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# Western Heiress;

A COMEDY,

IN FIVE ACTS.



“WE ARE NOT OWLS!”

(DESIGN FOR ADVERTISEMENT).

—BY—

CASSIUS M. COOLIDGE.

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PHILADELPHIA.  
BAKER & HAYES, PRINTERS,  
1885.



**Cassius M. Coolidge,**  
Studio, 1267, Broadway, N Y.



"THERE IS A WESTERN HEIRESS IN TOWN!"  
(DESIGN FOR ADVERTISEMENT.)



# Western Heiress;

A COMEDY,

—BY—

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# A WESTERN HEIRESS.

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## Cast of Characters:

- MISS LURA VINE, a Western Heiress, and Niece to the Sterlings, spending the season at Sterling Cottage.  
MISS JOSIE GRAFTON, Sterlings' Ward.  
WALTER VAN INE, a jolly good fellow, who at last discovers his true calling.  
NED BRUCE, an accomplished Artist.  
PHINEAS STERLING, Proprietor of Sterling Cottage.  
MRS. PHINEAS STERLING.  
MILLARD FULLER, a "desirable" husband.  
JOSHUA HAMILTON, Sterlings' aspiring Secretary.  
REV. DR. BULL, a Millionaire and Widower.  
ARTHUR BULL, his only Son and Heir.  
MR. STURGES, Sterlings' Private Detective.  
T. HOWARD CARTER, of San Francisco.  
JUDGE PENNYMAKER, a Millionaire and Widower.  
MISS AURELIA BANGS, Mrs. Sterling's maiden Sister.  
JASPER, Mr. Sterling's colored Servant.  
BILL ANDREWS, an honest Coastman.  
GUESTS and CITIZENS.
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## SYNOPSIS OF SCENERY.

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### ACT I.

*Grove on Bluff at Sterling Cottage.*

### ACT II.

*Drawing Room, Sterling Cottage.*

### ACT III.

*Interior of Bruce's Studio.*

### ACT IV.

*Drawing Room, Sterling Cottage.*

### ACT V.

*Drawing Room, Sterling Cottage.*

# A WESTERN HEIRESS.

## ACT I.

(*Scene located in Grove at Sterling Cottage, at the sea-side; Cottage in the distance at R; Ladder leading into a tree, L; Time, evening; Lights at Cottage. Enter BRUCE, L, listening to Miss Vine singing in Cottage, and VAN INE, R, smoking, walking nearly backward, also listening to singing. The two men fowl with each other.*)

BOTH. (In unison.) I beg your pardon! (*Each endeavors to cover his face, but each recognizes the other.*) What! (*Both laugh heartily.*)

BRUCE. Well!

VAN INE. *Well!*

BRUCE. I say *Walter*, what brings you down *here*, at this late hour, prowling about Sterlings?

VAN INE. I say *Ned*, what brings *you* down here, prowling about Sterlings?

BRUCE. What brings *me* down here? Why,—why,—why,—I am on my way down to—to *Sam Morgan's*, to notify him of a—*yachting* party to-morrow.

VAN INE. *Yachting* party! Strange! I have heard nothing of one! Am I shut out?

BRUCE. Oh no, of course not! You see, it is something decidedly *fresh!* (*Aside. Most decidedly!*) Now I should like to know why *you* are down about here.

VAN INE. I, oh,—I,—then you would really like to know? Well, I'll tell you, but you must keep it quiet! You see, I have just purchased a—a—box of the finest *Havañas* I ever took a whiff from! You will find them on the table at our room; help yourself to them! This makes only half a dozen I have got away with this evening, walking up and down the beach. Had to walk somewhere you know! Nothing *criminal* about it, I hope! By the way do have one, (*Gives him a cigar.*) you will need it; you have a long walk down to *Sam Morgan's!* You will be *lonesome*,—you will need at least a cigar for company.

BRUCE. Walk down with me; 'twill settle your dinner.

VAN. No, I guess not, thank you, the jaunt would simply cause me the trouble of eating another. I will go up to our *room*, and get some more cigars.

BRUCE. Well, I must stir my boots; ta, ta; be sure you go directly *home*; you will probably not see me before midnight. (*Exit, R, with a side laugh.*)

VAN. Well now, I should really like to know what has started *Ned* off on such a tramp to-night! I have heard of no *yachting* party for to-morrow, and blamed if I believe there is to be one! (*Whistles.*) And the more I think of it, the more I think he is playing me a game! So we will see about it! Ah, ha; oh, ho, my boy! I just think it my *duty* to loiter about

here a few minutes more, and see if the atmosphere about this cottage is not sufficiently enchanting to bring the sly rascal quickly back! Ah, ha; oh, ho! I *did* think I would keep this little *love affair* of mine from him, just for a change. Oh, hum! This courting a girl worth a million is decidedly embarrassing work! Yet I love Lura Vine as fondly as I possibly could *if she were not worth a penny!* And shall I drop her, drop all thoughts of her, simply because she is *unfortunate* enough to be *wealthy?* No, not I! Yet I really believe I could wish her *poor!* It seems then it would be much *easier* to tell her of my love. Then she would be more apt to *believe me* in case I did tell her of it. But I have not the *heart*, after all, to wish her *stricken with poverty!* No, I am glad she is an heiress to a *million*, and queen of the society in which she moves! I wonder if Ned is not inclined a bit toward her cousin, Miss Grafton? I really hope he is, and I wish him success! Ned is she best fellow living, my dear old chum, and Miss Grafton is a fine girl, *but* she can't sparkle by the side of my Western gem, Miss Vine! I only wish she *were* mine! (*Singing at Cottage.*) That's her now! (*Listens.*) What a bewitching voice! (*Listens.*) And if I'm alive, here comes Ned back! (*Enter NED, R, listening to singing. Van strikes him on shoulder.*) A fine voice, that! Ah, ha! On your way down to Sam Morgan's, eh? Oh, ho! Yachting party to-morrow! Ha, ha, ha! *Look here*, my fine fellow, let me whisper a thing or two in your ear. Ned Bruce, *you are in love!*

BRUCE. Well, what if I am! To be in love is no disgrace! Man was made to love! And Walter Van Ine, unless I have deceived myself, and I think I have not, sir, I have cause to whisper a thing or two in *your* ear! *You're in love!* Come now, my smart fellow, own up!

VAN. Just so! *I am in love!* I have lately found out my *true* calling. It is *to love!* I have always known that I had a calling, but never knew what it was before. Every man must be good for *something*, you know. Hereafter *loving* is to be my *forte*. I am going to cultivate it as a *fine art*. At present I take *pleasure* in *stating* I am in love with *Miss Lura Vine*, the Western heiress, whose sweet voice we have just had the pleasure of listening to. I don't expect—I *can't* expect—my love for her will amount to anything, but *blast* it, Ned, how can I *prevent* it! I'm in love with her and can't help it! No, I don't expect it will do me any good, but I do flatter myself if I were only worth a *million*, as she is, that my chances would be at least fair to middling. Birds of a feather, you know.

BRUCE. No, Van, you are not worth a *million*, but you are not *poor!* I have been thinking, it was just twenty-three years ago to-day when you and I were left at the foundling asylum, and the fifty thousand dollars in securities, left with you, after paying all our expenses, must by this time be netting you at least one hundred thousand. That is no mean sum!

VAN. Hav'nt I told you *time and time again*, that one-half my fortune I placed in bank to your credit the day I became twenty-one! And it is there to-day, drawing you six per cent. Our lots have been cast together, and I am *determined* we shall share equally!

BRUCE. And hav'nt I told you time and time again that I shall *never accept your funds!* Van, you have already done too much for me. You have paid all my expenses in boyhood, educated me, put me through Yale along with yourself, and of late have paid all my bills *you could get hold of*; but now, doing quite well in my chosen profession, I feel quite able to dispense with your further *charity!*

VAN. Oh well, Ned, that will do for you to *talk!* I'll admit it sounds *plucky*, but not at all *sensible!* Do you know, if I really *thought* you would never consent to share with me, you would make me very *angry!* But some one is coming down the walk! It's Mr. Sterling in company with a gentleman. Let's get home. Don't think it will matter if you don't go down to *Sam Morgan's* to-night! Ha, ha, ha! [*Exit, L, laughing.*]

(*Enter, R, Mr. STERLING and Detective STURGES.*)

STERLING. Nearly twenty-three years have now elapsed since our baby Mark was stolen from us in New York, and all this while we have never gained a positive clue, except that offer to return him for as much gold as my wife and I then possessed. Would that we had accepted the terms, though they had made us beggars!—Alas, Sturges, this life we have led has been little but a life of suspense and misery!

STURGES. But, Mr. Sterling, I have more faith in this new intelligence, seemingly, than in any we have heretofore had on the case.

STERLING. How well I remember the night when his mother and I returned from the opera, and found him gone! It has been a severe blow to us, and although we have ceased to hope for his recovery, yet as long as we live we shall keep some one on the search.

STURGES. I shall leave for Boston at midnight.

STERLING. Well, may luck go with you! Ah, Sturges, how many times have I wished you that same thing, but all in *vain!*

(*Exit, L, and enter Misses LURA VINE and JOSIE GRAFTON, R, waltzing down walk.*)

LURA. What can be the matter, Josie, we have had but six gentlemen callers this evening! And I have not been proposed to in *twenty-four hours!* I am getting *lonesome*, here at the cottage! It really makes me fearfully blue! I am almost afraid I'll die an old maid, after all! Would it not be a terrible death!

JOSIE. You have not told me yet your private opinion of your *Mr. Van Ine.*

LURA. Oh, yes! *Mr. Van Ine!* Well! Do you know he's a queer *chicken*; that is, sort of a peculiar *duck*. Mind you, he is no *goose!* It will take some one sharper than I am to *fowl* him

one jot. I can't read him any more than I can read Greek, and Greek is not my language! If you believe it, I am wholly undecided whether or not to place him in my list of lovers! The nearest he has come to admitting that he cared a picayune for me, was in a remark he made yesterday, when he told me he really pitied the man who got took in by me, and would not be in the fellow's brogans for *three dollars and sixteen cents*. What do you think of such love as that! How about Bruce?

JOSIE. Well—I must say I really fancy *him*. He is very jovial and can talk *sense* as well as nonsense! Just think of it; you know it is generally all one way with a man; and I'm inclined to think I've favorably impressed him. But (*short whistle*) mamma wouldn't consent to his paying me any attention if he should wish to. He is not *wealthy* enough! Gold goes a great way with her. Mr. *Fuller* is her idea of a husband for me. I wish I was situated as independently as *you* are, and it would be adieu, Mr. *Fuller*, immediately! But you see I hate to offend her, for since I came to live with her, since my own mamma died, she has been so *kind* to me, and been to me a real *mother*!

LURA. Oh say, uncle has passed down this way along with Mr. Sturges and must be coming directly back. Lets play some fly *joke* on him! Lets *scare* him! Don't you know how he delights in frightening *us*? How can we? What *can* we do? I have it! Lets climb into this tree and make him think we are *owls*! Can you hoot! I can! Hoo, hoo—hoo!

JOSIE. Hoo, hoo! Splendid! hurry, I think he is coming. (*They hastily climb into the tree. Enter Sterling, L.*)

LURA. Hoo—hoo—hoo!

JOSIE. Hoo—hoo!

STERLING. What's that! Owls in this grove?

LURA. Hoo, hoo,—hoo-o-o-o-o-o!

JOSIE. Hoo, hoo—hoo, hoo—hoo, hoo!

STERLING. (*aside.*) Ah, I see, those girls of mine are trying to perpetrate a joke on me, by personating owls! I'll see if I can't get the joke on them. (*Loudly.*) *Jasper! Jasper!*

LURA. Hoo, hoo—hoo!

STERLING. *Jasper!*

JASPER. (*Entering on run.*) Sir!

STERLING. I hear some owls up this tree; fetch out my shot gun, quick!"

JASPER. Owls! (*Exit, R.*)

LURA. (*Aside.*) Oh my! He's going to shoot us! But he can't shoot till he gets his gun. We'll be owls as long as we can. If we die, let us die *game*. (*Aloud.*) Hoo, hoo—hoc!

STERLING. (*Aside.*) And while Jasper is after the gun, I will give them the benefit of this revolver.

JOSIE. Hoo, hoo—hoo!

LURA. Hoo, hoo—hoo-o-o-o-o-o-o!

STERLING. (*Steps behind a tree and fires toward the ground. Girls scream.*)

LURA. Here sir! What—what—what are you doing? We are *not* owls.

STERLING. You can't fool me, I know you *are!* I've heard owls before and *shot* many a one. Guess I can tell an owl's hoot. (*Fires again and more screaming.*)

JASPER. (*Entering with gun.*) Where are they?  
(*Girls scream and rush down ladder.*)

LURA. Murder! Murder! (*Lura rushes into Sterling's arms, followed by Josie.*) Oh, you horrible man! Wouldn't take my word for it. Are we *owls?*

JOSIE. Oh—oh—how could would make such a mistake?

STERLING. Well I declare! I have never been deceived so before. Such *perfect mimicry.* Let's hear you hoot again.

BOTH GIRLS. *The HOOT's all taken out of us.* (*Both sob.*)

STERLING. Well, my dears, let's go in the cottage. I really hope I have not winged you. (*Exit R.*)

JASPER. Owls! ha, ha, ha! Owls! ha, ha, ha! Owls! (*Suddenly imagines he detects game in a tree, dodges around, gun goes off, he is kicked over, gets up, goes and picks up a monster turkey, that has fallen to the ground.*) Whoop la! Mr. Sterling, Mr. Sterling, I've shot an owl. (*Brings it to forward stage and throws it down. Sterling and ladies return. Jasper puts on much style and with gun dances around his victim. Sterling examines.*)

STERLING. Jasper, you scoundrel, you have shot one of my turkeys. Sixty days for you in the laundry. (*All exit R. Jasper greatly dispirited, with his game.*)

(*Same scene—daylight—enter L. Mr. Fuller and Arthur Bull.*)

FULLER. Well Arthur, how are matters progressing with you at Sterlings? I see you are somewhat inclined toward Miss Vine, you young rascal! (*Leering.*)

ARTHUR. Then you have really n-n-noticed it. Oh-oh q-quite well, thank you. F-f-father's had several t-t-talks with her and he t-t-tells me that she seems to think quite f-f-favorably of me. You see I am his only son and t-isn't very l-l-likely that she'd refuse a m-m-million. Oh-oh, I've no f-f-fears, she won't be foolish enough.

FULLER. Foolish enough; don't flatter yourself. What does she care about your money? She has a million in her own name. You had not better be too sure of her; there are several about here watching her. There is that Van Ine, for instance, who I am quite sure is cutting bait for his own hook. Comparatively poor to be sure, but the more desperate. He will lay you out, Bull, if he can. Don't you let him do it.

BULL. O, f-f-father'll f-f-fix him. S-say F-Fuller, that f-f-father of mine is a d-d-deuced f-f-fine f-f-figurer. I'd b b bet on him any d-day.

FULLER. Ah, here comes Mr. Hamilton with the Cottage mail, I wish to see him a moment, will overtake you.

BULL. You n-n-needn't be surprised if you d-d-don't. I am going t-t-to c-c-catch some f-f-fish for the cook.

(*Exit Bull R.; enters Hamilton L. with a bundle of letters.*)

FULLER. Good morning, Mr. Hamilton, I see you have a large mail this morning. Please see if I have a letter, I am expecting one in care of the cottage.

HAMILTON. Only usual assortment, those are for Miss Vine, love letters, you know from her admirers. Proof that she is worth a million. You see everybody loves her. *Everybody*. Oh dear! Those are for Miss Grafton, about half as many, consequently worth about half a million, and you see half of everybody loves her. The balance are for Mr. Sterling, none for you. (*Fuller eyes the letters sharply.*) Good morning, Mr. Fuller. (*Exit R. Hamilton.*)

FULLER. Just as I expected. That infernal Bruce is trying to engraft himself at Sterlings, I saw a letter in that bundle addressed to Miss Grafton bearing his monogram. Why in the deuce did I not manage to hook it? Can't think of a thing 'till too late. Pshaw! Yet, do I look upon this numbskull of an artist as a rival? *I*, reputed to be worth *half a million*. But you see *I* know I am not worth half a million. If my debts were all paid this minute I would not have enough money left to buy a bottle of porter. But, blast it I have *credit*, and can run six months yet, without detection, and in the mean time I *must* marry Josie Grafton. She has half a million in her own name, and will probably be left a full million by her guardian, old Sterling. Thank fortune Mrs. Sterling is on my side and is anxious, ha, ha, ha, that Josie should be my wife. There is nothing like conquering the old lady *first*. Marry Grafton I must, and blasted quick too, or my game is up. (*Exit L.*)

(*Enter Van Ine R, with cane, smoking.*)

VAN. Well, I've had this roundabout walk for nothing. Did not catch even a glimpse of the girls in passing their stronghold, and it is too early to make a call. Probably will not see her now till *evening*. (*Counts fingers.*) Just think of it. Eight hours. Now this must be what is termed *dead in love*. Hope I shall never have another such siege of it. It is fearful. Suppose my hair should turn grey. What a *give away* it would be. (*Looks at his hair in small pocket glass.*) And my brain, I may possibly have softening of the brain. (*Feels of his head.*) I really believe my head feels a little softer than usual, already. (*Looks to L.*) What! What! here come the witches now. Have been over at the pond having an early fish. Why *didn't* I know it. (*Enter Josie and Lura L. carrying fishing rods and basket of fish, dressed in fishing rigs.*)

LURA. If here isn't that nuisance again. Lets massacre him. (*Lura puts down her basket and canes him with pole.*)

VAN. Here, here, what are you doing. I'll have you in the arms of the law.

LURA. Well I'd rather be in the arms of the law than in yours. Why are you roaming about here at this unseasonable hour, I know you are out for no good. (*Canes him again.*)

VAN. Murder! Are you going to kill a fellow outright without trial. I'm no owl. (*More caning.*) Let up! let up! Give me a chance for my life, and I'll tell you why I am here.

Listen! You see, my worthy landlady heard me speak last evening about taking an early morning walk, and so sent me off up the coast to buy fish. I expected to arrive back at your cottage about your *breakfast* time, but seeing nothing of you, came directly by, and here I am, looking up Mr. Ned, who is down around here somewhere, making a coast study. Are you now satisfied as to the honor of my mission?

LURA. No, I don't believe a word of it! I fancy you are snooping down around here trying to *steal* something! Josie, watch my fish. (*in softer tone.*) Yet, Mr. Van Ine, you do tell a quite reasonable story, so let's be friends. (*They shake hands.*) Hav'nt you really been to breakfast?

VAN. (*Smells of his hand.*) Whew! I should judge you have had good luck this morning!

LURA. You horrid fellow!

VAN. Oh, yes, I have had *one* breakfast, but you see after a long walk one generally feels like eating a *second*. Don't put yourself out at all on my account.

LURA. I hope you don't think *I* was going to! Far from it! I would not give you anything to eat if I possessed all the food on the coast!

JOSIE. (*Aside*) I really believe they are in love!

[*Enter JASPER with banjo, L.*]

LURA. Oh, Jasper, give us some music; something lively!

JASPER. Oh, sartainly, Miss Lura.

(*Jasper plays and Lura and Van Ine dance sort of a clog, and with Josie exit, R. Jasper exit, L.*)

[*Enter ARTHUR BULL, L, with fish rod, lunch basket and camp stool.*]

ARTHUR. All for l-l-love! C-catching fish for the c-c-cook! F-f-father says he thinks I am after the c-c-cook! Says he thinks I l-l-love her! I l-l-love the cook for various reasons. Experience t-t-tells me if you w-w-want to l-live on the f-f-fat of the l-land, to l-love the c-cook. (*Baits his hook, and whistles some popular air.*) F-f-father says he thinks I d-d-don't know on which side my b-b-bread is buttered. (*Opens his lunch basket and eats.*) I think I d-do. This lunch was put up by the cook. It's o-only a m-matter of d-d-differenc of opinion, that's all. If you d-don't think I do, a-ask the c-c-cook she knows! (*Commences fishing.*) M-mighty f-f-fine morning, this m-m-morning; ought to have good l-l-luck. Hope I w-will. f-for the c-c-cook's sake. But pshaw! I don't think I shall ever m-m-marry the cook! What an idea t-t-that I should ever m-m-marry her! (*Laughs.*) Ain't enough s-style about her. F-f-father t-t-tells me t-that in f-f-fishing I had b-better f-fish for a wife! Ha, ha, ha! J-just as though I n-needed one! I'd starve surely in a week! No getting in w-w-with the cook then! Now just t-to p-p-please f-father I'll bait my hook f-f-for Miss Vine. (*Baits his hook.*) I expect I must g-g-give the c-c-cook a show; that would be n-no more than f-fair, you know. (*More lunch.*) L-l-let me see, if it's a b-b-big fish that I c-c-catch, it will b-be Miss Vine, and if it's a l-l-little fish, it will b-be the c-cook! That's f-fair!

N-now all ready, *b-b-bite!* (*Pulls up a little fish.*) Pshaw! I don't w-want the c-c-cook, *to keep!* (*Removes the fish.*) W-w-we w-won't count that one, w-we'll try it-again! Now! (*Pulls up another small fish.*) The c-cook again! The cook is h-h-having it her own way! We will change the s-s-statement. S-small fish are t-too plenty here t-t-to suit f-father. Now, if it's a l-little f fish it will be little Miss Vine, and if it's a b-b-big f-fish, it will be the b-b-big c-c-cook. That sounds more like it! (*Throws line.*) *Are you ready?* T-t take it! (*Hauls up an immense fish.*) The c-c-cook's mine! [*Exit, R.*

[*Enter BRUCE, L, with sketching material. Gazes upon the scene before him.*]

BRUCE. Well, here I am again! What a lovely morning! I never saw Nature look more beautiful. How grand the old ocean is! Every wave, as it rolls in toward shore, seems to wear a coronet. Now for a proper inspiration! (*Arranges his paints, etc., and goes to work excitedly.*) I must hurry and get this piece completed, and get the *money* for it. My finances are getting emphatically *low*, and I do so *hate* to ask Van for more money. Among other bills, I owe that rough sea-faring fellow, Bill Andrews, for sailing me down the coast, and I know very well he needs his pay, and he must have it!

[*Enter CARTER, L, smoking*].

CARTER. Hallo, Bruce, at it again! (*Looks at his work.*) Well, well, you *are* getting this scene down to a fine thing! (*Gaps.*) Wish I was master of your trick, just for *amusement*. Time occasionally hangs heavily with a fellow who has *nothing to do!* By the way, Bruce, I have never paid you back that ten I borrowed from you last week, and I am caught again this morning without a dollar in my pocket, without even enough to buy a fresh *cigar* with! I do so hate to be without money! (*Gaps.*) 'Tis very disagreeable, indeed! But I shall probably receive a remittance from my banking-house in San Francisco to-morrow. Well, good day. (*Starts to go.*)

BRUCE. Good day.

CARTER. (*Returning.*) Oh, say, you can't loan me another ten?

BRUCE. I am sorry to say, Mr. Carter, I have no tens to spare at present. You see, I am not as fortunate as you are. I have no bank account!

CARTER. Oh, but I suppose you *love* work. Some do, others don't. As for me, I don't. I like money, but I had rather *borrow* it, any day, than *earn* it. If you wish to make money easy, borrow it! (*Gaps.*) Good morning.

BRUCE. Good morning. [*Exit Carter, R.*] T. Howard Carter, of San Francisco, always expecting a remittance from home, but somehow don't seem to get it.

[*Enter VAN INE, R, takes out memorandum.*]

VAN. Mr. Carter, to cash, ten dollars. (*Persues his book.*) Ten, ten, ten, ten. (*Turns leaf.*) Ten, ten, ten! It does beat the mischief how many tens an enterprising fellow can loan among his acquaintances in the short space of six weeks.

Ten, ten, ten, ten! Over three hundred dollars all out in tens during my stay at this resort! And every ten going to be paid back *to-morrow!* That is, so they said when they borrowed it. Ten, ten, ten.

Arthur Bull, ten; said old man was going to give him some money to-morrow, and would hand it back sure. Six weeks now gone. Ten, ten, ten.

J. Armstrong Bragg, ten; father coming from city to-morrow, bring money, pay back sure. His father has been back several weeks, but no signs of money. Ten, ten, ten!

Millard Fuller, ten; will give me check or pay money to-morrow, sure. Told him to hand me the money, but have not seen it. Some three weeks have now elapsed. Ten, ten, ten!

Mr. Carter, ten; expect remittance; hand it back *to-morrow.* Ten, ten, ten!

If I make the acquaintance of a fellow to-day, within twenty-four hours he is sure to come to me and request the loan of a ten, and will hand it back to-morrow! What can a poor fellow do! How can I refuse a young man ten dollars, when he belongs to a first family! When his father is worth a *million!* I must be careful hereafter, and avoid introductions. That is the only safeguard I can think of. I will put up a notice, "No Introductions Allowed!" Ah, Ned, here you are! Well here I am, after having a grand frolic with Miss Vine! Tell you what, Ned, she's the girl for me!

BRUCE. So I hear you say!

VAN. (*Taking some papers from pocket.*) Say, old fellow, before starting out I was over at your studio, and while there you had *three calls.* Business seems to be picking up with you!

BRUCE. Who were they? (*Excited.*)

VAN. Why, one was,—you know him,—why, what's his name,—why,—your *landlord,* after his rent, and your wash-woman and tailor, each with a bill! I paid them all, and here they are receipted. (*Throws them to him.*)

BRUCE. I suppose you think you have done something *cunning.* It's all right, Van, I hope some day to pay you back for all this. It is simply money *loaned.*

VAN. It's all right; of course it's all right! And I take no change back, as you well know! If you will not accept half my funds, you cannot prevent my *occasionally* paying your bills.

BRUCE. There's where you have got me. But say, we shall have a caricature engagement at Sterling's before long. I have just received a note from Mr. Sterling to call and see him concerning it.

VAN. Well that *will* be *nice!* Of course you will have to have *my* assistance? You can't get along without *me!*

BRUCE. Well, yes,—or no,—that is, if you conduct yourself *properly* in the mean time, and see that all my bills are promptly paid.

VAN. Agreed! Within three days, if your bills all come in,

you shall not owe a copper!

BRUCE. Van, do you know that since I first knew the Sterlings I have had some strange presentiments, some queer fancies?

At times I have imagined myself worth a million!

VAN. At times you perhaps have taken a little too much wine!

BRUCE. In fact, I cannot believe I was born to always remain *poor*. There is something in my bones that tells me differently.

VAN. Most likely the *rheumatism*.

BRUCE. Nonsense, Van, you are growing more *senseless* every day!

VAN. Well, well, maybe I am. (*Takes book from pocket, and lies down on grass to read to Bruce.*) I have a novel here that I have brought down to read to you, entitled, "The Cook," loaned me by Mr. Arthur Bull. He says it is "p-perfectly s-splendid!" (*Citizens begin to pass by, and stop to examine and praise Bruce's painting.*) The Cook; or, the Heroine of the Back Kitchen. Complete in one volume. Chapter first. (*Crowd increases around Bruce. While the artist busies himself mixing some paint, they put their fingers on the wet painting to feel of it.*) 'Twas midnight; the kitchen fires had gone out, and Hannah, the cook,—the heroine of this romance—had gone out also.

CITIZEN NO. 1. Isn't that splendid! So natural like! He must be a regular born genius!

CITIZEN NO. 2. I have a boy who does that kind of thing, an' I would trade him off for a kicking mule, any day! No money in it!

CITIZEN NO. 3. Wall, I'll bet *thar is!* I bet he would'nt take a dollar and a half for that picter! Would you Mister, would you take a dollar seventy-five for that ar?

CITIZENS. Runaway! Runaway! (*A grand rush to get out the way of approaching team from the left; curtain drops, and they run over Bruce and his painting, knocking easel, etc., over, and destroy his work, causing much clatter; curtain rises. Bruce picks up his canvas, which is completely ruined.*)

BRUCE. Two week's work gone to smash! Van, I shall have to ask you for the loan of fifty dollars.

VAN. Ha, ha, ha! Why most assuredly! Quite *sensible!* And remember, one-half my funds are to your order *at the bank!* (*Hands him money, and slaps him good naturedly on the shoulder.*)

[END ACT I.]

## ACT II.

(*Drawing Room, Sterling Cottage. Lura Vine's portrait sitting on easel. JOSHUA HAMILTON stretching himself at table. Evening.*)

HAMILTON. Oh, poverty, poverty, why did you pitch upon me! Why was I not heralded into this world worth a million, as were Sterling, Fuller, Pennymaker, and a score of others I see about me every day! They possess all their wealth by *chance*. It certainly does not require a very smart or energetic man to inherit a fortune, but certainly does a *deuced* smart one to accumulate one! As an *inheritor*, I think I, Joshua Hamilton, would make a success, but as an *accumulator* I'm a failure. (*Counts his money.*) Twenty-five dollars is the extent of my worldly wealth. I am getting really unhappy amid this poverty! By the way, I have just heard, privately, that Mr. Fuller won the other evening, over at the First National, five thousand dollars at faro! They say 'tis better to be born lucky than rich. Now, how do I know but *I* was born *lucky*? If Mr. Fuller can win five thousand dollars in an evening, perhaps I can! And if five, why not fifty! And if fifty, why not a million! (*Gets up and paces the room excitedly.*) I am a millionaire this minute! I, Joshua Hamilton, will deposit my present fortune, twenty-five dollars, in a faro bank, *bust* all the banks in the country, or get *busted*! I almost wish I had never seen this Lura Vine! Why did she come East? I was contented with my lot 'till I saw *her*. I *love* that girl! I can love any girl worth a million! I am just like every other fellow, *human*! The fellows about here are all telling her of their love, and why should not I? *I will*! But I do not wish to offend her, I'll speak to her about my *attachment*, anyhow. I will break it to her gently. Come to think, it will be no easy job. Now suppose she were here, how the deuce could I tell her of it. There must be something lacking about me. It must be *cheek*! Now, let's imagine she really sat here by my side, and I, Joshua Hamilton, about to sacrifice myself. Ahem! Miss Vine,—ahem.—well really' I can think of nothing to say. (*Casts his eyes heavenward.*) Well, I declare, I was never so destitute of language before! If Miss Vine had actually been sitting here, I could not have opened my mouth! I think the safest plan for me would be to write out a confession of my love, and commit it to memory! I will that! (*Sits down at table, writes and repeats.*) "*My dear, I love you from the bottom of my heart. I can learn to love none other. Would that I knew thy heart could beat for me as fondly and as truly as mine now beats for thee.*" There, that's good! Fairly poetical! Words come right along!

[*Enter* JASPER, R.]

JASPER. Mr. Bruce has called to see Mr. Sterling, by appointment.

HAM. I will go and receive him. (*Turns note over on table, and exit, R. Enter* LURA VINE, L, *and seats at table.*)

LURA. What a disappointing fellow Mr. Van Ine is! After all, he is *dead in love with me!* Didn't think there was any love in him! But he seems to be *full of it*, by the tone of this letter. (*Takes letter from pocket and glances over it.*) How delicious! Too sweet for anything! Yes, I really do like your style,—but you shall not know it at present! Young man, I feel it my *duty*, in the absence of a mother, to give you a slight check in your mad career! (*Puts letter back in pocket.*) I reckon you need *curbing!* Let me see, what shall I write him? (*Writes note on back of Hamilton's sheet, and repeats aloud.*) "*Mr. Van Ine. My Dear Sir: I can give you no encouragement whatever.*" There, that will quiet him, I think, for a while. "*Yours, in haste, Lura Vine.*" If this note causes him to commit suicide, *all right!* All right anyhow! (*Puts note hastily in envelope, and exit with it, L. Enter HAMILTON and BRUCE, R.*)

HAM. Mr. Sterling has stepped out for a moment, and requested me to say if you called, that he would be directly back. Ah, here he comes now. (*Enter STERLING, R.*)

STERLING. Ah, Mr. Bruce, glad to see you. (*They shake hands.*) Be seated.

BRUCE. Thank you.

HAM. (*Observed looking around table and on floor, and fumbles in pocket in search of note. Exit, R, still looking, remarking as he passes out,*) What in the deuce did I do with that paper!

STER. Allow me to congratulate you on your success in pleasing the crowd at Sam Morgan's the other evening. That caricature you got off on me I have laughed over much; ha, ha, ha! I have secured it, and sent it to my home in New York.

BRUCE. Indeed, I am happy to have caused you so much pleasure.

STER. The art must be a great gift to you.

BRUCE. No gift at all, I assure you. It has to be labored for. Practice makes perfect, you know, in all professions, especially in art.

STER. True, true, that is seldom thought of. Such skill is generally looked upon as a *gift*. It is like receiving a gift from one's wife, and finding it charged among the bills. Well, what I wished to see you about, in particular, is, two weeks from to-night I am to have a gathering here, and I would like your name on my amusement programme.

BRUCE. I think I can be here.

STER. Well then, all right. I shall be much indebted to you, and in the meantime I will think up some cartoons for you to produce. You see, several of the fellows have been getting off their jokes on me, and I wish to pay them back, with interest.

BRUCE. Very well. But you must excuse me, I have an engagement to fill, and must be going. I will bid you good evening.

STER. I will see you to the gate. (*Both exit, R. Enter JOSIE and LURA, with large book under her arm.*)

LURA. Wonder what business Mr. Bruce had here with Uncle?

JOSIE. I believe he is going to give some caricaturing here at our gathering. So papa tells me.

LURA. Oh, that will be splendid! Of course, Mr. Van Ine will assist him. Do you observe, Josie, I have got out my great register. It is getting to be a terrible task for me to keep a correct record of all my lovers. If they keep on increasing at the present rate, I shall have to hire a book-keeper. Some girls who are well *acquainted*, I presume, would have to hire half a dozen. Oh dear, this being worth a million, and an *orphan* at the same time, is something *terrible!* (*Opens her book.*)

JASPER. (*Entering with card on plate.*) Inquirers, for Miss Lura in particular.

LURA. (*Reads card.*) "Mr. Splinter, of Baltimore. List, 3876." Show him in the back parlor. (*Refers to book.*) 3876. Met him first time June 16th, and have since had sixteen invitations from him to take a drive; accepted none. Well, really, I have not got down Mr. Van Ine's name yet! A clear goue case *now*. He has confessed. (*Writes.*) "Walter Van Ine; number 4250." But the grandest subject demanding my present attention is Rev. Dr. Bull's only son and heir, a regular *calf*. (*Reads.*) "Arthur Bull; number 4230. Oh, say, I have a letter from Mr. Van Ine! *Sweet* is no proper name for it! That fellow loves me *wildly!* Terribly! Read it!" (*Takes note from pocket and hands it to her.*)

JOSIE. And I have received one from his chum. See if yours can rival mine in *sweetness*. Ha, ha, ha! (*Hands Lura a letter.*)

LURA. Why this is mine!

JOSIE. And this is mine! We had them mixed. Strange! (*Laugh and exchange.*) Mixed again! No; these letters are alike!

LURA. That's Van Ine's work, I know. Just like him! Never mind; that joke shall cost him dear! (*Enter JASPER with two cards for Lura.*) Mr. Roorbach, of New Orleans, 2928. (*Looks at register.*) Have had but one call from him before this; 'twas love at first sight! I think he is in the tallow trade, but *wealthy*. Mr. Dingle, of Boston; 1333. Another case of love at first sight. One X, lovely; XX, quite lovely; XXX, *extra* lovely. Mr. Dingle, I see, is entitled to the three. Jasper, show them in the back parlor. (*Exit Jasper.*) Mr. Dingle is a learned gentleman from the Hub, a great scholar, famous in literary circles,—so he *tells* me. He is quite classical, and uses lovely language, especially when conversing about *cupid*.

JASPER. (*Entering with three cards.*) Judge Pennymanufacturer wishes to see Miss Lura privately; Mr. Carter says he has some business of a private nature, an' Mr. Dobbin, who called yesterday, is here now with a couple of gentlemen from de Souf, an' inquires for you, an' wishes a few moments of your private time. Miss Lura, as soon as you am out, tole me so! Yah, yah, yah!

LURA. Show them in the back parlor, Jasper, and we will have a grand private gathering. (*Exit Jasper.*) Judge Penny-maker, number 129, one of my first admirers after I struck the coast. Mr. Carter, 4001. Mr. Carter went down upon his knees at first interview. Mr. T. Addison Dobbin, so his card reads, 3728, from the swamps of Florida. Says he is poor now, but expects to make a fortune by exporting alligators. Is going to send me one. (*Enter Jasper with plate covered with cards.* Show them in the back parlor, Jasper, and carry in some stools. (*Exit Jasper.*) I surely shall have to hire a book-keeper! [*Exit Lura with her book.*

[*Josie rises and walks the room excitedly.*]

JOSIE. I hardly know how to answer Mr. Bruce's letter. I certainly am in a quandry! He certainly is aware that I love him! Surely I know he loves me! But he must not! Yet how can I prevent it? Poor fellow! He has no idea that my heart is not my own! Mama has presented it to Mr. Fuller, I suppose, (*disgusted*) and I am *heartless*! What an impoverished creature I am! Ned tells me he *loves me dearly*! Now, Mr. Fuller has never told me that. In fact, he has never said anything to me about *love*! Don't think he has ever thought of such a thing! Yet he certainly would not marry me unless he did love me, *would he?* Possibly! Men are frequently such horrid creatures! (*Meditates.*) But Ned Bruce tells me he *loves me dearly*! One likes to be loved *dearly*. (*Feels in pocket, and looks in writing-case for letter.*) Wonder what *has* become of Ned's letter! I can find nothing of it. Have not seen it since yesterday, since Mr. Fuller was here. Can it be he has stolen it? I really believe it! I am beginning to hate the sight of that fellow! I *do* hate him *with all my heart, there, and* I will tell him so! (*Throws herself on tete-a-tete and sobs.*)

[*Enter HAMILTON, c.*]

HAMILTON. I am here again, and alone! I think I will have another rehearsal! (*Steps in front of Miss Vine's portrait on easel.*) Excuse me, Miss Vine, I have an important communication. I love you from the bottom of my heart!—

JOSIE. (*On tete-a-tete.*) Oh, Mr. Hamilton!

HAMILTON. (*Embarrassed, aside.*) I'm satisfied! I was never born lucky! Faro has taken from me my twenty-five dollars, and now Miss Grafton has possessed herself of my heart's secret! What shall I say to her? Shall I acknowledge to her! I must not! Miss Vine must not get it second-hand! (*Aloud.*) Aha, Miss Grafton, is that *you?*

JOSIE. Mr. Hamilton, really now, are those your sentiments?

HAMILTON. (*Aside.*) Aha, I have it! (*Aloud.*) My sentiments? Oh, no! I was simply quoting a common expression here at the resort!

[*Enter MR. STERLING. Exit HAMILTON.*]

JOSIE. (*Jumping up.*) Oh, papa dear, you are just the one I wish to see! (*Takes his arm.*) I *cannot* fancy Mr. Fuller! I never did. I am getting so I really *hate* him! Mama, you know, thinks much of him, and wishes him to be my hus-

band, but I can never marry Millard Fuller; that's *certain!*  
*Never!*

[*Enter MRS. STERLING.*]

MRS. STERLING. What's that, Josie? Never marry Mr. Fuller! You certainly are going crazy! Why, he's to be here in fifteen minutes to see you, and decide on an early wedding day!

JOSIE. But mama, I have never agreed to marry the man!

MRS. STERLING. Yet Josie, your engagement has been understood, *anyhow!* And I have talked the matter over with him time and time again. Phineas, I never saw such a foolish girl! Going to refuse *half a million!*

STERLING. Well, settle it between yourselves. It's a woman's affair at best. I will only say that Mr. Fuller seems to be a fine fellow, and is probably worth the amount you mention. I am going down the coast to a target shoot, am a little late now, so you will have to excuse me. Josie, think the matter over carefully, and don't make a mistake. Mother, she must not marry him unless she can love him!

MRS. STERLING. But she can, Phineas. I know she can! He loves her dearly! I heard him say so the other day!

[*Exit Sterling, R. Enter PENNYMAKER, L, with handkerchief and hat in hand.*]

PENNYMAKER. Ah, good morning, ladies, excuse my hasty intrusion; has Mr. Sterling gone?

MRS. STERLING. Just started this moment.

PENNYMAKER. Ah, indeed! I do not see—(*Enter Miss Vine*)  
Ah, good morning, my dear. I was on the point of inquiring for you. I hope I see you well! (*Uses handkerchief.*)

LURA. Quite well, thank you.

PENNYMAKER. I have a little surprise for you. My new yacht has arrived off the coast, and it would greatly please Mr. Fuller and myself if you and Miss Grafton would condescend to join us in a little excursion to-morrow?

LURA. Oh, I should be delighted to go! Wouldn't you Josie?

JOSIE. I do not care to go, if you will excuse me.

MRS. STERLING. Why yes you would, Josie! Yes, Judge, she will be happy to go! She will be delighted to go, I assure you,

PENNYMAKER. Then we will call for you at proper time. (*Enter Fuller.*) Ah, Fuller, they have consented to go! We shall have a delightful trip! Ladies, I do not say good-bye, but—(*Throws a kiss to Lura, and waves his handkerchief as he backs out. All laugh.*)

FULLER. Good morning, ladies, and good morning, Miss Grafton. (*Goes up to her and grasps her hand. She withdraws it.*)  
What's the matter, my dear?

JOSIE. Mr. Fuller, mama has just informed me that you were to call this morning to—

FULLER. To decide on our wedding day! Was it not, Mrs. Sterling? That is my *mission*, and I trust you are glad to see me!

[*Lura exit; shakes her fist at Fuller as she goes out.*]

JOSIE. Then if such be the case, we had better talk frankly and to the point!

FULLER. Certainly; eh, Mrs. Sterling?

MRS. STERLING. Do not be foolish now Josie, I beg of you!

JOSIE. I shall not be foolish, mama! Is it foolish to refuse an offer you are certain would bring you unhappiness? No I'll not be foolish!

FULLER. Indeed!

JOSIE. Mr. Fuller, our marriage is *impossible!* I do not wish your hand, and shall reject it if you offer it!

FULLER. Ha, ha, ha! (*Aside.* Fuller, remember your bank-account!) Well, well, this is quite interesting, is it not, Mrs. Sterling? And I must say I admire your *frankness*, anyhow! But Miss Grafton, I have calculated on this marriage for some time! I have been received here, and it is generally conceded that we are engaged!

JOSIE. But Mr. Fuller, we are *not* engaged, and if you possess a spark of honor you will urge your suit no further!

FULLER. Even if you have not consented to become my wife, your kind guardian, Mrs. Sterling, whom I greatly respect, has, and now you cannot expect me to drop the matter so easily! Oh no, most assuredly! If you do not at present admire me, Miss Josie, perhaps you can learn to after marriage. I have seen such cases before now, where the parties have become very strongly attached. We might also. You know we are *all* liable to change our minds. Mind is but a fickle institution at best. Now I will admit that I have seen the day, Miss Josie, when I did not seem to even care for *you*, (when I was flush), but my mind has *changed*, and *now* I feel as though I think considerable of you!

JOSIE. And I feel and receive your intended compliments as *insults!*

MRS. STERLING. Oh, how foolish!

FULLER. Oh well, Miss Josie, I must admit you are quite *pert*, anyhow, and I admire you all the more! Do not think I shall treasure up any ill will toward you for so freely expressing yourself. Why, Miss Josie, my first wife did not like me before marriage!

MRS. STERLING. I do not wish to compel you to marry Mr. Fuller, Josie. I have simply wished for the union, as has Mr. Sterling. (*Josie sobs.*) We knowing it to be for your *interest*. Mr. Fuller, I hope she will think differently of the matter after a while. She don't seem to know what is *best* for her!

FULLER. I see she don't!

JOSIE. You are impudent, and I *hate* you; there!

MRS. STERLING. Oh, my goodness!

JOSIE. I hate and despise you! I will cry no more. Don't you ever speak to me again!

MRS. STERLING. Oh, my! Oh, my!

FULLER. I dare say you would sooner marry that penniless artist, Bruce!

JOSIE. Yes, than marry *you!*

FULLER. I suppose you know, Mrs. Sterling, that he is dead in

love with your ward!

MRS. STERLING. I did not; Josie, tell me!

JOSIE. Mr. Bruce does truly love me! But I have only treated him as any lady should treat a gentleman. I have given him no encouragement.

MRS. STERLING. Josie, I hope you will not go to disgracing our house! What would people say if you should marry such a worthless fellow! I cannot think of such a thing!

JOSIE. Mama, be careful what you call Mr. Bruce! He is a true gentleman!

FULLER. Ha, ha, ha! I have observed for some little time how the wind was blowing, and having too much regard for you, Mrs. Sterling, to think of seeing your ward marry a person so unworthy of you all. I have taken the trouble to look up a bit of this adventurer's history. This wonderful artist, who, by his clever tricks, can win so many *admirers*, is wholly dependent on his friend Van Ine for the payment of his *bills*!

MRS. STERLING. Oh, horrible!

FULLER. He is of low birth, reared in a foundling asylum, and in simmering him down to tripple extract, is a perfect *nobody*!

JOSIE. (*Confronting Fuller.*) Would that I were a *man*! (*Puts her fist in his face.*)

MRS. STERLING. Oh, my! Oh, my!

JOSIE. Yet girl as I am, I will allow *no one* to so abuse Mr. Bruce in my presence! And no one would do it but a base *coward*, that you are!

MRS. STERLING. Oh, my! Oh, my! What *shall* I do! But Josie, you must reason! Mr. Bruce maybe a fine fellow among *his* class, but he is penniless, and unsuitable to associate with *us*! Therefore I *forbid* him the house, and your having anything more to do with him! (*Josie sits down.*)

FULLER. Such firmness on your part, Mrs. Sterling, is very commendable. You are a very sensible woman, and as to you, Miss Josie, I trust you will think the matter over, forgetting all that has been said, and arrive at a *sensible* conclusion! (*To Mrs. Sterling, as they exit, R.*) I will see Mr. Bruce myself!

JOSIE. (*Springing up.*) And so will I see Mr. Bruce, and warn him against a scoundrel!

[*Enter LURA, in riding costume and whip.*]

LURA. Oh Josie, there is a yoke of cattle coming up the walk! Do come and see them! (*They look out of window, L.*)

JOSIE. How can you call Reverend Doctor Bull and son a yoke of cattle!

LURA. Why, don't two of them make a yoke? Ha, ha, ha! By the way, Josie, the Rev. Doctor Bull has his eye on me for his son, list, number 4230. He does his son's courting, and I imagine quite willingly, too, and says it will be all right with Arthur. How is that? Ha, ha, ha! The Doctor knows I am in the market, because I told him so the other day, so he asked permission to bring Arthur around. The Reverend Doctor had him over on the bluff yesterday, and managed to get us together, but he is *so* bashful. You never saw such a

*modest* young man in all your life. The Reverend Doctor means business! You see, Arthur is or will be worth a million when his pa dies, so the Reverend Doctor tells me; then, along with *my* million, so the Reverend Doctor thinks, Arthur and I can live quite comfortably. (*Fans.*) Oh, by the way, I must make a minute of ten dollars loaned Mr. Carter last evening. Expects a remittance from San Francisco to-morrow. (*Sits at table and makes charge.*)

JOSIE. (*Going to her.*) Do you know, I hate Millard Fuller!

LURA. Well, I *mistrust* it!

JOSIE. I despise him! (*Lura rises and takes Josie by the hand*) You are quite sensible, my dear! The first time I saw that man I took a strange dislike to him, and it has kept increasing since.

JOSIE. And here we have an engagement to go yachting with him and that fossil of a Judge!

LURA. Oh well, we must go yachting just the same! If it will be pleasanter for you when we get on the water, we will swap gallants; you superintend his excellency, and I will monopolize Fuller! It don't make a particle of difference to me!

JOSIE. An idea has just seized him that I marry him immediately! And mama, whom you know has always been his champion, encourages it! His great haste I think is caused by Bruce's letter, which I think he has stolen!

LURA. My idea exactly! Say, do you know what I would tell that fellow the next time he came here and forced himself into my presence, if I were you? Just imagine you were Mr. Fuller and I yourself, and that yonder door was open. *I'd tell him this!* (*With an expression of utter disgust she strikes a commanding attitude, and points out the open way; ends with a little kick.*)

JOSIE. My dear Lura, I did tell him to that effect to-day, but he had the audacity to tell me he thought the more of me for my speaking so *frankly!*

LURA. (*Falls into chair.*) Oh, my! What a fly fellow! Why did I not catch on to him in place of you. He must be a jewel! I would like to deal with such a man as that!

JOSIE. The reason why I think he has stolen Bruce's letter is because he told mama Mr. Bruce was *dead in love* with me!

LURA. And did you deny loving him?

JOSIE. Indeed I didn't *deny* it. If I had I should have spoken falsely.

LURA. Now my dear, why don't you marry Ned Bruce? He seems to be the only fellow you care a fig for.

JOSIE. Mama has now forbidden him the house, and my having anything more to do with him, simply because he is not *wealthy!*

LURA. Are you not interested in your own matters, in the selection of a husband?

JOSIE. I *ought* to be!

LURA. It seems to me that it is a matter that *personally* concerns you!

JOSIE. Mama, you see, has really engaged me to Fuller, with-

out even consulting my wishes, taking it for granted that I would jump at the chance! You know, he is worth half a million.

LURA. As for myself, I reckon I prefer doing my own engaging. I may be mistaken, but I imagine there is a little pleasure about that transaction that I do not care to let out. I do not wish to mix up with your love affairs in the least, *but* if I were you, and auntie should take the liberty of engaging me to any man, black or white, rich or poor, without my *endorsement*, legally speaking, I'd grant her the privilege of disengaging me! That's all! *I am a Western girl*, and from Chicago!

JOSIE. That is just what I did do! *I am an Eastern girl*, and belong to New York. (*They shake hands.*)

LURA. But why don't the Bulls arrive? (*Goes to window, L. and hastens back.*) The Reverend Doctor is trying to pull him up the steps! He can't get him in, I am quite sure! Such a bashful youth! Ha, ha, ha!

REV. DR. BULL. (*Outside.*) Come along, I say! (*The Bulls appear at L, arm in arm; son hangs back; observes the ladies; breaks away from his father and exits. In the old gentleman's excitement, he gives him a good parting kick and trips himself up; ladies hasten and help him up, and arm in arm exit, L.*)

[*Enter FULLER, R.*]

FULLER. Matters have arrived at a strange pass. Marry that girl I *must*! After living a life of luxury I cannot dwell in poverty! I would take my life first! That Bruce is my only obstacle. He must be removed; *removed!* (*Meditates.*) I think I know a certain rough coastman, who for a few thousand would sink him—*accidentally*, of course—in the bay! I will see him! (*Takes letter from pocket.*) Bruce's letter! He loves her dearly, and flatters himself his love, in a slight degree, is returned! Arrangements shall be made to rid me of this rival! My point I will carry, by fair means or foul! This death will give me a sure hand. We all must die, and what matters it if a little in advance of the time expected? A single blow, and all will be over! 'Twill be an easy death for him! Ha, ha, ha! I will not forget my bank account!

[END ACT II.]

## ACT III.

(*Interior Bruce's Studio. Numerous paintings on walls and floor; "Harvest," a female head, and "The Game of Poker," two men at table playing poker; all are represented by persons placed in darkened space, and observed by audience through frames; a painting of horses on an easel. Bruce painting at easel portrait of Rev. Dr. Bull.*)

BRUCE. Well, here I am, hard at work once more! And again without a dollar in my pocket! Wonder if I will get any duns to-day? (*Enter, L, BILL ANDREWS.*) Yes, here he comes, that boatman after pay for sailing me down the coast. Well, he must have it this time, sure! Ah, good morning, Captain,—never mind,—I know what you want. You just remain here while I step out and get some money. Will be back in a few minutes; don't fear, I'll be back—sure. Ah, Van, what *could* I do without you! (*Exit, R. Enter FULLER, L.*)

FULLER. Well, Saltie, what are you doing here; where's Bruce?  
ANDREWS. He has just gone out for a moment after some money to pay me *what he owes me*.

FULLER. Not a very good pay-master, I fancy?

ANDREWS. Wall no, boss, somehow he *seems* rather *slow*.

FULLER. Is he a particular friend of yours?

ANDREWS. Wall no, I can't say he is, any more than any man is who will give us a job. Business makes friends, you know, an' the more the pay, the bigger the friends, eh Bill? (*Asks himself the question, and answers for himself, a peculiarity of his.*) Well I should snicker!

FULLER. Ha, ha, ha! I believe you are the fellow who about every week or so gets into the lockup down town? I imagine you are pretty *tough*!

ANDREWS. Ha, ha, ha! Are we Bill? Ha, ha, ha!

FULLER. I fancy, my good fellow, you neither fear man or—the devil. Am I right?

ANDREWS. Wall, I guess ye are. Ye see, Bill an' I have edicated ourselves to not fear any of our *nabors*!

FULLER. That's right, and well put, too. Are you to be *trusted*? (*Looks about room, to see if any one is around.*)

ANDREWS. Who says we are *not* to be trusted? *Who* Bill? (*Looks bold.*) If we are tough we are *honest*!

FULLER. How would you like to make, say *five thousand dollars*?

ANDREWS. Whew! Five thousand dollars! What say ye, Bill? Well boss, we are *tough*! Ye see, I an' Bill here, Bill is my *inner* man, we are the tough ones of our families! I dis-kiver that every family has its pious one an' its tough one. An' allow me to say that *one* as tough as my inner half, Bill, is, or I is, or perhaps even *you* yerself, boss, will answer for a very *large* family, eh?

FULLER. I fancy you are pretty near right! But to business! Swear that our business together shall ever remain a *secret*. Do you swear?

ANDREWS. Why of course we *swear*. Oh the devil, yes! (*Aside.*) Hope he don't think a fellow could live on this coast a life-time without swarin'!

FULLER. Then listen. This Bruce, who owes you money, is my deadly enemy! He must be *fixed*! Now, what say you to the job?

ANDREWS. Ah ha, oh ho! What say you Bill? I say, boss, that's a dang small sum for that kind of a *fix*! Come down, come down, shell out! Ye see, boss, that *would* be a rather small sum to retire onto! After doin' such a job as that we would not feel like *workin'* any more! Make it ten thousan' boss. and we will gin ye a fine job! Won't we Bill?

FULLER. Then ten thousand be it. I will pay you now two thousand down, and the balance after he is *fixed*. I will leave it with you as to *how* you do it. When he goes out sailing with you, would it not be a good idea to just *chuck him over*? You could report on shore *drowned by accident*!

ANDREWS. Good plan, ain't it Bill? Good plan, good plan, first-class plan, boss.

FULLER. Well, here are the two thousand, and remember, the quicker he is fixed, the quicker you will get the balance!

ANDREWS. (*Taking money.*) But had'nt ye better gin us a due bill for the balance?

FULLER. Blast your due bill! You know *me* well! You have the word of a *gentleman*! Is not that enough? [*Exit, L.*]

ANDREWS. Havn't we struck a gold mine! Ha, ha, ha! Two thousan' in han,' and eight more in the bush. 'Cause we will go up town an' hammer the hofficers, the man thinks we would do murder! Whew, Bill, if we are gettin' our names up like that, we had better reform and jine the church! We can 'ford it now with this money! An' put in the plate a dollar every Sunday; better than most of 'em does, I fancy! But how can we get that 'ar *balance*? I have it! We will have Mr. Bruce and his friend Van Ine go sailin' with us some rough day, and we will take Bruce down the coast an' board him 'till we get our pay! We will gin him a thousan' dollars for a week of his time,—you see he is a poor duffer, an' 'twill help him on. We an' Mr. Van Ine, you know, can return an' report Bruce *drowned by accident*! Boat tipped bottom side up in a squall! Eh, Bill? Splendid! Good idee! Wonder if he has made the right change? (*Counts money; puts it in pocket as Bruce enters, followed by Rev. Dr. Bull.*)

BRUCE. Well, my friend, here is your pay; sorry to have kept you waiting.

ANDREWS. You jus' keep that 'ar for spendin' money; we don't need it!

BRUCE. Why, what do you mean?

ANDREWS. You jus' come out with us a minute, an' we will tell ye, won't we Bill? (*Exit, L., ANDREWS and BRUCE. Rev. Dr. Bull examines his portrait on easel.*)

DR. BULL. Aha! Here I am! Really, a fine looking fellow! I didn't know I was quite so good looking! A little flattery, no doubt! In flattery lies an artist's *strength*! It certainly

is younger looking than I am! I should say at least ten years! But I must say *I like it!* (*Stands and smiles over it. Re-enter BRUCE, L.*)

DR. BULL. (*Seating.*) I learn you are to soon give some caricaturing at Sterlings?

BRUCE. Yes.

DR. BULL. Sterling is a good clever fellow. Always trying to make those around him happy, but, poor man, he has seen but little enjoyment since his son was abducted long years ago.

BRUCE. I understand he has taken it much to heart.

DR. BULL. By the way, how do you like his ward, Miss Grafton?

BRUCE. She seems to be quite prime in every sense, as far as I have discovered.

DR. BULL. Do you know, Mr. Bruce, I think she's splendid! And there's her cousin, Miss Vine, a regular Western beauty! Mr. Bruce, there is something fascinating about a Western girl that I don't quite understand. Wish I was not as old as I am! Oh, dear! But what a life-like expression you have in that figure representing *Harvest!* She seems really about to speak!

BRUCE. The figure is painted from life, a Miss Derby, stopping at the resort; you have heard of her, I dare say—a great flirt. (*Waves her handkerchief.*)

DR. BULL. Well really. I don't know but I have! (*Looks at Harvest, and she sweetly smiles. Well really, (gets up) really!* I have never before seen a face so life-like! If Miss Derby was only here alive, instead of being simply some paint on canvas, I should almost think her trying to flirt with me now! Really! I see you have several new pieces. (*Examines painting of horses.*) These are—ah—horses, are they not?

BRUCE. Yes.

DR. BULL. I supposed so. I did not know, but supposed they were horses. Did they pose for you to sketch them?

BRUCE. No, they were drawn from imagination.

DR. BULL. Indeed! What a vivid imagination you must possess! Lovely! Exquisite! (*Stops in front of "The Game of poker."*) What's this?

BRUCE. The Game of Poker. Playing poker.

DR. BULL. So life-like— (*The figures play.*) I declare! I almost think I can see them play! I really believe I saw that man put down a card! You must be acquainted with the game.

BRUCE. Certainly, Doctor, it is important that an artist be acquainted with his subject. Therein *artists* have to differ from the *clergy*. I do not play poker myself; I have *seen* it played.

DR. BULL. Indeed! (*Eyes Bruce over his glasses.*) Indeed! I am glad to meet one young man who does not play poker! It is a great curse to the youth of our land! (*Examines Game of Poker again.* They have got a pile of chips in the pool! Wonder what cards they hold? (*Looks at right man's cards.*) Three kings and a queen. Well, that's *pretty safe.* (*Looks at left man's hand.*) Murder! *Four aces and a*

king! (*Notices Bruce.*) Ah, that is powerfully painted, powerfully! (*Stops in front of "Harvest."*) Beautiful, beautiful! Young man, allow me to say you possess a powerful brush! Powerful! Beautiful, beautiful! (*She winks, and he rushes to Bruce.*) I am sorry, Mr. Bruce, to absent myself so suddenly! I am pastor of a church, and I cannot allow myself to be *winked* at, not even by a painting! That painting called *Harvest* has actually commenced it! You give too much life to your pieces!

BRUCE. You must be deceiving yourself, sir!

DR. BULL. This cannot be a dream, can it? Punch me! Hit me with something! No, I know I am in my right senses. Mr. Bruce, you paint too natural! Don't make my portrait wink, will you? It would *ruin* me! RUIN me! I never flirt, not even with a painting! Never! (*Stops in front of his portrait.*) Ah, it is good! It is finished, is it not?

BRUCE. It is now complete.

DR. BULL. I am perfectly satisfied with it. But of the two, don't you think you have—flattered me a bit?

BRUCE. Oh, certainly not!

DR. BULL. I do *so* hate to see flattery in any garb.

BRUCE. I always endeavor to paint true to life. If I have my own way.

DR. BULL. But do you think I am as young looking as that?

BRUCE. Well,—yes,—oh, certainly!

[*Enter MISS BANGS.*]

DR. BULL. Ah, here comes Miss Bangs; as a critic we will have her opinion. Ah, Miss Aurelia, you have arrived just in time. I have just had my portrait finished. We would like your opinion. (*She views it.*)

BANGS. Perfectly lovely! *With a desire to flatter him.*) But it seems to me to look a little *old!* (*Fans.*)

DR. BULL. (*Youthful as possible.*) Indeed! You ought to know, certainly! Mr. Bruce, perhaps I had better have another sitting after all. I wish to get it *exact!* Well, good day Miss Bangs, Mr. Bruce. (*Exit lively, L, waving his handkerchief to "Harvest" as he goes out.*)

BANGS. Mr. Bruce, you know I agreed to call to-day for another sitting, I have called to get excused! The day out is *so* lovely, I cannot bear to remain in. (*Bruce produces her portrait.*) Ah, here is my beautiful face! You have improved it much! But don't you think the nose a little too prominent? Just a little, you know, for *looks.* And the cheeks not quite plump enough; what do you say?

BRUCE. Perhaps.

BANGS. And my form seems a little *thin*, don't you think so?

BRUCE. (*Looks at her figure and slightly smiles.*) Perhaps.

BANGS. And if I was smiling a little more, (*looks very sour,*) wouldn't you like it better?

BRUCE. Perhaps.

BANGS. And if the eyes were a little larger and more lustrous, I think it would be an improvement?

BRUCE. Perhaps.

BANGS. And if there was a little more color in my cheeks, I think I would look *fresher*?

BRUCE. Yes.

BANGS. What a beautiful portrait that is you painted of Miss Vine! If I could only get one as good looking as *that* I would be *perfectly satisfied*! But I must be going. It's such a *lovely day*! [Exit, L.

BRUCE. (*Disgusted.*) And what a lovely portrait this will be when finished! If I humor all her whims it will resemble as much the Princess of Wales! And if no one knows it, it will simply be a *joke on the artist*!

[Enter VAN INE, R, with huge card attached to left breast, "NO INTRODUCTION ALLOWED." Pulls note from pocket, and waltzes merrily about the room.]

BRUCE. What now, lunatic?

VAN INE. My dear boy, I want my portrait painted immediately! I want it painted in *elegant* style! Paint me one worth at least *five thousand*! Hereafter I have nothing *cheap* about me!

BRUCE. Gone crazy, sure!

VAN. Crazy, am I? (*Hands Bruce the note.*) Read that and see if I am crazy! Note from Miss Vine! Just took it from the office! Ahem!

BRUCE. (*Reads aloud.*) "*Mr. Van Ine:—I can give you no encouragement whatever. Yours, in haste, Lura Vine.*" (*Ned laughs.*)

VAN. If you please, now read it *correctly*, and then I will laugh!

BRUCE. I have read it correctly.

VAN. I know better! (*Takes note from him confidentially, but reads it crest-fallen.*) Well, I declare! This is strange! The strangest affair I ever saw! I took that note out of that envelope not over fifteen minutes ago, and it read differently *then*! Decidedly! *She must have changed her mind*!

BRUCE. What priced portrait did you say?

VAN. —(*Turns note over.*) Here, here it is now! This piece of paper, like everything else, has two sides! Paint me a portrait worth *ten thousand dollars*! Listen! "*I love you from the bottom of my heart! I can learn to love none other! Would that I knew thy heart could beat for me as fondly and as truly as mine now beats for thee.*" (*Kisses the note.*)

BRUCE. Please let me see it again. (*Looks at it.*) If you had half an eye in your head you could see she never wrote that part.

VAN. (*Examines it.*) I can't believe it! I don't wish to believe it! I will *not* believe it 'till I am *forced* to! (*Looks at it again.*) The writing certainly does differ, but you see she was in a different *frame of mind*! Perhaps the case does need an investigation! However, I think Miss Vine wants me to marry her! Of course, she should be a little shy at first. I hate a girl who will nibble at the first fly! My ideal must not be hooked so easily! My dear sir, courting a girl

is a delightful comedy in one act. If the curtain be allowed to drop too quickly, both parties eventually regret it! Sir, Miss Vine is an orphan, and needs a protector! (*Gets up in chair, and sits down on its back.*) True, she's worth a million, but she needs a protector the same!

BRUCE. Please get down out of that chair! Would you ruin my furniture!

VAN. A million will protect no woman! She needs the strong arm of *man*, and in this case *I'm the man!* 'Tis I, sir, she wishes to sit on the outer ramparts, and watch the approaching enemy! 'Tis I she wishes to be her heavenly meteor, to illuminate her path through life, to *marry* her, and, I regret to say, manage her finances! Duty bids me do it, and *duty* I obey! Now my dear sir, some people, I suppose, are rash enough to marry for *wealth*, but he who so marries lacks the spirit of true manhood! You may even fancy *I* wish to marry this heiress for her *money!* But what do *I* want of it?

BRUCE. To pay my bills with!

VAN. No sir, you have sufficient means at your own disposal! You have a credit at the bank.

I have detected an affinity existing between us that is bound to make us one! Yes, sir! We are capable of making an excellent pair of *clog dancers.*

BRUCE. I object! (*Throws book at him.*) If I listen to a harangue of this order, I demand pay!

VAN. (*Takes out some coin.*) What are your terms, sir?

BRUCE. Come to think, I can't be bought. Say, Van, I have to step over to our room for a few moments, and I wish you to remain here while I am out.

VAN. Why certainly, certainly sir. (*comes down out of chair. Exit Bruce, R.*) Walter Van Ine, artist. (*Puts on Bruce's painting rig.*) Wonder what kind of a looking artist I make, anyhow! (*Gets before mirror. Enter CARTER, L.*) What, Carter! (*Throws down pallet and begins to fumble in pocket for money.*) Here's a ten; I suppose that will answer 'till to-morrow.

CARTER. I am expecting a re—

VAN. Never mind the remittance.

CARTER. Thank you; a great accomodation, I assure you. Good day. (*Aside.*) *If you wish to make money easy, borrow it!* (*Exit, L. Enter PENNYMAKER, L, gives card.*)

VAN. Ah, Judge Pennymaker; I have often heard of you, but have never had the honor of meeting you before.

PENNYMAKER. I have called, recommended by the Sterlings, or rather by *Miss Vine*, to negotiate for a portrait. I see you are issuing some fine work.

VAN. Yes, I hope so. Pray, be seated.

PENNYMAKER. What is the price of your most elegant style?

VAN. Five hundred.

PENNYMAKER. Unquestionably five off for cash with-order?

VAN. Certainly.

PENNYMAKER. Well then, here is my check to bearer for five hundred, less that discount. I knew your price, and expected

the five off. It pays to discount all bills!

VAN. I guess that is so, Judge.

PENNYMAKER. A grand portrait by you at Sterlings of Miss Vine. Now, for various reasons I wish mine painted in similar style and *size*!

VAN. Intended for a *match* piece?

PENNYMAKER. It may be some day. (*Laughs and uses his handkerchief.*) You see, I am a particular friend to the family, and if I should *happen* to marry her some day, it certainly *would* be! Ha, ha, ha! Of course there is nothing certain in this world, but I will say to you, *confidentially* now, my chances at present seem *quite flattering*!

VAN. (*Aside.*) My rival!

PENNYMAKER. Now Mr. Artist, or what's your name, you must do me *justice*. *Confidentially* now, consider my age and aspirations! I used to be very good looking. (*Is attracted by "Harvest," who smiles on him and also winks.*) Sir, gratify me with your hand! (*Gets up, and rushes to Van.*) Young man, you certainly eclipse all the old masters! They may have painted as natural as life, but they never manipulated so a production could wink! By my faith, I have just detected several to emanate from that smiling beauty there! (*Blows his nose, and waves handkerchief to her.*)

VAN. I beg your pardon, sir, but it is impossible for a painting to wink! I am sorry to say you have symptoms common with a person of very intemperate habits.

PENNYMAKER. (*Leaning on Van.*) Then I must be intoxicated! (*Thinks.*) But really I can't recollect drinking anything within a week! Guess I had better sit down! (*Goes and sits down. Van gets a supposed fresh canvas, and places it on his easel.*) What are those fellows playing, *poker*? (*Waves handkerchief to "Harvest."*)

VAN. I believe they are.

PENNYMAKER. (*Uses glasses.*) They have got deuced good hands! A flush, and two pairs and a king. Blamed if I don't think I *am* not myself at all, for I really think I saw that man pull a card from his sleeve! He has now got two pairs and an *ace*!

VAN. You will be all right in a moment; look this why. I will map out your outlines to-day. It will take but a few minutes. (*Now for vengeance!*) I say, Judge, wouldn't you like a full length portrait? You have a splendid pair of bow-legs!

PENNYMAKER. Sir!

VAN. (*Aside.*) Come to think, I guess he wouldn't!

PENNYMAKER. Now, you know the style I wish, simply a bust portrait.

VAN. (*Sketching.*) Yes, wish to be taken on a bust! A regular *bender*! I say, Judge, do you *often* get that way?

PENNYMAKER. (*Angrily.*) Sir, I wish a bust portrait! Damn it, don't you know what a bust portrait is!

VAN. (*Laughing.*) Why certainly! I hope you don't find me after following my vocation a life-time, ignorant as to what a *bust* portrait is? I was simply *in jest*! Aren't you fond of jokes?

PENNYMAKER. Oh, ah! (*Smiles and is more composed. Waves handkerchief to "Harvest."*)

VAN. Would you like a large or small mouth? Can give you your choice. Some people are very particular!

PENNYMAKER. I would like *Pennymaker's* mouth! (*Aside.*) Another joke!

VAN. Then I will put you down *large!* Nose, quite nose;—cheek, large possessions; don't you think I had better paint you on a *wig?* 'Twill cost no more!

PENNYMAKER. Sir, I wish *no wig!*

VAN. How would a nice pair of mutton chops suit you?

PENNYMAKER. I wish *no mutton chops!* *Damn your mutton chops, sir!* (*Pounds with cane.*)

VAN. I beg your pardon! (*Smiles.*)

PENNYMAKER. Joke? (*Waves handkerchief to "Harvest."*)

VAN. (*Stops work and looks.*) Do I see a wart on the side of your nose?

PENNYMAKER. No, sir! (*Pounds with cane.*)

VAN. Well, don't you think I had better paint one on? There may be one there some day, Judge!

PENNYMAKER. (*Jumps up pounding with cane.*) *Damn your warts, sir! You are a base piece of impudence! What have you got there? (Advances to examine sketch; Van endeavors to turn it around so he can't see it, and exhibits to audience a ridiculous caricature Sketch must be previously made and kept from audience.)* Sir, I am grossly insulted! (*Strikes canvas with cane, and knocks it off easel.*) Bruce, you are a scoundrel!

[*Enter BRUCE, R.*]

VAN. (*Keeping a good distance from Pennymaker.*) Bruce, I make you acquainted with Judge Pennymaker. You heard him call you a scoundrel! Make him *prove it!*

[END ACT III.]

## ACT IV.

(*Drawing Room, Sterling Cottage. Rev. Dr. Bull and son seated. Arthur very erect, and dressed very trim. Arthur's hat on table.*)

DR. BULL. Arthur, you must not expect your old father to do *all* your courting! Of course, I am willing to assist you all I can, but you must not depend on me wholly! I am not as young as I used to be! If I only *were*, I would do it all *willingly*! Miss Vine, I am quite sure, has a deep regard for you, but she is, of course, a little *particular*, and if you wish to marry her, you will have to make her believe you are in *love*! Don't you see? If you wish her to love *you*, you must *impress* her with the idea that you love *her*! You must make her *think* it, whether you do or not!

ARTHUR. B-b-but how shall I do it? (*Arthur looks frightened thinking he hears her coming.*) Pshaw! Why didn't you t-t-tell her so? I'd stood b-b-bye you!

DR. BULL. I have told her that you loved her *devotedly*, but I know she would rather you would tell her yourself. You must do it to-day, before you leave this house!

ARTHUR. W-well I will, if it will, if it will do any g-g-good. But it's n-n-not very p-pleasant for me! I'll be glad when it's o-o-over with! It's all f-for your s-sake! N-not's I c-c-care anything about it!

DR. BULL. Girls are such *peculiar* creatures! Now, she would not take *my* word! Said I was jesting! But she will believe *you*, Arthur! Do you suppose your proud mother would ever have accepted me if I had sent your grandfather to see about it? *No sir!* You should see her yourself! Converse with her on different topics, entertain her in this way and that, and before you know it you will become strongly attached to each other. Then an engagement can be easily made!

ARTHUR. Oh d-dear, I d-dread it.

DR. BULL. What! Dread an engagement to Miss Vine?

ARTHUR. N-n-no! The *siege*!

DR. BULL. Dread courting such a beautiful girl! It should be the pleasantest task of your life!

ARTHUR. *You* may think so! Well, what shall I t-t-talk about?

DR. BULL. Talk nonsense! Talk anything! The *less sense* you talk, the better a girl will like you!

ARTHUR. Is that w-why mother happened to t-t-take such a f-f-fancy to y-y-you? But you see there is n-no n-nonsense in *me*!

DR. BULL. You had better say there is no *sense* in you! There is plenty of nonsense in you; too much of it. Be sensible now, Arthur, *once* in your life. I am going now. You remain here 'till you see her, and do not fail to tell her of your love. Now please your old father! (*The Doctor pats his son on head.*)

ARTHUR. Y-y-yes, sir! (*Exit Dr. Bull, L. As soon as he is gone, Arthur goes and sits very upright and sober near the door at L. Enter MISS GRAFTON on the arm of BRUCE, and*

MISS VINE *on the arm of VAN INE.* They seat around a table in centre. Arthur quietly gets up and slides out, leaving his hat.)

LURA. Whose hat is that? What gentleman is here? (*Goes and picks up hat.*)

VAN. I think that property belongs to Mr. Arthur Bull.

LURA. Yes, it is his! Where can the dear creature be! (*Looks behind doors and under lounge, then out door.*) There he goes running toward the water! Wonder if he is about *rescuing* some one!

VAN. Trying to *rescue* himself, I imagine. When we came in he sat by the open door!

LURA. Oh, indeed! The Reverend Doctor must have placed him there! Ha, ha, ha! He probably thought his chance slim when he saw you fellows with us! Do you know, the whole resort is praising both of you for your bravery in rescuing us from the wrecked yacht, while Mr. Fuller and Judge Penny-maker are getting joked shamefully!

VAN. We deserve no extra credit. People can praise if they wish—we cannot prevent. We only did our duty!

LURA. Modestly spoken, Mr. Van Ine, but mercy, what a swim we had! And what a walk around in our wet clothes after landing! How ridiculous! I have laughed about our yachting adventure with the Judge and Mr. Fuller all day, and if you believe it, I was swimming around the bay all night in my imagination! Is dream telling in order?

ALL. Oh, certainly!

LURA. Then I will tell you of one of my adventures. 'Twas this: Ahem! It was a beautiful afternoon, and I was sitting alone on the bluff near the old eagle's nest, listening in meditative posture to the music of the waves splashing along the rocky shore, when suddenly the soft fanning zephyrs sprang into a gale, dark clouds took possession of the heavens, and heavy thunders rumbled and tumbled along the rugged coast, and broad belts of angular lightening flitted across the firmament! Ahem! I gazed out on the frothing waters, and oh, horror! there you were, Mr. Van Ine, clinging in despair to an old fashioned hen-coop. I thought I heard a faint cry for help, and notwithstanding I mis'rusted you had been out stealing chickens, I rushed down the bluff, threw off my hat and slippers, took off my false hair (*laughs*), plunged into the foaming surf, swam out, and towed you safely into port! (*All laugh and applaud.*)

VAN. And how can I thank you for your *bravery*!

LURA. No thanks required. *I only did my duty!*

BRUCE. But we have heard nothing from Mr. Fuller since the wrecking of the yacht! Hope his fright did not make him sick!

JOSIE. No, I guess not; he was here this morning to see *mama*.

Dear Lura, I wish you would take Mr. Van Ine out after a button-hole bouquet; I wish to tell Mr. Bruce *a secret*.

VAN. But Ned and I have no secrets. Ned, will you tell me all about it?

BRUCE. Certainly.

VAN. Then for a button-hole bouquet! (*They exit, R.*)

JOSIE. You got my note, warning you against Mr. Fuller?

BRUCE. I did.

JOSIE. I think I have sufficient reasons for mistrusting he wishes you harm!

BRUCE. Do not fear, I shall be on my guard. But Miss Josie, you have given me no answer to my note.

JOSIE. I know it, and should have answered it before. Mr. Bruce, I can tell you truly, I hold you in esteem high above all others, and as long as we live I will remain true to you,—if you *wish* it!

BRUCE. *You will!* (*Grasps her hands.*)

JOSIE. (*Withdraws them.*) But at *present* I acknowledge you only as a *friend*. This will probably be the last time I shall be *allowed* to receive you here as my guest—until—

BRUCE. But—

JOSIE. No, no, do not ask me why! If you *love* me be patient, as I promised to be *faithful*, praying in the meantime that conditions and *opinions* may change.

BRUCE. I will! (*Grasps her hands again.*)

JOSIE. But where are those fugitives! Let us look them up!  
[*Exit, R.*]

[*Enter LURA and VAN INE, L, with huge button-hole bouquet.*]

LURA. Josie, my darling, where are you?

VAN. Guess they have stepped out among the flowers, so you can tell *me* a secret!

LURA. If I did, you would *tell* it to everybody! Pshaw! *Men* can't keep secrets!

VAN. Tell me one, and see if I can't!

LURA. Will you promise *never* to repeat it?

VAN. I promise upon my word as a gentleman and a scholar!

LURA. Then listen. (*Assures herself that no one is near.*) I think that Mr. Bruce is in love with Miss Josie!

VAN. Indeed! (*Pretends to faint, and sits down; Lura laughs. He gets up and grasps her hands.*) I should hardly think that of *Mr. Ned!* But come now, tell me honestly, what did you think of my *letter*?

LURA. *Your letter!* Indeed! I thought it a good *copy!* Yes, and from Mr. *Bruce's* note to Miss Josie!

VAN. (*Horried.*) *Copy!* Then I infer you think I did not originate it!

LURA. I emphatically do!

VAN. Well then, seeing that you young ladies have held an investigation, and as I cannot tell a lie, I shall not deny the charge! I did copy his note, unbeknown to him, admiring his style, and knowing I could not better it, as it contained my sentiments exactly! Pretty sweet, wasn't it? But I did not expect that you showed your letters around to everybody! I simply wished to satisfy myself on this very subject. I think it sort of a betrayal of confidence. I shall never dare to write you again anything I should object to having pub-

lished in a newspaper! By the way, I wish to ask you if you compose all the notes *you* send away?

LURA. I certainly *do*!

VAN. (*Grasps her hands.*) Then you do love me from the bottom of your heart?

LURA. I never *said* I did!

VAN. (*Takes note from pocket in haste.*) Never said you did! Look here! This is from your note! (*Reads.*) "*I love you from the bottom of my heart! I can learn to love none other! Would that I knew thy heart could beat for me as fondly and as truly as mine now beats for thee.*" Do you recognise those words?

LURA. No, sir! None of mine!

VAN. Isn't that your envelope?

LURA. Yes, sir! But those are not my words!

VAN. Those words came to me in that envelope! But repudiate them if you will! Make me miserable! But oh,—make yourself *happy*! I must go—

LURA. Don't be in a hurry. (*Reads the note confusedly.*)

VAN. I must go!

LURA. (*Sharply.*) *Sit down!* (*Van drops into chair, and she bursts out crying, and throws herself on floor at his knees.*) Those are not my words,—and don't you twit me of them again,—but—they are my *sentiments*!

VAN. They are! (*They both cry.*)

LURA. Oh, pshaw! (*Wiping her eyes.*) How foolish! We must be *happy* now! Say, Walter, can you sing? (*Breaks away.*)

VAN. No, I never could!

LURA. Oh, you *must*! (*Fumbles over music on piano.*) You can sing some *easy* piece!

VAN. Pshaw! I can't sing anything!

LURA. (*gravely.*) Mr. Van Ine, I have always said—I should never—marry a man—who couldn't sing!

VAN. Oh well, *I can try!*

LURA. That sounds more like it! Ah, here is "Eyes so Blue." It is lovely; you have heard me sing it. Now, I think I will put your voice under a systematic course of *training*. Stand up here, erect—shoulders thrown back—there, that is good—ready, now—sing— (*Orchestral accompaniment.*)

"Eyes so blue, eyes so blue, laughing, lovely, fond and true,  
How I fear to gaze on you, eyes so blue, to gaze on you;  
Eyes so blue, eyes so blue, I fear to gaze on you!"

(*Lura hits him across shins with cane with which she beats time.*)

VAN. Oh, murder! What are you doing! Do you take me for *time*?

LURA. Oh, ho, did that little thump hurt you?

VAN. I should say it did!

LURA. (*Gravely.*) Mr. Van Ine, I have come to the conclusion—that I do not care—to marry a man—who cannot stand—a *few thumps*!

VAN. Oh, I was only *fooling*! It did not hurt me *one bit*!

Ha, ha, ha! *But don't hit twice in the same place!* (They sing again, and Van endures a few more thumps with good grace.)

"Golden hair, golden hair, oh, your lovely braids so rare!  
I'll soon be driven to despair! I'o despair, golden hair, *Hits.*  
I'll soon be driven to despair. Oh, golden hair! Oh, golden hair! (*Makes him*  
[wink.]

Sunny smile, sunny smile, your's is more than mortal wile. (*Makes him wink.*)  
You bewitch me, you beguile, (*Hits*)  
Sunny smile, sunny smile! You bewitch me, sunny smile. (*Makes him wink.*)

*In case of encore:—*

Lips so red, lips so red, roses ne'er such fragrance shed! (*Winks*)  
I'd wake to kiss you were I dead, were I dead, lips so red! (*Hits.*)  
I'd wake to kiss you were I dead! I'd wake to kiss you were I dead! (*Winks.*)  
Lips so red, lips so red, I'd wake to kiss you were I dead, were I dead, were I  
dead."

LURA: That's splendid! I think that will do at *present*. I must be careful and not have you *over do!* Can you execute music?

VAN. Yes, hang it!

LURA. There! I will forgive you *this* time, but *no more* such witticism! Walter, do you recollect that dance we had one morning on the bluff?

VAN. I'll look in my memorandum! (*Feels for book.*)

LURA. You nuisance, yes you do remember it—you can *never* forget it! Let's have some more of it! (*They dance, and exit, R.*)

[*Time changes to evening. Enter MISS VINE.*]

LURA. Well, I wonder what this house is coming to! Never thought I would ever be mixed up so in a real romance! And I've promised Walter with a woman's oath to keep his secret! Can't even tell Josie, poor girl, that Ned is not dead but *sleeping*—in a fisherman's shanty! It is now nearly a week since Walter and those coastmen reported him drowned. Poor girl, she has at last been persuaded by Mrs. Sterling to think it her *duty* to marry this wretched Fuller, the *scoundrel!* Of course, she thinks he had nothing to do with Ned Bruce's *supposed* death! Poor thing, she is about crying herself blind this minute! Mr. Sterling's entertainment is coming off the same, and instead of caricaturing by Ned Bruce, this scoundrel Fuller is calculating to substitute his marriage with Miss Josie! *Oh, you villain!* Ned and Walter are to be here on time to block his game, according to programme number two, and in case they are delayed, I am to interfere! (*Goes and looks out window. Enter HAMILTON, R.*)

HAMILTON. (*Aside.*) Is she not beautiful! Now is my chance! (*Pulls note from pocket, hastily runs over it, rushes to her side and kneels.*) Miss Vine! I love you from the bottom of my heart! I can learn to love none other! (*Lura strokes his head with her hand.*) *Would that I knew thy heart—* (*Jasper enters with card, but observing the scene, hastily retreats.*)

LURA. Let me see, I think I have heard those words before! I reckon it must be a favorite composition about here!

HAM. Listen! (*Hands over heart.*)

LURA. Get up! Get up! (*Lifts him up by coat-collar.*) Mr. Hamilton, I am engaged!

HAM. (*Aside.*) Too late! Luck again against me! (*Aloud.*) Miss Vine—ah, allow me to congratulate you—ah, excuse me, but I have been connecting myself with an amateur dramatic association! What do you think of my acting?

LURA. Indeed! (*Embarassed.*) I think it is quite natural! My opinion is you are a *success!*

HAM. Thank you! (*Exit, R. Enter JASPER with card, cautiously.*)

LURA. What, is it possible! 4230! Show him in, Jasper, and do not let him escape! What a simpleton I just made of myself, in telling Mr. Hamilton I was engaged, when he was only in *jest!* (*ARTHUR BULL ushered in by JASPER, very bashful.*)

LURA. Good evening, Mr. Bull.

ARTHUR. I think it is, *y-yes!* · F-f-father sent me o-over!  
(*Lura takes his hat.*)

LURA. Indeed, your father is very kind. (*They sit down.*)

ARTHUR. Y-y-yes! H-he's spoken to you about *me?*

LURA. Oh yes, he has often mentioned your name!

ARTHUR. Y-y-yes! (*Twirls his thumbs.*)

LURA. And I suppose he has spoken to you of *me?*

ARTHUR. Y-yes. He's spoken t-t-to you 'b-'b-'bout *me?*

LURA. Oh, certainly!

ARTHUR. Y-y-yes, I t-told him t-t-to! W-w-well, what d-d-do you think 'b-'b-'bout *it?*

LURA. About what?

ARTHUR. 'B-'b-'bout our marriage! *Oh!* (*"Oh" in breath; frightened; sees he is in for it, and drops on his knees. Jasper enters with card, but hastily retreats. Lura helps him back to seat.*)

LURA. Why really, Arthur,—excuse my calling you *Arthur.*

ARTHUR. Y-y-yes! (*Pleased.*)

LURA. But really, Arthur, marriage is a subject I have thought little of! I will not *allow* myself to think of it! (*Bull looks sober.*) Most likely I shall *never marry!* (*More sober.*) Yet when I get older, when I am thirty-five or forty, I may think the matter over,—but no, I will not say it; in fact, I see so much *misery* brought about through marriages, I am resolved to *live and die single!* (*Bull looks most sober.*) This conclusion is final, (*Bull pulls out handkerchief.*) and I beg you will not *urge* me to change my mind! (*Sobs and uses handkerchief.*)

BULL. *Boo—hoo—hoo!* It w-w-will almost b-b-break f-father's heart! *BOO—HOO—HOO!* (*Looks up at her, and then sobs more bitterly.*) *Where's my hat?* (*Quits weeping; Lura gets his hat. Enter JASPER with card.*) *Where's m-m-my OTHER h-h-hat?*

LURA, Jasper, get his other hat. Good-bye, Arthur!

ARTHUR. C-c-call me *B-Bull*, if you p-p-please! (*Exit, with dignity.*)

LURA. 2999 again! (*Enter JUDGE PENNYMAKER, lively.*)

PENNYMAKER. Ah, good evening, Miss Lura! Here we are at

last alone! I hope I have the pleasure of finding you in good spirits.

LURA. You have that pleasure, Judge. Pray, be seated.

PENNYMAKER. Thank you, but for a fleeting moment. As usual, I am in great haste! I am about transferring this eve a large quantity of stock, making a nice thing out of it, and you will excuse me if I mention my present business without much *superfluous* ceremony! (*Uses handkerchief.*) Miss Lura, I suppose you have not failed to observe that I have had my eye on you for some time!

LURA. (*Innocently.*) Which one?

PENNYMAKER. (*Laughs and uses handkerchief.*) Pretty good! Both of them! And I would feel perched on the highest pinnacle of earthly enjoyment if you would consent to dwell continuously within their orbit! Will you not object to placing yourself under their observation and guidance? I tremble for your answer! (*Blows his nose.*)

LURA. Well, Judge, you take me a little by surprise! I hardly think it would be doing right to discharge my present manager at home, without cause or provocation. I can find no fault with him; in fact, I am perfectly satisfied with his management!

PENNYMAKER. You mistake me! I see I did not sufficiently elucidate my position! (*Drops upon his knees. Enter JASPER, who suddenly retreats.*) Will you—will you be my wife?

LURA. (*Laughing.*) Why, I thought you simply wished to become manager of my finances! Get up, Judge, before some one sees you! I will tell you something. (*Judge seats.*) You have not joined any dramatic association, have you?

PENNYMAKER. No, no, certainly not!

LURA. Sure?

PENNYMAKER. Yes, *sure!*

LURA. (*With handkerchief over face pretends to sob, but seen by audience to laugh.*) I'm—I'm—engaged! (*Sobs aloud.*)

PENNYMAKER. (*Getting up and caressing her.*) There, there, don't cry, dear Lura. What if you are! Break the engagement! If you can't, *fly with me!* (*Stretches out arms.*)

LURA. Oh no (*quits weeping*), I do not cry because I'm engaged! I've had these sobbing spells all day! This morning, without a moment's previous sickness, my pony, *Sancho*, you've seen me ride him, died in a *fit!* Boo—hoo—ho!

PENNYMAKER. Good evening! (*Grasps hat and rushes out. Enter JASPER with card.*)

LURA. 4001; show him in, Jasper. (*Exit Jasper.* Probably wishes to pay me that borrowed money. (*Enter MR. CARTER.*) Good evening, Mr. Carter.

CARTER. Miss Vine, I am glad to see you, socially, and in a business point of view. (*Gaps.*)

LURA. Indeed; be seated.

CARTER. Thank you. I have heard from San Francisco at last, and my remittance has not been equal to my expectations! (*Gaps.*) I have all along been in hopes of being able to pay my friends, who have kindly accomodated me, at least

three cents on a dollar, but I shall certainly be unable to do even that! (*Gaps.*)

LURA. I do not doubt your honor in the least, Mr. Carter, and if you are hard driven do not think of the small sum loaned you. I reckon I can get along.

CARTER. But—but, Miss Vine, I cannot allow your generosity. I assure you it will pain me exceedingly to wrong you out of a penny! (*Gaps.*) I wish to deal honorably, especially with the ladies! It was a great accommodation, your loaning me the sums you did! A genuine kindness I shall never forget! By the way, Miss Vine, I have a plan by means of which you can secure the whole amount. (*Drops on knees.*) Marry-me! (*Perfectly cool.*)

LURA. (*Both arise.*) Mr. Carter, such kindness, such self sacrifice on your part, I should feel loth to permit! A receipt shall be handed you in full of account. Good evening, sir! (*Waves her hand toward the door.*)

CARTER. Never mind your receipt. It won't matter. Save time and paper. Good evening. [*Exit, R.*]

LURA. Well, who comes next to confess his love, not for me, but for my bonds. I am sick of it! This is what we girls get when misfortune wills us a million! (*Enter JASPER with card.*) What, Rev. Dr. Bull, probably to intercede for his son. Ah, good evening, Doctor.

DR. BULL. (*Pleasantly.*) Yes, a most lovely evening. Let us be seated, my dear girl. I must have a very serious talk with you. Arthur tells me he has seen you.

LURA. Yes.

DR. BULL. Oh dear, I am so sorry you told him what you did. I could not rest 'till I came and saw you myself. I hope you did not forget that he is to be my sole heir. Can show you in black and white, if you wish proof.

LURA. I wish no proof; your word is sufficient. I surely congratulate him.

DR. BULL. But my dear Miss Vine, would not that fact tempt you to become my daughter-in-law?

LURA. My dear Doctor, it would not.

DR. BULL. (*Nervously.*) Dear, dear! Then nearly all my hopes are at last blasted! I have only one left. My dear, since we became acquainted we have been very good friends.

LURA. I trust so.

DR. BULL. Would you forgive me if I should perhaps foolishly admit a fact to you?

LURA. My dear Doctor, I would forgive you anything. (*Kneels to her.*)

DR. BULL. Then, my dear, I love you fondly myself! Don't be angry! Have mercy on me! Only for dear Arthur's sake would I willingly have parted with you! Anything to get you into our family! (*They both arise.*)

LURA. My dear sir, I am painfully surprised that such an admission should come from you! You had better retire, and let us not meet again until you have regained your usual good sense! (*Exits, brushing dust off his knees.*) Well, I

declare, I seem to be making an evening of it! Well, I am ready for another one! Who comes next? How I do wish that Walter would only step in! Only think, I have seen nothing of him in twenty-four hours! He is getting so he really neglects me! What, here he is now! (*Enter VAN INE.*) 4250!

VAN. Thought I must call in and take another lesson!

LURA. That's right! Oh, Walter, I am powerfully glad to see you! (*Enter JASPER with card.*) 2928! Tell him, Jasper, I am very much indisposed! Oh, Walter, I must ask a great favor of you,— (*Enter JASPER with another card.*) 1333, Mr. Dingle, of Boston. Oh, dear, dear, how I am bored!

VAN. Tell Mr. Dingle, of Boston, to get off that front porch, and to not call again until sent for!

LURA. That is right! Oh, that was *such* a relief. Walter, you know the other day we agreed to marry, didn't we?

VAN. Well, I believe it was *spoken* of! (*Enter JASPER with several cards.*) Tell all those duffers to get out that front yard, or you'll let the dogs loose, and Jasper, take off that bell pull!

LURA. Oh, this is *such* a relief! Walter, you are *so* good! But about our matter! You don't wish to back out, do you?

VAN. On marrying? Oh, that would be dishonorable! When I give my *word*, you can always depend on it! That is, most generally!

LURA. I am getting *so* bored of late! It seems that everybody wants to marry me! Now, if you have no objections, I wish to start the story that we are engaged!

VAN. Let me see! (*Thinks.*) No, I don't know as I have—that is, I don't think of any *now*! (*Swells up.*)

LURA. And you won't break your word?

VAN. My word with you, *never*! (*Kisses her hands; goes to kiss her cheeks, but she does not let him.*) See here, Miss Lura (*folds his arms*), I have come—to the conclusion—that I do not care—to marry a girl—who will not let me kiss her! (*Turns his back to her; she pulls at his coat.*)

LURA. And I long since came—to the conclusion—that I would not care—to marry a man—who would not *care* to kiss me! (*They turn and kiss each other with much satisfaction.*)

[END ACT IV.]

## ACT V.

(*Drawing Room, Sterling Cottage. Reception and grand entertainment given by the Sterlings; dancing ceases.*)

PENNYMAKER. (*Promenading with Miss Vine.*) What a delightful affair this is! But I see Miss Josie has not joined the merry dance this evening!

[*Rev. Dr. Bull observed trying to get his son out of a corner.*]

LURA. No, poor girl, she is not at all jolly, and on the eve of her marriage! She seems to mourn the death of poor Ned Bruce! If he had only lived, I fear Mr. Fuller would have fared poorly!

PENNYMAKER. I have fancied that myself! Ahem! Fuller is a good fellow among the *men*, but I don't fancy him possessing any quality attractive to the fair sex. I can see nothing about him lovable! (*Feels his own importance.*)

LURA. She tried to have him put off their marriage for even a week, but he somehow could not be induced to do it!

PENNYMAKER. Cruel, oh cruel creature!

LURA. Oh, I know Josie loved Ned Bruce dearly! She told me to-day, now that he is dead she did not care what became of her! It will be a very melancholy wedding!

PENNYMAKER. Poor girl, I feel so sorry for her!

DR. BULL. Now Arthur, do be a man!

ARTHUR. You d-d-don't think there is any d d-danger of my being a w-w-woman, do you?

PENNYMAKER. By the way, I hear that Mr. Bruce's friend, Mr. Van Ine, is the lucky one you are engaged to! He ought to be happy!

LURA. Yes Judge, and *I* ought to be happy, for he is such a splendid fellow, and loves me so *dearly*! Did you ever meet him?

PENNYMAKER. Yes—I met him once in poor Bruce's studio—he's a very *jolly* fellow! Very jolly!

LURA. Oh, he *is*! And as you say, he *ought* to be happy, for I do *love* him so! And say, I wish you'd tell *all the fellows* that we're engaged! I've been so *terribly* bored lately by *proposals*! (*Judge looks queer.*) But you must excuse me, I must go and join Miss Josie. (*Exit.*)

DR. BULL. Arthur, I am ashamed of you! Why don't you select a partner? Refreshments will soon be announced, and you will have to go down alone!

ARTHUR. Now, I w-w-wish you would n-n-not worry a-b-b-bout me! It so happens that I k-k-know the c-c-cook, and you b-b-bet I don't go h-h-hungry or get l-l-left!

HAMILTON. Ladies and gentlemen, I am requested to announce that the next thing on the evening's programme, as originally intended, was to have been caricaturing by our lamented acquaintance, Mr. Ned Bruce, whose sad fate we are all familiar with. In place of this part of the evening's entertainment is substituted the *marriage* of Mr. Sterling's ward, Miss Josie Grafton, to Mr. Millard Fuller, by the Reverend Doctor Bull. The ceremony will now take place, after

which dancing will be renewed. (*Bridal Party, headed by Dr. Bull, enters parlor from L. Ceremony about to commence.*)

LURA. (*Entering excitedly, R.*) Stop this ceremony! There is proof without that Millard Fuller is a would-be murderer! I beg your pardon, uncle, Mr. Ned Bruce is in waiting!

STERLING. What, Bruce alive!

[*Enter BRUCE and VAN INE.*]

BRUCE. Yes, alive! I am most happy to state! (*Looks at Fuller.*) Mr. Van Ine will explain all!

JOSIE. (*Rushing to Bruce.*) Oh, Ned, Ned is it really you! Are you alive! Dear, dear!

FULLER. A base conspiracy to ruin me! Some one shall suffer for this!

VAN. Mr. Sterling, we have proof with us that this man (*pointing to Fuller*) has paid ten thousand dollars for the death of Ned Bruce! Let the witness enter!

LURA. (*Bringing in Bill Andrews.*) This way! This way! Here he is!

VAN. Mr. Bruce has been stopping with this honest fellow for a week or more, until he could get the balance of this man's most liberal fee for committing a murder!

FULLER. 'Tis a base lie! You infernal villain, you shall rue all this! Traitor, a balance is due you yet! (*Menacing the coastman.*)

ANDREWS. You are very kind, boss, for which we are much obliged to ye, but we are perfectly satisfied with what we've already got! Ain't we, Bill? (*Exhibits huge roll of money.*) I should say we are! But as we are the tough ones of our families, I guess we can take anythin' ye have got it to gin us! (*Shakes fist at Fuller.*)

STERLING. Mr. Fuller, I am pained to see this undeniable proof of your murderous plot! If harm had happened to Mr. Bruce, I could have seen you hanged with pleasure! As it is—there is the door—quit my house, and never dare to enter it again! (*The baffled man retreats, amid hisses from the crowd.*)

CARTER. (*To Fuller, just as he is going out.*) Perhaps I won't see you again—can't you lend me a parting ten?

STERLING. (*Taking Bruce's hand.*) And Mr. Bruce, let me congratulate you for falling into the hands of this honest man! (*Goes and shakes hands with Andrews.*) My good fellow, I will see you again! You shall certainly be rewarded.

ANDREWS. Oh, thank ye, Mr. Sterling, Fuller has paid us well. Ain't he, Bill? Gin ye my word he has!

MRS. STERLING. (*Sobbing.*) Oh Josie, how can you forgive me! How can you!

JOSIE. I do freely forgive you, mama; indeed I do! So do not cry! (*Caresses her.*)

ARTHUR BULL. (*Sobbing in corner.*) F-F-Fuller was my f-f-friend! My f-f-friends are all d-d-deserting! Thank f-f-fortune, the c-c-cook will stand by me!

MISS BANGS. (*Sits down by his side.*) There Arthur, do not cry! Disappointments are nothing, after you get used to

them. *Be brave!* (*Arthur braces up.*)

[*Enter JASPER, with card for Mr. Stedling.*]

STERLING. Mr. Sturges has arrived; what news, I wonder! Show him up.

JASPER. (*Announces.*) Mr. Sturges!

STERLING. Ah, Mr. Sturges, I bid you welcome! Usual news I suppose, though as I expected! (*They shake hands.*)

STURGES. Don't know about *usual* news this time! I have an important clue! Is Mr. *Bruce* here?

STERLING. Mr. Bruce? Yes, he is here. Will Mr. Bruce please step this way?

STURGES. (*Eyeing him sharply.*) Mr. and Mrs. Sterling, renew your acquaintance with your long lost *Mark*. Mark Sterling, your parents!

STERLING. (*Grasping his hand.*) What, can it be! What, is this really our Mark!

STURGES. Look him in the eye! Observe the *mark* behind his ear!

MRS. STERLING. It is! It is! (*Throws her arms around his neck.*) Mark, my dear, dear *injured boy!* Oh dear, oh dear!

STERLING. (*With tears flooding his cheek, grasps Sturges by the hands.*) Sturges, my good fellow, 'tis he!

MRS. STERLING. Oh Mark, my dear, dear Mark, how *can* I atone for the harm I have done you! I am so unhappy! (*Sobs on his arm.*) Oh dear, oh dear!

MARK STERLING. There, mother, don't cry,—here, consent that dear Josie be mine—that will be sufficient!

MRS. STERLING. I do consent with all my heart! May heaven bless you both, and pardon *me!*

[*Arthur observed crying bitterly.*]

MARK. And father, do *you* consent?

STERLING. Josie, will you marry my boy? Not unless you truly love him!

JOSIE. I will most *gladly*, for I have loved him well!

STERLING. Then I consent, and this very night we'll celebrate your wedding!

LURA. (*Sobbing on Van Ine's shoulder.*) Have you—changed—your—mind? I didn't—know,—I thought—I'd ask!

VAN. *Oh, no!* I guess not! Do you fancy I'd like to be sued for *breach of promise?*

LURA. Did you hear, Mark and Josie are going to be married to-night! I—I—I have long hoped (*sobs*) to be married the same time *she* is! Would you have any *objections?* Now please don't say no to this poor, poor orphan girl, who loves you *so much!* (*Caresses him.*)

VAN. Let me see! (*Thinks.*) No, I have no objections. Will you give me time to go and change my clothes?

LURA. No, no, no! (*Clings to him.*)

VAN. Then I will speak to Mr. Sterling.

LURA. If you please! It will be such a *relief!* (*They go to Mr. Sterling.*)

VAN. And Mr. Sterling, *we* would like to celebrate *our* wedding this very night!

STERLING. Good! Good! *My dear good wife, let us get married-over and begin life anew!*

MRS. STERLING. My sentiments, dear Phineas! (*The three couple form on floor, near Rev. Dr. Bull.*)

STERLING. One more couple wanted this way! Another dance, and then for marriage!

ARTHUR BULL. Oh, if the c-c-cook was only here! (*Exit in haste.*)

PENNYMAKER. (*To Miss Bangs, lively.*) My dear girl, what say you? (*Offers her his hand.*)

MISS BANGS. But Judge, this is to be a dance for life!

PENNYMAKER. I know 'tis difficult, yet I think we can go through it! Will you not join? (*She arises, and he kisses her hand.*)

MISS BANGS. I never did say no!

STERLING. *The set is full! On with the dance!*

[END OF PLAY.]



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