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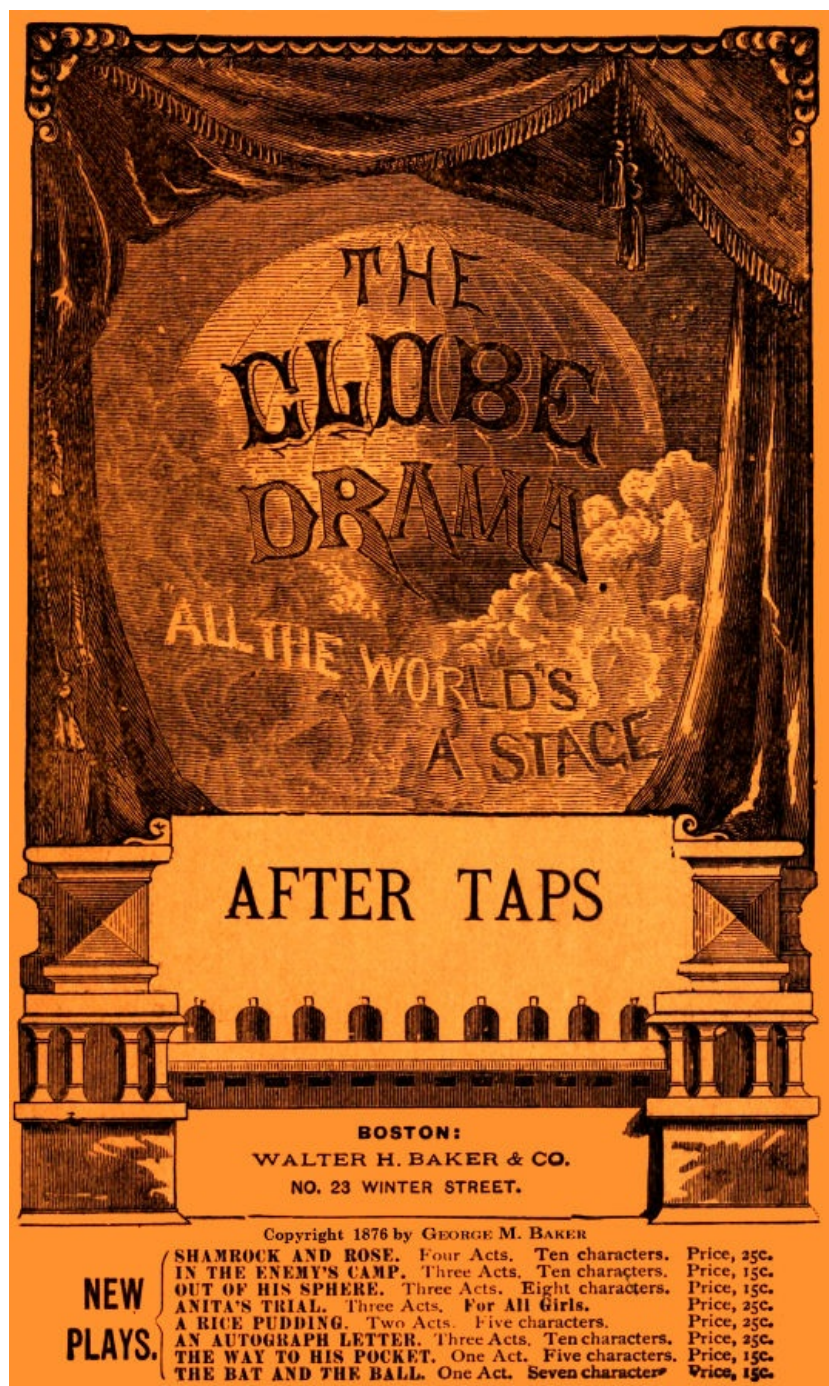
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Author: Rachel Baker Gale

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THE GLOBE DRAMA

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A STAGE

AFTER TAPS

BOSTON:

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AFTER TAPS

A Drama in Three Acts

COMPLETED BY

RACHEL E. BAKER

FROM NOTES AND UNFINISHED MANUSCRIPT OF THE LATE

GEORGE M. BAKER

BOSTON

Walter H. Baker & Co.

1891

CHARACTERS.

GORDON GRAHAM	<i>Colonel in Union Army</i>
ROGER CARRUTH.	
PINKERTON POTTS	<i>Major in Union Army</i>
BIJAH BRIGHT	<i>The Standard-bearer</i>
RANDOLPH NEWCOMB	<i>A Southern gentleman</i>
PETE	<i>A small contraband</i>
PATRICK KILROY	<i>Private</i>
RUTH GRAHAM	<i>Colonel Graham's wife</i>
DOROTHY GRAHAM	<i>Colonel Graham's sister</i>
POLLY PRIMROSE.	

SOLDIERS AND GUARD IN ACT II.

[ACT I.](#)—"Shot in the back."

[ACT II.](#)—"After Taps."

[SCENE 1.](#)—Noon.

[SCENE 2.](#)—Evening.

[ACT III.](#)—"Home Again."



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AFTER TAPS.

ACT I. SHOT IN THE BACK.

SCENE.—*Handsome apartment in the house of COLONEL GRAHAM in BALTIMORE. Door opening into hall, centre. Wide window, R.C. Mantel with fireplace L. in flat. Glass over mantel. Door R. in flat. Table L.C. Lamp on table, books. Chair beside table L. Arm-chair near mantel. Door L. in flat. Curtain raised to tune of "Yankee Doodle," by drum and fife at head of a company of Union troops, seen passing window. POLLY PRIMROSE, discovered with duster in hand, alternately peeping out of window and dancing about stage, singing.*

POLLY (*sings*).

"Father and I went down to camp,
Along with Captain Gooding;
And there we saw the girls and boys,
As thick as hasty pudding.
Yankee Doodle keep it up,
Yankee Doodle Dandy,
Mind the music and the steps,
And with the girls be handy."

(*Speaks.*)

Another thousand of Maine's boys marching down into Dixie. Bless their dear hearts! If this keeps on much longer, there will be none left for the hopeful Down-East girls and full-blown spinsters, whose natural expectations are warm corners in the hearts of these brave heroes. What a queer lot of men. Some have left their sweethearts behind them, I suppose. Heigho! There's no one to leave me behind. When I think of the good times Down East, it just makes my mouth water. I'd give a week's wages to catch a glimpse of some familiar face. (*Coming down.*) I wish I were a man. Nothing I'd like better than to join those ranks and march with them; but here I must stay and dust chairs (*dusts spitefully*) and tables. I know the military tic-tacs—no, that isn't right. I mean tactics. (*Executes manual with duster.*) Present—arms—no—feathers. Order—feathers. Indeed, I'd like to, for my next winter's bonnet, if there were only some one to pay the bill. Right shoulder, feathers. (*Carries duster to left, in place of right.*) Ha, ha, if any one could see me now, they would take me for a condensed, awkward squad. (*Music outside. POLLY marches up and down with duster at right shoulder.*) I can feel the military thrill down to the tips of my toes. Think of the excitement when the bugle calls, and you hear the cry, "Charge feathers—charge!" (*Charges with duster at door C., into the face of BIJAH BRIGHT, who appears with flag; he is bespattered with mud.*)

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BIJAH. Phew! pooh—ah, choh! (*Sneezes.*) What are you trying to do, smother a fellow? Giving us the great Othello act, with me as Desdemona! (*Looks at POLLY.*) Why, no!—yes, it is, Polly—Polly Primrose.

POLLY. Bijah Bright! Well, I declare!

BIJAH (*taking both of POLLY'S hands*). Why, the sight of you is good for a pair of diseased optics.

POLLY. But why are you here in this house?

BIJAH. It must have been the magnetism of your bright eyes, Polly. When I was marching along, I felt so drawn towards this house, sez I to myself, sez I, here, Bijah, is the place to find rest for your weary bones, and rations for an aching void. And, behold, I find you, my long-lost treasure. (*Tries to embrace POLLY, who steps aside.*) Ah, Polly Primrose, the way you've played tag with that vital organ of my being, the heart that beats for you alone, would frighten any other man, but I've jest made up my mind,—

"A sweetheart's a sweetheart,
As all the world knows,
And Polly's my Polly,
Wherever she goes."

POLLY. Don't be so sure of that, Mr. Bright. Don't flatter yourself that you are the only man that calls me, "My Polly."

BIJAH. Let me but find him. He'll wish he hadn't been born.

POLLY (*laughing*). Same Bijah Bright. Don't be worried (*coquettishly*), for I think you will find me the same Polly.

BIJAH (*taking both her hands*). Wal, now, that's something like. When the temperature of your society is at zero, it makes my very blood congeal.

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POLLY. Where did you come from?

BIJAH. Right from Oldtown, Polly, chuck full of patriotism and peace.

POLLY. Seems to me those two words don't jine well, Bijah. Patriotism and fight make the best partnership.

BIJAH. The fighting is all wrong, Polly. Do you see that flag? You bet, I'm proud of it. I've made a big wager that I can carry that flag from Oldtown to New Orleans.

POLLY. How do you get along?

BIJAH. Thus far, swimmingly; from Oldtown to Baltimore has been a triumphant march, but just here I've struck something.

POLLY. From the looks of that eye, and the mud on that coat, I should say something had struck you. Bijah, you're a crank. Your peace and flag won't stir anything down this way. If you are not both suspended from a tree before you reach New Orleans, you may think yourself lucky. If your wits were as sharp and dazzling as your name, you would shoulder your gun and join that regiment.

BIJAH. Oh, Polly, you're way off. No such work for me. I am the Standard Bearer. (*Takes flag.*) Think of the glory that will shine like a halo about my name. When posterity shall gently drop a tear for memory's sake, and in the language of the poet thus speak of one you knew so well:

There was a youth named Bijah Bright,
Who gloriously did lead the fight.
No sword or musket carried he
To shed life's blood on land or sea;
His honest arm the flag did wave,
And urging on the soldiers brave,
The cause was won: a noble fight,
And thanks are due to Bijah Bright.

POLLY (*beaming with admiration*). I declare, Bijah, jest as much of a poet as ever. Do you remember some of your poetry at the exhibition of the Oldtown School?

BIJAH. Indeed I do. When old Deacon Sasafrass visited the school he always wanted something original; so, one day, thought I'd give it to him. Let me think—yes, I have it. (*Recites with awkward gestures.*)

Our yaller hen has broke her leg,
Oh, never more she'll lay an egg.
The brindle cow has gone plumb dry,
And sister Sue has spoiled a pie.
Thus earth is full of sin and sorrow,
We're here to-day and gone to-morrow.

Ha, ha, Polly! Those were good times in Oldtown. Do you remember them?

POLLY. Do I? Don't I?

BIJAH. When I thought you were the purtiest girl in town; when the sight of you in your best bib and tucker made me feel as though there were an ice-cream factory in full operation on one side, and a hot air furnace on the other.

POLLY. Oh, Bijah!

BIJAH. But times are changed. The girls are changed, but you, Polly, are still a purty—

POLLY. Oh, Bijah!

BIJAH. Old girl.

POLLY (*indignantly*). Bijah!

BIJAH. Now, don't get excited, Polly; I'm by no means a blooming flower in the garden of youth myself. I've lived long enough to find out that money is the root of all evil; that an old rat is more capable from experience of keeping out of traps than a young one; that life may be worth living, but it isn't worth much of anything else; that an old sweetheart is at least a blessed memory; and so, when this cruel war is over, I'm going to lay my heart at the feet of—Miss Polly Primrose.

POLLY. Oh, Bijah!

BIJAH. In the meantime, as I am rather hungry, a bite of something from the cupboard wouldn't go bad.

POLLY. Then come with me.

BIJAH. Thanks, Polly; but before I accept of your hospitality, who is the proprietor of this establishment?

POLLY. Colonel Gordon Graham.

BIJAH. What? You don't mean it. (*Aside.*) Here's luck. (*Aloud.*) That grand old fellow?

POLLY. Do you know him?

BIJAH. Know him? Wal, I guess. Shot in the back. A dastardly trick.

POLLY (*holding out hand*). Bijah, give me your hand; you are my friend for life. The colonel is one of the bravest and best of men. The shot that brought him down could not keep him there: for, beckoning to two of his men, he was carried in their arms to the head of his regiment; and, waving his sword, led them on, driving the enemy in all directions. Mr. Randolph Newcomb, one of the fine gentlemen of the city, professes great friendship for the colonel; but, I've heard it whispered about, that he tries to make him out a coward. Oh, I just hate him.

BIJAH. He does, does he? I say, Polly, do they ever speak of Roger Carruth?

POLLY. Law, no; poor Miss Dorothy. She's just as bright as ever: but mind you, way down deep, she just grieves and grieves. I know, for I've seen her, when she thought she was alone. You see, Mr. Newcomb is down on Mr. Roger, and he is so intimate with the colonel, who believes that he is something of a saint, that he has made the colonel down on him too. That just breaks poor Mrs. Graham's heart, for Mr. Roger is her brother, you know. I should think Mr. Roger might send Miss Dorothy some word, at least, and not leave her to fret her heart out. Oh, these men, they make me tired. Haven't a thought for any one besides themselves.

BIJAH. Hush, Polly, don't say that. Haven't I marched from Oldtown just to catch a glimpse of your sweet face?

POLLY. Indeed you haven't. You've done all that for glory, or, for all I know, some other girl.

BIJAH. Oh, come, Polly, don't be hard on a fellow. You don't know how much stock you hold in that tender heart of mine. Its value is getting higher; better hold on to it, or some day, when the war is over, and it is above *par*, you will wish that you hadn't sold out. Besides, Polly, don't be down on Roger Carruth; he's "pure gold." He'll come to the front one of these days, and Mr. Randolph Newcomb won't stand the fire.

POLLY. What do you know about Mr. Newcomb, Bijah?

BIJAH. Never you mind. Sufficient unto the day, is the gossip thereof. And O Polly, while that heart of mine is beating a regular nightly tattoo for you on one side, the other organ of my being, the stomach, in the most unromantic manner is clamoring for mid-day rations.

(PINKERTON POTTS *and* DOROTHY *heard outside laughing*.)

POLLY. Poor thing, so active a poetical brain should not be allowed to starve. Come with me. (*Exeunt, R., POLLY and BIJAH.*)

(MAJOR PINKERTON POTTS *and* DOROTHY *enter, both in riding costume, and laughing heartily at POTTS'S appearance, who is brushing dirt from his clothes.*)

DOR. Well done, Pinky, that last leap was too much for you. That's your punishment for insisting upon pouring into my tired ears, a whole battalion of pretty speeches. Pride must have a fall. If your shots in battle do not find a more responsive target, your record will not be an enviable one.

POTTS. How can I help it? Such bright eyes and glowing cheeks cannot but provoke such thoughts to utterance. I say, Miss Dorothy, you do like a fellow, just a little, don't you?

DOR. Like you? Indeed yes. You are one of the nicest men I know. There is a large corner of my heart quite devoted to you.

POTTS. Well, to be liked is something. But, if you only knew, how much I thought of you by day, and dreamed of you by night.

DOR. Ha, ha! to think of Pinky Potts assuming the sentimental rôle. Dear me. I never dreamed of such a thing. Why, you are too old a friend. What should I do, if I were to fall in love with you? It would spoil all the fun, and now, you are my devoted slave.

POTTS. What's the matter with my being in love and playing the devoted too?

DOR. Never. Now, Pinky, you are just the dearest fellow in the world, and I am awfully fond of you; you are no end jolly. So come (*offers hand, which POTTS takes*), let's be friends forever, and keep sentiment out of the question. (*Seriously.*) And you know, Pinky, I can never forget Roger Carruth.

POTTS. No, Miss Dorothy, and I would not have you. Roger and I are too old friends. I would not mar his happiness or yours, for all the world. (*Kisses DOROTHY'S hand.*)

DOR. Well said, my noble major. Some day a fascinating little woman will cross your path who won't say "nay" to your devotion. I hope it will be some one that I shall know, Pinky, for I shall love her with my whole heart. When the war is over and Roger comes back—he will come back, won't he, Pinky?

POTTS. Indeed he will. Never doubt his loyalty, and some day you will have your reward. Roger is under a heavy cloud, but penetrated by the warmth of your love it will in time disperse. Then, Miss Dorothy, you will say "good-by" to tears, and revel in the happiness and sunshine about you.

DOR. Pinky, you were wrongly named. You are true blue every time. (*Goes to window.*) Pinky, come here. Do you see that man walking with the Colonel and Mrs. Graham? That is Mr. Randolph Newcomb—and—I don't like him.

POTTS (*looking over her shoulder*). What, that beastly cad? don't blame you.

(*Enter RUTH GRAHAM.*)

RUTH. Good-morning, major. Ah, Dorothy, you here? What a glorious morning for a ride. I see

you have taken advantage of it. But major, your appearance indicates a mishap—nothing serious, I hope?

DOR. (*looking at POTTS and laughing*). He made a thrilling leap, but missed the mark. O Ruth, I wish you could have seen his lordship ignominiously turning a somersault in the mire. Don't be surprised, if the next news that you hear is that Major Pinkerton Potts, formerly officer in the Union Army, had reached the zenith of success, and was now dazzling all Europe by his acrobatic feats. Pinky, don't forget your old friends when fortune smiles upon you, and (*mock courtesy*) send us a box. (*All laugh.*)

(*Enter COLONEL and NEWCOMB; COLONEL leaning upon NEWCOMB's arm, very weak. Leans against door.*)

COL. Yes, Newcomb, I must rejoin my regiment to-day. No more holidays for me. The wound is healing. Back again with my men, breathing the atmosphere of patriotism, strength will return to me. Ah, Newcomb, a glorious cause. I wish you were on our side.

(*Enters room. POTTS salutes.*)

COL. Glad to see you, major; our time is up, old fellow. Ah, been for a ride with madcap Dorothy? (*Putting his hand on DOROTHY'S shoulder.*) I tell you, major, if every man in the regiment was fired with the enthusiasm which this brave-hearted girl possesses, we should have no deserters. (*Turns to NEWCOMB.*) Major, allow me to introduce my friend, Mr. Randolph Newcomb. (*POTTS bows frigidly and does not see NEWCOMB's hand which he has extended. DOROTHY bows slightly.*)

COL. (*seated in arm-chair; RUTH beside him*). Newcomb, since you are not on our side, I cannot say "Come and join us" in the fight. No doubt, you are doing your duty equally well, by remaining here.

NEWCOMB. There is other work besides fighting, Colonel, and mine lies close at hand.

COL. True. And that reminds me of mine. Come, major, escort me to my room. We will talk over the plans for our return. Dorothy, dear, I must lean upon you, too. Ruth, I leave Mr. Newcomb to your kind care. Good-morning, Newcomb.

(*Exeunt COL., MAJOR, and DOR., L.*)

RUTH (*coming forward, about to seat herself at table; coldly*). Won't you be seated, Mr. Newcomb?

NEW. (*sits in chair near mantel*). The colonel insists upon a return; do you think this wise, Mrs. Graham?

RUTH. His heart is so full of patriotism, every hour's delay irritates him. Since he cannot be persuaded, I think it wiser to let him go. Yet, I fear for his safety. That shot in the back was mysterious. Some foe, calling himself friend, lurks near him; why, I cannot imagine. He is everything that is true and noble; and whoever fired that shot had some motive, which one attempt upon the colonel's life will not satisfy.

NEW. My dear Mrs. Graham, you are morbid. A colonel's life is at hazard as well as that of a private. Why could not the shot from an enemy's rifle have done the work?

RUTH. Impossible! the enemy were in front. Only a coward would do so contemptible a deed.

NEW. True, there are some without honor, Mrs. Graham. Your brother, Roger Carruth, for instance.

RUTH (*rising*). How dare you, Mr. Newcomb, in my own home, speak so slightingly of my brother? Why have you turned against him? When he was first accused of the crime, you acted as his friend. Since his escape, you never lose an opportunity to taunt me with his downfall.

NEW. Because the evidence against him has strengthened.

RUTH. Mr. Newcomb, you call yourself friend. I do not believe you. Roger is as innocent of that crime as I am, and you know it. Not content with attempting to overturn my faith in my brother, you have spared no time or trouble to turn the colonel against him. He believes in your friendship so thoroughly, he never thinks to doubt your word.

NEW. That is as it should be, Mrs. Graham. And, I hope, some day, the colonel's wife will favor me with her confidence.

RUTH. Never. Your very presence is hateful to me, and could I have my wish you would never again cross this threshold. The time will come when Roger's innocence will be proved, and woe to those who are his accusers.

(*Enter POLLY, R.*)

POLLY. If you please, Mrs. Graham, the colonel is asking for you.

RUTH. Very well, Polly. (*POLLY exit.*) I fear the walk has been too much for the colonel. Will you excuse me?

NEW. Certainly. (*RUTH exits, L.; NEW laughs.*) It will be a long time before that day, my dear Mrs. Graham. The plot cannot so easily be unravelled. Suspects some foe of the colonel's, does she? She shall have a better cause. The shot will be more telling next time. (*Goes to window.*)

(*Enter ROGER, disguised as GIBBS.*)

GIBBS. Is the colonel at home? (NEW. *turns, sees GIBBS, and gives a surprised whistle; GIBBS looks at NEW., and whistles.*)

NEW. (*coming down*). What business brings you here?

GIBBS (*coming down*). To inquire after the colonel's health.

NEW. I can give you full information. He has quite recovered, and is to rejoin his regiment to-day. What next?

GIBBS. To ascertain if he has ever found a clew to the perpetrator of the foul outrage.

NEW. If not, to turn traitor.

(*Enter DOR. in house gown, and sees NEW. and GIBBS. She is about to retire, but stops upon hearing GIBBS'S speech.*)

GIBBS. Yes, for I can give him the name of the man who planned his murder. (DOR. *crosses to stage C. and hides behind portière.*)

NEW. And what do you expect to get for this startling piece of news?

GIBBS. Well, say fifty dollars.

NEW. I will give you a hundred to say nothing about it, on one condition, that you yourself try your hand. That man Dowling was worse than nothing. It was a bad shot; we need better marksmen in our armies.

GIBBS. You are bound to murder him?

NEW. Murder? no indeed. "All's fair in love and war." Are we not enemies? Is he not the invader of the sacred soil that was my birthplace? Has he not won the heart of the woman I once loved? That affection is now dead, and hatred has risen from the ashes. She scorned me once, and I shall not rest until her happiness is wrecked.

GIBBS. Then that explains your treachery towards her brother, Roger Carruth. (DOR. *leans forward; listening.*)

NEW. What do you know of Roger Carruth? The world looks upon him as a criminal; he is beyond recall and as good as dead.

GIBBS (*looking at him steadily*). You are sure?

NEW. Yes, I am confident of that.

GIBBS. And the family; do they not suspect?

NEW. Suspect? not much; they are too simple for that. You are still in the colonel's regiment?

GIBBS. Yes. What are your orders?

NEW. Are you at any time placed as sentinel near the colonel's quarters?

GIBBS. Yes, any night may find me there.

NEW. Well, I must take my chances. To inquire after the colonel's health is sufficient excuse for my appearance in camp at any time. The colonel has given me a standing invitation.

GIBBS. Which you will have no hesitation in accepting, I see.

NEW. What time are you placed there on guard?

GIBBS. Just before taps.

NEW. Good, just the thing. After taps will be the time. Lights out, everything quiet. Can I depend upon you, Gibbs?

GIBBS. You have my word, sir.

NEW. Ha, ha! word? do you think that yours is worth anything?

GIBBS. Sometime I hope it will be.

NEW. Remember, you owe much to me. Should you turn traitor, your reckoning will be a sorry one.

GIBBS. I shall not forget all that you have done for me. Some day I will pay it back with interest. (DOR. *hides; GIBBS exit C.*)

NEW. I wonder if I can trust him? He seems docile enough; but sometimes I fancy there's a look in his eye—pshaw! what nonsense. Newcomb, my boy, a clever trick, a bold scheme; but you will win it, never fear.

(*Exit NEW., C.*)

DOR. (*frightened, appears from behind portière*). What do I hear? A scheme to take the colonel's life, and by his best friend too. (*Goes to window.*) There he goes, oh, the hypocrite. Now I know why I hate him so. With all his fine manners, I have not been deceived. Ugh! I hate even to shake hands with him. Oh dear, if I were only a man, that I might be near the colonel. Whom shall I tell? Who will help me? Ruth must not know, she has enough to bear. (*Goes to mantel and takes ROGER'S picture; music.*) They call me gay, Roger, frivolous and heartless. Perhaps I am, but if they could only look down deep into my heart, they would find the love for you, burning a strong and steadfast flame. (*Places picture on mantel and stands looking at it.*) O, Roger, why did you leave me? We all believed in your innocence and could have helped you bear the burden, which

now alone must be so heavy. Oh, if you were only here to help me now. (*Bows head on hands and stands weeping; music ceases. Enter BIJAH and POLLY.*)

BIJAH. That was the best piece of pie, Polly. If I could only have my knapsack as a receptacle for such samples of your cooking, I wouldn't need drum and fife to spur me on.

POLLY (*sees DOR.*). Hush, Bijah, Miss Dorothy is here.

DOR. (*raises head; comes forward*). A visitor, Polly?

POLLY. Yes ma'am. A friend from Oldtown; and only think, Miss Dorothy, he knows your Mr. Roger.

DOR. Knows my Roger? (*Goes to BIJAH.*) Oh, tell me of him; where is he?

BIJAH. That I cannot tell you (*takes letter from pocket*), but here is a letter, which he bade me give you should I ever come to Baltimore.

(*DOR. takes letter; breaks seal. BIJAH and POLLY retire to window; music.*)

DOR. (*reads*). MY DARLING DOROTHY.—That you still have faith in me I have no doubt. Your heart is too pure for anything else. I have enlisted in the army, and only as private will serve my country with heart and soul. When the war is over, I will return to you, my innocence established, and the foe, not only my country's but my own, defeated and trodden under foot. Bijah Bright, the bearer of this letter, is a true and loyal friend. He is worthy of your greatest respect, for he stood by me in my darkest hours. My love to dear sister Ruth. Until we meet again, yours in life or in death.

ROGER.

DOR. (*kisses letter*). Mr. Bright, I am more than grateful to you for bringing this letter; it fills my heart with renewed hope. Believe me (*gives hand to BIJAH*), your loyalty to Roger makes us warm and steadfast friends.

BIJAH. I shall see him again, Miss Dorothy, and, when I do, I shall say to him, that the stars in heaven never shone brighter than the love in your eyes when you spoke his name.

DOR. You are a true knight. Will you take an answer to this letter?

BIJAH. Indeed, I will.

DOR. Thank you so much.

BIJAH. No thanks, Miss Dorothy, the pleasure's mine. (*DOROTHY exit R.*)

POLLY. Isn't she just sweet, Bijah?

BIJAH. You've hit it this time; were it not for the dazzling brightness of the orbs of fascinating Miss Polly Primrose the palpitation of my heart would be greatly increased; as it is—

There's only one maid, and Polly's her name,
Of my love, my heart, she surely makes game;
But some time or other, so sorry she'll be,
She'll sigh for her Bijah, the bear of Old T.

POLLY. Indeed, I won't.

There's plenty of fish in the sea, Mr. B.,
Who'd bite at my hook with the greatest of glee:
You think, as you've writ, sir, my heart is your own,
That over your absence I sigh and I moan,
Indeed, I do not, sir; pray hear me aright,
I wouldn't give that (*snaps fingers*), sir, to be Mrs. Bright.

BIJAH. Ha, ha, Polly, that wee brain of yours isn't an idle one. It won't do for us to separate, but make a stock company and spring our poetic effusions upon the public together. (*Enter ROGER, without disguise.*)

ROGER. Is Miss Dorothy at home?

BIJAH. Why—Mr. Roger here?

POLLY. Land of living! Where did you come from?

ROGER. Was marching by; could not resist the temptation of a stolen glance at Dorothy.

BIJAH. Have just given her your letter, and she is now writing one in answer.

ROGER. But I must see her.

BIJAH. Then I won't wait for that answer. And, as I know the sensations of a fluttering heart, I'll step out and let you flutter alone.

ROGER. All right, Bijah. Where are you going?

BIJAH. Back to camp. I've had a taste of Polly's pies. That's joy enough for one day.

ROGER (*giving him papers*). Take these to the captain, and I will soon follow.

BIJAH. All right. (*Takes flag.*) Polly, should I on the cold earth lie, remember this—I loved your pie.

(Exit BIAH.)

POLLY. Pity sakes alive! Mr. Roger, how shall I break the news to Miss Dorothy?

ROGER. Your wits were always lively, Polly. I shall leave it to you.

POLLY. Dear me, she may come at any moment. Here, hide behind this. (ROGER goes behind portière, C.)

POLLY. Oh, dear, every idea in my brain is playing tag with the other. Such a horrid sensation I feel, as if some one had proposed and I had said "No," when I meant "Yes." (Raises eyes.) Shade of my departed grandsire, aid me. (Draws herself up, makes to door R., exits calling, "Miss Dorothy, Miss Dorothy.")

ROGER (drawing portière aside). Oh, how good to be in my own home again. They say that stolen goods are always the sweetest; one look and kiss from Dorothy will indeed be worth the stealing—hark, they are coming. (Hides. Enter DOROTHY and POLLY.)

DOR. What is the matter, Polly? From the vigorous manner in which you called my name, I should think the house was on fire, or besieged by burglars.

POLLY (excited). Hush, Miss Dorothy, it ain't a fire—it's worse—it's burglars.

DOR. (screams). Oh!

POLLY. Don't, Miss Dorothy; some one entered the house while you were in your room, and has stolen something.

DOR. Stolen something! What?

POLLY. Something that belongs to you. It is very precious.

DOR. (looks at hand). My rings are all here.

POLLY. Oh,—no—not that, something worse; (loud whisper) it's your heart.

DOR. Polly, tell me instantly, what do you mean?

POLLY (excited). I mean—I mean—no, I don't mean, yes—I do—

DOR. Polly, if you can talk sensibly, pray do, and not as if your brain were congested.

POLLY. Indeed, Miss Dorothy, my brain is all right—but look (mysteriously) behind that portière.

DOR. What is it? You make my very blood run cold.

POLLY. Behind that portière (goes to it, draws it aside, disclosing ROGER), is—is—

DOR. Roger! (Rushes into his arms.)

ROGER. My own dear Dorothy.

DOR. Oh, Polly, you frightened me so.

POLLY. Thank heaven, that's over—it's worse than having a tooth pulled.

ROGER. You did nobly, Polly. Will you tell Mrs. Graham that I am here?

POLLY. Indeed I will. (Exit POLLY, L.)

DOR. Oh. Roger, I have wanted you so much.

ROGER. What do you think of me? my lonely hours so far away from you all.

DOR. But where have you been? Tell me, Roger.

ROGER. Hush, Ruth is coming. I will tell you both together.

(Enter RUTH.)

RUTH. Roger, my dear brother. (Embrace.) Why this long silence? this uniform? What does it all mean?

(RUTH and DOROTHY both seated. ROGER'S hand on RUTH'S shoulder, the other holding DOROTHY'S hand.)

ROGER. It means, dear sister, that my heart responded to my country's call, and I could not stay away.

RUTH. But why did you not confide in us? we all believed in your innocence.

ROGER. All?

RUTH (looks down). Yes, all; for at heart the colonel believes in your honor. He must, but his friend Newcomb has so woven his influence about him, that the poison has done its work. Oh, Roger, that man, how I despise and fear him.

ROGER. And well you may. Never mind, Ruth, some day my name will stand without a blemish, and the colonel will be made to forget his doubts. Now, I shall serve my country with my heart and soul, believing and trusting that justice in good time will right my wrongs.

COLONEL (outside). Yes, major, a capital plan.

RUTH. The colonel! he must not see you. I fear he may forget that you are my brother.

ROGER. Never mind, Ruth, his words cannot hurt me.

(*Enter COLONEL leaning upon arm of POTTS, who carries the COLONEL's cloak and hat.*)

COL. Ruth, dear, I am quite myself again. The major's active brain has helped to clear my cobwebbed intellect, and our united forces have conceived a most brilliant scheme. (*Turns; sees ROGER; sternly.*) Roger Carruth, what are you doing here?

ROGER. Calling upon my sister and my fiancée.

COL. And do you think, sir, that I, their only protector, will allow one whose name is sullied to hold an interview with them?

RUTH (*goes to COLONEL*). Gordon, you forget that you are speaking to my brother.

DOR. (*goes to ROGER*). And please remember, Gordon, that this man I love and honor above all others.

COL. Stop, I say. In my own house, I will speak my mind. Roger Carruth, leave this house. All here bear honored names. We do not associate with dishonest men.

RUTH (*sobbing*). Gordon, how can you be so cruel?

ROGER. Colonel Graham, you forget to whom you are speaking. We once called ourselves brothers; that tie remains. We shall both fight for our country's honor. Mine will be a double duty. My good name shall stand again, and you, who spurn me now, shall live to crave my pardon. Farewell, Dorothy. (*Exit ROGER, C.*)

RUTH. Gordon, you have broken my heart.

DOR. You call yourself a soldier. If I were your country, I would disown you.

COL. Hush, Ruth, don't condemn me. Dorothy, I have done what seemed my duty.

DOR. There are some duties it is wiser to overlook. (*COLONEL and RUTH stand talking together; DOROTHY drags POTTS down front.*)

DOR. Pinky, what do you think of all this?

POTTS. A downright dirty piece of business, but don't blame the colonel. Newcomb is at the bottom of this.

DOR. Newcomb? Oh, yes. Pinky, what do you think? I overheard him talking to one of the colonel's men, and he's plotting (*whispers*) murder.

POTTS. What! Murder? Who is the victim?

DOR. The colonel. That shot in the back was a first attempt, and he is going to try it again.

POTTS. Not by a large majority.

DOR. You must help him in some way.

POTTS. I'll do my best; and if Newcomb isn't "laid out" before we're done with him, my name isn't Pinkerton Potts.

DOR. Find Roger; he will help you. He's too loyal to harbor the Colonel's words when his life is in danger.

(*Sound of fife and drum. Troops pass window, as at opening. POLLY enters, goes to window.*)

COL. Come, Ruth, my cloak and hat.

RUTH (*helps him with cloak*). Must you leave me? (*Music.*)

COL. (*taking RUTH in his arms*). Ruth, dearest, you are a soldier's wife, remember. Forgive my harsh words to Roger, but by the fireside or on the battle-field, our honor must be upheld. When the bugle calls me to active service, with heart and soul to lead my men in battle, it calls you to be brave and to conquer all fears, giving inspiration to those who march to meet the foe, and waiting with patient love and hope our safe return. (*Kisses RUTH: embraces DOROTHY.*) Good-by, Dorothy. Come, major. (*Exit COLONEL.*)

RUTH. Major, watch over him and bring him back to me.

POTTS. I will do my best, Mrs. Graham.

DOR. Good-by, major; don't forget the sacred trust imposed upon you. Care for them both. (*Exit MAJOR.*)

(*RUTH falls into DOROTHY's arms.*)

DOR. Ruth, dear, be brave. Roger will be near Gordon, I know. He has suffered much, but he will forget his own wrongs. We have faith in him and know him to be steadfast and true. Some time the world will know it. Keep hope alive in your heart, and believe with me, that Roger will some day make that shot in the back rebound, and the traitor will meet his just deserts.

(*Tableau. RUTH in DOROTHY's arms. POLLY at window waving handkerchief.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT II. AFTER TAPS.

SCENE I.—*Encampment of Union troops at Harrison's Landing one week later; time, noon. View of James River at back. COLONEL GRAHAM'S tent, L.C., opening facing audience. Trees R. and L.; fallen log R. Campstool outside tent; inside, table, stools, couch. In one corner, banjo; old army coat, hanging. Sentinel pacing at back. Soldiers grouped about; wooden table C., at which are seated soldiers playing cards. KILROY on log R.; BIJAH BRIGHT standing back of table. Soldiers laugh as curtain is raised.*

BIJAH. Wal, that's a true story, and don't you forget it.

KILROY. Faith, it's an injy rubber memory yees have any way. An' divil a bit does it trouble yees to stretch it. Be jabbers! it makes me dhry to listen to yees. (*Drinks from canteen, then looks at watch.*) Shure, it's toime I was on watch. (*Exits R.*)

(*Enter COLONEL GRAHAM and MAJOR POTTS. Soldiers rise, salute, and disperse.*)

BIJAH (*down front*). Ha, ha! I've given them chaff enough for one day. It will give them something to talk about and keep them out of mischief. (*Exit R.; COLONEL GRAHAM seats himself on stool outside tent.*)

COL. Ah, major, already new life fills my veins; to know that I am with my men again. That seven days' fight is over at last; poor fellows! how many have answered their last call, and lie with white faces upturned to the sky; only the heavy dew for a winding-sheet; while the wounded are waiting for transports to take them back to Washington.

POTTS. Those were hard days, colonel; but we *must* succeed in the end. When we have gained the victory, some of those brave fellows, whose souls are as white as their faces, will, if they can look down upon their country, rejoice that they gave their lives for so glorious a cause.

(*GUARD approaches with sentinel.*)

SENT. Halt! who comes there?

GUARD. Friend.

SENT. Advance, friend, and give the countersign.

(*GUARD gives the countersign in whisper; KILROY takes sentinel's place. The relieved sentinel falls behind guard and marches off.*)

MAJOR. Any orders, colonel?

COL. No, major, go amongst the men if you will, and speak words of encouragement; I shall be my old self to-morrow. (*POTTS salutes, and exit past KILROY, who salutes. COLONEL enters tent and writes at table. KILROY, pacing to and fro, suddenly starts and lowers musket.*)

KIL. Halt! who comes there? (*No answer; paces again.*) Plague take it! only the wind. (*PETE appears, crawling on hands and knees.*)

KIL. Halt! who comes there? Advance, and give the countersign.

PETE (*rising and coming forward*). 'Deed I can't sign nuffin, massa.

KIL. (*dragging him forward*). Well, by the powers, if it ain't a shmall nagur.

PETE. 'Deed, massa, I done mean no harm; I's scared blue, I is.

KIL. Blue, is it? faith it must be navy blue thin, wid a coat of tan outshide it. Phat are yees doing here?

PETE. I's only come to find my mammy.

KIL. Foind yees mammy. It's a foine place yees come to luk for her; p'raps yees thinks she's a bowld sojer by in petticoats, ha, ha!

PETE. Please, massa, I tought maybe, when she runned away, der Union men would be good to her, and let her stay wid dem.

KIL. Bliss his heart, a good bit of faith he has thin, and Patrick Kilroy is the last man, though he has an Irish heart, that would lit any harm come to this shmall spal-peen. Corporal of the guard, post four.

(*Enter CORPORAL.*)

KIL. (*with hand on PETE'S shoulder*). Look here, sir. See what I've found crossing the line. Shure it's a bit of ould Africa.

CORP. All right, I'll show him to the colonel. (*KILROY resumes march; CORPORAL leads PETE to COLONEL'S tent and salutes.*)

COL. Well, what is it?

CORP. A contraband discovered crossing the lines.

COL. Very well, leave him to me.

(*CORPORAL salutes and exit.*)

COL. (*coming out of tent*). My fine fellow, what is your name?

PETE. Dey neber done gib me one, massa, only Pete.

COL. How old are you?

PETE (*scratching head*). Dunno, 'specs I'se purty old; I'se had heaps of fun.

COL. Where did you come from?

PETE (*points across river*). Ober dere. Powerful hard time I'se had too, massa. I'se runned away.

COL. Why did you come here?

PETE. Ole massa, he sold my brudder, an' I jest feared he'd make me gwine too. An' I knowed der Union men was heaps good to de poor niggers, an' I tought p'raps yer might tell me whar my mammy is.

COL. No, Pete, my boy, I don't know where your mammy is. (*Puts hand on PETE'S shoulder*.) What are you going to do?

PETE (*scratching head*). Dunno! (*Thinks a moment, then looks brightly into COLONEL'S face*.) 'Specs I should jes lub to stay wid you.

COL. (*seating himself on stool, outside tent*). Stay with me? What could you do?

PETE. I can brack yer boots, massa. An' oh, massa Colonel, I do so lub a horse! Let me take care ob yours. I can handle 'em, massa, if dey be eber so debblesome. Please jes try me; an' I do eberyting yer axes me, sho's yer born.

COL. I havn't a horse, Pete; but you look like a pretty good boy. I think I can trust you. Yes, I will give you a trial.

PETE. Yer really means it? (*COLONEL nods assent*.) Ki-yi! (*Turns somersaults*.)

COL. Ha, ha! I'll make you my bodyguard.

PETE (*perplexed*). I ain't got no uniform, massa; 'specs I needs a sword for dat.

COL. That is a ragged coat you have on for this time of year. (*Goes into tent and brings out old army coat with gold stripes and buttons*). Here, put this on. You won't grow to it this year (*laughs*), but it is better than nothing.

PETE (*delighted; changes coat and walks about, admiring himself*). I jes wish my ole mammy see me now, she'd be proud, she'd be.

COL. Pete, you are to take good care of everything that belongs to me; and some day, when the war is over, we will go North and try to find your mammy.

PETE. Has you a mammy, Massa Colonel?

COL. No, Pete; she died long ago; but a dear wife and sister are praying for a safe return.

PETE. Massa Colonel, I'll do jes de bery bes I knows.

COL. Well said, Pete. Now go into my tent and put it in order.

PETE. All right, massa. (*Salutes and enters tent; enter POTTS and BIJAH*.)

COL. Ah, major! Whom have we here?

POTTS (*salutes*). Bijah Bright, the standard-bearer of your regiment. (*BIJAH salutes*.)

COL. A grave duty, Mr. Bright. May it not be trodden beneath your feet.

BIJAH. Wal, I guess not, colonel: not while this right arm is strong. Jest feel that muscle.

COL. Ha, ha! There's no doubt about that, or your heart either.

BIJAH. Only one corner reserved; the rest belongs to my country.

COL. And may I ask who possesses so great a treasure?

BIJAH. Why, don't you know? My Polly, your Polly.

COL. My Polly? Ah, I see. You mean Polly Primrose. Mr. Bright, you are to be congratulated; she's a treasure.

BIJAH. Don't be in a hurry with good wishes, sir. She's on the wing, and my shot has not yet brought her down.

COL. On the anxious seat, are you? (*Giving hand to BIJAH*.) I can at least wish you success.

BIJAH (*salutes*). Thank you, sir.

COL. Major, if you see a small darky about here, it is all right. He crossed the lines, and I will take care of him.

POTTS. Very well, sir. He shall not be molested. (*POTTS and BIJAH salute as COLONEL exits past guard, who salutes; MAJOR seats himself on end of log R.; BIJAH walks up and down*.)

POTTS. But tell me more of this Newcomb, Bijah. What can be his motive in planning the colonel's death?

BIJAH. Wal, before Mr. Roger's sister married Colonel Graham, Newcomb was all-fired gone on her. I know, for I was about Baltimore at the time and heard no end of gossip. You see, Mrs.

Graham didn't take to him, and snubbed him on all occasions. By Jiminy, wasn't he mad! The whole truth of the matter is, he's bound to be revenged, and takes what's nearest and dearest. He was the means of the colonel's injury, and I'm scared blue for fear that he will try it again. Roger Carruth has his eye on him, for he has a double debt to pay. (PETE *heard playing banjo inside tent.*)

POTTS. What's this? (*Goes to tent and brings PETE, holding banjo, down stage; BIJAH follows.*) Who are you?

PETE. Please; massa, I's only Pete.

POTTS. Where did you come from?

PETE. Ober dar, massa, and de colonel he's gwine to let me stay wid him.

POTTS. Well, give us a tune.

PETE (*salutes*). Deed, massa, dis yer belongs to de colonel; 'specs he wouldn't like to hab me gib yer dat.

POTTS. Yes, he will; I can answer for that.

PETE. All right, massa. I'll play de bes I know.

POTTS. Good, and here's a quarter for inspiration.

(PETE *salutes, takes coin, and seats himself on floor C. POTTS sits on camp-stool; PETE plays and sings a negro melody; SOLDIERS appear and group at back, listening.*)

POTTS. BRAVO, bravo! (SOLDIERS *applaud, then gradually disperse.*) I tell you what, Bijah, music and a song like that cheer a man up. If we have many more days of dead calm and quiet, I shall be tempted to desert the cause and soothe my troubled spirit with the society of some fair maiden.

BIJAH (*turns PETE around; laughs at coat*). You're a great one, you are. Where did you get that coat?

PETE. Massa Colonel gib me dat; he's heaps good to me, he is. I takes care ob eberyting, and I's his guard.

BIJAH. His what? Guard? Oh, ho! You mean body-guard. (*Whistles; aside.*) Wal, I vum, here's an idea. We'll work him. (*To PETE.*) Go back to your work, Pete. (*PETE goes into tent.*) Major, I have an idea. (POTTS *comes down front; BIJAH takes his arm.*)

POTTS. Isn't it rather dangerous to give it away?

BIJAH. How can we look out for the colonel? We can't always be at his side, or he will suspect something. He must not be warned, his health won't stand that. That small specimen of black humanity calls himself the colonel's guard; body-guard, he means. Now, why can't he be warned of the colonel's danger, and I'll trust him for the rest? He's mightily taken with the colonel, and you know what a darky's devotion is.

POTTS. Bijah, you're a trump! If that is a specimen of your stock of ideas, you are a valuable man. Pete, come here. (*PETE runs out of tent.*)

POTTS. Come here; we wish to talk with you.

PETE. I's all ready, sar; bof years wide open.

BIJAH. That's all right. Keep your mouth shut.

POTTS. You like the colonel pretty well, don't you?

PETE. Like him, massa? Deed I does. He's heaps good ter me. Look at des yer cloe's.

POTTS. You can pay him back for them, if you will.

PETE (*putting hands in pockets; turns them wrong side out; looks at them dolefully, then at POTTS*). Please, massa, I can't gib yer nuffin.

POTTS (*patting PETE on back*). I don't mean money.

PETE. Does yer mean I can do somefin for him?

BIJAH. Yes, that's jest the pint.

PETE. Deed, I'd just like dat. Does yer know what he's gwine ter do for me? When dis yer war is ober he's gwine to help me find my mammy. Don't yer tink I 'specs him for dat?

POTTS. Gad, you're a lucky fellow to find such a friend as that. I wish the colonel would help me find a sweetheart.

PETE (*grinning*). 'Specs for such a fine-lookin gennleman as you is, massa, de colonel would not have to work bery hard.

POTTS. Thank you, Pete. That's praise worth having.

BIJAH. I say, Pete, there's some one in this world, that *doesn't* love the colonel: you must take good care of him. One of these fine days some one will try to shoot him.

PETE. Shoot massa Colonel? Not if Pete can help it.

BIJAH. Mind, you keep both eyes wide open. (*Exit BIJAH through trees.*)

PETE. Deed I will, massa.

POTTS. Pete, my boy, the colonel is one of my dearest friends. I promised his wife that I would take good care of him, but I may be called away at any moment. I commend him to your care. And remember, the trust is a sacred one. (*Exit POTTS.*)

PETE (*salutes; wipes eyes on sleeves, and stands looking after him*). I'll do de bes I knows. Golly, 'specs I didn't jine de army for nuffin. (*Goes into tent; brings out pail and exits R. through the trees for water. Enter POLLY, wearing cloak and poke bonnet, with basket covered with napkin on arm, leading DOR., disguised as an old lady; bonnet with veil over face.*)

POLLY (*out of breath*). My gracious! thankful enough, I am, that we are out of sight of those horrid soldiers. One of them tried to kiss me. Ugh! it makes me shiver to think of it. Miss Dorothy, here we are at last.

DOR. (*raising veil*). Indeed, I am thankful too. I am so tired. (*Looks about.*) Where are we, Polly?

POLLY. Right in camp, miss; see that tent? I wonder who lives there? Let's look in and find out. (*Both enter tent.*)

DOR. (*takes picture in frame from table*). Look, Polly, Mrs. Graham's picture. It must be the colonel's.

POLLY. Pity sakes alive! so it is. He must not see us here.

DOR. No indeed. I wonder how I can find Roger; ever since I overheard that plot, sleep has forsaken me.

POLLY (*walking about, looking through trees R.*). Some one is coming this way. (*Looks again.*) And I really believe it is Major Potts.

DOR. They say "Fortune favors the brave." This is indeed a lucky find. (*POLLY beckons; MAJOR appears.*)

POTTS. Why, Polly Primrose, what are you doing here? (*Sees DOR.*) Miss Dorothy, have you lost your senses? In camp! How did you enter?

DOR. Behold my disguise. (*Pulls veil over face; then lifts it.*) I am Polly's antiquated aunt. She has cakes to sell.

POLLY. Yes, do have one. (*Offers cakes.*)

POTTS (*taking one*). But what means this masquerading?

DOR. I must see Roger, Pinky, and could think of no way but this. I must tell him of the plot I overheard.

POTTS. I thought you were to leave that to me. Lost your faith in your old friend?

DOR. (*taking his hand*). Don't think that for a moment. I could not remain at home. I did not dare tell Ruth, and I must tell my thoughts to some one; they were driving me frantic. Do find Roger for me—that's a dear fellow.

POTTS. That is easier said than done. He must keep out of the colonel's way, and that is his tent.

DOR. You have wits enough to manage that. Don't tell him who is here, leave that to me; I mean to give him a surprise.

POTTS. Let a woman alone for keeping a secret. You will undeceive him in five minutes. I know enough of the fair sex for that.

DOR. If you were not Roger's best friend, I should say something that you would not like.

POTTS. I fly to do your bidding. Don't empty your vial of pent-up wrath over my defenceless shoulders. I should not dare to look a pretty girl in the face for a week.

DOR. What a vacation the pretty girls would have! Come, do hurry, or the colonel will return and spoil everything.

POTTS. *Au revoir!* (*Salutes and exit past sentinel, who salutes.*)

DOR. My heart is fluttering like an imprisoned butterfly. Hark! Polly, some one else is coming.

POLLY (*looking*). Pity sakes alive! It's Bijah Bright; seat yourself on this log and don't speak. (*DOR. covers face; seats herself on log; POLLY draws hood together.*)

(*Enter BIJAH, R.*)

BIJAH. Wal, I agree with the major. This is getting monotonous; my blood boils for excitement; even the sight of a pretty face wouldn't go bad. That reminds me. (*Takes picture out of pocket.*) If I can't do that, there is no law to prevent me from looking at a pretty girl's picture; and "by gorry," she is worth looking at. (*Kisses picture.*)

POLLY. Well, I never! Now, I should just like to know—*another* girl, has he? I'll pay him well for that; deceiving me with his soft speeches.

BIJAH (*turns*). Bless my soul! if here isn't a sweet lass now. What! ho! my pretty maid; where are you going?

POLLY (*disguises voice; courtesying*). If you please, sir, I have cakes to sell. (*Uncovers basket.*)

BIJAH. Here's luck. Just what I've been looking for. I'll take half a dozen. (*Gives coin; bites*

cake.) My! what cakes! "Is this heaven, Uncle Tom?" (*Bites again.*) These bring to me visions of Polly's kitchen and her pies.

Where'er I roam, where'er I be,
No cakes can equal Polly P's.

This is richness. (*To POLLY.*) Why do you hide your face? Let me look at you.

POLLY. Indeed I can't.

BIJAH. You can't. Wal, I can. (*Tries to raise her head.*) Come now, give me a kiss. (*POLLY suddenly raises head, throws back hood and discloses herself to BIJAH's astonished gaze.*)

BIJAH. Polly—Polly Primrose!

POLLY (*indignantly*). Yes, Polly—Polly Primrose. Aren't you ashamed of yourself? You're a nice kind of a man, you are, pretending to be fond of me.

BIJAH. Oh, come, Polly, I didn't mean any harm.

POLLY. Oh no, no harm, of course not. Kissing every girl you meet. Don't speak to me—I'll never trust you or any other man again.

(*Enter POTTS and ROGER.*)

POTTS. What is this? An indignation meeting? Bijah quarrelling with a pretty woman? No, yes, it is—Polly Primrose; but who is this? (*Looking at DOR.*)

POLLY. That's my aunt, she came with me.

ROGER. Poor old lady; she seems tired.

POLLY. That she is; but she's never too tired to tell fortunes; wouldn't you like to hear yours?

ROGER. Anything to kill time. (*Goes to DOR.*) Come, let's hear it. My time is short. (*Looking about.*) No danger of the colonel's appearance, is there, Potts?

POTTS. No, Roger, he is busily engaged. I've looked out for that.

ROGER. Good! Now, what is the wheel of fortune to bring me? Oh! (*Crosses DOR.'s palm with silver.*) I remember, no golden treasure disclosed, unless the key be silver.

DOR. (*taking ROGER's hand; disguised voice*). Young man, you have had serious trouble; some cloud hangs over you. You are suspected of some crime.

ROGER (*starting*). What witchcraft is here?

DOR. But you are innocent. If you have patience, your name will soon be cleared.

ROGER. I hope so with all my heart.

DOR. You have a good heart, and, let me see—yes—that line is crossed—you have given it to some one.

(*Exeunt POLLY and BIJAH through trees, L.*)

POTTS (*slapping ROGER on back; laughs*). You are hard hit, old man. Even the witches can read your heart.

DOR. (*addressing POTTS*). Your time is coming, sir. "He laughs best who laughs last."

ROGER. Ha, ha! Potts, some time that heart of yours won't stand the fire. Then I will charter a Gatling gun to return all your volleys.

DOR. (*looking at ROGER's hand*). But what is this? Some danger lurks near a friend; perhaps a brother.

ROGER. I have no brother.

DOR. No; not a real brother, but—

ROGER. The colonel?

DOR. (*excitedly*). Yes, yes. You must save him. He shall owe his life to you. Some one calling himself friend is his foe. (*Rising; forgets, and assumes natural voice.*) He has done you a grievous wrong, but you will forgive that?

ROGER. That voice! (*Raises DOROTHY's veil.*) Dorothy?

POTTS. Cleverly done, little maid. You actually waited eight minutes. (*Looks at watch.*)

ROGER. Major! Dorothy, what does this mean?

POTTS. A well-laid scheme, Roger, to hold a stolen interview with you. Miss Dorothy, you can talk with Roger just five minutes, no longer. The colonel will return by that time.

(*Exit MAJOR. ROGER sits on log; DOR. kneels at his side.*)

DOR. Forgive me for coming, Roger, but I was so anxious.

ROGER. Anxious, little one? Why, what is the trouble? Is it a quarrel with "my dearest friend Mollie"?

DOR. Don't speak like that. No one ever gives me credit for any depth of feeling, just because I laugh and take the good of life as it comes along.

ROGER. Which I hope you will always do, Dorothy dear. Come, forgive me, and tell me your trouble.

DOR. Before the colonel left home after his illness, Mr. Newcomb called one day. I entered the drawing-room, and overheard a conversation which he was having with some man,—a soldier in the colonel's regiment.

ROGER. Did you hear the man's name?

DOR. Yes; Mr. Newcomb called him Gibbs. Oh, I was so frightened, for I heard them plan to kill the colonel.

ROGER. Kill the colonel? How? When?

DOR. This man was, some night, to be placed as the colonel's sentinel. That was to be the time and place. "After Taps" they said.

ROGER. Have you told any one of this?

DOR. Only the major. It would never do to tell Ruth. She worries enough without that.

ROGER. And you have kept it all to yourself? No wonder you were anxious. Dorothy, you are a treasure.

DOR. But tell me, how can you save Gordon?

ROGER. He says and thinks hard things of me, Dorothy. (*Both rise.*)

DOR. But you know at heart he does not mean it. It is all through that horrid Newcomb.

ROGER. Yes; that horrid Newcomb.

DOR. Promise me that you will do your best to save him.

ROGER. No need to promise that. He is your brother; for that, if for no other reason, I must forget and forgive.

DOR. Roger, you have made me so happy.

ROGER. Then, for all I have suffered, I ask no better reward.

(*Enter POTTS.*)

POTTS. Time's up. (*POLLY and BIJAH enter.*) Where is Polly?

POLLY. Here I am, sir.

(*BIJAH very dejected.*)

ROGER. Bijah, escort them both. Give the countersign, that they may cross the lines safely.

POLLY. We do not need his assistance. He had better wait for another girl. (*Glares at BIJAH.*) Come, Miss Dorothy.

ROGER (*embraces DOR.*). Good-by, sweetheart. No more anxious moments, remember.

DOR. Never. Good-by, Pinky.

(*Exeunt DOROTHY, POLLY, and BIJAH.*)

POTTS. Poor Bijah looks unhappy, because the maid of his heart won't smile upon him. He has a good heart, and is "true as steel."

ROGER (*hand on POTTS's shoulder; music*). Indeed he is. No one knows it better than I. He stood my friend in my darkest hours. Ah, Potts! I have a hard battle yet to fight. Newcomb must not win the day. My plan is a bold one. Stand by me, old man; your friendship will be tried. (*Taking his hand.*) But those honest eyes of yours never failed me yet. This firm pressure of your hand, and the knowledge of Dorothy's faith and love, give me strength and courage to do my duty.

SCENE II.—*Same as Scene I. Evening. KILROY has been relieved; lights across the river; table removed from the stage, C.*

PETE (*discovered lighting candle in COLONEL's tent*). Golly, I feels powerful big, I does, wid dis yer coat ob de colonel's. 'Specs some time, dey will mistook us, and I gets all de salutes. (*Comes out of tent.*) Dey will 'proach me dis yer fashion. (*Imitates ORDERLY and salutes.*) Massa Colonel. (*Imitates COLONEL.*) Yas, sar. (*Imitates ORDERLY.*) A 'spatch from de general. (*Imitates.*) Very well, sar. (*Salutes; walks about with dignity; enter KILROY.*)

KIL. Faith, and if it ain't the shmall heathen we saved from the other soide. Luk at the shtyle of him,—parading about wid the colonel's shtripes and buttons. Whist, honey, phat are yees doing wid that coat?

PETE (*turning*). I's habin' heaps of fun, I is. Massa Colonel gib me dis yer coat, an' I's playin' wid my 'magination, an' tinks I'se de colonel.

KIL. Playin' wid phat is it? The nixt thing you know, it may be powder phat's playin' wid you.

PETE. Does yer 'member, sah, when I comed across de line?

KIL. Will, indade I does. A foine specimen yees were. Shure, for a minit, I thought it was the divil himself, coming to give me a surprise party.

PETE (*grins*). Den yer don't trabel wid him all de time, massa?

KIL. Oh, yer shpalpeen! (*Strikes at PETE, who dodges, turns a somersault, and exit past sentinel.*)

KIL. A shmart one, by the powers! Travel with the divil is it? Faith, and he goes it so fast, niver a bit cud I kape up wid him. If that shmall imp don't show more respect to his betthers, a shmall chance he'll get to travel with any one.

(*Exit KIL., R.; GUARD approaches with change of sentinel.*)

SENT. Halt! Who comes there?

GUARD. Friend.

SENT. Advance, friend, and give the countersign.

(*GUARD gives it; GIBBS stands as sentinel; relieved SENTINEL marches off behind GUARD.*)

GIBBS. I wonder if Newcomb is on the watch. Yes; here he comes. Too clever to miss the game.

(*Enter COL. and NEW.; GIBBS salutes COL.; NEW. looks at GIBBS, and starts.*)

COL. What's the matter, Newcomb? Not nervous, are you?

NEW. It's nothing. Thought I saw a shadow. Do you have any of those black devils hanging about here?

COL. Yes, occasionally one; but they never give us any trouble. One little fellow crossed the line to-day, and he was so bright and clever,—wanted to stay here with me; so I have set him to work, and I expect he will take excellent care of me. I admire the devotion of that race; treat them kindly, and you are always sure of plenty of friends.

NEW. I prefer a higher type of humanity for associates.

COL. What a pity, Newcomb, that two such warm friends as we should not have heart for the same cause! However, some day you will be of my opinion, I hope.

(*COL. sits at table inside tent; NEW. on stool at opening.*)

NEW. Hardly that, yet. Whatever the end may be, I trust we shall still be good comrades.

COL. That sentiment I echo with my whole heart. But tell me, Newcomb, do you ever hear anything of Roger Carruth?

(*GIBBS listens at side of tent.*)

NEW. Never. He won't show himself in this part of the country again.

COL. You are sure that you have evidence of his guilt? I would not misjudge the boy for all the world; I am too fond of him for that.

NEW. Why should I, his friend and yours, seek to turn you against him?

GIBBS (*aside*). Why, indeed!

COL. I cannot understand it—so true and honorable, always. Some fearful temptation must have stood in his way.

NEW. Evil will show itself. If the seed is there, time will surely make it grow.

COL. No, no, Newcomb; don't say that. Why, man, would you have me think for a moment that it was more than a sudden pitfall?

NEW. The evidence grows stronger and stronger against him.

COL. Oh, Newcomb, this is so hard to bear! (*Covers face with hands; GIBBS returns to place and resumes march.*)

NEW. (*rises*). Never mind, old fellow. (*Places hand on COL.'s arm.*) You have some friends left who have not played the knave.

COL. (*rising; holds out hand*). True, Newcomb; I have much to thank you for. This kindly interest in my welfare, I trust the time will come when I can repay it.

NEW. Don't worry about that. (*Looks at watch.*) It is almost time for taps.

COL. Won't you stay and smoke with me?

NEW. Not to-night. Early hours are prescribed for you. Good-night.

COL. Good-night.

(*NEW. goes up stage; COL. enters tent; enter PETE, R.; sees NEW. talking with GIBBS.*)

PETE. I wonder if he lubs de colonel. 'Specs I jes listen to der comversation. (*Creeps behind tree near GIBBS.*)

NEW. Well, are you ready for your work?

GIBBS. Yes, sir.

NEW. No chicken-hearted business about this. Is your aim a true one?

GIBBS. Yes; true as steel.

NEW. I can depend upon you?

GIBBS. You can, sir. I feel a special interest in the work to-night.

NEW. At what time?

GIBBS. After taps.

NEW. It will soon be here. (*Bugle-call for taps.*)

GIBBS. That is the call. Ten minutes more; before the lights are out.

NEW. All right. Make your shot tell.

GIBBS. I will do my best, sir.

NEW. Good-night. (GIBBS *salutes*; NEW. *exit.*)

PETE (*shaking*). Golly, my hair just frozen stiff; bof my knees powerful confectionate. Dey's plotting mischief, dey is. An' if Pete don't keep bof eyes wide open, dere will be trouble in de camp. (*Hides behind tree.*)

(*Enter MAJOR and BIJAH.*)

POTTS. Newcomb is about the camp. I fear mischief is brewing.

BIJAH. I'd jest like to see the sport. I wonder who he is working this time.

MAJOR (*goes to COL.'s tent; salutes*). All right for the night, colonel?

COL. (*raising head from hand*). Yes, major; good-night.

MAJOR. Good-night. (*Salutes.*)

BIJAH (*looking through trees in flat, L.*). Major, look there! I'll bet you a fiver, that's Newcomb.

POTTS (*looking over BIJAH's shoulder*). You're right. Let us hide and watch him. (*Both hide in trees, L.; drum-call for lights out; stage darkens; COL. puts out candle and stands in doorway.*)

COL. I wonder where that snowball of mine is? Pete! Pete!

PETE (*runs across stage*). Here I is (*salutes*), massa!

COL. What are you doing at this time of night?

PETE. I's watchin' somefin, massa. I heard a crackling in der bushes; 'specs it possum. Yer don't mind if I looks, massa?

COL. No; only don't stray away too far.

PETE. 'Deed I won't, Massa Colonel. (*Salutes, and resumes watch.*)

BIJAH. You bet he scents the game.

COL. (*crosses stage, goes up back; stands looking at river.*) I wonder why it is my thoughts are all of Roger to-night. Poor Ruth! how heavy her heart is; and I spoke words which did not lighten the burden. Down deep in my heart I cannot think him guilty. Yet Newcomb is so sure,—and Newcomb knows. (*To SENTINEL.*) Everything all right?

GIBBS (*salutes*). All right, sir.

(*COL. turns to enter tent; NEW. appears at extreme L., and watches GIBBS; GIBBS sees NEW., stops a moment, then follows COL., aims at him, turns quickly, and fires at NEW. PETE, who has followed GIBBS, springs upon his back, and grasps him soon as shot is fired. NEW. is wounded in wrist. GIBBS swings PETE around and knocks him senseless with butt of gun. POTTS and BIJAH seize GIBBS; COL. turns as shot is fired; SOLDIERS appear; stage grows light; KIL. runs to PETE and raises head.*)

NEW. (*holding wrist*). The traitor! I'll pay him well for this.

COL. What does this mean? Treason in the camp?

NEW. It means, colonel, that this man attempted your life. I overheard his plotting and came to warn you. He missed fire, and my wrist caught the shot.

COL. Where is the sentinel?

KIL. (*points at GIBBS*). Faith, and there he is.

COL. So, sir, placed here on honor to guard your colonel's life, you turn traitor. Speak, man, why have you done this? (GIBBS *remains silent.*)

COL. (*goes to PETE*). Poor little fellow! You have killed him.

KIL. If yees plaze, colonel, his sinses are only knocked out of him.

COL. (*to GIBBS*). Man, why are you silent?

NEW. He is too great a coward to defend himself. He dare not speak. (*Music.*)

GIBBS. Dare not? Be careful, Newcomb; the game is not yet yours. You call me traitor: coward. Yet beneath the stars in heaven there is not one who wears, beneath his coat, a blacker heart than yours.

NEW. What do you mean? Who are you that dares to accuse me?

GIBBS (*right arm free*). One who has suffered much at your hands; who has borne with patience your taunts and slurs; who, knowing of the colonel's danger, tried to save his life. One whom you thought "as good as dead" stands before you. A victim of your treachery. (*Tears off*

whiskers and wig.) Roger Carruth.

(TABLEAU.—KIL., C., *kneeling and holding PETE'S head on knees*; COL. *staggers back and leans against soldiers, who support him*; POTTS and BIJAH *each holding one of ROGER'S hands, looking at him*; ROGER *looking at NEW., who stares at him horror-stricken.*)

CURTAIN.

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ACT III. HOME AGAIN.

SCENE.—*Same as Act I.: three months later. Time—evening. PETE, as BUTTONS, discovered lighting the lamps; POLLY arranging papers on table, and putting room in order, generally.*

POLLY. Now, Pete, make everything bright and cheerful. Mr. Roger is expected home to-night; we must do our share towards a warm welcome. The poor colonel is so unhappy. Between the treachery of his friend, and Mr. Roger's brave deed, he is torn with conflicting emotions.

PETE. I's powerful sorry for dear Massa Colonel. Wish I could do somefin for him.

POLLY. You do your work well, that will satisfy him. (*Takes banjo from corner.*) But I tell you what, Pete, you can do something for me. Play a dance tune on this banjo. I haven't heard one since I left Oldtown. I can tell you what, Pete, I knew how to dance once.

PETE. Yer don't need to tell me dat, Polly; I kin see de dancin' peeking out ob yer shoes. What yer gwine ter have?

POLLY. Give me a Virginia Reel. My gracious! I just adored that dance.

PETE. All right, Polly. You do der dancin', an' I play de tune. (*Plays banjo.*)

(POLLY *keeps time with head and hands; growing interested, enters into the dance; advances with right hand extended, pretends to swing partner; then left hand; then both hands; marches, slapping hands; grows more interested; finally swings PETE and banjo; then sinks into chair, laughing*; KIL., *in livery, appears at door, C.*)

PETE (*overcome with surprise*). Golly, Polly, yer jest took my bref away. You must have been to a powerful heap of corn shuckings; an' de gennlemen dey must lub to dance wid you. Golly, 'specs dey don't all hab a 'sprise party like I did.

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POLLY. Pete, that was just glorious! I'm ever so much obliged to you for playing.

PETE. I's right proud ob you, I is. If dis yer heart ob mine didn't belong to a nigger, 'specs I should frow it at yer feet.

KIL. Faith, and it's an Irish heart she can have, anyway.

POLLY (*turning*). Pity sakes alive! What are you doing here?

KIL. It's a missage I have for the colonel.

PETE. Lor, Polly. Dis yer is de soger what didn't shoot when dis yer nigger crossed de line. (*Salutes KIL.*) I's heaps glad to see you, sah. Does yer disremember me?

KIL. Faith, an' it's Pete, the colonel's guard. (*Shaking hands with him.*) What a foine by yees grown to. Shure it's a betther fitting coat yees have on, anyway.

PETE. Yas, indeed. I's Buttons, now, I is. Don't yer tink dis yer coat obercomes me?

KIL. Faith, it's a foine picture yees look in it.

POLLY. I remember; you are the soldier that was so kind to Pete.

KIL. Oh, yees make me blush,—the sight of those bright eyes, and the swate words yees be afther saying. Shure, a foiner jig I never saw in the ould country. Will yees be afther telling the colonel I am here?

POLLY. Yes, Pete will do that. Ask if the messenger shall be sent to his room.

PETE. All right, Polly. Who is de message from, sah?

KIL. Mr. Randolph Newcomb, if yees plaze.

(*Exit PETE, L.*)

POLLY. Should think that Mr. Newcomb had done mischief enough. You can't be very proud of your master.

KIL. Faith, and it's little I care about him. I applied for the situation to plaze Mr. Roger. Shure, it's a policeman I am in foine livery.

POLLY. Oh, I see, something more mysterious.

(Enter PETE.)

PETE. Massa Colonel will receib de message, sah. Yer is to follow me.

KIL. An' phat if that foine man, the divil, be afther kaping me company?

PETE. Den I goes first, massa, ebery time. I wouldn't for de world disturb de confections dat exist between you two.

KIL. Faith, an' if yees have a foiner coat, you're a *black guard* shtill.

(*Exeunt KIL. and PETE; the latter making fun of KIL.*)

POLLY. Pete's bright enough for him. I've taken quite a shine to my black diamond. (BIJAH *appears in door, C.*) How devoted he is to the colonel! Heigho! wish some one was devoted to me. Nonsense; I don't care. I am so happy, now that horrid war is over. I am ready to embrace anybody and everybody. (*Extends arms; BIJAH steps quickly, and POLLY embraces him.*)

BIJAH. And I am just the man to appreciate it, Polly.

POLLY. Bijah Bright! Bless my soul, how you frighten me! Back from the war, are you?

BIJAH. Yes, Polly. When I left you, patriotism filled my breast. I carried the flag, torn and tattered as it was, and, contrary to your expectations, was not suspended in mid-air. I lived for glory by day, and at night dreamed sweet dreams. They were all of you, Polly.

POLLY. Dreaming of me! Stuff and nonsense. Do you take me for a brainless Down-Easter, that you come with your sweet words and "palaverin" smiles. (*Dramatically.*) Away! "I'll have none of you."

BIJAH (*sinks into chair*). Won't you ever forgive me, Polly, for that day in camp?

POLLY. Never!

Think of me, dream of me,
Whatever you will,
That hour, that moment,
It rankles me still.

Besides, what should I have to say to you? A man who carries in his pocket other girls' pictures, and spends all his time kissing them.

BIJAH (*aside*). Oho! I see where the shoe pinches. (*To POLLY.*) Why shouldn't I? That's what I'd like to know. One moment you smile upon me, and my blood frantically and joyfully perambulates through my veins; and the next time my eager orbs behold you, an animated iceberg would be a more cheerful companion. You needn't flatter yourself that because you don't want me, no one else does. You can bet your sweet life, Bijah Bright doesn't mean to get left. No, ma'am. (*Taking picture out of pocket.*) Not when he has such a sweet face as this to look at.

POLLY (*tossing head*). Don't flatter yourself that you can make me jealous. Precious little thought I give to you or your picture.

BIJAH. You are just dying to see who it is.

POLLY. Indeed, I'm not. Some baby-faced simpleton.

BIJAH. Come, Polly, it is too bad for you to treat me so when I returned, hoping to share with you a secret.

POLLY. Secret! Oh, tell it to me, do.

BIJAH. Oh, no, Miss Primrose; I only make a confidant of my friends.

POLLY. Well, I'll be friends for just ten minutes.

BIJAH. Will you though? Not by a large majority. No friendship for me on the instalment plan.

POLLY. I'll be friends. (*Gives her hand.*) Now, tell me quick.

BIJAH. Ha, ha, ho, ho! I thought that would fetch it. A woman's curiosity is not fireproof against a volley of gossip.

POLLY. If you talk like that, I shall leave the room.

BIJAH (*taking her arm; brings her down front*). No, you won't, you are just dying to stay here. (*Holds picture and forces POLLY to look at it; POLLY looks at picture, then at BIJAH.*)

POLLY. Oh, Bijah! (*Hides her face on his shoulder.*)

BIJAH (*laughing*). You had better hide your face, Polly. Jealous of your own picture. That settles it: no more "Nays" for me. We'll give the folks in Oldtown a surprise, Polly, and the wedding shall be in the old church.

POLLY. Oh, Bijah! But don't be in a hurry. Be serious and tell me about Mr. Roger.

BIJAH. You know how he did old Newcomb up that day in camp?

POLLY. Yes, that was the time when Pete was injured and was sent home by the colonel.

BIJAH. Wal, Newcomb ain't done for yet. You see, when Mr. Roger was in the bank, I was there too. Of course, I wasn't president or director, Polly; only had to sorter keep my eye on everybody, and I jest did. I saw something that when it's known will be worse than dynamite, you jest bet.

POLLY. It seems to me that you are a rolling-stone, Bijah. The last time I heard of you before the war, you were poultry farming in Oldtown.

BIJAH. I could not make that work. I had read about the money in raising poultry. Fortunes made in no time; and my fancy pictured this enormous poultry farm. The name of Bijah Bright immortalized. Oh, yes, there's money in it, Polly; for I left all mine there, and had only experience to put in my pocket.

POLLY. But what is the wonderful news you have to tell?

BIJAH. Just wait. You want to be proud of me. It will be a scorcher.

POLLY. Don't be so mysterious, Bijah; you don't know everything in this world.

BIJAH. No, and I don't want to. Let me be sure that the heart of Miss Polly Primrose beats for me alone, and that will satisfy my cravings for knowledge. Come, let us depart to the charms of the culinary department. Methinks I see visions of your pies, Polly. There in each other's genial society we will partake of pie, and talk over that coming wedding in Oldtown. (*Exeunt POLLY and BIJAH, R.; enter COLONEL and KILROY, L.*)

COL. Tell your master, Mr. Newcomb, that I will see him this evening.

KIL. Indade, sir, he shall have your orders. (*Aside.*) Faith, it's a foine pie they be afther baking for Newcomb. By me powers, I wouldn't loike to be here at the cutting of it. (*Exit KILROY, C.*)

COL. (*sinks into chair at table*). It is hard to believe in Newcomb's treachery; he has always seemed so warm a friend. (*Enter RUTH, R.*)

RUTH (*goes to COLONEL*). Gordon, what did that messenger want? Who sent him?

COL. Randolph Newcomb.

RUTH. I thought as much; what was the message?

COL. Asking permission to see me!

RUTH. You did not consent?

COL. Yes, Ruth, I am to see him this evening.

RUTH. He shall not see you.

COL. Ruth!

RUTH (*kneels and takes COLONEL'S hand; music*). Gordon, why will you let him poison your heart against Roger? He is wily and cunning; you have proof of his treachery, yet your heart, once loyal to your friend, cannot without a struggle believe in his dishonor. Think no more of this man, but tell me of Roger, and that night in camp.

COL. Poor fellow, his experience has been a bitter one. Shall I tell you the whole story, little one?

RUTH. Yes, Gordon, every word.

COL. (*holding RUTH'S hand*). When the call for volunteers was heard throughout the country, Roger's heart responded to the call. Entering the service as a private, he tried to forget his wrongs in earnest work. Knowing the attempt upon my life, he sought the man who fired the shot. Dowling was confined as prisoner, awaiting sentence. Roger promised to help him, if he would confess the name of the instigator of the crime. Dowling at last did so, and you know who the guilty one proved to be. Oh, Ruth, to think a tried and old friend could be so base. (*Covers face with hands.*)

RUTH. Never mind, Gordon; perhaps better now to learn his falseness than later; go on.

COL. Roger, knowing that Newcomb would not stop at one attempt, determined to place himself in his way and act the knave. Assuming a disguise, he so completely lost his identity that Newcomb was well deceived, and before many meetings employed Roger to finish the work which had proved a blunder in the beginning. It was, as you know, planned for the night that Roger would act as my sentinel: the time after taps. Newcomb, always solicitous for my welfare, was a daily visitor in camp, and that night was on the watch to be sure that there was no blundering in the work.

RUTH. Gordon, it chills my blood to think of it.

COL. To deceive him, Roger aimed at me, but fired at him, and would have killed him on the spot, but Pete, having been warned that my life was in danger, was on the watch, and sprang upon Roger's back and caught his arm; the shot grazed Newcomb's wrist.

RUTH. Brave Pete and noble Roger.

COL. And to think, Ruth, that this was all for revenge. Thank Heaven, he did not succeed in winning the heart that, full of love and noble devotion, has been my inspiration in my darkest hours. (*Embraces her; music ceases.*)

RUTH. Yet you will see Newcomb again.

COL. He wishes to compromise. (*Rises.*) Ruth, how pale you look. When are the roses coming back to your cheeks?

RUTH. When all is well with Roger, and you are happy again.

COL. My heart will not be lighter until I ask Roger's forgiveness for doubting him. I wonder

why he does not return?

RUTH. He is seeking more evidence to clear his name.

COL. I am going to my study, Ruth. My head feels heavy; perhaps a short sleep will refresh me. Ruth, you too have much to forgive. I have doubted your brother.

RUTH. But not in your heart, Gordon. I have always been sure of that.

COL. Thank Heaven that my harsh words have not crushed out all your faith. (*Exeunt COLONEL and RUTH, L.; enter POTTS and DOROTHY, R.*)

DOR. Go on, Pinky, I am just dying to hear.

POTTS. You see, we knew it all the time, but just how and when Roger was to square it with Newcomb was beyond our knowledge. You ought to have been there—just a jolly row. When Roger threw off his disguise, you should have seen Newcomb's face. Old Nick himself could not have looked more insane.

DOR. Then the plot I overheard was no news to Roger?

POTTS. No, for under the disguise of Gibbs he held that interview with Newcomb.

DOR. Right in this room, and I didn't know it. Well, I never! But isn't it just glorious, Pinky. How did Roger escape arrest?

POTTS. Hard as it was for the colonel to believe Newcomb guilty, he, of course, took Roger's side. Newcomb tried a game of bluff, but it didn't work. He is at large, but we are only waiting for some new development. It will come, and with it the downfall of Newcomb.

DOR. He richly deserves it. Think of the wrong he has done Roger.

POTTS (*taking both her hands*). Your faith and devotion to Roger have just made me hungry. I want some one to have faith in me, too. Now, don't breathe it, but I've just "gone and done" it myself.

DOR. Pinky, what do you mean? You are in love with a girl?

POTTS. Why, of course. You would not have me fall in love with a spinster of many summers, would you? Guess who it is.

DOR. (*trying to think*). I cannot for the very life of me imagine who it can be.

POTTS. Let me whisper it. (*Whispers.*)

DOR. (*delighted*). No, really? Mollie? My dearest friend. There, I knew she had some secret. Pinky, I could just hug you, but I won't. I will reserve that demonstration for Mollie. (*Rings bell.*) Do you remember what I told you about the fascinating little woman? Now Roger will have an opportunity to return some of your happy remarks. (*Enter POLLY.*) Polly, my hat and wrap.

POLLY. Yes, miss. (*Brings them from door, R.*)

POTTS. Why, where are you going?

(*POLLY helps DOROTHY with wrap and exit.*)

DOR. To see Mollie, of course, and talk it all over. I will tell her what a sweet lamb I think you are. (*Exit, C.*)

POTTS (*laughing*). Good enough, Potts: your ears will burn steadily for just one hour. No, I will follow and save my reputation. (*Exit.*)

(*Enter NEWCOMB and PETE.*)

NEW. The colonel will see me in his private room?

PETE. Yes, sah; dis way, sah. (*Goes towards door, L.; RUTH enters, closes door, and stands before it.*)

RUTH. What would you have, Mr. Newcomb?

NEW. I would speak with the colonel, madam.

RUTH. Not in this house. You have done mischief enough with your treachery. My house shall see no more of it.

NEW. Harsh words from you, an old friend, Mrs. Graham.

RUTH. Don't call us friends, Mr. Newcomb. The time is past for that. From the first, your presence has been distasteful to me. I tried to be courteous, for you posed as my husband's friend. Now that we know you in your true colors, I can speak freely. I loathe and despise you; leave this house.

NEW. Excuse me, Mrs. Graham, but your husband has given me his word that he will see me.

RUTH. And you have mine—you shall not see him.

NEW. You are a clever woman, Mrs. Graham, and though you once scorned my love, I cannot but admire your courage.

RUTH (*scornfully*). Your love! That is an emotion which has never entered your being. Your heart is too cold and treacherous; it cannot harbor that which is loyal and true. I am only too thankful that I escaped such pretensions.

NEW. Have a care, madam; I am too dangerous to trifle with. Let me pass! No woman shall

stand in my way! (*Tries to take her from door by force; ROGER enters, takes NEWCOMB by shoulder and turns him round.*)

ROGER. What are you trying to do, sir?

NEW. Roger Carruth! You here?

ROGER. Yes, I am here.

RUTH. He wishes to hold a private interview with the colonel, and I object.

ROGER. Pete, tell your master I would like to see him here.

PETE. Yas, massa. (*Aside.*) Golly, tribulations am a-comin'. Massa Newcomb wish he were a deader.

[*Exit, L.*]

NEW. Mr. Carruth, this interview is for the colonel alone.

ROGER. Sorry, Newcomb, but as I take an active interest in your welfare, you must submit to my presence.

COL. (*enters*). Roger and Newcomb together?

ROGER. Yes, colonel. Newcomb wishes to see you on a matter of business; I surely think I have the right to hear.

COL. No one has a better. Speak, Newcomb, before us all.

NEW. Very well; I have no hesitancy. I thought possibly Mrs. Graham—

ROGER. If you have anything worth saying, speak, and don't waste words.

NEW. (*cool but angry; turns to ROGER*). Your scheme was a bold one, young man, and perhaps you think that we are quits; but you have not yet been acquitted of the crime of forgery. I alone hold the key to that mystery (*enter BIJAH*), and it will be well for you to listen to what I have to say. You accuse me as instigator of the crime of attempting the life of the colonel. Branded as a forger, who will take your word for that?

COL. Newcomb, leave this house!

ROGER. Wait, colonel. Let me deal with him. What compromise do you wish to make?

NEW. Let all suspicion fall from me, and I will give you my word that your name shall be cleared.

ROGER. You would buy my silence, sir, as you thought you did that of your accomplice. You, deeply scarred as you are by depravity and guilt, dare to make me such an offer? No; a thousand times, no. *You* will meet your deserts. For myself, time will prove my innocence.

NEW. Will it, indeed? You overrate your ability. I hold you in my power.

BIJAH (*comes forward*). And I hold you in mine.

ROGER. Bijah!

NEW. Bright, the bank's private detective!

BIJAH. Exactly so. Mr. Newcomb, I am afraid your nice little scheme will be "smashed to smithereens," for it's my turn to play my hand. You forget that, as private detective, it was my duty to shadow every one (*NEW. starts*),—even your Royal Highness; and you can jest bet your life, I did my duty.

ROGER. What is it? Have you any proofs?

BIJAH. Proofs? Yes; that Roger Carruth is innocent of forgery, and that Mr. Randolph Newcomb has that honor.

ROGER. Newcomb!

NEW. Man, it is false.

BIJAH. Don't blacken your soul with another lie. (*Holds up papers.*) I hold the trump card.

(*Enter POLLY.*)

POLLY. Two gentlemen are at the door.

BIJAH. Yes; friends of Mr. Newcomb. Colonel, shall we not bid him good-evening?

COL. Newcomb, leave my house; and may you never enter it again.

BIJAH. No fear of that. He has two accounts to settle. (*NEW. glares at BIJAH; bows to RUTH, and exit.*)

ROGER (*holding out hand to BIJAH*). Bijah, how much I have to thank you for!

COL. Mr. Bright, you have done your work well. I have seen your bravery on the battlefield, your honor and loyalty here. Your country may well be proud of you.

BIJAH (*salutes*). Thank you, colonel. If I could only hear Polly say that.

POLLY. Indeed I will, if you will give me the chance.

BIJAH. That's well said, Polly. (*Puts arm about her.*)

We'll all be bright and gay
When Polly names the day.

(Both laugh and walk up stage to window.)

RUTH. Gordon, are you satisfied?

COL. Roger, can you ever forgive me?

ROGER (*taking his hand*). With my whole heart, sir. We have much to be grateful for, that fate led me into Newcomb's way. But where is Dorothy?

(DOR. laughs outside.)

RUTH. Here she comes, laughing as usual. If she were wrecked in mid ocean, that silvery laugh of hers would wake echoes on the waves.

(Enter DOR. and POTTS; DOR. does not see ROGER, who stands in window.)

DOR. (*putting arms about RUTH, who is seated by table*). Another ripple on the matrimonial sea. Somebody's engaged. Guess who it is.

RUTH. Engaged? I give it up.

DOR. Allow me to present Major Pinkerton Potts as the culprit, and his victim is (*turns around; sees ROGER, and rushes into his arms*)—Roger! (*All laugh.*)

ROGER. That is news to me, major.

POTTS. Back again, old man. I am glad to see you. (*Shakes hands with ROGER.*)

DOR. Well, you needn't make fun of me. It's my dearest friend Mollie.

COL. Major, I indeed congratulate you.

ROGER. Thought you would follow my example, eh, old man?

POTTS. Yes; yours was such a lucky prize, thought I would try my hand.

RUTH. Mollie is well worth winning, major.

POTTS. Thank you, Mrs. Graham.

ROGER. Dorothy, what is the best news you could wish for?

DOR. Your name cleared, and all happy once more.

ROGER. Then it is yours. I am an accused man no longer.

DOR. Honor bright? How did you find it out?

ROGER. Through that good friend of ours, Bijah Bright.

DOR. (*goes to BIJAH*). Mr. Bright, I come to thank you once more. Polly, you can trust this man. He has proved loyal every time.

POLLY. Thank you, Miss Dorothy. It's pleased I am to hear you say so.

BIJAH. She has promised to marry me, and we invite you to Oldtown for the wedding.

DOR. I accept upon the spot. Be good to him, Polly; he deserves it.

BIJAH. That she will. I can trust her for that.

(Enter PETE, C.)

PETE. O Massa Colonel, such a time; it's jest orful. Massa Newcomb he jests rants and tears like a house afire. Down in de hall am two gennlemen a-talking to him right smart. Shall I ax 'em up?

COL. No, Pete. They will settle it amongst themselves. Do you remember what I promised you? That when the war was over I would help you find your mammy.

PETE. 'Deed, Massa Colonel, I 'members, but 'specs der ain't no great hurry for dat. Yer's been so good to me, an' de missis, too. I should jes lub to stay wid you. Please massa, don't send me away. (*PETE wipes eyes on sleeve.*)

COL. No; no fear of that. As long as you are a good boy, you shall stay with me. I shall not forget what you did for me.

PETE. Please, massa, I done de bes I knows.

COL. We all know that, and when your mammy does find you, she will be proud of her boy. And now, Pete, for the sake of the good old times in camp, give us one of your songs.

(PETE brings banjo; takes stage, C., and sings something pathetic.)

ROGER. Those songs brought the tears to our eyes when we thought of you all at home.

DOR. But no more tears now. No more trouble: only sunshine. Just think of it, Roger. Pinky is to be married, you his best man, and I maid of honor.

ROGER. I like that. Why not reverse things?

DOR. Oh, no; my last chance for that dignity. Wouldn't miss it for worlds. Besides, I promised for us both; didn't I, Pinky?

POTTS. Indeed you did. No backsliding, old man.

ROGER. As this little maid has signed the compact, I will help her keep it. (*Arm about DOR.*)

RUTH. Is your heart lighter, Gordon?

COL. Yes, Ruth; and already the color is coming to your cheeks. That, with Roger's forgiveness, makes me happy again. Ah! we all have suffered much, and have gained the happiness which I trust the future will bring. (*Music.*) Ruth, the household enemy is routed at last. There are bright days before us, but ever and anon will cross our paths memories of these dark days: the treachery of a friend; the bravery of our brother (*takes ROGER'S hand*), who could forget and forgive, and, at the risk of his own life, come to your husband's rescue "After Taps." (*Tableau.*)

CURTAIN.

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A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS BY THE AUTHOR OF THE POPULAR MILITARY DRAMA

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S Y N O P S I S .

ACT I. Kitchen in Jedediah's house. A stormy night. Family jar. Jedediah's return. A much abused man. "Hain't I been wrecked with floods, an' blizzards, an' hurricanes, an' every other calamity under the sun?" Dissatisfied with his sphere in life. "I want ter be rich, that's what I want, an' with nuthin' ter du but jest sit around an' take life easy." Mr. Markham seeks shelter from the storm. Jedediah, relates his troubles, after which he retires. Scheme between Mrs. Blood and Mr. Markham to cure Jedediah from grumbling. The Dutchman let into the secret. "You vhas der doctor, und I vhas der general superintendent. Pizness is pizness." Jedediah; placed under the influence of anæsthetics and taken to the mansion of Mr. Markham.

ACT II. Room in Markham's mansion. Jedediah awakes from his stupor. A bewildered man. "What—on—airth—Why! where am I, anyhow!" Female servants not wanted. Believes himself to be dreaming and endeavors to awake. "I've hern tell if you could shout, or thrash yourself about, it would wake you from the toughest nightmare on record. So here goes." Interview between Jedediah and John. "Wise man holds tongue. Old proverb. Better follow it." Fun by the bushel. More and more bewildered. Mrs. Blood as Mrs. Southernwood. An explanation wanted. "For Heaven's sake tell me where I am an' what's the matter." Old home the best. Asleep or crazy—which? "Oh, Lord, I'm in a lunatic asylum, an' these servants are my keepers." Jedediah retires. Once more returned to his old home.

ACT III. Same as Act I. Conundrums. "Why do some ladies who do up their hair imitate a rooster?" The Dutchman's conundrum. "Vy does der hen move his head back und forth vhen she vhalks?" Something about baseball. Jedediah awakes. "I've had a dream." So have Thomas and the Dutchman. Jedediah's story. A permanent cure. "No matter under what circumstances I am placed, or how poor my condition may be, I will never again find fault with my sphere in life."

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A FARCE IN ONE ACT.

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Four male, three female characters. Scenery, costumes and properties simple. Time in playing about 40 minutes. Showing the difficulties that may arise from the practice of Amateur Photography. A roaring farce.

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A DRAMA IN THREE ACTS, BY
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Eight male, two female characters. Good leading part, genteel villain, Irish and negro character. Time of playing about two hours. While not distinctively a war-play its incidents are concerned with imaginary events of the Rebellion, and it is not unsuited to the needs of Grand Army Posts. Scenery, simple interiors and landscape drops, very easy camp scene.

SYNOPSIS.

ACT I. Capt. Oliphant's home in the North. An unfinished honeymoon. The call of duty. A wife's anguish. "My hand girt on the sword that will be raised against my father!" The rebel spy. THE STOLEN DESPATCHES. "He is Madge's father! Rather a thousand times my own disgrace, than be his executioner." The penalty of silence. DISGRACED.

ACT II. SCENE I. Irish and negro. Colored dentistry. SCENE II. The prison. A little story over a bottle of wine. "I understand. Good bye, old friend, and may Heaven bless you." THE ESCAPE. A shot in the dark. "Now, my lady Madge, by fair or foul means you must be mine." SCENE III. Dead to the world. A wife's devotion. "I must bear it all for Malcolm's sake." A warning. "There is peril everywhere for friends of rebels." A false knave. "To remain is certain death!" TO THE RESCUE.

ACT III. SCENE I. The camp. "If I could only hear from Madge!" The flower girl. The price of a passport. "I pay it, but to only one." Husband and wife. "What is this woman to you?" A conundrum whose answer is death. "For the love of Heaven, get me the pass!" THE DESERTER. SCENE II. The villain's suit renewed. "Why not; your husband no longer lives." The lie in his teeth. Misunderstood. "Can you not trust your wife?" RECAPTURED. SCENE III. SENTENCED TO DEATH. "You will sometime know that Malcolm Oliphant died for another's crime—true to the Union—true to the last." A REPRIEVE. The spy's death. "We have plotted together and die together." REUNITED.

SHAMROCK AND ROSE,

A Romantic Story of Irish Life during the Rebellion of '98, in four acts.

By JOHN FITZGERALD MURPHY.

Seven male and three female characters. Costumes and scenery not difficult. Every part a good one. A sure hit. Printed as played under the author's personal direction, at the Dudley St. Opera House, Boston, St. John's Hall, Boston, and the Newport Opera House.

SYNOPSIS.

ACT. I. Scene, Squire Fitzgerald's Home, in Wicklow. Rose's story of Desmond's arrival. Shaun Cary hears a bit of valuable news. Barney O'Brady meets an unexpected visitor and shows him the door. Ileen and Barney. The Fugitive. The arrival of the soldiers. Capt. Beck quarrels with the Squire. The defence. The murder. THE ARREST.

ACT. II. *Scene I:* A Landscape. Cary and the Captain plot the abduction of Rose. Douglass' dilemma 'twixt love and duty. *Scene II:* The Prison. Barney's cell. Hot Irish in a stone jug. A friend in need. The red coat. *Scene III:* Rose receives a false message. *Scene IV:* Desmond's cell. The Death Warrant. Celt and Saxon. Barney a guard. The death knell. THE ESCAPE.

ACT III. *Scene I:* O'Byrnes' Wood. The purty girl milking her cow. Barney proposes to Ileen. Desmond hears bad news. Barney, in the guise of a soldier, gets important information from Cary. *Scene II:* Exterior of Beck's Castle by moonlight. Rose a Captive. Barney brings good news. The proposal and refusal. The ass kicks. The false captive. THE RESCUE.

ACT IV. *Scene:* Corrigmór at Sunrise. Shaun Cary a captive. The arrival of Nano and Ileen. Tracked by Beck. Nano keeps Beck at Bay. The duel. Cary's shot. Becks death. The "SHAMROCK AND ROSE."

Price, 25 cents.

Incidental to this piece occur the following *new* songs by Messrs. R. W. LANIGAN and LEO. A. MUNIER, entitled

SHAMROCK AND MY IRISH
ROSE. QUEEN.
MA BOUCHALEEN BAWN.

The three published together at 60 cents; obtainable only of the publishers.

For other novelties see the preceding page.
Walter H. Baker & Co., 23 Winter St., Boston.

Transcriber's Note

What appeared to be clear typographical errors were corrected; any other mistakes or inconsistencies were retained.

Hyphenation was inconsistent in some cases; the inconsistencies were retained (e.g.: “body-guard” and “bodyguard”, “battlefield” and “battle-field”).

The author chose to have some characters in the play speaking in “dialect”. The way this dialect is spelled is inconsistent and this inconsistency was retained.

The advertisements for other plays on the last pages of this book were formatted inconsistently. Attempts were made to make formatting more consistent, while retaining its peculiarities.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK AFTER TAPS ***

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