enjoyed a very good dinner. All this time I had seen no one. The instant I had finished I heard soft music playing, the doors opened, and in walked ever so many little people, whom I took to be genii. I spoke to them, but they only bowed their heads, and after having cleared away the dishes they vanished.

*Soph.* You must have been dreaming !

*Geo.* Did you ever hear such a wild story ?

*O. A.* I certainly never heard the like.

*Beauty.* What did you do next, dear Father ?

*Father.* I was thinking of settling myself to sleep in an easy chair, when one of the genii re-appeared, and beckoned me to follow. He led me to a gorgeously comfortable bedroom, where I slept soundly all night. In the morning, I found my worn

travelling clothes taken away, and these magnificent garments (*throwing off his cloak*) placed where the others had been. I should have preferred my own, but there was no choice left me. The same attendants waited on me as on the previous night at my breakfast, and my horse was ready for me at the very hour I intended to start.

*Beauty.* But didn't they ask you what time you would like to leave, or speak to you at all?

*Father.* No; no one spoke to me, and I led my horse down the avenue, that I might enjoy the beauty of the garden on every side.

*Geo.* Well, I don't see anything dreadful in all that, father, I'm sure.

*Father.* Stop a minute. I haven't come yet to what *was* dreadful. As I walked along, thinking of all of you, and how sorry I was to return without any gifts for you, I spied some lovely white roses hanging over a bush. I thought of you, my little Beauty,



and plucked the fatal cluster you see there. Immediately on my doing so I heard a terrible roaring from beneath the bush over which the roses grew. I started back, and saw a heavy-looking beast coming towards me.

*Soph.* What was it? a lion—or a bear?

*Father.* Neither, my dear child. I never saw a creature like it. [Groans.

*O. A.* Perhaps it was a hippopotamus?

*Father.* He was not ugly enough for a hippopotamus, nor fierce enough for a lion, he was more like a bear; but I can't tell you my surprise, when from between his ponderous jaws came a firm, gentle, manly voice, speaking.

*Soph.* Speaking, sir? Speaking?

*Geo.* And pray, what did it say?

*Beauty.* Oh, my dear father! The Beast spoke?

*Father.* Yes; it spoke, children—spoke, and said, "Why did you steal my roses?"

[Sighs.



*Geo.* I think, really, father must be out of his mind.

*Beauty.* Were you frightened,—so frightened that you could not speak to him?

*Father.* No, my dear. I did not feel frightened, his voice was so good; but I was very much puzzled. I said, "Good Beast, pardon me, I did not know that these were your roses." The Beast groaned, and, looking up, said, "Were they yours?" "No," I said; "but I have received such large hospitality since I came here,—so much had been given me, with such an ungrudging, though unseen, hand, that I did not dream of doing wrong in gathering these roses for my little daughter."

*Soph.* Well, papa, was the Beast cross then?

*Father* (*moans, and rocks himself to and fro*). My child, my child—my Beauty—my beautiful child—my darling!

*Beauty.* My dear, dear father, what do you mean by such distress?

*Soph.* I am sure the old man's gone mad. What shall we do?

*O. A.* Give him air. He's lost his head. You had better all go, and leave him to me.

*Beauty.* You may go, aunt. I cannot leave him.

*O. A.* Then I'll go and prepare a blister and leeches for his head. He will require both, I'm sure. *[Exit Old Aunt.]*

*Geo.* Oh, gracious, how wild he is! I shall go to bed.

*Beauty.* Don't leave me, sisters; stay a little.

*Geo.* Oh, you whining, fawning creature! I am sure you do not want us. Good night, miss.

*Soph.* I'm not going to be left alone with those two. One is nearly as bad as the other. *[Exeunt Geo. and Soph.]*

*Father.* Are those girls gone?

*Beauty.* Yes, they are. Shall I beg them to stay till you are better?



*Father.* No, Beauty! I'm glad they are gone. I can tell you all better now. I must not linger over it. I told you the Beast accused me of stealing. Well, he then told me the punishment for my sin must be death. That he must kill me instantly, unless I promised to bring my daughter—the daughter for whom I plucked the roses—to stay with him for three whole months. It was in vain I pleaded and craved forgiveness. He would not have mercy on any other terms; and, for your sakes—believing my life to be of value to you all—I at length promised to take you to his home, for he is the owner of the palace I had just left. But whether I can keep my promise I do not know.

*Beauty.* Father, dear! not keep a promise you have once made! and to such a gentleman of a Beast as you say he was!

*Father.* But, child, you will not consent to go, will you? You cannot leave me!

*Beauty.* It hurts me to leave you; but you promised for me, and your word is my law. I will go—I must go, Father. Is that all you have to tell me?

*Father.* All! all! Surely that is enough—enough to make my grey hairs fall off my head. Ah! but there was one more clause: if I do not take you to him to-morrow, I shall myself die before the week is out.

*Beauty.* But, Father, you will not think about dying. Because I *am* going; and we will start to-morrow.

*Father.* Why, child, how light-hearted you are about it; but, ah! you have not seen him.

*Beauty.* Do not let us talk more about him; but go to bed now, and we will arrange everything in the morning. Good night.

[*Beauty leads him out. Curtain falls.*]





ACT IV.

SCENE I.

*A Room in the Beast's Palace. Supper.*

Father and BEAUTY.

*Beauty.*



HAT a beautiful place it is, Father. I did not expect it would be *half* so nice!

*Father.* Yes, my darling! my Beauty! but what is that to me if the Beast is going to tear you to pieces before my eyes.

*Beauty.* Oh no, Father! I don't think he will. He must be a kind-hearted beast, or he would not have given us such a reception, even to warm slippers, see! for us both. And kidneys for supper! You know

you're fond of kidneys. And lots of fruit and jam for me. I wonder if he knows I'm fond of jam?

*Father.* Ah, yes! (*deep sigh*) it's all very well, but what can he want you for?

*Beauty.* I daresay he only made you promise to bring me because he is dull here, and he liked you so much that he wanted you to come to him again. You know everybody likes you. (*Kisses him.*) I wonder where he is! Do you think there is a Mrs. Beast?

*Father.* No, you silly little pet (*laughs*), but don't joke about him; he won't like it if he hears you.

*Beauty.* Well, I'm sure, with such a beautiful house and garden, he ought to have a wife to help him enjoy it. Oh Father, dear! I never saw such lovely flowers anywhere as there are in this garden.

*Father.* Yes, child; oh, yes! I dare say! But ah, me!

*Beauty.* You dear old papa! Now don't



mope, but let us enjoy these wonderful things, while we can. Do have some more wine, or dip your hands in this rosewater, and I will bathe your forehead. There, let me anoint the dear old father, and then he won't look so sad.

*Father.* Dear daughter, I am sure you ought to be more serious; you don't know what is before you. Let's be quick and go to our bedrooms, and then we shall not see him to-night.

*Beauty.* Very well, Father, dear. I want to see my room again, it is so beautiful. The bed is one cup of alabaster, like a lily supported on green stalks and broad green leaves, and the odour about them is just like real lilies. And the carpet is as tender as green moss under my feet.

*Father.* Ah! Beauty, my daughter! my daughter!

*Beauty.* There's a stream for a bath, that runs through the room, bordered withcelandines and sweet forget-me-nots; I wish

you could see it: and there are books and pictures and music in one part of the room, and such lovely birds and flowers; this is separated from the rest by purple velvet curtains, and on the top of these curtains is written, in letters of gold, "Beauty's Room."

*Father.* Yes, yes, dear! all very pretty, but I'd rather have you at home on deal floors. [Sighs.]

*Beauty.* Why, Father, you look as if you thought he had prepared this lovely room on purpose to eat me up in!

*Father.* Don't, darling, trifle about it. You know you haven't seen him as I have.

*Beauty.* No, but I'm sure he's nice; I know he is. And, besides, he hasn't seen me, and when he does he won't think me good to eat—I should be so indigestible.

*Father.* Oh, nice; you think it's nice to threaten to take away my life, do you, sweet, because I wanted a few of his roses for you?

*Beauty.* Well, you know you were a



naughty, wicked, thieving papa, to take what was not your own—weren't you now? I never told you to *steal* me some roses.

*Father.* But he did not say it was stealing when I eat and drank at his expense, and put on the clothes that were his gifts; was it worse to pluck a rose for you, pet?

*Enter Beast.*

*Beast.* "He that steals what isn't 'is'n,  
When he's cotched shall go to prison."

*[Beauty looks terrified, and runs to her*

*Father. Beast roars mildly.*

How do you do, sir? I'm glad to see you. It's well for you that you returned; and is that your daughter?

*Father.* Yes, my noble lord.

*Beast.* Don't call me a lord. I'm a beast. Call me Beast. Don't flatter me; I hate flattery. (*Turning to Beauty.*) How are you, lady?

*Beauty.* Quite well; at least pretty well, thank you, Mr. Beast. I'm a little frightened, I think.

*Beast.* Don't be afraid of me. I shan't hurt you ; I am too unhappy to hurt anyone. [*Sighs and groans.*]

*Beauty.* Alas, poor Beast ! Don't be afraid, Father.

*Father.* Hush, child ! you'll offend him ; don't speak.

*Beast.* Let her talk ; it does me good, it soothes my pains. Such a voice as that would charm any beast.

*Beauty.* Would you like me to sing to you, then ?

*Beast.* Ah, yes, very much—Will you ? And will you dance, too ? Beasts like dancing.

*Beauty.* I'll try ; but I never learnt to dance.

*Beast.* All the better. My genii shall come and dance with you. [*Whistles.*]

*Enter Genii. They dance and sing,  
Beauty joining.*

*Beast.* Thanks, Beauty ; that's soothing.



Now all to rest. You, sir (*turning to Father*), shall stay here to-night; but you must go in the morning, and leave your daughter to me. I will send her back when she wishes to go. You have kept your word in returning to me. I cannot reward your honour, but let me acknowledge it. You will find in your house a chest full of gold. Good night. If you will let me come and see you, Beauty, sometimes, you shall have all you want.

[*Genii retire, chanting Good-night.*


*Beauty and her Father embrace.*

*Curtain drops.*



SCENE II. BEAUTY *sitting at dessert, playing with flowers, fruit, and birds. She hears music. Attendant Genii. Time, a fortnight after her arrival at the Beast's Palace.*

*Beauty.*

 HAVE been a fortnight here, and I don't find my prison so disagreeable as I thought it would be. (*Genii wave handkerchiefs.*) But, oh dear, how I should like to see them all at home. Do you think I might go home for one day? (*Genii shake their heads.*) I wish you might speak to me. I wonder why my father does not come and see me. I think I shall ask the Beast to let me go home and see him. (*Genii shake their heads.*) Certainly, whenever I say anything about going away, it makes him so miserable. (*Genii kneel with raised hands.*) I won't trouble him. He is so kind, and so good, he gets me everything he thinks I should like—(*Genii rise and*



*smile*)—I should be sorry to hurt him ; but—ah ! there's that pretty music again. Oh, they're playing that old tune. It suits my case 'now, I think. Shall I sing it ? (*Genii bow their heads.*)

(*Sings.*) "I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls," &c.

*Enter Beast. (Exeunt Genii.)*

*Beast.* I heard you singing. Will you please, young lady, tell me who it was you seemed so glad to think of as "loving you still the same, the same?"

*Beauty.* Well, I hardly know. I suppose it must have been my father I was thinking of.

*Beast.* Oh, indeed ! I wish I were your father, then.

*Beauty.* But I love you very much ; though, of course, not *quite* so much as my father.

*Beast (groaning).* I wish I were handsome and clever, as well as rich.

*Beauty.* But then you wouldn't like me,

because I am poor; and I shouldn't like you to despise me, as you would if you were as clever as you are rich.

*Beast.* I couldn't despise such a beautiful angel!

*Beauty.* Oh, but don't you know what you'd say to me if you were a grand gentleman, and what I should say to you?

*Beast (groans out)* No!

*Beauty.* Then I'll sing it to you.

*Beast.* Do, do, do.

*Beauty (sings)* "Where are you going, my pretty maid?"

[*Beast gesticulates while she sings.*

*Beast (groans).* How cruel you are. Good-night. [*Exit.*

*Beauty.* Oh, there, he's gone, and I have not asked him what I wanted.

*Enter Fairy.*

*Fairy.* Beauty, I've come to see you, to tell you something. (*Beauty bows.*) This is an enchanted palace.



*Beauty.* Yes, I thought so. Are you the housekeeper?

*Fairy.* I preside over everything here. Are you not happy?

*Beauty.* Yes, thank you. Rather,—everything is very beautiful.

*Fairy.* Then what were you sighing for just now?

*Beauty.* Only because I want to know something about them all at home.

*Fairy.* Oh, you homesick girl! Why don't you forget all that, and love that nice Beast?

*Beauty.* I do like him very much, ma'am, indeed.

*Fairy.* Then why don't you agree to marry him?

*Beauty.* I can't tell exactly why,—well for one thing he has never asked me, and then I don't think, if he did, that I should quite like to go about with him everywhere as my husband, though he is the kindest monster in the world. Besides, he's a little clumsy.

*Fairy.* Foolish child! And you'll go and marry a fine-looking young man, I dare say, that may ill-use you; but just because he's handsome you'll love him.

*Beauty.* Oh! don't think so badly of me.

*Fairy.* Well, *if* you knew!—Ha! But I didn't come to persuade you to your happiness, for he is a nice Beast, but to tell you that you shall see in a vision all your friends at home—for I think you are anxious about them—you shall see how they have been engaged since you left. By three waves of my wand you shall see three visions. I will send the genii of the palace to wait on you.

[*Curtain falls.*





SCENE III. BEAUTY *in an attitude of repose.* The Fairy standing by her side.

*First Vision. Tableau.*

*Fairy.*



WHAT do you see, Beauty?

*Beauty.* Oh, there are my sisters! What are they about? Why, it is a marriage, I can see them both! There's Georgiana and Harry Wormebooke, and Sophia and Arthur Mousey. And a clergyman is performing the ceremony, and my Aunt is there too. Poor auntie!

*Fairy.* Are you happy at what you see?

*Beauty.* Oh so glad! I am so happy for them.

*Fairy.* What more would you know?

*Beauty.* Oh, where are my brothers?

*Fairy.* Compose yourself, and you shall see them next.

---

*Second Vision. Tableau.*

*Beauty.* Who can these soldiers be? Why, they are my brothers Willie and Joe! What! are they learning to be soldiers? they said they would—and I know it was only that they might kill my poor Beast. But I must watch them, and take care they don't hurt him. Dear old Beast! I wish he weren't quite so ugly.

*Beauty.* But I want most of all to see my father.

*Fairy.* Rest yourself again, and I will show him to you. [Waves her wand.]

*Third Vision. Tableau.*

*Beauty.* Where is he? I can't see him! Ah! is that he? Yes, in a chair, done up in blankets. Oh! he's ill, and no one to nurse him! Not even my Aunt there; how can that be? This is dreadful! Oh, Beast! oh, Beast! dear Beast! do let me go home.



*Enter* BEAST.

*Beast.* Yes, my Beauty, you shall go home; but first promise to come back to me.

*Beauty.* Yes, that I will, and I will stay with you sometimes. [*Beast groans.*

*Beast.* Oh, won't you marry me, Beauty?

*Beauty.* I don't think I could do that, sir!

*Beast.* Well, you told me the other day that you could love, honour, and obey me; then why not be my wife?

*Beauty.* Well, I don't exactly know; but I'm afraid we should look odd going to church together, for instance.

*Beast.* Ah! don't make game of me—don't be as cruel as you are beautiful.

*Beauty.* Dear Beast, I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. I do like you very much.

*Beast.* Will you let me kiss you?

*Beauty.* I would rather kiss *you*. I don't think you could kiss me very conveniently. Good night! I think you had better go now.

*Beast.* Yes ; good night ! But take this ring. Put it on now, and in the morning you will find yourself at your home. When you are at your father's house take off the ring, and only put it on again when you want to come back to your poor Beast. Don't stay long, or I shall die.

*[Beast hangs his head, and crawls out.*

BEAUTY *alone.*

*Beauty.* I do love him too. I can't bear to see him go away looking so sad. Oh dear ! oh dear ! I wish really I could marry him without any one knowing it, because I know I love him with all my heart, only everybody would think it so odd of me to marry such a queer looking creature. I don't think he is ugly a bit. He has got such a beautiful fur, and such a fine voice, and his eyes are so tender. I should never be tired of singing to him ; and then, instead of sleeping out of doors under the trees, I'd make him so comfortable on the rug here ; and I could soon teach him to sit up to dinner ;



and if he would let me cut up his dinner, he could soon learn to feed himself with a spoon. But I'm not quite sure about going out to walk with him. But—but—I know I could never be happy to leave him quite ; and then, I suppose, it wouldn't be quite proper to live here always unless I was his wife. Now I'll go to bed, and to-morrow I shall see my father.



SCENE IV. *Father's House.*

*Father wrapped in blankets in easy chair.*

*Father (groans.)*

**A**LL alone. Left by all my children. I wonder what has become of my Beauty. Has she forgotten me? The others, of course, have their new homes and their husbands to attend to, and my sister cares only for her pets and her parrots since my brother left her his house and

money; but *she*, my Beauty, might come just for a week or so to see me. Perhaps that Beast has eaten her up by this time, though he did promise he would not.

*Enter* GEORGIANA and SOPHIA.

*Geo.* Well, Father dear, all alone still, I see. [*Father grunts.*]

*Soph.* How's the gout, sir?

*Father.* Very bad—oh! ugh! Have you heard anything of my darling?

*Geo.* No, indeed; how should we? I expected that her boasted love and attention to her Father would have shown itself now you are ill, but——

*Soph.* Oh did you, then: I didn't. You never find those very virtuous talkers have much in them when there's anything unpleasant to be done.

*Father.* I wish you would not always go on railing against poor Beauty directly you come to see me. I'd rather you'd stay away if you can't be a little more pleasant.



*Soph.* Well, Father, I think you are very ungrateful, when we came to see what we could do for you; *I*, at least, ran the risk of offending my husband, for he won't speak a word to me all the evening if he thinks I've been attending to you instead of being at home waiting for him.

*Geo.* Well, you may as well do something for the old man as go on talking in that way. What shall Sophia do for you, sir?

*Father.* I want this poultice changed, it's got so hard.

*Soph.* Oh, I couldn't put on a poultice if you'd give me twenty golden guineas. Here, Georgiana, you are older than I am, so you'd better do it for him. I'm going.

*Geo.* So am I. My horses will get cold if I keep the carriage waiting any longer.

*Enter BEAUTY, who throws her arms round her father's neck.*

Dear, dear Father, what *is* the matter with you?

*Father.* Why, Beauty my love, I'm so glad to see you—ugh!—how did you come!

*Beauty.* I don't know; I suppose I walked. Oh, sisters, how are you?

*Soph.* Quite well, Miss Beauty.

*Geo.* Really, how grand you are; and have you been walking in that elegant costume through the forest?

*Beauty.* Oh, I forgot! Well, I suppose I must have been brought here somehow. But, never mind me. How is dear papa?

*Soph.* He is very ill; but as you are come now, you had better make him comfortable. We have been waiting on him till we are quite worn out with fatigue, and our husbands and our own homes require our attention now.

*Geo.* You can neglect your father and your home; we cannot help coming to him, though we have other duties to attend to.

*Soph.* Oh, don't talk any more to such a dressed up silly thing!



*Geo.* So the Beast gives you nice clothes, does he, and good things to eat?

*Soph.* I suppose you'd like to be his wife, and then you could stay at this grand place always. But, good-bye; of course you'll stay here till father is well?

*Beauty.* I must not stay more than a week.

*Geo.* Oh, very pretty, I'm sure!

*Soph.* Truly dutiful—a week!

*Father.* Oh, my toe! Beauty, take off all these rags. My foot is so burning hot.

*Geo.* Pray take off your grand clothes first.

*Father.* Get along, you chattering magpies! Confound it!

*Soph.* Well, Georgiana, there's gratitude for you!

[*Exeunt. Beauty kneels down and dresses the toe.*]

*Father.* Well, child, how do you get on?

*Beauty.* Now, my dear, dear Papa, I'm not going to let you talk at all to-night, and I

shan't talk to you. I will only just tell you that I am quite well, and I have only one sorrow.

*Father.* What's that, dear?

*Beauty.* That I am separated from you! But you must go to bed now, and then I'll come and talk, and read to you, and sing to you in the morning. I'll call the men to carry you up stairs in your chair.

*Father.* Oh, Beauty! I think I can sleep to-night, because you're come home again.

*Beauty.* Good-night, my dear Father.

*Father.* But first of all, promise me you will stay a fortnight at least with me. I can't get better if you don't. Do, do, dear!

*Beauty.* Oh, Father! don't speak like that to me. Of course I will, if you are ill, and really want me.—(*Aside*) But what will become of my Beast?

*Father.* Well then, now, good-night.

*Beauty.* Good-night.





## ACT V.

SCENE I. *Music within ; song, " She never told her love." Beast alone in listening attitude. Listens and trembles ; shows signs of hope and fear.*

*Beast.*



YES, it is her own voice. One thing the Fairy gave me, when she took away my wit and my beauty—a power of hearing and seeing what I choose to hear and see. I see her sitting alone with her father and singing ; but what is she singing ? " She never told her love." Who is her love ? Can it be me ? Does she love me ? But if she loved me she would not leave me so long. I shall die. I knew I couldn't live if

she stayed away so long. I've not tasted food for seven days. Oh! I am falling! My heart will break. [*Falls down.*]

BEAUTY *enters.*

*Beauty.* My Beast! my own Beast! What is the matter? I saw you in a vision; I heard your moans. I longed to be with you: I put on your ring, and here I am. My beautiful, darling Beast, don't die.

*Beast.* Never mind me. I can't live any longer.

*Beauty.* Why not? You must live for me. I shall die if you do.

*Beast.* Ah! if you had come back when you—s—aid—you—would, and had spoken such words then, I might have lived; but I must die now.

*Beauty.* But, Beast, love,—my father was so ill and so miserable, I could not leave him before, and I thought you were so good, you would like me to stay and nurse him. But oh! get up now; or lie here,



and let me get you a smelling-bottle or some water.

*Beast.* It is of no use now, dear. I've eaten nothing for seven days for love of you.

*Beauty.* Ah, Beast, Beast, how wicked I have been. I wish I had married you before I went away. Do get well, and I'll marry you to-day, if you'll let me go home sometimes.

*Beast (nearly dead, but just able to gasp)*  
Ah! Will you?—will you?

*Beauty.* Yes, I will. Don't die, dear Beast, don't die.

*Beast.* Then—then, get me some water, and perhaps—yes, perhaps—

*[Beauty fetches some water, and, turning back, sees a young Prince, instead of the beast, standing.]*

*Prince.* Beauty! will you really be my bride—my Princess?

*Beauty.* Sir, sir, don't speak to me. I want my Beast; he's dying—he wants this water. And I do not know you.

*Prince.* You will soon know me, Beauty; I am your Beast, only that now I have my true shape.

*Beauty.* Ah! can it be?

*Prince.* Give me the water. (*He drinks.*) Your love has saved me from the power of a spell my godmother cast over me because of my discontent. Henceforth she will only do us good. Love has conquered.

*Beauty.* But you seem like a stranger to me.

*Prince.* You loved me when I was a beast, won't you love me now?

*Beauty.* My father will like you all the better, and perhaps I shall some day.

[*He kisses her hand. Curtain falls, and, rising again, all the actors appear and invite their friends to the marriage supper.*]







## SNOWDROP.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

The KING.

The PRINCE OF THE SUN.

LORD RUPERT.

PETER.

JANS, HANS, *and five other Dwarfs.*

A SERVANT.

The QUEEN BEATRICE.

The QUEEN ELEANORA.

The PRINCESS SNOWDROP.

CONSTANTIA and HONORIA, *Maids of Honour.*





## SNOWDROP.

### ACT I.

SCENE I. *The Queen sitting at work with two maids of honour, CONSTANTIA and HONORIA, at an ebony table, with needle-work apparatus. CONSTANTIA, kneeling, offering some muslin.*

*Constantia.*



MAY it please your Majesty, I have prepared this hem and lace.

*Hon.* And I have threaded this needle.

*Queen.* Thanks, dear friends ; how good

you are. (*They are backing to go out.*)  
Stay ; sit with me a little while.

*Both.* Fair Queen, you do us honour.

*Queen.* I have some work to do. Will you help me prepare some dresses for the little princess the Fairies have promised me ?

*Con.* Gladly, indeed. I have no greater pleasure in life than to be with you, and to work for you, dear Queen.

*Hon.* And for me, the greatest joy I have is to do anything for you. But, pardon me, your Majesty, I wonder you did not choose a prince ?

*Queen.* You see, Honoria, perhaps I shall not live very long, and then after my death a sweet little daughter would be such a comfort to her father ; and if I do live, think of the pleasure of having a little lady-child for a companion. The country is sure to be provided with princes, but I want a princess for my own companion.

*Con.* Well, it does make me happy to



work for her. There's something wonderful about the work too. I am sure the Fairies help us. Look at this embroidery, and all done in half an hour.

*Queen.* I am not surprised. The fairy Lightbell, who promised her to me, said that all work for her should be sweetness, all labour happiness. See, is not this lovely? it grows beautiful in my hand.

*Con.* Yes, indeed, it is lovely. How small and cosy it looks! Now it is finished may I put it in your new ebony table? That will be such a nice nest for all the baby clothes.

*[Honorina helps to open the table, and together they put in the robe.]*

*Queen (looking at them).* My friends, I see how tenderly you care for even the garments of my new darling. Tell me you will love her and care for her always—after my death even more than you would were I to live to bring her up myself.

*Con.* Dear Queen, do not talk of leaving us.

*Queen.* No, I won't talk about that ; but only promise me that if I do not live, you two will not leave her as long as she wants a mother's care. Will you nurse her and watch her, help her and teach her, in my place ?

*Hon.* Dear Queen, we will promise you anything you ask—anything to serve you—to our lives' end. Will we not, Constantia ?

*Con.* Indeed—yes. I am only thinking what an honour you are putting on us to give us such a labour of love. Our much loved Queen, under you, whether you be in heaven or on earth—under you, we vow to serve your child.

*Queen.* Thanks, dear friends ; I love no others so well as you—and—and the Lady Eleanora, my lord's cousin, frightens me. It gives me much comfort that you promise not to leave her while she is a child.

*Con.* We promise to serve and cherish her, not from duty only, but from the love we bear to you.



*Hon.* With true affection, and with loyal worship.

[*Kisses Queen's hand. Constantia approaches, and kisses her hand too.*]

*Queen.* So if I go to heaven, my child will have two mothers here instead of one.

*Hon.* Our sweet lady!—oh, do not, do not speak so! We cannot spare you. Life would be so blank without you. Even the baby would bring no joy.

*Con.* She would be but an inheritance to us of love and sadness. [Both weep.]

*Queen.* Now, maidens, do not weep. I am not gone yet, and I do not feel ill; but sometimes the hope and the joy seem too much for me, and I feel as if I should have nothing else to desire after she is born (*with a sigh*). But here comes my lord the King. (*The King walks majestically across the stage, not noticing the Queen.*) Oh, King, dear, will you come and sit by me a minute?

*King.* You never asked me aught in vain, yet I have no time to waste.

*Queen.* I will not keep you long ; but I want to thank you for your Majesty's beautiful present—this ebony table.

*King.* I am glad you like it, madam. My cousin Eleanora thought it regal looking—ahem !—and fit for a queen.

*Queen.* Oh ! I thought it was your *own* choice for me. I wish it had been. Well, never mind, it is very handsome, and so useful too. Do you know what I keep in it ?

*King (pompously).* No, I do not.

*Queen (archly.)* My secrets. Look ! I will shew you.

*[Shews him a little cap and a little frock, looking triumphantly.]*

*King.* Very satisfactory, Queen ; I'm glad you are so sensible.

*Queen (who is working, looks up and smiles.)* It is such pleasant work.

*[She pricks her finger, and looks at it bleeding.]*

*King.* Oh, Queen ! what have you done ? Let me send for the doctor.



*Queen.* Oh, no! please don't! He would give me plaisters and lotions, and he would make such a fuss about nothing. Besides, I rather like to see it bleed. Does not the colour look pretty on this white work. (*Coyly.*) I should like my little girl that is coming. . . .

*King (interrupting her.)* Queen, I should prefer an heir, if you please.

*Queen.* Oh! should you? I'm very sorry for you, then, because I'm nearly sure the Fairy promised me a girl.

*King.* Humph!—ha! I wish Fairies wouldn't be so meddlesome!

*Queen.* Well, I should like a girl best; and I should like her cheeks and lips to be as bright as this blood, and her skin to be as white as my work, and her hair to be as black as this ebony table.

*King (magnificently.)* You are getting silly! I must go to my realm; it wants governing. My lords and slaves are waiting me.

*Queen (coaxingly).* You are worth waiting for. (*The King bows his head. The maids of honour are backing to move away.*) No, ladies, do not go away. Dear King, in the presence of these, my two sweet friends, I want you to second my appointment of them as guardians to our little one that is coming.

*King (rising).* Madam, surely there is plenty of time for that.

*Queen.* Not too much time, my dear Lord. I want your sanction to my appointment. I want your promise, that if I d—, if I do not live, you will give my Honoria, and my Constantia, leave to act as mothers to my child.

*King.* Now, Queen, you are not like yourself; you are not wise. You will live to nourish your offspring, and guide its education for the throne yourself.

*Queen.* But in case I should die, you will see my wishes carried out? May these two take care of my child in such a case?



*King* (*stroking his beard.*) Under *my* superintendence, I suppose you mean.

*Queen.* Yes, surely! You will ever be her father.

*King.* I should like it better were my cousin Eleanora to train her—if it is a girl—for the lofty position she will have to maintain. *Her* style and manner might teach her something *like* queenly bearing. *She* understands deportment.

[*With a sneering look at Honoria and Constantia.*

*Queen* (*beseechingly*). Ah, please, dear King, I like her not. She is so haughty and grand, so proud, and even fierce sometimes. She does not like *me*. She could not love my child.

*King.* Tut, tut! Do as you like, but no more of such silly talk. I like you best when you laugh and look merry. A Queen should never think of trouble. It is not dignified.

*Enter a Servant.*

*Ser.* May it please your Majesty, the Barber, your Secretary, the Keeper of your Majesty's Conscience, and the Clerk of the Weather; the Telegram Master, and the Tailor, the Photographer and your Trumpeter, Peter the Huntsman, with others, await your commands.

*King.* I'll be with them shortly. (*Exit Servant. Turning to the Queen.*) Farewell! Keep up your spirits, and at two o'clock, be ready to drive round my City with me.

[*Exeunt all. Curtain drops.*]






SCENE II. *A Twelvemonth after.*

HONORIA and CONSTANTIA nursing the  
infant Princess Snowdrop.

*Honoria.*

HAT a dreadful noise those bells make?

*Con.* Yes. No wonder our darling keeps starting at those clanging sounds.

*Hon.* I think they bode her no good, sweet little angel! How lovely she looks! Ah! what a noise! Marriage bells, indeed!

*Con.* It's little more than a year since her sweet mother so playfully wished for this ebon hair, this snow-white brow, and these sweet cherry lips and rosy cheeks.

*Hon.* What would you and I not give that she could see them now in such per-

fection? Give her to me a minute, dear.  
(*To the Baby.*) You little beauty! you pet!

[*Kisses her passionately.*]

*Con.* But oh! Honoria, my heart aches.  
(*Presses her hand on her heart, raises her eyes.*) Heaven save her from that woman!  
that dreadful Eleanora!

*Hon.* You should say "The Queen Eleanora."

*Con.* How can I? Can you? I know we shall be forced, but—Heaven protect our darling. Honoria, we must never leave her. How could the King marry that woman? she is so much disliked everywhere.

*Hon.* You must confess she is handsome.

*Con.* Handsome! Ah! he'll be sorry for it before long, I think. But how will she treat our baby?

*Hon.* She shall not have to treat her at all. We will never leave her till she is grown up. The King gave his promise to her sainted mother that we should remain here as her guardians.



*Con.* I will not leave, Honoria, but *you*. Lord Rupert will never wait.

*Hon.* Then he must get another wife! Constantia, believe me, if the child is ever left by either one of us, it will be the death of her. There's murder in that woman's eye. I saw it when she asked for the child the other day.

*Con.* And did you see her pinch its cheek when she pretended to caress it?

*Hon.* Ay, did I *not*? The mark is not gone yet.

*Con.* So, dear Honoria, on our knees let us vow that we will not leave her, night nor day. [*They kneel.*]


*Hon.* Yes, let us vow, and each, clasping the baby in our arms, say, "We vow, so Heaven help us, never to leave you, sweet!"

*Con.* (*taking the child from Hon.*) We vow, so Heaven help us, never to leave you, sweet!



SCENE III. *A Room in the Palace. The King and Queen* ELEANORA. *Time, the day after the last day of the honeymoon.*

*King.*

ILL your Majesty please to drive out with me to-day in the chariot?

*Queen.* With eight horses; not unless.

*King.* I think, fair Queen, that four will be enough. It is not a state occasion.

*Queen.* Then *I* do not go.

*King.* I will have eight, if you wish it.

*Queen.* I did not say I wished it: I only say I do not go with four; I am not going to make my beauty so common. If *you* don't know how to maintain your dignity, I will teach you.

*King (frightenedly).* Oh, thank you! You are very good.

*Queen.* Say, beautiful.



*King.* I meant beautiful and handsome too, for so indeed you are.

*Queen.* You are—a milksop.

*King.* And *you*—you are so very funny.  
Ta, ta. *[Exit King.]*

*Queen.* The fool! He *is* a fool, and my husband. Bah! Well, never mind; I am Queen at last, and all the world envies him such a Queen. (*Walks backwards and forwards before a glass proudly.*) No woman surpasses me, nor can pretend to compare with my beauty. But that I may be quite sure, I will consult my magic mirror, which always tells the truth. (*Says to Glass*)—

Glass, glass, upon the wall,  
Tell me who, in hut or hall,  
Is the fairest of us all?

*Glass.* Queen, Queen, proud and tall,  
Envy none, in hut or hall,  
Thou art the fairest of them all!

*Queen.* That's well. Now I should be quite content if it weren't for that child that is growing up, for I suppose it will

grow, it looks healthy ; and its mother was beautiful — oh, so beautiful ! Well, there's plenty of time yet. I must ring for my maids to dress me, as I am going out in my chariot and eight. This is the sort of thing that is worth living for, and I'm the right person for such a life. [Exit.







ACT II.

SCENE I.

CONSTANTIA *and* HONORIA *together.*

*Enter* SNOWDROP.

*Constantia.*



Y dear Snowdrop, we have something to say to you. Were you wishing to go out?

*Snow.* I was going to ask one of my kind aunts to go with me into the woods; I do love to walk there in such snow as this. But if you like I will ask Dinah to go with me; she can take care of me.

*Hon.* No, darling sweet, you must not go without one of us. It is about that and

about your need of us that we want to speak to you, precious.

*Snow.* (*taking off her hat*). Yes, aunties dear ; here I am, ready to listen, and I will sit all day and let you talk to me, if you like.

*Hon.* We will all go out together soon, but first we want to tell you some things about yourself.

*Snow.* Oh, I don't want to be told anything. I don't like being told things. I am so happy, I want to keep as I am, and not go away anywhere or alter anything.

*Con.* No, dear ; you are not going away : but now you are grown so much, you know the world will want to see the king's daughter.

*Hon.* So you will have to go out in the chariot with the Queen, and you must go to her balls and dances, like other ladies.

*Snow.* I shall like to go to the dances ; but, please, I *will not* go out in that big carriage with my stepmamma. Do you



know, aunties — only you must not tell anybody. Promise—*not anybody*.

*Hon. and Con.* No, darling ; it shall be a secret.

*Snow.* I do not like my stepmamma at all. I think she dislikes me very much.

*Con.* Oh! Snowdrop! what can make you think so? She always calls you her little angel, and gives you such handsome presents.

*Snow.* Well, I hope it's not wicked of me, but I can't bear her presents, because she looks so *very* ugly when she gives me them. Then she is sure to hurt me somehow, when she comes to see me, or when I go to see her. Sometimes she treads on my toes so hard I cannot help the tears coming into my eyes. Then she smiles so *very* much, and says, "The little angel will pardon her carelessness."

*Con.* Poor child! Poor dear child!

*Snow.* But then, besides that, if I have a pretty dress on that you have chosen for

me, she is sure to tear it, or to let something fall on it that quite spoils it.

*Hon.* Well, dear, you must try not to take fancies into your head; but I am afraid you are right. I fear she does not like you.

*Con.* But you must try to be very good to her, dear, though it is difficult. Only we want you to promise never to be alone with her for a minute. Your lovely mother made us promise never to leave you while you were a child.

*Hon.* And we did promise, and we have kept our promise all these years.

*Snow.* How very, very good of you! How could you be so kind?

*Con.* Because we loved your mother first, and now because we love you, darling, for your own sake.

*Hon.* Ah, Snowdrop! I wish you had known your mother. She was so beautiful!

*Snow.* But I do know her. I often see her in my sleep, and she is so like you two,



only rather prettier, I think. You don't mind my saying so, do you, dear aunties?

*[Goes up to them, and cossets them.]*

*Con.* You dear, sweet child! how could we mind it? She *was* more beautiful.

*Hon.* I never saw any one to equal her.

*Snow.* The Queen, my stepmamma, says—*she* is the most beautiful woman that was ever made.

*Hon.* Well, never mind. Don't let us talk about her. But remember, you must never go anywhere with her, without one of us, or without your maid.

*Con.* Honoria tells you this, dear, because she herself must leave you.

*Snow.* Leave me? Why? Leave all of us! Where are you going?

*Hon.* *(taking her face in her hands, and kissing.)* Well, dear, where do you think?

*Snow.* Oh, I can guess! You are going away with Lord Rupert. Is that it? I hate him then! I used to like him; but I never will again! *(Bursts out crying.)*

*Con.* Oh, Snowdrop, dear! You'll hurt Honoria!

*Snow.* I can't help it. I'm very sorry, but I don't want her to go away; and she told my Mamma she would always stay here. I shan't like anything after you are gone. (*Cries.*) Oh, dear Honoria, do not go!

*Con.* Listen, darling, while I tell you something before you say another word.

*Snow.* Yes, I will listen, but I must say a great many other words if you talk about her going away.

*Con.* But I want to tell you that, more than sixteen years ago, Lord Rupert loved Honoria. She was as young as you are now. All her life was before her, and this life she had promised to him. His house was bright and gay. His lands and houses and gardens; his tenantry and servants—all expected her. They only waited the Queen's pleasure to arrange the time of their marriage, when suddenly the Queen



died with this entreaty to Honoria and to me on her lips: "For the love you both bear to your God and your Queen, never leave my darling till she is a woman."

*Snow.* My poor Mamma! And did you really stay with me instead of going to your beautiful home with that dear Lord Rupert, and did he wait and wait all those long years?

*Con.* Yes, dear Snowdrop, indeed he did, and his house has been desolate all this while—he went away to fight for his King; and now that you are grown up, and I am still with you, won't you let Lord Rupert take her home.

*Snow.* (*throws herself down at her feet*). Yes; yes indeed, Auntie, my precious Auntie. I won't be selfish any more, and I won't hate him, but I will love him better than ever, and I must thank him for lending you to me for so long. But when does he want you?

*Hon.* He is coming to-day, to get us all to go together to see my new home, and then we will fix the time. Will you come too, Snowdrop? I should like you to see our beautiful place.

*Snow.* Thank you, but—

*Enter The Prince of the Sun and  
Lord RUPERT.*

*Prince.* Good morning, fair ladies. (*General salutations.*)

*Lord R.* My friend the Prince has kindly promised us his company to-day, and has brought his carriage and some riding horses hoping to persuade you all to go out.

*Prin.* Will you all accompany us? I propose that we take Lord Rupert's country house by storm, and frighten his house-keeper. May we, Lady Honoria?

*Hon.* Lord Rupert promised to introduce me soon to the dear old soul, and I shall be delighted to have so many companions to support me in her august pre-



sence for the first time. Darling Snowdrop, will you go with us ?

*Prin.* I had my white ponies harnessed in the hope that you would accompany us.

*Snow.* Thanks : may I drive them myself ?


*Prin.* I don't think you can manage four in hand ; but if you will sit by me, and if they should behave very well, we shall perhaps be able to give the ponies the honour of being guided by you (*Offers her his arm, and they go out. Lord Rupert, Constantia, and Honoria follow. Curtain drops*).



SCENE II. *Breakfast Table.*

King and Queen ELEANORA.

*King.*

OW that we are delivered from the presence of the Lady Honoria by her blessed marriage, I wish arrangements to be made, with your permission, in order that our daughter Snowdrop may be present at our matutinal meals.

*Queen.* It would be more pleasant to my feelings, sire, in speaking of that young person, if you would call her *your* child, and remember that she is no daughter of mine, and as to having her to breakfast with us, I have not the least objection if she comes alone, but if Constantia is to be with her I decline to appear myself at the breakfast table.

*King.* Excuse me, fair queen, I promised the sainted mother of my child—

*Queen (interrupting him).* Will you hold



your tongue, sir king? I am tired of hearing of *that* saint, and as to your daughter, you might be content that you have introduced her to the public gaze at your balls and your spectacles. Poor little chit! an infant like her to be stared at and talked about as she is—I pity her!

*King.* Indeed! How kind!

*Queen.* If you will send Constantia away I will bring out your daughter with the reticence and the dignity befitting a princess.

*King.* Excuse me. I tell you that I promised her mother I would not part her from Constantia and Honoria while she remained a child.

*Queen.* Honoria has left her; it shows how much her devotion is worth! besides, you surely might consider her grown up at seventeen.

*King.* Just now you called her an infant and a chit!

*Queen.* Pardon me, cannot you see that I did so to try and shame you for keeping

her in pinafores and in the school-room still?

*King.* Well then, madam, to please you, Constantia shall leave. And remember, from this time forth, Snowdrop is our companion—our equal.

*Queen.* Equal indeed! Do you mean to insult me, and say that my beauty is not superior to hers?

*King.* Preposterous idea! No, indeed, I did not mean *that*. Your majesty's beauty must ever be the greatest in the land. (*Flatteringly.*) Splendid woman. No one can compare with you in my eyes. But, you see, *young* people *perhaps* might think differently.

*Queen.* If I am not absolutely the handsomest woman in the world, I care no longer to live.

[*A knock at the door. Enter Servant.*]

*Serv.* The Prince of the Sun.

*King.* Welcome, young prince, to my halls (*introducing him to the Queen*). The



Queen Eleanora—the Prince of the Sun, so named for his brightness, his wealth, and his beauty!

*Prin.* Good king, you make me blush. I fear my father's people have exposed me to ridicule in bestowing upon me such a title, which grew out of their love to him and from their desire to exalt his son. (*The Queen bows haughtily.*)

*King.* You have doubtless heard of the Queen Eleanora, the fairest woman the world ever saw?

*Prin.* I have heard of your Majesty's daughter, the Princess Snowdrop, and most proud and honoured I am to be introduced to her mother. It needs must be that her beauty should transcend—

*Queen.* Pardon me, young Prince, I am *not* her mother. Had you ever seen the child of whom you speak, you could not have fallen into such an error for a moment after looking at me.

*Prin.* To confess the truth, I have seen

the princess more than once, and indeed your majesty is more than right; I could see *no* resemblance, and I was vainly trying to comprehend the mysterious difference. Your beauty is of another order altogether.

*Queen.* I should imagine that it is.

*King.* May I ask you where you have seen the Princess?

*Prin.* At the play last night, I was one of the privileged few who could get a glimpse of her surpassing beauty now and then. (*The Queen fans herself and shows signs of fainting.*) I had also the honour of an introduction to her Highness a few days since in the company of the Ladies Honoria and Constantia at Lord Rupert's country seat.

*Queen.* So! so! indeed—that is the care those models of perfection take of your daughter of “surpassing beauty!” (*With a sneer at the Prince.*)

*King.* Well, Queen, you do not expect my daughter to be kept shut up in her own



garden all her days, do you? Lord Rupert came to me craving the honour of her company at his house, and had it been only out of gratitude to the Lady Honoria, I could not have said him nay.

*Queen.* You never asked *me* what I thought of the propriety of such a proceeding, but if you *will* guide her without a *mother's* protecting help you must take the consequences (*looking insolently at the Prince*).

*King (to the Prince).* Pardon this little matrimonial discussion, honoured Prince, which has interrupted so abruptly what should have been a hearty reception of you. Your father sent couriers to inform me of your coming, and your apartments are already prepared.

*Prin.* Thanks, good king. My father will be ever grateful to you.

*King.* I trust you have not been wandering in my kingdom without house or home.

*Prin.* Nay indeed, Lord Rupert cap-

tured me, and assured me that your Majesty was not apprised of my intended visit. Had I known that my father had written, I should have presented myself without delay to your Majesty.

*King.* Rest assured there is no need for apology. Queen, you will welcome the son of my friend, and make him one with us.

*Queen.* I will see your commands obeyed, sir.

*King (to Prince).* I am going to the chase this morning. Will you accompany me?

*Prin.* Willingly, your Majesty.


*Queen (aside).* And I am to entertain a man who thinks Snowdrop more beautiful than I am. (*Aloud*) — gentlemen — good morning—I go to my prayers—

*Gentlemen.* And we, fair Queen, to follow the hounds. [*Exeunt King and Prince.*]

*Queen.* May the hounds seize you both!



## SCENE III.

*Queen.* LASS, glass, upon the wall;  
Tell me who, in hut or hall,  
Is the fairest of us all?

*Glass.* Queen, Queen, be wise and bear;  
Still, as ever, thou art fair,  
But Snowdrop's beauty is more rare.

*Queen.* Ah! ah! So it's come at last!  
The cursed doom that I have been dreading.  
Something must be done. (*Paces the room;  
sits down and meditates, &c.; then rings.*)  
I think I know a man that will serve my  
turn. (*Enter Servant; he bows.*) Is Peter,  
the huntsman, here to-day?

*Serv.* May it please your Majesty, yes,  
he is. He is with the King at this very  
moment.

*Queen.* Bid him come to me before he  
leaves the palace. (*Servant bows, and exit.*)

Now, what shall I say to him? (*Broods.*) Ah! yes—yes; nothing else. It must be *Death!* She must be—— (*Enter PETER, the huntsman.*) Are you the King's huntsman?

*Pet.* May it please your Majesty, yes.

*Queen.* Where do you live?

*Pet.* In the forest, noble lady.

*Queen.* What do you do all the day?

*Pet.* I hunt and shoot, and supply the King's table with venison and game, and kill a poacher now and then, when I have a chance. I feed the dogs and kill the stags, and I frighten the old women that break the hedges in winter; and, in fact, I'm keeper of the peace and ruffian in general to his Majesty.

*Queen.* Stop there! That's what I want. Ruffian, you said?

*Pet.* Yes, my lady—your Majesty, I mean. (*Aside.*) Ho! ho! my fine madam! (*Aloud.*) At your Majesty's service; your most humble, obedient. I wait your Majesty's commands.



*Queen.* You shall have them. There is a certain creature I find in my way.

*Pet. (aside.)* So you want her put out of it.

*Queen.* She is an annoyance, a hindrance to me.

*Pet. (aside.)* She must see dark, I suppose.

*Queen.* She is insolent, and stands in my way with my people when I want to help them.

*Pet. (aside.)* So I'm wanted to twist her neck. Hum!

*Queen.* Do you know what I mean?

*Pet.* I should think I do, your Majesty.

*Queen.* Have you courage enough?

*Pet.* I should think I had, now. But what sort is she? Is she a fawn (*grinning*) or a fowl, hey? or a cat, maybe?

*Queen.* No, she's a girl. A foolish child, a useless plague, the torment of my life, the spoiler of all my pleasure.

*Pet.* A girl! Humph! That alters the case. I don't know as my knife's sharp

enough for that sort of business; that comes to be rayther serious, you see, ma'am. What may her name be, now?

*Queen.* That is nothing to you—man. Do you know your place? If I make you a good offer, that's all you have to do with.

*Pet. (aside.)* So it is, if it be a good offer. *(Aloud.)* I hope I'm above doing anythink for money, ma'am; which it's agen my principles.

*Queen.* You! ruffian in general, *squeamish*—talking about principles—when luck puts a good turn in your way!

*Pet.* I should like to know, howsomever, what a Queen calls a good turn?

*Queen.* Look here! Here's all the money I have in the world, three bags of gold. I'll give you one. Look at it.

*Pet. (taking up his hat.)* Good morning, ma'am—beg pardon—your Majesty. Don't think to bribe me, ma'am.

*Queen.* Well, man, see, I'll give you two.

*Pet.* You don't think me such a villain as

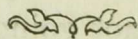


to be damned for two o' them bags, do you?

*Queen. (excitedly.)* Well, well! I see I was right—you're as bad as I took you for. Here, take them all, only don't fail me, or you shall hang as high as the church steeple.

*Pet.* When do you want me?


*Queen.* To-night, as the clock strikes twelve. There! there, be off! Here comes the King.



#### SCENE IV.

SNOWDROP and CONSTANTIA, *in their dressing-gowns, preparing for bed.*

*Snowdrop.*

 FEEL so dull, dear Auntie. I don't know how it is, but I feel as if something nasty were going to happen.

*Con.* Do you, dear? How can that be? Perhaps you heard what the King, your father, said to me to-night?

*Snow.* No, I did not. What was it?  
Oh, Auntie, you frighten me!

*Con.* I can't bear to tell you, my darling;  
but, you must know, it must come.

*Snow.* Are you going to be married, too?

*Con.* No, dear, I am not; but——

*Snow.* Well, Auntie, but what?

*Con.* Why, dear, your father doesn't  
want me here any longer.

*Snow.* Where are we going, then?

*Con.* *You* are not going anywhere, dear;  
he wants me to leave you.

*Snow.* But you know you promised  
mamma you would *not* leave me. So  
you can't, darling Auntie. Don't you  
see?

*Con.* My child, my pet, I promised I  
would not leave you as long as you were a  
child; and the King says very truly that  
you are not a child any longer.

*Snow.* Oh! I'm sure I'm not grown up  
yet, for I am so silly and stupid. I'm sure  
I am not a woman yet.



*Con.* You are more than seventeen, Snowdrop!

*Snow.* But I want more taking care of now than I did. Because I am expected to be wise and I'm not wise, and I don't know how to talk like wise people yet. So do not leave me, dear, dear, I can't do without you.

*Con.* But I must go, Snowdrop. We must make the best we can of it. I'll come and see you very often.

*Snow.* No, that won't do. I will go away if you do. I can't and won't stay here without you! I shall tell papa so to-morrow. I should die without you!

*Con.* Well, dear child, get into bed now, and we can talk about it again in the morning.

*Snow.* I won't go to sleep till you promise me you will not leave me!

*Con.* I won't go indeed, Snowdrop, if you can persuade your father to let me stay.

*Snow.* I know I can make him promise

me anything I like. So I won't believe you are going, and yet I'm so tired, and things all look so ugly. I won't go to bed.

*Con.* You must, child, and directly, too.

*Snow.* I can't, auntie, dear, dear auntie. Do let me stay up a little longer! I am frightened to go to bed to-night, though I don't know why, and I feel so drowsy, too. It's so strange.

*Con.* I must confess, sweet, I am like you. I feel dreadfully sleepy and stupid; but I am frightened at leaving you to go to bed.

*Snow.* Then let us stay together a little longer. (*A pause.*) I wonder why the Queen asked us both to supper with her to-night.

*Con.* She said it was a farewell entertainment to me.

*Snow.* She did not do much to make it entertaining. Did she, auntie?

*Con.* She said she brought out her best wines and fruits to please me; and though



I never take wine, I was obliged to drink some, or she would have been quite hurt.

*Snow.* I really think, aunt dear, you are too good.

*Con.* It wasn't goodness, darling, it was only politeness. I drank what she gave me more for the sake of peace than anything else. But I begin to wish I had not taken it, I feel so very sleepy and dull after it. Wine always makes me light-headed, but I feel worse than ever I did before.

*Snow.* It's because you are sad about leaving me. Don't believe it—you are not going—there! I'm sleepy, too, so I'll put my head down here, and we shall be happy in being near each other.

*[They fall fast asleep. A laudanum sleep.]*

*Enter Queen, with PETER blindfolded.*

*Queen.* Those dawdling brats, the monkeys! They are neither of them in bed! But, I'll stake my crown they're not awake. I'm too wide awake for that! (*Stoops*

*down and looks at them*). Yes, asleep enough! I knew how that would be. Trust *me* for thorough work. Nothing half done when *I* do it. Here, Peter! Quick! (*Covers Snowdrop over with matting.*) Here's a nice young tree to plant near your own house. If you take proper care of it, it will bring you a rare lot of fruit. Sharp's the word, now. I lead you back again, and then mum's the word.

[*Peter carries Snowdrop out.*

*Curtain drops.*



SCENE V.

*A dark night. In a wood. PETER and  
SNOWDROP.*

*Snowdrop.*



HERE am I? Auntie, where are you? I can't understand it.

*Pet.* No more can't I, miss.



*Snow.* Who are you?

*Pet.* I should like to know who *you* are, young one?

*Snow.* Why, you *must* know who *I* am! But who are you?

*Pet.* I'm a friend that has brought you out here for a moonlight walk, only there doesn't happen to be no moon. But tell me your name.

*Snow.* Why, surely you know me, *Peter*!

*Pet.* Is it really my snow-white princess? The king's daughter! [ *With horror.*

*Snow.* Yes, of course I am Snowdrop! But how am I here if you did not bring me? Where's my aunt?

*Pet.* Well, never mind that. Here you are, and I am sorry to say, you can't be here long, for I have promised to take nothing of you back to the palace but your heart.

*Snow.* My *heart*! What do you mean?

*Pet.* I mean that (*desperately*) I've got to kill you!

*Snow.* (*screams.*) Oh, Peter! You won't do that!

*Pet.* I *must*. I said I would. I promised her.

*Snow.* Who?

*Pet.* Why, the Queen, to be sure!

*Snow.* But you won't keep your promise—surely—surely, Peter, you won't? Why does she want me killed?

*Pet.* Because you are too beautiful, I suppose. She says you are in her way.

*Snow.* I in her way! I should like to get out of it. Take me back to Aunt Constantia! They've sent her away, and I'll go to *her*. Good Peter, *do—do—do!*

*Pet.* Oh! Lawk a mercy! What did yer wake for? I'd have sent you happy to heaven in another minute, if yer hadn't a-woke. You'd have made a purty angel with your wings on!

*Snow.* But I don't want to go to heaven yet. Let me stay a little longer here; won't you?



*Pet.* I'm sure I don't want to kill you ; but I've got her money for it, and I can't give it back, and I can't take all that for nothing—you see—it wouldn't be honest like.

*Snow.* Throw it away then. Such money won't do you any good. But don't kill me, Peter. You can't, can you now, when you remember how, when I was a small thing, you used to draw my little white goat-carriage, and lead me in the sunny places in winter? Don't you remember, Peter? I was almost like your own child to you. And you used to take me in the cool green shady walks in the hot days. Oh! dear old Peter! do save me!

*Pet.* La! child, don't talk so like your mother! I can't a-bear that. *She* was an angel, if you like!

*Snow.* Yes she was, and she loved you ; so then, for her sake, let me go.

*Pet.* But where will you go to?

*Snow.* Never mind that. I won't go back to the Queen. I promise you. I'll find Aunt Constantia. Ah, do let me go!

*Pet.* (*releasing his hold a little*). But you can't find her, and I haven't anywhere to take you to; and if you run loose here, you'll be eat up by the wild beasts.

*Snow.* Let me have a chance, at least. There—Look! What's that behind you?

[*Ghost of the Queen passes.*]

*Pet.* La! gracious powers! It's your mother's ghost! If it ain't, it's your mother's very self. There, be off with you then! Only keep to the right through the woods. Don't forget. Never turn to the left. (*Snowdrop runs away fast.*) Well, if ever any one see a ghost, I did, sure enough. And I ain't easy frightened nayther. I do feel streaky after it. I'm glad I let her go though. But what'll become of the *lass*? I must kill a beast for the sake of its heart, to take to the Queen, and then go to my old woman, or




she'll be bothering me with questions as to my whereabouts to-night. Heyday, who comes here?



SCENE VI. *Enter* CONSTANTIA, *her cloak thrown over her dressing gown, and her shawl tied round her head.*

*Peter (aside).*

T'S my Lady Constantia, as I'm alive. *[He turns away.]*

*Con.* Peter!—Peter! I think you are the man I'm looking for.

*Pet.* It's queer you should be looking for any one in the dark like this? And what in the world can you want *me* for, woman?

*Con.* Now, Peter, you know who I am, so don't sham ignorance.

*Pet.* How should I know? Who *are* you?

*Con.* You know I'm the Princess' governess and friend. And I want you to tell me where the Princess is!

*Pet.* You, the Lady Constantia, out here alone at night, and asking me where the Princess is. (Poor creature, she's gone clean out of her wits.) I must take you back to the palace, my lady. Allow me to help you home. [*Takes her by the arm.*]

*Con.* Now, Peter, no nonsense! You know as well as I do, that we are neither of us wanted at the palace to-night. Be my friend; I will be yours. If you won't, I will be your enemy. The King shall know all I know. I was not asleep when you were blindfolded and carried off the Princess. I pretended sleep, but I didn't take a drop of her drugged wine, and I've acted my part well. I—.

*Pet.* Hang it! You're dangerous, you are! I must kill you too, then, must I!

*Con.* Nonsense, Peter. You haven't killed the Princess, and you won't kill me. I am



not afraid. Tell me where she is, and I'll never reveal to a living being your share in to-night's work. I followed near enough to you, to know you cannot have killed her. You have not had the time, even had you had the heart to do it. Oh, tell me! tell me where she is!

*Pet.* Oh! you are an eavesdropper and a spy, are you? A nice trade for my lady to take up.

*Con.* Now, Peter, don't pretend to be worse than you are. You may trust me not to tell your secret. Where is she?

*Pet.* I can't tell you what I don't know! There! that's all you'll get out of me! and it's no use your going after her. *That* I know, and no more.

*[He turns to go away.]*

*Con.* Will you shelter me, Peter? I know your cottage is near. Won't your wife take me in for to-night?

*Pet.* You needn't think to find the Princess there, for she's not in my house; and

my wife knows nothing of my little game of to-night.

*Con.* Well, at least take me in. I won't say a word. I'll tell her I've offended the King, and have been turned out of the palace ; and I'll trust to your mercy to let me have some clue to my child's fate.

*Pet.* Come along ! If you can pay for a night's lodging, you can have one.

*Con.* Tell me then, may I believe that Snowdrop is safe ?

*Pet.* Believe what you like. I told her at least which turning she should *not* take.

[*They go out.*]







### ACT III.

#### SCENE I. *The Dwarfs' Cottage.*

*Table spread, seven knives and forks, seven spoons, seven plates, seven bowls, seven chairs at the table. Lantern burning in middle of table.*

*Enter SNOWDROP, panting; sinks into a chair. Looks all round frightenedly.*

*Snowdrop.*



THANK Heaven for this shelter. But I wonder who lives here—shall I be safe? Supper laid, too—and for 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 people; but how funny, the chairs are so small, they must be for children. Well, so much the better! People with children are sure to be kind to a

poor little thing like me, with no home to go to. (*Sighs.*) Ah! I *should* like some supper—I am so hungry and tired. How fast I did run. I didn't know I could run so fast. What a blessed ghost that was. Dear kind ghost, you saved my life. It must have been my mother's spirit. Oh! why didn't I wait and look at her face; but I was only thinking of getting away then. What will become of me? what shall I do without Constantia? What will they do to her? (*She gets up and walks about the room.*) I wonder who lives here! What a strange looking place! Perhaps the owners are sprites, or ogres, or witches. At any rate, it's all beautifully neat and clean, and the food looks as if they eat like other mortals. (*Pause.*) Now I think of it, I had better eat something while I can get it; or I shall not be strong enough to run off again, if the people here won't shelter me. (*She peers about the table.*) Ah! it's all put in portions; then I'll take a little away



from each, and then none of them will be much the worse off for what I take. (*Drinks a little milk out of one bowl, some oat cake from another plate, bit of cake from another, potatoes and more milk from the last. Sits down, rubs her eyes.*) Oh, this sleepiness! What can make me so sleepy! just when I have so much to frighten me and keep me awake. (*Gapes.*) Oh dear! what shall I do! (*Turns round, sees seven beds.*) Beds, too! how small they are. Oh, the children won't mind my lying down. I may as well be here as in a chair, and if any one comes, I'll tell them my story. [*She falls asleep.*



## SCENE II.

*Enter seven Dwarfs. They put down their spades and their lanterns in a corner. They take their seats at the table.*

*Jans.*



H, oh! Hans, you have not laid the supper so carefully as usual. Look how the cloth is dragged; and see, here are crumbs about, and this bowl is nearly empty.

*Hans.* Well, Jans, I don't know, but I fancy some one has been in since I set the supper. I left it all as neat and right as usual, and see, my bread is all gone.

*3rd Dwarf.* And my cake!

*Hans.* But, brother, you know you always tell me to leave the door ajar this time of the year, and the lantern alight, in case of some hungry traveller passing by.

*Jans.* Yes; but when people do come,



they generally stop till we return. And you see no one is here.

*4th Dwarf.* Brother Jans, all my porridge is gone.

*5th Dwarf.* And my big potato is eaten, there's nothing but the skin left.

*6th Dwarf.* The wine 's nearly all gone out of my goblet. Well, I'm sure he's welcome. He must have been hungry.

*7th Dwarf.* One of my eggs is eaten ; I'm very glad he eat it, though !

*Jans.* Who do you mean by he ?

*6th Dwarf.* *Somebody* must have been eating our food.

*Jans.* Well, brothers, never mind, whoever it is, I am sure he's welcome.

*Hans.* How do you know it is a man, Jans. Perhaps it may be a woman. I wish she had stayed to see us. I like company sometimes.

*Jans.* Well, it would have been a nice change for us, and a bit of good luck for you, Hans, if we could get a lady to visit

us. You'd like a nice waiting-maid now, wouldn't you?

*Hans.* Yes, indeed; I'm rather tired of being waiter-in-general to you all, my brothers. Though you are all very amiable, you see, I get scolded sometimes, when it's not my fault. (*Laughing and looking at Fans.*)

[*They all laugh, Ha, ha, ha, and eat their supper.*

*Fans.* Chris, did you shut and lock the door of the mine?

*6th Dwarf.* Yes, indeed, brother, and here's the key.

*Fans.* Oh! that's right, because we don't want any visitors there, either he or she, do we? (*Dwarfs all echo, No, indeed!*) Now we've done supper, let us go to bed.

[*They sing a "Good-night" song.*

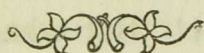
*Chris.* Look, some one's lying in my bed! (*All the Dwarfs come to look, and see Snowdrop asleep.*) Look, do see! It's such a pretty little girl! Oh! this is the little girl



that has been eating our supper. I should like to kiss her. Take care, all of you, that you don't wake her.

*Jans.* Now, Chris, as she is in your bed, you must come into mine, and we'll talk to her in the morning.

*Chris.* Yes, thank you, Jans. Good-night. [Curtain drops.]



SCENE III. *Same. Breakfast, SNOWDROP pouring out coffee for the Seven Dwarfs.*

*Snowdrop.*

**I**T was very kind of you, gentlemen, not to turn me out last night. I did not mean to sleep so long, but I was really very tired, as I have been telling you.

*7 Dwarfs (all together).* Yes, yes, indeed! you must have been.

*Jans.* And your name is Snowdrop?

*Snow.* Yes, sir.

*Chris.* Are you quite rested this morning?

*Snow.* Yes, quite, thank you, sir.

*Fans.* Don't call us sirs and gentlemen ; if you will live with us, as you say you will, you must call us brothers.

*Snow.* Thank you, thank you ; that will be nice ! I never had a brother, and now I shall have seven ! But what shall I do all day while you are away ?

*Hans.* You must prepare our meals, make our beds, and keep our rooms fresh and clean.

*Snow.* I shall like that very much, I think ; but I never did scrub a floor yet, and I am afraid I can't wash dishes and plates very nicely at first.

*Fans.* Well, Chris and Hans shall scrub for you !

*Snow.* Well, they shall show me how, but I shall soon learn ; I always could learn anything I wanted to know, and I



don't think it can be more difficult than playing the harpsichord or doing my tapestry-work.

5th Dwarf. Can you play the harpsichord? We'll buy you one next time we go to the city.

4th Dwarf. And can you sing?

Snow. Oh, yes! I know a great many songs. I should like to sing to you, I will to-night when you come back.


All. Oh! sing us a song now before we go.

[*Snowdrop sings "Home sweet Home."*

*They thank her, rise, take their spades and their lanterns, and kissing her hand one by one, go out.*



SCENE IV. *Peter's Cottage.*CONSTANTIA *alone, pacing the room.**Constantia.*

 HERE can Snowdrop be? I wish I knew that she was as safe as I am. Peter is getting as unhappy about her as I am. He says now he wishes he had not let her run away alone; but he has been out for days, looking for her through the forest everywhere, and he has promised to let me know as soon as he has any news of her. I'm sure she must be safe. I won't believe she is lost.

*Enter PETER.*

*Pet.* My Lady Constantia, I have found her at last! Alive and well!

*Con.* Well! oh, heaven be praised! Where is she? Tell me all.

*Pet.* Hush!—keep quiet—wait a bit, and



I'll tell you, and I'll show you, too, what you can do for her.

*Con.* For Snowdrop, you mean?

*Pet.* Yes, of course I do. Keep quiet, can't you, a bit, my lady, and listen.

*Con.* I am listening, indeed; tell me.

*Pet.* Yesterday I discovered—never mind how—that our little beauty had wandered to the cottage of some miners.

*Con.* Miners, did you say? oh, what horrid creatures!

*Pet.* Now, my lady, can't you be quiet? They bean't horrid creatures at all, but seven wonderful little men, quite dwarfs, that live on the other side of they mountains. Everybody knows about 'em, that knows anythink. They work in a silver mine, and are good to everyone as comes nigh them.

*Con.* Oh, that sounds well; and have they been kind to our Princess?

*Pet.* Yes, indeed, she's living with them, as blithe as a bee.

*Con.* But does the Queen know?

*Pet.* She do. I was with her this morning, you see. (*Hesitatingly and scratching his head.*) I had a little matter of business with her ; in fact I don't mind telling you : I'd been her banker, like, for a while.

*Con.* Peter !

*Pet.* Well, never you mind, lady ; and I went to give her back some bags of her money as I had had the keeping of (*aside*), and a blessed deal lighter I am without 'em.

*Con.* Well, go on.

*Pet.* So when I got there—my eyes, what a mortal rage I found her in ! She'd just been asking her glass whether she was the beautifullest woman in the world. You know about her glass, don't ye ?

*Con.* Oh yes, indeed. It is her only conscience, I think. (*Laughing.*) And what did her glass say ?

*Pet.* Why, plain-plump out,—  
You're very beautiful, I dare say ;  
But over the hills, and far away,



Snowdrop's a living with a dozen o' dwarfs,  
And you're not so pretty as her by two  
halfs.

*Con.* And you say she was in a rage?

*Pet.* Just wasn't she! that's all, ma'am. She turned livid with passion; she was the awfulest sight I ever seed. Then after glaring at me with her eyes all bloodshot, for ever so long, she said, ses she, "Peter." "Ay, mum," says I. "Peter, tell me where the old witch lives that used to tell fortunes and sell *medicated* charms." So, my lady, I thinks of you directly, and, instead of telling her that that old hag had been drowned with two seven-pound weights tied to her head and her heels this many a long day, I says, ses I, "Well, that's queer now you should ast that, seein' just at this time she's a putting up at my house."

*Con.* Oh, now I see! You clever Peter! But what did the Queen say?

*Pet.* She said, "*Is* she, Peter?" So I gives her a nod and a wink, which, you

know, they say, is quite enough for a blind horse.

*Con.* Yes, but tell me a little more.

*Pet.* Why, next she says, swearing a bit, I can tell you, "I'll be down at your place, then, this afternoon, and if you see her afore me, just tell her to look out her best *medicines*, will you?—*medicines*, mind—because she is going to have a visitor that will pay well for them; but don't say *who* the visitor is."

*Con.* Then do you really mean that I must pretend to be the witch?

*Pet.* Yes; and you must disguise yourself. You must be quick about it, too, if you want to help your little Princess.

*Con.* I'm ready directly! But tell me, what shall I do?

*Pet.* First of all, you must make yourself look old and withered, and dress like all them people do—scarlet cloak, tall hat, &c., in that style.

*Con.* But, before this afternoon, can I? and how am I to find any dress?



*Pet.* Why, to tell ye the truth, I've been a wise woman before now, myself ; and I've got some clothes propitious for the purpose ready upstairs. I'll soon get you up in real old hag style. My wife shall help you dress up, while I prepare the drugs. I'll call her. [*Exit Peter.*

*Con.* (*calling after him.*) But, Peter ! Peter ! What does he mean by preparing drugs ? Peter ! Peter ! Oh, where is he gone ? What does he want me to do ? I can not sell poisons, and I can't quite trust Peter. But I'll see to that afterwards. Then suppose I can't disguise myself ? Well, I can but try. [*Enter Mrs. Peter.*

*Mrs. Pet.* My husband sends you these things, my lady. He says you are going to a masquerade.

*Con.* Oh, thank you, my good woman ; put them down.

*Mrs. Pet.* Nay, my lady, let me help you. I shan't blab ! I haven't been my husband's mate for sixteen years for no-

thing. I know the masquerade that's a comin' to you.

*Con.* I think you are good and kind—you look so.

*Mrs. Pet.* I don't set up for good ; but I *can* hold my tongue, and that's what every woman can't say. Look here. First.

*Con.* What's that ?

*Pet.* That's yer petticoat. And this is yer cloak, and this yer cap and bonnet. (*Constantia turns them about.*)

*Mrs. Pet.* Come, we must be quick, Peter says. Here, slip this over your other dress. The bunchier you look the better. Thin witches ain't to be trusted nigh so much as bulky ones. [*They fasten on the things.*]

*Con.* Indeed, but this bonnet won't hide my face enough.

*Mrs. Pet.* I ain't forgot your face. *That* complexion would never do no good, I can tell you, even supposing you wasn't known by the party as is a comin'.

*Con.* Then what am I to do ?



*Mrs. Pet.* Here, smear your face over with this powder. Brickdust, gamboge and rhubarb. You'll look a beauty after that, I promise you. But stop, an under coating of blue-bag first. (*Takes hold of blue bag, and smears her face.*) Now for some black streaks of burnt cork for wrinkles, and we'll burn some sulphur in the room to make your subterranean origin the more telling. And a little plate of salts and spirits burning just under you, when she comes in, will do wonders for you.

*Con.* But what am I to give her? Peter hinted at poisons! I can not put real poisons into her hand.

*Mrs. Pet.* He's coming to give you all directions. He ain't likely to trust either her or you with pison — don't you be afraid. (*Touches her up.*) There, you look a thorough going hag now. I think you'll do. Good-bye. Here comes Peter! I must be off. [*Curtain drops.*]



## ACT IV.

### SCENE I. *The Same.*

CONSTANTIA *arranging various powders and bottles. She sets a saucer of spirits alight. A knocking heard.*

*Constantia.*



COME in. Ah! old Goody, who are you? [Enter Queen.]

*Queen.* I want your advice. Never mind who I am.

*Con.* You'd best keep a civil tongue in your head if you want my help.

*Queen.* Never you mind my tongue. I can give you silver to cross my hand with.

*Con.* Silver! I never touch silver! My help's worth gold or nothing.

*Queen.* Like all the rest of your kind—



money grubs. But I'm above haggling. So look here (*holding out gold*). Now, give me some proof that you are the wise woman you profess yourself. What do I want?

*Con.* Come here! (*Crosses her hand with the gold; looks into her hand; puts on her spectacles; looks at her face; looks at her other hand*). Neither chick nor child you've got, and yet you've got one more than you want.

*Queen.* Hum—um. What more?

*Con.* I see more, but I can not interpret. I can not understand it myself.

*Queen.* What is it you see? Perhaps I shall comprehend, though you can't?

*Con.* Here's (*looking at her left palm*) a golden crown, and as I look, its brightness goes out; snowflakes come and dim its glory. That's very like nonsense; yet so it is. I see it again and again.

*Queen* (*groans and says aside*), She's a horrid true woman—she's a real witch. I know too well. (*Aloud*) Well, never mind

your crown and your other bosh. I don't look much like a creature that's likely to have anything to do with crowns, do I? So you may as well talk sense another time if you *can*.

*Con.* Tell me what you want; or look here, I'll tell *you*. You've got neither chick nor child, and yet you've got one more than you want, though she is far away. Is that true?

*Queen.* Well, if it is? What remedy?

*Con.* I'll sell you three recipes for five guineas each.

*Queen.* Done! If they're thorough, tell me them.

*Con.* How will you get at her or him?

*Queen.* Say her, just for a form of speech. How shall I get at her? I'm a pedlar woman. I can get at anyone I like.

*Con.* What do you sell?

*Queen.* Dress and trinkets, pins and needles, fruits and cakes. La, anything! Daggers and knives!



*Con.* Beware of weapons. The laws of the country don't allow the private use of such things, and we've got a terrible king and a terrible queen. But dress *is* lawful. You can tempt silly lasses with gimcrack clothes. A fine bodice, for instance, with a strong lace to make the waist mighty delicate and wasp-like. Such a lace as you never laced with before. She'll never want another.

*Queen.* I'll lace her. Famous! capital! Bless you, here's your five guineas! Now, for No. 2, for there might be a slip—hey!

*Con.* Recipe No. 2, a *spiced* comb. What do you think of that?

*Queen.* A comb! How? Tell me.

*Con.* You said you could lace her yourself. Can't you dress her hair for her? A bright coral comb like this with spice on the teeth. *Spice*—a polite word for—you know what. [*Whispers in her ear.*

*Queen.* Ah! Yes! Clever woman!

*Con.* I have some excellent spices here,

warranted to affect the brain in a wonderfully short space of time. Splendid soporific! Translate her to heaven as quick as a flash of lightning.

*Queen.* And no one could find it out?

*Con.* How should any one? Who would ever dream of a poisoned comb? (*in a whisper*).

*Queen.* Give me the comb. Here's your second five guineas. Now for recipe number three. This must be a clincher. Attack the stomach this time. I see your splendid art! Work first on the heart, failing that, on the brain. Now for certain sure on the stomach! Physic some food, some dainty food.

*Con.* But how will you get her to take it? She'll be frightened at you by that time. You must disguise yourself.

*Queen.* No, I never could do that; I should be sure to fail, and spoil all. No, I must tempt her! Surely, after being shut up in that—but oh! I forgot—you don't



know where she is. Suffice it to say, her miserable fare must be loathsome enough to make her jump at a lovely apple or bunch of grapes or sweet rich peaches. Look, now, at these apples!

*Con.* I have it! Give me one of them. (*Cuts it in half, medicates one half, returns the two joined*). You eat this half, give her the other. Do you see?

*Queen.* I understand. You shall have ten guineas for that.

*Con.* It's worth it, I can tell you. I'll warrant that crown will never be dimmed again with soot or snow.

*Queen.* I begin to breathe freely again! There's hope in the distance; my life will not be wasted after all! (*Packs up her things*). I'm off now. You'd better make yourself scarce in this part of the world; if anything happens, remember, *you* sold me these things. [*Exit.*

*Con.* Yes, thank heaven, I did. Peter told me how much he would *seem* to do her

wicked work. I think I can trust him; I am sure he loves Snowdrop too much to let me really hurt her. But I'm a little uneasy about that last, the drug we put in the apple. If she should eat it all!—but no, she would never do that.

*[Curtain drops.]*







ACT V.

SCENE I. *Dwarfs' cottage.* SNOWDROP,  
*at work, sings "Cherry Ripe."*

*Enter QUEEN as pedlar; sings "Come,  
buy my laces."*

*Queen.*



H, my sweet little lass, where  
did you spring from?  
*Snow.* That's more than I  
can tell you, grannie. How did  
*you* get here?

*Queen.* You tell me, I tell you,—tit-for-  
tat, little chick. I've known this place  
many's the year, but never saw a little  
girl here afore. Did the dwarfs buy you?

*Snow.* No, grannie; I was dropped out  
of the clouds one fine morning, so I hear

say. But I can't say I remember the journey myself.

*Queen.* Are you happy here?

*Snow.* Yes, indeed! Why shouldn't I be?

*Queen.* Are the dwarfs kind to you?

*Snow.* Yes, that they are, very good.

*Queen.* Do they give you any money?

*Snow.* Just as much as ever I want, and a great deal more. Hark! that's some of it. *[Shakes pocket.*

*Queen.* But it is of no use to you, poor little cageling.

*Snow.* Oh, but it is! They take me to the grand city just whenever I like.

*Queen.* But it's a long way off.

*Snow.* The farther the better for my taste.

*Queen.* Then if you don't like long journeys you'd better look at my pretty dresses, for I'm sure you like to look neat and dapper. Now, don't you, my dovey?

*Snow.* Yes; of course I do. But I am



well enough dressed to please my seven little master friends.

*Queen.* I don't know. They're very particular, though they don't say much. And they'd only take it as a compliment if you were to wear such a dainty little bodice as this, for instance, and let them know that you had bought it just to please them. I am sure they would understand such a delicate attention to their feelings and tastes.

*Snow.* Well, that is a sweet thing, I must confess, and I should like something ; besides, this is beginning to wear. But that looks too small for me.

*Queen.* Oh, dear no, my darling pretty cherub. Your waist is like a swan's neck. La ! how tiny and delicate it is. (*Measures her waist and the bodice.*) Bless you, my honey ! (little conceited wretch) I am only afraid it's too big. But we'll have a try.

*Snow.* I'll go into my own room, and try it on.

*Queen.* No, my hearty ; stay here. I'll

lace it for you. You can't get a lady's-maid every day, my chuck! (not such a one, I can promise you).

*Snow.* Oh, well, you're very kind. It would be quicker if you would do it for me.

*Queen.* Yes, my dear, I'll be quick enough. Here, turn you round (I'll soon do for you)!

*[Queen laces Snowdrop. She falls.  
Exit Queen triumphing.]*

*Enter Dwarfs.*

*Fans.* Oh! our beautiful Snowdrop. She's ill, brothers. Look, she's on the ground.

*Hans.* She's ill!

*3rd Dwarf.* She's ill!

*4th Dwarf.* She's ill!

*5th Dwarf.* She's ill!

*6th Dwarf.* She's ill!

*7th Dwarf.* She's ill!

*Fans.* Alas!

*All.* Alas! alas!

*Fans.* What can be the matter with her?



*All (in turn).* What can be the matter with her ?

*[They gather round her. They try to raise her from the ground. She falls again.]*

*Fans.* She's dead !

*All (in turn).* She's dead !

*Hans.* She's got on a strange bodice. How did she get it ? She's laced too tight.

*Fans.* Cut the lace.

*[Hans cuts lace. Snowdrop begins to revive. Sighs, smiles. Chris gives her water.]*

*All (together).* She's alive again ! Heaven be praised !



SCENE II. *Dwarfs' Cottage.*

SNOWDROP *making pastry.*

*Snowdrop.*

**H**OW kind these dwarfs are ! But I am really a little dull sometimes, they are such dear, slow old things ; but I

daren't go and look for Constantia, and there's no one else in the world who cares for me at all. (*Sighs*). Ah, I did fancy that some one—well, I suppose it was only a fancy. If he had cared for me he would surely have found me out by this time. Oh, here comes that pedlar woman. I wish brothers hadn't made me promise not to let her in again, for I don't believe it was her fault that I fainted away; and though she is not so very nice, she was better than nobody to talk to; and she was very amusing; besides, I did not pay her for this bodice, and I must do that. It fits me so nicely now I have let it out and made it larger. I suppose the brothers would not mind my just speaking to her at the door. (*Knocking without.*) I shall just see what she wants to say to me. (*Opens the door.*) Ah, my good friend, I'll be with you in a minute; but please don't come in.

[*Queen appears; pushes the door open with her stick. Snowdrop goes to wash her hands; takes off her apron.*]



*Queen (at the door).* Then my glass was right again as to her being alive at least. I didn't squeeze all the breath out of her ugly body. The little horror, how I hate her! I won't leave her till I'm sure of her this time.

*Snow. (returning).* Well, old grannie, what have you got to show me? Or did you only come for your money?

*Queen.* How can you ask me such a question, my cherub? I came to see you. Who wouldn't come ever so far to look at you? Pay me when you like, I'm not in any hurry. Look, I have got such a many things to-day, rare and pretty, I do assure you. Just let me come in and put down my basket, my arm does ache so.

*Snow.* No, that I must not do; I promised them no one should come in again. Do you know, I was so ill after you left the other day.

*Queen.* Was you, indeed, my honey? Now, only think of that! How unfortunate

for both of us ! Well, I'm sure I had nothing to do with it, had I ?

*Snow.* No, so I told them ; but I could not get the dwarfs to believe what a good old creature you were.

*Queen.* Well, never mind, I won't come in, then, not right in ; but you can look at my pretty trinkets. See, here's a sweet necklace ; and look at this bracelet ; how amazingly well it would show off your pretty round white arms.

*Snow.* No ; I don't want any such things here. The bracelet is very pretty, but I really don't want it.

*Queen.* Well, here's a comb ; that kind of comb is all the fashion now, I do assure you.

*Snow.* But I don't want one ; you see I always wear my hair down, like this.

*Queen.* I'm sure it must be in the way when you are doing your work, all flying about like that ; let me show you how they dress the hair at court. I saw the Queen's the other day done in this manner.



*Snow.* (*stoops her head to her*). But how did you get to see the Queen?

*Queen.* As she was driving to the theatre.

*Snow.* Oh, indeed, and how did she look?

*Queen.* Bless you, child, splendid! She is the finest woman, really, that you or I ever saw. [*Digs the comb into her head.*]

*Snow.* Oh, grannie, you hurt so!

*Queen.* Never mind about that, my dear, pride can bear a pinch. (*Another dig into her head.*) I've nearly done, and then you shall look at yourself in the glass, and see if you don't look pretty. (*Snowdrop gives another little shriek, and then sinks on the ground.*) I'll not budge just yet; I'll wait a bit, for fear you should come to. Ach! you little vixen! how I hate you! (*Gives her a kick with her foot to see if she moves. No sign of life.*) Ha! ha! ha! that's success at last! She's as dead as—well, I won't say what—as dead as I can wish her to be. Farewell, my beauty! What will

my glass say now? I shall triumph in the end!  
[*Exit Queen.*]

*Enter Dwarfs.*

*Fans.* Our Snowdrop on the ground!

*Hans.* On the ground again!

*3rd Dwarf.* On the ground again!

*4th Dwarf.* On the ground again!

*5th Dwarf.* On the ground again!

*6th Dwarf.* On the ground again!

*7th Dwarf.* On the ground again!

*Fans.* Is she laced too tight again?

*Hans.* No. (*Feeling her dress.*) No; what can this be?

[*They look all over her dress. Chris discovers the comb, and draws it out of her head.*]

*Chris.* Look here! That woman must have been here again.

*Fans.* Yes, it's her mischief, you may be sure.

*Chris* (*putting down the comb*). It smells of poison.



*Fans.* Of poison? oh!

*Hans.* Of poison? hah!

*3rd Dwarf.* Of poison? bah!

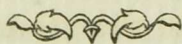
*4th Dwarf.* Of poison? ah!

*5th Dwarf.* Of poison? la!

*[Snowdrop moves her head and opens  
her eyes. They all look at her.]*

*Fans.* Chris, fetch some water; she lives!

*[Curtain drops.]*



### SCENE III.

*SNOWDROP alone at work.*



SHOULD like to get all these shirts done this week; I must be very busy. My brothers are so good to me, and I am afraid they think me ungrateful. I wish I hadn't talked to that old woman the last time she came. I suppose it was very naughty of me, but I'm sure it was not her fault that I was so poorly after she

was gone. (*Pouting.*) They won't let me have that comb again, as if it could have been that that made me ill. I did feel very strange, certainly, for three or four days. I don't think I feel quite well yet. I'm so thirsty. (*Knocking at the door.*)

*Snow.* No one at home.

*Queen.* Who speaks, then?

*Snow.* Only the pussy.

*Queen.* Pussy, then! puss! puss! puss! open the door.

*Snow.* I can't, I've got no hands.

*Queen.* But you've got paws and claws, and you can climb trees. Jump upon the window-sill, and look out, pussy.

*Snow.* What for?

*Queen.* To see what I've got for you; such nice game. Pussies like wee sparrows and dickie-birds. Lookie here! (*Snow-drop opens the window and looks out. Kissing her hand.*) Ah, you little charmer! you little cheat! you little coaxing duck-o'-diamonds.



*Snow.* Grannie, don't call me names. I've only come to tell you I must not talk to you; but here is the money I owe you for the bodice. (*Throws out a purse.*) I must say goodbye *directly*.

*Queen.* You are an honest little lady, and how very obedient! I like you *very much*; but, if I am never to see you again, take this as a parting gift. (*Holds up a bunch of grapes.*)

*Snow.* Well, thank you, I am very thirsty. (*Snowdrop eats them, nodding now and then to the pedlar.*) They are nice. I've not been very well, and I think they will do me good. And now I must say good-bye to you.

*Queen.* Good-bye, little lady.

*Snow.* You won't come again, please, because my friends here don't like me to speak to any one. And I don't like either to be rude to you, or to disobey them. So good-bye.

*Queen.* Good-bye. Poor child! But one look more! I've got quite fond of you, my

pretty. Here, let's eat this apple together. Ain't it a beauty?

*Snow.* Ah! it is lovely. Fruit is just one thing I have not seen since I left—since I came here, I mean. That is a pretty apple.

*Queen.* Well child, take it. I'll give it you for nothing, mind.

*Snow.* No, thank you. I have had some grapes; I might be ill if I had more, and then the dwarfs would only say it was your doing.

*Queen.* Look now! If I eat half of it, you can't be afraid. Hark! how smooth it cuts. [*Offers her half, eats the other half.*]

*Snow.* (*aside*). I shall offend her if I don't take it. (*Aloud*) Well, thank you; you are very kind to me. [*Takes it.*]

*Queen* (*aside*). I have good reason to be.

[*Snowdrop takes a piece, and instantly sinks on floor.*]

*Queen.* (*from without*). How now, my pussy? Where are you? Just kiss your



hand once to me, and say farewell. Come to the window. Come, just once more. (*No answer. Queen waits.*) Won't you speak. (*Pushes door open, and peers at Snowdrop. Goes up and touches her with her stick.*) This time it must be all right. The poison has entered her stomach. It will quickly circulate through her veins. How thoroughly, delightfully cold and dead she is! Suitable death for an upstart. I'm glad she liked fruit! What's your beauty worth now, my step-daughter? Madam, I should like to stay and see you buried. But, for other reasons, I had better depart. (*Shakes her stick at Snowdrop.*) I like to see you there.





## ACT VI.

SCENE I. *Two Dwarfs sitting, one each side of the bier, Dwarfs Fourth and Seventh.*

*7th Dwarf.*



AM afraid our two hours of watching are nearly up.

*4th Dwarf.* Yes. Hans and Chris will soon be here.

*7th Dwarf.* I should like to watch all day.

*4th Dwarf.* And so should I; but that would not be fair to the others. How lovely she looks!

*7th Dwarf.* Is it not strange that she keeps so beautiful still?

*4th Dwarf.* No, I do not think it is strange. She never was like any other mortal.



*7th Dwarf.* Much lovelier, certainly. (*They rise and look at her.*) Her colour is still like the rose, her complexion as much like the pearl as ever!

*4th Dwarf.* And her beautiful locks are as ebony black, as soft and glowing as before she ceased to breathe.

*7th Dwarf.* I wonder whether we shall be able to keep her so always.

*4th Dwarf.* Surely we shall. She charms the house, and keeps our spirits bright and good by her beauty.

*7th Dwarf.* I know that; I know it; but sometimes I feel afraid it is a state of things too good to last.

*4th Dwarf.* Why should doubts and fears spoil the enjoyment we have?

*7th Dwarf.* Who is this coming? Throw the veil over her. I do not like strangers asking questions about her, or staring at her.

*4th Dwarf.* No, you are right, brother.

[*They cover her up.*]

*Enter PRINCE of the SUN.*

*Prin.* Good morrow, good sirs.

*[Dwarfs rise, bow, and reseate themselves.]*

*Prin.* Can you give me any information respecting a silver mine I have heard of somewhere in these mountains? (*Dwarfs shake their heads slowly.*) I am very anxious to find it. I have been searching for days, nay, for weeks, to get speech of the dwarfs who work this mine. (*They rise and stand before the bier, shaking their heads.*) Will you not speak? I think you could tell me something about them if you would (*shake their heads*). Now I think of it, you *must* know something about them. I am almost sure you belong to their party. I have heard they are dressed just as you are.— (*Aside.*) Well, if I have found two, I can bide my time. I shall wait, if they won't speak, and then I can see where they go. Ah, yes! I can wait, and wait, for news of



her. (*The dwarfs start and look at each other. Prince paces up and down, looks at them, then at the bier, starts, looks puzzled.*)

What is that you are standing by? Excuse me, little gentlemen, I should like to see. (*Prince approaches. Dwarfs raise their spades; he still approaches.*)

*Both.* Stand off, sir! Away! Are you a gentleman?

*Prin.* I hope so, I am a prince.

*Both.* Then act like one, and keep your distance. (*They strike the ground three times, and shout*) Danger!

*Enter five Dwarfs.*

*All.* How now? What danger?

*4th & 7th Dwarf.* A man!

[*All look at the Prince.*]

*Prin.* Gentlemen, I rejoice to see you. I will not harm you.

*Dwarfs.* For your own sake you had better not.

*5th Dwarf.* What do you want here?

*4th & 7th Dwarfs.* He wants our mine.

*Prin.* No ; I want only to speak to you.

*Dwarfs.* We listen.

*Prin.* I am in search of a lady, a friend of mine, a lost princess.

*Dwarfs.* We know her ; she is ours.

*Prin.* I know you have been very good to her. She was in trouble, and you sheltered her. Pray take me to your home, and let me speak to her.

*Dwarfs.* Alas ! we cannot. She is dead ! she is dead !

*Prin.* What do you say ? She cannot be dead ; you said just now she was yours.

*Dwarfs.* Yes ! she is ours still. But she has been dead three weeks. Oh, woe is me !

*Prin.* What *do* you mean ? Explain yourselves. How did she die ?

*Dwarfs.* She was poisoned.

*Prin. (frantic.)* Poisoned ? Where have you buried her ?

*Dwarfs.* She is not buried, and never



will be. Her beauty is immortal, and cannot change, so we bring her daily with us to the mountains, and we take her home at night. You will never see her again!

*Prin.* Good dwarfs, this cannot be. Dear friends, tell me plainly where she is. I only want to see her once more. Ah, how much I loved her Heaven only knows!

*Dwarfs.* We loved her, and do love her still.

*Prin.* If you know what love is, and if she is really dead, let me, too, look at her. I will work for you always; I will be one of you; I will serve you faithfully, only let me have a share in your care of her precious body.

*Dwarfs.* Do you mean that you are willing to come and live with us, and work for us, if we will let you see her daily, and take your share of our watch?

*Prin.* Yes, very gladly I will do that; let me see her at once.

*4th Dwarf.* But you are a prince; will

you give up all the grandeur of your father's court?

*Prin.* To look at and to live near her?—yes! were that court a thousand times as grand!

*Fans.* Ah, let him see her. May I take off the veil?

[*They whisper together solemnly.*

*Hans (to the Prince).* We agree to what you say. Serve us and you shall help us to serve her.

*Prin.* How do you do that?

*Fans.* We carry her up here every morning, and let the mountain breezes play on her, and freshen her lovely cheeks; and we carry her back at night, and there, by a glass shelter, we keep her from all soiling or spoiling.

*Prin. (impatiently).* Let me see her. (*The dwarfs remove the veil.*) It is Snowdrop! My love! My princess! Ah, beautiful as ever! But how cold! Yet she cannot be dead!



*Gans.* Alas! she is dead! She breathes not!

*Prin.* But she is not changed! Look at her!

*4th Dwarf.* We have looked at her, and she has remained like that for weeks.

*[Prince walks round her, looks, muses, and turns to Dwarfs.]*

*Prin.* Well, you will take me as your helper, your servant?

*Dwarfs.* Yes, we will trust you to help us; keep our trust sacred.

*Prin.* The love I bear her is not less sacred than yours; let me carry her home to-night. Are you ready?

*Dwarfs.* Yes, quite ready. We will help you.

*Prin.* I can carry her myself; you take the bier.

*Dwarfs.* No; we fear you will fall with her.

*Prin. (passionately).* I must, and I will carry her myself.

[*The Prince takes the body of Snowdrop in his arms, and as he walks along he stumbles over a stone. The bitten apple falls from her mouth; she sighs, breathes hard, opens her eyes; sees the Prince, looks round her; and she falls back into his arms.*

*Prin.* What! my own! Alive again!  
Can it be? My Snowdrop!

*Snow.* Is it my Prince?

*Prin.* Yes! Your prince! Say it again!  
Your prince!

[*The Dwarfs come round wondering.*

*Snow.* My brothers! My dear brothers!

*Enter the King and Queen.*

*Queen (excitedly).* The worse for your daughter if the glass does not lie.

*King.* It never lied yet.

"Snowdrop still lives, most lovely, most sweet,



And a Prince good and handsome now  
kneels at her feet."

And—is it possible?—Yes—there she is!  
My own Snowdrop!

*Queen.* She shall die.

*[The Queen starts forward with a dagger, aiming at Snowdrop's heart. The King drags her back and holds her. Enter Constantia and Peter. Constantia embraces Snowdrop. Peter helps the King to hold the Queen. She ceases struggling. They relax their hold.]*

*Queen.* One of us *must* die.

*[Stabs herself, and falls. Curtain drops.]*









THE TETTERBYS.



## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

MR. TETTERBY.  
ADOLPHUS TETTERBY.  
JOHNNY TETTERBY.  
TOM TETTERBY.  
FRED TETTERBY.  
BILL TETTERBY.  
DICK TETTERBY.  
MR. DALRYMPLE.  
DR. MORGAN.

MISS WORMWELL.  
MISS CECILIA GREY.  
MRS. TETTERBY.  
SALLY TETTERBY.





## THE TETTERBYS.

### ACT I. SCENE I.

*Enter MISS WORMWELL and MISS GREY.*

*Miss Wormwell.*



OW do you do, Mrs. Teetherby?  
*Mrs. Tet.* Good morning,  
ma'am; which my name is not  
Teetherby, but Tetterby, ask-  
ing your pardon, ma'am.

*Miss W.* Oh! I see, Mrs. Tetterley,  
then. Well, have you read the little book  
I brought you last week?

*Mrs. Tet.* Bless your heart, ma'am, no  
indeed; *I* time to be reading o' books!  
I only wish I had; but it's as much as me  
and Tetterby, slaving day and night, can

do to feed the children ; and then I've their clothes to sort a bit, and the house to rid up every day for my good man ; for he do like to see the place tidy, and he deserves to have what he likes, that he do.

*Miss W.* Dear me, Mrs. Tetterley !

*Mrs. Tet.* Tetterby, if *you* please, ma'am.

*Miss W.* Oh, it's all the same. What can that matter to people of your position ?

*Mrs. Tet.* Excuse me, ma'am, but somehow we do like our right names as well as the gentry.

*Miss W.* Well, I dare say ; but I was going to remark that you surely were not born in a Christian land, to talk as you did just now about your husband being so good, and *deserving* this and that. Do you not know that none of us deserve anything, not even the air we breathe ?

*Cec.* Oh, aunt dear, don't talk so ; she can't understand just in what way you mean that. I think we ought to be glad she is so proud of her husband.



*Miss W.* I am sure she has nothing to be proud of; I often see him go into the public-house opposite our house, at nine o'clock at night!

*Mrs. Tet.* It strikes me, ma'am, if you'll excuse me, that you might be better employed than in watching the doin's of people of "our position," after dark, too! But I must say he never goes there but to fetch a drop o' beer for our suppers, after my charing and washin'. People as watches their vulgar neighbours into public-'ouses might, if they was Christians, watch 'em out again.

*Miss W.* It is all very fine for you to try and shield your husband; it's my belief every woman worth anything would swear black was white, or coffee was tea, on her dying bed, to shield her husband from blame, even when they are the lowest of the low. I'm very glad I was never led into temptation of *that* sort.

*Cec.* But, auntie, we are keeping Mrs.

Tetterby, and you know you wanted to hear how Mr. Dalrymple is.

*Miss W.* Indeed I didn't do anything of the kind. I daresay he is much better, with such a nurse as Mrs. Tetterley must be. (*Turning to Mrs. Tet.*) No, I came to ask you how much you will give me this quarter towards my Civilization Society?

*Mrs. Tet.* (*to Cecilia, turning away from Mrs. Tetterby.*) Oh my dear young lady, the young man is one of my troubles; besides all my children to attend to, and having to go out to two washes this week, there is poor dear Mr. Dalrymple, without a friend near him, getting wus and wus.

[*Cecilia looks distressed, and trembles.*]

*Miss W.* What are you whispering about, Cecilia? Mrs. Tetherley, listen to me. This is the most interesting society ever set on foot. You know, I dare say, that we were all apes and gorillas once, don't you? except a few of us, who were oysters, by the bye; at least, that's what



the scientific men of our day have discovered.

*Mrs. Tet.* Oh! I don't know, ma'am, what you might have been, but I'm sure Miss Grey, nor my husband, nor my baby, no, nor Dolfus, weren't never anythink like them cretures.

*Miss W.* You don't understand. I mean many centuries ago.

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, ma'am, I could believe you was almost any age, certinly. No offence, ma'am. I hope no offence; but my husband—

*Miss W.* My good woman, say no more about it. I shouldn't have mentioned scientific discoverers' opinions to *you*, but I want to know what you will give me for a society for clothing the savages and the gorillas among whom they live.

*Mrs. Tet.* Clothing the gorillas! Why ma'am, there ain't too many clothes at home for us human beings.

*Miss W.* Oh! Mrs. Tetterley, we shouldn't

be always thinking of ourselves, and I firmly believe, if we would but put clothes on to those intelligent animals, they would soon be quite as wise as we are. You see, I have collected all these pence (*opens a purse and shows her*) from different cottages, and Lady Screwem-down has given me these ten sovereigns, and Lady Jabberstuff has given me £5 ; and I have several shillings from young ladies' schools. What will you give me ?— Say a penny a week.

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, really, ma'am, I'm sure it's very kind of a lady to think our pennies worth anythink, but it's main difficult to keep things agoin at home ; and them b'ys, I'm sure they want civilizing theirselves ; but I'll speak to Tetterby about it ; and what I think is, one never cums wus off oneself by trying to do a bit for one's fellow-creturs.

*Miss W.* Exactly so. I am glad to hear you speak so.



*Mrs. Tet.* Why here comes that blessed baby! I'm sure you'd like to see her, ma'am. Now, Johnny, do mind 'er 'ead!

*Miss W.* I suppose the child's been christened—eh, Mrs. Tetterley?

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, ma'am, *Tetterby's* had her vaccinated; and when we can get a nolliday, we do think of taking her to church to be baptized. The poor young clergyman as is upstairs, has spoke so good to us about it, many's the time. But we'll wait till he's better.

*Miss W.* What! wait! Poor little sinner! Do you know what you are about? Suppose she were to die to-morrow!

*Mrs. Tet.* Lor, ma'am! don't talk so 'orrid! There's not a heartier child in the street. Bring her here to the lady, Johnny, she's just longing to nurse her a bit, I know. There, don't 'old her all of a lump, child!

*Miss W.* (*drawing herself up.*) Thank you, I like to see the little ones, but I'm not so clever as Johnny at holding them.

*Mrs. Tet.* Oh! don't mention that, ma'am. You are very kind to Johnny, I'm sure; but you must just feel of her, how heavy she is. She do grow. Bo, bo, Sally, bo! There, let the lady take yer, dear Tuck-a-tuck!

*Miss W. (tries to take the child. The purse slips down to the floor.)* Dear me! the child will break my arm! (*Mr. Dalrymple's bell. Exit Mrs. Tetterby, and Johnny after her.*) Here, Johnny! Johnny! Oh! what am I to do with this little heathen! Cecilia! Cecy! take the creature! Where is that wicked boy gone?

*Cec.* Here, baby, come to me! I'll see if I can play with you! Really, she is too heavy to hold, aunt! But see if you can't crawl, little one. Look here!

*[Puts baby down; takes sweeties from her pocket; baby crows and rolls on floor; Cecilia on her knees entices her to come.]*

*Miss W.* Now really, I'm not going to



waste my time in this way. I have ten more houses to canvass for this society before I go to Brighton, so, if you choose to stay and play with that grubby child, pray do! Only mind, you have a warm bath when you come back to my house!

*[Exit Miss Wormwell. Baby cries, Cecilia takes her up and paces the room with the child.]*

*Cec.* Oh, you little innocent! How strange it is to think that you have seen him and been in his room, and to think I cannot get to speak to him one word! I cannot do anything for him! Oh, how can I keep quiet! Baby, baby, can't you help me? If he knew I was in the house, I wonder, would it do him good? No, he must hate the very thought of me. It would only worry him, and, besides, my aunt would never consent to my claiming acquaintance with a poor curate, though he was a missionary once, and though papa and mamma knew and loved him so much;

yes, and they wanted me to marry him, too. (*Bursts out crying.*) How silly I was—how stupid of me not to know how I loved him all the while; but I did not know it myself till I went away. He used to be so tender to me! how beautiful he was! But I thought he was too religious for me, and I thought I should like some fun first, before I married; and (*puts the baby in the cradle*)—well, I suppose I didn't want to marry a clergyman. But when he's well again I shall tell my aunt about him; and I should like him to know that I can never forget his kindness to me and to my beloved papa and mamma in all their last trouble. Perhaps he is married, and his wife may be in India, or gone somewhere in the country to see her friends. Oh, dear! what happy days those used to be. (*Cries again.*) I shall never, never be so happy as I was then, any more. (*Baby stirs.*) I wish Johnny would come. The baby will cry if she wakes and finds only me here.



*Enter* MRS. TETTERBY.

*Mrs. Tet.* Lor, Miss Grey, you here with the baby! Why, I forgot all about you and your aunt. But thank you. (*Looks at the child in the cradle.*) I was obliged to send Johnny for the doctor, and—there! I'm at my wits' end—and Tetterby not come home, and I don't know where to send to any of Mr. Dalrymple's friends. You see, he's only been here a fortnight, and I'm sure I don't know what he could have come here for.

*Cec.* Has he got a wife, do you think? Could I write to her for you, if he has? or his mother, doesn't she live in Kent somewhere?

*Mrs. Tet.* How could you tell that, miss? Do you know him? I don't think he's got a wife, though.

*Cec.* Oh! I know there are two or three families of that name near Dover, so I thought perhaps—

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, miss, but his mother's

not one of *them*, because she's dead. He told me yesterday, she died only three weeks before he came home from Ingia.

*Cec.* But what does the doctor say ?

*Mrs. Tet.* Why, he says we must not leave him a minute. He's quite off his head. He fancies he's in Ingia, and keeps calling out to the servants to work the punkah ; and then he sobs out "Cecilia ;" and sometimes after that he faints off. I wonder whether Cecilia is his sister ; or perhaps she's his lady-love. He's maybe left her in Ingia ; 'cos he told Tetterby if he were like him, and had been happy enough to get a wife, he shouldn't have had to leave the living, or something o' that sort, he had in Ingia. Anyhow, he's got to be sent off to the hospital to-morrow. The doctor said he'd send for one of them beds to carry him through the streets, if neither he nor I can find a nurse for him.

[*Cecilia trembles, and catches hold of the table.*]



*Cec.* The hospital! Oh, Mrs. Tetterby, you won't let him go?

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, you see, my dear missie, what can I do? I ain't no time to nurse him, and he might take the wrong medicine, or faint off too long, or cut his throat, or something, and then I should never forgive myself.

*Cec.* (*drawing on her gloves*). I see, I see. Don't let them take him away till I come back, I pray you. I think I know a Sister of Mercy who would come. You know they are such good nurses, and the doctors always like them. I must go at once. Ask the doctor if he might have some of these nice grapes. My aunt is gone to Brighton this afternoon, and she won't want them. Good-bye, Mrs. Tetterby.

*Mrs. Tet.* Good-bye, miss, and thank you kindly. (*Exit Miss Grey.*) Now I must get a bit of tea for them children, and Johnny must put 'em to bed while I go to the cookshop. (*Stoops to*

*pick up the purse dropped by Miss Wormwell.*) Lawk-a-mercy, wot's this? It's her purse, as I'm alive! I must give it to Miss Grey, next time she comes, for her aunt: I don't know, neither, as I need; the money ain't mine, but then it ain't hers: it was give for charity, and I'm sure it 'ud be more charity to be spent in warm clothes for the children.

*Enter the little TETTERBYS.*

And Christmas so nigh, too, I don't see as it's fair to give it to those gorillias that don't want no clothes, but is plentiful provided with hair, cum summer, cum winter, I believe There, don't make such a racket, little 'uns.

*Dick.* We wants summat to eat, mammy: give us some tea.

*Mrs. Tet.* Lor, I ain't got no tea for you, children. (*Aside.*) Anyone 'ud think they'd a see'd inside the purse. (*Aloud.*) There, git along, there's ducks; I'll go and see what's in the cupboard. (*Children scuffle*



*about. Mrs. Tetterby looks at purse behind the cupboard door.)* My! there's the golden guineas Lady Screwemdown gave her, and there's the fivepun' note, as I'm alive!

*Children.* What you got for us, mammy?

*Mrs. Tet.* Never you mind, you brats! get along, do; I'll come to you! (*Children begin to cry.*) There, don't cry. (*Pops the purse into her pocket. Aside.*) We'll see about whether the gorillias or the Tetterbys want the money the most. (*Aloud, bringing some bread and a jar of treacle and an iron spoon to the table. Makes them sit down, some on chairs, some on the ground, and one on the table, and giving them all round a pot of bread and treacle, some cold tea from the morning's pot, with some water put into a milk-jug to wash it out.*) There's some tea for you, and some make-believe milk.

*Tom.* I don't like that: I can't see the milk.

*Mrs. Tet.* Then you may go without. It's more than I got at your age.

*John.* Here, mother, he may have mine,

its whiter than 'is ; I daresay it's got more of the milk stuck to it than his'n.

*Mrs. Tet.* Ah, Johnny, you're a prime 'un, you are ! I'm going out, Johnny ; and you take care of the baby while I'm gone ; if she wakes up, give her this bit of bread and treacle to suck—don't let her choke—till I bring some milk in, mind.

*John.* All right, mother.

*Mrs. Tet.* I'm going to get father's supper—shan't be long.

*Bill.* Oh, crikey ! won't father be glad ! I wish I was a father !

*Mrs. Tet.* Crikey, indeed ! I'll crikey you if you're not good. Now, don't plague daddy when he comes in ; and, Johnny, make 'em pretend to be asleep, if they ain't, 'cos of father—he do like a bit o' quiet. (*Children make a noise.*) Look'ee, I say, my urchins, hark'ee—them as goes to sleep the soonest shall have some pork and some stuffin', afterwards.

*John.* Lor, mother. Thankee, mother.



*Bill.* When's "afterwards," mother?

*Mrs. Tet.* None of your imperence, Bill.

*Bill.* Thank'ee, mother; good - night, mother. I'm asleep a'ready. (*Pretends to snore.*)

*Fred.* Git along, Bill, you're not asleep. I can see bits of the blue out of your eyes.

*Bill.* You can't; 'cos my eyes ain't blue, they are dunn, duckity-mud colour.


*Fred.* I can, look 'ere, I can pull 'em open. (*Pulls up his brother's eyes and squeezes his own tight.*) There, mine are shutterer than yourn.

*Bill.* They ain't, I tell you. (*Kicks.*)

[*Mrs. Tetterby, putting on her bonnet and shawl, gives them a kiss all round, and Good night. Exit. Curtain falls.*]



SCENE II. *A Street.**Enter* MRS. TETTERBY.*Mrs. Tetterby.*

 AM glad I took none o' that money to-night. Not till I've told Dolfus ; and yet I don't know 'bout tellin' of 'im ; I should not like Dolfus if he advised me to keep it. I should never respeck him arter it so much—I don't b'lieve I should ; and I *must* have the money, so I'll spend it all myself by degrees, then he won't find out. But not to-night. There, I won't think of it, for somehow it makes me wretched and cross ; but I'm sure it was *good luck* sent it here, and I *will* keep it. *That* I will—hurrah for good luck ! Well, about gettin' things for my young man upstairs—I dusn't do it with that money, for he's that good, he is, that things bought with stolen money would choke him. They'd stick in



his throat, they would. But, lor! t'ain't stolen, it's only *left 'ere*, I do believe, just for 'im and the children and Tetterby. I'm sure *I* don't want no good of it. Nothing good ever 'appens to me. Left 'ere by Providence, says I. Yes, left 'ere till called for, p'raps. Ah! (*Enter Miss GREY, in a Sister of Mercy's dress.*) Why, here comes the sister o' Mursey that Miss Grey spoke of sending.

*Cec.* Why, Mrs. Tetterby, you don't know me!

*Mrs. Tet.* No, miss, that I didn't till you spoke. I couldn't mistake your voice though anywhere's.

*Cec. (aside).* I wonder whether he'll know it. (*Aloud.*) I'm so glad you didn't know me.

*Mrs. Tet.* Lor, miss, why? The young gentleman never see'd you afore, did he?

*Cec. (aside).* I forgot she didn't know all about it. (*Aloud.*) Oh, Mrs. Tetterby, you seem such an old friend; it's quite six

months since I first knew you, I think I had better tell you—I'm sure you won't betray me.

*Mrs. Tet.* Why, miss, I couldn't betray you ; what is it ?

*Cec.* Well, yes, I think you ought to know. Mr. Dalrymple is a very old friend of mine. Nearly as old as I am myself.

*Mrs. Tet.* Then, bless you, miss, why didn't you come and see him days ago.

*Cec.* That's what I can't tell you, Mrs. Tetterby; but there *is* something that kept me away—something that he is very angry with me about, and he's quite right too. But I couldn't help it then, and so, of course, I couldn't come and see him now.

*Mrs. Tet.* Oh, miss, he's such a dear, gentle creature, he couldn't be cross to nobody, if he was hever so hangry. You should have gone to see him.

*Cec.* But he *is* very angry with me ; and, besides, my aunt doesn't know him. She doesn't even know that my father and



mother knew him, and were very fond of him.

*Mrs. Tet.* But if they was, you *must* go and see him—if they was friends like.

*Cec.* Yes, I'm going to him now; it is my business now to go and nurse the sick, and I hope he won't know me; I don't think he will, do you, in this dress? I do look different, don't I?

*Mrs. Tet.* Your voice ain't no difference; it's just as much like a angel's as it was in your work-a-day clothes. But bless you, my pretty dear—excuse me, miss, I couldn't help it—he wouldn't know you now if you'd been his lover ever so, no nor his mother. He's past that; besides, he's been blind these three days; he can't see no more nor a mole.

*Cec.* Oh, Mrs. Tetterby, I must go at once. If he dies it will be all my fault. (*Hurries away.*) I shall soon see you again.

[*Exit.*

*Mrs. Tet.* Ah! dear me! she is a sweet

creature, and no mistake! I shouldn't wonder if he wanted to marry her, and the pretty dear wouldn't have him! Girls never knows their own minds at her age. But I'm losing my time. There's Tetterby'll be home, and not a drain or crumb of supper. Wot shall I buy? It's all honest money, that's a comfort, that's in this pocket. (*Takes out a few shillings and pence and counts them over.*) Well, I think I can git 'im a bit o' pork. [Exit.



SCENE III. *The Tetterbys' Room.*

*Small TETTERBYS playing about. The Baby and JOHNNY. Two children jumping in and out of bed, constructing an oyster-shell castle; two others trying to knock it down. JOHNNY with Baby, tries to stop them quarrelling. Mr. Tetterby tries to read his paper; looks up now and then.*



*Mr. Tetterby.*

**H**OLD your nise, do, you kids!

*Chorus.* Yes, father. (*All rush off to their places. Johnny rocks the Baby.*)

*Mr. Tet.* Look there now, Johnny; don't go and waggle the baby like that; if you must waggle her, waggle her straight.

*Fred.* (*throwing his boots out of bed, then a whistle, and a lump of wood, a top, &c., and kicking.*) Oh, jolly! mother's going to bring home some supper!

*John.* There, do be quiet, Fred; let father alone.

*Fred.* I ain't a touching o' father, you silly! He's quite 'appy.

*John.* Don't make such a row; he can't read, I tell yer, if yer do, and mother told me to keep your tongues quiet. Lor, how you 'arras me, and baby and all.

[*They all laugh and jump out of bed again. Mr. Tetterby makes one or two ineffectual rushes at two flying figures in bed gowns, and bears sud-*

*denly down upon Johnny and boxes his ears.*

*Mr. Tet.* You bad boy, haven't you any feeling for your poor father, after the fatigues and anxieties of a hard winter's day, since five o'clock in the morning, but must you wither his rest and corrode his latest intelligence with *your* wicious tricks? (*Boxes his ears.*) Isn't it enough, sir, that your brother Dolphus is toiling and moiling in the fog and cold and you rolling in the lap of luxury, with a—with a *baby* and everything you can wish for, but you must make a wilderness of home and maniacs of your parents? Must you, Johnny? Hey? (*Boxes his ears.*)

*John.* Oh, father! when I wasn't a-doing anything, I'm sure, but taking such care o' Sally and getting her to sleep. Oh, father!

*Mr. Tet.* I only wish my little woman would come home! I ain't fit to deal with 'em. They make my head go round and get the better of me. Oh, Johnny! Isn't it



enough that your dear mother has provided you with that sweet sister? isn't it enough that you were seven boys before without a ray of gal, but must you so behave yourself as to make my head swim?

*John.* Well, I didn't know as I was doing wrong, father! and I do take care of ye, don't I baby, eh, baby? There ain't a Punch I don't run after, sometimes miles of streets, 'cos she likes the squeak. It sets her kickin' and crowin' that strong I can 'ardly 'old 'er. But then, oh, my! don't she like it, just! And the tumblers and the 'appy families we walks after is amazin'.

*Mr. Tet.* I daresay, Johnny, I daresay! You're a blessin', Johnny, to her, and to your mother, and I hope they'll recondite you some day; but you *are* weak in the legs, Johnny, and it do try me to see it. Why can't you walk straight, like your father? Look here!

[*Walks across the stage.*]

*John.* But, father, you haven't got no

baby to double you down. Father, look at Bill and Tom.

*[Mr. Tetterby turns and sees two of the boys out of bed playing leap-frog, another playing on a toy whistle, another building the oyster castle. Mr. Tetterby pursues the culprits, and nearly knocks baby and Johnny down. He succeeds at last in catching and administering punishment; others scramble into bed and pretend to be fast asleep. Johnny shrinks into a corner. When peace is restored—*

*Mr. Tet. (wiping his flushed face).* My little woman herself could hardly have done it better! I only wish my little woman had had it to do, I do, indeed! *(He looks on his screen, covered with bits of newspaper, and reads.)* "It is an undoubted fact that all remarkable men have had remarkable mothers, and have respected them in after life as their best friends." Think of your



own remarkable mother, my boys, and know her value while she is still among you! (*Takes a seat by the fire and sits cross-legged, reads newspaper.*) Let anybody, I don't care who it is, get out of bed again (*looking on the screen*), and "astonishment will be the portion of that respected contemporary." Johnny, my child, take care of your only sister Sally; for she's the brightest gem that ever sparkled on your early brow. (*Johnny sits on a stool with the baby crushing him.*) Ah! what a gift that baby is to you, Johnny!

*John.* Yes, father, oh, yes!

*Mr. Tet.* And how thankful you ought to be.

*John.* Yes, father, oh, yes!

*Mr. Tet.* "It is not generally known," Johnny, (*looking on his screen*) "but it is a fact ascertained by accurate calculations, that the following immense per-centage of babies never attain to two years old;" that is to say—

*John.* Oh don't, father, please! I can't a-bear it when I think of Sally.

*Mr. Tet.* Very well, Johnny, very well. (*Johnny wipes his eyes with his coat-sleeve, and hushes the baby.*) Your brother 'Dolphus is late to-night, Johnny, and will come home like a lump of ice. (*Poking the fire.*) What's got your precious mother?

*John.* Here's mother, and 'Dolphus, too, father, I think.

*Mr. Tet. (listening).* You're right! Yes, that's the footstep of my little woman.

*Enter MRS. TETTERBY, carrying market-basket; sits down; throws off her bonnet and shawl.*

*Mr. Tet.* Why, my little woman, here you are at last!

*Mrs. Tet.* I don't see, 'Dolfus, that I'm particularly little—at least, not by the side of you.

*Mr. Tet.* Why, Sophy! what's the matter? If I'm not mistaken, it has generally appeared to give you considerable satisfac-



tion when I called you my "little woman."  
(*Rubs his hands.*)

*Mrs. Tet.* Then you *are* mistaken; I don't *always* like it. Here, Johnny, bring me Sally, for a kiss.

*John.* Yes, mother.

[*Mrs. Tetterby takes the baby, and kisses her; Johnny retires.*]

*Adol.* (*after unwinding his comforter.*)  
How do, father? Bring the baby to me, too, Johnny. I want a kiss of the duck o' diamonds.

*John.* All right! Here she is; ain't she a beauty?      [*Adolphus kisses Sally.*]

*Mr. Tet.* Well, I don't see any law against my having one too. Come here, Johnny. Here goes!      [*Gives her three kisses.*]

*Mrs. Tet.* Whatever you do, Johnny, take care of her, or never look your mother in the face again.

*Adol.* Nor your brother, sir.

*Mr. Tet.* Nor your father, Johnny.

[*Johnny looks the baby over to see it is*

*all right; pats her back, and rocks her with one foot.*

*Mr. Tet.* (keeping his eye on his wife). Are you wet, 'Dolphus, my boy? Come and take my chair, and dry yourself.

*Adol.* No, father, thank'ee (*smoothing himself down with his hands.*) I ain't very wet, I don't think. Does my face shine much, father?

*Mr. Tet.* Well it does look waxy, my boy.

*Adol.* It's the weather, father (*polishing his face with his jacket-sleeve*); what with rain, and sleet, and wind, and snow, and fog, my face gets quite brought out into a rash sometimes, and shines it does; oh don't it though!

*Mr. Tet.* How hoarse you are, 'Dolf, eh?

[*Looks at his wife, who is pouting.*

*Adol.* Well, look'ee 'ere, guvenor, I think you'd feel hoarse if you 'ad to shout out "Morning paper! morning paper!" like I do all day.



*Mr. Tet.* Why, we was plotting to vary it, the other day, to "Morning popper!"

*Adol.* So I do, father, and "Morning piper," in the arternoon, and "Morning popper!" and after five o'clock I 'ollers out "Evening pupper!" It *is* easier for your mouth, but it don't make much odds for your hoarseness.

*Mr. Tet.* Ah, don't it! Well I should have said it would. (*Sees his wife sitting, twirling her wedding ring, and looking moody.*) My little woman, what do you say?

*Mrs. Tet.* (*sighs, and rises to lay the cloth for supper.*) Ah, dear me! dear me! dear me! That's the way the world goes!

*Mr. Tet.* Which is the way the world goes?

*Mrs. Tet.* Oh, nothing! (*Mr. Tetterby pretends to read his newspaper. Mrs. Tetterby lays the cloth; punishes the table with the knives and forks; slaps the plates, salt-cellar, and loaf down.*) Ah, dear me! dear

me! dear me! That's the way the world goes!

*Mr. Tet.* My duck, you said that before! Which is the way the world goes?

*Mrs. Tet.* Oh, nothing!

*Mr. Tet.* Sophia, you said *that* before, too!

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, I'll say it again, if you like—Oh, nothing!—there; and again, if you like—Oh, nothing!—there; and again, if you like—Oh, nothing!—now then!

*Mr. Tet.* (*looking at her intently.*) My little woman, what has put you out?

*Mrs. Tet.* I'm sure *I* don't know. Don't ask me. Who said I was put out at all? *I* never did.

*Mr. Tet.* (*walks across the room, flings the newspaper down, his hands behind him, with resigned air—then turns to Adolphus.*) Your supper will be ready in a minute, 'Dolphus. Your mother has been out in the wet to the cook's shop to buy it. It was very good of your mother so to do. (*Turning to*



*John.*) You shall get some supper, too, very soon. Johnny, your mother's pleased with you, my man, for being so attentive to your precious sister.

*Mrs. Tet.* (*less angrily, taking from her basket some pease-pudding wrapped in paper, a basin of hot pork with a saucer over it.*) There, I declare! [*Sighs.*]

*Mr. Tet.* (*stands and looks very hard at his wife, speaks very slowly.*) Yes, yes, your supper will be ready in a minute, 'Dolphus. Your mother has been out in the wet, to the cookshop, to buy it. It was very good of your mother so to do it.

*Mrs. Tet.* (*catching him round the neck and weeping.*) Oh, 'Dolphus! How could I go and behave so?

*Mr. Tet.* There, there then, my little woman. Do'ee, do'ee, do'ee, there *then*.

[*The little ones peep from their beds, and begin to cry, too. Enter two other small ones in their night-gowns, looking hard at the supper.*]

*Mrs. Tet.* I am sure, 'Dolphus, coming home I had no more idea than the cat.

*Mr. Tet.* Say than the baby, my dear.

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, then, no more idea than the baby, I hadn't. (*To Johnny.*) Don't look at me, but look at her, or she'll fall out of your lap and be killed, and then you'll die in agonies of a broken heart, and serve you right. No more idea I hadn't than that darling, of being cross when I came home; but somehow, 'Dolphus—

[*Turns her wedding-ring round and round.*]

*Mr. Tet.* I see, I understand! My little woman was put out. Hard times and hard work, and hard weather, make it trying now and then. I see! Bless your soul! No wonder! 'Dolf, my man (*exploring the basin with a fork*), here's your mother been and bought, at the cook's shop, besides pease-pudding, a whole knuckle of a lovely roast leg of pork, with lots of crackling left



upon it, and with seasoning, gravy, and mustard quite unlimited. Hand in your plate, my boy, and begin while it's simmering.

*Adol. (goes to the table, takes his food.)*  
Thank you, father.      [*Sits down.*]

*Mr. Tet.* Now then, Johnny. Here's a bit for you ; but you must have yours on a bit of bread, young chap. It would never do for you to let that perecious lot of gravy go trickling down Sally's face and frock. Here's some pease-pudding, too, for you, but you'd better keep it in your pocket when not actually partaking of it ; otherwise it might incommode Sal in more ways than one.

[*Seasoning, mustard and salt, given respectively on the bread. Enter small TETTERBYS from their beds, quietly nudging their brothers for bits which are given them. They hover about in night-gowns while Mr. and Mrs. Tetterby eat supper.*]

*Mr. Tet. (jumping up, and flacking them with his handkerchief.)* Off to bed, you scamps, you vagabonds—you—you wandering rascals! (*Mrs. Tetterby laughs and cries hysterically during supper.*) My little woman, if the world goes that way, it appears to go the wrong way, and to choke you.

*Mrs. Tet.* Give me a drop of water, and don't speak to me for the present, or take notice of me. Don't do it.

*Mr. Tet. (gives her water, and turns suddenly round on Johnny.)* Johnny, why do you stay there wallowing in gluttony and idleness, instead of coming forward and presenting the blessed baby to its mother, that the sight of her may revive her?

*John.* Well, here you are, father, and Sally's all as right and tight as twopence! Look'ee mother, how she do smile at you!

*Mrs. Tet. (raising her hand.)* No, Johnny, I'm not able to look at the child. Don't



come one inch nigher, or I shall hate you for ever! I couldn't abear it just now! (*Johnny retires to his seat. Mrs. Tetterby fans herself with her handkerchief; undoes her wristbands; drinks water. Mr. Tetterby stands looking at her with his hands in his pockets.*) There! I'm better a bit now!

*Mr. Tet.* (*doubtfully.*) My little woman, are you quite sure you're better? Or, are you, Sophia, about to break out in a fresh direction?

*Mrs. Tet.* No, 'Dolphus, no! I'm quite myself! (*Settling her hair, and pressing the palms of her hands upon her eyes, and laughing.*) What a wicked fool I was to think so for a moment! Come nearer, 'Dolphus, and let me ease my mind, and tell you what I mean. Let me tell you! (*Mr. Tetterby brings his chair nearer. Mrs. Tetterby laughs again, and gives him a hug, wiping her eyes.*) You see, 'Dolphus, that when I was single, I might have given myself away in several directions.

*Mr. Tet.* Might you indeed ; I dare say.

*Mrs. Tet.* At one time four after me at once ! Two were soldiers, 'Dolphus, and one of them was much richer than you !

*Mr. Tet.* Oh !

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, I'm sure I never think of such things now to regret them ; and I'm sure I've got as good a husband, and would do as much to prove that I was fond of him as—

*Mr. Tet.* As any little woman in the world ! Very good—*very* good !

*Mrs. Tet.* But you see, 'Dolphus, this being Christmas time, when all people that can, make holiday, and when all people who have got money like to spend some ; (*aside*) and I might have spent some too, if I'd had the courage ; (*Aloud*) I did somehow get out of sorts when I was in the streets just now. There were so many things to be sold, such delicious things to eat, such fine things to look at, such delightful things to have ; oh ! dear ! and yet, I had to calcu-



late and calculate before I durst lay out a sixpence for the commonest things.

*Mr. Tet.* Ah yes, very right, my little woman! Well?

*Mrs. Tet.* And the basket was so large, and wanted so much in it, and my stock of money was so small, and would go such a little way! There now! You hate me, 'Dolphus, don't you?

*Mr. Tet.* Not quite as yet.

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, I'll tell you the whole truth, and then perhaps you will! I'll tell you what made me begin thinking that perhaps I might have done better to take a richer one than you. Do you hate me now I tell you that?

*Mr. Tet.* Why, no! I don't find that I do as yet!

*Mrs. Tet.* (*gets up and gives him a hug.*) Well, I begin to hope you won't; for I'm sure I didn't really wish it, and I never loved any one better, or thought that any one could be half as good to me as you.

*Mr. Tet.* Well, never mind that, my dear !  
Go on !

*Mrs. Tet.* You see we are poor. No one can't gainsay that.

*Mr. Tet.* No, no one can't. But what made you think so much about it just to-night ?

*Mrs. Tet.* That's my secret. Those boys must go to bed !

*Mr. Tet.* Boys, be off ! Go to bed !

*Mrs. Tet.* The place is inconvenient and small enough without you. Johnny, put the baby down in my bed, and don't put her head upside down as you did last night !  
Good-night. [*Exeunt boys.*]

*Mr. Tet.* Well now, my little woman, tell me what it's all about ?

*Mrs. Tet.* I don't like to tell you, but I must. It'll burn my inside out if I don't. I never cared much about money but to-day ! Hum !—

*Mr. Tet.* Well, my dear ?

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, 'Dolphus !



*Mr. Tet.* Well, my dear, but to-night? What else? What can have set you wishing for riches to-night?—which, Sophia, always take to themselves wings, as the newspapers tell us.

*Mrs. Tet.* (*pulling out the purse and throwing it down.*) Wings! Fiddles! There, then! if you must know all! *That's* mine, and yet it isn't. Leastways, it's nobody else's now!

*Mr. Tet.* (*takes it up and counts out the money.*) Mrs. Tetterby, what does this mean? Whose *is* this money?

*Mrs. Tet.* I am not going to explain myself to you, while you come lord and master over me in that style!

*Mr. Tet.* It seems to me, Sophia, that if you are not able to account for your possession of this money, it is time I made inquiries about it. Was this given you?

*Mrs. Tet.* No, it was *not*!

*Mr. Tet.* Nor lent?

*Mrs. Tet.* No, nor I didn't borrow it, nor earn it, nor steal it! There!

*Mr. Tet.* Sophia! Are you of an unsound mind? You used to be honest! I think I will retire to rest. I would rather hear no more. [*Walks towards the door.*]

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, I can keep the secret to myself, if you behave like that. (*Exit Tetterby.*) I'll tell him the whole story before morning; and when he hears about poor Mr. Dalrymple, he'll want to use Miss Old Crab's money, I'll be bound. I know I can get round the soft part of his heart. He won't like to hear that poor young man a-groaning all night, and we without money to get him anything. [*Exit.*]







## ACT II.

### SCENE I.

*Enter ADOLPHUS.*

*Adolphus.*



NOBODY up to give me my breakfast, so I must take some. (*Helps himself.*) I can't find either dripping or treacle, or butter, so I shall take a bit of cheese. I say though, it isn't so nice as when mother's here to give me something to drink with it. I must fetch it from the pump, or go without. Holloa! There's Oppersition Shop's paper-boy off! I shall miss the gents of the first 'bus if I don't cut.

*[Exit Adolphus.]*

*Enter JOHNNY and the baby.*

*John.* There ain't no use in trying to be good to you this morning ; you are so cantankerous ; so's mother, so's father, so am I ; there ! Don't wriggle so. (*Shakes her.*) Can't you keep quiet ! Oh, bother *you* (*slaps her*) ; see if that'll settle you—you're cutting teeth, are you ? Hold your noise, will you ? I can't keep my hands off you.

*[Slaps her again, and puts his hand before her mouth.]*

*Enter MRS. TETTERBY ; collars him, and boxes his ears.*

*Mrs. Tet.* You brute, you murdering little boy ; had you the heart to do it ?

*John.* Why don't her teeth come through, then, instead of bothering o' me ? How would you like it yourself ?

*Mrs. Tet.* Like it, sir ? (*Takes Sally from him.*)

*John.* Yes, like it. How would you ?



Not at all. If you was me, you'd go for a soldier; I will, too! There ain't no babies in the army.

*Enter MR. TETTERBY. Stands, looking thoughtfully at Johnny, and then at Mrs. Tetterby.*

*Mrs. Tet.* I wish I was in the army myself, if the child's in the right, for I have no peace of my life here; I am a slave, a Virginia slave. I never have a holiday, or any pleasure at all, from year's end to year's end! Why, bless and save the child! what's the matter with her now? (*Shakes her and examines her, to see what is the matter. Puts her in the cradle, and rocks it impatiently with her foot. To Mr. Tetterby,*) How you stand there, 'Dolphus; why don't you do something?

*Mr. Tet.* Because I don't care about doing anything.

*Mrs. Tet.* I'm sure I don't.

*Mr. Tet.* I'll take my oath I don't. By

the way, where's that purse? You'd better give it to me.

*Mrs. Tet.* Very likely, when I picked it up; and you so particular about its being given back to Miss Wormwell at first!

*Mr. Tet.* But, Sophia, as you think we ought to keep it——

*Mrs. Tet.* I never said *ought*.

*Mr. Tet.* Well, as you think we *should* keep it, for Mr. Dalrymple's sake—I mean—I'll take the money, and spend some of it for him.

*Mrs. Tet.* I think I see you, my boy! The purse is in my pocket.

*Mr. Tet.* Very well, Mrs. Tetterby; remember, *if* you please, that you have it in *your* pocket!

[*Mrs. Tetterby dispenses bread and treacle.*]

*Mrs. Tet. (to children).* You children, give over there; come to breakfast.

[*They scuffle for the loaf.*]

*Mrs. Tet.* I am not likely to forget it; I



begin to hate it. It seems as if the devil was in it, it makes us all so cross.

*Mr. Tet.* You should have thought of that before; the question is settled now, though I confess you are more disagreeable ever since you had it.

*Mrs. Tet.* And what are you? (*The children wander about, eating and quarrelling.*

*Mr. and Mrs. Tetterby sit to the table. Mr. Tet. looks at his breakfast.*) You had better read your paper, if you ain't going to eat any breakfast.

*Mr. Tet. (in tone of excessive discontent.)* What's there to read in a paper?

*Mrs. Tet.* What? Why, police.

*Mr. Tet.* It's nothing to me. What do I care what people do, or are done to?

*Mrs. Tet.* Suicides.

*Mr. Tet.* No business of mine.

*Mrs. Tet.* Births, deaths, and marriages! Are those nothing to you?

*Mr. Tet.* If the births were all over for

good and all to-day, and the deaths were to begin to come off to-morrow, I don't see why it should interest me till I thought it was coming to my turn.

*Mrs. Tet.* I suppose you wouldn't care if I was to die to-morrow.

*Mr. Tet.* Why, you'd only be too glad to get out of *my* way. You're sorry you ever married me; and, as to marriages, *I've* done it myself—I know quite enough about *them*.

*Mrs. Tet.* Oh, you're a consistent man, ain't you? You, with the screen of your own making there, made of nothing but pictures and bits of newspapers, which you set and look at, and read to the children by the half hour together.

*Mr. Tet.* Say *used* to, if you please; you won't find me doing so any more. I'm wiser now; and as to the pictures, that's *your* folly—I shouldn't have put them there but for you. I'll take them off. Yes, I'm wiser now!



*Mrs. Tet.* Bah! wiser, indeed! How much better are you? Are you kinder, do you think?

*Mr. Tet.* (*passing his hand across his forehead.*) Better? kinder? Ah! I don't know as any of us are better or kinder, or happier either. Better is it? (*Turns to screen.*) This used to be one of the family favourites, I recollect (*forlornly and stupidly*), and used to draw tears from the children, and to make 'em good if there was any little bickering or discontent among 'em, next to the story of the robin-red-breasts in the wood. "Melancholy case of destitution. Yesterday a small man, with a baby in his arms, and surrounded by half-a-dozen ragged little ones, of various ages between ten and two, the whole of whom were evidently in a famishing condition, appeared before the worthy magistrate, and made the following recital:"—Ha! I don't understand it, I'm sure; I don't see what it has got to do with us.

*Mrs. Tet.* How old and shabby he looks! I never saw such a change in a man. Ah! dear me—dear me—dear me! It *was* a sacrifice!

*Mr. Tet.* What was a sacrifice? (*Mrs. Tetterby shakes her head and rocks cradle.*) If you mean your marriage was a sacrifice, my good woman—

*Mrs. Tet.* I *do* mean it.

*Mr. Tet.* Why, then, I mean to say (*sulky and surly*) that there are two sides to that affair, and that *I* was the sacrifice, and that I wish the sacrifice hadn't been accepted.

*Mrs. Tet.* I wish it hadn't, Tetterby, and with all my heart and soul, I do assure you. You can't wish it more than I do, Tetterby.

*Mr. Tet.* I don't know what I saw in her, I'm sure. Certainly, if I saw anything, it isn't there now. She's fat, she's ageing, she won't bear comparison with most other women. I was thinking so last night, after that confounded purse came to the house.



*Mrs. Tet.* I am sure you are common looking enough. You haven't any air with you. You're small. You're beginning to stoop, and, what I hate more than all—you're getting bald.

*Mr. Tet.* (*still musing*). I must have been out of my mind when I married her!

*Mrs. Tet.* My senses must have forsook me: that's the only way I can explain it to myself.

[*Children rush forward, again quarrelling for the milk-jug. They brandish slices of bread and butter. Johnny chokes behind a milk-jug.*]

*Mr. Tet.* Order, you little brats! Order, I say. [Flies at them.]

*Mrs. Tet.* These children will be the death of me at last; and the sooner the better, I think!

*Mr. Tet.* Poor people ought not to have children at all; they give us no pleasure.

[*Mrs. Tetterby pours out tea rudely, and pushes Mr. Tetterby's cup towards him. Enter CECILIA.*

*Cec.* Good morning, Mrs. Tetterby, and how do you do, Mr. Tetterby?

*Mrs. Tet.* Why, lor, miss, how early you are up!

*Cec.* I've never been to bed, Mrs. Tetterby—I've been up all night watching Mr. Dalrymple. I had to run for the doctor once in the night, about twelve o'clock, he became so much worse.

*Mr. Tet.* Why did you not ask me, ma'am? I would have been honoured to go; it wasn't fit for you.

*Cec.* I did knock at your bedroom door, hoping I might get some help; but you seemed in such earnest and loud conversation, Mrs. Tetterby, that I couldn't make you hear. Mr. Dalrymple had just gone off to sleep, and the doctor living so near, I ran off to him at once.

*Mrs. Tet.* Did he come? How is he



now, miss? (*Aside.*) Lor, how selfish I've been! What an old fool I am!

*Cec.* Yes; he came directly, and stayed with me two hours at least. What a good man he is!

*Mr. Tet.* You may say that, miss: his qualities are excellent, and he's as clever as he is good. But how's the young man this morning, ma'am?

*Cec.* He is really better, I am thankful to say. The doctor says the crisis of the fever is past, most favourably, and all he wants now is strengthening food and careful nursing. The latter I am able to give him.

*Mr. Tet.* And I am proud to say the former *we* can give him.

*Cec.* Indeed, Mr. Tetterby! No, that must not be!

*Mr. Tet.* But you don't know. Wife, give me a sovereign of that money.

*Mrs. Tet.* Not just now, Mr. Tetterby. (*Aside to Mr. Tet.*) I want to speak to Miss Grey about it first.

*Cec.* You dear, kind people, no. You want all the money you earn with such hard, honest work. Mrs. Tetterby, I have made up my mind to tell my aunt all about Mr. Dalrymple, and then, I am sure, she will let her servants make anything I require for him.

*Mrs. Tet.* Lor, miss, you shouldn't do that; your aunt will only be angry and take you away from here.

*Cec.* No, she will not; when it is a matter of right and wrong, I *must* have my own way. Besides, she is kind at heart, though she does not show that at first. I am going to write to her. You know she went to Brighton, yesterday.

*Mr. Tet.* I'll get you some pens and ink and paper from the shop, ma'am. Cream-laid or blue-lined do you prefer?

*Cec.* Oh, thank you very kindly, Mr. Tetterby: anything will do.

*Mr. Tet. (aside).* Yes, and a stamped envelope for her. What a blessed good creature she do look! [Exit Mr. Tetterby.]



*Mrs. Tet.* Now, first of all, you must stay and have a cup of tea, and I'll get you an egg in a trice.

*Cec.* No, thank you, I can't leave him, though he is asleep.

*Mrs. Tet.* Let me go and sit with him, then, while you get a little breakfast. You know he's used to me; he won't mind me, if he should wake. I shan't put him out.

*Cec.* Well, thank you, Mrs. Tetterby; perhaps the noise of the pen and the folding of the paper might wake him. That's kind of you.

*Mrs. Tet.* No, it ain't. You don't know how wicked I am. (*Aside.*) It'll do me good, though, to be quiet a bit upstairs alone. In that sick man's room it'll be almost like going to church for quiet, and then I can think about the money again. (*Calls.*) 'Dolphus! 'Dolphus!

*Enter MR. TETTERBY.*

*Mr. Tet.* Well, Sophia?

*Mrs. Tet.* Just send Johnny for an egg, and you cut Miss Grey a nice bit of bread and butter, and you can give her my tea. I don't want any myself; I couldn't take it!

*Mr. Tet.* Sophia! you had better drink it, and I'll make her some more.

*Mrs. Tet.* Couldn't do it! (*Lowering her voice.*) 'Dolphus, we ain't got *no* money, 'Dolf, but two or three honest shillings (*looking hard at him*), remember that!

*Mr. Tet.* Well, my little woman, I don't know but you are right; but I can't quite think it fair to send all that money out of the country when there's such a lot of starving Christians, or heathens, if you like, at home.

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, never mind now; we won't decide, at least just yet. But the purse do lay like a cold weight on my chest. (*Aloud.*) Here's tuppence for Johnny to get a new-laid egg. They've got 'em next door sometimes.



*Cec.* Oh, if you are sending out, will you let Johnny go to the post for me ?

*Mrs. Tet.* Certainly. (*Calls.*) Johnny!

*Cec.* But, please, Mrs. Tetterby, do go upstairs to Mr. Dalrymple. Johnny and I and Mr. Tetterby will manage the rest.

*Mrs. Tet.* Yes, all right, miss. Is there any medicine to give him if he wakes ?

*Cec.* Yes ; but please ring for me if he wanders. If he is quite quiet, and knows you, and asks no questions, just give him a tablespoonful of the mixture that is on the table.

*Mrs. Tet.* Very well, miss. (*Looking back.*) And God bless you ! [*Exit.*



SCENE II. MISS GREY *writing a letter.*

*Enter MR. TETTERBY, begins to cut bread and butter, and JOHNNY, with an egg.*

*Mr. Tetterby.*

**T**HAT'S right, Johnny; have you boiled it?

*John.* Yes, father, exactly three minutes and a-half, father.

*Mr. Tet.* But, Johnny, you can't tell three minutes and a-half; you hadn't got a clock.

*John.* No; but I know it takes me just five minutes to run to the pump and back when I've got baby in my arms, and without her I guess it takes me a minute and a-half less.

*Cec. (looking up).* Thank you, Johnny. Did you boil this egg for me?

*John.* Yes, miss, and baby kep' it a-boiling; at least, she watched the pot while I run to the pump for the time.

*Cec.* Well, thank you; I am sure I shall



like it. But let us see how it is done, with such a funny timepiece.

*Mr. Tet. (handing her bread and butter).*  
Do take a slice, ma'am. I am not exactly used to cutting for the gentry; but, at least, the victuals is paid for.

*Cec.* I'm sure I shall like it as much as any I ever eat. (*Breaks the egg.*) Johnny, the egg is done to a turn.

*John.* Oh, ain't I glad, father! That's all Sally's doing; she do help one such a lot. (*Aside.*) I can't think how it was I felt so jolly cross with her just now.

[*Knock at the door. Mr. Tetterby opens it.*]

*Enter MISS WORMWELL.*

*Miss W.* Are you Mr. Tetherley?

*Mr. Tet.* My name is Tetterby, ma'am. Anything I can do for you, ma'am?

*Miss W. (rushing in.)* Why, Cecilia! You *here*! What is the meaning of this?

*Cec.* But how came *you* here, aunt? I

was just writing to you to tell you how much I wanted you. I thought you were at Brighton still.

*Miss W.* Indeed! It's quite time I came back, I see.

*Cec.* Why, is anything the matter?

*Miss W.* Everything is the matter, it seems to me. Where were you all last night?

*Cec.* Here, in this house, aunt dear.

*Miss W.* What! were you here? and why are these Popish clothes put on again?

*Cec.* Because I have been nursing a sick friend—a sick person, I mean; and I like this dress, as a sign of my profession. I should never have had it given me had I not been able to nurse; it is as good as a certificate.

*Mr. Tet.* And, ma'am, it is so very becoming to the young lady; it gives her such a saint-like appearance, I'm sure.

*Miss W.* It is not in my creed that we



are to wear garments to show men how good we are, or how——

*Cec.* Well, aunt dear, just read my letter, and you will then see, at least that in *my* case, this dress has been very useful. Besides, I only put it off for a little while, that I might be with you till my cousin came back again ; but read my letter.

*Miss W.* I haven't got my spectacles ; I'll read it when I get home. Come back with me, and then you can explain your eccentric behaviour. What the servants can think of you at home I am at a loss to imagine ! If I had known that my niece was such a wild creature as this, I should never have asked her to visit me.

*Cec.* Please, dear aunt, don't talk so ; you must, indeed, hear all about it before you judge me.

*Mr. Tet.* I do assure you, ma'am, he's a most respectable young man, and *so* poor, ma'am, so *very* poor, and such a gentleman !

*Miss W.* Who is poor and young, and such

a gentleman? What do you mean? I'm all in a maze! Mr. Tetherley, who is he?

*Mr. Tet.* Why, ma'am, the young clergyman upstairs, that Miss Grey has been a-nussing all night. She's been like a angel in our house; and she taking no rest herself—not one wink of sleep has ever crossed her eyes, and he in a raging fever.

*Miss W.* Young clergyman! raging fever!

*Cec.* Aunt, if you can't read my letter, listen to me while I tell you that Mr. Tetterby's lodger—the gentleman that I have been nursing—is Mr. Dalrymple, a very old friend of my father's.

*Miss W.* Oh! very well. Old is he? I thought Mr. Tetherley——

*Mr. Tet.* Tetterby, ma'am.

*Miss W.* Oh, yes, I forgot—Tetherby! Well, I thought this good man said he was young.

*Cec.* Well, aunt, I mean he was an old friend of papa's and mamma's. He is not so



very young ; but papa knew his father, and they were great friends.

*Miss W.* Well, Cecilia !

*Cec.* That's all, aunt ; except that as he was very ill here, and had no friends, and as my father and mother had known him, and had received much kindness from him, I could not do otherwise than come and nurse him.

*Miss W.* Really ! What beautiful devotion !

*Mr. Tet.* Madam, if you had been ill, without a friend to look to you, and an old friend, a young lady I mean, had come—

*Miss W.* I do not need your interference, sir, thank you.

*Mr. Tet.* But justice must be done in my house, ma'am.

*Miss W.* Justice ? Oh, very well ! I'm glad to hear that. Where is your wife ? I want justice, at least honesty, from her.

*Mr. Tet.* My wife ? May I make so bold

as to ask what you want with her, ma'am ? She is at present with Mr. Dalrymple, while Miss Grey gets a bit of breakfast.

*Miss W.* Pray eat, Cecilia ; but I must see Mrs. Tetherley. I came from Brighton by the first train, in consequence of having had two losses : one was my niece ; of this loss I heard last night from my maid, who telegraphed to tell me she had gone off, no one knew where.

*Cec.* Oh ! that silly woman ! I told the housemaid where she might find me, if I was wanted.

*Miss W.* Yes ; but they would not believe her. Well, as I was going to observe, I not only lost my niece, but my purse ; as I have found her here, I probably may find my money, too, in the same house.

*Mr. Tet.* Your purse, *your* money, ma'am ! I am astonished that you did not discover your loss before you took your ticket to go to Brighton.

*Miss W.* Well, no ; that does not follow.



The purse was my own, but the money was not ; it was *dedicated*.

[*Casts up her eyes.*]

*Mr. Tet.* Indeed, ma'am ?

*Miss W.* Yes, to the Needy and the Destitute.

*Mr. Tet.* Hum ! (*aside*). Then it couldn't have come truer to its pole. But I don't know what Sophia will think by this time. I begin to have *my* qualms.

*Miss W.* Will you, if you please, call Mrs. Tetterley ?

*Cec.* I will go for her then, aunt.

[*Rises to go out.*]

*Enter MRS. TETTERBY. Meets Miss Grey.*

*Mrs. Tet.* Oh, miss, you can go up now ; he's gone off into a beautiful sleep.

*Cec.* Has he been asleep all the time ?

*Mrs. Tet.* No ; he woke as I went in ; but there's no wandering about him, like yesterday.

*Cec.* Did he speak ?

*Mrs. Tet.* Yes; he looked round the room quite wistful, and then said, "Mrs. Tetterby, will you come here?" I went to his bedside. "Is there any one else in the room?" "No, sir," I says. "Oh," then says he, "I thought I had heard a voice I knew, but I can't see yet at all, and I dare say it was only a dream—a beautiful dream—such a one as one only has once in a lifetime." "Lor, sir," ses I, "but you seem better." "I should think so," says he; "and I should never be ill or down-hearted again, if I could have a dream like that every night."

*Cec.* Well, Mrs. Tetterby, what did you say to him?

*Mrs. Tet.* I said ('cos I guessed what he thought he'd been dreaming), I said, "But suppose your dream could come true, sir, wouldn't that do as well as dreaming it every night?" "Ah, but Mrs. Tetterby," says he, "that can't be; at least, not in this life," and then he got excited, and that red



spot come in his face again, so I told him just to take his medicine and lie down, and maybe, he'd dream again ; so he puts down his head, quite lamb-like, and goes off to sleep again.

*Cec. (overcome).* I'd better go up. Oh ! I wish the doctor would come. I think he ought to have some nourishment now. My aunt wants you, please, Mrs. Tetterby. Send the doctor up directly he comes, will you ?

*Mrs. Tet.* I'll be sure to send him at once, miss. (*Exit Miss Grey. To Miss Wormwell.*) Good morning, ma'am.

*Miss W.* Good morning, Mrs. Tetherley ; I suppose you thought I was at Brighton ?

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, ma'am, to speak the real truth, I did feel glad to think you was enjoying yourself at the sea-side.

*Miss W.* But I could not enjoy myself after I discovered my loss.

*Mrs. Tet.* Oh, really, ma'am ; a loss have you had ?

*Miss W.* Yes, Mrs. Tetherley, the loss of a purse. A serious one to me, which I feel the more, as it was not my own money, but some given in trust.

[*Shutting her eyes.*]

*Mrs. Tet.* Was it much, ma'am? And where did you lose it?

*Miss W.* I think I lost it in this row of houses, and I couldn't help hoping that I might have left it in this house. Have you seen nothing of it?

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, ma'am, how much did you say was in it?

*Miss W.* Over £15! I hope you know something of it.

*Mrs. Tet.* If it was that one that you had in your hand when you came collecting for the gorillias, I can't say I never saw it, because I remember wishing that the money was going to the heathens as is a little nearer home.

*Miss W.* But, Mrs. Tetherby, tell me truly, have you seen my society's purse?



*Mrs. Tet.* Ma'am, I told you I saw it in your hand.

*Miss W.* Yes, yes; but since? Have you seen it? Don't tease me: I know you are an honest woman, and if you know where it is I am quite sure of its safety.

*Mrs. Tet.* Couldn't you just run next door, and I'll ask Tetterby if he knows anything about it, and when you come back, ma'am, we'll see what we can do.

*Miss W.* Yes, I will, and then I'll come back here again. I want to speak to you about Miss Grey. [*Exit Miss Wormwell.*]

*Enter MR. TETTERBY.*

*Mrs. Tet.* 'Dolfus, what shall we do with this purse? You've heard what she says?

*Mr. Tet.* Every word, Sophia; and you see, Sophia, if she puts it in that way—"Do you know anything about it?"—what is to be done? We can't tell a lie about it, and, say what you will, it isn't ours; now is it, Sophia?

*Mrs. Tet.* No, 'Dolfus, it ain't: and I couldn't help seeing—when I was sitting in Mr. Dalrymple's room just now—well I couldn't help thinking how miserable and nasty I've been ever since I thought of touching the money; (*tearfully*) and you were so good and all to me till you began to think we might as well take it, and then you got as bad as me, and we've both been thinking so much of ourselves and so little of each other ever since.

*Mr. Tet.* I can't abear to think of it, my little woman. Why, Heaven forgive me! What evil tempers I've been giving way to. (*In agitation.*) How cross we have all been!

*Mrs. Tet.* However could I treat you as I did? And didn't we make the children cross to each other by being so savage ourselves? Why, lor, 'Dolfus, only think—Johnny, to take and slap that baby! He never done such a thing in all his blessed born days before, and he wouldn't have



done it then if the boy hadn't heard us quarrelling.

*Mr. Tet.* Oh, I'm a brute! I never shall forgive myself! I can't abear to think of it, my little woman. I've nearly broke your heart! I know I have.

*Mrs. Tet.* No, 'Dolf, no! It was me. It was all my fault!

*Mr. Tet.* My little woman, *don't*. You make me reproach myself dreadful, when you show such a noble spirit! But let bygones be bygones, and let's give the lady back the purse. Honour bright!

*Mrs. Tet.* Yes, 'Dolf. Honour bright, old man! Here comes Miss Wormwell, and there's the doctor! Go and get him to go upstairs through the shop. [*Exit Mr. Tetterby.*

*Enter MISS WORMWELL.*

*Miss W.* I can hear nothing of my purse, Mrs. Tetherley.

*Mrs. Tet.* (*drawing it out of her pocket.*) Is this it, ma'am?

*Miss W.* Why, yes, Mrs. Tetterby! I am glad to see it! How did you get it?

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, ma'am I don't feel bound to tell you that. There it is! and I think, without being rude, I might say, Take care of it another time, and don't take such dangerous things about with you. At least, not into poor people's houses.

*Miss W.* Dangerous things! Do you call a purse with fifteen pounds, nine shillings and sixpence—(*Counting out the money.*) Yes, it's all right, £15, 9s. 7½d.—a dangerous thing?

*Mrs. Tet.* Yes, ma'am, I do, when dropped on to poor people's floors. It's been a curse to *this* house, and the sooner you take it out of it the better, ma'am.

*Miss W.* Really, I don't understand you, my good woman! I know that the love of money is the root of all evil, but how it can have been a curse to you, Mrs. Tetterby, I cannot understand.

*Mrs. Tet.* I daresay not, ma'am. You see,



we ain't the gentry, and you ain't a poor woman with eight children, so I daresay you don't understand. But there's your purse, ma'am, and all I say is, Don't drop it about again on poor people's floors.

*Miss W.* I beg you will take a reward for your honesty. [*Offering her a pound.*]

*Mrs. Tet.* No, thank you, ma'am; I'm obliged to you! Me and my husband we works for our money! We don't live on charity! We are paid for our work, not rewarded for our honesty!

*Miss W.* Oh! as you please, certainly. I did not mean to hurt your feelings. But now about my niece. Miss Grey must come back with me, and I will find a nurse for this lodger of yours.

*Mrs. Tet.* I think you forget, ma'am, that he belongs to the clergy.

*Miss W.* Oh! some Baptist or Methodist ranter, I daresay.

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, ma'am, I only know he's preached at the big church in your street,

and he said all the prayers there when the bishop preached, just the day before he was took ill; and you wouldn't have known which was the most pious, him or the bishop, except for the bishop's sleeves; which I suppose shows he's got most prizes in religion.

*Miss W.* Oh, really! he preached there, did he? Well, I will certainly look out for a well-trained nurse for him.

*Mrs. Tet.* I think you had better ask the doctor first, ma'am. He's gone upstairs. I heard him go through the shop way just now. I'll go and bring him in here. (*Opens the door, enter DR. MORGAN.*) Oh! here you are, doctor! This is Miss Grey's aunt, doctor, and she was just saying—

*Dr. Mor.* (*bows and looks at Miss Wormwell.*) Oh, Miss Wormwell! Good morning. Our sister of mercy, upstairs, your niece, ma'am?

*Miss W.* Yes, she is. I was just saying, Dr. Morgan, that she must come back



with me. I cannot allow her to be exposing herself in this ridiculous way to infection. Besides, she'll be bringing fever into my house, and, if she is laid up—

*Dr. Mor.* Madam, you needn't be at all alarmed on that score. Brain fever is not infectious. Mr. Dalrymple's malady is the result of overwork and extreme anxiety of mind. Low fever of a wearisome nature will set in, unless the greatest care be taken.

*Mrs. Tet.* Oh, doctor, is he any better to-day? Was he awake when you were up now?

*Dr. Mor.* He is better, my good woman. He has turned a corner, and with extreme care, quiet and rest, I hope we may yet bring him round.

*Miss W.* Oh, I'm glad to hear that. Then Cecilia can come home at once.

*Dr. Mor.* If you mean Miss Grey, madam, I am sorry to say, she *cannot* return with you, unless you wish to kill the young man.

In a case of encephalitis, everything depends on an evenness of treatment being preserved; a change of nurse, or a different course of medicine would be sure to throw him back; an increase of fever would set in, his blindness would become permanent, and his death or idiotcy, would probably lie at your door.

*Miss W.* But am I, and all my household, to be endangered because this stranger—

*Dr. Mor.* I can't say anything about your household; you, madam, can see about that afterwards. If you take Miss Grey away now, I know I should try and get you convicted of manslaughter when the young man dies, which he would be sure to do.

*Miss W.* I see it is of no use talking more to you. Mrs. Tetherley, I shall come in again this afternoon; good-bye for the present (*looking back*). Good morning, Dr. Morgan, I shall be happy to supply beef-tea, wine, jelly, or anything that you



think your patient wants, if you believe him to be really respectable.

[*Exit Miss Wormwell.*]

*Dr. Mor.* Now, Mrs. Tetterby, I want to say something to you. Doctors must not tell secrets, but I have just found out one, and I will say this much—Miss Grey is no new friend of Mr. Dalrymple's, and because she has nursed him, he has got over it. I think he recognises her voice, and it has done him good.

*Mrs. Tet.* I've made out as much myself, sir.

*Dr. Mor.* So, whatever you do, don't let that woman take her away. Mind!

*Mrs. Tet.* She won't go, I think, sir.

*Dr. Mor.* She must stay a little while, now at least, whatever happens afterwards. The quiet that has come over him would be broken, if she were to leave him. Gracious, what a quiet creature she is! I heard her talking to him before she knew I was in the room.

*Mrs. Tet.* Does he know her?

*Dr. Mor.* I'm not quite sure. But at any rate, her presence makes him quiet, and I've heard enough to know she couldn't be wiser; and she won't let him get excited, and she won't lose her self-possession. Send to Miss Wormwell's for all you want. I know her better than you do. She will come all right in time; and mind, when Miss Grey comes down here for her meals, no one must go up to him but yourself.

*Mrs. Tet.* I'll attend to all you say, doctor. Good morning, and thank you, sir.

*Dr. Mor.* Good morning. [Exeunt.







ACT III.

*A fortnight afterwards.*

SCENE I. MRS. TETTERBY *and* JOHNNY.

*Mrs. Tetterby.*



WELL, Johnny, ain't we going to have a party? Now, undo that basket Miss Wormwell's man brought just now. (*Johnny unpacks a basket of good things. Mrs. Tet. puts them on the table.*) She's coming to tea herself, Johnny. I'll lay out the tea, while you go and get the little 'uns washed and polish 'em up a bit extray, Johnny.

*John.* That I will, mother. [*Exit.*

*Enter MR. TETTERBY, looking at the tea-table.*

*Mr. Tet.* Hoity-toity, Mrs. Tetterby, what

is up now? Buns, and muffins, and creases, and a Christmas pudding, as I'm alive!

*[Taking off the cover of a pot on the fire.]*

*Mrs. Tet.* You shouldn't have uncovered that, 'Dolf; that's a surprise of mine.

*Mr. Tet.* But what's it all about?

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, Tetterby, can't you guess who's coming to tea?

*Mr. Tet.* My little woman, observing the preparations, I consider them only commensurate with royalty. Perhaps her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria is going to step in?

*Mrs. Tet.* Lor, 'Dolfus, how can you be so callous to dignities? It's quite revolutionary of yer to talk so. It's Christmas Eve, you know, and the doctor's as good as his word, and has got Mr. Dalrymple well enough to come down to tea with us, and Miss Wormwell's coming!

*Mr. Tet.* Oh, bother!

*Mrs. Tet.* No, don't say *bother*. I'm sure



she's been very good of late, and I know she's sorry enough now that she were so sharp with Miss Grey. It ain't for you to remember her sins agin her, when she knitted that comforter for you with her own hands.

*Mr. Tet.* I don't want to cast any one's faults up to them, and it's a shame of me to feel antagonistic towards her, for she wore very mild to us when we pretended we didn't know anythink about the purse; but somehow I can't take to her; so *there*, my little woman!

*Mrs. Tet.* Well, I don't say I could hug her exactly, but that's no odds to us, so long as she takes to Mr. Dalrymple—that's really what she's comin' for to-night, don't you see?

*Mr. Tet.* It is to be hoped they will ameliorate, for never was there a gentleman better deserved an angel in female form than does Mr. Dalrymple; and, transmutably, never was there descended out of

heaven a angel more worthy of that position than is Miss Grey. But I thought Miss Grey went back to her aunt's?

*Mrs. Tet.* So she did, when the doctor said she might leave him.

*Mr. Tet.* Didn't you tell me Mr. Dalrymple had found out who she was?

*Mrs. Tet.* Ah, Tetterby, wouldn't you have found me out if I had another kind of gownd on?

*Mr. Tet.* That's what I'm trying to exemplify to myself. *Didn't* he know her?

*Mrs. Tet.* Surely he did, though he didn't get back his eyesight till after she left; but she never wouldn't give in to letting him talk to her lover-like, you know, and he was such a high gentleman, he never took advantage of her to make her even say for positive who she was.

*Mr. Tet.* Humph! Sophia—ah!—I'm sure it's quite romantic! Romance in high life! and to happen in a lowly cottage like ours (*turning to his screen*); quite a romance,



which has been so well described (*runs his finger along the screen and reads*) as "that singular intermixture of the wonderful and mysterious with the sublime and beautiful, which introduces us into an enchanted existence, and raises us above the bare realities of life by its dazzling peculiarities." (*Turning round.*) And is she coming as Miss Grey, or as the Sister of Mercy?

*Mrs. Tet.* You'll see ; here they come. I'm going now to see after the children and get my young man in. You must do the honours, Adolphus.

*Mr. Tet.* My little woman, I am equal to any emergency.

[*Exit Mrs. Tetterby. Knock at the door.*]

*Enter MISS WORMWELL and MISS GREY.*

*Mr. Tet. (bows low).* How do you do, madam and miss.

*Both.* Good evening, Mr. Tetterby.

*Mr. Tet.* Ladies, pray be seated ; Mrs.

Tetterby will be here in the concourse of time.

*Cec.* Thank you, Mr. Tetterby. May we take off our bonnets?

*Mr. Tet.* Miss Grey, you do us much honour.

*Cec.* No, Mr. Tetterby, it is you we have to thank for letting us come.

*Miss W.* I feel grateful to you for your care of my niece while she was under your roof.

*Mr. Tet.* Madam, she honoured our domicile by her presence.

*Cec.* I hope the children are coming in.

*Mr. Tet.* I believe their mother intends them to be allowed to appear before the close of this festive board, if they can comport themselves with propriety. But children will be children, Miss Wormwell, and at the best o' times they are a trial to their elders.

*Miss W.* I am *quite* of your opinion, Mr. Tetterby. I think that children, like some



pictures, are best enjoyed from a distance. Still, I *like* your children, Mr. Tetterby.

*Mr. Tet.* Your kindness is overcoming in its greatness. [Bows.



## SCENE II.

*Enter MRS. TETTERBY, and MR. DALRYMPLE in a dressing gown and cap.*

*Cecilia (aside).*



WILL he know me now?

[*She shrinks almost behind the screen.*

*Mrs. Tet. (to Mr. Dalrymple).* Now, don't look at our company, sir, till you've got to your seat. (*Leading Mr. Dalrymple to his seat*). How do you do, Miss Wormwell, you'll excuse the gentleman, it's the first time as he's walked downstairs for three weeks, and he's a bit shakey, you see.

*Miss W.* I am very glad that Mr. Dalrymple is able to be down at all.

*Mrs. Tet. (after putting cushions and*

*making him comfortable*). And now, Miss Wormwell, will you shake hands with Mr. Dalrymple, as I am sure you have been wanting to do ; and Miss Wormwell, this is, Mr. Dalrymple, the lady I was telling you of, who has sent so often to inquire after you. *[They shake hands.]*

*Miss W.* I hope you are getting stronger, you don't look very hearty yet.

*Mr. Dal.* No, I suppose not ; after three weeks in bed I cannot expect to feel very strong.

*Miss W.* Ah ! really, it's a long time to suffer. No, indeed, you can't feel strong.

*Mr. Dal.* I have to thank you, I believe, for many attentions. You have been so kind ! The grapes you sent me were very refreshing in my intense thirst, and—

*Miss W.* Oh, pray don't mention it ! (*Miss Grey comes forward.*) It was for my niece's sake—at least, I mean, that Mrs. Tetterby told us about you, and I was very sorry.

*Mrs. Tet.* Here is another lady would



like to shake hands with you, sir, Miss Wormwell's niece, Miss Grey.

*Mr. Dal. (rising, and looking at her.)*  
Cecilia Grey! then it was indeed and in truth, you! *[They hold hands.]*

*Cec.* You have not forgotten me, then! You do remember long ago?

*Mr. Dal.* Long ago! yes, and last week! You saved my life!

*Cec.* Can you see now? Are your eyes quite strong?

*Mr. Dal.* Strong enough to be quite sure about your identity. My nurse, my old friend! *(Aside).* And so it is all really true.

*Miss W.* I understand that you knew my sister and her husband in India.

*Mr. Dal.* Are you Mrs. Grey's sister? I was with her when she died, two days after her husband.

*Miss W.* Oh, Mr. Dalrymple, you make me feel quite ill. My poor, dear sister! *(Cries.)* She would go out. *(Cries.)* Did she send me any message?

*Mr. Dal.* She did not think of my meeting with you ; but she did give me a message for her daughter, if I should ever find her, which I—

*Cec.* Oh ! what was it ?

*Mr. Dal.* I cannot tell it you. (*Aside.*) How little I thought how it would come about.

*Miss W.* But, Mr. Dalrymple, a dying message is as sacred as a will, and it is as dishonest to withhold the one as the other.

*Mr. Dal.* Miss Grey only, and yourself, can make me able to tell you.

*Miss W.* Really, sir, you are very mysterious. We wish you to tell us.

*Mr. Dal.* But I could not do so, unless Cecilia first consented to answer a question I once asked her, and which she left India without answering. But if I got no answer then, how can I expect one now.

[*Looking at her.*]

*Miss W.* (*to Mrs. Tetterby*). It strikes me we had better get some tea for Mr. Dal-



rymple, Mrs. Tetterby. I fancy we are not altogether wanted in this corner.

*[They arrange the cups and pour out the tea.]*

*Mr. Dal.* Cecilia!

*Cec.* Edward, forgive me. I beg you to pardon my childishness. I behaved very badly; I was so silly!

*Mr. Dal.* No; *I* was hard. I am too old for you, I know! but, oh! if you could have been my wife!

*Cec.* But can't I be, yet?

*Mr. Dal.* Not now; I'm too poor, now; too shattered, now; too weak for you to lean on—

*Cec.* But I'm so strong! can't you lean on me? You belong to me and I to you: we can never be parted. I always loved you!

*Mr. Dal.* Can it be true?

*Cec.* If you doubt me, I must wait till you do believe me. You will some day. I fear I have said too much.

*Mr. Dal.* Cecilia, it was because I

could not comprehend my happiness that I doubted it. What! after all my sorrow, shall I have such a joy? Will you give me this? *[Taking her hand.*

*Cec. (giving him the other).* It has been yours so long.

*[Mr. Dalrymple takes it and raises it to his lips. Miss Wormwell, advancing with a cup of tea, spills it, in her confusion at the sight, and turns round.*

*Mr. Dal.* Oh, Miss Wormwell, don't go away.

*Miss W.* I have spilled your tea.

*Mr. Dal.* I like that half-cup of tea: do come here.

*Miss W.* Really, Mr. Dalrymple, I don't know, really. Ha, well! Oh! but I see you can't take it yet.

*[He is still holding Miss Grey's hand.*

*Mr. Dal.* Oh, yes I can, Miss Wormwell: see, I can take it with my left hand. Please



come here ; I want to give you your sister's message ; I can do it now. (*Miss Wormwell stands before him ; he puts down the tea.*) It was this—"Tell Cecilia, my last wish for her is that she may be Edward Dalrymple's wife."

*Enter Children, singing.*

"Little Robin Redbreast fell sick upon a time.

Little Jenny Wren gave him sop and wine :

Eat Robin, drink Robin, sop it well in wine.

Thank you, Jenny, kindly ; you shall be mine !"

*Mr. Tet.* Encaw ! Encaw !

*Mrs. Tet.* Yes, children, sing it again to Mr. Dalrymple and Miss Grey ; I don't think they heard the words.

[*They sing it again.*]

*Bill.* Mother, don't Miss Grey look like Jenny Wren now ?

*Mrs. Tet.* There's nothing that imperent boy won't say.

*Bill.* I didn't think Mr. Wobin Wedbweast 'ud mind it. He looks so much happier than he used, afore he was ill.

*Cecilia.* I say, Billy, and Tom, and Johnny, can't you sing another song, and we could all join you, perhaps.

*Tom.* We cud sing, "Hark! the merry bells are ringing. Ding-dong."

*John.* Or a Christmas Carol. We can all sing that, and baby sings Amen.

*Mr. Dal.* Oh! do sing a carol. I hear them sometimes the first thing in the morning singing so prettily. Sing that one I heard to-day.

*All.* Oh yes! We learn 'em at school.

*Enter ADOLPHUS. Throws down his newspapers. Bows to everybody.*

*Mrs. Tet.* Oh, Adolphus! Come along, we are all so happy! You shall have some



tea soon. We are going to have a carol first, and *then* the plum-pudding.

[*They sing a carol.*

*Adol.* I've got a letter here for Miss Wormwell. I met her servant, and he asked me to bring it in to her.

*Miss W.* For me, Adolphus! Thank you.

[*Adolphus gives her the letter, and touches his forelock. While Miss Wormwell reads, Mrs. Tetterby takes the pudding from the pot; Mr. Tetterby gets the dish; they pour brandy over it; Miss Grey puts in a holly branch; and Mrs. Tetterby sets it on the table. Miss Grey and Johnny seat the children. Mr. Dalrymple sits watching Miss Grey. Miss Wormwell looks pleased and important; pockets her letter, and smooths down her dress.*

*Mrs. Tet.* Now, tea's ready! so's the

pudding ! Miss Wormwell, will you honour us by presiding at the tea-board ? I will wait on you all, and Mr. Tetterby will carve.

*Mr. Tet.* Carve what, Sophia ?

*Mrs. Tet.* Why, the puddin', if you please !

*Miss W.* Will you let Cecilia make the tea ? and I will read you my letter, if the children can be quiet.

*Children.* We won't say nothink, ma'am !

*Miss W.* After all, you had better read it, Mr. Tetterby, please ; my voice is somehow not very steady to-night.

*Mr. Tet.* The honour you do me is super-eminent, am I to read it, *pro bono publico*, ma'am ?

*Miss W.* Oh, yes, if you please ! I think it will interest you all.

*Mr. Tet.* (*settles his collar, coughs, and reads*). "The Palace, Barchester, December 23rd. My dear cousin, I have just time to save the post, and in answer to yours, am happy to inform you that I have



nominated the Rev. Edward Dalrymple to the living of Chessington, near Barsest. Will you tell him that I shall be glad to receive him into my diocese, were it only for his father's sake ; but I hear high praise of himself. I hope he is married, as we need lady workers here much. Most truly yours, J. P. Barchester."

*Mr. Dal. (quickly).* Oh, Miss Wormwell, how little I thought of such kindness !

*Mr. Tet.* That's quite supernatural in its providential concurrence with circumstances. (*Looks at the seal.*) And a real bishop's mitre on the seal, as I'm alive.

*Mrs. Tet. (coming to look over his shoulder).* Then I suppose Mr. Barchester is a bishop, 'Dolfus ?

*Mr. Tet.* My little woman, your ignorance on these subjects is pardonable ; women rarely understand these things. But allow me, Miss Grey, to congratulate you.

*Cec.* Mr. Tetterby, I am not going to be the rector of Chessington.

*Mr. Tet.* But the rector's better half ought to have the better half of the congratulations, which, I take it, is the *first* half, now that her helpmeet is raised by a bishop's power to so elevated a position in the land.

*Miss W.* Will you, if you please, hand that letter to Mr. Dalrymple.

*Mr. Tet.* May I pass it to Miss Grey, that she may convey it to him.

[*He passes it to Miss Grey, who takes it to Mr. Dalrymple.*]

*Mr. Dal.* (*looking up at her.*) Read it with me. (*She looks over his shoulder as he reads. Miss Wormwell comes forward.*)

*Miss W.* You must take this as my present to you both.

*Mr. Tet.* Children! three cheers for Mr. and Mrs. Dalrymple, rector and rectoress of Chessington. Hip, hip, hip, hurray!

[*They all give three cheers.*]

*Mr. Dalrymple and Miss Grey rise together.* Dear children, thank you very much.



*Mrs. Tet.* Now for the merry bells !

*Miss W.* Excuse me one minute, Mrs. Tetterby. I must tell you what I heard yesterday.

*Mr. Tet.* No more good news, ma'am, surely.

*Miss W.* I hope you will think it such. At Chessington there is a small stationer's shop, which is also the post-office, which is to let, and I know I can get Mr. Tetterby appointed to the post-office, if he could also undertake the stationer's business, in which Mrs. Tetterby and Adolphus must assist him.

*Adol.* I thank you, ma'am ; thank you.

*Miss W.* Can you be induced to leave London ?

*Mr. Tet.* Ma'am, there is nothing to gain-say such a glorious prospect of rural felicity. The country has always been the vista to which my highest ambitions have soared.

*Mrs. Tet.* Miss Wormwell, bless you :

how the children will thrive! Why, Sally (*taking her out of the cradle*), how rosy your cheeks will get. [*Gives the baby to Johnny.*]

*Miss W.* (*touching the children's cheeks, as if they were dough.*) And you, and you will come and see me, won't you? for, Mrs. Tetterby, I have already taken a small house and grounds in the neighbourhood.

*Children.* We'll come, ma'am, if Miss Grey's a-comin' too!

*Miss W.* Oh, yes, and Mr. Dalrymple too.

*Children.* How jolly!

*Mr. Tet.* Children, rise your voices again to thank Miss Wormwell for her imperial kindness. We don't deserve it from her; but all the more does the glory redound on to her head.

*Children.* Bless you, and thank you, ma'am; thank you!

*Mr. Tet.* My little woman (*seeing his wife in hysterics*), don't take on in that way. Laugh if you like, but omit the crying.

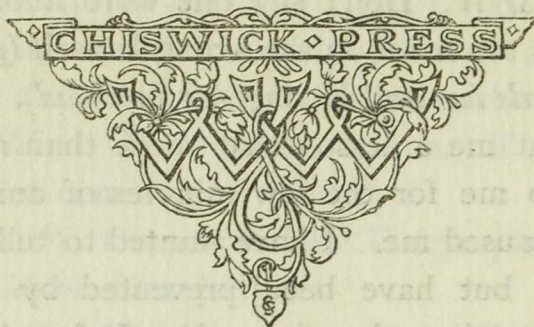
*Mrs. Tet.* (*sobbing.*) But for her to be so



kind, and benevolent, as we *did* intend to cheat. It shames me more than a bit to have such good nature from her. Oh! Adolphus, speak for me; tell her how bad we were.

*Miss W.* Don't say one word about it. I was too much in the wrong myself (*going towards her and kissing her forehead*). You taught me a lesson that more than made up to me for the few minutes of anxiety you caused me. I have wanted to tell you since, but have been prevented by false shame, that the day after I found the purse, I took all the money back to the different contributors, and begged them to use it for charity through some better medium. You made me feel, by your kindness to our friend here, and to my niece, how wretched was my false mode of attempting to benefit my fellow-creatures. Say no more about it, but let us all be glad.

*Mr. Tet.* And sing, "Hark, the merry Bells." [*Children sing. Curtain drops.*]



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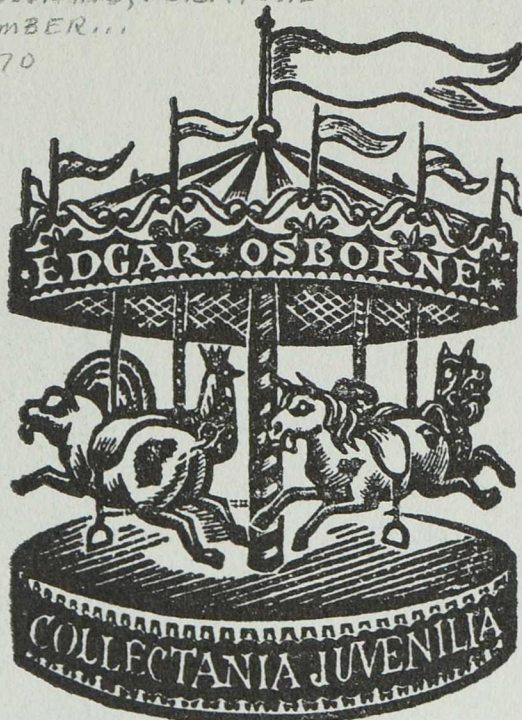
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