

# HOW TO MAKE HOME HAPPY.

A Comic Drama.

IN ONE ACT.

BY

## WILLIAM BROUH

*Author of "Apartments," "House out of Windows," "Phenomenon in a Smock Frock," "Trying it On," &c. &c.*

THOMAS HAILES LACY,  
WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND,  
LONDON.

909463

Mr. DABCHICK ..... Mr. WRIGHT.  
TUFFINS ..... Mr. BASIL BAKER.  
FREDERICK ELDON ..... Mr. HENRY BUTLER.  
PETER ..... Mr. TEMPLETON.  
MRS. DABCHICK ..... Mrs. FRANK MATTHEWS.  
EMILY SNOWDEN ..... Mrs. MELFORT.

### Characters.

MR. DABCHICK ..... MR. WRIGHT.  
TUFFINS ..... MR. BASIL BAKER.  
FREDERICK ELDON ..... MR. HENRY BUTLER.  
PETER ..... MR. TEMPLETON.  
MRS. DABCHICK ..... MRS. FRANK MATTHEWS.  
EMILY SNOWDEN ..... MRS. MELFORT.

### Costumes of the Present Day.

Time in performance, 55 minutes.

MOONLIGHT

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## HOW TO MAKE HOME HAPPY.

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SCENE.—*A Sitting Room. Window in flat, l. Doors, r. and l. Piano, tables, chairs, &c.*

*Enter DABCHICK, c.*

DABCHICK. Here, Jane—Charlotte ! Confound it—no, I mean Maria—that is, Ellen. No—what the deuce is the servant's name to-day I wonder ? Oh ! I remember—Peter. Yes, we've exhausted the vocabulary of proper names, feminine, so we are beginning with the masculine. We have got a smart active lad who has undertaken to make himself generally useful. Well, I hope we are suited at last, and that there will be nothing now to disturb the connubial felicity of my blessed Caroline and myself. Up to the present time we have never been able to keep a servant a week. I have tried all I could to get the ugliest and the oldest women that could be met with ; but it was no use. Though we have had a series of the plainest of all plain cooks, and the most homely of housemaids, my beloved Mrs. D. has never had a moment's peace of mind while they were in the house—suspected me of being smitten with their horrible faces. Suspected me—the most faithful and devoted husband living. A husband, too, that does everything to prevent the least particle of jealousy ; and yet the very steps I take to dispel my wife's suspicions always tend somehow or other to increase them. However, I have hit on a capital idea. Henceforth we will be waited upon only by the masculine gender, and my blessed Caroline is to be the only noun feminine in the house. Here, Peter !

*Enter PETER, c.*

DAB. Give me my cravat, Peter.

PETER. Shall I get you a clean one, sir?

DAB. Certainly not. Give me that. Good. I think that looks pretty slovenly—eh, Peter ?

PETER. Uncommon, sir.

DAB. That's right. Now my coat.

PETER. Yes, sir. Here's your new one just come home from the tailors. (*showing coat wrapped in paper*)

DAB. No, no, not that—my old one.

PETER. But that's so shabby, sir.

## HOW TO MAKE HOME HAPPY.

DAB. Exactly ; and when the new one gets shabby, I'll wear that. Now then, go and fetch my hat—the very worst you can find.

PETER. Yes, sir.

*Exit, c.*

DAB. There ! (*looking in the glass*) I don't think she can suspect me of going to see any ladies in this dress. Ladies, indeed !—as if I ever went to see ladies !—Not I, at least only such as are old enough to be my grandmother. The fact is, my blessed Caroline has absolutely forbidden me to receive any female clients under fifty years of age, so I have been forced to make arrangements with old Tuffins over the way. I send him all the young women, and he sends me all the old ones. Well, anything for peace and quietness. Where have I to go to this morning ? Eh ! where's my pocket-book ? Ah ! I'll lay any wager Mrs. D has picked my pocket of it to see if there were any love letters inside.

*Enter PETER, c.*

PETER. Here's your hat, sir.

DAB. Couldn't you find a shabbier one ?

PETER. No, sir.

DAB. Good. Bring in the breakfast when your mistress comes.

PETER. Yes, sir.

DAB. And, Peter, here !—just put those things into my bag. (*PETER bundles the papers, which are lying on the table, r., into a lawyer's blue bag, putting in with them the parcel containing the new coat*)

*Enter FREDERICK, c.*

FRED. Ah ! Mr. Dabchick—I am so glad you are not gone out. May I have a minute's conversation with you ?

DAB. Certainly. Peter, leave the room.

*(Exit PETER, c.)*

FRED. Sir, I have been but a short time in your office, but yet your uniform kindness to me has always made me look upon you as a father.

DAB. Is this all you have to tell me ?

FRED. Under these circumstances, sir, to whom but to you should I apply for assistance ?

DAB. Assistance ! Why you are not in debt ?

FRED. No, sir—I am not in debt, but—

DAB. What ? Speak up man—don't be frightened.

FRED. In love.

DAB (*covering his mouth hastily*) Silence !

FRED. But sir—

DAB. How dare you mention such a word beneath this roof ?

FRED. But when I tell you that the lady—

DAB. I don't know anything about ladies, I tell you. I don't believe there are any ladies in the world except—my wife.

FRED. It is Mrs. Dabchick's friend—Miss Snowden.

DAB. Will you be quiet ? Don't you know my wife is jealous of womankind in general—and of Emily Snowden in particular ? How dare you mention her name to me ?

FRED. But sir, I love her.

DAB. And what the devil is that to me? If it's my blessing you want, take it and be hanged—only be off and don't bother.

FRED. Hear me, sir. In reading over the particulars of the case—

DAB. What case?

FRED. The action brought against her by her cousin, about that mortgage—

DAB. And what on earth have you to do with that?

FRED. Why, sir, she wishes you to defend it.

DAB. I defend it! Are you mad? Send it to Tuffins instantly. Don't you know Emily is not yet fifty years of age?

FRED. Certainly.

DAB. Then how dare you undertake her case?

FRED. Sir, I don't understand you.

DAB. Whoever said you did? Send the case to Tuffins, I tell you.

FRED. One moment, sir, I beg. Amongst these papers I find a note from this very cousin, asking Miss Snowden's hand in marriage. Now, if in order to bring the law-suit to a close—

DAB. She were to accept him—so much the better. Mrs. D. would perhaps be easier in her mind.

FRED. But sir, were I to be so happy as to obtain her hand, would not the same end be gained?

DAB. It might—I can't say.

FRED. Oh, sir, I have to come to beg of you to intercede with her for me.

DAB. Don't stand mumbling there below your breath. If my wife came in, she would think we were talking secrets.

FRED. (*loud*) Secrets? Oh, no! Miss Snowden—

DAB. What the devil do you mean by shouting like that?

FRED. How shall I speak then?

DAB. Don't speak at all.

FRED. But you will do what I have asked?

DAB. Will you hold your tongue? I hear my wife coming—she's here. Talk to me on business.

FRED. Eh?

DAB. Talk about business, idiot!

### *Enter Mrs. DABCHICK, L.*

FRED. (*aside*) I understand. (*takes up papers and begins reading*) The mortgage being upon the estate in question—

DAB. Well, isn't that exactly what I told you?

FRED. Yes, sir—but you see here, in another part, the defendant, Miss Emily Snowden—

DAB. Shut it up, you fool! (*to Mrs. D. as if just perceiving her*) Well, my dear?

Mrs. D. You didn't tell me you were engaged in Emily's case, Mr. Dabchick.

DAB. (*agitated*) Eh! didn't I, my love? Good gracious! How very stupid of me. Why, you see, the fact is—

FRED. Mr. Dabchick had forgotten it, madam.

DAB. No such thing. Don't believe a word of it, my dear. How could I forget it, when I never knew of it myself?

MRS. D. Never knew it?

DAB. Certainly not. This young scamp of a clerk of mine has only just informed me of it: 'twas he that undertook the case—not I. The young rascal! I gave him notice to quit instantly for daring to have anything to do with it. Didn't I give you notice to quit—eh?

FRED. Sir? Oh! yes—to be sure——

DAB. Then why couldn't you say so at once?

MRS. D. Yes—pray be careful how you answer, Mr. Eldon.

DAB. My own pretty little chickabiddy! I see you think we are deceiving you.

MRS. D. I, Mr. Dabchick? Why should I think anything of the kind, pray?

DAB. Yes—why indeed! That's exactly what I said myself.

MRS. D. Are you not going out?

DAB. Why, yes—at least I had some idea of doing so. In fact, I may say, important business compels me to go out—that is, if you have no objection?

MRS. D. Oh! I have no objection, Mr. Dabchick.

DAB. Of course you haven't—that's all right. There! (*kisses her*) Good bye! I shan't be long. I am just going down to Westminster. (*crosses to L.*)

MRS. D. Westminster! I understood you had an appointment in the Temple. (*gives him his pocket-book open*)

DAB. (*aside*) I knew she'd got it! (*aloud*) An appointment in the Temple, had I? That is—yes—of course I had. It isn't likely anybody would forget having an appointment in the Temple. I shall go there afterwards.

MRS. D. (*looking at her watch*) But your appointment was at half-past nine.

DAB. Yes, half-past nine—or ten—or from that to eleven. You know when you say half-past nine, it always means eleven—allowing for the difference of the clocks. You see your time is Horse Guards—we go by the Greenwich time—ball in the Strand—the mean time, you know—astronomical time—that is—I don't know what I'm saying.

MRS. D. I don't think you do.

DAB. (*aside*) It's no use—I had better tell her everything. (*aloud*) The fact is, my dear, Frederick and I have a secret.

MRS. D. I was sure of it.

DAB. No, I don't mean that! What nonsense I am talking—we haven't anything of the kind. He has—not I. I have no secrets you know—I never have. This is a secret of his own he has just told me, and so of course I must tell it you immediately. (*FREDERICK makes signs to him to proceed*) What the devil do you mean by those nods and winks, eh? Yes, my love—he wishes you to be informed of it. He is in love; actually in love—a fellow like him in love—ha! ha! (*with a forced laugh*) Funny, isn't it? In love with your old friend, Emily Snowden. Isn't that the truth, sir?

FRED. It is, sir.

DAB. Then why the deuce can't you say so, out loud? There is no occasion for any mystery about it.

MRS. D. No, sir—as my husband says, I don't see why you should be so mysterious—so confused.

FRED. Oh! madam, the joy—the doubt—the—I did not think Mr. Dabchick would have consented to speak to you—in fact, to intercede for me.

MRS. D. Enough, sir. I will mention the matter to Miss Sn wden, you may depend upon it.

FRED. How shall I thank you?

MRS. D. There is not the least occasion for it, I assure you.

DAB. No, of course not. Don't you hear there's not the least occasion for it? Go—be off—leave us! (*aside*) She doesn't believe a single word I've been saying—I knew she wouldn't.

FRED. But madam—

DAB. Will you be off? You'll only make it worse! (*pushes him off, c.*) Here goes—now then for it! (*affectionately*) Come, now, Caroline—let us be frank with one another. You fancy all this is a plot, I know. You think 'tis I am in love with Emily—now don't you? and that what Frederick said was merely to put your suspicions to sleep.

MRS. D. Good gracious! you surprise me. I never could have thought of anything half so ingenuous.

DAB. You couldn't? No, of course not. I was wrong. You don't suspect me—do you now? To be sure you don't. Is it likely I could love any one but you? Where could I find any other so fit to love as my own Caroline?

MRS. D. (*softened*) Oh, Dabchick! If you are deceiving me—

DAB. But I'm not—I never do. It's you deceive yourself.

MRS. D. You don't love any other, do you?

DAB. Of course I don't. (*embraces her*) There, now—you'll not be jealous any more?

MRS. D. No, indeed I won't—and you won't give me cause, will you?

DAB. Give you cause? No—but I'll tell you what I'll give you: I'll give you that shawl you admired so the other day—what do you say to that now?

MRS. D. You will?

DAB. I will.

MRS. D. Oh, Samuel!

DAB. There—you can't think how happy I am when you are like this.

MRS. D. You know my only wish is to be sure of your affection.

DAB. That's right—and now by way of finish to this happy day suppose I take you to the opera to-night.

MRS. D. The opera! oh, how I should enjoy it. Stop though, one question—is there to be a ballet?

DAB. No.

MRS. D. Then we will spend a happy evening.

*Enter PETER with breakfast—and Exit.*

DAB. But I must go.

MRS. D. Without your breakfast?

DAB. Why, yes, my dear, I am all behind my time, and the fact is I am not in the least hungry—I couldn't eat a bit, I pledge my word of honour.

MRS. D. And where, may I enquire, will you breakfast when you do get hungry?

DAB. (*aside*) There she goes again—She thinks of course that I am going to breakfast out with some lady or other!—There's only one way. (*sits at table*) My dear what shall I hand you?

MRS. D. If you are not hungry, pray do not force yourself to eat.

DAB. Not at all, I assure you—on the contrary I begin to feel quite ravenous!

MRS. D. Oh, pray do not breakfast at home on my account!—I have no doubt there is another waiting for you somewhere!

DAB. (*aside*) I knew it. (*aloud*) Jealous again already?—Look at me.—Is it likely I should go out to breakfast dressed like this? There's a coat to go out visiting in! Here's a hat for a morning call! And as to my cravat, look at it, and say, is not that a tie to bind me to my home?

MRS. D. I was wrong!—Forgive me this once again!

DAB. Forgive you, of course I do! Hand me the muffins!

MRS. D. No, you shall not breakfast with me—I have no suspicions left. Go, as you intended—

DAB. Not a bit of it—Hand me the muffins, I tell you!

MRS. D. No, you will think I doubt you still!—

DAB. Will you hand me the muffins—Don't I tell you I'm starving?

TUFF. (*outside*) Not gone yet? Very well!—

*Enter TUFFINS, C.*

Good morning, Mrs. Dabchick, your most obedient. Eh! how's this,—at breakfast? Why, I thought you and I were to have breakfasted with Mrs. —

MRS. D. With Mrs. ? (*starting up*)

TUFF. With Mrs. Witherspoon's agent, at his hotel, don't you remember?

MRS. D. (*looking at her husband*) Oh!

DAB. Why, yes, we talked of it—but you know he said he would not wait for us—as we could come afterwards. Sit down and take a cup of coffee.

TUFF. With all my heart! By the bye, I've a capital story to tell you.

DAB. That's right let's hear it. (*aside*) It may get Mrs. D. into a little better humour. Capital fellow—Tuffins! Always has a story ready.

TUFF. You know Thompson, the sharebroker? He lives at Bayswater, you know?

DAB. Yes.

TUFF. Oh! such a capital joke—I can't help laughing when I think of it—

DAB. Let's hear it—Go on! Caroline, my love, just listen to this about old Thompson.

TUFF. I must tell you, in the first place, he has got a jealous wife.

MRS. D. Indeed!

TUFF. Oh! horribly—unbearably jealous!

DAB. Ahem!

TUFF. Well then—but stop, Mrs. Dabchick is not at all inclined to jealousy—

MRS. D. Oh! dear no! not in the least—

DAB. Oh! not in the least!—*(aside)*—It strikes me Tuffins' story will not turn out so pleasantly as I imagined.

MRS. D. *(to TUFFINS)* Go on, sir, pray.

TUFF. Well, Thompson, like many other men is fond of society, and like many other men doesn't want his wife to know every time he goes to a nice little snug party. So what do you think he does to disarm her suspicions?

MRS. D. What? Do tell me?

DAB. Come along, you old ass—don't you know we shall be late. *(pulling him)*

TUFF. Directly! Oh! a capital trick. He leaves home dressed in a loose antediluvian cravat, an unheard of style of hat—an impossible coat—thick soled boots—and Berlin gloves. Of course no one would suspect him of going to see ladies dressed like that.

MRS. D. Of course not!—of course not!

DAB. Of course not! very funny! very good indeed! but let us start.

TUFF. But what do you think he does, sly dog? He has his dress coat, gloves, cravat, patent leather boots, and all in a carpet-bag in his Brougham—changes his dress as he drives along—and leaving Bayswater a dirty looking grub—comes out in London a brilliant butterfly! Capital! Isn't it? ha, ha!

DAB. *(laughing uneasily and looking at his wife)* Ha! ha! very good—very—very—

MRS. D. *(aside and looking at her husband)* So that's the way it's managed?

DAB. Will you come along? *(rings bell—aside)* What the devil does the fellow come here for with his confounded yarns.

*Enter PETER, c.*

DAB. Peter, call a cab.

*Exit PETER, c.*

TUFF. By the bye, Mrs. Dabchick, I saw an old friend of yours last night—Miss Snowden.

MRS. D. Indeed! How was she?

TUFF. Very well. I've got a little commission to do for her. She asked me to get her a box at the opera to-night.

MRS. D. What, is Emily going to the opera to-night?

DAB. Will you come along?

Mrs. D. How very lucky to be sure ! My husband is going to take me—We shall most likely meet.

*Enter PETER, c.*

PETER. The cab is here, sir !

DAB. Good ! Come along ! here, Peter, put this bag in. (*gives him the bag*)

MRS. D. One instant ! Mr. Dabchick, answer me. What, sir, is in that bag ?

DAB. (*aside*) Oh ! that infernal story about Thompson. (*aloud*) Peter, send the cab away—I'll walk.

MRS. D. Peter, give me that bag. (*PETER hesitates*)

DAB. Well, sir, why don't you give your mistress the bag when she asks for it, eh ? (*PETER gives it*)

MRS. D. (*shakes the things out of the bag and snatches up the parcel, which she opens*) A new dress coat, as I'm a living woman ! So, sir, you dress in cabs then, do you ?

DAB. You scoundrel !—who told you to put that coat in there ?

PETER. You did, sir.

DAB. It's false, sir !—get out of my sight. (*kicks him off, c.*)

TUFF. Egad ! that's like a story I remember.

DAB. Go to the devil with your stories.

*Exeunt Mr. DABCHICK and TUFFINS, c.*

MRS. D. Was there ever such a tissue of falsehoods and villainies ? But I'll be his dupe no longer ! That servant of his—I'm sure he is in his confidence. Why should he engage a man servant instead of a woman, if not to aid his wicked plots ? (*rings bell*) I will know the truth !

*Enter PETER, c.*

MRS. D. But no ! To speak on such a subject to a menial.

PETER. Did you ring, marm ?

MRS. And Emily too ; a friend I have known from childhood.

PETER. Please did you ring ?

MRS. D. Yes, leave the room.

*Exit PETER, c.*

*Enter EMILY, c.*

EMILY. Well, Caroline ! And how are you ? It's an age since I saw you !

MRS. D. And whose fault is that ?

EMILY. Not mine, indeed, dear. I've been so bothered about this horrid law suit, I have not had time for anything. In fact I've come on business even now, and Mr. Dabchick's not at home I find. Why, what's the matter, Caroline ?

MRS. D. Matter ! Nothing ! Why ?

EMILY. There's something, I'm sure !

MRS. D. What lovely violets those are !

EMILY. Yes, they're the first I have seen this year. I bought them just at the corner here.

MRS. D. You bought them, did you ?

EMILY. I'm sure there's something wrong. Now tell me, there's a dear, we used to tell each other all our secrets.

MRS. D. I have no secrets, Emily; whatever *other* people have.

EMILY. You've not had any quarrel with your husband?

MRS. D. Quarrel! What should we quarrel for? Do you know anything that we should quarrel about?

EMILY. No, but you seem unhappy.

MRS. D. Nonsense, who could be unhappy with such a husband as Mr. Dabchick?

EMILY. Oh, I'm sure he's very kind!

MRS. D. (*aside*) No doubt you've found him so.

EMILY. I'm sorry he's not in. I wanted to see him most particularly.

MRS. D. You did! On business merely, of course.

EMILY. (*laughing*) Why you don't suppose I want to make love to him, do you?

MRS. D. Oh, dear no! By no means; but as you came on business I'll send Mr. Eldon to you!

EMILY. (*hastily*) Not on any account! I'll call again.

MRS. D. When my husband is at home!

EMILY. Why, Caroline! How strangely you say that!

MRS. D. Emily, one word. Why don't you marry?

EMILY. I!

MRS. D. In your position, with the property your father left you, at your age too—you cannot be at a loss for offers.

EMILY. Oh, dear no! I've had lots of offers—but—

MRS. D. But what?

EMILY. There's something more than that required.

MRS. D. Do you mean to say you've never met with any one that you could love?

EMILY. No, on the contrary. It is because there is no one that I do love—

MRS. D. Then were this one to offer marriage—

EMILY. Impossible—he is already—

MRS. D. Married!

EMILY. No—no, not married—that is—let us change the subject.

MRS. D. (*aside*) There is no more doubt about it. Do you think that I could guess who this unknown lover is?

EMILY. You?

MRS. D. Yes, he lives not very far from here!

EMILY. Right!

MRS. D. (*getting more and more excited*) He lives here. In this very house!

EMILY. He does!

MRS. D. (*aside*) She owns it. Is it possible. (*aloud*) And do you think that I could name him?

EMILY. I have no doubt you could.

MRS. D. Shall I do so?

EMILY. If you like.

MRS. D. You give me leave?

EMILY. Why, as it seems you have discovered who it is, I don't see why you shouldn't name him.

MRS. D. You don't!

EMILY. Certainly not. I'll name him for you: Frederick Eldon.

MRS. D. Frederick!

EMILY. Yes!

MRS. D. (*aside*) Have I deceived myself then? (*aloud*) But he is not married!

EMILY. I never said he was.

MRS. D. And he loves you!

EMILY. I have long suspected it.

MRS. D. I know it! And yet you wouldn't marry him?

EMILY. No!

MRS. D. Why not?

EMILY. Another time I'll tell you!

MRS. D. Oh, there's no necessity! I understand. (*aside*) Fool that I was to believe her for a moment.

EMILY. Put what's the matter, Caroline?

MRS. D. Nothing! You are going to the opera to-night, are you not?

EMILY. No!

MRS. D. No! Mr. Tuffins said you were!

EMILY. I've changed my mind.

MRS. D. (*aside*) Of course she has heard that I was going!

EMILY. But I must say good morning. (*puts on her bonnet*) By-the-bye, Caroline, you've left off wearing curls, how's that?

MRS. D. To please my husband.

EMILY. Doesn't he like them?

MRS. D. No.

EMILY. (*laughing*) Oh, then I must alter them I suppose.

MRS. D. You need not.

EMILY. Well, good bye, dear. Give my respects to my worthy lawyer. I won't say give my love, or you would be jealous. (*kisses her*) Good morning. *Exit, c.*

MRS. D. And this is the woman I thought my friend! Was there ever known such vile duplicity? But I am not deceived. 'Tis clear as day—the embarrassment of my husband—the absurd mystery that Emily tried to make about Frederick Eldon, everything proves it, and I am an ill-used woman. (*falls into chair crying*)

*Enter FREDERICK, c.*

FRED. Oh, Mrs. Dabchick, have you spoken to her as you promised?

MRS. D. Do you still persevere, sir?

FRED. Madam

MRS. D. Are you not ashamed, sir?

FRED. I really do not understand!

MRS. D. To be a party to so infamous a plot!

FRED. A plot! I don't know what you mean! All I know is I love Miss Snowden.

MRS. D. Enough of this.

FRED. Love her with the purest, most ardent affection.

MRS. D. Then I am sorry for you, she does not love you.

FRED. Did she tell you so?

MRS. D. Oh dear no, she told me quite the contrary!

FRED. Then I am the happiest of men.

MRS. D. Is this assumed, or are you really so blind as not to see that Emily professes love for you only to conceal her affection for another?

FRED. No, no, you are deceived.

MRS. D. I have been, but I am deceived no longer. Mr. Eldon, Emily Snowden is in love with Mr. Dabchick!

FRED. Impossible!

MRS. D. Not so, for I have proofs—convincing proofs.

FRED. You have?

MRS. D. I have. Such proofs as leave no room for the smallest particle of doubt. Yes, sir, my husband is false!—Emily is false! and you and I are miserable dupes.

FRED. It can't be, yet, when I recollect—your husband's positive refusal to speak for me to Emily.

MRS. D. He refused! Of course he would.

FRED. His impatience when I told him of my love for her.

MRS. D. Jealousy! The monster!

FRED. Then how confused he was in your presence.

MRS. D. And well he might be!

FRED. Oh! It's monstrous! Horrible!

MRS. D. It's diabolical!

FRED. And, when I think that I have been the means of giving them so many opportunities of meeting—

MRS. D. You?

FRED. Yes, that law suit! But they shall not have that excuse, I'll take the papers instantly to Tuffins as he told me.

MRS. D. Oh, Mr. Eldon, I am an injured woman!

FRED. You are! And so am I!

MRS. D. Promise me one thing, promise me you will aid in bringing their atrocities to light.

FRED. (taking her hand) I swear it—I—

MRS. D. Silence! I hear my husband.

*Enter Mr. DABCHICK, c.*

DAB. Well—here I am again, my dear.

MRS. D. You are!—I see you are, sir.

DAB. It seems I disturb you. (laughing) Was Frederick making love to you, my dear?

FRED. No, sir, I am not a libertine—a Don Juan—a Heliogabalus. Good morning, Mr. Dabchick.

*Exit, c.*

DAB. (aside) What's that? She calls me Sir! He calls me Heliogabalus. There's a screw loose again somewhere. (aloud) Has anybody been here, my dear?

MRS. D. I don't know.

DAB. (aside) That means somebody has been here. (aloud) My love, I have had that shawl I spoke of taken up to your room.

MRS. D. Thank you.

DAB. Oh! And see, my sweetest, I have bought you such a lovely bunch of violets.

MRS. D. Violets!

DAB. Violets. (*gives them*)

MRS. D. Violets!

DAB. Exactly—violets; I am not aware that there is anything wrong in violets. If there is, I'll take them back, and make it cauliflower.

MRS. D. (*looking sternly at him*) Mr. Dabchick, Emily has been here.

DAB. Indeed! How was she? (*aside*) I knew somebody had been here.

MRS. D. Sir, she had a bunch of violets.

DAB. Dear me, you don't say so.

MRS. D. Exactly similar to these, sir.

DAB. How very odd.

MRS. D. Mr. Dabchick, you gave them to her and now you bring another bunch of them to your lawful wife by way of quieting your conscience.

DAB. Upon my life, my dear.

MRS. D. Enough, sir.

DAB. Quite enough, in fact, I think I may say rather, just a little bit too much, eh?

MRS. D. Oh! Mr. Dabchick, if I thought—

DAB. But you do think—you are always thinking something—this morning, now, about the opera.

MRS. D. About the opera—well?

DAB. To show you now that I consider no sacrifice too great to set your mind at rest, I had completely set my heart upon going to the opera to-night, and yet—

MRS. D. And yet—

DAB. I have given it up.

MRS. D. (*in a great passion*) So then, I am not to be allowed to go to the opera, just because Miss Snowden chooses to stay away.

DAB. What! She's not going!

MRS. D. Mr. Dabchick, you know she is not.

DAB. And I gave up going only because I heard she was.

MRS. D. No, sir, Emily will be at home alone this evening, and you, of course, will have to go out on most important business.

DAB. I won't!

MRS. D. (*softened*) You won't?

DAB. I swear it. No business on earth shall take me out of doors again to day—there.

MRS. D. What? Then you will not leave me all the evening?

DAB. Not for a moment. I'll give up business, everything, for the sake of spending one real delightful evening with my little wife, for you ought to know, I never can be half so happy as when I am with you.

MRS. D. Oh, if I could be sure of it!

DAB. We'll dine together all alone, and after dinner you shall

play the piano—I'll stand by and turn the leaves over—if you've any skeins of silk to wind, I'll hold them. There's a picture of domestic comfort. Isn't that the way to make home happy?

MRS. D. Samuel, kiss me.

DAB. (*kisses her*) There, no more jealousy or quarrelling. We'll have a truly happy evening, wont we?

MRS. D. Oh, if we could be always so! I feel I am wrong ever to doubt you.

EMILY. (*outside*) Thank you, that will do.

MRS. D. (*starting*) Mr. Dabchick, here is Emily!

EMILY. (*outside*) That will do, no ceremony needed with me.

*Enter EMILY, c.*

Is there, Caroline? (*to DAB.*) So I've found you at last, and I don't intend to let you go again; I've such lots of things to say to you about this horrid law suit, so I mean to stay to dinner. May I, Caroline?

MRS. D. Oh, we shall be delighted! eh, my dear?

DAB. (*aside*) I am a lost man!

MRS. D. (*aside*) So, this is what he stays at home for!

EMILY. (*taking off her bonnet*) Yes, I've brought my crochet with me, and I intend to stop the entire evening—there's an infliction for you.

DAB. Really a pleasure so wholly unexpected.

MRS. D. (*aside to him*) So unexpected, Mr. Dabchick!

EMILY. You are not going out this evening though, are you?

MRS. D. Oh, dear no! My husband has promised to sacrifice the whole evening to me.

DAB. A sacrifice, my love! What nonsense, you know it's a pleasure.

MRS. D. (*looking at EMILY*) I have no doubt of it.

DAB. (*aside*) I think I may anticipate a remarkably pleasant evening.

MRS. D. (*suddenly*) Emily, what have you done with your curls?

EMILY. (*laughing*) Didn't you tell me that Mr. Dabchick did not like them?

DAB. (*aside*) That's right—go on!

EMILY. And you know we poor clients must do all we can to interest our lawyers for us.

MRS. D. Well, Mr. Dabchick, have you no complimentary speech to make after that?

DAB. (*aside to her*) My dear, if you would only lock me up in the coal cellar till she is gone, I should be eternally obliged to you.

EMILY. Tell me truly, Caroline, don't make a stranger of me, am I in the way?

MRS. D. Oh, no! You are not in the way.

DAB. Of course not. As you say, we don't make any stranger of you; do we dear? In proof of it, look here, (*kisses his wife*) you see! (*aside*) It's bad taste before company, but it's my only plan. (*kisses her again*) Ah! Miss Snowdon, why don't you marry? You see how happy we are! (*embracing MRS. D.*)

MRS. D. (*aside to him*) Do you wish to make her jealous?

DAB. (*aside*) If I could only start some topic for conversation.—Hah! a good idea! (*aloud*) My dear, you have not shown Miss Snowdon your new shawl.

EMILY. Oh, no! Do let me see it.

DAB. (*aside*) That's it!—once set women talking about dress—(*aloud*)—Yes, go and fetch it, dear. (*aside, seeing that his wife is looking sternly at him*) Halloo! What's the matter now, I wonder!

MRS. D. My shawl is upstairs, is it not?

DAB. (*aside*) I understand. (*aloud*) Yes, but don't you go—I wouldn't on any account—I'll go myself.

MRS. D. Oh, no! You know I couldn't think of letting you fetch it.

DAB. No, but I'd rather—or stay, I'll send the servant. (*rings bell*)

EMILY. (*laughing*) Why any one would think this shawl was at the top of the Monument.

MRS. D. I'm sure I don't know why Mr. Dabchick makes such a fuss about it!

*Enter PETER, c.*

MRS. D. There's nothing wanted, Peter.

DAB. Very well, as you please, my dear. Peter, there's nothing wanted, Peter! *Exit PETER, c.*

MRS. D. I'll be as long as as possible, my dear. *Exit, l. 1 e.*

DAB. (*aside*) It's no use. Everything I do only increases her suspicions! (*EMILY, who is seated doing crotchet work, drops her ball of cotton which rolls down the Stage. DABCHICK makes a movement to pick it up, suddenly stops and looks towards the door his wife went out by*) (*aside*) No! If I do, I'm hanged!

EMILY. (*picking it up and laughing*) Thank you!

DAB. Ten thousand pardons, I was just going to—

EMILY. (*approaching him*) Are you a judge of crochet, Mr. Dabchick?

DAB. (*retreating*) Not in the least, I pledge my word and honour. (*aside*) Why the devil can't she sit still?

EMILY. (*following him*) No, but do look at this. Isn't it pretty?

DAB. (*crossing to avoid her*) Very, very!

EMILY. (*following him*) It's a pattern of my own.

DAB. Indeed!

EMILY. (*at piano*) I see, Caroline has got the Huguenots.

DAB. Yes!

EMILY. (*crossing over with the music*) Only the piano part though, not the words.

DAB. (*crossing to avoid her*) No, not the words.

EMILY. (*turning the leaves*) Yes, words and all!

DAB. You don't say so!

EMILY. (*crossing to him*) Look, here they are.

DAB. (*crossing*) Ah, so I see. I was thinking of "Pop goes the Weazel." I know she hasn't the words of that. (*goes to the fire place, R., and stands with his back to the grate, which is empty; EMILY returns to the piano, L.—during this crossing EMILY*

*has dropped her violets, which are now lying at DABCHICK's feet)*  
Hang it, I wish she'd keep her distance.

*Enter MRS. DABCHICK, l. 1 e.—EMILY is humming over a tune at the piano; Mrs. DABCHICK looks first at her, and then at her Husband.*

MRS. D. Mr. Dabchick, if you are cold I will order a fire!

DAB. Eh! no, my dear—I was only warming myself while—  
*(looking round and seeing no fire—aside)* I don't know what I'm at.

MRS. D. *(aside to him)* You overdo it, sir, you keep too far apart, it's not well managed.

DAB. My love, I solemnly swear to you—

MRS. D. *(starting on seeing the violets)* And those violets at your feet.

DAB. Violets!

MRS. D. Oh, yes! She has thrown your love gift back to you, because you said just now you loved your wife.

DAB. *(aloud)* No! It's too much. I can't and won't stand it any longer!

EMILY. *(comes down)* Whatever is the matter!

DAB. Matter—This is the matter.

MRS. D. Mr. Dabchick!

DAB. No, it's too late! I will speak out. The matter is, Miss Snowden, that I am making love to you—that you are making love to me—that just this moment I was kneeling at your feet, or you at mine. I am not sure which! That you have deceived your friend for love of me—and that I have deceived my wife for love of you! That's the matter! And the opera's the matter—and that bunch of violets is the matter—and damme—I don't know what is the matter. *(rushes about the Stage)*

EMILY. Caroline, is it possible!

*Enter FREDERICK and TUFFINS, c.*

TUFF. Eh, Dabchick! What is all this?

MRS. D. *(ashamed)* It's nothing, The fact is—

DAB. Yes, the fact is, I'm a villain, a libertine, a Heliogabalus, as Mr. Eldon very properly observed.

EMILY. What Mr. Eldon too?

MRS. D. Yes, he has observed it also.

FRED. I beg your pardon, madam!

MRS. D. What! did you not say just now—you would send Miss Snowden's papers away from the office?

TUFF. He has just given them up to me—

EMILY. He has?

FRED. Miss Snowden—Mr. Dabchick—

DAB. Don't any one come near me! I am dangerous!

EMILY. But calm yourself, sir!

DAB. No! Miss Snowden, I cannot understand these ridiculous suspicions; damme, what's more, I don't intend to try to understand them! *(knocks a chair over)*

TUFF. But, my friend—

FRED. But, my dear sir—

DAB. Away all of you! I'll have no friend! I'll have no clerk!  
I'll have no wife! no any thing! (*rushes out, c.*)

MRS. D. (*crying*) Oh! somebody look after him!

*Exit TUFFINS, c.*

FRED. Oh, Miss Snowden, will you pardon me!

EMILY. Never sir, to abuse my confidence, and thus give up my papers to another without consulting me!

FRED. But if I might dare to tell you—

EMILY. Leave me, sir, I command you!

FRED. (*aside*) My last hope gone.

*Exit, c.*

EMILY. Come, Caroline, dear.

MRS. D. I couldn't help it Emily, 'twas not my fault.

EMILY. Indeed, it was not mine.

MRS. D. No, I believe you now. But tell me, why are you so harsh with Frederick, if it is true you love him!

EMILY. If it is true! Again a doubt! Here, let this explain to you, why although I love him, I can never marry him. (*gives letter*) see there.

MRS. D. (*reads*) " You speak of Frederick Eldon, who used to be in father's office, in a way which makes me half suspect that you have fallen in love with him. Don't do that, Emily, he is engaged to my sister Julia."

EMILY. (*taking the letter*) Now do you understand?

MRS. D. But Frederick loves you!—

EMILY. And my friend loves him—I must not sacrifice her happiness even to ensure my own.

MRS. D. But may not the engagement have been broken off? that letter is six months old.

EMILY. No! if it had been I should have heard again. But come, about yourself—your husband—

MRS. D. Did you ever see a man fly out in such a rage?

EMILY. Was there not some excuse after your absurd suspicions?

MRS. D. Absurd, Emily! well I confess they were—Oh! if I could be certain that my husband were true to me.

EMILY. And what is to prevent you? Nothing but your own jealous doubts. Depend upon it, Caroline, to make a husband's home unhappy is the surest way to lose him!

MRS. D. To lose him! Oh no, don't say that. What shall I do?

EMILY. Do this. When he comes back—for I am certain he will come back—you have not lost him yet—speak kindly to him, and whatever he may say do not contradict him. Let him do what he pleases; shew him that you can trust him; for if you don't—

MRS. D. I will, indeed I will!

EMILY. That's right. I'll leave you now to make it up—I'll come back to dinner. May I come back though?

MRS. D. Oh! Emily!

EMILY. And without curls?

MRS. D. Cruel girl! (*kisses her*) Come when you like and how.

EMILY. And you will try and act on my advice.

MRS. D. I will indeed.

*Exit EMILY, c.*

Yes, she is right—'tis I have driven him from the house. Oh! if he does come back, I will atone for my folly. Will he come back though, or have I lost him altogether?

*Enter FREDERICK, c.*

FRED. Mrs. Dabchick, I could not leave the house for ever, without seeing you once again.

MRS. D. Leave the house! Where, then, are you going?

FRED. I care not. Anywhere away from here. I have offended Emily beyond forgiveness.

MRS. D. But hear me.

FRED. It is useless, I am resolved.

MRS. D. But when I tell you—Hah! I hear my husband! Go into the garden—in five minutes I will join you.

FRED. In five minutes I shall have left this spot for ever.

MRS. D. No, you must not go, she loves you.

FRED. Oh! you have given me new hope. *Exit, l. d.*

*Enter DABCHICK, c.*

DAB. (*aside*) The bruised worm has turned—now for it!

MRS. D. (*aside*) He has come back—now, Emily, to follow your advice!

DAB. (*suddenly*) Mrs. Dabchick!

MRS. D. My love!

DAB. (*aloud*) Mrs. Dabchick, I say. I have come to tell you—that the bruised worm has turned. Do you hear me, madam?

MRS. D. Yes, dear!

DAB. (*aside*) Yes, dear! Why, what the deuce—(*aloud*) And that henceforth I intend to do exactly as I please, without your questioning me—be my own master in everything, madam.

MRS. D. Yes, dear—certainly!

DAB. I tell you for the future, I will not be interfered with. In the first place, I will have as many female clients as I please—if I can get them.

MRS. D. Yes, dear!

DAB. Young ones.

MRS. D. Yes, dear!

DAB. Pretty ones.

MRS. D. Yes, dear!

DAB. I will dress as I please—make myself look as handsome as I please.

MRS. D. Yes, dear! (*aside*) Oh, I shall not be able to keep it up much longer.

DAB. Will go out when and where I please—to parties, balls—I'll dance, I'll flirt, I'll say smart things to the ladies—if I can think of any.

MRS. D. Yes, dear!

DAB. (*aside*) Will nothing move her? (*aloud*) I'll make love to every pretty girl I see; in fact I'll—

MRS. D. Sir!

DAB. (*aside*) At last!

MRS. D. Yes, dear!

DAB. Caroline, what is the meaning of this?

MRS. D. It means that I have seen my folly—that I am wrong to suspect or even question you—that you have, as you say, a perfect right to do exactly as you please—to go when and where you please. Would you like to go out now, dear? Haven't you any business to see after, dear?

DAB. No!

MRS. D. Don't let me prevent you—go dear.

DAB. But I tell you—

MRS. D. Don't mind me at all. Go, here's your hat.

DAB. (*aside*) How's this? She's anxious to get rid of me.

MRS. D. Perhaps you'd rather stay at home? Then do so, do exactly as you please. You'd wish to be alone, I'll leave you. (*aside*) And now to set poor Frederick's mind at rest.

*Exit*, D. L.

DAB. Here, I don't want to be alone. What the deuce does all this mean? This sudden change, "Yes, dear!" Why, this can't be the wife I had an hour ago! No, but I like her the better of the two, and I don't care how long it is before the other comes back again. And, yet I don't know, there's something in it that somehow or other—"Yes, dear!—yes, dear!"

*Enter TUFFINS, c.*

TUFF. Well, Dabchick, have you made it up?

DAB. Yes, dear!—that is, yes!

TUFF. That's right! Between ourselves, let me tell you, you were wrong; why you ought to be delighted at your wife being jealous.

DAB. The deuce I ought! Why so?

TUFF. Why? Because in the first place, it is a proof of her affection for you; in the second place, a proof of her own virtue. Depend upon it, when a wife questions her husband's conduct so very closely, it is a certain sign she does not fear enquiry into her own.

DAB. Then you think if she had any cause to fear enquiry herself—

TUFF. She'd be a different being altogether.

DAB. You fancy so, do you?

TUFF. I'm sure of it. If I were married, and I found my wife confiding and submissive, letting me do exactly what I pleased without a question—

DAB. Yes? If she let you do exactly as you please—

TUFF. I'd send her home directly to her family.

DAB. What infernal nonsense!

TUFF. Is it, though? Did I ever tell you that story about Brooks and his wife?

DAB. Go to the devil with your stories!

TUFF. But doesn't that prove just what I said. Brooks's wife

was just like yours—just as fond of her husband—just as jealous—

DAB. What's that to me?

TUFF. But let me finish. Well, Brooks at last flew into a rage—declared he would have no more of it—but would be entirely at liberty to do just what he thought fit.

DAB. Well?

TUFF. Well, from that moment he never heard another contradiction. Say or do what he would, she only answered—

DAB. Yes, dear!

TUFF. Exactly.

DAB. (*walking about*) Yes, dear! yes, dear!

TUFF. And a month afterwards she eloped with a captain of the Guards. The fact is, she had said "yes" so often to her husband, that she had forgotten how to say "no" to anybody. Ha! ha! But what's the matter with you?

DAB. Nothing. Yes, dear! yes, dear!

TUFF. And then there's Jenkinson—

DAB. Will you be quiet with your infernal stories?

TUFF. Well, it was just the same in his case. His wife would never allow him to go out alone. He rebelled, and now she tries every means to induce him to go out.

DAB. (*aside*) And so does Mrs. Dabchick.

TUFF. He does go out—

DAB. (*aside, tragically*) But I don't! (*sits, L.*)

TUFF. And it is said—

DAB. (*looking through window, L.*) Ah!

TUFF. What's the matter?

DAB. Frederick Eldon and my wife! He has this moment left her. He looks happy—smiling like a laughing hyena. This, then, accounts for her submission—this is her—yes, dear! yes, dear!

TUFF. Dabchick, I say!

DAB. So, then, her pretended jealousy was but a scheme to prevent mine. Oh! I see it all!

TUFF. Is the man mad?

DAB. Was there ever such a plot? First, there is Frederick Eldon loves my wife—then there is my wife gets Emily Snowden to pretend that she loves Frederick—then he—that is, Frederick—asks me to tell her—that is, Emily Snowden—that he loves her; so that I may not suspect he loves my wife—and then my wife pretends to think that I love Emily Snowden, so that I may not think she loves Frederick Eldon—and then there's Emily—I mean Tuffins—that is, my wife—I should say Frederick—and—oh! it's all plain—it's diabolically plain!

*Enter MRS. DABCHICK, c.*

MRS. D. What's the matter?

TUFF. (*to her*) I cannot make him out at all.

DAB. Come, none of that! I'll have no more plotting here.

MRS. D. Plotting!

*Enter EMILY and FREDERICK, c.*

FRED. Congratulate me, sir. Miss Snowden has consented.

DAB. Enough! I am your dupe no longer—I know all—Yes, Frederick Eldon—and you, wretched woman—I know all, I tell you.

MRS. D. Mr. Dabchick!

DAB. No, faithless woman, that tone of innocence is useless now. (*seeing violets in FREDERICK's button hole*) Good heavens, before my very face! How came you by those violets?

FRED. Violets! You mistake, sir! It is the olive branch of peace. (*kisses EMILY's hand*)

DAB. 'Tis false! And you, Miss Snowden—

EMILY. Sir!

DAB. (*to his wife*) Speak, what is that letter?

MRS. D. 'Tis Emily's; she has just received it. (*hands it to EMILY; DABCHICK snatches it*)

DAB. 'Tis false I tell you.

EMILY. Really, sir, this rudeness—

DAB. Oh, yes, I know you do your best to screen them. (*opens letter*) "Dear Emily, my sister Julia has kept her love affairs so secret that I could not give you any news before, but now I find that her engagement with Mr. Eldon has been broken off some time ago, and she is to be married in a month. If you love Frederick Eldon, there is nothing to prevent your marrying him." (*aside*) The devil! It strikes me I've found a mare's nest here.

FRED. Now, sir, you are satisfied, I hope. Allow me to introduce to you my future wife.

DAB. Really, Miss Snowden—

EMILY. (*laughing*) Come, sir, what say you now—you cannot understand these ridiculous suspicions, eh? No, you don't intend to try to understand them.

DAB. Well, I must confess—at least, that is—the very thing Ha! ha! ha! Very good indeed! You thought I was jealous! It wasn't badly done, was it?

MRS. D. Sir?

DAB. Why, my love, of course—I only wished to give you a lesson—to shew how ridiculous it is to have suspicions. You see it now, don't you?

MRS. D. What, was your jealousy only assumed then?

DAB. Of course it was. You didn't think I was in earnest? No, no!

EMILY. (*aside to MRS. D.*) Don't believe him, he was jealous.

MRS. D. (*aside to her*) All the better.

TUFF. By-the-bye, that reminds me of a story.

DAB. Will you be quiet? We've had enough of your confounded tales; and now, Caroline, my dear, as you have seen the folly of being jealous—

MRS. D. Oh, not another word about it! From the present moment I will never entertain the slightest jealous feeling again as long as I live.

DAB. That's right! Then nothing more is wanting to make home happy, except—*(comes forward to speak to Audience)*

MRS. D. (*coming forward*) Mr. Dabchick, who is that lady in the dress circle you are looking at?

DAB. Lady! What lady?

MRS. D. Why, you are looking at her now.

DAB. Now, you don't mean to say you are jealous again already. I pledge you my word, I don't know a single woman in the house.

MRS. D. A married one then, worse and worse.

DAB. It's a hopeless case, all I can say is, you have seen our faults to-night, if you can look over them, let me hope to see you again to-morrow evening—in the same place—at the same time—

MRS. D. An appointment! Before my very face, Mr. Dabchick!

DAB. It's no use, I've tried to make home happy, but all I have done has only made things worse. Will you just try what you can do? Lend us a hand, or rather all your hands—you know the way—and then, as the Poet says, "We may be happy yet!" for after all, it is only through your assistance that we can hope to MAKE HOME HAPPY.

Curtain.