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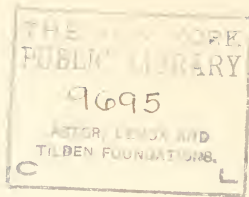
# SHORT PLAYS ABOUT FAMOUS AUTHORS

BY  
MAUDE MORRISON FRANK

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*For love of unforgotten times —*

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

NON VON  
2001  
VON

## INTRODUCTION

WHEN a writer of stories or plays chooses well-known characters for his chief personages, he finds himself obliged to take certain liberties with the facts as set down in the printed page of history or biography. As Sir Walter Scott once put it, stories of things that really happened must be given a stick and a cocked hat, before they can be introduced to readers as novels or dramas. In the plays contained in this volume there has been some shifting of dates to help out the plots, and Time has been made to go at a less dawdling pace than is his habit, in order to bring necessary happenings within the compass of a single act. But these changes are fairly entitled to indulgence, if, in spite of them, the familiar figures that appear against backgrounds more or less closely copied from actual life are not unfaithfully portrayed. The writer hopes that such is the case, and that Goldsmith, Dickens, and the others whom we know and care for may become in some slight degree more real to the young people who read and act these little plays about great authors.

Experience has shown that the production of the plays need present few difficulties, even to players of very limited resources. The setting is in all cases exceedingly simple. The costumes required for all the

characters, with the exception of those in the Christmas pageant and the fairy play, belong to the eighteenth or the early nineteenth century. In planning these costumes, Hugh Thomson's or C. E. Brock's illustrations to books dealing with the periods in question will serve as helpful and readily accessible guides. A good and inexpensive quartet of books describing and illustrating costumes is the series "English Costumes," prepared by D. C. Calthrop, and published by A. C. Black and Company. The costumes of the characters in the Christmas pageant are traditional, and are fully described in the stage directions. For the elves in "The Fairies' Plea" there are useful suggestions in the excellent little book, "The Bankside Costume Book for Children," by Melicent Stone, published recently by Wells, Gardner, Darton, and Company.

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A MISTAKE AT THE MANOR





This play is based on an incident in the early life of Oliver Goldsmith, which is related as follows by Austin Dobson:

“ Having set off for school on a borrowed hack, and equipped with boundless riches in the shape of a guinea, given him by a friend, he amused himself by viewing the neighboring country seats on the road, intending ultimately to put up like a gentleman at an inn. Night fell, and he found himself at Ardagh, half-way on his journey. Casting about for information as to the best house, that is to say, the best inn in the neighborhood, he unluckily hit upon one Cornelius Kelly, who had been fencing-master to the Marquis of Granby, but, what is more to the purpose, a confirmed wag and practical joker. Amused with Oliver’s schoolboy swagger, he gravely directed him to the mansion of the local magnate, Squire Featherston. To Squire Featherston the lad accordingly repaired, and called hastily for someone to take his horse. Being ushered into the presence of the supposed landlord and his family, he ordered a good supper, invited the rest to share, treated to a bottle or two of wine, and finally retired to rest, leaving careful instructions that a hot cake should be prepared for his breakfast on the morrow. His host, who was a humorist, and, moreover, knew something of his visitor’s father, never undeceived him, and it was not until he

quitted the supposed inn the next day that he learned to his confusion that he had been entertained at a private house. Thus early in Oliver Goldsmith's career was rehearsed the first sketch of the successful comedy, 'She Stoops to Conquer.'"

# A MISTAKE AT THE MANOR

## CHARACTERS

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON, a country gentleman.

MRS. FEATHERSTON, his wife.

GRADY, a butler.

MOLLY, a maid.

CORNELIUS KELLY, a groom.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH, aged 15.

TIME: 1743.

SCENE: *The dining-hall at Featherston Manor. In the center of the hall is a table set for three. To the left is another table on which are various pieces of silver. GRADY is vigorously polishing the silver as KELLY enters from the right. KELLY wears high boots, and carries his hat, in which is fastened a cockade of white ribbon.*

GRADY

Is it yourself, then, Corney Kelly, coming around so early? And what might be the matter with the stables, that you're after quitting them at this time of the day?

KELLY

Sure, I just stepped over to wish you the top o' the morning, and to ask how the world was treating you all here.

## GRADY

[*Angrily.*] How the world is treating me, is it? 'Tis not a good time to ask me that, then. There's a scrap of the world that's treating me as bad as possible this very minute. Hot cakes, indeed! *I'd* hot him, if I had the chance. "And don't go wool-gathering and forget to put the plates in the platewarmer, old cock," he says to me—me, that's waited on Squire Featherston and all his friends for four and twenty year!

## KELLY

Who's this you're distressing yourself about?

## GRADY

'Tis a young sprig that dropped in here last night to visit the master, and is like to drive us all distracted with his impudent ways. "Don't you be after filling your pockets more than half full up with his oats," he says to Tim O'Rourke, when he gives him his horse to feed. Tim was that angry when he came in and told us in the servants' hall about it that we could hardly keep him from going back and putting up his fists at him. And Molly——

## KELLY

[*Interrupting.*] Molly! What did he have to be after saying anything at all to Molly for?

GRADY

[*Laughing.*] Ah, there, now; there's no need to be troubling yourself about anything he might say to Molly, even though 'tis her bachelor you'd like to be. 'Tis only a youngster that he is, though a more forward, swaggering jackanapes I never set eyes on. [*Enter MOLLY.*] Here's Molly herself now. Do you ask her if I'm not in the right about him.

MOLLY

I've a message for you, Mr. Grady. [*Seeing KELLY.*] A pleasant good-morning to you, Mr. Kelly.

KELLY

Sure, 'tis always a pleasant morning when I see you, Molly.

GRADY

[*To MOLLY.*] Have you forgotten my message entirely?

MOLLY

'Tis from the young gentleman in the guest-chamber. He called out to me, that you were to look sharp with his breakfast, and not forget the cake, for he'd be down directly.

GRADY

Did anyone ever hear the like of that, now? I wonder did he have no more orders to give?

[*Bell rings violently.*]

MOLLY

There's his bell now. I'll run up and see what he'll be needing, or he'll be after breaking the bell-pull.

[*Exit* MOLLY.]

GRADY

Perhaps his boots weren't blacked to his liking, and he'd be wanting the master to do them for him, or maybe he'd wish the mistress to mend the tear in his ruffles.

[*Re-enter* MOLLY, *laughing*.]

GRADY

And what was his will, then?

MOLLY

Faith, I couldn't keep from laughing in the face of him. He wanted shaving-water, and him no more than a slip of a boy that's hardly loosed from his mother's apron-strings. "Is it yourself you're going to shave?" says I. "And maybe when I bring you up the water I'll bring you up the cat, too, and you can shave her."\*

KELLY

[*Admiringly*.] Ah, you've always got the ready tongue, Molly.

\* Molly must have told this joke about the cat to her friends, for we find Sullivan, Captain Fitzsimons's man in Thackeray's "Barry Lyndon," making the same remark to young Redmond Barry under similar circumstances.

## GRADY

I'll have to be going in to the cook now, I expect, and giving her the visitor's orders. Was the like of such a visitor ever seen, I ask you? Ordering his own breakfast in the Squire's house, and telling me to look sharp about it, too! [*To MOLLY and KELLY.*] Do you two, now, get away out of here. It's little I care about the young jackanapes, but the Squire and the mistress'll be along presently, and the hall's no place for you, Corney Kelly, even if the Squire does think a deal of you for keeping his horses in good trim.

[*Exit GRADY.*]

## MOLLY

He's angry in good earnest. But sure 'tis a queer thing for the master to be having a lad with ways like those in the house, and him always so particular with everybody. Why, when I passed the door last night, 'twas sitting in the best armchair he was, with the Squire and the mistress both standing up, and his legs crossed before him, as comfortable as a lord.

## KELLY

[*In a confidential tone.*] Would you like me to tell you a fine secret, Molly?

## MOLLY

Why wouldn't I like to know a secret of any kind whatever?

KELLY

Will you dance with me at the village to-night, if I tell it you?

MOLLY

I will that. But be quick with your secret, for I'll have to be getting back to my work before the mistress comes along.

KELLY

'Tis all a trick of my own about the lad above-stairs.

MOLLY

A trick, you say? What kind of a trick, then?

KELLY

Well, 'tis this way. Last night, as I was walking down the road smoking my pipe, there comes along this young bantam-cock of a fellow. He pulls up his horse and says to me, as patronizing as if he was King George himself, "Can you tell me, my man, if there's any place hereabouts where a gentleman could lie for the night? None of your cabins," he says, flourishing his whip, "but a place where a gentleman that could pay for real comfort would be at home. The best house in the district is what I'm looking for, my good fellow," says he again. "Is it the *very* best house hereabouts you're looking for?" says I. "And what else would a gentleman like me be wanting?" says he.



“Well, then,” says I, “you go on half a mile down the road, and then take the turn to the left, and you’ll see the house that’s the best in Ardagh.” “There’s good quarters there?” he asks. “As good as any in all Ireland,” says I, speaking nothing but the truth. “Well, then, good-night to you, my man,” says he, and rides off, as proud as you please.

MOLLY

[*In a tone of consternation.*] And ’twas here you sent him!

KELLY

Isn’t this the best house in Ardagh, I’d like to know?

MOLLY

You sent him to Squire Featherston’s when he was looking for an inn! Sure the Squire’ll not forgive you if he finds it out. ’Tis a kind master that he is, but he’ll not be for putting up with the like of that, I’m thinking.

KELLY

Ah, then, I’ve not much fear of his finding out at all, that ’twas myself that sent him here, for the young sprig had no knowledge of me, whatever. And if he did—why, the Squire’s fond of a joke himself, they’ve all been telling me ever since I came on to Ardagh. And if ever anyone needed to have his comb cut, ’twas

my young gentleman of last night, with his airs and his flourishes, and the Squire's the right one to be doing it for him.

MOLLY

[*In a puzzled tone.*] The Squire never let on the least bit in the world that the lad was no friend of his.

KELLY

I wonder now what that was for. But we've a good tale to tell, whichever way the cat jumps. Let's be off now, for here's the master and mistress coming. I'll go below stairs with you, and maybe we'll hear something from Mr. Grady when breakfast's over.

MOLLY

Ah, sure, 'tis you that has the head for a clever trick, Mr. Kelly. I wish there may no harm come to you for this one, though.

KELLY

I'll not mind anything whatever, if you'll keep your promise about the dance to-night, Molly.

[*Exeunt MOLLY and KELLY. Enter SQUIRE FEATHERSTON and MRS. FEATHERSTON. MRS. FEATHERSTON goes up to one of the chairs at the table and is about to be seated, when the Squire checks her.*

## SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

[*In a tone of pretended concern.*] For shame, my dear! It would never do for the landlord and landlady to take their places before their guest was seated. We must e'en stand and wait for him, willy-nilly.

## MRS. FEATHERSTON

I protest, the part grows too difficult for me to play.

## SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

Nay, as for me, I find it a pleasant enough change to be Boniface for a while, instead of the Squire—to be bullied a trifle, instead of being made obeisance to. 'Tis a moment's breath of reality such as seldom touches us little great folk of the landed gentry. I have my fill of seeing everybody about me hat in hand, and I should be but ungrateful not to welcome anyone who says a few rude words to me—even though 'tis only a foolish lad making a foolish blunder.

## MRS. FEATHERSTON

[*Petulantly.*] Well, Mr. Featherston, I am less fond of rude words than you, and I shan't be sorry when the jest is over.

## SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

A little patience, madam, and the game will play itself out. [*A noise is heard as if of furniture being*

*pushed about.*] Hark, I think I hear my gentleman bestirring himself. We must take pains not to make it too hard for him when he comes to his senses,—eh, my dear? I confess, I've taken a liking to the scapegrace, in spite of his impudence.

*[Enter GOLDSMITH, humming a tune loudly. He strides up to the table, draws the chair up as noisily as possible, and throws himself back in it with an air of great importance.]*

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

*[Bowing low.]* Good-morning to you, sir. I hope you rested well.

GOLDSMITH

*[With an air of nonchalance.]* Ha! landlord, at your post? Never fear; I'll not forget to call for a morning tankard to make the reckoning longer. The house shan't suffer that has *me* for a guest, I promise you.

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

*[Deprecatingly.]* Nay, sir, I but inquired how you had slept.

GOLDSMITH

Oh, as to that, so-so.

MRS. FEATHERSTON

Was the bed not to your liking, sir?

GOLDSMITH

[*Carelessly.*] 'Twas not so ill for an inn, maybe. But you should get fresher hangings when the next packman comes to your gate, Mistress Boniface.

MRS. FEATHERSTON

[*Bridling.*] 'Tis a pity that our tapestries did not please you. They have some value in the eyes of judges of the art.

GOLDSMITH

A fig for all musty, fusty hangings of any sort whatever, say I. But I vow I shall be starved if you dawdle away the time much longer with your talk of tapestries and such. What about breakfast, pray? What can you give me, now?

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

[*Rubbing his hands.*] We have in the larder, I believe, a joint of cold beef, a leg of cold veal, a ham, and a pigeon-pie, from which we should be honored to have you select your meal. I can especially vouch for the merits of the pie.

GOLDSMITH

None of your cold victuals for me. 'Tis quite enough to have them offered you at night, after a ride

of a dozen miles or more, without beginning the next day upon them. You're a pretty landlord, man! I warrant you've forgotten the hot cake I bespoke last night. [*To MRS. FEATHERSTON.*] You should jog his memory, hostess!

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

I protest, I *had* forgotten. But I make no doubt that the butler—I should say rather, the factotum—to whom your honor was pleased to give the order, has kept your honor's wishes in mind better than I.

GOLDSMITH

Have the fellow in, then, and waste no time about it. I must be getting on my way as quick as may be, and I have no mind to go on with only your cold comfort in my stomach.

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

He shall be here directly, sir.

[*Rings bell.*]

MRS. FEATHERSTON

I wish, sir, that we might have succeeded better in winning your favor.

GOLDSMITH

Nay, Madam Boniface, never heed me overmuch. 'Tis only a traveler's way, after all. Who would give

a snap of his fingers for us travelers if we were always content? [Enter GRADY.]

## GOLDSMITH

[*With a change of manner.*] Ah, here's the old cock himself. [GRADY starts indignantly, but controls himself.] The solemn look of him's worth an extra shilling in the reckoning. [To GRADY.] Did you remember what I bespoke for breakfast, now?

## GRADY

[*Very gravely.*] I did, sir. The cook's only just now drawing the cake out of the oven.

## GOLDSMITH

Up with it then, double-quick. And a draught of your best ale with it—your best, mind you—none of your second brew.

[GRADY goes out. GOLDSMITH lolls back in his chair and sings "Barbara Allen" quite audibly, continuing while GRADY re-enters bearing a tankard, and followed by MOLLY, who carries a plate with a hot cake. GRADY and MOLLY set the plate and tankard before GOLDSMITH, who still sings away, regardless of GRADY'S looks of offended astonishment and MOLLY'S only half-suppressed amusement. Exit MOLLY.]

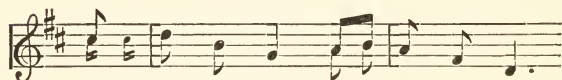
## BARBARA ALLEN



In Scar - let Town, where I was born,



There was a fair maid dwel - lin'



Who made the youths sigh Well - a - day!



Her name was Bar - b'ra Al - len.

## GOLDSMITH

[*Eating.*] 'Tis not so well-flavored a cake as is to be had at the Bull in Edgeworthstown. [*Takes up the tankard.*] This ale is something too thin for me. [*To the SQUIRE.*] Have you none headier?

## SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

How is our cellar, Grady? Have we another brew of ale?

## GRADY

[*Stiffly.*] Never a one, sir.



## GOLDSMITH

Ah, well, a poor drink is better than none. [*Drains the tankard.*] 'Tis but a thin brew to travel on, none the less. I warrant you our friend yonder [*pointing to GRADY*] knows a secret or two about it. The water-butt's a trusty helper when the keg's half dry, eh? Nay, 'tis no matter [*as GRADY seems about to speak*]. I bear no ill-will. 'Tis all in the day's journey when one takes the road. And now, my man [*to GRADY*], do you tell the stable-lad to give my horse another measure of oats. [*GRADY is about to leave.*] And tell him, too, that he's not to let more than half the measure find the way into his pocket. Will you mind the message, now?

## GRADY

[*Who has started for the door, turns about, facing GOLDSMITH, and gesticulates violently as he begins to speak, angrily.*] No, I'll not be after minding any such message as that. I've heard enough from you now. I'll carry no such word to Tim O'Rourke, my own cousin's nephew's son, that's known to everyone as the honestest lad in the parish, and me recommending him to the master for the place here. Is it in a thieving tavern that you think you are, indeed, with your talk of stealing oats and watering the drink? Sure, it's in a low-lived shebeen that you deserve to be, with your manners and your doings, and not in a gentleman's house, at all!

GOLDSMITH

[*Who has listened to the tirade in open-mouthed astonishment.*] A gentleman's house!

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

[*To MRS. FEATHERSTON.*] Ah, madam, now that honest Grady has taken a hand, our game is over, you see.

GRADY

[*Subsiding somewhat.*] Your honor'll not hold it against me, I hope, that I've forgot myself for a minute, and given a taste o' the rough side of my tongue to a lad that's got no kind of manners at all! 'Twas as much as flesh and blood could stand to see a buckeen like him yonder misbehaving to you and the mistress, and you so considerate-like, because, faith, it's your visitor he is. But I know your honor'd never wish the characters to be taken away from your servants, and me not to speak for them, that's so proud of their service with the Squire.

GOLDSMITH

[*Who has grown more and more uneasy.*] Proud—of their service—with the Squire?

GRADY

[*Turning sharply on GOLDSMITH.*] Ah, and I may well say that, for Squire Featherston's known far and wide to be the best master, and the finest gentleman too, in all the county!

GOLDSMITH

[*Looking from one to the other.*] Squire Featherston?

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

[*Bowing low.*] At your service, my young friend.

GOLDSMITH

[*Excitedly.*] What's this house called, then? Has it any name? Tell me, madam [*to MRS. FEATHERSTON*], pray!

MRS. FEATHERSTON

This house has always been called Featherston Manor since Sir Richard Featherston built it, a hundred and fifty years ago.

GOLDSMITH

[*Rising and slapping his knee.*] Then I've been a bigger fool than anyone ever took me for—and that's saying a great deal!

MRS. FEATHERSTON

[*Taking seat.*] Well, at any rate, I suppose I may sit down in my own house now.

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

[*Genially.*] Nay, never mind a bit of folly, my lad. There's many a wise man has been a fool, and the world no whit the worse for it.

GOLDSMITH

But I've been the very greatest fool in all Ireland! Here have I tumbled myself headforemost into a gentleman's house, and given everybody the same orders as though 'twas my own, and misconducted myself mightily altogether, the more shame to me, when all the while 'twas only the guinea I had to spend at an inn, that was burning a hole in my pocket!

GRADY

An inn, indeed! And was it an inn you took the Squire's home for, and his honor himself for the inn-keeper? Sure that caps all!

MRS. FEATHERSTON

But tell us, pray, how you came to think this was an inn.

GOLDSMITH

I was directed here straight enough, and told I'd find the best inn in all the countryside.

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

An honor, I'm sure. But who paid us the compliment of commending us so highly?

GOLDSMITH

A smooth-spoken young fellow in riding-boots who was strolling along the road a half-mile or so from

here, as I was coming up it. He was so ready with his tongue—ah! I'd like nothing better than to say a few words to him this minute.

GRADY

Riding-boots, is it? And did you take any notice of his hat, now?

GOLDSMITH

There was a sizable cockade in it—yes, and 'twas a white one.

GRADY

The rascal! I've got him, sure enough!

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

Ah, Grady, can you help us to find our amiable patron and our young friend's kind guide?

GRADY

I can fetch him up here in no more than the shake of a lamb's tail, if your honor will give me leave.

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

By all means, let us make his acquaintance.

GRADY

Very well, your honor.

[*Exit.*

## GOLDSMITH

[*Hanging his head.*] 'Tis not the first blunder I've made, nor is it likely to be the last; but I'm distressed that I cut so sorry a figure in this house.

## SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

Nay, a word has set it all straight. 'Twas a transparent blunder enough, and our evening here, as Madam will tell you, has been the less dull for your little adventure; so there is something to be counted on the credit side of your score.

[GRADY *appears in the doorway, followed by KELLY, who has as much of a swaggering air about him as is compatible with his respect for the SQUIRE.*

## GOLDSMITH

There's the very fellow now! [*To the SQUIRE.*] Do you but ask him what he told me.

## GRADY

I've got him to come up, your honor; but he declares he told the young gentleman not a word but what was true, and how to come at the rights of that I don't know. [*To MOLLY, who enters with a tray.*] You've no need here at all, my girl.

## MOLLY

[*Timidly.*] I thought his honor might be wanting the dishes cleared off.

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

I suspect Molly has something besides dishes on her mind. Let her stay, Grady, if her mistress [*bowing to* MRS. FEATHERSTON] is willing. [*To* KELLY.] Well, Kelly, my young friend here has a crow to pluck with you, and I've a mind to stand by and see the plucking.

GOLDSMITH

[*Ruefully.*] A crow, indeed! The bird in that bargain was more likely a gull! [*To* KELLY.] What did you make a fool of me last night for, misdirecting me when I asked a straight question?

KELLY

I didn't misdirect you, anyway whatever.

GRADY

Hark to that now!

GOLDSMITH

[*Indignantly.*] How have you the face to tell me that! Didn't I ask you for the best house in all the countryside, and didn't you tell me to go on till I came here?

KELLY

Well, and where will you find a better house in Ardagh than Featherston Manor, I'd like to know?  
 [*Pause. The SQUIRE begins to chuckle.*]

GOLDSMITH

But it was an *inn* I asked you for, man!

KELLY

'Twas a *house* you said, and 'twas a *house* I sent you to, and never a better one in all Ireland, nor one with a better master or mistress to it. Who's to blame if we were at cross-purposes in our talk? Sure, you were so proud-like that there was no stopping you when you once got started on your road.

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

The clouds begin to lift. [*To* GOLDSMITH.] Do you see, now, how we came by the honor of your patronage?

GOLDSMITH

I see that I'd best have stayed at old Paddy Byrne's school and minded my book with him, blockhead that I am! 'Twould have been better than going to the fine school at Edgeworthstown, that I'm on my way home from now, and disgracing everybody there, and my poor father at Lissoy into the bargain. Won't they all say when they hear of it, "What else but folly did anyone ever expect of Parson Goldsmith's Noll? Sure, he was born a fool, and a fool he'll stay."

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

Parson Goldsmith of Lissoy, you say your father is? Not the Charles Goldsmith who took orders in the year fourteen?



## GOLDSMITH

He was ordained in the very year the Queen died, I've often heard him say.

## SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

Why, this is a meeting, indeed! My dear [*to* MRS. FEATHERSTON], allow me to present to you the son of my old college-mate at Trinity. [MRS. FEATHERSTON *courtesies*. GOLDSMITH *bows*.] Many a lecture his father and I dozed through side by side, while good Dr. Longley was droning his way through the metaphysics. But I woke up and went on to livelier doings, while he had to put on the surplice and bands at his patron's bidding. Ah, well, he was cut out for a parson, and I'll warrant he makes a good one.

## GOLDSMITH

The Lissoy people can tell you enough about that. There's no vicar that they'll admit to be the equal of theirs. But [*hanging his head*] I'm afraid they'd not give the same character to his son Noll. They'd have fine tales to tell you of his blunderings, and now here's another added to them, and the worst of them all.

## SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

Nay, my lad, the blunder is over and done with, and a friend—or two friends, if I know Madam as well as I should—come out of it for you. I suppose,

though, there's a score to be settled with your guide here. [*Looking at KELLY, with something of an air of severity.*—]'Twas not precisely in the bargain, when I hired him to see to my horses, that he should turn me into an innkeeper.

## MOLLY

[*Coming forward, deprecatingly.*] Oh, sure, your honor'd not be too hard on the lad for a bit of a joke!

## SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

Well, we shall hear how our guest is minded in the matter. [*To GOLDSMITH.*] Should not my ready-tongued gentleman yonder pay something of a penalty for his prank?

## GOLDSMITH

Why, sir, if you will hearken to me, Master Kelly may go back to his stables with a clean slate. 'Twas nothing but my own folly that led to it all, and I want no one else to do the paying for it.

## SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

[*To MRS. FEATHERSTON.*] What say you, madam? Shall it be as our young friend would have it?

## MRS. FEATHERSTON

'Twas a sad idle trick to be sure, to make an inn of Featherston Manor, and an innkeeper's wife of its mis-

tress. But—bygones are best let to be bygones, I suppose.

SQUIRE FEATHERSTON

[*To KELLY.*] Well, since the two ladies are for having it so, there's naught for it but to wipe out the score. So get you back to the stables, and see that our visitor's horse is ready for the road. [*To MOLLY.*] And do you go with the rascal and preach him a sound sermon about keeping out of mischief.

MOLLY

I will that, your honor. And thank you kindly for not holding his mischievous ways against him. [*To GOLDSMITH.*] And I'll say thank you to you, too, sir, for bearing no malice.

KELLY

[*To SQUIRE and MRS. FEATHERSTON.*] Service, your honors! [*To GOLDSMITH.*] 'Twas a good house with a good master I sent you to after all, you see, sir.

[*MOLLY pulls him sharply by the sleeve.*

*Exeunt KELLY and MOLLY.*

GRADY

[*To GOLDSMITH.*] Sure, and if I may be so bold, I'd like to say myself that I'm sorry for having been so free with my tongue to a young gentleman that's got the kind heart like your own.

## GOLDSMITH

Ah, well, the wiseacres will be shaking their head over Noll Goldsmith's folly many a time, I make no doubt. Town or country, man or boy, 'twill be all one to him, I'm thinking; for his soft heart will lead him into many a scrape that a better head than his would be bothered to get out of. The best he can do will be to make a bit of a song or tell a merry tale about his silly doings, so that the other folk may have a laugh when they are well over. And that reminds me, Squire, there were some lines came into my foolish noddle, as I was riding through the lane yesterday, about the death of a mad dog. 'Tis a sweet subject. Shall I make a shift to let you hear them before I go? 'Tis all that I can do to make amends for my misdoings at Featherston Manor. [*To MRS. FEATHERSTON.*] Have I your leave, madam? [*MRS. FEATHERSTON inclines her head.*] [*To the SQUIRE.*] And yours, sir? [*The SQUIRE nods assent.*] 'Twill not be long, I promise you.

[*GOLDSMITH takes center of stage, and begins to sing\* (or recite), "Good people all—" GRADY, at side table, beats time; SQUIRE and MRS. FEATHERSTON follow attentively, smiling. MOLLY and KELLY are seen listening at door.*

\* Madame Liza Lehmann's very effective setting to this ballad may be procured at any establishment where music is sold. If the Goldsmith of the occasion prefers to omit the singing, the "Elegy" may be recited instead of sung.

## SONG

## ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF A MAD DOG

Good people all, of every sort,  
Give ear unto my song;  
And if you find it wondrous short  
It cannot keep you long.

In Islington there lived a man  
Of whom the world did say  
That still a godly race he ran  
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had  
To comfort friends and foes;  
The naked every day he clad,  
When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found,  
As many dogs there be,  
Both mongrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,  
And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends,  
But when a pique began,  
The dog, to gain his private ends,  
Went mad, and bit the man.

Around from all the neighboring streets  
The wondering neighbors ran,  
And swore the dog had lost his wits  
To bite so good a man.

## A MISTAKE AT THE MANOR

The wound it seem'd both sore and sad  
To every Christian eye,  
And while they swore the dog was mad,  
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light  
That show'd the rogues they lied ;  
The man recover'd of the bite,  
The dog it was that died.

WHEN HEINE WAS TWENTY-  
ONE





The incidents in this play are suggested by the facts of Heinrich Heine's life as related by his biographers and revealed in his poems and letters. We know that the poet's unrequited love for his cousin Amalie (Molly) was the theme of most of the beautiful lyrics that appeared in his first volume of poetry; and we know that the wealthy banker, Salomon Heine, would have preferred a steady-going nephew with a talent for finance to the erratic genius who formed part of the Hamburg household about the year 1820.



# WHEN HEINE WAS TWENTY- ONE

## CHARACTERS

HEINRICH HEINE, aged twenty-one.

SALOMON HEINE, a banker, Heinrich's uncle.

KELLERMANN, a clerk.

CHRISTIAN SETHE, a student of jurisprudence, Heinrich Heine's friend.

HERR MAIER, a merchant, Salomon Heine's friend.

PROFESSOR MERTENS, head of the Hamburg Gymnasium.

MOLLY, Salomon Heine's daughter.

A maid.

TIME: 1821.

*The SCENE is the living-room in the house of SALOMON HEINE, in Hamburg. The furniture is solid and comfortable, but very ugly. On each side of the room is a large desk well supplied with writing materials. At the desk to the right is seated HEINRICH HEINE, writing a letter. CHRISTIAN SETHE is in an armchair beside a table, reading a small volume. HEINE lays down his quill pen, sprinkles sand over his paper, then after a moment, folds the letter, picks up his pen, and writes the superscription.*

SETHE

[*Reading aloud.*]

\* *Ein Fichtenbaum steht einsam,  
Im Norden, auf kahler Höh';  
Ihn schläfert; mit weisser Decke  
Umhüllen ihn Eis und Schnee.*

*Er träumt von einer Palme,  
Die, fern im Morgenland,  
Einsam und schweigend trauert  
Auf brennender Felsenwand.*

(Alone in the dreary northland,  
A pine-tree stands on a height,  
Asleep, while about his branches  
Fall snowflakes thick and white.

His dreams are all of a palm-tree,  
Afar in the southern land,  
That grieves through the weary hours,  
Alone 'mid the burning sand.)

[*Laying the book down.*]

That deserves a bravo, old comrade! But I beg your pardon. I should not interrupt.

HEINE

[*Flinging his pen down and springing up noisily.*]  
There! I have made my bow to the very last correspondent of the morning who wants to cheat my uncle or be cheated by him!

SETHE

[*Amused.*] Apparently your uncle has curious correspondents.

\* The translations of the German poetry may be substituted for the original in case audience or players are unfamiliar with German.

## HEINE

Not curious in the least. What I remarked was that I had finished answering the business letters of the bank of Salomon Heine and Company for to-day. [*In a tone of disgust.*] Pah! This house reeks of business! There's no escaping from it! Here in the living-room, where every other fat and greasy citizen of Hamburg is content to smoke, and read *The Watchman*, and leave other folks in peace, my uncle must have a couple of desks set up—one for me and one for old Kellermann—so that on days when the counting-house is closed, the machinery of answering the eternal letters can be kept revolving as steadily as ever. Two hours of my morning gone to-day,—when the evening must be wasted in being polite to the stupid merchants and their stupider wives who are coming to the indigestible dinner my uncle is going to give them to-night! But now I am free for a time—free for a walk and a talk—a talk of the old times in Düsseldorf and the new times in Hamburg! Ah! [*placing his hands on CHRISTIAN'S shoulders*] but it is good to see you again, Christian, old fellow! How I grudge the minutes you had to spend in waiting for me to break loose from my chains!

## SETHE

The time passed pleasantly enough for me. Was I not reading the works of a poet who will surely be known as one of the first men of his century?

HEINE

[*Laughing.*] So you remember that old jest of mine? What a pity that it can never be quite true!

SETHE

From December 13, 1799, to January 1, 1800, is only a few days. You were born only a little on the wrong side of the century, after all.

HEINE

That was a bad beginning. I shall always be just a little on the wrong side of the things I should like to claim as my own, I fear.

SETHE

Does that mean that *she* has been less kind than usual since you last wrote to me, I wonder?

HEINE

Molly? She is always kind. She doesn't know how to be anything else. She is kind to the little errand-boys in the counting-house, kind to the stupid stock-brokers of forty that come to dine here so that they may hear all the latest rates of exchange quoted over their strong coffee; and kindest of all to me and to her mother's fat old lapdog. For twenty-three hours and forty-five minutes out of the twenty-four hours I can succeed in forgetting about the errand-boys and the money-changers and the lapdog, and remember only that she smiles

when I speak to her; but then there are the other fifteen minutes, and they come every day, and they give me a wickedly bad quarter of an hour, I assure you.

SETHE

Can you not depend on your poems to give you an advantage over the others?

HEINE

Ah, yes; the poems—they ought to go on the credit side of the ledger. But then there is my promise to her father to give up meddling with rhymes and to use pen and ink and paper only for adding up marks and pfennigs—that will have to be put down on the debit side. Isn't that a pretty commercial metaphor? You see, I have not lived in Hamburg for two years without profiting by it.

*[Goes to a table at the side of the room and busies himself with a pack of cards lying on it.]*

SETHE

What are you doing?

HEINE

Hush! don't speak so loud! I am building a wonderful house of cards. See how high it is! And on the very summit Molly and I are standing quite alone together, and my arms are clasped about her. Ah! but

it takes only a breath to wreck it all! [*In a changed tone, as the door opens.*] There! It is down!

[KELLERMANN *enters.* *He is about fifty-five, slow of speech, short-sighted, with spectacles pushed up on his forehead, and a quill pen stuck behind his ear. He carries a bundle of letters, and is at first much preoccupied with his business duties.*

KELLERMANN

Good-morning, Herr Heinrich. Are the letters for the Frankfort post ready? [*Perceiving SETHE.*] Your servant, Sir.

HEINE

Here they are, Kellermann. [*Crossing to desk and taking letters.*] Every *i* is nicely dotted and every lie is told as politely as even you could do it with all your forty years' experience as corresponding clerk.

KELLERMANN

[*Deprecatingly.*] But, Herr Heinrich!—

HEINE

Oh! I know you have the utmost respect for the lies that a banker's figures tell. To be sure they have always told the same tale to my uncle Salomon, and it has been a tale well worth listening to when the



balance is struck at the end of each year. It is only poetry that doesn't tell lies profitably; eh, Kellermann? But you must let me present my friend Christian Sethe, student of jurisprudence, from Düsseldorf. Think of it, he has come all the distance out of his way from Hildesheim, where his errand was, to see for himself how the good-for-nothing idler, Harry Heine, managed to breathe in this money-laden Hamburg air of yours.

## KELLERMANN

*Ach*, Herr Sethe, you must not believe all that Herr Heinrich says of himself. We are so proud of him here since he really began to think of business. At first, of course, the poetry-making got in his way a little. But now, ever since he promised his uncle to give it up, no one could do better than he.

## SETHE

So? He has promised to give it up?

## KELLERMANN

Yes; it is over a year ago since his uncle made the bargain with him. I heard it made. [*With dignity.*] Ah, I may say that I am almost one of the family about such affairs. Herr Salomon always takes me into his confidence when there are any business matters going on.

## HEINE

[*Drily.*] And when are there not business matters going on in this house; eh, Kellermann?

## KELLERMANN

[*In a tone of great pride.*] Yes, you may well ask that. No house in Hamburg can equal the house of Salomon Heine for business. But as I was saying, Herr Sethe—over a year ago, in this very room, Herr Salomon—found Herr Heinrich making rhymes when there was a letter from the Herr von Rothschild in England to be answered, and he said, “Now, I have had enough of this folly. If you want to be a poet, then be a poet; if you want to be a banker, you shall have your chance with me; but poetry and banking do not belong together in the house of Salomon Heine. Take your choice,” said he, just so, “stop this rhyming nonsense, stick to your work, and in two years’ time I will give you a business for yourself such as my nephew ought to have; or go on with your poetry and see what you can make of that. But not here in Hamburg,” he said, “where we have other things to think of than whether ‘love’ goes with ‘dove.’” And so Herr Heinrich, like a sensible young gentleman, made his bargain, and gave up all his poetry-making, and one of these days the world will hear of the great banker Heinrich Heine—is it not so, Herr Heinrich?

## HEINE

Yes, Kellermann, there is no telling what the world may hear of Heinrich Heine. Meanwhile there is something that my uncle is going to hear about him—and I think he had better hear it from you.

## KELLERMANN

[*Anxiously.*] You have not been getting into any trouble, I hope, Herr Heinrich?

## HEINE

Who knows? I have been getting into print, at any rate. I have had a volume of my poems published, and the publisher has written to me to say that the Hamburg papers are going to print reviews of it to-day. You had better break the news to my uncle while I show Herr Sethe the sights of the Alster Bassin. Never mind, old friend. [*Clapping KELLERMANN on the back.*] Uncle Salomon is in a specially good humor to-day about something, I am sure. He invited Herr Sethe to the dinner party to-night as hospitably as if he had discounted a score of bills for his father at the most favorable rates.

## KELLERMANN

[*In a tone of consternation.*] But, Herr Heinrich, you can never mean it, that after all your uncle said you have really been writing more of your poetry!

## SETHE

It's really very nice poetry, Herr Kellermann. I have the volume here. Listen to some of it. [*Reads*]:

*Im wunderschönen Monat Mai,  
Als alle Knospen sprangen,  
Da ist in meinem Herzen  
Die Liebe aufgegangen.*

*Im wunderschönen Monat Mai,  
Als alle Vögel sangen,  
Da hab' ich ihr gestanden  
Mein Sehnen und Verlangen.*

(In the month of the lovely Maytime,  
When the buds thrilled with the spring.  
Then first I heard within my heart  
Love's tender whispering.

In the month of the lovely Maytime,  
When the birds sang on each spray,  
I found courage then to tell her  
All that my heart would say.)

Now isn't that pretty?

#### KELLERMANN

Herr Sethe, Herr Sethe, what do I know about such things? All that I have to do is to see that my books balance, and then I can smoke my pipe and take a walk in the evening without troubling myself about birds and buds and sprays. But what will Herr Salomon say? After Herr Heinrich's promise and all—just when he was so proud of him.

#### HEINE

[*Nonchalantly.*] Well, Kellermann, you must do your best for me. The fat will be in the fire by the time my uncle goes out for his afternoon walk,—if it hasn't got there by now. Don't let me get too badly burned by it if you can help it, old colleague. You know you always said I could make the neatest figures of anyone in the office. Come,

Christian [*to* SETHE], if we stay too long my uncle will be here, and we must not intrude upon any confidential communications Kellermann may have to make to him. *Auf wiedersehen*, Kellermann! We shall not be away very long, so get it over comfortably, do you hear? [*Exeunt* HEINE and SETHE.

[KELLERMANN *walks up and down, shaking his head, catches sight of the volume of poetry which SETHE has left behind, picks it up, opens it, and begins to read:*

*Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten,  
Dass ich so traurig bin.*

(I know not what is the meaning  
That I am sad at heart.)

KELLERMANN

*Traurig* indeed!

[*The door opens, and SALOMON HEINE appears. He is about fifty, pompous and important, with a touch of irritability evident in his manner. He wears a smoking jacket, and carries a pipe in one hand, some folded newspapers in the other.*

KELLERMANN

[*Stopping short in his walk and hastily stuffing the book into his pocket.*] Good-morning, Herr Heine!

SALOMON

[*Drawing the armchair up to a table and seating himself comfortably. He does not look at KELLERMANN while speaking, and so does not observe the latter's perturbation.*] Morning, Kellermann! Everything in order?

KELLERMANN

Yes, Herr Heine—that is——

SALOMON

Did Herr Heinrich get the Frankfort letters written?

KELLERMANN

[*Eagerly showing letters.*] The letters were all ready before he went out, Herr Heine. See, I have them all.

SALOMON

[*Taking letters, unfolding them.*] Hm-m-m; yes, very good, all correct. He has turned out better than I expected, after all. In another year he will make as good a banker as though he had been brought up under my own roof. Matters have been different ever since I drove that poetry-making out of his head. I knew that, as soon as he got rid of that folly once for all, we should find him good for something. And I was right. Is it not so, Kellermann?

KELLERMANN

[*Hesitatingly.*] Yes, Herr Heine, of course you were right—of course——

SALOMON

[*In a tone of satisfaction.*] Ah, I do not make mistakes. I could see that in spite of all the verse-mongering he was a true Heine, who would help to make the house of Salomon Heine the greatest in all Hamburg—who knows, perhaps in all Germany? In that stupid nest of a Düsseldorf, where no one hears of anything but Rheinwein and poetry, poetry and Rheinwein, what was the wonder that he should talk of being a poet? But here in Hamburg there are sensible things to think of, Providence be praised. The letters to the post now, Kellermann.

[*Begins to read a paper.*

[KELLERMANN *starts towards the door, opens it, closes it again, comes back into the room, goes towards the door again, returns once more.*

SALOMON

[*Looking up, and speaking sharply, in a tone of surprise.*] Is there anything the matter with you this morning, Kellermann?

KELLERMANN

[*Confusedly.*] No—nothing, Herr Salomon.

## SALOMON

Then go, and let me read my paper in peace, and do not dance back and forth like a foolish marionette on a string. [KELLERMANN *remains where he is for a moment, then goes through the same proceeding as before.*] Something does ail you, I see. [*Laying the paper down.*] Out with it. What do you want to tell me?

## KELLERMANN

Nothing, Herr Heine—only—I have been reading some very interesting poetry lately.

## SALOMON

[*In a tone of exasperation.*] Is that what you have to say to me? Have you lost your senses?

## KELLERMANN

[*In greater confusion than before.*] No, Herr Heine—but I thought—perhaps you might like to hear some of it. [*Takes volume out of his pocket and reads with an attempt at being impressive*]:

*Im wunderschönen Monat Mai,  
Als alle Knospen sprangen,  
Da ist in meinem Herzen  
Die Liebe aufgegangen.*

*Im wunderschönen Monat Mai—*



(In the month of the lovely Maytime,  
 When the buds thrilled with the spring,  
 Then first I heard within my heart  
 Love's tender whispering.

In the month of the lovely Maytime—)

SALOMON

[*Interrupting angrily.*] What ridiculous nonsense  
 have you there?

KELLERMANN

[*With a great effort.*] No nonsense at all, Herr  
 Heine. See for yourself. [*Hands him the book.*

SALOMON

[*Lays it down contemptuously at first, then the title  
 catches his eye. He picks it up and reads, first in a  
 puzzled tone, and then indignantly.*] “ ‘ *Junge Leiden*  
 [Youth's Sorrows], by Heinrich Heine.’ ” “ ‘ *Junge  
 Leiden* [Youth's Sorrows], by Heinrich Heine’ ”!  
 What Heinrich Heine? My nephew! [KELLER-  
 MANN *nods.*] The good-for-nothing fellow!  
 [*Slams the book down violently.*

KELLERMANN

[*Timidly.*] But will you not read some of the  
 poetry, Herr Heine?

SALOMON

A poet! After all that I have done for him! To  
 have my nephew here in my own house, so that he

might miss no single opportunity of learning how to manage a bank—and then to have him write verses, as though he were nothing better than a beggarly wandering student. And to print them, too! It is more than I will endure! Thirty years have I lived in Hamburg, and been respected from the beginning, and now that I am Salomon Heine and Company, this empty-headed nephew of mine must bring shame upon me by his imbecility! Let him go back to the Rhine, and write his verses among others like himself. We shall see how he will make his way there with his nonsensical follies!

KELLERMANN

But, Herr Heine!

SALOMON

Do not say a word! Ah, we shall see how he will get along when he has only the publishers to depend upon. There are not many who would willingly throw away their connection with the house of Salomon Heine! Just when I had been boasting to everyone how sensible he had become! I shall be the laughing-stock of all Hamburg!

*[A maid enters.]*

MAID

Herr Maier to see Herr Heine!

SALOMON

Is the whole world upside-down this morning? My nephew turns poet, and my dinner guests come at luncheon time!

[*Enter HERR MAIER, a rotund, comfortable-looking man of about SALOMON HEINE'S age. He has a newspaper in his hand. Exit maid.*]

MAIER

[*To KELLERMANN.*] Good-morning, Kellermann.  
[*To SALOMON.*] I should not be here in the morning, I know, but as soon as I read it in the paper, I wished to be one of the first to congratulate you.

SALOMON

Congratulate me! The newspapers surely——

MAIER

Do you mean to say you have not seen *The Watchman*?

SALOMON

I have no time for *The Watchman*. There are the Exchange rates to be read; and the foreign dispatches and the column from Berlin. Even if it is a holiday—absolute idleness is only for you merchants, not for us bankers.

MAIER

Yes, yes, we all know no grass grows under the feet of Salomon Heine. But you have all the luck! To have under one roof the most flourishing bank in all Hamburg and the—what it is? [*Unfolds paper and reads:*] “The poet who gives promise of being one of the greatest in all Germany.”

SALOMON

What is that you are reading?

MAIER

Why, the review of your Heinrich's poems from to-day's *Watchman*. I had forgotten you said you had not read it. I will read it to you. I was proud of him myself, I declare, when I read it. [*Reads.*] “In “*Junge Leiden*” [Youth's Sorrows], published by Maurer of Berlin, Herr Heinrich Heine, of Hamburg, has produced a volume of poems which seems to promise a new awakening of the long slumbering muse of German song. All the romance of the Rhineland, all the magic of fairyland, are in the young poet's verses. They have the qualities that true German poetry should possess—simplicity, pathos, and melody. Some of the shorter pieces end on a strangely beautiful minor chord that is, we believe, a new note in the poetry of any language. Among so much that is exquisite it is hard to know what to select for special praise.’” [*Breaks off in the reading.*] That is not

bad for a young fellow from Hamburg, is it? And that is not the half——

SALOMON

[*Interrupting.*] Kellermann, hand me *The Watchman* from that desk.

KELLERMANN

[*Who has been listening with eagerness.*] Surely, Herr Heine.

[*Picks up paper, opens it, glances hurriedly through the columns, hands paper to SALOMON, pointing as he does so as though to call attention to a special article, then retires hastily to his desk. SALOMON reads silently, with evidently growing interest.*]

MAIER

Well, what do you think of it?

[*Enter maid.*]

MAID

Herr Professor Mertens to see Herr Heine.

MAIER

[*Surprised.*] Since when have you begun to keep such learned company? The most important wiseacre of the whole crew—nothing less!

[PROFESSOR MERTENS enters. *He is a thin, elderly man, dressed in black. His hair is long and straggling, falling over his ears as he bows his morning salutation. He wears large gold-rimmed spectacles and carries a huge, black cotton umbrella, which he carefully deposits in a corner before beginning to speak.*

SALOMON

[*All three occupants of the room rise respectfully.*] This is an honor, Herr Professor. [*Offering him a chair.*]

PROFESSOR MERTENS

[*In a formal but not unkindly manner.*] No, no, Herr Heine. Such practical men as you have so little time that we bookworms must not intrude upon it for long. But this morning is a special occasion. I have just come from a meeting of my colleagues, all of whom had learned with great interest from this morning's *Watchman* that a new poet had arisen in Germany, and with great pride that he was a dweller in Hamburg. It is so seldom that we Hamburgers get credit for anything but commercial productiveness that we owe a debt of gratitude to those who can show that an atmosphere of art and letters need not be wholly absent from a commercial city. On behalf of my

colleagues of the Gymnasium as well as on my own, I wish to compliment you upon your nephew's talents, and upon your share in fostering them. Be so good as to convey to the young poet, whom I have not the honor to know, but whom I hope to have the pleasure of meeting very soon, our warmest congratulations, and our best wishes for the future. Your very humble servant, sir [*to MAIER*], and yours [*to KELLERMANN*], and yours. Good-morning.

*[Looks for his umbrella and then goes out.]*

MAIER

*[Chuckling.]* Ah, you see what an honor it is when a banker has a poet for a nephew!

*[MAID enters.]*

MAID

A messenger has just brought this note from Herr Hofrat von Claussen.

*[Exit.]*

MAIER

The Hofrat too! What next?

SALOMON

*[Opens letter, shaking his head as he does so, and reads.]* "The Hofrat von Claussen presents his compliments to Herr Salomon Heine, and begs to

felicitate him on the poetic talents of his nephew Herr Heinrich Heine, of which the three poems quoted in this morning's *Watchman* furnish so convincing a proof——”

KELLERMANN

[*Rising from his place at the desk, going over to the table where SALOMON is seated, and looking for the place in the paper.*] Yes, three, that is right!

SALOMON

[*Seems about to rebuke KELLERMANN, but refrains, and resumes reading the note*]. “The Hofrat wishes to add that the Hofrätin would esteem it a favor if Herr Heinrich Heine would give her the pleasure of his company to-morrow afternoon at three, when the Hofrätin will entertain Gräfin von Wintersholm and some other ladies who would be charmed to hear Herr Heinrich Heine read some of his poems. The Hofrat will be indebted to Herr Salomon Heine if he will have the goodness to convey to Herr Heinrich Heine the Hofrätin's invitation, and again assures Herr Salomon Heine of his sincere felicitations and in addition his most distinguished consideration.” [*Draws a long breath.*] Indeed!

MAIER

Well, when notes and invitations come from Hofrats and Hofrätins who are generally too near-sighted to



see us commercial folks when they pass us in the street, I had better go, before the King of Prussia sends his Hofmarschall to ask for the privilege of presenting you at court. [*Goes towards door.*] *Auf wiedersehen*, then, uncle of a poet! [HEINRICH HEINE and CHRISTIAN SETHE appear at the door. To HEINRICH HEINE.] All that fine poetry need not be kept for Hofrätins, I hope. We must hear some of it at dinner to-night.

[*Goes out.* HEINRICH and SETHE enter. SETHE greets SALOMON HEINE and KELLERMANN, then seats himself at a table and reads a paper.

## HEINE

[*In a low tone to KELLERMANN, who has gone back to his place at the desk.*]. Well?

## KELLERMANN

You shall see.

[HEINRICH HEINE seats himself in a comfortable chair and looks at SALOMON HEINE with an air of expectancy.

## SALOMON

[*After fidgeting awkwardly with papers and letters for a few moments.*] So! You have published a book of poetry.

HEINE

[*Half-defiantly.*] That is true!

SALOMON

[*After another pause.*] The Hofrätin von Claussen has invited you to her salon to-morrow afternoon to read some of the poems.

[KELLERMANN, *who has been following eagerly, leans back in his chair with a sigh of relief.*

HEINE

Invited *me*?

SALOMON

Here is the invitation. Perhaps some of the guests who are coming to dinner to-night might like to hear a poem or two as well. What do you say, Herr Sethe?

SETHE

An excellent idea, Herr Heine. Heinrich should begin to practice his reading at once.

SALOMON

No, no, no, it is too near luncheon time. But to-night we shall have some poetry in honor of the new member of the family whom we are going to welcome.

HEINE

What new member is that?

SALOMON

Yes, yes, of course you do not know; no one has been told about it. Have you not noticed anything about Molly lately?

HEINE

[*Starting.*] Molly! What is it about Molly?

SALOMON

[*Chuckling.*] Ah, she is a steady-witted little girl and can keep a secret. You remember Herr Friedländer from Königsberg, who sold us the Prussian bonds three months ago. To-night he will come as Molly's future husband. It was settled only yesterday.

HEINE

[*Slowly.*] So Molly is going to be married?

SALOMON

Yes, and she will have a husband with as good a head for business as ever I saw on anyone's shoulders. So perhaps the house of Heine can stand one poet, after all. And now we can go in to luncheon. I am hungry with all the talk about poetry. There is to be fish-

soup to-day. Come, Kellermann, leave the papers. Heinrich, bring Herr Sethe with you.

[*Goes out.* KELLERMANN rises and follows him.]

KELLERMANN

[*As he shuffles past HEINE.*] It has all come out right, you see, Herr Heinrich!

[*Goes out.*]

HEINE

My house of cards is down!

SETHE

[*Going to HEINRICH and bending over him.*]  
Courage, old comrade!

HEINE

Of course I shall have courage. That will be my *métier* through life, you shall see. What is it, after all? The flesh-and-blood mistress of my affections has engaged herself to someone else. As long as the Muse remains faithful, what need I care? Everyone knows that a broken heart is the very best stock in trade for a poet, and have I not received official permission from the head of the house of Salomon Heine to be a poet, and read some verses at Molly's betrothal feast? But go now, Christian, the fish-soup will be

getting cold, and Hamburg fish-soup is not a dish to be scorned—ask any Hamburger.

[SETHE goes out. HEINE remains seated in an attitude of utter dejection. MOLLY enters. She is a pretty young girl, simple and unaffected in manner.

MOLLY

[Going up to HEINE, who starts as he becomes aware of her presence.] Harry! They want to know why you do not come in to luncheon.

HEINE

[Playfully.] It's all your fault, Molly, that I am so late. I have been trying to think how I can most gracefully congratulate my fair cousin on her betrothal. Let me see—"Gnädiges Fräulein!"—

MOLLY

I would much rather have you write a poem about me, Harry. Father says that you are to read some of your poetry for Herr Friedländer after dinner to-night, and since you are a real poet now, with your poems printed in a book, I should like it of all things if you were to write one about me.

HEINE

Well, I will try to be the family poet in good earnest. Here is something that I have only just finished. Will you listen to the last verse?

*Es ist eine alte Geschichte,  
Doch bleibt sie immer neu,  
Und wem sie just passieret  
Dem bricht das Herz entzwei.*

(The story is old as the ages,  
Age-old, yet ever new;  
And a broken heart is his guerdon  
Who learns to find it true.)

## MOLLY

That is very pretty [*hesitatingly*], though I don't quite understand what it is about. But now you really must come, Harry, or we shall both be scolded, and on the day of my betrothal too!

[*Goes out.*]

## HEINE

[*Repeating*]

*Und wem sie just passieret  
Dem bricht das Herz entzwei.*

(And a broken heart is his guerdon  
Who learns to find it true.)

[*Bows his head on his hands, then rises, and walks slowly to the door. Exit.*]

MISS BURNEY AT COURT





In 1778, Miss Fanny Burney, then twenty-six years of age, published the novel "Evelina," which at once made the authoress famous. Her second novel, "Cecilia," was equally successful, and for some years Miss Burney was one of the literary celebrities of England. In 1786, Queen Charlotte, the consort of George III, offered her the post of Keeper of the Robes. Although it grieved Miss Burney to leave her family and her circle of friends to take up her residence at Windsor Palace, she gratefully accepted the honor conferred upon her, hoping that her connection with the Court would enable her to advance the fortunes of her father, Dr. Burney, a learned and accomplished musician. Miss Burney remained a member of the Queen's household for five years, during which time she kept a most entertaining diary, giving us delightful as well as true pictures of the life at Court. For Miss Burney herself the life was far from pleasant. Though the royal couple, King George and Queen Charlotte, were exceedingly considerate, her duties were made very irksome by the almost unbelievable rudeness and unkindness of her German colleague, Mrs. Schwellenberg, the Senior Keeper of the Robes. In her diary and in her equally entertaining family letters Miss Burney gives Mrs. Schwellenberg the appropriate nickname of Cerbera. In spite of the indignities she was compelled to endure, Miss Burney's anxiety to secure the King's favor for

her father made her unwilling to resign, even though her friends protested that her health was giving way under the strain. She did, however, finally resign her post in 1791, receiving a pension from the Queen's own purse, and retaining the Queen's friendship throughout her life. The fact that the King, as well as the Queen, was very kindly disposed towards the amiable authoress of "Evelina" is the basis of the following play.

# MISS BURNEY AT COURT

## CHARACTERS

FANNY BURNEY, Second Keeper of the Robes to Queen Charlotte.

SALLY BURNEY, her half-sister, a young girl.

MRS. SCHWELLENBERG, Senior Keeper of the Robes.

DR. BURNEY, a musician, father of Fanny and Sally.

THE VISITOR.

A FOOTMAN.

SCENE: Fanny Burney's drawing-room at Windsor.

TIME: 1791.

FANNY BURNEY *enters from an inner room on the left side. She has evidently been crying, and dries her eyes as she seats herself with an air of dejection at a small table near the center. FOOTMAN enters at the open door at the right.*

FOOTMAN

[*In a monotonous but not disrespectful tone.*] Mrs. Schwellenberg bids me say to Miss Burney that Mrs. Schwellenberg wishes Miss Burney to be punctual at

tea this afternoon and not keep Mrs. Schwollenberg waiting ten minutes as Miss Burney did yesterday.

*[Bows and goes out.]*

FANNY

*[Impatiently.]* Oh! Odious!

*[Rises quickly and takes seat on the sofa to the left, again drying her eyes. SALLY BURNEY enters on tiptoe. She looks about her, perceives FANNY, rushes up to her, and embraces her affectionately.]*

SALLY

Oh, Fanny! I've been home from school a week now! Only fancy! Home for good! And I'm come to see you at last.

FANNY

Why, Sally, my dear, what a delightful surprise! But have you come all alone?

SALLY

No, indeed; I should never have had the courage for that, even though I'm not a school-miss any longer. Father came with me.

FANNY

Father with you! Where is he, pray?

## SALLY

Below in the town, paying his respects to Dr. Parsons, who had some new tunes for father to hear, he said. I found my way up here all by my very own self, after they had shown me the path up the hill. What a monstrous tall fellow of a sentinel you have standing by the lodge gate! I quite shivered with fear as I passed him, but I said "Miss Burney," and looked as bold as a lion, I'm sure. And now I'm here—here in the palace! How fine everything is! Oh, how all the girls at school envied you for living in a palace! [*Stops; looks sharply at FANNY.*] Why, you have been crying, I declare. Your eyes are all red! What has happened?

## FANNY

[*With a little laugh.*] Nothing has happened. I have a slight cold, I think.

## SALLY

And you look quite sad! Do tell me what is wrong!

## FANNY

[*Half laughing and half crying.*] Oh, my dear, nothing is wrong—except that life in a palace has some little drawbacks which make themselves felt now and then. But so has life elsewhere, and I am going to forget all about my silly pin-pricks while my little Sally is visiting me. Now lay off your bonnet, [SALLY

*unties bonnet and lays it down*] and tell me all about the people at Norbury. How did you leave our dear Susan?

SALLY

Very well indeed; and I have a great long letter from her which you were to be sure to read before father came. [*Opens reticule and gives letter to FANNY.*]

FANNY

[*Breaking seal.*] A great long letter indeed! And I am to read it now? You must give me your permission, then. [*Begins to read.*]

SALLY

[*After a moment of watching.*] You are crying again! There must be bad news in the letter! Do tell me!

FANNY

[*Drying her eyes.*] No, Sally dear, there is no bad news in the letter; we will read it together, if you like, to convince you, and then you will know some of my secrets. [*Reading the letter aloud to SALLY, who listens eagerly.*]

My dearest sister:—

I can no longer be silent as to the concern with which your situation is regarded by those who love you. Your unselfish unwillingness to disappoint our dear father's hopes of promotion by informing him of the true state of your affairs is causing us the greatest anxiety. Though the il-

lustrious persons you serve possess almost all human excellences, and treat you with the most benevolent condescension, yet you can never, in any part of the livelong day, command liberty or social intercourse or repose. Worse than all, you are subject to the caprice of one whose colleague you justly expected to be, but who regards you as her dependent. Your depression of spirits and constant declension in health convince us all that your constitution is surely giving way. Cease to conceal the fact from the father who loves you so truly. No prospect of honors to be derived from your connection with the Court will seem to him of value equal to a cherished daughter's well-being. I implore you in the name of all your friends—and who has so many as you?—to give him your confidence. Be sure that he will receive it without a syllable of reproach or regret for the thwarting of his plans. Speak to him to-day—tell him all, and end the distress of

Your ever-devoted sister,  
SUSAN PHILLIPS.

SALLY

So you were really crying, after all! Poor Fanny! And I thought you were as happy as the day was long, here in the palace, waiting on the Queen! Do tell me all about it, now! Is the Queen not good to you?

FANNY

The Queen! Oh, my dear, she is goodness itself! I am always happy when I am with her.

SALLY

Who is it, then, that makes you unhappy? [*A bell rings.*]

FANNY

Oh, I had forgotten that it was so near tea-time. But I may escape to-day, I suppose. [*Rings bell on*

*the table*—FOOTMAN *enters.*] John, I shall have tea here instead of above. Bring a tray for two. And make my excuses to Mrs. Schwellenberg, and tell her I have my sister visiting me. [FOOTMAN *goes out.*]

## SALLY

Mrs. Schwellenberg! What a queer name? Who is she?

## FANNY

She is the Senior Keeper of the Queen's Robes. I am only the Second Keeper, you know, and I share these apartments with her. I ought to be pouring tea for her now, I am afraid.

## SALLY

Tell me something about her, this Mrs. Schwellenberg. [*Making a grimace at the name.*] Do you like her?

[FOOTMAN *enters, bearing tray with tea-service, which he places upon the table.*]

## FANNY

I think our little confidences will have a better flavor over a dish of tea, perhaps. [*Is about to pour tea when MRS. SCHWELLENBERG enters. She is a stout, red-faced woman of between fifty and sixty, and is in a violent passion.*]



## MRS. SCHWELLENBERG

[*Scarcely able to control her anger.*] \*Miss Berni, vat do this mean? I tell you I vant you promptly, and you come not at all. I have lived in this palace for such a long time as no one else, and I never know no one who behave so ill!

## FANNY

[*Quietly.*] I sent John with a message to explain, Madam, that my sister was come to visit me.

## MRS. SCHWELLENBERG

[*No less angrily.*] You have not to explain, you have to do as I vant. Who is the mistress here, you or me? You think because the Queen like your story-book you are so much better as everyone that you do not one thing but be idle in your room and leave me to be alone by myself. But you shall not stay down when there is tea-time. I tell you so vonce—twice—many times, and now I tell you so again that you shall come up.

## FANNY

[*Obviously making an effort to control her indignation.*] I will come, Madam. Will you permit my sister to join us? She has just come from school in Switzerland, and is paying her first visit here.

\* Mrs. Schwellenberg's dialect and manner of speech are reproduced from Miss Burney's report of them in the "Diary."

MRS. SCHWELLENBERG

[*Rudely.*] For vat must I have the trouble with your sister who comes from school? The gentlemens in my company—gentlemens who vait on the King—do not vant to sit with persons so young like that. Your sister can vait here until I do not vant you longer.

FANNY

[*Gently to SALLY, who has been listening in astonishment.*] Go, my dear, into my bedroom [*pointing to door*] and bring me my fan and gloves. You will find them on the dressing-table. [*SALLY goes.*]

MRS. SCHWELLENBERG

Have His Majesty not alreaty sent to you to-day?

FANNY

No, Madam. Sent for what?

MRS. SCHWELLENBERG

He have said this morning to the Queen vwhile I vas vith her that he did vish for some snuff like vat you mixed for the Queen, and he vould ask you for that you mix him some for himself.

FANNY

I have received no message from him, Madam.

[*Re-enter SALLY, with fan and gloves, which she gives to FANNY.*]

## MRS. SCHWELLENBERG

[*With a scornful look towards SALLY.*] You will come up at vonce, Miss Berni, and not keep my company waiting no more. [*Goes out pompously.*]

## SALLY

[*Half-frightened, half-indignant.*] Ugh! what a horrid, horrid creature! No wonder you are unhappy if you must be where she is. Poor Fanny! I declare, I hate the palace after all.

## FANNY

[*Laying a finger on SALLY'S lips.*] Hush, my dear. I must go and serve tea to the equerries now, but you will wait patiently for me, I know. I can give you no company to your dish of tea, for I expect no one at this hour, but you will take my place and do the honors if anyone should chance to appear, will you not? [*Kisses SALLY and goes out. SALLY stands disconsolately in the doorway for a moment, then tiptoes back into the room, goes up to the mirror, and practises courtesying à la grande dame before it. As she is doing so a middle-aged gentleman appears in the doorway. Catching sight of his reflection, she turns in some confusion.*]

## VISITOR

Is Miss Burney not within?

SALLY

No, sir; Miss Burney is engaged at present; but she will be not absent long. She is gone to serve tea to the King's equerries above-stairs.

VISITOR

[*In a puzzled tone.*] To the King's equerries, eh? —the equerries?

SALLY

Yes, sir. But I was to take her place if anyone called while she was away, and [*with a sudden inspiration*] will you not step in and allow me to pour you a dish of tea?

VISITOR

[*Entering and looking curiously about him.*] A dish of tea, eh?—a dish of tea? Very kind, indeed.

SALLY

Nay, sir, I am doing only as my sister bade me. Pray, be seated. [*The VISITOR takes a chair at the table, SALLY sits down opposite him. As she does so, the visitor starts as if in surprise, without, however, attracting SALLY's notice.*]

VISITOR

So you are Miss Burney's sister, eh?

SALLY

Yes, sir, but only just freed from school in Switzerland. [*Pouring out a cup of tea and handing it to the VISITOR.*]

VISITOR

Never been to the palace before, then?

SALLY

No, sir; never before. When my sister first came here I was too young, and they thought it would not be fitting for her to receive me.

VISITOR

That was foolish of them,—very foolish.

SALLY

And then I was sent away abroad to school so that I might get a finer education than was to be had at home.

VISITOR

Ah, French and fal-lals, I suppose. That's what you get abroad.

SALLY

But I wouldn't stop long after coming home from school. I was so eager to see my sister in the

palace. [*Sighs deeply as she pours out a cup of tea for herself.*]

VISITOR

A great thing for your sister to be in the palace—a great thing, to be sure!

SALLY

Yes, I always used to think so and boast about it to the girls at school. But I should have known better than to boast—I am well paid for it.

VISITOR

No,—no,—never boast.

SALLY

Indeed, I would never have boasted if I had known the truth. But how could I help believing that it was a fine thing to be in the palace and wait on the Queen, and see the King himself, every day of one's life! [*VISITOR draws himself up complacently.*] Poor Fanny! [*Sighing again.*] But will you not let me give you another dish of tea?

VISITOR

[*Passing his cup.*] A very good brew indeed—a very good brew. [*Drinks.*] But you say, "Poor Fanny!" Why "Poor Fanny"?

SALLY

Ah, sir, I have a good reason to say poor Fanny, as you would know if you were better acquainted with the people in the palace. [VISITOR *seems about to interrupt, but checks himself.*] As for me, I had not been here a quarter of an hour before I found out how things stood with my sister. Indeed I cannot see how she endures such an odious creature!

VISITOR

Endures? She loves the Queen, surely—the good Queen?

SALLY

No, no, it's not the Queen. The King and Queen are both good and kind, she says. But [*hesitating*], Fanny would not like me to be saying all this. 'Tis all because I am so angry. When I am angry I must be speaking my mind to someone.

VISITOR

Yes, yes! speak your mind—tell me—I am Miss Burney's friend. I always was. Tell me again—is she unhappy?—I can't believe it—the Queen does all she can for her, I'm sure. And if she were unhappy she would surely tell the Queen—the Queen wants no one about her to be unhappy. I'll not believe it until I hear that Miss Burney says so herself.

## SALLY

[*Hurt at his incredulity.*] Ah, you don't know how good she is. I could not understand it myself until I saw my sister Susan's letter. It is on account of our father that she will not tell the Queen. Look, you may see for yourself in the letter that Susan sent to her this very day. [*Takes letter and going over to the VISITOR, points out passages and reads*]: "'Your unwillingness to disappoint our dear father's hopes of promotion by informing him of the true state of affairs is causing us the greatest anxiety on your behalf.'"

## VISITOR

Ah!

## SALLY

Well, now you may as well look at the rest, and see who knows more about life in a palace, you or I.

## VISITOR

[*Taking letter and looking through it slowly.*] "Causing us the greatest anxiety." [*Shaking his head gravely.*] "The illustrious persons you serve possess almost all human excellences." [*Nodding his head as if in pleased assent.*] "Subject to the beck and call—regards you as her dependent——" Ah, yes, yes,—the Schwellenberg—I know she must have a hard time with the Schwellenberg, but I thought—well, well, this will not do—not do at all.



## SALLY

Indeed, sir, you would be as sorry as I am if you had seen Fanny's eyes all red from crying, and you would be as angry as I am if you had heard how rudely she was spoken to when the Mrs. what-d'ye-call-her came here to order her above-stairs. [*Mimicking* MRS. SCHWELLENBERG.] Miss Berni—vat does this mean? You have not to explain—you are to do as I vant—For vat must I have the trouble vith your sister!

## VISITOR

[*Laughing at the mimicry.*] Ah, very good! very good! But we should not laugh because people are unhappy. We should see what can be done for them. Well, well, we shall see, we shall see. But now it is time for me to take my leave. [*Rises.*] I had come to ask Miss Burney to fill my box with some of her snuff. She mixes it exactly right—exactly right. I will leave my box [*places box on table*], and my kind hostess will tell Miss Burney that I will send for it shortly.

## SALLY

Who shall I say will send, sir?

## VISITOR

Who? Oh, yes—say Colonel George. Your servant, madam, and my thanks. [*Bowing.*]

SALLY

[*Courtesying*]. I wish you a very good day, sir.

[*VISITOR goes out. After he has gone, SALLY takes the snuffbox from the table and examines it curiously. As she is doing so, MISS BURNEY enters.*

FANNY

Well, Sally, my dear, here I am back, you see. The equerries have all been properly tea'd, and I am free for my little sister at last. Poor little sister, to be left all alone in a great gloomy drawing-room!

SALLY

Ah, but I wasn't alone. I had a visitor!

FANNY

A visitor? Who, pray?

SALLY

Colonel George.

FANNY

[*Puzzled.*] I know no Colonel George. Was he a stranger? And who announced him?

SALLY

He spoke as though he knew you—though to be sure, he knew little enough about the palace, as I took

pains to tell him. He came in as coolly as you please, so that there was nothing for it but to bid him be seated and have his dish of tea.

FANNY

Unannounced—why, no one but—tell me, what was he like?

SALLY

He was a goodish-sized fat man, not quite so old as father; pleasant enough, though a little stupid, I thought. And he kept on saying things twice over, as though he couldn't quite hear himself.

FANNY

[*In a tone of distress.*] Oh, Sally, you can't mean it—Why, you surely haven't—

SALLY

Why, what ails you, Fanny? You bade me take your place and I did; and this Colonel George, whoever he may be that seems to distress you so—I'm sure I can see no reason for it, for he was not so ill, even though he had few wits—came only to ask you for some snuff that you could mix better than anyone else, he said.

FANNY

[*Sinking into a chair, in utter consternation.*] Oh, Sally, Sally, you poor little goose!

SALLY

[*Aggrieved.*] And here's the snuffbox he left for you to fill when he should send for it. [*Handing box to FANNY.*]

FANNY

[*Taking box.*] Ah, I was sure of it! Had you no idea who your Colonel George was?

SALLY

None in the world. And who was he, pray?

FANNY

Why, His Majesty, himself!

SALLY

Oh, no, no!

FANNY

This is his snuffbox. I have seen him with it a thousand times. And Mrs. Schwollenberg told me he wished for some snuff of my mixing. And he always repeats his words in this fashion. [*Imitating the VISITOR*): "Yes, yes"—"very good, very good"—"Was not that the way?"

SALLY

Yes, it was indeed. Oh, what shall I do? Why didn't I know? You don't know what I told him!

FANNY

Told him! What did you tell him?

SALLY

Ah, you may as well know it all. I was so angry at Mrs. What-do-you-call-her, and you know I can never be silent when I am angry—and he seemed so kind that I—oh! how can I say it?

FANNY

You did what? [*Gently.*] You know, dear, I cannot be angry with my little sister, only sorry.

SALLY

I showed him Susan's letter!

[*In the pause which follows DR. BURNEY enters. He is about sixty years old, stout, florid, and cheery.*]

DR. BURNEY

[*To FANNY.*] Well, my dear, I am come at last. Dr. Parsons was for playing me a half-score of his newest and slowest tunes, or I should have followed Sally sooner. [*To SALLY.*] And what does Miss Bread-and-Butter think of the palace, eh? [*To FANNY, again.*] There was no keeping her away, once she came home—nothing would serve but she must visit Fanny in the palace, before any of the others were

as much as thought of. But [*observing the appearance of distress on SALLY'S and FANNY'S countenances*] what is this? What has happened?

SALLY

[*Sobbing.*] Oh, father, you don't know what I've done!

DR. BURNEY

Why, what can you have done? Not quarreled with Fanny, surely? No one could do that. [*To FANNY.*] Do you tell me, Fanny.

FANNY

[*Greatly disconcerted.*] Why, father, I was obliged to leave Sally to herself while I served tea in Mrs. Schwellenberg's apartment and——

DR. BURNEY

And the spoiled little minx did some mischief, I'll be bound—smashed your pet china monster, or ruined your best paduasoy with trying it on when she'd no business to be meddling with it.

SALLY

[*Indignantly.*] Indeed, father, I did no such thing. But I will tell you, since you must know. [*Disregarding FANNY'S anxious efforts to induce her to be silent.*] I showed the King Susan's letter!

DR. BURNEY

Susan's letter! What letter?

SALLY

The letter that Susan sent Fanny to persuade her to give up her place here at the palace.

DR. BURNEY

[*Nonplussed.*] But why should Susan want Fanny to give up her place at the palace?

SALLY

Why? [*To FANNY.*] Yes, Fanny, I will tell, since you will not. If the King knows it, father may as well. [*To DR. BURNEY again.*] Because she is miserable and ill and unhappy, on account of a horrid woman with a German alphabet for a name, and because she won't tell about it for fear of disappointing you. [*As DR. BURNEY stares uncomprehendingly, she thrusts the letter into his hand. He reads it slowly.*]

DR. BURNEY

[*Turning to FANNY.*] My dear, if this is true we are all to blame for not having greater confidence in one another. But Susan has judged me rightly. There is no promotion worth the price of my dear daughter's well-being.

FANNY

But, father, I had such hopes that the Queen's favor would bring you the recognition you have earned so well! My troubles would have seemed nothing if only the King could have promised you the place you——

[*Enter FOOTMAN, bearing tray with a letter.*

FOOTMAN

A letter for Miss Burney's sister.

SALLY

[*Starting forward.*] For me? From whom?

FOOTMAN

I was to say from Colonel George, Madam.

[*Exit.*

SALLY

[*In distress.*] Ah! Now I shall find that I have wrecked everything for you.

FANNY

[*Gently.*] Do not mind, my dear. You did not mean the least ill in the world.

SALLY

[*Breaking the seal and reading*]:

Colonel George presents his compliments and assures



Miss Burney's sister that it is the King's pleasure, and will be the Queen's, that Miss Burney take whatever steps be necessary for the preservation of her health and for the proper exercise of those talents which first brought her to their Majesties' notice. Should Miss Burney no longer feel it wise to remain a member of the Queen's household, Colonel George is authorized to add the assurance that she will lose nothing of the Queen's regard by ceasing to attend upon her. Miss Burney may also feel at liberty to count on the King's recognition of her father's merit, as soon as any position worthy of Dr. Burney's acceptance falls within the King's gift. Colonel George begs that Miss Burney's sister will retain the snuffbox which Colonel George left in her possession as a slight mark of her guest's appreciation and enjoyment of her sincerity.

[*Dropping the letter.*] Then I've not been so dreadfully meddlesome after all! Did you understand it, Fanny and father?

#### FANNY

[*Taking the letter.*] 'Tis the King's hand, sure enough. I may resign, and keep the Queen's favor! And father's promotion is on the way! Oh, Sally, you little diplomatist! You should have been at court instead of me!

#### DR. BURNEY

Nay, I have tried the family fortunes with one daughter, and am lucky to have escaped without losing her, it would seem. If the King will make me his bandmaster, well and good; but I fear the Burney womenfolk were not meant to be Mistresses of the Robes. I was stupid and owlish not to have noted

your distress before, Fanny, but 'tis not too late to make you well and happy again—Providence be praised—and who knows—“Evelina” and “Cecilia” may have a sister heroine before long. And now [to SALLY] get your bonnet, Mistress Sally. We have had our fill of the palace for one day.

SALLY

And such fine news as we have for Susan! What will she say to my letter—and to my snuffbox?

FANNY

She will say that she chose a clever ambassadress to send to court.

DR. BURNEY

[To SALLY, who is tying on her bonnet.] Bid adieu to the Keeper of the Robes. She will soon be plain Fanny Burney again, back with her old father in Poland Street.

SALLY

And with Esther in Mickleham, and Susan in Norbury! Ah, to have Fanny at home again will be better than having a sister in the palace! But [*drawing herself up proudly*] the King is not so ill to have a chat with, there's no denying it. [*Putting box in reticule*].

## FANNY

[*Laughing and kissing her.*] Good-by, my little courtier. [*Courtesying to her father.*] Good-by, sir. You shall hear all the hows and whens of my change of station as soon as they have been arranged for. Tell Susan I am grateful, and that all will be well now. [DR. BURNEY and SALLY go out. FANNY stands in the doorway for a moment, looking after them; then turns back into the room. As she does so, MRS. SCHWELLENBERG enters.]

## MRS. SCHWELLENBERG

[*Much perturbed.*] Miss Berni! For vat do you vait? Do you not know that this afternoon I vill go out, and you shall take my place to be ready for Her Majesty when she shall come back from her drive? But no, you do not know nothings—never do you know nothings at all!

## FANNY

[*Gayly.*] I declare, Madam, I had forgotten. Or perhaps you had forgotten to tell me. And so you are going out? Is it for a visit, or merely to enjoy the air?

## MRS. SCHWELLENBERG

[*Angrily.*] It makes no matter for vhy I go, so long as you do not forget for vhy you are here. I tell you vonce more it is for you to do as I shall vant, and not to ask any questions.

FANNY

[*Still gayly.*] Yes, Madam, to be sure. Am I to go to Her Majesty now?

MRS. SCHWELLENBERG

It is not yet the Queen's time for an hour. But I did come to tell you that you shall send your sister away, so that you shall not be too late.

FANNY

My sister has gone, Madam. And now, since we have some time, shall we not play your favorite game of cards?

MRS. SCHWELLENBERG

[*Astonished.*] For vat you ask me to play cards? You are always so tired at night ven ve play. The gentlemens, they always say, "Miss Berni, she get tired vith the cards," and I say, "It is nonsense. Ve play no more as four hours. For vhy shall she be tired?" But I tell them to-night Miss Berni am not tired, she ask to play.

FANNY

I shall be only too happy, Madam.

MRS. SCHWELLENBERG

[*Scrutinizing FANNY sharply.*] For vhy you say you are happy?

## FANNY

I say so, because I *am* happy, Madam. And now, if you are willing, we will go to our cards.

[MRS. SCHWELLENBERG *goes out tossing her head and muttering, "Happy, for vhy happy?"* FANNY *courtesies very low as* MRS. SCHWELLENBERG *walks away, then follows her out of the room.*



A CHRISTMAS EVE WITH  
CHARLES DICKENS





In the story of the early life of Charles Dickens, the great novelist, we read that when he was about eleven years old, his father became very poor, and fell into debt. In those days there were debtors' prisons, and to one of these Mr. Dickens was sent. During his father's imprisonment, Charles did what he could to help his family by working in a blacking factory. His duty was to tie up the blacking bottles, and for many months he worked faithfully at this tedious task. All the men and boys in the factory were kind to him, because he was so young and so different from the other employees. One boy, named Bob Fagin, was his special friend. Every morning and every night, Charles visited his parents and his brothers and sisters in the prison, but he slept in a lodging of his own near by. His father remained in the prison for more than a year, until he received a legacy from a relative, which enabled him to pay his debts. We do not know just when the good news of the legacy reached the family, but if we are willing to imagine that it came on Christmas Eve, and if we believe in pleasant dreams, we have our little play.



# A CHRISTMAS EVE WITH CHARLES DICKENS

## CHARACTERS

CHARLES DICKENS, aged twelve.

FANNY, his sister, aged fourteen.

BOB FAGIN, aged fourteen, employed in the blacking  
factory.

MRS. GALE, Dickens's landlady.

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS.

### *Characters in the Christmas Pageant.*

FATHER CHRISTMAS.

ST. GEORGE

THE LORD OF MISRULE

THE KING OF EGYPT

HOLLY

THE DOCTOR

IVY

THE FAIR SABRA

COOKS

THE DRAGON

SCULLION

MORRIS DANCERS

PAGES

BEARER OF THE BOAR'S HEAD

TIME: 1824.

PLACE: CHARLES DICKENS'S *lodging in Lant Street, Borough, London.*

*The SCENE represents a room, poorly furnished, but neat. At the right of the stage towards the front, a*

*table with a small chair beside it and upon it a pile of shabby books, and a candle, partly burned, in a tin candlestick. In the left-hand corner at the back, a tightly-rolled mattress and a pillow. On the left side, towards the front, an old-fashioned high-backed chair. A fireplace at the right-hand side of the stage, and on the small mantel over it, the clock. MRS. GALE, bending over the fireplace, using a pair of bellows vigorously.*

*The door to the left of the stage opens, and CHARLES DICKENS and BOB FAGIN enter. DICKENS'S suit is neat and well-fitting, but threadbare. He wears a woolen tippet around his neck and carries a round cloth cap in his hand. BOB wears long loose trousers and a jacket of a different color, much too large for him. On seeing MRS. GALE, he snatches off a shabby fur cap.*

MRS. GALE

[*Looking up, surprised.*] Why, if it isn't Master Dickens! Whatever brings you back so soon? It's never your regular time, surely?

DICKENS

[*Cheerfully, unwinding his tippet.*] I'm a whole hour early to-night, Mrs. Gale. Mr. Lamert said, since it was Christmas Eve, we might leave the warehouse at six instead of seven.

MRS. GALE

That *was* kind of him, to be sure. Everyone can do with a little spare time on Christmas Eve. It's a pity,

though, I've not a better fire ready for you this cold night. I'd have had a nice blaze if I'd known when to look for you. But come up to the hearth, at any rate, and try to get warm, you and [*after a pause and an uncertain look at BOB*] the other young gentleman.

BOB

[*Briskly.*] There ain't no need to be calling *me* a young gentleman, ma'am. I'm only Bob Fagin, as works in the blacking ware'us for seven bob a week. It's *him* [*jerking his thumb over his shoulder at CHARLES*] as is the young gentleman in our place. We all calls him that, you know. Poll Green, he didn't want to, once,—he said it was "airs," he did. But I soon settled *him*; you know I did, don't you, Master Charles?

DICKENS

[*Laughing.*] You're always very good to me, Bob, I know that.

BOB

[*To MRS. GALE.*] Oh, it didn't take any time at all, ma'am. I finished him beautiful in the second round. *He* won't want to call people out of their right names no more, I'll warrant you that.

MRS. GALE

[*Pleasantly.*] Well, Bob, since that's your name, come up and get warm at the fire, anyway. You must need it after your walk.

BOB

[*Approaching the hearth, and blowing on his hands.*] It is a goodish bit, ma'am, from Hungerford Stairs to here, and it ain't exactly May weather neither.

DICKENS

Yes, and do you know, Mrs. Gale, he walked home with me, though it's quite out of his way, just because——

BOB

[*Interrupting.*] Just because Christmas Eve ain't no time for a young gentleman whose folks is away, and who ain't feeling as shipshape as he might, to be coming home through the streets all alone by hisself. It's easy enough for *me* to get around the streets any night of the year. *I* was born to them, *I* was, and there ain't no chap of my size as knows them better than I do. But Master Charles here's different. Why, if he was my kind, I'd ha' made him come home alonger me. We always has good times on Christmas Eve,—sassengers and mashed for supper, and plenty of them—but [*with a sidelong glance at CHARLES*] it wouldn't be no use asking him, most like.

DICKENS

It's very, very good of you, Bob, to want to invite me. But I'd rather stay here to-night, I think. You shall tell me all about your Christmas when we're to-

gether again. But you mustn't wait any longer now. I've made you quite late enough. Good-night, and a Merry Christmas.

BOB

A Merry Christmas it is, then, Master Charles, and good-night, since you're bound to have it so. And [to MRS. GALE] good-night to you, too, ma'am. [*Bolts out.*]

DICKENS

[*Very slowly.*] Do you think, Mrs. Gale, it's very wrong of me not to tell Bob that father and mother are living in the prison because father can't pay his debts? Bob's so good to me. Ought I to tell him, do you think?

MRS. GALE

[*Briskly.*] Bless your little heart, I don't see that there's the least wrong in the world about it. It's hard enough for a little gentleman like you to have to work alongside of such rough folk without them knowing all your troubles, to make sport of them, most likely. If you can keep your troubles to yourself without telling fibs about them, why, so much the better, say I. But you're surely going over to the prison to-night to see your pa, aren't you?

DICKENS

No, Mrs. Gale, I'm not going to-night. We used to have such jolly times on Christmas Eve, and father

was always the happiest of us all. I know it makes him sad now to think of our spending Christmas Eve in prison. So I said last night that I wouldn't come again till Christmas Day, and father said that Fanny and the rest could spend the evening at my godfather's.

MRS. GALE

So you'll be going to your godfather's presently?

DICKENS

No, I don't care to go anywhere at all to-night; I'd rather stay here.

MRS. GALE

[*In surprise.*] Stay all by yourself on Christmas Eve!

DICKENS

Why, yes. I sha'n't mind being alone. The fire's nice and bright, and I have almost a whole candle, so that I shall be able to read nearly as long as I want to.

MRS. GALE

Deary me, you're never going to sit and read books to-night! Another lad would want some sport on Christmas Eve instead of tiring his brains with books after working all day tying up those nasty, ugly, blacking bottles.



DICKENS

Oh, Mrs. Gale, the books don't tire me, indeed they don't! They're just friends—and such old friends too. I've had them all since I was a little fellow, no more than eight. And there are so many splendid things in them. Now, to-night [*enthusiastically*], I'm going to read about the Christmases they used to have long ago—all sorts of wonderful sports. Why, they even had plays about Mince Pie and Plum Pudding. Did you ever read any of them, Mrs. Gale?

MRS. GALE

[*Laughing.*] No, I never read any plays about mince pies and plum puddings. It's quite enough for me to make pies and puddings.

DICKENS

They're not *really* pies and puddings, you know, just people dressed up to look like them. But I do love to read about the plays and the games and the dances. It seems as though I were seeing them all, instead of only reading about them. That's what books are for, I believe—to make people happy.

MRS. GALE

[*Shaking her head.*] Well, my boy, you shall have it your own way. [*Moving slowly toward the door.*] Good-night, then, Master Dickens, and keep a good heart. Something'll be sure to happen soon to get your

poor father out of prison before Christmas is many days old.

## DICKENS

[*Smiling.*] That's just what he says quite often: "Something will be sure to turn up." Good-night, Mrs. Gale.

[MRS. GALE goes out. DICKENS lights his candle, and sitting down at the table, takes a book and begins to read aloud, at first in an ordinary tone, but more and more drowsily as he proceeds.

\* "Any man or woman that can give any information or tell any tidings of an old, old, very old, gray-bearded gentleman, called Christmas, who was wont to be a verie familiar guest and visit all sorts of people both poor and rich, and used to appear in glittering gold, silk, and silver in the Court, and had ringing, feasts, and jollity in all places both in the citie and countrie, for his coming [*very drowsily*] whosoever can tell what is become of him, or where he may be found,—let—them—bring—him—back—again—to—England."

[*Leans back in his chair, letting the book fall from his hand. After a moment's pause, the music of "Silent Night, Holy Night" is faintly heard. As the music dies away, a slender figure, wearing a long green robe trimmed with holly and mistletoe, appears in the doorway.*

\* From "A Hue-and-Cry After Christmas."

## DICKENS

[*With a sigh.*] What beautiful music! It's Christmas music, too! [*Seeing the visitor.*] And you—[*dreamily*] look like the Christmas angel on the cover of my old carol-book. But that would be too wonderful!

## SPIRIT

[*Advancing.*] Nay, dear child, I *am* the Spirit of Christmas. You have read in the books that you love so much [*laying his hand on the shabby pile*] how in olden days no witch or evil spirit had power to charm on Christmas Eve. It is only the messengers of love and kindness, of peace and good-will, that can walk abroad on that blessed night. Then we are free to wander where we will, and, with all the people in this mighty city to choose from, I have come to spend this Christmas Eve with *you*.

## DICKENS

But though I love to read about Christmas, I am only a boy who works in the blacking factory. I don't understand why you should have thought of me.

## SPIRIT

Christmas comes but once a year, as the old song says, but the Christmas feeling is always at work in the world. No kindly deed is done without it, no loving wish uttered, no friendly greeting spoken. It is be-

cause, young as you are, you have done your part to cheer and comfort those around you, that I have chosen to come to you to-night, and to bring you some share of Christmas joys and jollity.

#### DICKENS

But all the real Christmas jollity happened long ago, in the days when people in the country played merry games and feasted and sang carols from Christmas Eve until Twelfth Night. In this poor end of London, there's far too much work and too little play for any such Christmas doings as those. Ah! [*with a sigh*] I should have liked to see them for myself—just once.

#### SPIRIT

And so you shall, and here, if I mistake not [*joyful music is heard*], is good Father Christmas himself with a merry troop at his heels, as is his ancient custom. You will not lack for old-time mirth and jollity while he is your guest.

[*The SPIRIT moves to the left side of stage and watches the scene with a smile of quiet content. Enter FATHER CHRISTMAS, with long white hair and beard, dressed in a scarlet coat and cap. The personages in his retinue are two fat cooks in stiff white caps and aprons, one carrying a rolling-pin and a sieve, and*

*the other a skillet; also a scullion in a blue calico apron, brandishing a toasting-fork; a boy in a holly-trimmed jester's costume of red and green to represent HOLLY, and a girl in soft gray robes decorated with vines to represent IVY. The LORD OF MISRULE, dressed in a purple cap and cape, with a great yellow ruff and a colored wand, followed by four pages in tunics and capes of contrasting colors, enters behind FATHER CHRISTMAS and marshals the others, who appear at the mention of their names and take positions to the right and the left of the stage.*

### FATHER CHRISTMAS

*[At center of stage]*

\* Behold a personage well-known to fame,  
Once loved and honored. Christmas is my name.  
My officers of state my taste display:  
Cooks, scullions, pastry-cooks, prepare my way.  
Holly and Ivy round me honors spread.

*[HOLLY and IVY make graceful gestures with branches.*

And my retinue [*pointing to cooks*] show I'm not ill-fed.

\* From the Prologue to Garrick's "A Christmas Tale."

Though old and white my locks, my cheeks are cherry;  
 Warmed by good fires, good cheer, I'm always merry.  
 With carol, fiddle, dance, and pleasant tale,  
 Jest, gibe, prank, gambol, mummerly and ale,  
 I English hearts rejoiced in days of yore.  
*You* will not sure turn Christmas out of door.  
 Old Father Christmas now in all his glory  
 Begg with kind hearts you'll listen to his story.

[*To MISRULE*]

Go on, prepare my bounty for my friends,  
 And see that mirth with all her crew attends.

[*FATHER CHRISTMAS seats himself on the high-backed chair to the left. THE LORD OF MISRULE takes the center of the stage with HOLLY to his right and IVY to his left, and recites:*

Holly and Ivy once made a great party,  
 Who should have the mastery  
 In landës where they go.

Thus spake Holly:

HOLLY

"I am free and jolly;  
 I will have the mastery  
 In landës where we go."

MISRULE

Thus spake Ivy:

IVY

“ I am loved and proved,  
And *I* will have the mastery  
In landës where we go.”

MISRULE

Then spake Holly and set him down on his knee:

HOLLY

[*Recites, kneeling*]

“ I pray thee, gentle Ivy, say me no villainy  
In landës where we go.”

MISRULE

Nay, gentle Ivy, nay, it shall not be, I wis  
Let Holly have the mastery, as the manner is.

[*IVY retires to a corner disconsolately, her vines trailing behind her. HOLLY, moving with dancing steps, presents branches to FATHER CHRISTMAS and the other actors and, throwing back his jester's cap, is crowned with a wreath of holly by FATHER CHRISTMAS while the "Holly and Ivy" carol is sung by the actors or behind the scenes.*]

## THE HOLLY AND THE IVY

*mf* 1. The hol - ly and the i - vy Now both are full well

*f* grown, Of all the trees that are in the wood, The

*p* CHORUS.  
hol - ly bears the crown. O the ris - ing

*f* of the sun, The run - ning of the deer, The



play-ing of the mer-ry or-gan, Sweet singing in the

The first system of the musical score consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. It contains a melody of eighth and sixteenth notes. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, providing a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines.

quire, Sweet sing - ing in the quire.

The second system of the musical score also consists of two staves. The upper staff continues the melody from the first system, ending with a quarter note. The lower staff provides the accompaniment, featuring some chords with fermatas over them.

### FATHER CHRISTMAS

*[Advancing to the center of the stage from his chair as the other actors fall back.]*

\* Again come I, old Father Christmas

Welcome, or welcome not,

I *hope* old Father Christmas

Will never be forgot!

*[Looking around at audience.]*

I am not come here for to laugh or to jeer,

But to show some sport and pastime,

Gentlemen and ladies, in the Christmas time.

\* Adapted from the version of the old Christmas mumming used in the West of England.

If you will not believe what I do say,  
Enter the King of Egypt—clear the way!

*[Enter the KING OF EGYPT, dressed in dark flowing garments with Oriental trimmings.]*

#### THE KING OF EGYPT

Here I, the King of Egypt, boldly do appear,  
St. George, St. George, walk in, my son and heir!  
Walk in, my son St. George, and act thy part,  
That all the people here may see thy wondrous art.

*[Enter ST. GEORGE in a shining corselet, bearing a shield and a sword.]*

#### ST. GEORGE

Here come I, St. George; from Britain did I spring,  
I'll fight the Dragon bold, my wonders to begin.  
I'll clip his wings, he shall not fly.  
I'll cut him down, or else I die.

*[Enter the DRAGON, dressed in a tight-fitting garment of brown, covered with silver disks to represent scales. He has a grotesque head and a long tail.]*

#### THE DRAGON

Who's he that seeks the Dragon's blood,  
And calls so angry and so loud?

That English dog, will he before me stand?  
I'll cut him down with my courageous hand.

[ST. GEORGE *and the DRAGON fight; the  
DRAGON is killed.*

FATHER CHRISTMAS

Is there a doctor to be found  
All ready, near at hand,  
To cure a deep and deadly wound,  
And make the champion stand?

[*Enter the DOCTOR in skull-cap and spectacles, wearing a black coat and short trousers, black stockings and low shoes with large buckles.*

DOCTOR

Oh, yes! there is a doctor to be found  
All ready, near at hand,  
To cure a deep and deadly wound,  
And make the champion stand.

FATHER CHRISTMAS

What can you cure?

DOCTOR

All sorts of diseases,  
Whatever you pleases,  
The phthisis, the palsy, and the gout—  
Whatever disorder, I'll soon pull him out.

## FATHER CHRISTMAS

What is your fee?

## DOCTOR

Fifteen pounds it is my fee  
 The money to lay down,  
 But as 'tis such a rogue as he, [*pointing to the DRAGON*]  
 I'll cure *him* for ten pound.

[*The DOCTOR gives the DRAGON medicine.  
 The DRAGON revives. ST. GEORGE and  
 the DRAGON fight a second time and the  
 DRAGON is again killed.*

## ST. GEORGE

Here am I, St. George, that worthy champion bold,  
 And with my sword and spear, I've won three crowns  
 of gold;  
 I've fought the fiery dragon and brought him to the  
 slaughter;  
 By that I've won fair Sabra, the King of Egypt's  
 daughter.

[*SABRA, clad in flowing white robes, ad-  
 vances to ST. GEORGE, regarding the  
 prostrate DRAGON with looks of horror.  
 At FATHER CHRISTMAS'S next words,  
 all the characters retire to the back of the  
 stage, the DRAGON rising and following  
 the rest.*

## FATHER CHRISTMAS

Now, ladies and gentlemen, this sport is just ended,  
So prepare for the next, which is highly commended.

[*The LORD OF MISRULE marshals in a fiddler and six couples dressed as Morris Dancers. Girls wear short skirts, brown, gray, or red, with a band of contrasting material at the bottom, waists of same material, with full sleeves to elbow, white aprons without bibs, white kerchiefs, low shoes with rosettes, and rosettes with flowing ends on left shoulder. Boys wear short trousers, full at the knee, white shirts loosely tucked in at the belt, long colored stockings, bands with bells just below the knee, and hats of colored cloth made with small brims and soft crowns. The fiddler wears short trousers, a jacket of bright colors, and a tall hat trimmed with a colored band and cockade.*

## \*DANCE [THE DERBY RAM]

[*Couples form a ring, dancing from left to right. A boy placed in center sings the first stanza, and at the end pulls his successor roughly into the ring to sing the next, and so on. At the chorus, the girls*

\* Old English folk-song and dance.

*turn, first toward the boy to the right and then to the boy to the left, and shaking the forefinger reprovngly, sing: "And indeed, Sir," etc. All join hands in a ring at the last line of the chorus.*

## I

As I was going to Derby, Sir, 'twas on a summer's day,  
I met the finest ram, Sir, that ever was fed on hay.

## CHORUS OF GIRLS

And indeed, Sir, 'tis true, Sir, I never was given to  
lie,  
And if you'd been to Derby, Sir, you'd have seen him  
as well as I.

## II

It had four feet to walk on, Sir, it had four feet to stand,  
And every foot it had, Sir, did cover an acre of land.  
*Chorus:—*And indeed, Sir, etc.

## III

The horns that were on its head, Sir, held a regiment of  
men,  
And the tongue that was in its head, Sir, would feed  
them every one.  
*Chorus:—*And indeed, Sir, etc.

IV

The wool that was on its back, Sir, made fifty packs of cloth,

And for to tell a lie, Sir, I'm sure, I'm very loth.

*Chorus:*—And indeed, Sir, etc.

V

The wool that was on its sides, Sir, made fifty more complete,

And it was sent to Russia, Sir, to clothe the Emperor's fleet.

*Chorus:*—And indeed, Sir, etc.

VI

The tail was fifty yards, Sir, as near as I can tell,

And it was sent to Rome, Sir, to ring St. Peter's bell.

*Chorus:*—And indeed, Sir, etc.

[*Dancers leave stage.*]

THE DERBY RAM

*Allegro.*

As I was go-ing to Der-by, sir, 'Twas

The musical score is written in 6/8 time and consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line with the lyrics 'As I was go-ing to Der-by, sir, 'Twas'. The middle staff is a piano accompaniment for the right hand, and the bottom staff is for the left hand. The tempo is marked 'Allegro.'.

on a summer's day, I met the fin - est

The first system of the musical score consists of a vocal line on a single treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on two staves (treble and bass clefs). The vocal line begins with a quarter note 'on', followed by a quarter note 'a', a quarter note 'sum-mer's', a quarter note 'day,', a half note 'I', a quarter note 'met', a quarter note 'the', a quarter note 'fin-', and a quarter note 'est'. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand.

ram, sir, That ev - er was fed on

The second system continues the musical score. The vocal line has a quarter note 'ram,', a quarter note 'sir,', a quarter note 'That', a quarter note 'ev-', a quarter note 'er', a quarter note 'was', a quarter note 'fed', and a quarter note 'on'. The piano accompaniment maintains its rhythmic pattern with eighth notes in the bass and chords in the treble.

hay. And in - deed, sir, 'tis true, sir, I

The third system concludes the musical score on this page. The vocal line starts with a quarter note 'hay.', followed by a quarter note 'And', a quarter note 'in-', a quarter note 'deed,', a quarter note 'sir,', a quarter note ''tis', a quarter note 'true,', a quarter note 'sir,', and a quarter note 'I'. The piano accompaniment continues with its characteristic eighth-note bass and chordal accompaniment.



nev-er was giv'n to lie, And if you'd been to

Der-by, sir, You'd have seen him as well as I.

[THE LORD OF MISRULE to the audience.]

These dances were performed of yore  
 By many worthy Elves.  
 Now if you will have any more,  
 Pray shake your heels yourselves.

[While the music of the Boar's-Head  
 Carol is faintly heard, a tall youth (the  
 BEARER) enters dressed in a scarlet

*doublet and trunk hose, bearing aloft a Boar's Head on a huge platter garnished with sprigs of green. The BEARER stands at the center of the stage with FATHER CHRISTMAS at his right and the LORD OF MISRULE at his left, the others grouped around, while the carol is sung. At the second repetition of the chorus he moves toward the door followed by MISRULE, ST. GEORGE, and the other characters in the pageant, FATHER CHRISTMAS preceded by his cooks bringing up the rear. . . . .*

THE BOAR'S HEAD CAROL

The boar's head in hand bear I, Be -

*Maestoso.*

*mf*

This system contains the first four measures of the song. It features a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The tempo is marked 'Maestoso' and the dynamic is 'mf'. The lyrics are 'The boar's head in hand bear I, Be -'.

decked with bays and rose - ma - ry.

This system contains the next four measures. The lyrics are 'decked with bays and rose - ma - ry.' The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines in both hands.

And I pray you, my mas - ters, be mer -

This system contains the final four measures of the visible portion of the song. The lyrics are 'And I pray you, my mas - ters, be mer -'. The piano accompaniment concludes with sustained chords.

ry, *Quot es - tis in con - vi - vi - o,*

The first system consists of a vocal line on a single treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The vocal line contains five measures of music with lyrics underneath. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with chords and moving lines in both hands.

CHORUS. (*ad lib.*)

Ca - put a - pri de - fer - o,  
 Ca - put a - pri de - fer - o,  
 Ca - put a - pri de - fer - o,

The chorus section is marked "CHORUS. (ad lib.)" and features three vocal lines (soprano, alto, and tenor/bass) and piano accompaniment. Each vocal line has its own staff with lyrics underneath. The piano accompaniment is on a grand staff. The lyrics are "Ca - put a - pri de - fer - o," repeated three times across the four staves.

Red - dens lau - des do - mi - no.

Red - dens lau - des do - mi - no.

Red - dens lau - des do - mi - no.

The musical score consists of four staves. The top three staves are for vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, and Tenor/Bass), each with a treble clef and lyrics underneath. The bottom staff is for piano accompaniment, with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The music is in a simple, homophonic style with a clear melody and accompaniment.

II

The Boar's head, as I understand,  
 Is the bravest dish in all the land,  
 When thus bedecked with a gay garland,  
 Let us *servire cantico*.

*Chorus:—Caput apri defero, Reddens laudes domino.*  
 [*Characters in the pageant pass out, singing.*]

DICKENS

[*Rising from his chair as the last figure disappears, to*  
 SPIRIT.] Why, it was all just as my old books say! It

seems so wonderful that you should have made me see it! England *was* Merry England when Father Christmas brought revels like those. But everything is so different now! I wish I could do something to bring those happy times back, though I don't see what I can ever do, after all.

## SPIRIT

But I do, dear child. Kind wishes that are uttered on Christmas Eve have a strange power of making themselves come true. Perhaps it is because the spirits who are abroad on that happy night welcome them so eagerly, and hurry them forward on their way to do their beautiful work in the world.

## DICKENS

Well, then [*eagerly*], I will tell you all of my Christmas wish, before it is too late. [*With an anxious look at the clock on the mantel.*] Every day as I go to my work, I see so many people who are sad and tired, and happiness seems very far from them. I wish I could do something to bring it a little nearer, not only on Christmas Day but every day. Then there would be a sort of Christmas all the year round, wouldn't there?

## SPIRIT

When love and good-will do their beautiful work all the year round, and no one forgets his neighbor,

rich or poor, then there will come a new kind of happy Christmas—the Christmas that you wish for. And there is a boy growing up in London to-day who will do much to make your wish come true.

DICKENS

How can a boy do that?

SPIRIT

His own heart will teach him how to understand the lives of the poor about him, and some day he will tell their story so well that the whole world will listen and will understand too. [*Music of "Silent Night" is faintly heard.*] Now I have told you of your share in the Christmases that are to come, for—you are the boy. Farewell, and—remember.

[*As the SPIRIT passes out, DICKENS sinks into his chair as if once more asleep. Pause. A loud knocking at the door is heard.*]

DICKENS

[*Starting up.*] I must have been asleep! And what a beautiful dream I've had! [*Knocking is repeated.*] Who can that be, I wonder!

[*Hurries to the door and opens it; FANNY DICKENS rushes in.*]

DICKENS

Why, Fanny! Whatever brings you here?

FANNY

[*Eagerly.*] Oh, Charley, I've such news for you.

DICKENS

[*Quickly.*] Is it good news? Then it must be about father.

FANNY

Yes, you've guessed it! Father won't have to stay in prison any longer. He's going to pay all his debts.

DICKENS

But how can he?

FANNY

Don't you remember that when Cousin John in the country died last year he left father some money in his will and——

DICKENS

Yes, but the lawyers wouldn't give it to him.

FANNY

[*Hurriedly.*] But now they have, and father got a letter to-night about it. He's to leave prison to-morrow and we are going to have a house again, and you can stay at home. You're to come back directly with us and hear all about it, and be as happy as we always used to be on Christmas Eve.



DICKENS

[*Quietly.*] I *am* happy, to be sure. [MRS. GALE enters.] Oh! Mrs. Gale, just think what's happened! Father's going to get the money to pay his debts and get out of prison directly.

MRS. GALE

Bless your brave little heart! So that's why Miss Fanny was so anxious to see her brother all in a hurry, is it? Didn't I always tell you something would be sure to turn up? But I didn't look for it quite so soon as this. Well, there's no one whose good luck I'd be gladder of, Master Dickens, though I *do* have to look for another lodger. But you'll give me a thought, once in a bit, when you're safe and comfortable in your own home again?

DICKENS

Indeed I will, Mrs. Gale. I won't ever forget how kind you've been to me.

MRS. GALE

Why, as to that, it would be a poor sort of woman who wouldn't want to show a bit of kindness now and then to a lad like you! But never mind about me now. Wrap yourself up and get off as fast as you can to wish your father a happy Christmas. [*Ties DICKENS'S tippet round his neck and hands him his cap.*] Good-by, now, and a Merry Christmas!

[FANNY goes out.]

DICKENS

*[Pauses for a moment before following his sister and says quietly]:* I shall always remember! It is a Merry Christmas!

*[A few bars of Christmas music are heard again.]*

MRS. GALE

*[Opening the door and looking out.]* I wonder what it is that the lad will always remember. But it is a Merry Christmas. God bless them, every one!

THE FAIRIES' PLEA



## THE FAIRIES' PLEA

An interlude for Shakespeare Day. Adapted from Thomas Hood's "Plea of the Midsummer Fairies."

### CHARACTERS

TITANIA.	A MEADOW FAIRY.
PUCK.	OTHER FAIRIES.
A FLOWER FAIRY.	TIME. . .
A FORESTER FAIRY.	SHAKESPEARE.

SCENE: *A woodland. In the center of the foreground TITANIA; in the background two green-clad fairies with silver bugles.*

#### TITANIA

Go forth, ye twain, and with a trump convene my lieges all!

*[The trumpeters step to opposite sides of the stage and blow a shrill but sweet-toned blast. The fairies appear. All bow before TITANIA, then group themselves about her.]*

#### TITANIA

O fays, a danger menaces!

## FLOWER FAIRY

What danger, gracious queen?

## TITANIA

Have ye forgotten, subject sprites, upon what a slender thread our fairy lives have ever hung? Do ye not know that when men's fickle faith in us ceases, we must fade and perish? [FAIRIES *murmur sorrowfully.*] Only the poets have given us our length of days, and now that their power is waning, our lives must wane with it. To-day I awoke from troubled dreams, and saw within the very limits of our realm a dreadful shape. Gaunt he was, and grim, with a single lock of wintry white overhanging his frowning brow. Upon a staff he bore a curving blade, and as he waved it to and fro, I seemed to feel its cruel edge, and knew that our fate was well-nigh upon us. See! even now he comes! [*Shuddering and drawing back.*] Alas, for us wretched sprites! 'Tis Death or Time!

[TIME *enters; the fairies all cower together.*

## TITANIA

[*Kneeling before him.*] Master of all things, have pity upon us!

## TIME

[*Planting his scythe upon the ground, and gazing grimly upon TITANIA.*] Thou feeble, wanton, fickle,

foolish thing, speak not to me of pity! My joy lies in destruction.

## TITANIA

Fairies, plead for your race!

## FLOWER FAIRY

Great King of years, why have our little lives incurred thy hate? We are kindly creatures all, and help poor mortals in their toilsome lot. Young lovers seek our haunts, and know themselves secure. And when the mother sits beside her babe, we kiss its dimpling cheek, and bring the smile she looks for. Spare us for the sake of Love!

## TIME

Naught know I of Love, nor aught of lovers, save that my strength can part them. And children—I devour my own! What care have I for women or their babes?

## FORESTER FAIRY

[*Doffing his acorn-cup cap.*] Have pity on the tiny woodsmen, who knit the boughs to screen the birds from foes that seek their nests! We frame the arches of the shady forest, where men lie down to hide away from care. We scoop the squirrel's hollow cell, and give the rough gray trunk its soft garment of ivy or of moss. Spare us for the sake of the sweet greenwood!

## TIME

Say naught to me of forests or of birds! The rustle of the dead leaves through the autumn air is sweeter far to me than the flight of the most tuneful songsters! And there is no beauty for me in the woodland, save when the brown limbs are bleak and bare—like Nature in her skeleton! The hour has come to bid farewell to tangled branches and the nests they hold. Delay me not with vain prayers!

## MEADOW FAIRY

O let us live, Eternal King! See how we rejoice in all that earth can give! Remember, too, how oft we teach others to share our joy. Did we not, in roving through these very meadows, once find a babe—deserted, and alone, and like to perish;—and did we not then take the shape of grasshoppers, and with our shrill call, summon help? A tender-hearted rustic reared our foundling, and all London town knows the lordly merchant who bears a grasshopper as his chosen crest. Why slay us, who have served mankind so well?

## TIME

*[Is about to answer angrily, when PUCK, who has been indulging in all sorts of freakish pranks, comes within reach of his arm. He seizes PUCK fiercely.]*  
Impish mischief, who art thou?



## PUCK

[*Imploringly.*] Alas! I am but a little random elf, whose life is only merry. I have no task but teaching men to smile. Good hoary master, set me free, and I will show thee many a pleasant sport!

## TIME

[*Shaking his scythe.*] Thou foolish antic, to hope to win me to a smile! I change all merriment to gloom! Look here upon this handle of my scythe! It was a Maypole once, and bore a flowery crown, and rustics danced about it. But I plucked it down and laid the dancers low, and so will I do to thee and thine!

## TITANIA

Is there none to save us from Time's wrath? [*A sudden flutter among the fairies.*] Lo! here is one who hath power even over Time himself!

[SHAKESPEARE \* *enters.* *At sight of him*  
TIME *drops his scythe with a crash.*

## TITANIA

[*Kneeling before SHAKESPEARE.*] Immortal poet, who art Time's sole rival, save us from his dreaded blade! Thou alone hast strength to withstand it—shield us then, and we will repay thy love by giving thee such glimpses of our faëry realm as never poet's eye beheld!

\* Shakespeare should wear an Elizabethan costume. If possible, an attempt should be made to have his appearance convey some suggestion of the Chandos portrait.

SHAKESPEARE

[Facing TIME and pointing to the fairies]

## I

\* These be the pretty genii of the flowers,  
 Daintily fed with honey and pure dew—  
 Midsummer's phantoms in her dreaming hours,  
 King Oberon and all his merry crew,  
 The darling puppets of romance's view,  
 Fairies, and sprites, and goblin elves we call them,  
 Famous for patronage of lovers true;  
 No harm they act, neither shall harm befall them,  
 So do not thus with crabbèd frowns appall them.

## II

[For] unto them are poets much beholden  
 For secret favors in the midnight glooms;  
 Brave Spenser quaffed out of their goblets golden,  
 And saw their tables spread of prompt mushrooms  
 And heard their horns of honeysuckle blooms  
 Sounding upon the air most soothing soft,  
 Like humming bees busy about the brooms—  
 And glanced this fair queen's witchery full oft,  
 And in her magic wain soared far aloft.

## III

Nay, I myself, though mortal, once was nursed  
 By fairy gossips, friendly at my birth,

\* The lines spoken by Shakespeare are quoted directly from Hood's poem.

And in my childish ear glib Mab rehearsed  
 Her breezy travels round our planet's girth,  
 Telling me wonders of the moon and earth;  
 My gramarye at her grave lap I conned,  
 Where Puck hath been convened to make me mirth;  
 I have had from Queen Titania tokens fond,  
 And toyed with Oberon's permitted wand!

## IV

Wherefore with all true loyalty and duty  
 Will I regard them in my honoring rhyme,  
 With love for love, and homages to beauty,  
 And magic thoughts gathered in night's cool clime,  
 With studious verse trancing the dragon Time,  
 Strong as old Merlin's necromantic spells;  
 So these dear monarchs of the summer's prime  
 Shall live unstartled by his dreadful yells,  
 Till shrill lark warn them to their flowery cells.

[TIME, with a show of great fury, attempts to raise his scythe as if to strike SHAKESPEARE, but after repeated efforts, finds himself powerless. He then shuffles off, casting looks of baffled rage at the fairies, who cluster about SHAKESPEARE.]

## TITANIA

[Waving her wand.] About him, Elves, and honor him; for, had he not been here to save us, the silkworm now had spun our shroud!

[FAIRIES dance in a circle about SHAKESPEARE, TITANIA remaining at the right]

## THE FAIRIES' PLEA

*of the stage, while PUCK frolics about her. The faint crowing of a cock is heard.*

## PUCK

Away! 'Tis Chanticleer! Now comes the dawn!  
 [TITANIA raises her wand with a gesture of command. The fairies group themselves irregularly about SHAKESPEARE and move with him slowly towards the exit, singing as they go. TITANIA follows with PUCK in attendance.]

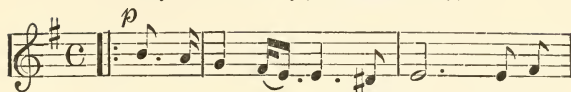
## FAIRIES' SONG

[ARIEL'S song from "The Tempest."]

Where the bee sucks, there suck I;  
 In the cowslip's bell I lie;  
 There I couch when owls do cry;  
 On the bat's back I do fly  
 After summer merrily.  
 Merrily, merrily shall I live now,  
 Under the blossom that hangs on the bough!

## WHERE THE BEE SUCKS

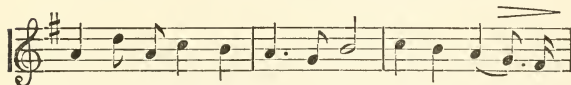
Air by Pelham Humfrey (seventeenth century).



Where the bee sucks there suck I: In a



cowslip's bell I lie; There I couch when owls do



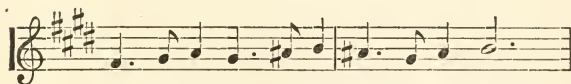
cry: On the bat's back I do fly Af-ter sum-mer



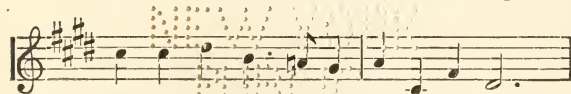
mer - ri - ly, mer - ri - ly.



Mer-ri - ly, mer - ri - ly shall I live now



Un - der the blos-som that hangs on the bough!

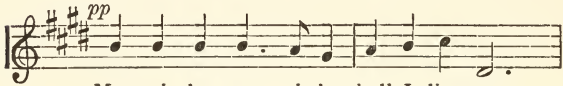


Mer - ri - ly, mer - ri - ly shall I live now,

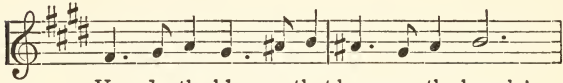
## THE FAIRIES' PLEA



Un - der the blos - som that hangs on the bough!



Mer - ri - ly, mer - ri - ly shall I live now



Un - der the blossom that hangs on the bough!



Mer - ri - ly, mer - ri - ly shall I live now



Un - der the blos - som that hangs on the bough.













