

A CAPITAL MATCH !

A Farce.

IN ONE ACT.

BY

JOHN MADDISON MORTON,

MEMBER OF THE DRAMATIC AUTHORS' SOCIETY,

AUTHOR OF

*Box and Cox, Two Bonnycastles, Who stole the Pocket Book,
The Midnight Watch, Poor Pillicoddy, Going to the Derby, Old
Honesty, Grimshaw, Done on both Sides, Young England,
The King and I, My Wife's Second Floor, The Double-
Bedded Room, Wedding Breakfast, Milliner's
Holiday, The Irish Tiger, Who's the Com-
poser, Who do they take me for, The
Attic Story, Brother Ben, Who's my
Husband, Thumping Legacy,
&c., &c.*

THOMAS HAILES LACY,

WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND,

LONDON.

109396

First performed at the Theatre Royal Haymarket, on
Thursday, November 4th, 1852.

Characters.

MRS. SINGLETON MRS. L. MURRAY.
ROSAMOND (*her Niece*) MISS ROSE BENNETT.
MR. SUNNYSIDE MR. KEELEY.
CAPTAIN TEMPEST, R.N. MR. HOWE.
JOHN (*Servant to Mrs. Singleton*) MR. EDWARDS.

SCENE—CHELTENHAM.

Costumes.

CAPTAIN TEMPEST.—Plain street suit.

SUNNYSIDE.—Blue riding coat, fancy waistcoat, brown trowsers,
great coat, and black hat.

JOHN.—Drab livery—gaiters.

ROSAMOND.—White—crimson sash, &c.

MRS. SINGLETON.—Figured silk, &c.

Time in Representation—45 minutes.

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A CAPITAL MATCH!

SCENE.—*A handsomely furnished Apartment in the House of MRS. SINGLETON; folding doors, c., showing garden beyond; a window, L. C.; doors, R. and L. 2 E. ROSAMOND seated at table, R., at work; MRS. SINGLETON seated near window, with an open book in her hand.*

MRS. S. (*starting slightly, and looking towards window*) Surely I cannot be mistaken? it was Captain Tempest. (*looking at ROSAMOND*) Rosamond seems so absorbed in her crochet, that I'll venture to take a peep. (*about to rise, ROSAMOND raises her head, MRS. SINGLETON hastily opens book again and begins to read*)

Ros. (*looking aside at MRS. SINGLETON*) Aunt seems so intent on her last new novel, that I think I can manage to read poor dear Charles's letter once again. (*cautiously producing letter, which she reads to herself*)

MRS. S. (*observing her*) Now I think I may venture. (*rises and approaches window, L.*)

Ros. If he could but obtain this appointment he speaks of, how happy we should be. (*ROSAMOND and MRS. SINGLETON both turn their heads at the same moment—ROSAMOND crumples up her letter, and begins to work violently at her crochet, and MRS. SINGLETON opens her book and begins to read*)

MRS. S. (*aside, as she advances*) It was he. (*aloud*) Come, Rosamond, let us put our bonnets on, for I suppose we must go through the usual ceremony of a visit to the pump room.

Ros. Oh, my dear aunt, I should so like to have a quiet, comfortable morning at home—not that there's much chance of that, thanks to Mr. Sunnyside.

MRS. S. Ha, ha, ha! Poor Mr. Sunnyside; he certainly is remarkably persevering in his attentions.

Ros. There's no getting rid of him—he's the most adhesive little man I ever knew.

MRS. S. And yet we are under great obligations to him: he happened to occupy the same carriage with us on our journey here two months ago—paid us the most assiduous attentions from the moment we started, till the instant we arrived—overwhelmed us with civility and sandwiches—kept up an incessant flow of compliments, and sherry and water—took charge of our luggage on arriving—procured a fly—jumped on the box by the side of the coachman—took us to the most comfortable hotel—secured our rooms—ordered our supper—wished us good evening—started off

again in search of apartments—called the next morning with another fly—settled the bill—brought us here—asked permission to pay his respects occasionally—

Ros. And in less than a week made himself as much of a fixture in the house as one of the door posts ! but, of course, that's *your* affair ; all I desire is, that Mr. Sunnyside will not interfere in my affairs. He's taken it into his head that it's high time I was married—I don't find fault with the man's idea at all—but I shall beg Mr. Sunnyside to understand that I can find a husband for myself, and that he needn't give himself the trouble of hunting up all the bachelors and widowers in Cheltenham and the neighbourhood on my account, as he's been doing for the last six weeks.

MRS. S. Mr. Sunnyside's excessive anxiety on the subject is very easily accounted for : he does me the infinite honour of soliciting my hand, and knowing that my determination is unalterable—namely, to remain a widow until you are married, he naturally endeavours to accomplish so desirable an object with as little delay as possible.

Ros. Indeed ! Then I've a good mind to remain single all my life, just to punish Mr. Sunnyside for his interference, and *you* for the cruel, barbarous way in which you snubbed poor Charles Marlowe all last winter in London.

MRS. S. A medical student forsooth, with nothing in his pocket but his case of instruments.

Ros. And capital things too for a young man to cut his way in the world with ! At any rate, he was rather a superior article to your Mr. Sunnyside ; besides, Mr. Sunnyside has his faults as well as other people. You are not aware, perhaps, that Mr. Sunnyside was heard to say at Mrs. Major Trollop's the other evening that you absolutely doated on him ?

MRS. S. Indeed ! (*smiling*)

Ros. Yes ; and that you found the state of widowhood so monotonous, that if you were not already Mrs. Sunnyside, it was no fault of *yours*.

MRS. S. You don't say so ! (*aside*) So, so, Mr. Sunnyside, I shall not forget *that*.

SUN. (*without*) Mrs. Singleton is in the breakfast room, and the bull dog tied up ? very well—then take my horse and gig round to the stable, and you can give him a rub down and a mouthful of corn, as I dare say I shan't be going for an hour or two.

Ros. Indeed ! Then I shall immediately go and lock myself up in my room, with a violent headache. (*runs out, L. 2 E.*)

SUN. (*entering at c. l. ; he is in a driving coat, and carries a whip*) That's right ! that's right ! Of course Miss Rosamond takes to her heels as soon as I show my face ! And yet I am not a frightful object, neither can my cast of countenance be called ferocious—nor even repulsive ; I have had my portrait taken several times, and I have always been drawn mild.

(*goes up Stage, and gets rid of his hat and whip*)

MRS. S. Ha, ha ! You forget, Mr. Sunnyside, that you are rather an alarming person in Rosamond's eyes, for the last month

and more you have never made your appearance without having at least half a dozen Capital Matches to propose to her.

SUN. And what has been my reward, Mrs. Singleton? How have my indefatigable, I might almost say superhuman, exertions to find a husband for Miss Rosamond been appreciated by Miss Rosamond, Mrs. Singleton? When you told me, six weeks ago, that you wouldn't marry again until your niece had got a husband, what did I do? I immediately set about finding one; first I ransacked Cheltenham, and in less than a week she had seventeen offers—principally old East Indian Nabobs, with nankeen complexions, lots of money, and very little liver—what could she want more? yet she refused them all. I then resolved on exploring the neighbourhood, and even carried my enthusiasm so far as to purchase a gig—with a horse to it—for the purpose of scouring the country; and when I tell you I had never had any practical experience in driving before, you may imagine the agony of mind I endured. I can safely say, that I never took my seat in that gig, with the reins in one hand, and the whip in the other, that I didn't instantly forget which was the right side of the road; the consequence was that I never met any description of vehicle whatever without our respective wheels becoming jammed together in the most complicated way imaginable, and as for sign posts, milestones, and turnpike gates, I'll venture to say there isn't one within ten miles round, that my vehicle hasn't scraped acquaintance with; however, I persevered, and there have I been husband hunting in every direction ever since, and all for what?—to find a Capital Match for a young lady, who rejects them all as fast as I do find 'em—but I give it up! (*takes off driving coat and hangs it on chair*) I shall sell my horse and gig—that is, if anybody 'll buy 'em. I may get rid of the gig, because, beyond two or three of the spokes being gone out of each wheel, and one of the shafts broken, it's as good as new; but I've my doubts about the horse—not that there's much the matter with him after all, except that he's broken both his knees about half-a-dozen times—however, I shall get rid of 'em, resign my driving coat, abdicate my whip, and return to Mrs. Major Trollop.

Mrs. S. Mrs. Major Trollop?

SUN. Yes, Mrs. Singleton, a woman who adores me—with a large fortune—(*aside*)—and green spectacles—(*aloud*)—and that I behaved like a brute to on your account. (*wiping his eye*—Mrs. SINGLETON goes up to window) Poor Trollop! you really ought to give me some little hope. (*tenderly*)

Mrs. S. (*looking towards window, and not paying attention*) Eh? I beg pardon. What were you observing?

SUN. (*r. violently*) I was observing that you ought to give me some little hope. I'm not a bad match! I've a good income already—then I'm a candidate for the governorship of our County Jail, and I'm sure to get it, because all the magistrates are friends of mine.

Mrs. S. You know that my determination is unalterable. Rosamond must be married first.

SUN. But, good gracious, she *won't* be married; and what's more, it's my opinion you know she *won't*, and that you've laid your heads together to make a fool of me!

MRS. S. Fie, fie, Mr. Sunnyside! I can only say that as soon as she accepts a husband, I will follow her example.

SUN. You will? Then Jack's alive again. (*putting on driving coat*) I'm sorry for Trollop—but she must look out for somebody else—not that I've the slightest idea where to look for a husband—I've exhausted Gloucestershire—so I'll try Oxfordshire; and if that won't do, I'll take a dip into Worcestershire—there must be lots of capital matches left still.

MRS. S. (*smiling*) Well, only prevail on Rosamond to accept one of them, and—(*crosses to r.*)

SUN. (L.) And you'll—(*tenderly*)—and you—

MRS. S. (R., *looking towards window*) If I find that he, who has so often led me to believe he loves me, is worthy of my affection—

SUN. (*enthusiastically*) You'll marry him?

MRS. S. I will! (*curtseys, and goes out door, r. 2 e.*)

SUN. (*rapturously*) She's mine—at least, she will be mine, when I've found a husband for Miss Rosamond—I mean, when I can prevail on Miss Rosamond to accept one—for I have found a matter of six and forty already. I'm sure I don't know what to do—there's only one thing more I can do, and that's to walk about the streets with a board on my back, and another on my front.

Enter SERVANT, c. L.

SER. Your servant has just run up here with this letter for your honour. (*gives letter to SUNNY, and runs out again, c. L.*)

SUN. (*looking at letter*) The London postmark! from my old friend, Bully, the barrister, no doubt—it suddenly occurred to me the other day that Bully would be a capital match for Miss Rosamond; in the first place, he's a remarkably fine young man, at least he was five and twenty years ago, so, what must he be now? then he's got a capital practice—at least, I suppose he has—and no wife—at least, I presume he hasn't. I know he hadn't five and twenty years ago—so I wrote to him, and here's his answer. (*opens letter, and reads*) "Sir,"—halloa, that's not Bully's usual style—at least, it wasn't five and twenty years ago—(*reads*) "Sir, I have opened your letter in my husband's absence,"—(*aloud*)—Husband! "signed 'Sarah Bully.'" Then he is married, ha, ha!—of course, just my luck. (*reading again*) "Your base attempt to seduce Mr. Bully from his wife and children"—oh, poo, poo, Sarah, you're talking nonsense, damned nonsense, Sarah—(*reading again*) "is fortunately defeated by the simple fact that Miss Rosamond Travers, the lady in question"—lady with a dash under it—for shame, Sarah—"is already privately married." What's this? privately married to my cousin Charles Marlowe. Married! (*reading again*) "But your frightful depravity"—that's right, Sarah—go it, Sarah—"is not the less odious in the eyes of the indignant Sarah Bully!" Oh, poo, poo—bother the indignant Sarah—Miss Rosamond is married, privately married—no wonder she refused all my capital matches.

Married! (*suddenly*) Good gracious—of course! now she's married—Mrs. Singleton's married—at least she *will* be married. *I shall* be married—we shall all be married, ha, ha, ha! tol de rol! tol de rol! (*dancing about and taking off driving coat*)

Enter ROSAMOND, L. 2 E.

Ros. (*as she enters*) Aunt is in her room, so I suppose Mr. Sunnyside is gone! (*seeing him*) No, there he is, and practising the Polka, I do declare. (*looking at SUNNYSIDE, who is capering about*)

SUN. (*seeing her, suddenly stops—assumes a serious manner, and comes forward—takes ROSAMOND by the arm—then in a low emphatic tone*) When a youthful female calmly looks on while an inoffensive and inexperienced middle-aged individual is daily driving about the country in a gig, with a horse to it, in search of a husband for her, when she's already got a husband of her own——

Ros. Hush! (*anxiously and alarmed*)

SUN. I won't hush!

Ros. (*suddenly grasping his arm, and turning him round sharply*) Mr. Sunnyside, you know my secret—now, mark me, if you betray me, I'll instantly precipitate myself—before your eyes—into something or other—I care not what.

SUN. (*in a low tone, without looking at her*) Precipitate yourself!

Ros. Mr. Sunnyside—dear Mr. Sunnyside! (*appealingly*)

SUN. It's no use! I'm flint—I'm granite—Gibraltar itself!

Ros. Have you no pity—no compassion—no tenderness?

SUN. Tenderness! to a man who has passed the last four weeks of his existence in a gig, and in a sitting posture in that gig, with a hard-mouthed horse, dislocating his shoulder at every step—the question, methinks, savours somewhat of the satirical.

Ros. But you'll keep my secret?—you'll not betray me to my aunt?—recollect, it involves not only my happiness, but my Charley!

SUN. (*violently*) Don't talk to me about your Charley!

Ros. Hush! (*alarmed*)

SUN. (*louder*) What's your Charley to me?

Ros. Hush! You cannot—will not—doom two fond, doating hearts to despair! (*imploringly*)

SUN. (*aside*) Sunnyside, for shame!—you're beginning to melt—your Gibraltar's giving way, Sunnyside—be firm, Sunnyside!

Ros. Listen, and you shall know all. (*timidly putting her arm in SUNNYSIDE's, who allows it to fall, then crosses his arms*)

SUN. Go on! (*turns aside*)

Ros. Two years ago I first met Mr. Charles Marlowe in London. He proposed for me to my aunt: she not only refused her consent, but forbade him the house! Oh! if you had seen him weep——

SUN. A great blubbering baby!

Ros. My aunt then suddenly left London, and took me to Boulogne; but Charles soon followed us. I happened to be alone on the pier when he landed—looking so dejected—so pale——

SUN. He'd probably been poorly. Look at me—I'm naturally of a ruddy complexion——

Ros. Nay—not ruddy—but a rare combination of the rose and the lily. (*insinuatingly, and again taking SUNNYSIDE'S arm*)

SUN. (*smiling conceitedly and patting her hand*) Be it so. And yet I never landed, even at Gravesend, without being exceedingly pale—all lily! And so Charles followed you, did he? Well, though I condemn his conduct, I admire his pluck!

Ros. He urged a clandestine union—I consented, and we were privately married, and Charles is only waiting for an appointment, which he soon hopes to obtain, to confess everything to my aunt. So we must be patient a little longer.

SUN. Must we? It strikes me I've been patient quite long enough. Do you know what your aunt said to me not ten minutes ago? That as soon as you'd accepted a husband, she would too, not two husbands—and now that I know that you are married, and that I can marry your aunt, as soon as your aunt knows you're married, you think I'm going to throw away the chance of marrying your aunt, by not telling your aunt that you are married!—pooh! absurd! (*going*)

Ros. (*stopping him*) Oh! Mr. Sunnyside, have you a heart? (*laying hold of his arm*)

SUN. No—your aunt's got it.

Ros. Then go! betray the secret that has been confided to you, and become an object of execration to your fellow-creatures for the remainder of your miserable and brief existence——

SUN. Brief existence! Fiddle-de-dee! I'm good for another forty years. (*cutting a caper*)

Ros. Not for another forty hours! (*SUNNYSIDE suddenly stops—ROSAMOND grasps his arm, brings him down to c. in front, and in a low, earnest tone*) Are you a good shot?

SUN. Not a crack one—but, then, I never tried.

Ros. I'm very sorry for you—because Charles *is!* (*with intention*)

SUN. (*after a short pause*) Though I confess I didn't exactly like your style of saying "Charles *is*," I don't clearly see how Charles being a crack shot can possibly affect me.

Ros. (*grasping his arm again violently*) What! do you suppose he'd allow the destroyer of my happiness and his own to triumph in his crime? No! (*crossing to r. vehemently, and throwing his arm violently away, and making him spin round again—then walking hurriedly to and fro*)

SUN. (*following her*) It's no sort of use putting yourself in a passion—we shall never come to an amicable arrangement if you will insist on putting yourself in a passion.

Ros. (*stopping suddenly and smiling*) An amicable arrangement?

SUN. Yes: I'll keep your secret on one condition—and that is, that you'll accept the first capital match I propose to you; of course, I don't insist on your marrying the individual—I've no wish to expose you to the Penal Enactments against Bigamy—all I require is for you to accept *him*, in order that your aunt may accept *me!*

Ros. But, consider—what right have I to trifle with the poor man's feelings?

SUN. I'll choose one without any feelings! Come, is it a bargain—yes or no?

Ros. Well, I suppose I must say yes!

SUN. That's all right—so off I go again. (*puts on driving coat*) Here, John, bring my horse and gig round to the door. (*going to door, c.*) And John, let the horse have as much water as ever he can drink, and then, perhaps, he won't insist upon going up to his middle in every pond he comes to; and, John—Stay! Can it be? No—yes—my dear friend Captain Tempest, I declare! (*shouting again at door*) Holloa, Captain, here—it's me—Sunnyside! (*to her*) The very man for our purpose. (*takes off driving coat*) Come along, don't be afraid—the bull dog's tied up! (*coming hurriedly down to ROSAMOND*) As I said before, here's the very man for us—remember our bargain, if I get him to propose, you'll accept him.

Ros. Well, but—

CAP. (*without*) Now, Sunnyside, where the deuce are you?

(*ROSAMOND hastily runs off, L. 2 R.*)

Enter CAPTAIN TEMPEST, C. L.

CAP. (*L.*) Oh! here you are.

SUN. (*R., shaking hands*) My dear Tempest, I'm delighted to see you!

CAP. Egad, Sunnyside, you look better than ever. (*SUNNYSIDE smiles complacently*) Rather fatter, perhaps.

SUN. No—I assure you—no. I'm not fatter; what you see is simply an increased developement of muscular power.

CAP. (*looking around him*) This is really remarkable comfortable.

SUN. Yes, it's a snug little place of ours, isn't it?

CAP. (*aside*) Ours! then the reports I have heard are true—and he evidently considers it a settled thing—so—so, Mrs. Singleton, I've just arrived in time! (*aloud*) By-the-bye, I want you to introduce me to Mrs. Singleton—at least to give me the opportunity of presenting myself to her notice again.

SUN. Again!

CAP. Yes! I had the pleasure of making her acquaintance two years ago at Ramsgate during the bathing season—by-the-bye, did you ever notice the peculiar style of bathing at Ramsgate, eh? (*nudging him*)

SUN. Yes, sir! on the only occasion I ever took a dip at that fashionable watering-place, I imprudently wandered some considerable distance from my machine, and then I was kept a good hour-and-a-half in the sea, till I was almost pickled, in consequence of the numerous audience, principally of the fair sex, each with a book and a parasol—this sort of thing—(*imitates action of servant ladies*)—who were congregated on the sands to witness my proceedings; and, unfortunately, the tide was going out, so I was obliged to go out, too—luckily I was picked up by a fishing-boat, or I do believe I should have floated right over to the French coast, rather than have walked to my machine, under the circumstances.

CAP. Mrs. Singleton's a very charming person.

SUN. (*indifferently*) Yes !

CAP. And remarkably handsome !

SUN. (*indifferently*) Has been.

CAP. (*aside*) What an accomplished little hypocrite it is. (*aloud*) I'm surprised she has not married again.

SUN. (*with intention*) You wouldn't be if you were to see her niece.

CAP. Her niece ! oh, yes, I recollect ! she had a tall, thin, gawky girl with her—red hair, I think.

SUN. Red hair !—gawky !—poo—a most magnificent creature, sir ! a superb article—cuts her aunt all to shivers ! regularly puts an extinguisher on her wherever they go.

CAP. Indeed !

SUN. Yes ! Egad, if I was a young man, and a fine dashing, good-looking fellow, like you—for you are a good-looking fellow—a damned good-looking fellow—I'd carry off such a prize in triumph.

CAP. Who ? I ? Go along !

SUN. I will not go along—I will not allow you—you, the man I love as a son—I mean a brother, to sacrifice your own happiness, and that of a sweet young creature—(*in a low whisper*)—who adores you !

CAP. Adores me ?

SUN. Yes, in secret—I'm sure of it—why should she be always talking about Ramsgate more than Sandgate ?—why should her sketch book be full of Ramsgate more than Margate ?—the thing's clear—because at Ramsgate she first saw *you*—there she first beheld those finely-chiselled features—

CAP. Spare my blushes, my dear Sunnyside. (*aside*) I see the rascal's plan, and as it will serve my object to encourage it—here goes ! (*aloud, and grasping his hand*) Then learn *my* secret—it was to see *her* again that I came to Cheltenham.

SUN. Bless you ! (*throwing his arms round TEMPEST*) She's yours ! From this moment you may look upon yourself as a married man and the father of a family.

CAP. Really, my dear Sunnyside, you take as warm an interest in *my* marriage as you would in *your* own.

SUN. I do, exactly.

CAP. But will Mrs. Singleton consent ?

SUN. Of course she will—a fine handsome fellow like you, with two thousand a year.

CAP. No such thing—only five hundred.

SUN. Oh, five hundred—I thought it was only four hundred—then we'll say three thousand—but here she comes—leave all to me—I'll manage it.

Enter MRS. SINGLETON, R. 2 E.

MRS. S. (*seeing CAPTAIN TEMPEST, and with slight emotion*) Captain Tempest !

CAP. Yes, madam—I—that is—

SUN. (*aside to him*) Hold your tongue, or you'll botch the busi-

ness to a certainty. (*aloud*) Yes, Mrs. Singleton, my very dear friend, Captain Tempest—a noble fellow, Mrs. Singleton, and a gallant soldier.

CAP. (*aside to him*) Sailor!

SUN. I mean sailor! a man I have known and respected ever since he first entered the army.

CAP. (*aside to him*) The navy!

SUN. I should say the navy! he has requested me to present him to you.

MRS. S. Captain Tempest needed no introduction.

SUN. (*aside to CAPTAIN*) Bow! (*CAPTAIN bows*)

MRS. S. His polite attentions at Ramsgate, two years ago, have not been forgotten either by myself or by Rosamond—

SUN. (*aside to CAPTAIN*) You hear that! “or by Rosamond.”

(*aloud*) Nor has Captain Tempest forgotten *you*, Mrs. Singleton!

(*aside to CAPTAIN*) We must flatter her a bit! (*aloud*) In short his only motive in obtaining leave of absence from his regiment—

CAP. (*aside to him*) Ship!

SUN. I mean ship—was the hope of renewing his short, but delightful acquaintance with you.

MRS. S. (*aside*) How thoughtless—how imprudent of him to confide his intentions to Mr. Sunnyside.

SUN. (*aside to MRS. SINGLETON*) He's over head and ears in love with Miss Rosamond.

MRS. S. (*angrily*) Ah!

SUN. (*aside to her*) He's come down here on purpose to propose to her—

MRS. S. (*aside*) Faithless monster! (*with a fierce look at CAPTAIN*)

SUN. (*aside to CAPTAIN*) It's all right—I've done it.

CAP. Done it—yes, confound it. I'm afraid you have. (*pushing SUNNYSIDE back*) Mrs. Singleton, will you allow me to say—

MRS. S. There's not the least necessity for you saying anything, sir. (*coldly*)

SUN. (*coming between them—to TEMPEST, aside*) Don't you hear, there's not the least necessity for you saying anything! of course not. I told you I'd done it! (*aside to MRS. SINGLETON*) He's something like a capital match, eh? three thousand a year! and the handsomest man in her Majesty's army—I mean navy! Of course, Miss Rosamond will accept him—you'll accept him for Miss Rosamond—

MRS. S. (*aside*) Never! (*hastily*) Leave us alone.

SUN. (*aside*) I see! to receive his proposal for your niece in due form. (*aside to CAPTAIN*) Now, then, courage—get the steam up and propose at once, for the “lass that loves a soldier”—I mean a sailor. (*aside*) Now to find Miss Rosamond, and just to remind her of our bargain and prepare her to accept this capital match, No. 74.

Exit at door, L. 2 E.

MRS. S. (*with pretended calmness*) I have to congratulate you, sir, on the consistency of your professions, if what Mr. Sunnyside says is true.

CAP. What Mr. Sunnyside says, madam, is *not* true.

MRS. S. (*hastily*) Then you have *not* come here to propose for my niece Rosamond.

CAP. Certainly not, madam.

MRS. S. Then Mr. Sunnyside is mistaken, for, probably, you have no matrimonial intentions whatever.

CAP. Now *you* are mistaken: I have come one hundred miles, by express train, for the express purpose of offering you my hand.

MRS. S. But you forget the conditions of my acceptance; Rosamond must be married first, and she peremptorily refuses every capital match that Mr. Sunnyside has hitherto proposed, nor can I imagine what her reason can be.

CAP. I can—the very simple one, that Mr. Sunnyside has been so intent on presenting others, that he has never thought of proposing to her *himself*.

MRS. S. But you forget that Mr. Sunnyside is *my* admirer.

CAP. Very true; but that's no reason Miss Rosamond shouldn't be an admirer of Mr. Sunnyside, and if so, I'm sure you wouldn't stand in the way of her happiness.

MRS. S. Not for the world.

CAP. A thousand thanks! And, in the mean time, it's perfectly understood that you won't hear of me as a nephew-in law?

MRS. S. Oh, certainly not—ha, ha, ha!

CAP. That I'm totally unfitted for the marriage state, eh? A wild unsettled harum-scarum fellow?

MRS. S. Perfectly good for nothing—ha, ha!

CAP. And that rather than allow me to marry your niece—

MRS. S. Yes—

CAP. You would marry me yourself?

MRS. S. Yes—that is—I mean—

SUN. (*without*) Now, Miss Rosamond, come along—don't be shy.

(MRS. SINGLETON runs out, door R. 2 E.)

Enter SUNNYSIDE and ROSAMOND, l. 2 e.

SUN. (*as he enters*) I tell you it's an old acquaintance of yours. (*aside to her*) Now, no nonsense—remember our bargain! don't look at the man as if you could eat the man—give the man some encouragement—smile at the man!

Ros. (*looking at the man, and smiling*) Will that do? (*aside to SUNNYSIDE*)

SUN. It's more like a *grin*, but it's better than nothing! Now speak to him.

Ros. (*to TEMPEST*) How do you do, sir? I hope you're pretty well.

SUN. (*aside, and triumphantly to TEMPEST*) There, d'ye hear that? She hopes you're pretty well—didn't I tell you she adored you? (*aloud*) Well, Miss Rosamond, you see my gallant friend, the Captain, has followed you to Cheltenham. (*hastily aside to ROSAMOND*) Give a start!

Ros. Ah! (*with a violent start*)

SUN. Poo! don't be a fool—you could give a start without jumping a yard-and-a-half off the ground, couldn't you? (*aloud*) Yes, Miss Rosamond—and, what's more, he talks of making a long stay

here—(*prompting ROSAMOND in a very rapid tone*)—the longer the better.

Ros. (*in the same rapid tone*) The longer the better.

SUN. (*in an agony*) No, no!

Ros. (*aloud*) No, no!

SUN. Not so!

Ros. Not so!

SUN. Hush! (*aloud*) Yes, and who knows but he may have the intention of marrying and settling here if a certain young lady—(*aside*)—turn red!

Ros. (*aside to him*) I can't.

SUN. Then turn white, blue, green—I don't care what, as long as you change color! (*aloud*) I repeat, if a certain young lady—

CAP. (*taking SUNNYSIDE's arm, and aside to him*) My dear fellow, I'm very much obliged to you—but this is all labour thrown away. I have seen Mrs. Singleton—I've proposed to her for Miss Rosamond—

SUN. Well.

CAP. (*taking out his pocket-handkerchief*) And have been rejected. (*burying his face in his hands*)

SUN. Rejected! Oh, poo—confound it—dash it—this is too bad. (*goes up and puts on driving coat and hat*)

Ros. (*observing SUNNYSIDE*) How angry Mr. Sunnyside looks—perhaps he thinks I've not been amiable enough. (*to CAPTAIN, and in an assumed timid and tender manner*) Perhaps Captain Tempest would like a stroll before dinner; and if he would offer me his arm, as he used to do during those delightful walks on Ramsgate Pier, by the moon's pale light—

SUN. (*coming down between them, and sulkily*) Oh, bother the moon's pale light, and Ramsgate Pier too. (*aside to ROSAMOND*) You needn't think of him any more—he's no go—there's only one thing to be done—I must set out on my travels again and find another. (*buttoning up his coat*) Here, John, bring that horse and gig round.

Ros. But don't be angry with me, Mr. Sunnyside—would you like me to propose to him?

SUN. Poo, don't I tell you I'm going to look out for another! (*sulkily*)

Ros. (*timidly*) Then I suppose I can go?

SUN. (*impatiently*) Of course you can go.

Ros. Oh, lud!

(*runs out, l. 2 E.*)

SUN. (*to CAPTAIN*) And so Mrs. Singleton won't hear of you as a nephew-in-law, eh?

CAP. (*gaily*) No—snubbed me in the most unmerciful manner possible—ha, ha, ha!

SUN. I don't think it's anything to laugh about.

CAP. (*suddenly recollecting himself*) I'm not laughing—despair makes me hysterical—it always does—ha, ha, ha! (*laughing hysterically*)

SUN. Now, don't take on so. I'll see what I can do for you—my back isn't easily put up; but when it is up, it doesn't go down

again in a hurry, and so you'll find, Mrs. Singleton—but, here she comes—leave us together, and as you go out let her see what a wretched-looking object you are.

Enter MRS. SINGLETON, R.—CAPTAIN bows coldly to her, then places his handkerchief to his face, and goes towards C. D., then stops, exchanges signs of intelligence with MRS. SINGLETON, unperceived by SUNNYSIDE, then goes out, c.

SUN. Now, Mrs. Singleton.

MRS. S. What's the matter?

SUN. The matter—here, after four weeks of mental anxiety and considerable bodily suffering, I find the very man for Miss Rosamond—young—

MRS. S. Yes!

SUN. Handsome!

MRS. S. Yes, but wild, unsettled—

SUN. Yes. I mean, no!

MRS. S. Not at all fitted for a husband!

SUN. No! I mean, yes! But what does it matter, so long as Miss Rosamond likes him—your *condition* was that she should accept a husband, and she accepted him.

MRS. S. Accepted him—impossible!

SUN. I tell you she did—jumped at him—a good height, too!

MRS. S. Pshaw! I know better.

SUN. Well, 'pon my life that's rather cool; why shouldn't she accept him?

MRS. S. Because she couldn't marry him.

SUN. Why couldn't she marry him?

MRS. S. Because—because—(*taking his arm*)—I strongly suspect she loves another. (*significantly*)

SUN. (*aside*) Couldn't "marry him"—"loves another"—she means Charley—she *must* mean Charley! (*aloud*) Oh, then, she's told you all about it, has she?

MRS. S. Not a word, *I guessed* it. (*knowingly*)

SUN. And you consent to sanction her union with the man of her heart?

MRS. S. Willingly!

SUN. (*triumphantly*) Huzza! ha, ha, ha! (*pulls off driving coat*) I'm the happiest fellow alive—at least I soon shall be. (*taking both MRS. SINGLETON'S hands*)

MRS. S. It only rests with you to name the day.

SUN. (*very tenderly*) Then let it be this day fortnight; or, if that's too early, suppose we put it off till the day after to-morrow.

MRS. S. That's a question which can only be decided by your bride.

SUN. (*tenderly*) Then the sooner my bride decides it the better.

MRS. S. Indeed!—then I'll call her. Rosamond. (*calling, L. 2 E.*)

SUN. (*staggered*) Rosamond!

MRS. S. Yes, ha, ha, ha! I told you I had guessed your secret; but I forgive you both for keeping me so long in the dark.

SUN. But, goodness gracious, you're considerably more in the dark than I am. Miss Rosamond marry me, ha, ha, ha! here she

comes—now, ha, ha, ha ! just you pop the question for me and all I can say is, if she don't refuse me at the first go off, I'll marry her in half-an-hour.

Enter ROSAMOND, L. 2 E.

Ros. Did you call me, aunt ?

Mrs. S. Yes, my dear. (*crosses to c.*) Come here ! The fact is, Mr. Sunnyside, undismayed by your repeated and determined refusals, has mustered courage enough to propose another capital match for you. (*with intention, and looking at SUNNYSIDE*)

SUN. (*r., with his hands in his breeches pockets, and swaying to and fro*) Yes ; a reg'lar good 'un this time, and no mistake—ha, ha, ha ! (*aside*) It's too absurd !

Ros. (*aside*) Well, Mr. Sunnyside shan't find fault with me for want of amiability this time, for I'll accept him directly, whoever he is.

MRS. S. Mr. Sunnyside is naturally fearful that this last suitor for your hand may have come somewhat late in the field.

Ros. (*with intention, and looking towards SUNNYSIDE*) Nay, the last comers are very often the most welcome !

SUN. Yes ; and, ecod, so you'll say, when you know who it is—ha, ha, ha ! (*aside*) It's too ridiculous ! (*swaying to and fro as before*)

SUN. Then, in a word, Rosamond, Mr. Sunnyside offers you his hand and heart.

Ros. (*astonished*) Mr. Sunnyside !

SUN. Yes—ha, ha, ha ! Didn't I tell you he was a regular good 'un ?—ha, ha, ha ! Of course you'll accept him ?—ha, ha, ha ! (*still swaying to and fro*)

Ros. (*aside*) I suppose I must say Yes ! He'll be angry if I say No ! (*aloud, and looking tenderly at SUNNYSIDE*) Accept him ? Yes ! with all my heart. (*running, and throwing herself into SUNNYSIDE's arms, who is perfectly bewildered*)

MRS. S. There ! didn't I tell you she loved you ?

SUN. Me !

Ros. Yes. Oh, you dear man, you ! (*throwing her arms about him again*)

SUN. (*struggling*) Pooh, pooh !

MRS. S. (*coming between them, takes a hand of each and joins them*) There, be happy ! (*aside*) Now to announce the good news to Captain Tempest. (*runs out, c.*)

SUN. (*after watching MRS. SINGLETON'S proceedings in silent bewilderment, then throwing ROSAMOND'S hand away*) Now, Miss Rosamond ! (*folding his arms*)

Ros. Now, Mr. Sunnyside ! (*folding her arms*)

SUN. What do you mean by accepting me as a husband ?

Ros. What do you mean by proposing for me as your wife ?

SUN. Just to show your aunt that you'd refuse me.

Ros. Then you shouldn't have told me to accept you.

SUN. Accept me ?

Ros. (*half crying*) Yes ! our bargain was that I was to accept the first capital match you proposed. I was ready to accept Captain

Tempest—you told me he was “no go”—that you’d find another—you then propose for me yourself—I accept you, and you’re not satisfied.

SUN. Satisfied! Pooh! you ought to have treated me with the utmost contempt.

Ros. How should I know?

SUN. You ought to have known!

Ros. You ought to have told me!

SUN. Your common sense ought to have told you! Where was your common sense? What had you done with your common sense? Where had you put it?

Ros. You’re a vile, tyrannical, discontented, ugly, little, old man!

SUN. Very well, very well! Then, since you choose to become personal, and say I’m tyrannical—I don’t mind your calling me ugly, because it must be obvious that that’s mere calumny—you must take the consequences.

Ros. I understand you, sir. You’ll betray my secret to my aunt. Very well, sir—do your worst! But, remember, I’ve already told you that my Charley is a crack shot; so, if you should happen to find yourself suddenly cut off in your old age—don’t blame me!

Exit, l. 2 E.

SUN. (*following her, and having the door slammed in his face*) Stop! Miss Rosamond! (*shouting*) Mrs. Marlowe! I say, Mrs. Marlowe! Well! this is pleasant! I want to marry the aunt—the aunt won’t marry till the niece is married—and the niece insists on marrying me—stop a bit!—that is—really, what with the aunt, and the niece, and Charley, and the horse and gig, and the army and navy, I’m in such a hopeless state of confusion, I don’t know what I’m talking about? Oh, Trollop, if I could only get accustomed to your green spectacles!

Enter CAPTAIN TEMPEST, hastily, c. d., down r., he laughs aside on seeing SUNNYSIDE, and then comes down.

CAP. (r., slapping SUNNYSIDE on the shoulder, and assuming an indignant manner) So, sir!

SUN. (l., jumping round) What’s the matter now?

CAP. Matter! Mrs. Singleton has told me all—all, you false, double-faced, manoeuvring, circumventing little hypocrite, you!

SUN. I deny it.

CAP. Deny it?

SUN. I don’t know—but I deny it for all that.

CAP. What! didn’t you urge me to propose for Miss Rosamond, while you were in love with her yourself all the time?

SUN. Me? No!

CAP. Pshaw! Havn’t you just proposed to her?

SUN. No—I mean—yes—that is—(*very loud*) Will you hear me? (in an agony)

CAP. No! You’ve proposed—she’s accepted you—and you must marry her. Yes, sir, *must*—or take the consequences!

SUN. Oh, damn it! I can’t stand being bullied in this sort of

way. No, sir—and, once for all, I tell you, sir—in spite of your threats—that I won't marry Miss Rosamond! You hear, sir? I won't, sir—won't.

CAP. And why, sir?

SUN. Because I can't. (*in an earnest undertone*) A secret marriage! Hush!

CAP. I see! You've got a wife.

SUN. No! she has—I mean a husband. I promised her not to tell her aunt—but you're not her aunt, are you?

CAP. Miss Rosamond married, and you knew it! (*suddenly and angrily advancing upon SUNNYSIDE*) Then what the devil do you mean, sir? (*following up SUNNYSIDE, who retreats, n.*) Yes, sir; how dare you make a fool of me, by advising me to propose to a married woman?

SUN. (*r., suddenly forcing a laugh*) Ha, ha, ha! Don't you see it was a joke?—ha, ha, ha!

CAP. I? A joke? Now, sir—(*shaking him*) now, sir, I insist on a clear and satisfactory explanation!

SUN. You shall have it! Now I'll tell you all about it. I propose to you to propose to Miss Rosamond, because her aunt won't marry till Miss Rosamond's married, and I want to marry her aunt don't you see? Miss Rosamond can't marry, because she *is* married. I promise not to tell the niece that the aunt's got a husband—I mean the niece—*ergo*—mark the *ergo*!—I can't marry the niece—I mean the aunt—you understand! And there we are in a regular fix! At that moment, in *you* came; upon which, says I to myself, "Ah!" says I, "I've a capital idea," says I; and so it was: "And what's more," says I, "I'll do it," says I—and so I did! There! if that isn't a clear and satisfactory explanation, I don't know what you would have.

CAP. So, you're in love with Mrs. Singleton, eh? (*with pretended astonishment*)

SUN. Yes, sir.

CAP. Then why not acquaint her with her niece's secret marriage?

SUN. Because I've promised to keep it secret—not only for Miss Rosamond's sake, but Charley's.

CAP. Who's Charley?

SUN. Whose Charley? Her Charley! Her husband—a Mr. Marlowe.

CAP. Marlowe?—Charles Marlowe? The best friend I have in the world—a capital fellow!

SUN. But poor as a rat!

CAP. Especially as he tells me there's but little chance of his obtaining the appointment he was soliciting.

SUN. What appointment?

CAP. That of Governor of your County Jail.

SUN. No! Ha, ha, ha! Poor devil! He found there was another candidate in the field—did he? Ha, ha, ha!

CAP. Yes; so he told me: some Gloucestershire booby or other, with more interest than brains. Perhaps you know him?

SUN. Well, I should think I did *rather*—it's me!

CAP. You?

SUN. Yes—I'm the Gloucestershire booby.

CAP. (suddenly) Then, my dear fellow, follow my advice and Mrs. Singleton's yours.

SUN. Mine? How?

CAP. How? The thing's so obvious, any fool might see it.

SUN. I beg your pardon, I don't.

CAP. Then listen! You resign in favour of Mr. Marlowe.

SUN. (quickly) No, I don't.

CAP. Pshaw! as I said before, you resign—

SUN. I tell you I don't.

CAP. Marlowe gets the appointment, steps into a handsome income—his marriage with Miss Rosamond need no longer be kept a secret—you disclose it to Mrs. Singleton—the young couple are forgiven—Mrs. Singleton's condition is consequently fulfilled, and she—

SUN. (who has been gradually gaining an insight into the CAPTAIN's meaning—suddenly and triumphantly) Marries me! Of course—ha, ha, ha! (stopping and seizing CAPTAIN's hand) You're a man of genius! I don't wish to flatter you, but the moment you took your hat off, and I saw your phrenological developement, I said to myself—"that's a man of genius."

CAP. Don't lose time in compliments, but send in your resignation at once.

SUN. This very moment. (runs to table, R., and begins to write) Luckily, there's a meeting of the magistrates to-day at three o'clock.

CAP. Remember, a powerful appeal in favour of Marlowe.

SUN. (writing) Don't be afraid, I'll make it all right for Charley. There—(addressing letter)—To Colonel Muddle, Chairman of the Bench of Magistrates. (gets up—looks at watch) Half-past two—just in time. Here, John, John.

JOHN runs in at c., with a whip.

Run up directly with this letter to the Sessions House.

JOHN. I've got to drive the pony over to Farmer Podger's, for some butter and new laid eggs for missus, sir.

SUN. Then I'll take the letter myself: is the horse and gig at the door?

JOHN. Yes, sir.

SUN. Then off I go! (puts on driving coat) Give me my hat—where's my whip? I'll take yours, too, John; when one's in a hurry, there's nothing like having plenty of whips. (to CAPTAIN) Now, John, come and hold my horse's head while I get into the gig—and hold it tight, will you? Good bye, Captain. (runs off at C. L., followed by JOHN)

CAP. Come, I've done poor Marlowe a good turn, at any rate; and now, my good friend Sunnyside, it'll go hard indeed if you havn't to resign the widow as well as the County Jail. (a loud crash heard without. MRS. SINGLETON and ROSAMOND run in, and they all go up hurriedly towards c.)

SUN. (*without*) Of course—of course. I knew how 'twould be; it's too absurd.

Enters at c. l., his hat and coat muddy, and both his whips broken; as he enters.

Don't be alarmed! I'm not hurt! There's nothing broken *except* the whips.

MRS. S. But what has happened?

SUN. Oh, the old story: tried to drive through your garden gate—stuck plump against one of the posts—the horse wouldn't move—I pitched into him with both whips—smash went something—off went the horse, with both the shafts—up went the gig in the air, with me in it—out I went behind—down I came behind—but, never mind, it's nothing when you're used to it; and now, Mrs. Singleton (*taking Rosamond by the hand*) I beg to present *to you* the wife of the unquestionably certain-to-be-elected governor of our County Jail, Mr. Charles Marlowe. Yes! I've just resigned in his favour, and he steps into eight hundred a year.

Ros. Oh, you dear, kind, benevolent, generous little man.

(*embracing him*)

SUN. And now, most adorable of widows—now that the condition is fulfilled—(*tenderly*)—now that Miss Rosamond *has accepted* a husband—

MRS. S. Well, I suppose I must submit; and, as I was saying to you this morning, Mr. Sunnyside, if I were sure that he who has so often led me to believe he loves me—

SUN. (*enthusiastic*) Believe he loves you—I believe he does *too*—he adores you! (*to CAPTAIN*) Doesn't he? (*aside to him*) Back me up, there's a good fellow.

CAP. He does indeed! (*looking tenderly at MRS. SINGLETON*)

SUN. (*grasping TEMPEST's hand, and aside to him*) Thank *you*.

MRS. S. I repeat, if I were sure that he is worthy of my affection—

SUN. He is!

MRS. S. You're sure of it?

SUN. I'll take my oath of it—(*to TEMPEST*)—and so will *you*, won't you?

CAP. I will—I do.

SUN. (*aside to him, and again grasping his hand*) Thank *you again*.

MRS. S. Indeed! then take my hand, Captain Tempest.

SUN. Poo, poo, that won't do at all—that's all wrong. (*MRS. SINGLETON and CAPTAIN*) Ha, ha, ha!

SUN. Captain Tempest, why just now you said he wasn't *at all* fitted for a husband.

MRS. S. Nor is he—for my niece.

MRS. S.

CAP. } Ha, ha, ha!

Ros.

SUN. (*looking dignified, then suddenly bursting out with a loud laugh*) Ha, ha, ha! and you join in the laugh against me, too, do you, Miss Rosamond? Very well, then allow me to remind you

that my letter of resignation in favour of Charley hasn't gone, and, what's more, it shan't go ! no, here it is—(*feeling in his pockets*)—no it isn't—ah, now I've got it—(*feeling in another pocket*) No, I haven't—

Enter JOHN, c. l., running.

JOHN. A letter from Colonel Muddle, sir!

SUN. Colonel Muddle. (*opens and reads it*) "Dear Sunnyside, in consequence of your resignation in favour of Mr. Charles Marlowe, as contained in your letter this moment received—" Just received!

JOHN. Yes, sir, I found it laying just outside the garden gate, so I ran down with it.

SUN. Did you—get out. (*driving JOHN out, c. l., and resuming letter*) "We have unanimously elected that gentleman—" oh, bother—(*crushes letter*)

CAP. Come, Sunnyside, be satisfied with having done a generous action—think of that—

MRS. S. }
ROS. } Yes—think of that.

MRS. S. You wouldn't quarrel with your friends?

ROS. Your dear friends?

CAP. For we all love you.

MRS. S. }
ROS. } Yes—all!

CAP. And so shall our children.

MRS. S. }
ROS. } Yes—and so shall our— (*they stop*)

SUN. It's no use ! There, be happy all of you—as for me, It's decreed that I shall live and die a bachelor.

MRS. S. Nay, you forget Mrs. Major Trollop.

SUN. (*makes a wry face, then aside*) 'Pon my life, I don't think her green spectacles so very unbecoming, after all. (*aloud*) No, I've had enough of matrimonial speculations for some time to come; and yet there are two parties still under this roof that I should like to bring together if I could.

MRS. S. }
ROS. } Indeed!
CAP. }

SUN. Yes—we represent one party, and our kind friends before us the other—shall I propose ? (*to the other Actors*) Ladies and gentlemen, you have come here, as you always do, to be pleased, we have endeavoured, as I trust we always do, to amuse you—have our efforts been successful?—in short, do you accept them? Say but yes, and we shall then indeed have made—"A CAPITAL MATCH!"

CAPTAIN TEMPEST. MRS. SINGLETON. SUNNYSIDE. ROSAMOND.
RIGHT. LEFT.

Curtain.