

WAITING FOR AN OMNIBUS

IN THE

LOWTHER ARCADE ON A RAINY DAY.

A Farce,

IN ONE ACT.

BY

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Away with Melancholy, From Village to Court, Whitebait at Greenwich, To Paris and Back for Five Pounds, The Woman I Adore, A Capital Match, The Two Bonnycastles, Who Stole the Pocket-book, Your Life's in Danger, The Midnight Watch, Going to the Derby, Box and Cox, Done on Both Sides, Poor Fillicoddy, Young England, The King and I, My Wife's Second Floor, Double-Bedded Room, Wedding Breakfast, The Milliner's Holiday, The Irish Tiger, Who's the Composer, Who do they take me for? The Attic Story, Brother Ben, Who's my Husband? Slasher and Crasher, Old Honesty, &c.

THOMAS HAILES LACY,

WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND,
LONDON.

909560

*First Performed at the Royal Adelphi Theatre,
on Monday, June 26th, 1854.*

Characters.

JOHN HORATIO O'WALKER	MR. LEIGH MURRAY.
MR. BARBICAN BROWN	MR. PAUL BEDFORD.
SCHNIPPS (<i>a Tailor</i>).....	MR. GARDEN.
BEADLE.....	MR. J. SAUNDERS.
MRS. JELLCOE	MISS CUTHBERT.
FANNY	MISS EMMA HARDING.
MISS PATTY PECKOVER	MISS FANNY MASKELL.

Pedestrians, &c.

Time in Representation—50 minutes.

Costumes.

O'WALKER. Black frock coat, white trousers, white hat.
BROWN. Brown coat, nankeen trousers.
SCHNIPPS. Eccentric dress.
BEADLE. Brown suit with gold binding.
MRS. JELLCOE. Silk dress, velvet mantle and bonnet.
FANNY. Walking dress.
PATTY. Blue muslin dress, red scarf, and white bonnet.

WAITING FOR AN OMNIBUS.



SCENE.—*Interior of the Lowther Arcade. The Strand Entrance supposed to be at L. side; shops and stalls with goods exposed running across at back of stage; PEDESTRIANS, male and female children walking to and fro at L., a number of people standing, others make their way in with umbrellas up, which they put down and join the PROMENADERS; the BEADLE of the arcade occasionally seen; heavy rain heard.*

MRS. J. (*without, L.*) Now, gentlemen, stand aside—don't quite block up the way if you please! (*forces her way through crowd, L., followed by FANNY; they have their parasols up, which they immediately put down*) Mercy on us! here's a day! this is something like rain.

FANNY. (*L.*) Yes, mamma, very like it indeed.

MRS. JELlicoe. (*R.*) However, now we are safe under cover, my dear, suppose we see what we've got to do to-day. First, there's the upholsterer's; then the milliner's; then the jeweller's; then the printer's—

FANNY. The printer's—what for?

MRS. J. What for! why, to order the wedding cards to be sure!

FANNY. Lor, mamma!

MRS. J. (*imitating*) Lor, mamma! just as if you're not ready to jump out of your wits for joy all the time! I'm sure when I was engaged to your papa, I was so happy, I did nothing but cry all day long for weeks together: but, perhaps I was more in love with the late lamented Jellicoe, than you are with Mr. O'Walker?

FANNY. I like Mr. O'Walker very well, mamma; he's agreeable enough—very amusing—very attentive—sufficiently good-looking—

MRS. J. And very genteel! And then, he's very well to do in the world; in short, Fanny, it's a very desirable match for you in every respect; and if we can only persuade cousin Brown to be of the same opinion—

FANNY. Surely, mamma, I can get married without the consent of this cousin Brown that you are always talking about?

MRS. J. Of course you can, my dear; but Barbican Brown is a rich old bachelor, and your godfather into the bargain—I shall never forget him on the memorable occasion of your christening—the tender yet half-reproachful tone in which he said "don't kick up such a row, you little brat," as you lay squalling in his arms;

and I must say, my dear, you did misbehave yourself in a variety of ways.

FANNY. Well, this godpapa of mine certainly must have taken a very violent interest in me indeed, considering that he has never seen me since.

MRS. J. Simply because your poor papa went out of business shortly after and settled at Brentford, and cousin Barbican went into business and settled in London; we really must go over to his little place at Holloway this evening, we shall be sure to catch him at home, and then we'll see if between us we can't coax him to come down with something handsome on your wedding day. (*violent rain heard*) Dear, dear, I declare it rains harder than ever; I really think, Fanny, we had better put off our shopping and our intended visit to cousin Barbican till to-morrow, and get into a Brentford omnibus and go home at once.

FANNY. Very well, mamma, but do let us take one stroll up and down the Arcade first. I suppose there's no harm in it?

MRS. J. Harm! Do you suppose I should be here if everything wasn't perfectly respectable? For goodness' sake put that silly notion out of your head—and take care of your pockets.

MRS. JELlicoe and FANNY lounge out at R., looking at shops as they exeunt; violent rain again heard and noise of voices L., in dispute.

VOICE. (*outside*) Now then—where are you pushing?

O'WALKER. (*without*) I'm pushing my way into the Arcade—at least, I am trying to do it!

O'WALKER, with a green cotton umbrella over his head, forces his way through CROWD, L.

O'WALKER. Isn't it a remarkable fact, that people no sooner get under cover out of the rain than they immediately congregate in a dense mass to prevent other people getting under cover out of the rain—I don't know why they should, but they do! Here's a day! never mind, I've no doubt the country wants rain, the turnips especially: somehow or other, turnips always seem to want rain—I don't know why they should, but they do! and if they do, all I can say is, they've got it—consequently, it's all for the best; and although my new twelve-and-ninepenny boots do feel for all the world like a couple of wet sponges, I think of the agricultural interest and am silent.

The BEADLE here approaches, and touching his hat to O'WALKER, points to his open umbrella, and then walks on.

O'WALKER. (*astonished*) Now, that man evidently means something; he wouldn't touch his hat to me for nothing—I don't know why he shouldn't, but he wouldn't!

BEADLE again approaches O'WALKER, R., points to his open umbrella, smiles, touches his hat, and about to retire.

O'WALKER. (*beckons to him*) My good friend, perhaps I ought to

know you? you may have been the cherished companion of my childhood, or the friend of my bosom in after years? if so, I'm ashamed to say I've forgotten you—now, what is it?

BEADLE. Umbrella, sir!

O'WALKER. Well?

BEADLE. Don't rain here, sir—under cover, sir—needn't keep it up, sir!

O'WALKER. (*suddenly*) Of course—ha! ha! ha! As you say, it doesn't rain here—I don't know why it should'n't, but it doesn't! I'm obliged to you. (*shutting up his umbrella*) The fact is, I've so much to think of I really haven't time to think of anything. In the first place, I'm going to be married—that's a trifle to begin with, isn't it? Are you married? (BEADLE *nods*) And how do you like it? Is matrimony an article you approve of in the long run? In short—do you recommend it?

BEADLE. (*in a low tone and with a significant wink*) Try it!

Exit, L.

O'WALKER. He says "try it!" therefore, he does recommend it! Not that I exactly liked the tone in which he said "try it!" I mean to try it. I shouldn't like to know who wouldn't with such a charming little wife as I'm going to have, a sweet unsophisticated creature from the peaceful and picturesque village of Brentford, with health on her cheek, innocence in her heart, and £2,000 in her pocket. Now that £2,000, added to what I shall bring, will make a total of £2,000; for I don't mean to say a word about the ninety-seven pounds ten, left me last week by my uncle Samuel—no, that ninety-seven ten I consider the property of my creditors; I gave it yesterday morning to my friend Dibbs to invest in the three per cents, with the full determination of paying my debts with the interest. I made the calculation last night, and find that in thirty-seven years I shan't owe one shilling in the world: if that isn't a moral satisfaction for a man, I don't know what is! Dear me! now I think of it, I went out in such a hurry this morning that I hadn't time to read my letters. (*taking letters out of his pocket and opening them*) Oh, from Jacob Jones, Dibbs' head clerk, to tell me he's invested my ninety-seven ten, I suppose! Holloa—what's this? (*reads*) "Sorry to say Dibbs is done up"—Dear me! how very sudden—poor Dibbs. (*reading again*) "and means to make a bolt of it to-morrow"—That's to-day! well, I can't blame Dibbs if he does; perhaps it's the best thing Dibbs can do. (*reads*) "with all the money he can lay his hands on"—Of course, every man has a right to do what he likes with his own, and so has Dibbs. (*reads*) "all the money he can lay his hands on—yours included"—Mine! my ninety-seven ten! that scoundrel Dibbs! (*reading again hurriedly*) "he means to be off by the rail"—Jacob's a clever fellow! (*reads*) "but I don't know which"—Jacob's an ass! (*reads*) "but this I do know, that if you want to get your money back"—Want my ninety-seven ten? Of course I do! "be at his house in Arabella Row, Pimlico, before three o'clock and you'll nab him." Before three o'clock—(*hastily pulls*

out watch) come, I've plenty of time, that's one comfort—I'll jump into a cab at once, drive to— Stop—I've only got a fourpenny-piece in my pocket, and I don't suppose any cabman would take me two miles and a half for that—I have it, I'll jump into a Pimlirrow Omnibus—get down at the corner of Arabellaco, and come down upon Dibbs like a thunderbolt. (*looking out*) Ah! yes—there's an omnibus! here! stop! conductor!

Puts up his umbrella and forces his way through CROWD at L.—and then heard outside.

Here! Pimlico! stop! stop!

Re-enter MRS. JELlicoe and FANNY from R.

MRS. J. Rain or not, we must go now, my dear; indeed we must!

O'WALKER. (*outside*) Now then, if you'll allow me.

Re-enters, with his umbrella up.

Full, of course; and, strange to say, there wasn't a lady would get outside to accommodate me. They positively refused, every one of them—I don't know why they should, but they did!

FANNY. (*seeing him*) Why, I do declare, mamma, there's Mr. O'Walker!

MRS. J. So it is! How fortunate, to be sure! My dear Mr. O'Walker!

O'WALKER. Mrs. Jellicoe! Miss Fanny, too! (*passing his umbrella, which is still open, from one hand to the other as he shakes hands with them*) I was that moment thinking of you—I was indeed, my dear Mrs. Pimlico—I mean Jellicoe. (*aside*) That ruffian Dibbs! (*aloud*) And how's my Arabella—I mean my Fanny? (*aside, and looking at his watch*) A quarter to two.

MRS. J. Here's a dreadful day, Mr. O'Walker; but it can't be helped.

O'WALKER. No—I believe the only thing to be done is, what they do in Spain when it rains.

MRS. J. And what's that?

O'WALKER. Why, they let it rain!—I don't know why they should, but they do!

MRS. J. Ha, ha, ha!—you're a funny creature! besides, as the old joke says, it suits the ducks.

O'WALKER. Not mine! (*showing his splashed trousers*)

FANNY. Ha! ha!

O'WALKER. Don't laugh, Miss Fanny; ducks are no joke I can tell you, and so you'll find when the washing bills come in—after we are married; by-the-bye, suppose we wash at home? I appeal to you, Mrs. Jellicoe—you're a woman of experience in household matters, you've been washed by other people, and you've washed yourself—now which do you recommend?

MRS. J. You'll find washing at home a great nuisance.

O'WALKER. Perhaps; but I'd put up with a great deal for two pair of ducks a-week.

MRS. J. Suppose we get the home first? By-the-bye, we've just

seen such a love of a loo table— (*taking O'WALKER's arm*) haven't we, Fanny?

O'WALKER. Have you though?

FANNY. Yes, John Horatio, and such a darling sideboard. (*taking O'WALKER's arm*)

O'WALKER. You don't say so; and I've got my eye on such a duck of a bedstead.

Mrs. J. Fic, Mr. O'Walker.

Here the BEADLE again comes in, L., goes up to O'WALKER, points to his open umbrella, smiles, touches his hat, and retires.

O'WALKER. (*suddenly recollecting and shutting up his umbrella*) Thank you!

Mrs. J. Now, my dear Mr. O'Walker, let's talk of business. Have you seen a house that you think you would like?

O'WALKER. Fifty! there isn't a house in Grosvenor Square that I shouldn't like amazingly!

Mrs. J. Now let's talk seriously, if you please. Of course, when a man marries, he must expect to lay out a little money at starting.

O'WALKER. I perfectly agree with you, and what's more, I don't care how little.

Mrs. J. In short, as the late lamented Jellicoe would have said, you must come down with the dibbs.

O'WALKER. (*suddenly*) Dibbs! (*pulling out his watch and looking at it, then looking suddenly off at L.*) There goes one!—here!—stop! stop!

Puts up his umbrella and runs out, L.—noise of voices in dispute outside as before.

O'WALKER. (*without*) Stop! Conductor!

Mrs. J. Why what can be the matter with Mr. O'Walker?

FANNY. How very odd!

O'WALKER. (*without*) Will you allow me? Thank you!

Re-enters, L., with his umbrella up.

Full again! the Conductor wanted me to get on the roof of his vehicle and sit upon a sort of knife board—I don't know why I shouldn't, but I wouldn't! (*to Mrs. J.*) My dear Mrs. Jellicoe, I beg ten thousand pardons—but I thought I saw a friend pass—a friend I haven't seen since—since I saw him last—but as you were very properly observing just now—by-the-bye, what were you very properly observing just now?

Mrs. J. I was going to say that you ought to take a small house, furnish it comfortably, and then, with Fanny's little fortune and your own income—by-the-way, I think you said your income was about—

O'WALKER. Yes—more or less—but that's the average.

Here BEADLE comes in again, L., goes up to O'WALKER, points to his umbrella, touches his hat, and again retires; O'WALKER hastily puts down his umbrella.

Mrs. J. (*to BEADLE*) Worthy man, would you be so kind as to stop the first Brentford omnibus?

BEADLE. Certainly, ma'am.

Goes out at 1.

Mrs. J. (L.) Oh, Mr. O'Walker, when you were a traveller to a wholesale house in the oil and varnish line, and used to come down to Brentford once a week for orders, little did I think you would ever be my son-in-law. And how does the business get on, eh?

O'WALKER. (C.) My dear Mrs. Jellicoe, you don't imagine I'm the sort of man to settle down in oil and varnish all my life? Bless you, I cut it a long time ago.

Mrs. J. Indeed! And what are you doing now?

O'WALKER. Why the fact is, I've tried my hand at a good many things: I thought it prudent not to make too great a dash at starting, so I began by doing a trifle in the coal and potatoe line—then I took an early breakfast house—then I started a penny publication—

Mrs. J. A weekly one?

O'WALKER. Yes, so weakly that it didn't live above a fortnight. At last, I hit upon a brilliant idea—what do you think it was? I turned doctor.

Mrs. J. A doctor? Then I suppose you walked the hospitals, as they call it?

O'WALKER. Not all of 'em; I walked through Saint Thomas's one day with a friend of mine.

FANNY. (R.) Oh, then you're not a member of the profession.

O'WALKER. Oh no, my dear, I'm not one of your regular *Materia Medica*s—I'm what ignorant and prejudiced people call a quack; but I don't care what they call me as long as my boluses go down.

Mrs. J. Boluses!

O'WALKER. Yes—O'Walker's Beneficial Bolus! Sold in boxes at thirteen pence halfpenny, two-and-threepence, four-and-sixpence, and nine shillings—this is a nine shilling one. (*pulling a very large pill box out of his pocket*)

Mrs. J. Good gracious! And how did you come to think of it?

O'WALKER. By study, Mrs. Jellicoe—by intense study. I shut myself up in my room for three months, and the result of that confinement was a bolus.

Mrs. J. And what do they cure?

O'WALKER. Everything—if you only take plenty of 'em! I used to make 'em up myself at starting, but so eagerly were they swallowed that now I've got three men and a boy up to their elbows in boluses all day long. Now, I'll explain my system: these boluses are so composed that the more you take of 'em the worse you get—still you persevere—and when you're as ill as you can be you leave 'em off, and from that moment you begin to get well; I don't know why you should, but you do—that's my system! But enough of business—now for pleasure. When is the happy day to be? Fanny, my fond one, my fair one, when will it be your happy lot to call me yours?

FANNY. (R) Ask mamma!

Mrs. J. Come and dine with us to-morrow, Mr. O'Walker, and

we will talk about it. (*suddenly and solemnly*) I hope your moral character will bear the strictest scrutiny, Mr. O'Walker. You say you have no debts?

O'WALKER. (*proudly*) If you doubt my word, Mrs. Jellicoe, I refer you to my milkman.

FANNY. (*tenderly*) And I'm the only woman you ever loved?

O'WALKER. The only one—except my mother.

BEADLE appears, L.

BEADLE. (L.) The Brentford 'bus, ladies!

MRS. J. Come along, Fanny. We shall see you to-morrow, Mr. O'Walker. Now, Fanny.

O'WALKER opens his umbrella, and escorts the LADIES off, L.

BEADLE. (*picking up reticule which MRS. JELlicoe has let fall*) Holloa, the old lady has dropped her ridicule, and there goes the 'bus!

Re-enter O'WALKER, L., with his umbrella up.

O'WALKER. Ha, ha, ha! it's too bad—but I can't help laughing.

BEADLE. (*as before—pointing to O'WALKER'S umbrella, touching his hat, &c.*; O'WALKER puts umbrella down) Please, sir, one of the ladies dropt this article—perhaps you'll take care of it, sir?

O'WALKER. (*taking the reticule*) Of course—here! (*feels in his pocket—then puts his hand into the reticule, takes out purse, and gives the BEADLE money*) I always make a point of rewarding honesty—there's half-a-crown for you! (*puts purse in his pocket—BEADLE touches his hat, and retires*) As I said before, I can't help laughing; that poor innocent little Fanny, too, flattering herself she's the only woman I ever loved. If she could only see a catalogue of my tender attachments, she'd find herself about the hundred and sixteenth on the list—that dear Patty Peckover, for instance. I do believe I should have married that Patty Peckover if she hadn't had so many cousins in the Life Guards; but she was a good-hearted soul—she never would have treated me as Miss Amelia Jones has done. When I think of the number of cubas I've smoked in that woman's little back parlour, and the bill I owe that woman for those cubas, that woman's ingratitude quite shocks me! Here's a letter she wrote me yesterday. (*taking out letter and reading*) "Perfidious monster"—that's so like Amelia Jones, that is—"you're going to be married, are you? Don't deny it, hideous wretch that you are;" that's Amelia Jones all over, that is—(*reading*)—"but I'll be revenged: listen—I have kept your letters, miscreant!" that's a favourite expression of Amelia Jones's, that is—(*reading*)—"and to-morrow they shall be in the hands of your intended. So tremble, viper! and believe me to remain as usual—your fond and affectionate—Amelia." Now any one would imagine that Amelia Jones was an exceedingly ill-used young woman—but it's no such thing. I went to her shop in Little Windmill Street this evening, prepared to offer her a shilling a piece for my letters, she wasn't at home—so I went into her little back parlour, and there, lying open upon the table, and staring me in the face, was

this letter (*showing letter*)—beginning with “Loveliest of Amelias,” and winding up with “Your fondest of Browns.” Now here’s a woman who’s got a Brown—a mysterious Brown—a Brown who by his own account is the “fondest of Browns,” and yet this woman presumes to call me a viper. Such is the sex—I grieve to say, but such is the sex. (*during the above he has been occasionally cracking nuts, which he takes out of Mrs. JELlicoe’s reticule—very suddenly*) Goodness gracious, I forgot Dibbs! (*pulling out his watch*) A quarter to two! Why it was a quarter to two the last time I looked. (*holding the watch to his ear*) It’s stopped—that’s pleasant; what’s to be done now? Ah, there goes an omnibus. Here! Stop! Conductor—Pimlico—

Puts up his umbrella, and runs out at L., nearly upsetting Mr. BARBICAN BROWN, who enters at the same time.

BROWN. (*who is without an overcoat or umbrella, has a pair of nankeen trousers on, and is drenched with rain*) I am not aware that I ever saw a drowned rat, but I should say that the appearance of that animal when in that state must closely resemble mine! It’s a singular fact, but this morning I said to myself as I was dressing myself, “Barbican Brown,” said I, “thirty years’ experience tells you that as sure as you put on nankeens, so sure is it to rain;” nevertheless, nankeens I did put on—I sally out—before I get to the end of the street down comes a shower—nankeens soaked! I go into a pastrycook’s, call for a basin of soup, dry my nankeens at the fire, sally out again, down comes another shower—nankeens soaked again; go into another pastrycook’s, another basin of soup, another shower—nankeens soaked again! Look at me now, I’ve just swallowed my thirteenth basin of soup, dried my nankeens for the thirteenth time—I sally out, down comes the fourteenth shower, and, as you see, nankeens soaked again!

Re-enter O’WALKER hurriedly, his umbrella up—he is closely followed by SCHNIPPS, L.

SCHNIPPS. (*following O’WALKER and trying to look into his face, who continually thwarts him by concealing his face by means of his open umbrella*) I’m sure I know de shentleman. (*in a strong German accent and trying to get a peep at O’WALKER, who again thwarts him with his umbrella*)

O’WALKER. (*R., aside*) My tailor—the devil!

SCHNIPPS. (*L.*) You may hide your vace as much as you like, Mr. O’Walker—I can swear to de umprella, ha, ha!

O’WALKER. (*putting down umbrella*) Ah, Schnipps, my boy! how are you? And how’s Mrs. Schnipps and the little Schnipps? I hope they’re all salubrious—I don’t know why I should, but I do!

SCHNIPPS. They’re very boorly—de tree leetlest is very bad with de weasels.

O’WALKER. Oh, they’re bad with the weazles, are they? I’ll tell you how to get rid of the weazles—catch ’em asleep, ah, ah!

BROWN. (*who is standing apart, L. C., and listening*) Ha, ha! good,

good, very good! (*nodding approvingly at O'WALKER, who bows in return*)

SCHNIPPS. De doctor says I must take dem in de country.

O'WALKER. The weazles?

SCHNIPPS. No—de leetle ones—to give dem a leetle fresh hair.

O'WALKER. A little fresh hair, eh? then I'd advise you to go with them. (*pointing to SCHNIPPS's bald head*)

BROWN. (*as before*) Good, good, good again! (*nods approvingly to O'WALKER, who again bows*)

SCHNIPPS. And where's de money to come from? Gustamers won't pay—it's no use at all sending in their pills.

O'WALKER. Then why don't you try draughts?

BROWN. (*as before*) Good, good, good again! (*same play*)

SCHNIPPS. No—I will try de law! I will make dem pay, and yourself among de number—yes, Mr. O'Walker.

O'WALKER. Now there's gratitude! Didn't you ask me for my custom?

SCHNIPPS. Ya!

O'WALKER. Did you ask me what my custom was?

SCHNIPPS. No.

O'WALKER. Then you ought, and I should have told you my custom was not to pay—I don't know why I shouldn't, but I don't!

BROWN. (*as before*) Good, good, good again! (*same play*)

SCHNIPPS. We will see that, ha, ha! when you find yourself in brison—perhaps you will laugh on de oder side of your vace—but I can't stop here all day—I've got to go after anoder bad gustomer at Bimligo.

O'WALKER. (*suddenly*) Pimlico!—I quite forgot Dibbs! Ah!—(*looking out*) there goes an omnibus! here! conductor! stop! stop!

Opening his umbrella and pushing his way out, L., followed by SCHNIPPS, shouting "Mr. O'Walker! Mr. O'Walker!"

BROWN. I feel an intense desire to cultivate that gentleman's acquaintance; in short, so intense is my desire to cultivate that gentleman's acquaintance, that I'll instantly run after him! No—yes! I will, though I know what the result will be, namely, another shower, and nankeens soaked again. (*running towards L., again meets O'WALKER, who again nearly upsets him*)

O'WALKER. (L.) Full again! it's a most extraordinary thing! (*twirling his umbrella round and sprinkling the wet over BROWN, who tries to advance towards him*) I repeat it's a most extraordinary thing! (*twirling umbrella and sprinkling BROWN again, who is advancing on the other side of him*) It really seems as if the entire population of the metropolis was animated by a frantic desire to go to Pimlico to-day!

BROWN. (R., to O'WALKER) Sir, you have afforded me considerable amusement, and I thank you—I'd embrace you, only I might give you cold, being, as you see, wet through.

O'WALKER (L.) I see you are, those nankeens of yours are the

most uncomfortable looking things I ever saw, however, rather than disappoint you I'll wait till you're dry—I don't know why I should—but I will.

BROWN. (R.) That tailor of yours, sir, hadn't the ghost of a chance with you—you didn't leave him a leg to stand on.

O'WALKER. No, I flatter myself I rather cooked his goose.

BROWN. Good, good, good again: if you will insist upon making yourself so damned agreeable, I shall be obliged to embrace you before I am dry. I am the last man in the world to intrude upon any one, but if upon emerging into yonder crowded thoroughfare, our paths happen to lay in the same direction, we will walk together, and by the time we part, as I shall probably be dry, I can embrace you.

O'WALKER. (*impatently*) Oh) confound it—there—(*flinging his arms round BROWN*) and now I'm off to Pimlico—what say you?

BROWN. I say wherever you go—Brown goes too. (*taking O'WALKER'S arm*)

O'WALKER. Brown!

BROWN. Brown! Barbican Brown! but perhaps you'll have no objection to my taking Little Windmill Street in my way?

O'WALKER. (*aside*) Brown—Little Windmill Street!

BROWN. Just to buy a few cubas. (*taking out cigar case*)

O'WALKER. (*aside*) Brown—Little Windmill Street—cubas. (*snatches cigar case out of BROWN'S hand—takes out a cuba and examines it, aside*) This is one of Amelia Jones's cubas—I'll swear to it—he's a Brown—he says he's a Brown, and if a Brown, why not the “fondest of Brown's,” if I could only make him the means of getting those infernal letters of mine back—I have it. (*aloud and suddenly seizing BROWN'S hand*) Brown, it is my painful duty instantly to plunge a dagger into your manly bosom. (*BROWN starts*) Don't be alarmed, I speak figuratively—in other words—(*in a loud and mysterious whisper*) go elsewhere for your cubas.

BROWN. Ah!

O'WALKER. (*aside*) It is the fondest of Brown's. (*aloud in the same low earnest tone*) Brown, you are deceived.

BROWN. What do you mean?

O'WALKER. I mean that Amelia Jones—

BROWN. Hush!

O'WALKER. I repeat, that Amelia Jones.

BROWN. Hush! (*looking about him and then to O'WALKER*) don't speak so loud—I'm afraid you'll call me a sad dog when I unfold my tale—I shan't be offended if you do—for I know I'm a shocking good-for-nothing rascal, but I can't help it—that's the melancholy part of it—I can't help it. Listen! As I was sauntering about the West End one evening last week, I suddenly found that I had lost my way, and seeing a gentleman in a Highland dress standing outside the door of a tobacconist's shop, in the act of taking a pinch of snuff, I accosted him and civilly asked him where I was; he didn't think proper to reply, which I inferred from being a Highlander he didn't understand English—consequently, I entered the shop, and there I beheld a sweet creature—I bought a cigar, and though I had never smoked before in all my life, I lighted it—I positively

lighted it, and then I smoked and chatted, and chatted and smoked till, as it was getting *rather* late, and I was getting very poorly, I took my leave of the fair creature and went home. I'm ashamed to say I was there again, the next day, and the next day, and the day after that; and as every pound of cigars I bought of her seemed to ingratiate me more and more in her good opinion, in less than a week I found I had laid in a sufficient stock to open a tobacconist's shop of my own—in fact I became so fascinated—so charmed—so—so—

O'WALKER. Spooney!

BROWN. Exactly—so spooney—that I was on the point of asking her to become Mrs. Brown, when I suddenly recollected that I was engaged to another.

O'WALKER. Engaged to another?

BROWN. Hush! A woman who can't live without seeing me twice a day and that I haven't been near for a week.

O'WALKER. Then go to her, Brown, and forget the perfidious Amelia. She's made a fool of you, Brown, nobody can look at you and doubt it.

BROWN. How?

O'WALKER. Simply because she's engaged to be married. I happen to know the fact, because the gentleman is the friend of an intimate friend of a friend of mine, I don't know why he should be, but he is.

BROWN. Who is he? Tell me his odious name and place of abode, in order that I may instantly repair thither and sweep him off the surface of the earth.

O'WALKER. I can't tell you his odious name—but his letters *can*, and Amelia Jones has got half a bushel of 'em at least—so go to her at once—ask for a few pounds of her best havannahs—she'll open a particular drawer—then you'll see the letters.

BROWN. How do you know?

O'WALKER. Eh! Why—because the friend of my friend's intimate friend told him so and he told me; so as I said before there you'll see the letters—you'll pounce down upon them, carry them off in triumph—join me here,—and then we'll decide upon future operations.

BROWN. That's settled already—the friend of your friend's intimate friend—dies—and now I'm off. (*starting towards L.*) Stop—(*feeling his clothes*) dry as a bone—so come to my arms. (*embraces O'WALKER and runs off L.*)

O'WALKER. There he goes, what an advantage a man of his protuberant proportions has in a crowd to be sure! I shall count every minute till he comes back with the letters. What a state of nervous agitation I'm in to be sure. Goodness gracious! Dibbs! I quite forgot Dibbs. Ah, there's an omnibus! here! conductor! stop! (*opening his umbrella and running towards L. and pushing against PATTY PECKOVER who enters with her parasol up and a pair of dogs in her hand*)

PATTY. (R.) Well, I'm sure, sir,—eh? Yes. I do declare it's

O'Walker. (*laying hold of O'WALKER by the tail of his coat and pulling him back*)

O'WALKER. (*L. without looking at her and endeavouring to make his way out*) I'll speak to you presently, ma'am—here! conductor! stop! (*flourishing his umbrella*) Gone, of course—and this is your doing, ma'am? (*turning upon PATTY*) Eh—no—yes—it is—Patty Peckover, and more bewitching than ever.

PATTY. O'Walker! but no familiarity if you please, I'm a married woman.

O'WALKER. Married!

PATTY. Yes! at least I'm as bad—I mean as good as married.

O'WALKER. Oh—to one of your numerous cousins in the Life Guards I suppose?

PATTY. That's no affair of your's, sir,—when you behaved like a brute to me—yes, Mr. O'Walker, brute's the word—you didn't imagine I was going to remain in a state of single blessedness all my life.

O'WALKER. And yet you swore you would.

PATTY. And so I did—for a whole fortnight, and then out of spite I vowed I'd marry the first man that asked me—I shouldn't have cared who, if he'd been a baron or even a duke I'd have had him!

O'WALKER. And who is the happy man? What's his name?

PATTY. B. B.

O'WALKER. B. B.

PATTY. Yes—I shan't tell you any more, except that he's made his fortune in the soap line, and says I'm absolute perfection.

O'WALKER. The soft soap line evidently. Patty, I congratulate you on your B. B., and you may as well congratulate me.—I'm going to be married.

PATTY. You! You who vowed you could never love any woman but me!

O'WALKER. No, more I did, *for a whole fortnight?*

PATTY. Well, I can't stand chattering here any longer—I must go and look after my intended.

O'WALKER. By all means; we'll go and look after your intended. (*opening his umbrella and offering PATTY his arm*) Come along, Patty.

PATTY. Certainly not, Mr. O'Walker. B. B.'s so dreadfully jealous, he'd do you some frightful injury to a certainty; that's one reason—the second is—

O'WALKER. Never mind the second, the first is perfectly satisfactory: though we may be friends, we're no longer sweethearts.

PATTY. Sweethearts, Mr. O'Walker! (*drawing herself up*)

O'WALKER. Ah! those were happy days. Greenwich in the morning—

PATTY. Greenwich, Mr. O'Walker! (*horrified*)

O'WALKER. Vauxhall in the evening—

PATTY. Vauxhall, Mr. O'Walker! (*horrified*)

O'WALKER. And then the polka—the delicious polka! (*polking with his umbrella. Band plays a polka L.*)

PATTY. The polka, Mr. O'Walker, just as if I ever— (*looking*

at O'WALKER dancing and beginning to move her feet about suddenly) That's all wrong—bless the man, you never could do it right. *(snatches umbrella from O'WALKER and flings it away—dances the polka with O'WALKER, till seeing BEADLE who appears L. she escapes from O'WALKER and runs off, R.)*

O'WALKER. *(suddenly)* Good gracious! Dibbs! I quite forgot that scoundrel Dibbs. *(snatches up his umbrella—opens it—starts off towards L. and runs up against BROWN who enters, L.)*

BROWN. *(advancing to the front and showing his clothes wet through)* Soaked again!

O'WALKER. Well, the letters!

BROWN. I've got 'em; they cost me a pound of cigars, but that's not worth thinking about. *(showing a packet of cigars)*

O'WALKER. Certainly not. *(taking cigars)* Don't think of 'em again.

BROWN. I look upon that as money well laid out.

O'WALKER. Decidedly well laid out! *(putting the cigars into his blue bag)* Now for the letters.

BROWN. *(producing letters tied up)* Here they are. To my surprise she gave them up without the slightest hesitation, and said she was very much obliged to me for taking the rubbish away.

O'WALKER. Rubbish! Ha, ha! *(forcing a laugh)*

BROWN. Yes; it seems she has been for some time past pestered with letters from a contemptible fellow with the vulgar name of O'Walker.

O'WALKER. Ha, ha, ha! *(aside)* This is pleasant!

BROWN. Yes; he signs himself "John Horatio O'Walker," and she requested me as a particular favour to find Walker out at once, and give Walker a horsewhipping on her account as well as my own.

O'WALKER. Ah, ah, ah! *(aside)* This is remarkably agreeable.

BROWN. I said I would, and so I will. Take me to him. I'm sorry for your friend's intimate friend's friend, but I've a duty to perform; and that duty, as I said before, is instantly to sweep O'Walker off the surface of the earth! So come along.

Enter MRS. JELlicoe, L., with BEADLE following.

MRS. J. *(as she enters)* I'm sure I must have dropped it here. It's a green reticule, with sixteen shillings and fourpence halfpenny in it, besides a pair of spectacles, two bunches of keys, a packet of envelopes, two buns, a silver thimble, six Queen's heads, a bill of the play, and half a pint of nuts.

BEADLE. All right, ma'am—I gave it to that gentleman. *(points to O'WALKER)*

MRS. J. Ah! still here, Mr.—

O'WALKER. *(very quickly and interrupting her)* Yes—yes. *(aside to her)* Don't mention my name—you see that portly individual there—*(pointing to BROWN, who is standing with his back towards them)* Insane! sad case!—in early life fell in love with the Baron's fair daughter, you've heard of her—she deceived him and married Walker, the twopenny postman, you've heard of him—it turned

his brain—quiet as a lamb till he hears “Walker”—then raving mad in a moment!—the chances are, he’d murder me on the spot, and you too—I don’t know why he should, but he would!

Mrs. J. Lud a mercy! (*looking again at BROWN*) Eh? can it be? no—yes it is— (*to O’WALKER*) that gentleman’s no more mad than you are—you’re mistaken in your man, and I’ll prove it. (*goes to BROWN and in a loud voice*) Walker!

BROWN. (*jumping round with a savage yell*) Ah!

Mrs. J. (c.) Cousin Brown, don’t you know me? (*alarmed*)

BROWN. (k.) Cousin Jellicoe, delighted to see you! (*advancing to her, seizing her hands and shaking them violently*)

Mrs. J. (*in a soothing tone*) Don’t agitate yourself, Barbican. I wouldn’t have touched upon such a delicate subject for the world—but I never heard a syllable about the “Baron’s fair daughter—or the twopenny postman” either till I was told of it just now by Mr.——

O’WALKER. (*interrupting her*) Exactly. (*aside to BROWN, who looks astonished*) Don’t notice what she says, poor soul—insane! sad case!—last Christmas went out without her bonnet—burning sun—snow on the ground—never recovered it! (*goes up*)

BROWN. (*pathetically and looking at Mrs. J.*) Poor soul!

Mrs. J. And now, Cousin Brown, now that I’ve got you— (*suddenly taking his arm—BROWN rather alarmed*) we must talk over a certain little matter—in other words, my darling Fanny is only waiting for her dear godpapa’s consent to get married—ain’t she, Mr. O’Wal— (*to O’WALKER*)

O’WALKER. (*very quickly*) Yes—yes. (*aside*) This is getting intensely exciting!

BROWN. Well, my consent shan’t be wanting, nor a wedding portion either, provided I approve of Fanny’s choice. What sort of a fellow is he—eh?

Mrs. J. Judge for yourself, Cousin Brown—for there he is. (*pointing to O’WALKER*)

BROWN. Eh!—I’m delighted to hear it!— (*shaking O’WALKER’s hand*) but where’s my god-daughter?—Brown requires his god-daughter!

Mrs. J. There she is! (*to FANNY, who runs in L.*) Fanny, embrace your godpapa—he consents to your marriage.

FANNY. Oh, you dear, good, kind, handsome old man! (*embracing BROWN*) Why don’t you throw your arms round him too, John Horatio?

BROWN. John Horatio—Walker?

Mrs. J. (*aside to him*) Yes—but no relation to the twopenny postman, on my honour.

BROWN. (*after a short pause and eyeing O’WALKER with a savage earnestness, then approaching him and in a loud whisper*) So, sir!—

O’WALKER. I very much regret that most important business with the Austrian Ambassador— (*going*)

BROWN. (*grasping his arm and stopping him*) His Excellency must wait. So, sir, you are the friend of your intimate friend’s friend after all, are you? I thank you, John Horatio, for the

information, as it will enable me to redeem my promise of immediately sweeping him off the surface of the earth.

O'WALKER. Be it so, but I claim an Irishman's right of making his last speech. (*going towards L. and speaking off*) Will any one oblige me by stopping the first omnibus that goes near the Surrey Zoological Gardens, for the purpose of conveying this gentleman back to his cage. (*pointing to BROWN*)

Enter PATTY, L.—overhears O'WALKER.

PATTY. Who? my B. B.! (*running to BROWN*) Let any one lay a finger on my intended, if they dare! (*flourishing her clogs*)

MRS. J. Cousin Brown, your intended!—then why shouldn't the two weddings take place together? Come, Cousin Brown, give your consent—Mr. O'Walker's moral character will bear the strictest scrutiny.

PATTY. Like my B. B.'s. (*BROWN gives a savage laugh and looks at O'WALKER*)

FANNY. And I am the only woman he ever loved. (*goes up*)

PATTY. Like my B. B. again. (*tenderly to BROWN—goes up*)

BROWN. Indeed!—the only woman he ever loved! ha, ha, ha, ha! (*with a fierce look at O'WALKER, and slowly drawing the packet of letters from his pocket*) Of that I have abundant proof in these letters, which—

O'WALKER. (*suddenly grasping BROWN's arm and aside to him*) Betray me and I'll instantly acquaint your intended wife with her B. B.'s little eccentricities at a certain little tobacconist's shop in Little Windmill Street.

BROWN. (*aside to him*) Pooh! she won't believe you!

O'WALKER. Probably not; consequently, I shall refer her to you or rather to this letter— (*producing BROWN's letter*) to the "love-liest of Amelias" from the "fondest of Browns."

BROWN. Hush!—she'd tear my eyes out!—we are both standing on the edge of a frightful precipice.

O'WALKER. We are; one step more, and over you go.

BROWN. And over *you* go.

O'WALKER. In other words, over *we* go.

BROWN. There's only one thing to be done—let's exchange letters.

O'WALKER. Agreed.

BROWN. Here are yours! (*gives packet of letters to O'WALKER*)

O'WALKER. And here's yours—(*about to give BROWN the letter, stops*) Stop! You consent to my marriage with Fanny?

BROWN. No! (*in a loud tone to O'WALKER*)

O'WALKER. Very well. Ahem! (*opening letter and about to read*)

BROWN. (*very loud*) I do consent!

O'WALKER. (*to the OTHERS*) He does consent! (*aside to BROWN and about to give him the letter*) There—(*stops*) Stop! (*aloud*) With a wedding portion of one thousand pounds?

BROWN. No—no! (*aside to O'WALKER*)

O'WALKER. Very well. Ahem! (*about to read letter*)

BROWN. Fanny shall have a thousand pounds!

O'WALKER. (*aloud to the OTHERS*) He says Fanny shall have a thousand pounds! (*slips the letter into BROWN's hand*) Generous, liberal-minded man, allow me to embrace you—I don't know why I should, but I do! (*embraces BROWN*)

MRS. J. And me too, cousin! (*ditto*)

FANNY. And me, godpapa! (*ditto*)

PATTY. And me too, B. B.! (*ditto*)

BROWN. And now what say you to a comfortable dinner, by way of a wind up?

O'WALKER. Agreed, and what's more, you shall have the pleasure of paying for it. (*BROWN about to remonstrate*) Nay, I insist upon it—I don't know why I should, but I do!

BROWN. With all my heart. (*looking at his watch*) Let me see—ten minutes past three—

O'WALKER. Past three! (*snatching BROWN's watch out of his pocket and looking at it*) It is!—that scoundrel Dibbs—I'm ruined!—and yet—I may catch him yet—ah! (*thrusting BROWN's watch into fob and looking towards L.*) Yes—there goes one—here, conductor—stop! stop! (*opens his umbrella and runs hastily, L., comes in contact with SCHNIPPS*)

O'WALKER. My tailor, again! It never rains but it pours—I don't know why it shouldn't, but it don't! Oh, Dibbs!—that scoundrel Dibbs!

SCHNIPPS. Dibbs! Oh, yes—he was the other bad customer I was talking about, but I got to Bimligo just in time to stop him.

O'WALKER. Stop him?

SCHNIPPS. Yes, as he was getting into a cab; de police have got him and everybody will have dere money back.

O'WALKER. Schnipps, come to my arms, but for you I should have lost a fortune; and to prove my gratitude, you shall instantly make me thirteen suits of clothes, and what's more, you shall put them down on the bill. (*SCHNIPPS about to remonstrate*) Not a word! I'm indebted to you—I've paid you and I'm saised—^{L.}I don't know why I should be, but I am!

BROWN. Then, as I said before—

VOICE. (*outside*) Now then—Islington! Holloway!

BROWN. There's the Holloway omnibus, come along!

O'WALKER. Never mind, we'll take a cab, there are only five of us—the three ladies inside, myself on the box, and you on the top, that's settled—now we're off!—no we ain't—one moment—one word of advice before we part—instead of "Waiting for an Omnibus in the Lowther Arcade on a Rainy Day" recollect there is an establishment a few doors higher up, whose hospitable doors open every evening at seven o'clock to all classes of Her Majesty's subjects, who've got money enough to pay for their admission—I needn't say, I mean the Theatre Royal, Adelphi!

R.

L.

SCHNIPPS. MRS. JELlicoe. O'WALKER. FANNY. BROWN. PATTY.

Curtain.