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1856-1911: Love in '76, by Oliver Bell Bunce**

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LOVE IN '76

AN INCIDENT OF THE REVOLUTION

[Illustration: OLIVER BELL BUNCE]

OLIVER BELL BUNCE.

(1828-1890)

The name of Oliver Bell Bunce is not prominently connected with the American Theatre. Authorities have taken little or no trouble to unearth his association with the plays and players of his time—the mid-period of the nineteenth century. Yet they all agree that, as illustration of "parlour comedy," his "Love in '76" is a satisfactory example of sprightliness and fresh inventiveness. For this reason, the small comedietta is included in the present collection. It challenges comparison with Royall Tyler's "The Contrast" for manner, and its volatile spirit involved in the acting the good services of such estimable

players as Laura Keene, Stoddart, and Ringgold. In the cast also was J.G. Burnett, author of "Blanche of Brandywine," a dramatization of a novel by George Lippard, also produced by Laura Keene.

"Love in '76" was given its première at Laura Keene's Theatre, New York, on February 28, 1857, for the benefit of the Shirt Sewers' Union; and was the second offering of a double bill beginning with "Faust and Marguerite." Though the critiques of the time recognized in it a "nice little play," they balked at what was considered to be a foolish nomenclature, "Comedietta." What was liked about it, particularly, was the absence of patriotic fustian, for the national drama of the time seems to have been loaded down with long flights of fancy on the subject of liberty. Others hailed it as smart in the social sense. As late as March 31, 1892, the little play was revived by amateurs for the benefit of a monument to be erected over the neglected grave of Washington's mother.

This was not the first time Bunce had appeared as a playwright. There had been seen, on June 10, 1850, at the New York Bowery Theatre, a tragedy entitled "Marco Bozzaris; or, The Grecian Hero," and in the cast were J. Wallack, Jr., and his wife, together with John Gilbert. It was not based on the poem by Fitz-Greene Halleck, but, for its colour and plot, Bunce went direct to history. For Wallack he also wrote a tragedy, entitled "Fate; or, The Prophecy," and, according to Hutton, during the summer of 1848, the Denin Sisters produced his "Morning of Life," at the New York Chatham Theatre.

Such was the extent of Bunce's drama writing. His life was not cast in the dramatic field, but rather in the publishing world. The plays were done in his early manhood. But he was pledged in interest to the theatre, and there are many significant criticisms and descriptions in print which convey an excellent impression of his attitude toward plays, players, and acting.

Bunce was a self-made man, with an excellent grasp of literature, which served him well in his various literary ventures. His mind was cast in channels of originality, and the history of book publishing in New York must needs consider the numerous suggestions, which, as literary adviser at different times for the houses of Harper and Appleton, he saw to successful fruition. In 1872, he became Editor of *Appleton's Journal*, and it is to the files of this magazine we must turn to extract his frank reaction to the theatre of his day. He wrote novels, stories, essays, editorials, everything to win him the name of journalist; once he had a publishing house of his own, doing business under the firm name of Bunce & Co. He was always cordial toward every move to further the literary interest of the country, and was among the first to welcome the founding of the Authors Club. It may be that his "Love in '76" was a by-product of a book written by him, in 1852, and called "Romance of the Revolution."

Bunce wrote well on theatrical matters; he is much more vivid and human than many a better-known critic. Here, for instance, is an impression of the old Park Theatre, New York, in 1846.

"That was the time," he writes in "The Editor's Table" of *Appleton's Journal* for October, 1880, "when the theatre had a pit, where critics and wiseacres were wont to assemble and utter oracular things about the plays and the performers. The actors were in those days afraid of the Pit, especially at the Park, of the fourth bench from the orchestra, where the magnates of the pen sat watchful, and where old Nestors of the drama delivered their verdicts in terms that no one dared to gainsay. The Pit was entered by cellar steps, and through a half-lighted, subterranean passage. Decorative art, as we see it now in the full bloom of the Madison Square auditorium and Mr. Daly's lobby, had not even given a hint of its coming."

In *The Galaxy* for February, 1868, Bunce ventures to survey "Some of Our Actors" from the standpoint of deploring the pre-Raphaelite realism of the modern school. He scored the attempted "truth" and "fidelity" of Matilda Heron, and, in considering Maggie Mitchell's *Fanchon*, he bespoke the cause of ideality, as necessary in *Fanchon* as in *Juliet*. "Modern comedy acting," he declares, "is usually a bright, brisk touch-and-go affair, suited to modern plays; but to the mellow and artistic style of a former generation, it is as the light claret wines, now so much in use, to crusty old port."

Except in the instances of our comedians, like Murdoch, with his "lightness of manner, that grace, which I have described elsewhere as snuffing a candle in a way to make you feel that snuffing candles is the poetry of life;" Harry Placide, with whose retirement went the retirement of *Sir Peter Teazle* and *Sir Harcourt Courtley*, ("When Placide and Gilbert are gone," he writes, "Sheridan will have to be shelved"); Holland, with his intense fun in eccentric bits; Brougham, without whom "The Rivals" is difficult to endure—apart from these the stage of the time, to Bunce, was not all it should be. He valued at their worth the romantic extravagances of the Wallack family; he applauded the sound judgment, and deplored the hard manner of Davenport; he viewed calmly what he regarded to be an overestimation of Edwin Booth—one of the first criticisms of an avowedly negative character I have seen aimed directly at this actor. In other words, Bunce fought hard against the encroachment of the new times upon the acting of his early theatre days. The epitome of his old-time attitude is to be found in *Appleton's Journal* for April 3, 1869. His better mood was to be met with in his discussion of the players of Ellen Tree's type. Here are his words of censure against the new order:

"If we old files are to be believed, the art of acting is dying out, and the very tradition of the stage disappearing.... Very likely the spirit, which in painting we call pre-Raphaelism, is obtaining its influence on the stage, and that some of the actors are turning out of doors the traditions and formal mannerisms of the schools, and going back to nature and truth for their inspiration.... There were very artificial methods, no doubt, among the old actors, but there was also a very consummate knowledge of the art, a great deal of breadth, force and skill, and a finished training, which the new schools do not exhibit. In aiming to be natural, some of our actors seem to have concluded that their profession is not an art. They grow heedless in the delivery of language, weakening or obscuring its meaning, and missing its significance; and in some way lose that rich and mellow colouring that characterized the bygone performers. So marked is this, that some of the old dramatic characters are abandoned altogether, because in the hands of the Realists they fade away into ineffective and colourless forms. The *Sir Peter Teazles* and *Sir Anthony Absolutes* of the old comedy require indispensably the resources of the old art, and no thin, water-gruel realism, so-called, can personate them. In avoiding the declamatory Kembletonianism of the old school, our actors are right enough; but they cannot safely disregard the skill which sharpens and chisels, as it were, the sentences; nor forego the care, study, precision and stern adherence to rules of art, that marked the old stage."

Steeped in such belief, it is small wonder that two of Bunce's plays had characteristics in them to suit a member of the Wallack family. And being such a lover of old English Comedy accounts for some of the spirit of "Love in '76."

His plea, sound in its fundamental championing of the best that has been on our stage, might well be heeded at this time (1920). It is a strong valuation of tradition—the jade who is looked at askance by the amateur players of the "little theatres," and too exacting for the average player on the professional stage.

Bunce was a New Yorker, born in that city, February 8, 1828, and dying there on May 15, 1890.

LAURA KEENE'S NEW THEATRE,

624 BROADWAY. NEAR HOUSTON STREET.

MISS LAURA KEENE SOLE LESSEE AND DIRECTRESS MR. THOMAS BAKER MUSICAL DIRECTOR

Change of Time. Doors open at half past Six. The performance will commence with the Overture at a quarter past Seven.

* * * * *

BENEFIT OF THE SHIRT-SEWERS' UNION

Sixth time of the Dramatic Poem, in three acts, entitled

FAUST AND MARGUERITE

The Drama having been misapprehended by one or two critics, it is respectfully stated that the translation has not been made by a resident dramatist, as inferred, but by the celebrated European scholar and linguist, Jonathan Birch, whose translation has been recognized by Frederick William, of Prussia, as the best rendition of the original of Goethe's Faust ever given in English to the public.

The play has been taken bodily from this translation, published by Black & Armstrong, London, and F.A. Brockhaus, Leipsig, without any alteration other than is necessary to bring it within the bounds of an evening's performance. To produce the poem as written by Goethe, would require at least three nights in performance. By reference to the edition mentioned, it will be seen that there has been no deviation from the original, except as above specified.

The fall of Marguerite, in the poem, is much more sudden than in the play, and, indeed, the exceptions taken generally to the drama concern the original author, Goethe, rather than the translation. Great care has been taken to produce the play with strict fidelity to the author, following in the architecture, costumes and groupings the celebrated *chefs d'oeuvres* of REIZSCH, who devoted the best years of his life to illustrate this great work; and it should be added, also, that every note of the

music in this piece is from SPOHR.

Music by Spohr, arranged by Mr. Thomas Baker
New Scenery by Messrs. Hawthorne and Almay
New Wardrobe by Mr. Bullock and Assistants
Machinery by Mr. Smart and Assistants
Properties and Appointments by Mr. W. Duverna

Under the personal supervision of

MISS LAURA KEENE.

* * * * *

First time of a New American Comedietta, In two acts, by a Citizen of
New York, entitled

LOVE IN '76

* * * * *

SATURDAY EVENING, FEB. 28th, 1857

Will be presented the great Dramatic Poem by Goethe, translated by Jonathan Birch, Esq., and
produced for the SIXTH TIME, as now adapted and arranged for this artistic work under the title of

FAUST AND MARGUERITE

DISTRIBUTION OF CHARACTERS:

Faust, an aged scholar Mr. C. Wheatleigh
Mephistophilis Mr. George Jordan
Wagner, a student, friend to Faust Mr. Stoddart
Valentine, a soldier, brother to Marguerite Mr. Lingham
Brandor, a soldier, friend to Valentine Mr. Alleyne
Frosh Mr. Hayes
Siebel Mr. Reeve
Fritz Mr. Harcourt
Students Messrs. Carpenter, Jackson, Carter, Kellogg
Altmayer Mr. McDonall
Beggars Mr. Beneon
Marguerite, a young peasant girl Miss Laura Keene
Martha, her confidante Mrs. H.P. Grattan
Lizzie { Companions } Miss Alleyne
Barbara { of Marguerite } Miss Howell
Witch, creature of Mephistophiles Mrs. Attwood
Spirits of Good Miss Howell, Miss Wall, Miss Berkowitz,
and Miss Rosa Berkowitz
Peasantry, Chorus of Demons, etc., etc.,

SCENERY IN THE DRAMA:

ACT I. Scene 1st—Faust's Laboratory By Almy Scene 2nd—Street in Wittenburg By Hawthorne

ACT II. Scene 1st—Pavillion and Garden of Marguerite By Hawthorne

**ACT III. Scene 1st—Street and Cathedral in Wittenburg By Hawthorne Scene 2nd—Rocky Glen By Hawthorne Scene
3rd—Prison By Almy Scene 4th—Street and Cathedral—Apotheosis of Marguerite By Hawthorne**

To conclude for the FIRST TIME with a New American Comedietta, in TWO
ACTS, by a Gentleman of this city, called

LOVE IN '76

Mr. Elsworth Mr. Stoddart
Lieutenant Harry Elsworth Mr. Ringgold
Captain Walter Armstrong Mr. Lingham
Major Cleveland Mr. Burnett

Captain Arbald Mr. Benson
Lieutenant Marvin Mr. Hayes
Apollo Metcalf Mr. Johnston
John Mr. Harcourt
Corporal Mr. Leslie
Soldiers Messers Jackson and Kellog
Rose Ellsworth Miss Laura Keene
Kate Ellsworth Miss Alleyne
Bridget Miss Howell

A Grand Scenic Drama, called THE SONS OF NIGHT, has been in rehearsal and will be produced immediately.

ADMISSION

Drama Circle and Parquette 50 Cents
Balcony Seats 75 Cents
Family Circle 25 Cents
Orchestra Stalls One Dollar
Private Boxes Six and Eight Dollars

Box Office open from 8 in the morning throughout the day.

Children in Arms not admitted. This regulation will be rigidly enforced.

Treasurer Mr. W.W. Gray
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LOVE IN '76

AN INCIDENT OF THE REVOLUTION

A COMEDIETTA IN TWO ACTS

By OLIVER BUNCE

AS PERFORMED AT LAURA KEENE'S THEATRE NEW YORK, FEB. 28, 1857

[The acting edition of this play, with the relative positions of the performers on the stage, is published by Samuel French.]

COSTUMES.

MR. ELSWORTH.—*Shad-cut brown coat, brown or black breeches, shoe-buckles.*

LIEUTENANT HARRY ELSWORTH.—*Red, turned up with blue, buff breeches, high boots.*

CAPTAIN ARMSTRONG.—*Blue, turned up with buff, white top boots.*

MAJOR CLEVELAND.—*Red, turned up with white, breeches, high boots.*

CAPTAIN ARBALD.—*The Same.*

LIEUTENANT MARVIN.—*The Same.*

APOLLO METCALF.—*Gray shad, square-cut suit.*

THE LADIES.—*The costumes of the period of '76.*

LOVE IN '76.

ACT I.

SCENE. *The drawing-room in the residence of MR. EDWARD ELSWORTH. Garden seen through doors. ROSE ELSWORTH occupied at a small table, stitching. KATE ELSWORTH stretched languidly upon a sofa, with a book in hand. MR. EDWARD ELSWORTH in an easy chair, with newspaper in his lap. Writing materials on table.*

KATE. Oh, dullness! dullness! I do wish Harry was at home, or Sir William would march some of his troops this way! What's the use of an army in the country, if one can't have a dance once in a while?

ROSE. What, indeed! All I desire is, sister, that they should be [*Enter SERVANT with letters for MR. ELSWORTH.*] left to the dance! That much they do very well.

KATE. I'm sure, Rose, I can't see what you find in these rebels to admire. As far as my observation has gone, they are only so many boors. There was Captain Arthur. Was there ever such a dunce? He had no manner whatever. He attempted once to walk a minuet with me, and I really thought he was a bear accidentally stumbled into coat and slippers.

ROSE. You're quite right! he never should have got his appointment until he had served a campaign in the drawing-room. If I were the Congress, I'd appoint none who could not bring diplomas from their dancing-masters.

ELSWORTH. Ha? 'pon my word! Very extraordinary news.

[*All coming forward.*]

ROSE. What is it, papa?

ELSWORTH. There has been a battle.

ROSE. Is it possible? Oh, where, sir?

ELSWORTH. On Long Island. [*Reading.*] Washington has been defeated—has evacuated the city—is retiring northward. [*Speaking.*] I feel, my daughters, that our situation is becoming here unsafe. We shall be continually exposed to the assaults of marauders. It would be wiser, in the present aspect of affairs, for us to seek a securer residence in New York, now so fortunately in possession of Sir William Howe.

ROSE. I should prefer remaining here.

ELSWORTH. Would it be safe, Rose?

ROSE. Yes, for we neutralize each other. Your loyalty will secure you with the Tories, and my Whiggism will protect us with the other faction.

ELSWORTH. Your Whiggism, Rose? You shock me by such an avowal; and your brother, too, an officer of the King.

KATE. I don't think there is much danger, if Mr. Armstrong is near to protect us.

ELSWORTH. Mr. Armstrong?

KATE. Oh, yes, papa! He's got to be a captain.

ELSWORTH. Not a rebel, I trust.

ROSE. Not a traitor, I thank heaven.

ELSWORTH. You confound terms strangely. A traitor is one false to his king.

ROSE. False to his country, sir. A king is a creature of to-day—your country a thing of immortality.

ELSWORTH. Your King is your sovereign, by divine right and true succession.

ROSE. Then, sir, serve the Stuarts. How came the house of Hanover upon the throne? You see, sir, that if you zealous loyalists could shift off James, we, with less belief in the divine right of kings, can

shift off George.

Enter MR. APOLLO METCALF.

METCALF. Good day, Mr. Elsworth. Good day, young ladies. "Good day" all, I may say.

ELSWORTH. Have you any news of the war, Mr. Metcalf?

METCALF. News—plenty of it, and mad. The country is depopulated. There isn't a youth with the first hope of a beard upon his chin, who hasn't gone with young Armstrong, to join the army.

ELSWORTH. Young Armstrong?

METCALF. To be sure, sir. He's turned out a fiery rebel, after all—and a captain, to boot.

ELSWORTH. Heaven bless me, but this is very sad. A promising youth to be led astray! Dear me, dear me! Rose, I am very sorry to say that this is certainly your fault. You have filled him with your wild, radical, and absurd heroic rhapsodies. You have made him disloyal to his King. You have put a dagger in his hand, to stab at the heart of his country. Alas! I see what the end will be—disgrace and death, ignominy and the gallows.

[ROSE *walks back to the window.*

KATE. Mr. Metcalf, how are your little charges? How flourishes the birch?

METCALF. They've all caught the spirit of the rebellion, marm, and are as untractable as bulls. Bless you, there isn't a lad over fourteen who hasn't abandoned his horn-book and gone off with Armstrong. And as for the girls, they're greater rebels than the boys. What do you think, marm? The other day they came marching in procession, and demanded to know on which side I was. I said "God save the King;" whereupon they fell upon me like a swarm of bees, armed with a thousand pins, and so pinched, and pricked, and pulled me, that there wasn't a square inch of my skin that wasn't as full of holes as a ten-year old pin-cushion. And I do believe they never would have stopped if I hadn't cried, "Huzza for Washington!"

ELSWORTH. I hope, sir, that you will not be compelled to follow the example of your scholars, and turn soldier.

METCALF. Never, sir. I content myself with teaching the young idea how to shoot, without indulging in such dangerous practices myself.

ROSE. [*From the window.*] Why, there's Harry—father, Kate—Harry is dismounting at the door.

ELSWORTH. Bless me! Is it possible?

[*All gather around the window.*

KATE. It is, I declare—and how splendid he looks. Harry! Harry!

[*All salute him, and shake their handkerchiefs.*

METCALF. [*Aside to ROSE.*] Hist! Miss Elsworth!

ROSE. Eh!

METCALF. Walter is near—a note—

ROSE. [*Seizing it, and reading hurriedly.*] Will be with you to-day—

KATE. [*Looking towards right, at the window.*] Doesn't he look fine? There's his step in the hall.

[*They all go towards door. ROSE conceals WALTER'S note.*

HARRY. [*Within.*] Rose, Kate, father!

Enter LIEUTENANT HARRY ELSWORTH. *All gather around him with exclamations of welcome.*

METCALF. [*Aside.*] I'll take occasion to steal down-stairs, and plague Bridget into a kiss or two. Delicious Bridget!

[*Exit* METCALF.

ELSWORTH. Harry! My brave lad!

ROSE. Dear brother!

HARRY. Dear sister! Father!

ELSWORTH. Stand aside, girls. Let me have a look at him. Harry! Harry! You are a splendid-looking fellow, you are. Ha, ha, ha! Your hand, my boy. You look like a soldier, sir.

HARRY. I have good news for you. I have just rode on before to acquaint you that Major Cleveland will honour your roof to-day.

ELSWORTH. He shall be welcome—open doors and open hands.

HARRY. He will remain until to-morrow. Now, girls, some of us young fellows are dying for a dance—can't we extemporize a ball?

ROSE. Good gracious, Harry! You will have to pit coat against coat—where are your ladies?

HARRY. Oh, we'd drum them up. There are a dozen families within as many miles.

ROSE. A mad idea.

HARRY. A wild one, I confess.

ELSWORTH. It would be a suitable festivity in honour of our Long Island victory. Come girls, you have my consent.

Enter SERVANT, announcing CAPTAIN ARMSTRONG.

Enter CAPTAIN WALTER ARMSTRONG.

ALL [*but ROSE*]. Captain Armstrong!

ARMSTRONG. Captain Armstrong!

ALL [*but ROSE*]. In the Continental service?

ARMSTRONG. In the Continental service!

ELSWORTH. I am somewhat surprised, sir, at this visit. When you were a loyal gentleman my doors were always open to you—now, in that dress, I cannot consent to receive your visits. In happier moments you were a companion of my daughters—a friend of my son—you have selected a course which must terminate that connection with my family.

ARMSTRONG. You will pardon me, sir, I trust, for this intrusion. I have reached this place with some danger, for these parts abound with a set of fellows who have a fancy for wishing everybody else's skin the colour of their own coats. Mr. Elsworth, my sense of duty has compelled me to pursue a path which has estranged me from your friendship. Let me ask frankly, sir, if it must separate me from one who has honoured me with her consideration and affection?

ELSWORTH. You allude to my daughter—to Rose—

ARMSTRONG. I do, sir.

ELSWORTH. *Mister* Armstrong—for I acknowledge no title bestowed by an unlawful authority—I would rather wed my daughter to a Turk than to one who had so forgotten his duty to his country.

[*Goes up.*—ARMSTRONG *bows.*]

HARRY. Walter, we were friends once, but, as His Majesty's servant, I can offer no compromise to a rebel. *Now* you must not think of a union with our family. [*Goes up.*]

ROSE. This is nothing but blind prejudice. It has neither sense nor justice. Hear me. That for which you discard him places him higher in my esteem—shows me how worthy he is of the respect and honour of every true woman. My greatest pride is that he to whom I have pledged my hand wears those colours.

ARMSTRONG. Generous girl!

ELSWORTH. Rose, you pain me inexpressibly!

ROSE. I am not a giddy girl, sir. I'm a woman—old enough to know my own heart, and to decide between right and wrong. Walter, go, and carry with you assurances of my unwavering fidelity.

Enter BRIDGET, hurriedly.

BRIDGET. Oh, my good gracious! dear me, good gracious! gracious, goodness, me! Such a lot of soldiers—all coming down the road.

ARMSTRONG. Eh? Red or blue?

BRIDGET. Bless me, goodness gracious, you here, Mr. Armstrong? You'd better look out, sir, for they are red coats, and there's a big number of them, too.

ARMSTRONG. I must vanish. [*Running to the window.*] Why, we're surrounded on every side. By Jove, I'm in a trap!

ROSE. What will you do?

ARMSTRONG. To the north of the house. Perhaps I can reach the forest—

BRIDGET. They're all around that way, sir.

HARRY. I wish that you could escape, Walter, without my knowledge. This is the regiment to which I belong. You were foolhardy to venture here.

ARMSTRONG. I believe I'm caged, that's certain. And I've no desire to be caught either, for they bear especial malice against me. If they should know me for the fellow who played a certain trick upon them, an hour's time would suffice for them to make me an ornament to one of your old oaks on the lawn—a style of decoration that might suit their taste, but which wouldn't accord with my fancy.

ROSE. Do they know your person?

ARMSTRONG. From description, probably.

ROSE. We must conceal you, then.

ARMSTRONG. If you've a rat hole into which you can crowd me.

HARRY. I must be ignorant of your movements. I will go and receive them. [*Exit.*]

ARMSTRONG. Whose command is it?

ROSE. Major Cleveland's.

ARMSTRONG. Eh? The man of men who itches to get hold of my insignificant person. He has offered £50 for it.

KATE. [*At the window.*] Away! They are dismounting at the door.

ROSE. You, Bridget—I can trust you—quick, to the loft with him.

KATE. [*Still at the window.*] Quick! quick!

ARMSTRONG. Stow me away among your rubbish.

[*ROSE urges them off. WALTER snatches a kiss from ROSE'S hand as he exits with BRIDGET.*]

KATE. I do declare Captain Arbald is below, and I am sadly deranged.

ROSE. Oh, fearfully! Run to your glass, by all means. Set your springes, for these red birds are rare game.

KATE. Sister! But I'll be revenged. [*Exit KATE.*]

Enter MAJOR CLEVELAND, ushered in by LIEUTENANT ELSWORTH, who withdraws.

ELSWORTH. My dear Major Cleveland, let me welcome you zealously to this abode.

CLEVELAND. A great many thanks, my dear Elsworth. I'm delighted to meet so true-hearted a loyalist. We pushed our march to partake of your hospitality. Ah, Miss Elsworth! How shall I express my delight in finding that Time, who deals so inexorably with us, has been induced to favour you. It gives me infinite pleasure, Miss Elsworth, to meet you once again, for the recollection of the occasions we

have met previously are bright spots in my memory.

ROSE. Oh, sir, I thank you.

ELSWORTH. And how, sir, comes on the royal cause? Will it be long ere these rebels are taught their duty to their King?

CLEVELAND. Have no apprehensions, my dear Elsworth. Another campaign will scatter them to the mountains, and a live rebel be so great a curiosity, that to cage one and exhibit him would make a showman's fortune.

ROSE. [*Aside.*] If he knew there were a caged one here now!

ELSWORTH. But come, Major Cleveland, where are your companions? I must see why they have not followed you.

CLEVELAND. They are delayed for a moment with the troop. By the way, Miss Elsworth, I believe that there are a couple of gentlemen without, who are old admirers of yours—Captain Arbald and Lieutenant Marvin.

ROSE. Old, Major! You flatter my taste.

CLEVELAND. Why, with beauty I thought the conquest of the morning stale matter by night.

ROSE. Oh, sir, if staleness went to make their age, they would be proverbied instead of Methuselah.

CLEVELAND. They took very much to you.

ROSE. So did the measles, sir.

CLEVELAND. They are desperately enamoured of you—would do any difficult thing—even die for you.

ROSE. So they once told me, but I courtesied, and replied that I should prefer a live rebel to even two dead loyalists.

CLEVELAND. And then—

ROSE. They vowed to live for me. I begged of them to put themselves to no such inconvenience; that I wouldn't trouble them to do anything of the kind; that if they didn't think it worth while to live for themselves, I shouldn't intrude upon any suicidal intention they might entertain.

CLEVELAND. And so they lived—

ROSE. But I had no hand in it; I am innocent; my skirts are clear of the melancholy fact.

CLEVELAND. They are noble gentlemen, Miss Elsworth. You must bear with me if I defend them. They are good soldiers, and fine-looking fellows.

ROSE. For which I thank their tailors.

CLEVELAND. Gay, dashing; brave of heart, and witty of tongue.

ROSE. Then they have been studying the almanac. When I saw them last, they hadn't a grain of wit—not even by scratching.

CLEVELAND. Really, Mr. Elsworth, your daughter has a sharp tongue.

ELSWORTH. It is her humour, sir. Her passes are but play.

CLEVELAND. I'll be sworn her heart is as true as her wit. She is—

ROSE. Rebel, sir, from top to toe!

[*Enter ARBALD, MARVIN, and HARRY.*]

Ah, gentlemen, my best welcome. My father will be proud to greet you—

ELSWORTH. And most happy to know you, gentlemen.

[*Enter SERVANT, with wine.*]

Major Cleveland, will you do me the honour—

CLEVELAND. Sir, I esteem it an honour. Gentlemen, I hope you will all fill in honour of our host. [*They gather around, fill, and drink to MR. ELSWORTH.*] Fill again, gentlemen, and honour the toast I am going to propose. The ladies! speedy priests and rings.

ROSE. A doubtful compliment, Major Cleveland.

CLEVELAND. Can you think so?

ROSE. Ay, sir; for marriages, though called matches, are mostly sad patch-work.

CLEVELAND. And the unmarried—

ROSE. Oh, they are even worse. Old maids and old bachelors are the tossed about odds and ends of humanity.

CLEVELAND. [*Going over to her.*] The happiest wit, madam, I ever heard.

ROSE. Captain Arbald, will you grant me your arm? I'm sure you would like a turn in the garden. I shouldn't wonder if my sister were upon the grounds. Lieutenant Marvin, will you go with us? Kate is dying for the sight of a red-coat. [*Exit.*]

CLEVELAND. A merry-hearted woman, Mr. Elsworth. There is a touch of sly deviltry in her composition.

ELSWORTH. I fear lest her indiscreet tongue—

CLEVELAND. Not at all, my dear friend! Lieutenant, I have been informed within an hour, that one Captain Armstrong has been seen this day within five miles of this place. On account of his connection with a certain affair, I wouldn't let him escape me at any sacrifice. I have already dispatched dragoons in his pursuit. At earliest dawn I shall expect you to head a detachment in his search. Meanwhile, sir, I should be grateful for an opportunity to repair my toilet.

HARRY. This way, sir; I myself will conduct you to a chamber.

[*Exeunt CLEVELAND and HARRY.*]

ELSWORTH. This is a situation, indeed, for a royalist gentleman! My house filled with the King's officers, and a proscribed rebel concealed above. If discovered, I tremble to think of the consequences. [*Exit.*]

Enter ROSE.

ROSE. Thank heaven; I am rid of them. Now to Walter, and learn his full danger.

[*Enter* ARMSTRONG.]

Are you mad? What are you here for? Back to your hiding place at once.

WALTER. No, Rose; I shall not go.

ROSE. Why—what—

WALTER. Hear me, Rose. Ask yourself if it is an honourable course for me, a proscribed and hunted rebel, to suffer myself to be concealed in your father's house when my discovery would involve him in terrible consequences. I cannot consent to expose him to those consequences. I would rather openly deliver myself into the hands of Major Cleveland.

ROSE. Foolish man! You are ruining all. Walter, for my sake go back again. This is a ridiculous and false sense of honour.

WALTER. No, Rose, I am resolved—

ROSE. Walter, I implore you—

[*Enter* MAJOR CLEVELAND.]

[*Aside.*] Ha! Lost! [*Aloud.*] Oh, Major Cleveland, how opportune. Pray let me make you acquainted with Captain Fuller. A friend of my father's, sir—a neighbour. Captain Fuller, Major Cleveland. Allow me to commend you, gentlemen, to each other's better acquaintance.

CLEVELAND. A rebel officer. This is very extraordinary.

ROSE. Let me see you shake hands, gentlemen, for here, you know, you must be friends. If you like to cut each other's throats elsewhere, so be it; but, of course, you sheathe your swords, and swear peace in the presence of a lady.

CLEVELAND. Miss Elsworth well rebukes us. Captain Fuller, for the time being, the red and the blue rejoice under a common auspices—Miss Elsworth smiles.

[*They shake hands ceremoniously.*]

ROSE. Now, gentlemen, sit down. You, Major, shall have a seat upon the sofa by my side. Captain Fuller, please, take the chair near you. [*The gentlemen seat themselves.*] Now, you see, I am between you, and shall prevent warfare. I here proclaim a truce. The Captain, Major, wants to join our ball to-night. I have promised him my hand the next after yours.

CLEVELAND. [*Scrutinizing WALTER closely.*] I'm quite ready, Miss Elsworth, to laugh at a joke, but really I cannot understand—

ROSE. Why two gentlemen cannot meet under my father's roof, as his guests, and not fall to tearing each other to pieces? Is it the modern way to make war in parlours, instead of the field?

CLEVELAND. Strange, very strange. Your pardon, Captain Fuller, but I cannot help remarking that you closely resemble a description I have received of one Captain Armstrong.

ROSE. Dear me, and who is Captain Armstrong, pray?

CLEVELAND. A rebel, madam.

ROSE. I like him for that.

CLEVELAND. A spy.

ROSE. But what has all this to do with Captain Fuller? I have known the Captain, Major, for some years, and I think you can take my word for it, he is no spy.

CLEVELAND. Do Captain Fuller and Captain Armstrong wear the same colours?

WALTER. All Continental officers wear the same colours.

CLEVELAND. Are they all of the same complexion, height, and [*Rising and going over to him.*] do they all wear the same love tokens? Does Captain Fuller wear Captain Armstrong's sash, worked with Captain Armstrong's name!

WALTER. [*Aside.*] The sash Rose worked and gave me. Fool! fool!

CLEVELAND. Miss Elsworth, I'm under the necessity of a disagreeable duty. I am compelled to consider our truce at an end. Young sir, you are my prisoner.

WALTER. [*Drawing and rushing between the MAJOR and the door.*] If you speak aloud or attempt to call aid, I will strike you dead. I shall not yield without resistance. If you molest me, blood will be shed.

CLEVELAND. [*Drawing a pistol.*] I am better armed than you supposed, sir. It would be awkward for any collision to occur in the presence of a lady, and yet I shall not hesitate to do my duty. If you are really Captain Fuller, I shall be very glad to shake hands and drink a glass of wine with you; if Captain Armstrong, you *must* become my prisoner.

ROSE. [*Standing by her chair, trembling.*] Gentlemen! Gentlemen!

WALTER. I have but one reply to make: if you attempt to arrest me, I shall defend myself—and will escape if I can.

[*Several shots fired within.*]

Enter MR. METCALF suddenly, pursued by TWO SOLDIERS.

CLEVELAND. Ha!

METCALF. [*Not seeing CLEVELAND, and rushing up to WALTER.*] Bless me, Captain Armstrong.

CLEVELAND. Oh, then he is Captain Armstrong.

ROSE. [*With great suddenness.*] Captain Fuller, Mr. Metcalf—don't play your jests here—Captain Fuller, sir.

METCALF. Eh! Eh! [*Looking confused from one to another.*] A jest, Captain Fuller—capital—ha, ha, ha—[*Aside to ROSE.*] What mischief have I tumbled into now, and who is that fellow in a very red coat and a very white wig?

ROSE. [*Aside to him.*] Major Cleveland.

METCALF. Major Cleveland! We are all hanged and quartered—though for the matter of that, in my capacity of expounder of the alphabet, I've been quartered—on the neighbourhood, these ten years past. Your obedient servant, sir, your very obedient—

CLEVELAND. That will do, fellow. What was the cause of those shots just now? [*To SOLDIERS.*]

METCALF. 'Pon my word, sir, it was the guns.

CLEVELAND. Pshaw!

SOLDIER. This fellow attempted to pass without the countersign.

METCALF. You see, sir, I was just about to enter to call on my friend, Mr. Elsworth, to sip an afternoon glass with him, when a big-booted fellow cried out, halt. Now, sir, the idea of asking a man well in both legs to halt, is preposterous. So I said, and walked on as straight as I could, when bang, bum, whiz, came one, two, three bullets scattering after my hide—

CLEVELAND. Have done, sir. [*To WALTER.*] I am desirous of giving you, sir, every opportunity to disprove your identity with Captain Armstrong. I chance to know that gentleman's handwriting. There is a desk with pen and ink. Will you stand that test?

WALTER. [*Aside to ROSE.*] That would never do. There isn't one of my pot-hooks that wouldn't hang me.

ROSE. [*Quickly.*] Really, Major Cleveland, you might require a more reasonable test. Don't you see the Captain has a rheumatic hand?

CLEVELAND. For a rheumatic hand, Miss Elsworth, he handled his sword somewhat skilfully, just now. You see, sir, resistance is useless. You will resign your sword, I trust.

[*The two SOLDIERS, at a sign from CLEVELAND, have come up behind WALTER. He is seized.*]

WALTER. Ha! I am your prisoner, sir.

Enter MR. ELSWORTH and HARRY.

ELSWORTH. What's this?

CLEVELAND. I regret to say, my dear Elsworth, that this gentleman must, for a few hours, remain my prisoner. A mere form, sir. He will, doubtless, be free in a few days. I shall have to make use of one of your barns, sir. It is really a pity that the Captain must be deprived of the dance to-night, but I will take care that his confinement shall not be severe.

ROSE. This, sir, is a shameful breach of hospitality. Captain Armstrong is my father's guest, no less than yourself. Every consideration of delicacy and honour requires you to consider him so.

CLEVELAND. Miss Elsworth, I could wish you not to consider me wrong or cruel in this.

ROSE. I judge, sir, by what I see.

CLEVELAND. You are severe.

ROSE. I am glad you find me so.

CLEVELAND. Will you not say peace?

ROSE. War, Major Cleveland, to the last.

ELSWORTH. Daughter, more courtesy.

ROSE. Oh! father, they may chain and bind our poor country, but they cannot find a way to chain a free woman's free tongue.

CLEVELAND. Lieutenant Elsworth, I place the Captain in your charge. Conduct him to a safe place.

HARRY. This is the hard necessity of duty.

ELSWORTH. And this will really be nothing serious?

CLEVELAND. A bagatelle, I do assure you, sir.

WALTER. [*Aside.*] I thank him for calming the fears of the family—but I know how hard it will go with me.

HARRY. Walter—

WALTER. I go, Harry. Rose!

ROSE. [*Aside, with a sudden thought.*] Go! Say nothing.

WALTER. Come, sir. [*To HARRY.*

ROSE_ assumes an air of cool indifference, and flings herself carelessly in a chair._ MAJOR CLEVELAND *appears astonished.* MR. ELSWORTH *and the others look surprised and incredulous.*

PICTURE TO CLOSE OF ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE.—A Garden.—House in the background, illuminated.

Enter ROSE and MAJOR CLEVELAND from house, ROSE hanging on the MAJOR'S arm.

ROSE. It was really absurd—was it not?—to think me the champion of that country clown. Poor fellow! I couldn't bear his discomfited looks, Major, and so, out of old companionship, what could I do less than stand up for him? There won't be anything positively serious, will there, eh? I should be sorry to have it so, inasmuch as he fell into the trap under my father's roof. But don't you think I made a good champion? It was really presumptuous for the fellow to come here, though. These rustic clowns thrust themselves everywhere.

CLEVELAND. What, Miss Elsworth, Captain Armstrong, then, is nothing—

ROSE. Nothing in the world, I assure you, but a harmless country lad! Do tell me, Major, am I not a good actor?

CLEVELAND. Excellent. I really could have supposed that this American stood high in your esteem.

ROSE. Oh, I like him well enough. He is among the best the country affords, but that is very bad, you know.

CLEVELAND. Then you bear me no malice?

ROSE. Not enough to kill a gnat.

CLEVELAND. Ah, Miss Elsworth, this assurance gives me the greatest pleasure.

ROSE. Don't hurt the poor fellow though, Major, I beg of you. I should be quite sorry if anything happened to him. He is a good-natured, useful neighbour enough—an unpolished jewel, papa calls him. Ah, Major, our social wants in this community are lamentable enough, when we are obliged to content ourselves with such a poor substitute as you have seen, for all the polish and manner of London circles.

CLEVELAND. Lamentable, indeed, Miss Elsworth!

ROSE. The war brings one boon, at least,—the society of gentlemen.

CLEVELAND. Very true, indeed.

ROSE. [*Aside.*] Hem! Major Cleveland, I'll so wheedle you this night you shall cry enough to a woman, even if it so happen that you have never done it to a man. So look to it, my valiant Major! Look to it!

CLEVELAND. Do you know, dear Miss Elsworth, that I could wish to see you in these troubled times

united to some one who could afford you the protection which only a husband can extend?

ROSE. [*Behind her fan.*] Oh, Major!

CLEVELAND. [*Taking her hand.*] I cannot be mistaken in the surmise that you love already.

ROSE. [*With a sigh.*] Oh, sir!

CLEVELAND. Miss Elsworth! Rose! Confide in me! I am your friend.

ROSE. [*With affected confusion.*] I believe you, Major Cleveland. I—I—really, sir—I implore you to believe me—I have nothing to confide.

CLEVELAND. Do not be offended, Miss Elsworth. I have your interest at heart. Pardon me—but Captain Arbald—[*ROSE starts and appears agitated.*] believes, or at least hopes, that he is acceptable to you. I am very deeply his friend—very deeply yours.

ROSE. It is very pleasant to hear you say so, Major Cleveland.

CLEVELAND. Then you do look upon him with favour?

ROSE. Alas, Major Cleveland, these wars, these wars!

CLEVELAND. They separate us from those who are dearest to us—they come between us and our hearts' affections.

ROSE. Do they not daily threaten us with a heart widowhood?

CLEVELAND. Ah, Miss Elsworth—Rose, let me call you—I see you are thinking of the young Captain. You love him!

ROSE. [*Aside.*] Walter, I must save you by whatever means! [*Aloud.*] Oh, Major, let me beg of you one thing—let me hear you promise what I will ask you. You assure me you are my friend. Then grant me a pledge. Promise me to—to protect—

CLEVELAND. The Captain—

ROSE. Who is to be my husband.

CLEVELAND. You delight me. Are you then pledged?

ROSE. We are.

CLEVELAND. The young rascal. He never told me so. And jealous enough, I'll be sworn he is, to see me monopolize your society, as I do.

ROSE. His life is almost in your hands. Often you can save him from danger.

CLEVELAND. You will marry him?

ROSE. [*Abashed.*] Yes.

CLEVELAND. I give you the pledge, then, you ask. Make him your husband, and for your sake I will defend and protect him to the extent of my power.

ROSE. Oh, sir, you make me happy. I am, Major, a foolish girl. I place, perhaps, absurdly, so much confidence in your ability to rescue him from many dangers—that I should like—should like, sir, to wear this ring [*Slipping one from his finger.*] as a friendly pledge that you will be his guardian, his watchful protector.

CLEVELAND. Let me kiss the ring upon your finger as a formal seal to my pledge.

ROSE. It becomes an oath now.

CLEVELAND. It does—sworn upon this hand.

ROSE. That you are his friend—ever to be my husband's friend.

CLEVELAND. That is the oath. I take it again!

ROSE. [*Aside.*] Now, Major Cleveland, I have you!

CLEVELAND. [*Aside.*] She shall be his—then—why then to make her mine.

ROSE. [*Aside.*] There is some libertine scheme behind all this, I feel assured. He is playing the villain. Well, well! Shall we go in?

Enter ARBALD.

CLEVELAND. Ah, Arbald. We have been looking for you.

ROSE. I believe, Captain, that I am pledged to you for the next dance.

ARBALD. It is my happiness to recollect it. But one dance is missed.

ROSE. Let me make amends.

Enter MARVIN, *hurriedly*.

MARVIN. Sir, the rebel has escaped.

CLEVELAND. Ha! What do you mean? How?

MARVIN. It is uncertain how.

CLEVELAND. He must be about the grounds somewhere. Put your fellows upon his track. Hunt him out! I wouldn't lose my hold upon him for the value of a dozen ordinary rebels.

[*Crosses.*

During this speech ARMSTRONG *glides in behind, among the shrubbery, and touches* ROSE. ROSE *starts, and slightly screams. All turn quickly toward her. She, hastily and unseen, unclasps a bracelet from her arm, and flings it behind her.*

ROSE. Gentlemen! gentlemen! gentlemen! I've lost my bracelet—a valued bracelet. Five minutes ago I had it on my arm. Major Cleveland—Captain Arbald—I beseech you to search for it. What could have become of it?

CLEVELAND. Your bracelet?

ROSE. Gentlemen, I implore you to search for it. Major, it may have been dropped in the bower. Go look for it, sir. Captain Arbald and Lieutenant Marvin, why do you stand idly there? Do you refuse to search for my jewel? I've lost a bracelet, I tell you, sirs. Is this the way you attend upon the wishes of a lady?

CLEVELAND. Really, Miss Elsworth, duty—

ROSE. Don't talk to me of duty, sir. I would not lose my bracelet for the wealth of the world. A valued token from a dear friend; I swore never to part with it. Oh, indeed, you are gallant gentlemen! You let me lose a precious jewel, and you stand staring by. I tell you, I value that bracelet with my very life.

CLEVELAND. But the escaped prisoner?

ROSE [*Passionately.*] What is the prisoner to me? What is he to my bracelet? Must I lose my bracelet for the sake of a runaway rebel—a miserable clown, who may either hang or run, I care not? Some one will tread upon my bracelet, [*Walking up and down impetuously.*] one of the common soldiers will find and keep it. I would not lose it for worlds.—

ARBALD. Indeed, Miss Rose, I assure you—

ROSE. Oh, no assurances, sir. Where is your devotion to me? Where your willingness to sacrifice everything for me, as I have heard you swear more than once? If you ever expect to come into my presence again, you must first clasp that bracelet on my arm. I will hear nothing, listen to no excuse; and if you refuse to obey me, never let me see you again.

CLEVELAND. [*Aside.*] I must not lose my hold upon her, by offending her. [*Aloud.*] Gentlemen, do you remain with Miss Elsworth, and search for the lost jewel. I will myself give the necessary order for the search for the missing prisoner.

[*Exit* CLEVELAND.

ROSE. You, Captain, search yonder bower.

ARBALD. Were you there?

ROSE. Or I should not send you. [*Exit* ARBALD.] Marvin, go hunt the rooms—I cannot say what moment I dropped it.

MARVIN. I obey Miss Elsworth. [*Exit* MARVIN.]

ROSE. Where can he be—if my *ruse* has only given him time.

[*Enter* WALTER, *hurriedly*.]

Good heavens! Not off! Here yet!

WALTER. Every outlet is guarded: could I reach the house—

ROSE. This way—we may steal in—

WALTER. I found your jewel, Rose!

[*As they are hurrying off, enter* MAJOR CLEVELAND.]

Caught, as I'm alive!

ROSE. Quick! away—

WALTER. It shall be so—[*Rushes off in an opposite direction*.]

CLEVELAND. Ha! ho! Guard! Corporal!

[*Enter* CORPORAL and GUARD *rapidly, with torches*.]

That way is your prisoner. Find him, I charge you.

[*Exeunt* CORPORAL and GUARD.]

What am I to think, Miss Elsworth?

ROSE. [*Vehemently*.] Think! That I would give the world for Captain Armstrong to escape.

CLEVELAND. Humph! The gift would be useless. Look for yourself.

ROSE. [*Looking off; then suddenly burying her face in her hands*.]
Good heavens!

CLEVELAND. [*In her ear*.] How's this, Miss Elsworth? [*She starts up, proudly*.]

[*Enter* SOLDIERS, *guarding* WALTER.]

I rejoice, sir, that we meet again.

SOLDIER. A jewel, sir, found upon the prisoner.

CLEVELAND. Ha! what's this? [*Reading the inscription by a torch*.] "To Rose, from Walter!" Madam, I understand you now. I was deceived. Permit me to be the means of restoring this valued token from a dear friend. Would it not be a strange vicissitude if the finding of the trinket should be the means of losing the friend? Conduct your prisoner hence.

[*Exeunt all but* ROSE and CLEVELAND.]

ROSE. Major Cleveland, Captain Armstrong must be allowed to go free. I have your promise. I hold you to it.

CLEVELAND. My promise—

ROSE. Look! [*Pointing to the signet received from the MAJOR*.]

CLEVELAND. Aha! Then it was Captain Armstrong, and not Captain Arbald, to whom you alluded in our interview. I was beginning to suspect the trick.

ROSE. Your shrewdness would have done you more credit if you had detected it before. As it is, I have your signet and your promise to save Captain Armstrong.

CLEVELAND. But the promise referred only to your husband.

ROSE. Captain Armstrong is my betrothed husband.

CLEVELAND. Ay, but at present is a prisoner. You see, madam, I hold the cards.

ROSE. Your pardon, sir, but I have the game.

CLEVELAND. Eh! Is not the Captain in my hands?

ROSE. Before to-morrow morning he shall be in mine.

CLEVELAND. Confound it, madam, I'll keep so strict a guard upon him, a fly sha'n't light upon him without my knowing it.

ROSE. Do so, and if you were argus-eyed into the bargain, I'd marry him before to-morrow morning.

CLEVELAND. Ha! is it come to that? I'll march this hour.

ROSE. It would be too late.

CLEVELAND. This moment, then.

ROSE. I would anticipate you.

CLEVELAND. Zounds, madam, you talk idly.

ROSE. Zounds, sir, you talk without reason.

CLEVELAND. I'll go to him at once—put a pistol to his head—blow his brains out, and—

ROSE. Make me his widow.

CLEVELAND. Deuce take it, you're mad.

ROSE. Mad if you will, Major Cleveland. It is a struggle between us. Look to it, sir. You may be bold, valourous, cunning—vastly so; but you have a woman's wit against you—so look to it!

CLEVELAND. Confound it.

ROSE. Bravo! bravo! Your passion, sir, well becomes you—

CLEVELAND. Deaths and devils! [*Exit.*]

ROSE. Ha, ha, ha!

[*Enter METCALF.*]

Here! Here, Mr. Metcalf—follow Major Cleveland; watch every step; don't lose sight of him for a moment.

METCALF. Trust me; I'll be his shadow from this time forth. [*Exeunt separately.*]

Enter CAPTAIN ARBALD *and* KATE.

ARBALD. Really, Miss Kate, you do me injustice—but if I could only induce you to intercede—

KATE. Plead your cause for you. [*Aside.*] Blind and stupid! Can't he see that I am dying for that my sister laughs at.

ARBALD. If I could but find that lost bracelet—

KATE. Hush! Who comes here?

[*They withdraw.*]

Enter MAJOR CLEVELAND, MR. ELSWORTH, LIEUTENANT ELSWORTH, *and* METCALF *behind.*

ELSWORTH. Declared to you that she would marry Captain Armstrong—

CLEVELAND. Yes, my dear sir, and I felt it my duty to acquaint you.

HARRY. I will go to the Captain and demand a satisfactory—

CLEVELAND. Your pardon, young gentleman. Captain Armstrong is now my prisoner; and I shall hold him safe for my own purposes.

ELSWORTH. In face of my commands this day pronounced. It is monstrous. I must seek out Rose, and have an explanation.

[*Exit.*

KATE. [*Aside to ARBALD.*] You see, sir, how little the bracelet would plead in your cause.

ARBALD. I do, indeed.

[*They saunter off.*

HARRY. I do not, sir, often ask favours of you. This day my father forbade Armstrong from entertaining any intentions relative to my sister. He has insulted me, my father, and Rose. I wish to chastise him, sir.

CLEVELAND. Tut, tut! I will not give his cunning a chance to plan another escape. The best thing you can do is to help me to prevent the possibility of the marriage.

HARRY. You are my superior. I have no choice but to obey. But I long to inflict the punishment due to his treachery. [*Exit.*

CLEVELAND. Pest on't, I love the wench. I thought, if married to Arbald, and frequently near me, my suit might flourish. But the cunning vixen caught me in my own trap. If I could only trip her now; let me see—let me see.

Enter ARBALD.

CLEVELAND. Ah, Arbald, come hither. How flourishes your suit with Miss Elsworth?

ARBALD. Badly, I must confess.

CLEVELAND. Unless we prevent it she will be married to this Armstrong before morning.

ARBALD. Is it possible?

CLEVELAND. I have my own reasons for desiring to break up the match between them—to prevent their marriage. Nothing occurs to me at all feasible to that end, but some plan to get introduced into Armstrong's presence a woman disguised as Rose.

ARBALD. And marry them?

CLEVELAND. Ay. Armstrong is on the alert for some scheme to rescue him—would fall into such a net as fishes do—and think it was his mistress' cunning to serve him.

ARBALD. But where is the woman?

CLEVELAND. Rose has a girl in attendance upon her who is near her size and figure—a mischievous wench, or I am no judge of physiognomies.

METCALF. [*Who has been listening, aside.*] Oho! [*Exits hurriedly and secretly.*

ARBALD. Bridget, they call her.

CLEVELAND. Send her to me. Fifty pounds will be more than her fidelity can stand. Luckily we have the Chaplain with us. Have him ready.

ARBALD. I'll hunt Bridget up at once.

[*Exit ARBALD.*

CLEVELAND. The plan is a good one. Now, Lady Wit, those who win may laugh. But I was a blind fool ever to allow her to obtain that promise from me.

Enter METCALF.

METCALF. Hist! Major Cleveland.

CLEVELAND. Well, good fellow.

METCALF. [*Aside.*] Fellow! It is remarkable now that I, who daily make a score of urchins tremble in their shoes at the frown of my portentous brow, can't in the least make these people afraid of me. Let me see what effect one of my frightfully severe looks would have. [*Walks up to him.*]

CLEVELAND. Well, sir, have you any business with me?

METCALF. No, no, sir. [*Aside.*] I suppose my urchins feel as I do now. [*Aloud.*] I've got an idea, sir, about the Captain.

CLEVELAND. Well, what idea?

METCALF. [*Aside.*] Here comes Rose—the very image of Bridget—all I wanted was to give her time. [*Aloud.*] An idea—[*Aside.*] to trap you with sword, coat, and all—

CLEVELAND. There she is—begone, fellow—you intrude upon me.

Enter ROSE, disguised as BRIDGET.

ROSE. [*Curtseying.*] Your Honour sent for me.

METCALF. Ha! ha! ha! Trap to catch foxes—ho! ho! ho!

[*Exit.*]

CLEVELAND. You look a lively, quick-witted lass.

ROSE. [*Aside.*] Now for the airs of your true lady's lady.

CLEVELAND. Do you know how to keep a silent tongue?

ROSE. Bless us! Haven't I always been in practice? Ain't I mum to what all the fine gentlemen say about the bouquets, the presents, the love notes—

CLEVELAND. How would you like to make twenty pounds?

ROSE. Oh, sir, I am quite invincible.

CLEVELAND. But twenty pounds?

ROSE. Say twenty-five.

CLEVELAND. To be paid when the contract is performed. How would you like to marry?

ROSE. Oh! good gracious!

CLEVELAND. Hush! Why the deuce do you raise that clatter?

ROSE. Lor, sir, we always do.

CLEVELAND. Be silent, or the twenty pounds—

ROSE. Twenty-five—

CLEVELAND. Twenty-five then. Marriage in jest.

ROSE. Oh!

CLEVELAND. Only in jest—to decide a wager. You must disguise yourself as your mistress, when you will be admitted into the presence of Captain Armstrong.

ROSE. Captain Armstrong.—Goodness gracious!

CLEVELAND. Hear me out. A pretended chaplain will be by, and a sham form of marriage will be gone through with—

ROSE. Only in jest? Why, what a funny joke!

CLEVELAND. Capital! capital! Ha! ha! ha!

ROSE. Ha! ha! ha! A splendid joke, sir. But I don't quite understand it.

CLEVELAND. Oh, you understand enough. You must not speak above the lowest whisper, nor let the Captain see your features. A few words and the—the—ha, ha, ha—the joke is through with—

ROSE. I see—I see.

CLEVELAND. And then to-morrow when he comes to know it—don't you see—we will have a run on the Captain—'twill be the rarest sport when found out.

ROSE. But suppose now it should turn out to be a real no-mistake marriage.

CLEVELAND. But it can't. The priest is a sham—that's the point of the joke.

ROSE. That's the point of the joke, eh?

CLEVELAND. Come, will you do it?

ROSE. Well—I am doubtful.

CLEVELAND. Only carry it out well, and you shall have fifty pounds.

ROSE. I am convinced, as old intrigues are dull, I want pastime, and would like to earn fifty pounds, and if my chances in other quarters are uninjured, why—

CLEVELAND. You will do it?

ROSE. Will the Captain think it a jest?

CLEVELAND. He thinks there is a plan on foot to introduce your mistress to him for a similar purpose.

ROSE. And when he finds that he has married plain Bridget instead of Miss Rose—what a rage he will be in! Oh, what a delightful jest—

CLEVELAND. The funniest you ever heard of. Such laughing as there will be!

ROSE. Fifty pounds—all in gold—is more than I can stand.

CLEVELAND. Then meet me in five minutes, by yonder tree.

ROSE. I'll slip on one of my mistress's dresses, and in five minutes be ready—but remember—*fifty pounds!*

[*Exit* ROSE.]

CLEVELAND. [*Rubbing his hands.*] The best of tricks. Ha! ha! ha!

[*Exit.*]

Enter METCALF and ELSWORTH.

ELSWORTH. Ha, ha, ha! Bravo, Metcalf! a good jest, sir.—Bridget disguised as Rose—ha! ha! ha!

METCALF. It's exquisitely funny, sir—only I think you don't quite understand it—

ELSWORTH. It's you, Metcalf, that don't understand it. It's nothing but a piece of military devilry. Why, my innocent sir, Armstrong's confinement is only a sham—it doesn't mean anything—Cleveland told me so himself—he will be free to-night. I shouldn't wonder if they were drinking and carousing together now. Bless you, Metcalf, it's only one of Cleveland's practical jokes. But I must go and find Rose, and tell her all about it—it will give her such a laugh. How the Captain will stare when he finds it out, to be sure!

[*Exit.*]

METCALF. Well, wise one, if you insist upon having it in that way, why, do so—I suppose Miss Rose can fight her battles without your help. It was devilish lucky, though, I overheard that plan of theirs, or the Captain would have been victimized—damnably—ay, damnably—if it be swearing—and a capital crime at Fiddington School. I wonder where Bridget is—Bridget *bona fide*—I mean—a delicious girl,—I love her—I will conjugate her. Nobody in the walks—the marriage not over yet—bless me! I do believe that I am trembling like a refractory scholar with a prospective birching. If it should fail—but it won't, it can't—Rose is a girl to carry anything through.

Re-enter MR. ELSWORTH.

ELSWORTH. Where can Rose be, I wonder! I can't find her anywhere. Everybody inquiring for her—everybody laughing too about the jest upon Armstrong. Ah, these military fellows are such practical

jokers—so full of deviltry, to be sure! Who could have thought of such a trick?

METCALF. No civilian, you may be sure, sir. [*Aside, looking off.*] Eh? There they are. The deed is done. It's all right, ha! ha! ha! I'll cut. That Major has a sanguinary way of contemplating me that has blood in it—blood! [*Aloud.*] I think I saw Rose in this direction, sir, with the Major; I dare say we can find her, if we go along.

ELSWORTH. Come, sir, then.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter MAJOR CLEVELAND.

CLEVELAND. It's done, and they are fast married. Aha, my lady, who now has the game? Armstrong looked astounded, but, expecting some plan to aid him, he fell into the trap without asking a question. Now, now, my course is clear!

Enter ELSWORTH.

ELSWORTH. Where can Rose be, to be sure? The guests are leaving, and I must find her to give them a good-night. Ah, Major! Have you seen my daughter?

Enter LIEUTENANT ELSWORTH.

LIEUTENANT ELSWORTH. Sir, sir, do you not know that Rose has clandestinely been introduced into the presence of Armstrong—

ELSWORTH. No! has she, though? You d-o-n-t say so! Let me whisper a word, Master Harry—a beautiful joke—it was Bridget—

LIEUTENANT ELSWORTH. No, sir, it was Rose herself.

CLEVELAND. The young man is right.

ELSWORTH. How! What do you say?

CLEVELAND. Simply, sir, by the richest scheme in the world, this rebel's union with your daughter is rendered impossible. I told you the marriage was a jest—a sham. It was not—quite the contrary.

ELSWORTH. Do I understand you to say, sir, that you have really tricked Captain Armstrong into a marriage with—

CLEVELAND. To be sure, sir. It will be the sport of the whole army. The disgrace you feared cannot now occur. Miss Elsworth can never be that rustic's wife—thanks, sir, to my splendid idea. Aha, it was a glorious thought, glorious!

ELSWORTH. Now, damn all respect for the red-coats.

CLEVELAND. Ha!

ELSWORTH. Sir, you have been guilty of a vile scheme. You have put my house to a dishonourable use. You have betrayed one of my guests infamously. Oh! that one of His Majesty's officers could lend himself to a scheme like this.

CLEVELAND. Why, sir, I thought—

Enter ROSE *and* WALTER, *back.*

ELSWORTH. That I would sanction such a plot. Major Cleveland, your conduct has made me half a rebel. It was devilish—diabolical, sir!

CLEVELAND. But—

Enter METCALF, *dancing.*

METCALF. Armstrong has escaped.

CLEVELAND. Escaped! Again! Impossible!

METCALF. He has, or may I be birched.

Enter LIEUTENANT MARVIN.

MARVIN. Sir, the prisoner has escaped—and the woman—

CLEVELAND. By heaven! it shall not be—a hundred pounds reward for him!

ROSE. [*Approaching with WALTER.*] I claim the reward, Major Cleveland.

CLEVELAND. You! The prisoner here! How came he free?

ROSE. By your signet. The sentry knew and acknowledged it.

CLEVELAND. Miss Elsworth?

ROSE. Mrs. Armstrong, by your kind assistance.

CLEVELAND. Ha! What do you mean?

ROSE. Permit me to present you to my husband.

CLEVELAND. Your husband! What does this mean?

ROSE. I *did have* the trump card, sir, and have taken the trick.

CLEVELAND. I am bewildered—I cannot understand—

ROSE. Can't you see? [*Imitating him.*] "How would you like to make twenty pounds? Ha, ha, ha! only as jest! a splendid jest! we'll have such a run on the Captain! As I want pastime, and my prospects—"

CLEVELAND. The wench has betrayed me.

ROSE. You never spoke a word to Bridget. I was the only person you saw.

CLEVELAND. You!

ROSE. Even I. Did I act it to the life?

CLEVELAND. Caught! Tricked! Fool! By—! Madam, this is a farce.

ROSE. Sir, I know it, but it has been played out, and you unwittingly have acted the clown.

ELSWORTH. I am confounded.

CLEVELAND. The end is not yet. I refuse to be governed by a forced construction to a promise which I meant to apply differently. The rebel is still my prisoner. He is surrounded.

ROSE. If your promise is not observed to the letter, I'll proclaim you through the army. I'll degrade you in the eyes of every English officer and gentleman in the land. You disgrace your sword, sir, by this very hesitation. Your bitter, unsoldierly, and dishonourable hatred and persecution of an honourable prisoner, drove me to an extremity which nothing but a question of life or death could have persuaded me to undertake. My womanly modesty I was forced to outrage. You compelled me to stoop to things which I abhorred. But I have a brother who is an English officer; a husband who is an American one. Be careful, sir, in what way you use my name in connection with this night's work, for, be assured, they will not fail to punish a ribald, a slanderous, or a libertine tongue. Consent to Captain Armstrong's release, and your discomfiture remains a secret; refuse, and with one word, I'll have all our guests upon the spot and a public confession.

CLEVELAND. It's absurd to suppose that I'm to be bound by such figments as you have woven. The thing is too ridiculous!

ROSE. You acknowledged the binding nature of your promise, when you attempted, with such heartless cruelty, to entrap the Captain into a marriage with a servant. How would that story sound, think you? And what would be said of the sagacity and discernment of an officer who could allow such a deceit to be practised upon him as I practised upon you? Dear me! I think, Major, that you are in a quandary.

METCALF. [*Aside.*] In a ditch!

ROSE. We await your decision. Shall the Captain be free and this little jest go no further?

CLEVELAND. Miss Elsworth—

ROSE. Excuse me if I assist your memory—Mrs. Armstrong.

CLEVELAND. Madam, I yield to a woman. You fight with weapons I do not understand—

ROSE. With wit, eh?

CLEVELAND. [*Aside.*] There is no hope for me. She has me at every point. I may as well yield with what grace I can. [*Aloud.*] Miss Elsworth, I am at your mercy. May not this night's work be forgotten? Captain Armstrong, I swore if ever I caught you, that you should pay dearly for that daring trick of yours—that bold capture of a fellow-officer, sleeping by my very side—but this lady has checkmated me.

WALTER. Checkmated you, sir, and mated me.

CLEVELAND. Both were done by the same move.

ELSWORTH. And you are married, Rose?

ROSE. I will bear Walter's name when we are publicly married, sir—which now, I trust, will be with your sanction.

ELSWORTH. You have it. You have won a husband, if ever woman did.

LIEUTENANT ELSWORTH. Walter, if you were only more true to the right—

WALTER. Oh, Harry! We will discuss that question yet. I shall make you [*In his ear.*] a convert; be sure of it.

Enter CAPTAIN ARBALD *and* KATE.

KATE. Why, the company is breaking up. We missed you all, sadly. Here come the guests.

CLEVELAND. Ah, Arbald, I'm afraid you will have to forego Miss Rose, here—

ARBALD. To pluck a flower no less sweet.

ROSE. What? Why, Kate—

ARBALD. I have your sister's consent, Miss Elsworth, conditioned only that you all accord with her decision.

ROSE. And so you have been making love under the *rose* all this while. Do not doubt our good wishes.

METCALF. I wonder where Bridget is. I'll pop the question before morning.

ELSWORTH. Rose, you have neglected your friends. Let us go in.

ROSE. Our first duty is to the friends before us—

WALTER. To which faction do they adhere—red or blue?

ROSE. True blue and rebel, I'll be sworn—but I will ask them! [*Comes forward. To* ARMSTRONG.] You see, sir, they respond already. [*To the Audience.*] Do you approve the Whiggish maid, and sanction her schemes so boldly played? The heart of love is heroic in every age; and after all

What difference can we affix,
Twixt love to-day, and Love in '76?

CURTAIN.

The End.

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