

THE JACOBITE.

A Comic Drama

IN TWO ACTS.

BY

J. R. PLANCHÉ

*Author of Not a Bad Judge, The Jenkinses, The Mysterious Lady,
Follies of a Night, Grist to the Mill, Captain of the Watch,
Somebody Else, A Cabinet Question, The Irish Post,
Spring Gardens, &c., &c.*

THOMAS HALES LACY,
WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND,
LONDON.

209482

First Performed at the Theatre Royal Haymarket.

CHARACTERS.

SIR RICHARD WROUGHTON, BART.....	MR. STUART.
MAJOR MURRAY	MR. HOWE.
JOHN DUCK	MR. BUCKSTONE.
LADY SOMERFORD.....	MISS FORTESCUE.
WIDOW POTTE { <i>Landlady of the</i> "Crooked Billet" }	MRS. STANLEY.
PATTY POTTE (<i>her daughter</i>)	MISS REYNOLDS.

COSTUMES.

Time of George the Second.

Major.—A square cut coat, full skirts; full breeches; high boots; round hat, and feather; cravat; sword and belt; hair unpowdered. *2nd dress:* Plain black dress of the time; hair powdered.

Sir Richard.—Dark suit of the time.

Duck.—Square cut coat; long waistcoat; trunk breeches and shoes; apron.

Soldiers.—Square cut red coats; long gaiters.

Lady Somerford.—Velvet coat and riding habit of the time; powder.

Widow. } Open chintz dresses, tucked up; coloured petti.
Patty. } coat.

Time in Performance—One hour and 20 minutes.

[16507]

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THE JACOBITE.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Parlour of a Public House, or road side Inn, “The Crooked Billet.” Doors R. and L. A door c, leading into Tap Room. A large linen chest, a cupboard, chairs, tables, &c. A cellar with trap open is seen in the Tap Room through c door.*

Enter PATTY and LADY SOMERFORD. L.

PAT. It's all safe, my lady. There's nobody here, and mother and John are down in the cellar bottling cider.

LADY S. Then tell me quickly. Did you put the note where I told you?

PAT. No, my lady.

LADY S. No!

PAT. Pray forgive me, my lady; but indeed I couldn't help it. It was all along of John Duck?

LADY S. John Duck?

PAT. Yes, my lady, our man—he—he would try to kiss me, my lady, and I ran away, and he ran after me, and somehow or another, I lost it, my lady.

LADY S. Lost my note! What is to be done? You have destroyed me!

PAT. Oh, don't say so, my lady. Nobody's likely to find it, I'm sure, if I couldn't, for I hunted all about the road where I must have dropped it. Such a tiny bit of paper, and if they do, what can any one make of it? There's no name, outside or inside, and only one line, “To-night at eight o'clock in the parlour of the inn.”

LADY S. But one line, one word, in such times as these, is sufficient to endanger the liberty, perhaps life of the writer, and then, the Major—

PAT. Oh, it's all right about the Major, my lady. When I couldn't find the note, I thought the best thing to do was to stop under the old tree I was to leave it in till the Major came for it; and didn't I sit there on pins and needles, my lady, till he did come, for I knew mother would give it me for staying out so long.

LADY S. He did come, then, and you saw him?

PAT. To be sure I did, my lady, and a monstrous handsome young man he is too. It would be a shocking pity if they chopped off such a head as he has got on his shoulders, I'm sure.

LADY S. But, dear Patty, what said he? What passed between you?

PAT. Oh, he looked terribly scared when he saw me first, but I up and told him at once what I came about, and what was written in the note, by your ladyship, and then he brightened up, and said you might depend on his coming at eight o'clock, as you wished him.

LADY S. So far, then, you have made up for the unfortunate loss of my note, which, provided it does not fall into the hands of Sir Richard Wroughton—

PAT. Ah, he'd be jealous, I suppose, my lady?

LADY S. Jealous!

PAT. Why, yes, everybody down here says, the baronet is hugeously in love with you; and what's more, that you are going to be married to him.

LADY S. Indeed!

PAT. Oh yes, but I tell 'em—

LADY S. Nothing, I hope, to awaken suspicion of—

PAT. Oh, no, my lady, of course not; I'd die sooner. I only say, that if I was a young rich handsome widow, like your ladyship, I wouldn't marry such a cross, ugly, bad man, as Sir Richard—for he is a bad man—Now isn't he, my lady? Tho' he is your cousin, I've heard you say—

LADY S. Beware, beware, my dear Patty, or you will ruin all my hopes, and involve yourself in trouble by such language. Sir Richard is as powerful as he is vindictive. He has purchased favor at Court by the betrayal and abandonment of his oldest and best friends. His pretended affection for me but masks his design upon the estates left me by my late husband, to which he would otherwise have succeeded. Did he suspect for a moment I had any personal motive in urging him to obtain the pardon of Major Murray, all would be lost; therefore, for mercy's sake be prudent.

PAT. Oh, my lady, I'll never open my lips again on the subject, let 'em say what they please.

LADY S. Hush! I heard some noise.

PAT. It's mother and John, in the cellar.

LADY S. You are sure you will be alone at eight this evening?

PAT. Certain. Mother's obliged to go up the squire's

at half-past seven, and she can't be back much before nine, and I'll find some fool's errand for John Duck ; so you can have the parlour all to yourselves.

LADY S. Thanks, Patty, thanks. Farewell ; you needn't stir ; my groom is there with the horses. At eight precisely.

Exit, L. D.

PAT. Never fear, my lady. He'll be here, I warrant him ! He is certainly as fine a looking young man as you'd meet in a summer's day. Oh, a great deal handsomer than John Duck, but then, somehow, John Duck has got such a way with him—I do love John Duck, that's a fact, tho' I won't own it to him—because—what's the use?—he's get no money, and mother won't let me marry him, I'm sure.

SONG—PATTY.

John is not a beauty,
Rather the reverse—
John has not a penny,
That makes matters worse ;
But he has such a winning way,
And with one so goes on,
That altogether I must say,
I do love John.

That I might do better
Everybody knows,
There's our rich old miller
Does all but propose ;
And prudent people always say
One can't live love upon ;
But I've a mind to try, some day,
With my dear John.

JOHN. (*speaks without*) In the cupboard, you say ?

PAT. Oh, gracious ! Here he comes ; how my heart, does beat at the very sound of his voice.

Enter JOHN from cellar, R. F.

JOHN. You're sure you said in the cupboard ?

WIDOW. (*from cellar*) I've told thee so a hundred times, fool ; art thee deaf ?

JOHN. How can I be deaf, when I hear perfectly well what you say ?

WID. Then what dost ask the same question for, over and over again ?

JOHN. Because you might have made a mistake yourself ; you often do.

WID. Hold thee impudent tongue, and bring me the corks directly.

JOHN. (*sees PATTY*) Ah ! my angelic Patty ! are you still angry with your devoted Duck ?

PAT. Yes, I am.

JOHN. For imprinting a chaste salute on the back of your cap ? For your cruel resistance rendered a nearer approach to those tempting lips impossible, without a degree of violence at which my delicacy revolted.

PAT. (*aside*) He does talk like a book, that's for certain. No matter for that, I'm very angry with you, and I beg you won't speak to me, unless I speak to you.

JOHN. Implacable Patty ! So that if you should happen to sneeze, I mustn't even say, " Bless you ! "

PAT. Certainly not.

JOHN. But I shall in my heart, Patty ; tho' your rigorous mandate may fetter my tongue.

WIDOW. (*within*) Art thee coming with them corks ?

JOHN. Confound the corks ! (*bawling to WIDOW*) I can't find them.

PAT. You are not looking for them.

JOHN. Possibly that may be the reason ; nay, you spoke to me then and I have a right to reply. Oh, Patty !—(*aside*) I'll go on while I can, and bring matters to a crisis—(*aloud and kneeling*) Pity me, Patty ; have compassion on an unfortunate young man, who has endured so much for your sake ; who has cast away the blue bag of the scrivener, to gird his loins with the blue apron of the waiter ; sacrificed fifteen shillings a week, a seat on the high stool of a respectable office, for next to nothing a year, bad board, and worse lodging, in a hedge ale-house—

PAT. Mr. Duck !

JOHN. Pardon the severity of truth in consideration of its rarity. To dignify the " Crooked Billet " with the title of a tavern, would be a baseness of which I am incapable. But do not imagine, beautiful inhabitant of this miserable cabin, that I regretted my fallen state whilst one ray of hope gilded the galling chain of servitude. But now, now that your cruelty has left me in utter darkness—

Enter WIDOW POTTE from cellar, R. C.

Now, that the blow has fallen—

WID. (*cuffing him*) That's how thee looks for the corks, is it !

PATTY screams and runs off, C. L.

JOHN. Woman, you abuse the privilege of your sex !

WID. What's thee doing on thy knees to my daughter ?
Making love to her, it's my belief.

JOHN. Continue in it. You have my authority. I have filed the declaration.

WID. Why, thou impudent varlet—a ragamuffin like thee !

JOHN. Ragamuffin ! Mistress Pottle, you are not aware of my real position in society. It is time to throw off this cloud, and appear myself. Thus do I cast from me the apron I was never born to wear, and resume the station from which all powerful love had seduced me.

WID. Seduced thee ! What, thee be'est some good-for-nothing chap that has stolen into my house to seduce my daughter then ?

JOHN. I scorn the charge ! No, madam, I am a man of too much honour to presume upon my personal advantages—I respect as much as I adore the incomparable Miss Pottle, and demand her hand in marriage.

WID. In marriage ! what hast thee got to live upon ?

JOHN. Nothing at present ; but I am young, active, intelligent—had a free school education—can write a good hand—have earned fifteen shillings a week, and am worth double to any lawyer in London.

WID. Find some one to give it thee, then ; and when thee'st saved a hundred pounds, come again, and may be I'll listen to thee ; but don'tee cross my threshold before thou'st gotten it, or I'll cross thy pate with a broomstick, so I tell thee.

JOHN. A bargain ! I *will* return with a hundred pounds, Mrs. Pottle, and claim the hand of the celestial Patty ; Cupid will inspire me.

WID. Come, pack up thee duds, and out of the house with thee.

JOHN. Patience, Mrs. Pottle ; the occupation of packing will not occupy much time.

WID. No, I warrant me ; I doubt much if thou'st a second shirt to thy back.

JOHN. Decency, Mrs. Pottle ; the doubt is unbecoming a respectable female.

WID. Hold thee jabber, or I'll take the broomstick to thee now, I will.

JOHN. Manners, Mrs. Pottle ; there is not the slightest occasion for the broomstick.

Exit D. R. U. E.

WID. I'll see the house well rid of him, a cozening varlet.

Exit R. R. U. E.

Enter PATTY C. from L.

PAT. Poor dear Duck, mother used him shamefully. How is he ever to get £100—he couldn't save so much in as many years. I'll ask my lady if she can get him any employment—I'm her foster sister, and besides, in this business with the Major——

SIR RICHARD WROUGHTON (*without*) Halloo ! house !

PAT. Who's that ? (*opens door*) Oh Mercy !—Sir Richard !

Enter SIR R. WROUGHTON C. from R.

SIR R. Oh, you are Widow Pottle's daughter, I believe ?

PAT. Yes, Sir Richard.

SIR R. Where's your mother ?

PAT. Just stepped up stairs, Sir Richard.

SIR R. Go and tell her I wish to speak with her.

PAT. Yes, Sir Richard. (*aside*) Mother can't tell him anything, that's one comfort. *Exit R. U. E.*

SIR R. How lucky it was that I met Saville; but for him I should have taken the other path through the wood, and consequently not have picked up this little scrap of paper, which confirms all my suspicions—"To-night, at 8 o'clock, in the parlour of the inn." No address—no signature; but very like the hand-writing of my fair cousin, Lady Somerford, and if so, the place of appointment is here, for the Widow Pottle was her nurse, and is most likely to be in her confidence. Oh, woman ! woman !—How truthful appeared her assertions that she knew nothing of Major Murray personally, that she was interested about him solely on his mother's account. I have since ascertained positively that she met him in Paris, and afterwards in Holland; and now, no doubt, she is in communication with him here, for he has been in England, I suspect, during the last six weeks. Oh, if I had but known this earlier ! However, I am yet in time, and my vengeance shall be all the greater. Yes, yes, my politic cousin, when for your sake I have obtained the free pardon of this Jacobite, you will throw off the mask, and give your hand and fortune to him into the bargain. Well, here is the pardon, signed most unwillingly by the King, at the strong solici-

tation of my fast friend, the Duke of Newcastle; but it is not in your hands yet, Lady Somerford, and if I succeed in catching you and your lover together, I will tear this paper to pieces before your face, and hang the traitor on the nearest tree, as my commission empowers me.

Enter WIDOW POTTLE, D. R. U. E.

WID. Deary me, your honour. I beg your honour's pardon, I'm sure, a hundred times over, for keeping you waiting; but—

SIR R. No matter: you were nurse, I think, to the lady who married my late cousin, Lord Somerford?

WID. Yes, sure I was, Sir Richard; she and my Patty are foster sisters.

SIR R. Aye, and of course, now she is staying in this neighbourhood, she often visits you.

WID. Nows and thens—nows and thens, Sir Richard, she do look in upon us. My Lady be mighty kind to Patty and I too, Sir Richard.

SIR R. Oh, I've no doubt—I've no doubt. She calls here with a gentleman, sometimes, does she not?

WID. A gentleman? No, Sir Richard, I can't say as ever I seed any gentleman with her, except Mr. William, her groom, as rides behind my Lady, and holds her horse for her when she do come in to chat a bit.

PATTY appears, R. 3 E., listening.

SIR R. Humph! she is coming this evening, I believe?

WID. Not as I knows of, Sir Richard; but if you say so—

SIR R. You do not expect her?

WID. No, Sir Richard, I've heard nought about it.

SIR R. (*aside*) She is warned—I must intimidate her. (*aloud*) You rent this house of Mr. Saville, the Lord of the Manor here?

WID. Yes, Sir Richard, Squire Saville be my landlord; I be going to him about a new lease this very evening, for the old one be just out.

SIR R. Mr. Saville is under great obligations to me, and I have but to say one word to prevent his granting you a new lease.

WID. Lord, Sir Richard, but you wouldn't do so—you

wouldn't hinder a poor lone widow woman from getting an honest living—it be but a living, Sir Richard.

SIR R. Then don't attempt to deceive me, but answer truly any question I put to you.

WID. Lord, Sir Richard, of course I will; what should I tell your honour a pack of lies for?

SIR R. Lady Somerford has appointed to meet a gentleman here this evening.

WID. Lord, Sir Richard, I don't say she haven't.

SIR R. Did you not tell me you didn't expect her?

WID. No more I do, Sir Richard; as I hope for mercy I know no more nor the babe unborn about it; but if you say she be coming—

SIR R. Beware, for I shall remain here and ascertain the fact.

WID. Just as you please, Sir Richard. Wont'ee take a seat, then? (*rubs chair with her apron and offers it*)

SIR R. (*aside*) Is she really ignorant?

PAT. (*aside*) How has he discovered?

SIR R. (*produces note*) You may as well confess. This slip of paper has revealed all.

PAT. (*aside*) Oh, mercy, the lost note! What is to be done?

WID. I've nothing to confess, indeed and indeed, Sir Richard, and as to that bit of paper, I never seed it before in all my days.

PAT. (*advancing quickly*) But I have, and can tell you what's in it, Sir Richard.

SIR R. Hah, indeed! so, so; you then can give me some information, perhaps.

PAT. I'll tell you all I know about it, Sir Richard, and that is, that about an hour ago, while mother was in the cellar, a young gentleman in a riding dress came to the door, and asked me if there was an inn, called the "Greyhound," in this neighbourhood. So I told him it was at the other side of the forest, on the road to Whitelands, and then he sat down on the bench at the door and took out that note, and looked at it for some time, and I peeped over his shoulder, and read something about, "Eight o'clock in the parlour," and he then put it into his pocket again, called for a mug of beer, drank it in a great hurry, and walked away.

WID. Without paying for it?

PAT. No, mother, no; he was quite a gentleman, I tell you.

SIR R. (*aside*) It is true, there is such an inn, and Lady Somerford, being known here, may have induced her to fix on another house. That did not occur to me, but it is equally probable. (*aloud*) How far is it from hence to the "Greyhound?"

PAT. About a mile and a half, Sir.

SIR R. Thank you, my good girl. Good day, widow.

WID. But, Sir Richard, you won't set the squire—

SIR R. No, no, if you have told the truth, you have nothing to fear. *Exit, c. and R.*

PAT. (*aside*) I'm glad he didn't say that to me, for I never told such a story in all my life. I must go and watch for the Major. *Exit, c. and R.*

WID. My wits be gone wool gathering with all this coil.

Enter JOHN DUCK, D. R. U. E. with a bundle under his arm and his hat on.

JOHN. Behold me ready to depart.

WID. Then the sooner thee dost it the better—thee knowest the way to the door.

JOHN. Intimately. But one word before we separate. It is understood that I am to amass the sum of £100 sterling money of Great Britain, before I present myself to claim the hand of the incomparable Patty. Now it gives me considerable satisfaction to inform you, that you are legally bound to contribute the first instalment of the sum aforesaid, and thereby lay the foundation of this gigantic fortune, by handing over the amount due to me for work and labor done, during the space of one calendar month in the Crooked Billet, as per agreement.

WID. The long and short of that rigmarole be that thee wanst thee wages?

JOHN. It is one of those natural desires which the human heart is not ashamed to indulge in.

WID. Rot thee fine speeches. I suppose I must pay thee summat, but it goes against the grain woundily, I can tell thee. Stop a bit, till I see what thee hast broken.

Exit c. and R.

JOHN. One month, at five shillings per month, makes

just five shillings—take five shillings from £100 and there remains £99 15s.—that is to say, it remains to be got; and the question naturally occurs to me, how is it to be got? Without loss of time, for it is “wanted immediately,” as they head the advertisements. My passion is ungovernable, and will not admit of delay. Oh, that I was Chancellor of the Exchequer for a quarter of an hour—for the time only to draw a cheque upon the Treasury for £100 and receive the money—the wish is preposterous, but pardonable under the circumstances.

Enter SIR RICHARD C. from R.

SIR R. I am not quite satisfied that this girl—(*stops short on seeing DUCK*) Hah!

JOHN. £100. I must get the money somehow, instantly.

SIR R. (*aside*) Who is this fellow?

JOHN. I will do anything for a hundred pounds: who will give me a hundred pounds to do anything? I am to be sold for a hundred pounds. This valuable young man going for a hundred pounds, will nobody bid? It's really giving myself away. Only a hundred pounds—going, going—

SIR R. Gone. (*slapping him on shoulder*) You are mine at that price.

JOHN. You don't say so—hur—

SIR R. Hush!

JOHN. Hush! (*aside*) This man has overheard my soliloquy! He is about to propose to me the commission of some terrible crime! Duck, don't be desperate. (*aloud*) What would you have me do?

SIR R. A very trifling service. It is probable something will take place here at 8 o'clock this evening, which I desire to be informed of.

JOHN. A—a—robbery—a—murder!

SIR R. No! simply a conversation between two parties, the subject of which is of considerable importance to the State; and your duty will be to hide yourself in this apartment, where you can hear and see all that passes.

JOHN. Nothing more?

SIR R. If you repeat to me faithfully whatever occurs, I will give you immediately the £100 you desire.

JOHN. You will? May I request the favour of your name?

SIR R. Sir Richard Wroughton. It is tolerably well known in the county.

JOHN. Sir Rich—Deputy Lieutenant—Colonel of Militia—my fortune is made!

SIR R. What is your name?

JOHN. Duck—Mr. John Duck, formerly of Chancery Lane, and at present in want of a situation. Should there be one under Government in which my services may be rendered available—

SIR R. First, earn your hundred pounds.

JOHN. I shall be delighted.

SIR R. I rely on your zeal.

JOHN. Rely upon my necessity—zeal is its natural offspring as well as invention.

SIR R. I like your candour; but not a word to the landlady or her daughter.

JOHN. Depend on my discretion—it is the better part of my valour, I assure you.

SIR R. Enough! (*aside*) I am now confident of success—if this be the place of assignation this man is my witness—if the Greyhound, I shall be there myself to convict them.

Exit c. and r.

JOHN. “Important to the State!” It is some conspiracy, some treason against the house of Hanover—perhaps another gunpowder plot, and I shall be the preserver of my king and country! I think I already see the traitors, twelve or twenty of them, in slouched hats and large mantles, gliding like spectres into their solitary tenements, armed to the teeth—armed!—ahem!—armed?—if I should be discovered an eaves-dropper—a spy, the consequences may be particularly disagreeable. I may not be able to preserve even myself, let alone my king and country! It is too late to reflect, the die is cast. Patty, for thee I perish!

Enter WIDOW POTTE, c. from r.

WID. Thee’st broken a dish, two jugs and a pipkin, and they’d cost more than five shillings, I warrant me; but there, I’ll give thee sixpence to be well quit of thee.

JOHN. Sixpence! I broke my shin tumbling up your garret stairs—you’d better charge for that.

WID. And so I should by rights, twopence for brown paper and vinegar, but I’ll let thee off that thee mayst have nothing to grumble at, so away wi’ thee!

JOHN. (*aside*) Away with me ! But if I go out of the house I mayn't be able to get in again, and there's an end of the £100. I must devise some means.

WID. What's thee waiting for now ? Wilt thee go or not ?

JOHN. (*aside*) An inspiration. (*aloud*) No, Mrs. Pottle, it does not suit me to go at this moment.

WID. Not suit thee ?

JOHN. No, Mrs. Pottle, allow me to call to your recollection that our positions are altered—you are still the hostess of the " Crooked Billet," but I am no longer your waiter—I am a gentleman at large—a traveller, Mrs. Pottle ; you keep a public house ? You have the effrontery to write up " Good Entertainment for Man and Beast !" I, as a man, not a beast, command you to entertain me. Landlady, a pint of beer and a pipe of tobacco, and let them be good as you value my custom. (*sits*)

WID. Why, hang his assurance !

JOHN. Widow, you neglect your business ; go yourself or send the waiter—a pint of beer and a pipe for the gentleman in the parlour—that'll be fivepence, you may keep the change.

WID. He be mad, surely ! No matter, I'll get my sixpence back—so he may pay for his joke, if it be a joke. Ha, ha ! Thee bee'st a foine gentleman, truly. Thee shalt have thee beer and thee pipe, ha, ha !

Exit c. and r.

JOHN. Now, for a hiding place ! In this cupboard, impossible—under the table, it may be moved—oh, this chest, the key in the lock. (*opens it*) Full of linen—out it goes and in I get ! (*tumbles out the linen behind the chest, jumps in, and shuts down the lid, then lifts it up again*) Phew, it's a tight fit, and desperate close. I must keep the lid up a little, or I shall see and hear nothing at all.

Enter WIDOW POTTLE c. from r., with beer and pipe, at the same time PATTY appears in tap room with MAJOR MURRAY.

WID. Here be the—(*misses him*) Gone ! The saucy companion ! stole out of the back door here, I warrant me. Thought twice about spending his sixpence, the swaggering puppy—with all my heart, I'm too glad to be rid of him ! But where's Patty all this time ? My goodness, she bean't gone with him. Patty—Patty !

(MAJOR hastily conceals himself L. of c.)

PAT. (*advances* R. c.) Here, mother, here I am!

WID. Oh, come, that's a comfort! Odzoinks, it gave me quite a turn like. Harkye, Patty, I must go up to squire's about the lease, so I shall shut house up for to-night. Folks seldom come this way after dusk. Thee bean't afraid of being alone for an hour or so?

PAT. Afraid! oh, dear, no, mother.

WID. My keys—where be my keys? I had them them to get out the clean towels.

PAT. You've left them in the linen chest.

WID. Ah, so I have! (*locks chest and takes the bunch of keys out*) Now fasten the door after me, and doantee open it to anybody thee dosen't know before I come back.

Exit c. and r.

PAT. No, that I won't, I promise you, mother; for the Major is here already, and my lady is no stranger, I'll be sworn. (*to MAJOR*) Come in, Sir.

Enter MAJOR MURRAY—JOHN knocks violently in chest.

MAJ. Has Lady Somerford arrived?

PAT. No, it is barely the hour. (*JOHN knocks again*) What noise is that?

MAJ. It sounded like some one knocking.

PAT. It is my Lady, for certain. (*opens D. L.*)

Enter LADY SOMERFORD, D. L.

I thought so.

LADY S. The Major?

PAT. He is here. I will fasten this door, and go watch at the front one, that you may not be interrupted.

[Exit c. and r.

LADY S. Edward!

MAJ. At last, dearest, we meet in safety.

LADY S. In safety!—would I were assured so! I have yielded to your earnest entreaties, but am painfully alive to the danger of the step. I implored you not to leave Brussels till I had obtained the King's pardon.

MAJ. I could no longer endure the separation, and your last advices induced me to believe that before I could reach England, the pardon would be in your hands. Besides, I run no great risk; my person is unknown in this part of the country. I have papers and a passport, setting

forth that I am Charles Vardeck, son of a merchant of Antwerp, with letters of recommendation to persons of credit in England. I have between three and four hundred pounds in gold about me, for any pressing necessity, and were I even arrested and recognized, the interest you have secured for me would be a sufficient protection.

LADY S. Ah!—there is your mistake! In that interest lies the danger. Sir Richard Wroughton considers us personal strangers; should he discover, or only suspect, that an attachment existed between us, he would exert all his influence with the Government not to obtain your pardon, but your destruction!

MAJ. Wherefore!

LADY S. He is himself a suitor for my hand, and would make my consent the price of your safety. I have as yet managed to avoid a direct answer, and stipulate on my part for the previous performance of his promise. Matters are at a crisis, and the least accident may turn the scale against us. (JOHN knocks again) What's that?

MAJ. The noise I heard before, and which we thought your signal. (JOHN thumps again)

LADY S. Whence does it proceed?

MAJ. It is from this chest! Some one is concealed in it.

LADY S. Betrayed!

MAJ. (*draws, and attempts to raise the lid*) It is locked!

LADY S. It can be no spy, then—some animal, most likely—some dog, or cat, shut in by accident.

MAJ. I will make sure tho'. (*wrenches off the hasp of lock with his sword. The lid flies violently up and JOHN flings himself half out of it.* LADY S. *utters a cry of terror, and runs out, D. L.*)

JOHN. (*half stifled*) Air! air!

MAJ. (*siezes him by the collar, and drags him out*) How cam'st thou in that chest, and for what purpose? Speak, for thy life.

JOHN. Let me breathe first; I'm all but smothered; another second, I was a dead man.

MAJ. Answer instantly, without evasion. Were you placed there as a spy upon us?

JOHN. (*aside*) A spy upon us! This is one of the conspirators, and the rest are gone!

MAJ. You hesitate! (*puts point of his sword to his throat*)

JOHN. No, no—I was, I was—

MAJ. By whose orders?

JOHN. Sir Richard Wroughton's.

MAJ. Ha!

JOHN. But don't be frightened. I have heard nothing, seen nothing.

MAJ. Thou liest!

JOHN. No—as I hope for mercy, it was quite impossible.

MAJ. If I could depend. Hark ye, fellow, how much didst thou hope to gain by thy villainy?

JOHN. I was promised one hundred pounds.

MAJ. Here are two rouleaus of fifty guineas each.

JOHN. For me?

MAJ. If you will swear to keep my secret.

JOHN. I do most solemnly! (*aside*) For I havn't the least notion what it is.

MAJ. Remember, to betray the unfortunate is an infamous action—to save them, a noble one.

JOHN. I am all for the noble one, and guineas instead of pounds.

MAJ. Take them. You have not witnessed our meeting. You have heard nothing that passed!

JOHN. I'll take my affidavit before the Lord Mayor.

MAJ. If you deceive me, I will find means to punish you. If you are faithful, I will double that sum.

JOHN. Double! You'll give me another hundred!

MAJ. Rely upon me.

JOHN. And rely upon me. The rack shan't move me!

Enter PATTY, hastily, c. from R.

PAT. Fly, fly, Sir Richard Wroughton is at the front door. *Exit c. and R.*

MAJOR. Sir Richard! (*to JOHN.*) Remember!

Exit hastily, D.L.

JOHN. It's impossible for me to forget! One hundred guineas! Another to come. For most certainly no power on earth can make me divulge a secret of which I am totally ignorant.

Enter SIR RICHARD, c. from R.

SIR R. (*speaks as he enters*) Stay you there! (*aside*) That girl deceived me. This was the place of assignation. (*sees JOHN DUCK.*) Ah, you are here!

JOHN. I am, Sir Richard.

SIR R. Well, your news; speak!

JOHN. I have none, Sir Richard.

SIR R. None! You have not watched, then?

JOHN. On the contrary. I have never been out of this room.

SIR R. Where were you concealed?

JOHN. In that chest.

SIR R. And you have witnessed no meeting?

JOHN. I'll take my oath of it before all the magistrates in the county.

SIR R. And you have heard nothing about any one?

JOHN. Not a syllable.

SIR R. (aside) He is in the plot, or they have been warned. No matter; there is yet a way. [Exit c. and r.

JOHN. Hurrah! I have behaved intrepidly. I have told the truth, and earned two hundred guineas—two hundred; by the bye, how am I to get the other hundred? I am ignorant of the gentleman's name or address, and as he don't know mine—(A leather bag is thrown in at the window) Hah! (picks it up, opens it, and takes out two rouleaus) Oh, noble young man, mirror of honour and integrity! He knew I could not have recovered and yet he paid me the money.

Enter PATTY, c. from r.

PATTY. He's gone, muttering something about vengeance. I'm all in a tremble. (seeing him) John Duck!

JOHN. Mr. John Duck, a gentleman, and a man of property. Embrace me, Mrs. John Duck, that is to be.

PATTY. John, be quiet; how dare you stay here; if my mother—

JOHN. Your mother! I desire the presence of that respectable old lady. I am in a position to call upon the venerable relict of the late Peter Pottle, publican, and demand the hand of Martha Pottle, sole issue of the aforesaid Peter, and Sarah his wife. Sarah Pottle, Sarah Pottle, widow, come into court.

PATTY. He is crazy. Oh lud, here is mother! What shall we do?

Enter WIDOW POTTLER, c. from r.

WIDOW. What's all this coil about? And the doors open! John Duck here? Why, thou ragamuffin!

JOHN. Widow Pottle, respect your son-in-law. Here is the needful—the sum of money agreed upon.

WID. Thee's got one hundred pounds?

JOHN. Two hundred.

WID. Oh, the villain! who hast thee robbed?

JOHN. Nobody. I've earned it honestly, by speaking the truth.

PAT. The truth! What have you said, then?

JOHN. Nothing! It was all I knew, and I repeated it manfully. If you ask me any more questions I shall give you precisely the same information.

Enter a CORPORAL and GUARD, c. from R.

COR. Your name is John Duck.

JOHN. It is, what of that?

COR. You are my prisoner.

JOHN. } Prisoner!

PAT. } JOHN. What for?

COR. That's not my business; you'll know soon enough, I dare say.

PAT. Oh, my poor Duck! They'll shoot my poor Duck!

COR. March.

WID. He's robbed somebody. I knew he had—or been a making false coin! He'll be hanged, anyway, that's one comfort.

Exit JOHN, guarded, c. and R. followed by WIDOW and PATTY.

END OF ACT.

ACT II.

An apartment in an old English mansion. A large Chimney, c. Doors R. and L. Door, R., in flat. A Table with writing materials, L. C., and a Cabinet, R.

MAJOR MURRAY is discovered writing at Table.

Enter LADY SOMERFORD followed by a SERVANT, R. D. F.

LADY S. Very well; inform Sir Richard I am here.

Exit SERVANT, D. R.

MAJ. (*aside*) 'Tis she! (*in a whisper*) Katherine!

LADY S. (*turns quickly*) Sir! Heavens, is it possible, Edward!

MAJ. Hush, speak low! some one may be within hearing.

LADY S. I am overwhelmed with astonishment and terror! You in Sir Richard's house! Under what name?

MAJ. Under the name of Vardeck, in which my passport is made out. I heard by accident that Sir Richard required a Secretary. I offered my services until he could obtain one, producing my letters of recommendation, one of which I had ascertained was directed to a particular friend of his in London. I presume he was pleased with my manner and appearance, for he immediately accepted my proposal.

LADY S. But what motive could induce you to venture?

MAJ. I had two; the first was the certainty of seeing you daily and with greater facility than before.

LADY S. Imprudent!

MAJ. Pardon me, for the second was the conviction that I should be much safer under this roof than wandering about the neighbourhood, exposed to continual questions and observations, which my present position and occupation put an end to. You have led me to believe it cannot be many days before my fate will be decided.

LADY S. I am in hopes this very hour. Sir Richard has sent round to me, that he has something of importance to communicate, and I have little doubt the pardon has arrived. Once in my possession, you are free. A footstep! hark! remember we are strangers.

Enter SIR RICHARD, R. D.

MAJ. (*pretending not to see him*) Will you not take a chair, Madam? Sir Richard, no doubt—Ah! he is here!

SIR R. Good morning, dear Lady Somerford.

LADY S. I have obeyed your summons, Sir Richard.

SIR R. With an alacrity that would be most flattering to me, could I monopolize the compliment. Mr. Vardeck, you

will be kind enough to leave us ; I will ring for you when I want you.

Exit MAJOR, L. D.

LADY S. I expected to have seen you yesterday.

SIR R. I was on my way to you, but heard you had ridden out alone.

LADY S. In the afternoon, yes. I rode as far as White-lands, having heard that some of the family were ill, but I was home by eight o'clock.

SIR R. By eight ! Are you certain ?

LADY S. Well, I won't swear to the minute. It might have been a quarter past, but I should say decidedly not later than that. What makes you so particular ?

SIR R. Only some one told me that they thought they saw you in the forest at eight.

LADY S. Probably ; I came that road home. But, now, tell me what is your news : have you succeeded ? Is the pardon arrived ?

SIR R. It is signed. So much I can tell you. His Majesty yielded most reluctantly, but he did yield, as a personal favor to the Duke, from whom I have this morning received the information.

LADY S. And why did he not forward the pardon at the same time ?

SIR R. Oh, it will be sent with some dispatches, which are to be brought by a special courier, most likely in the course of the afternoon ; but the Duke, kindly, lost no time in communicating to me the issue of his mediation ; and I, knowing your great anxiety on the subject, for which, I trust, Major Murray will prove himself most grateful—

LADY S. I have no doubt ; although, as I have before told you, my interest in the matter arose from my long knowledge of and affection for his mother, who doats upon him. He is her only son, and their separation was hurrying her to the grave.

SIR R. Ah, true, you have never seen the Major himself ?

LADY S. I never told you that.

SIR R. Your pardon ; I so understood you.

LADY S. Then you misunderstood me. I have seen him, certainly ; I met him in Paris and afterwards at Brussels.

SIR R. Ah, indeed, he is reckoned handsome !

LADY S. He is good-looking—the manner and air of a

gentleman ; his mother was a celebrated beauty in her day, and is still, to me, the most charming woman in the world !

SIR R. As you are to me, my dear cousin.

LADY S. I shall believe that when you have performed your promise, Sir Richard.

SIR R. I have performed it ; the pardon is obtained.

LADY S. But not in my hands.

SIR R. It will be to-day, provided no accident intervenes.

LADY S. Accident ! What accident ?

SIR R. Nay, I do not anticipate any, but in this world we are never sure—we are all the creatures of circumstance.

LADY S. About what hour do you expect the courier ?

SIR R. Between two and three.

LADY S. I will return at three—you will be at home ?

SIR R. To you, certainly !

LADY S. *Au revoir*, then.

SIR R. You will write to Mrs. Murray ?

LADY S. Not till I have the pardon in my own possession, for fear of accidents, Sir Richard.

Exit R. D. F.

SIR R. She suspects me evidently, and sees that I suspect her. Well, after all, the estates *are* my object ; I will own it frankly ; and till she makes me master of them, by the gift of her hand, she shall never put finger on this precious document. At three o'clock the matter shall be decided.

(rings hand-bell)

Enter MAJOR MURRAY, L. D.

MAJ. (*aside*) She is gone.

SIR R. It was not for you I rang, Sir ; but no matter, you may remain.

MAJOR bows, sits at table, and writes. SIR RICHARD rings again. *Enter SERVANT, R. D. F.*

A taper to seal these letters, and tell the Corporal to bring up the man he arrested yesterday at the Crooked Billet.

Exit SERVANT, R. D. F.

MAJ. (*aside*) At the Crooked Billet ! Should it be the fellow that was in the chest !

SIR R. (*aside*) I will have the truth out of that knave, somehow. If I could get sufficient proof to startle Lady Somerford, she would be at my mercy.

MAJ. (*aside*) If the man should recognise me, there may be danger. (*going, L.*)

SIR R. Where are you going, Sir?

MAJ. To my own apartment. I have finished copying these letters, Sir.

SIR R. Stay, I have no other work for you, be seated.

MAJOR *sits.* Enter SERVANT, D. R. F., followed by CORPORAL with DUCK. SERVANT places lighted taper on table.

SIR R. (*to JOHN*) Stand forward, sirrah! (*to CORPORAL*) Wait without. *Exeunt CORPORAL and SERVANT, R. D. F.*

MAJ. (*aside*) 'Tis the very person; let me hope that the change of dress, and his alarm at the time, may prevent his recognition.

SIR R. You have passed the night in jail, Mr. Duck.

JOHN. I am sufficiently aware of the unpleasant fact, and should feel grateful for an explanation of the circumstances.

SIR R. No impertinence, sirrah! Remember to whom you speak.

JOHN. I don't mean to be impertinent, Sir Richard. It is with the greatest respect I request a piece of information on a matter in which I am personally interested. I may say, vitally; for I have narrowly escaped destruction from the ferocious partners of my dungeon.

SIR R. Partners! Were you not alone?

JOHN. Certainly not. The prison swarms with rats, Sir Richard—rats of the largest size, and remarkable voracity.

SIR R. Pshaw, you have had time for reflection.

JOHN. Not an instant—I have been fighting all night—the creatures evinced an alarming partiality—

SIR R. Fool! you shall rot amongst them if you refuse to state what passed last night at the Crooked Billet.

JOHN. But I don't refuse—on the contrary—I am ready to reveal everything.

MAJ. (*aside*) Cowardly traitor!

SIR R. Speak, then, instantly—what did you see?

JOHN. Nothing! I saw, positively, nothing!

SIR R. What did you hear, then?

JOHN. Nothing. It was quite impossible; I told you so last night, but you wouldn't believe me.

SIR R. Nor do I now, villain! Beware; concealment is hopeless. The sum of two hundred pounds was found

in gold upon you; you had not a farthing when I accosted you scarcely an hour before. Such a sum of money could only have been paid you for some important service.

JOHN. No doubt, no doubt—I don't deny it. I was paid—

SIR R. Ah, by whom?

JOHN. By a gentleman.

SIR R. You confess at last.

JOHN. You never asked me that question before.

MAJ. (*aside*) He will tell all.

SIR R. No equivocation, sirrah; who was this gentleman?

JOHN. I havn't the slightest idea.

SIR R. Then what did he pay you for?

JOHN. To say nothing, and I've said it. That's the beauty of the business. He could not have found a better man for his purpose: somebody else might have known something, but I literally knew nothing.

SIR R. You shall be made to know something.

JOHN. It's impossible. Would you have me to invent something—I'll do it if you'll pay me—I've a vivid imagination.

SIR R. (*aside*) There was some one there who gave him the money. The girl, the girl must know; she shall be confronted with him.

(*Exit RD. F.*)

JOHN. Sir Richard, am I discharged? This is very extraordinary conduct. Sir (*to MAJ.*) I beg your pardon, Sir, but as you have been present during this examination—(*the MAJOR continues to write, averting his face from JOHN's view*)—you will oblige me particularly if—(*catches a sight of his countenance*)—eh—why—no—yes—it's the very man!

MAJ. Silence! you know me not.

JOHN. Oh, but I do, I'm positive.

MAJ. Fool! I mean I have paid you not to know me!

JOHN. I beg your pardon—no such thing—you paid me not to say what had passed whilst I was in the chest, and I didn't, because I couldn't.

MAJ. Be silent still, and—

JOHN. Be sent to prison again. I'd rather not.

MAJ. I will set you free.

JOHN. When?

MAJ. Almost immediately,

JOHN. Almost! That's too late.

MAJ. Think of the baseness——

JOHN. Think of the rats!

MAJ. It shall make your fortune; I shall owe you not only my life, but the happiness of her I love.

JOHN. Her you love!

MAJ. Yes; were she here she would implore you as I do.

JOHN. Hah! Stop, stop—horror! A fearful light breaks in upon me! I remember yesterday morning, Patty's embarrassment when I met her in the forest. Oh, answer me—you love Patty Pottle?

MAJ. Patty Pottle!

JOHN. You cannot deny it—your confusion is evident—you came to see her whilst her mother was out.

MAJ. (*aside*) His error may save me yet. It is evident he really knows nothing of the truth.

JOHN. He is dumbfounded. It must be so. It could not be the *old* woman he came for; no, it would be an insult to my common sense to indulge in such a delusion. But I will be revenged!

Enter SIR RICHARD, R. D. F.

Hah, Sir Richard, there is the man—the very person who gave me the money.

SIR R. Mr. Vardeck!

JOHN. Yes, Vardeck, if that's his ugly name, or whatever else it may be. He has implored my mercy, but I will have none; he has injured me in the tenderest point, and I demand vengeance—vengeance upon Vardeck!

SIR R. (*to MAJOR*) What was the motive of your visit to the Crooked Billet, last night, sir?

JOHN. Patty was the motive. False, perjured Patty! At half-past seven she pretended to weep at our separation, and at eight she had an assignation with that viper, Vardeck. Oh, the sex—oh, the sex—oh, the sex!

SIR R. An assignation with Patty! Are you sure it was with Patty?

JOHN. Let him deny it if he dare.

MAJOR. I do not deny it.

JOHN. Hear him, hear him—the unblushing Tarquin.

SIR R. But why the gift of this large sum of money?

JOHN. It was the price of my dishonour. A bribe to make me marry his mistress! Infamous Vardeck! Shades of my ancestors! I should have sullied a long line of Ducks; disgraced, perhaps, a Duck that came over with the Conqueror.

SIR R. (*aside*) There is not a word of truth in this story—but I have my suspicions.

Enter SERVANT, R.D.F.

SERVANT. The young woman is here, Sir Richard.

SIR R. Admit her instantly. (*Exit SERVANT, R.D.F.*) Now we shall hear what Patty has to say for herself on this subject.

JOHN. Patty!

MAJOR. (*aside*) How to give her notice!

JOHN. Let her come that I may crush her with my indignation.

SIR R. I forbid you to say one word to her without my permission.

SERVANT enters with PATTY, R.D.F. *Exit SERVANT.*

PAT. (*aside*) The Major. (*sees the MAJOR, who makes signs to her*)

SIR R. Come hither, young woman.

PAT. (*aside and advancing*) He is making signs to me!

SIR R. You deceived me yesterday. I now know who you expected at eight o'clock, during the absence of your mother.

PAT. (*watching the MAJOR, and aside*) No he don't. (*aloud*) Then I'm sure, Sir Richard, you know more than I do—for I expected no one.

JOHN. 'Tis false! You expected your lover, the execrable Vardeck.

SIR R. How dare you speak, sirrah? I commanded you not to open your lips.

JOHN. I was charged with indignation, from head to foot, and I exploded accidentally.

PAT. My lover, Vardeck!

JOHN. There he stands, the gay, bold-faced villain!

SIR R. Silence, or—

PAT. (*aside*) As he doesn't deny it, I suppose I'm to say so too.

SIR R. (*to Patty*) Well, do you admit this fact? Did this gentleman visit you last night?

PAT. I can't say he did not, Sir Richard.

JOHN. There, there, she can't deny he did not! Horrible depravity!

SIR R. The note, then, that I found in the forest, was written by you to Mr. Vardeck?

PAT. Yes, Sir Richard.

JOHN. A note, written by her—and I—I taught her to write! You should have seen her pot-hooks and hangers before I gave her a lesson; and she directs her first legible epistle to my rival. Disgusting ingratitude!

SIR R. (*aside*) I am not to be duped. This Vardeck is not the man he represents himself. (*to Major*) You see, Sir, the consequences of your indiscretion; you have compromised a respectable girl; as an honourable man, there is but one course for you to pursue, you must marry her.

MAJ. Marry her!

PAT. (*aside*) Marry me! O la!

JOHN. No, no, never! I won't marry her; but he shan't. I forbid the banns—she shall live in single misery.

SIR R. (*to Major*) Do you object to make her your wife?

MAJ. It is impossible, Sir Richard, I have a wife already.

SIR R. Indeed!

JOHN. A wife! Hah, then I insist on their union. He shall marry two wives, and be hanged for bigamy!

SIR R. Peace, fool! (*to Major*) Mr. Vardeck, after this disclosure, it must be evident to you that I cannot retain you in my service, nor can I recommend a libertine to my friends.

MAJ. I admit the justice of your displeasure, Sir Richard, and humbly take my leave.

SIR R. Stop, one moment; there is still an act of justice you may render to this young girl. Sit down, Patty, and write as I shall dictate.

PAT. (*aside*) What does he mean?

(*Sits by his direction at the table.*)

SIR R. (*gives her a pen, and puts paper before her*) Begin thus:—"I, the undersigned, Martha Pottle, having been induced to meet, at eight o'clock, in the parlour of the inn"—

JOHN. Degrading confession !

SIR R. (*having watched the writing, and taking the paper from her*) "At eight o'clock, in the parlour of the inn." That will do. (*takes out the note he had in the first act, and compares the writing*) The same words, but not written by the same hand. This note was never penned by you. It was written by Lady Somerford. What, ho ! Guard !

Enter CORPORAL and GUARD, R.D.U.

SIR R. Arrest that person. (*points to MAJOR*)

MAJOR. (*aside*) Discovered. Upon what charge, Sir ?

SIR R. Your name is not Vardeck ! It is Edward Murray. You are an attainted traitor, excluded from the general pardon, and your life forfeit if taken upon English ground.

MAJ. What proof have you of this ?

SIR R. Oh, I shall find enough, never fear me, and within an hour. (*to CORPORAL*) Remove your prisoner, for the present, into that room. (*exit MAJOR, guarded, L. D.*) Begone, girl, and think yourself well off if you are not further implicated in this business. It is a serious one, I promise you, as your foster-sister, Lady Somerford, and her admirer shall find.

JOHN. Her admirer ! Lady Somerford ! Then it was not Patty !

SIR R. My belief is, that you knew it, scoundrel, and I intend to make an example of you. *Exit, R. D.*

JOHN. Do, do, I am reckless of circumstances ! I awake from an hideous dream ! Patty, my pure, my immaculate Patty, I suspected you wrongfully. You are the victim of presumptive evidence. I acknowledge your innocence ! I admire your noble devotion ! You are worthy my love and my hand.

PAT. And you are unworthy mine : you have played the spy and the informer. You have insulted me by your jealousy. Betrayed a brave young gentleman, and will be the death of him and poor dear Lady Somerford.

JOHN. Listen to me, Patty.

PAT. Let me go, Sir, I'll never speak to you again.

Exit, R. D. F.

JOHN. Patty, Patty ! (*Follows her, SERVANT stops him*) Let me pass !

SER. Not without orders from Sir Richard ! You came here as a prisoner, and I shan't let you out of this room till I have proper authority. (*shuts door*)

JOHN. What's to be done ? Follow her I must ! Despair inspire me ! The window—no ? Even a cat might hesitate. Hah, what if—I shudder at the thought, but necessity has no law, and the chimney must have a top. I never did go up one, but that's no reason I never should. From the roof of the house I can drop on the roof of the stables. Nobody will suspect, and the soot will serve for a disguise. Sir Richard ! That decides me ! (*disappears up chimney*)

Enter SIR RICHARD, R. D., and LADY SOMERFORD, R. D. F.

SIR R. You are more than punctual, Lady Somerford. The clock has not yet struck.

LADY S. You said the courier would arrive between two and three, and I thought it unnecessary to wait ; but if he has not come, and I intrude—

SIR R. By no means ; I am perfectly prepared to receive you, cousin.

LADY S. Hah, the pardon is arrived, then !

SIR R. Here it is ! (*produces it*)

LADY S. A thousand thanks, dear Sir Richard, give it to me.

SIR R. Excuse me, fair cousin, for a moment, at least. There is some reward due to me, I believe, for my exertion in this matter : am I not to receive something in return for this precious paper, which has been, I may say, extorted from his Majesty.

LADY S. (*with some embarrassment*) I owe you my thanks, Sir Richard, for the trouble you have already taken, and shall not hesitate to acknowledge my gratitude to you when I have placed the pardon of her son in the hands of my excellent friend, Mrs. Murray.

SIR R. And prove it by giving your hand to that son, and with it the estates of my late cousin, Lord Somerford, which he chose to leave from the representative of the family, to a wife who never loved him.

LADY S. Sir Richard !

SIR R. Lady Somerford ! I am not to be duped. I am not to be trifled with. I know you love Edward Murray ; I know he is in England ; that you wrote to him to meet

you last night, at eight o'clock, at the inn in the forest.
(*shews note*) You will not deny your handwriting.

LADY S. It would be useless. You have my secret; I do love Major Murray: loved him and was engaged to him before you preferred your suit to me.

SIR R. Which you encouraged to secure my influence with the minister?

LADY S. I grant you have so far a right to complain of my conduct; but the life of the man I loved was at stake. I, too, might accuse of duplicity the suitor who professed affection for me but to become the master of my fortune. Be generous, Sir Richard, admit that mine was the worthier motive, and accept all that it is in my power to give, gratitude and friendship.

SIR R. It is not for the loser to alter the stakes. You played for love; I for money. The game is in my hands —assign to me the Somerford estates, and in exchange you shall have the pardon.

LADY S. You cannot, surely, insist on such a sacrifice.

SIR R. I do. There is the deed, duly prepared; will you sign?

LADY S. I will not. His Majesty has pardoned Major Murray—you have no power to harm him.

SIR R. Not so fast! His Majesty most unwillingly signed the paper, not knowing that the attainted Jacobite had already set foot on English soil, and thereby forfeited his life to the law; not knowing that under the assumed name of Vardeck, he had obtained admission into this mansion, in which he has been arrested and awaits the doom he has so audaciously courted.

LADY S. Hah! but it is signed—it is signed—it is in your hands, and you will not dare to injure a hair of his head!

SIR R. Not dare! Ah, you defy me! Look ye, Lady Somerford, here is a lighted taper—here I place the pardon of Edward Murray (*places the pardon in the grate*) sign that deed, and you are free to take it—refuse, and that instant I burn it before your face, well assured the King will not sign a second pardon. (*holds the lighted taper close to the pardon*)

LADY S. Hold, hold! I will sign!

(JOHN DUCK drops from the chimney, knocks out the taper, and seizes the pardon)

JOHN. No, you won't, there's no occasion. I, John Duck, deliver this, as my act and deed. (*gives it to LADY S.*)

LADY S. Ah!

SIR R. Confusion!

JOHN. (*throws open L. D.*) Corporal! in the King's name, release your prisoner!

Enter MAJOR, with CORPORAL and SOLDIERS, L. D.

LADY S. Edward, dear Edward, here is your free pardon, signed by his most gracious Majesty.

JOHN. George the Second, of Great Britain and Ireland, King, defender of the faith, &c., &c.

MAJ. Dearest Lady Somerford, a life of devotion shall prove my gratitude.

LADY S. Nay, it is to this young man we should both be grateful. To what fortunate circumstance are we indebted—

JOHN. To my not having served apprenticeship to a chimney-sweeper. If I could have climbed to the top, I should never have heard what passed at the bottom.

LADY S. Sir Richard Wroughton, is it your intention not to recognise the authority of this document?

SIR R. You have won the game, madam; Major Murray is at liberty.

Exit R. D., and CORPORAL and GUARD, R. D. F.

LADY S. Let us hasten from this place.

Enter PATTY, R. D. in F.

PAT. Oh, my Lady! oh, Sir, pray forgive me; it was not my fault. It was all along of John, from the very beginning.

LADY S. John! he is our preserver—our guardian genius!

JOHN. You hear, Patty—you hear! My conduct is not as dirty as you imagined, whatever my face may be! I am proud to say, I have come out of this business with clean hands, metaphorically speaking!

MAJ. Name your reward, my good friend. Anything in our power.

JOHN. My reward! Here it is: Patty Pottle! I ask nothing more in the world, except a comfortable income for ourselves and family.

LADY S. (*smiling*) I will answer for the income, if Patty will answer for herself.

PAT. Why, my Lady, if so be that John has really been of such service to your Ladyship and the Major, and mother will give her consent—

JOHN. Give it—she sold it! she named her price, and I've bought and paid for it. Come to my arms. (*going to embrace her—she keeps him off*) I beg your pardon—I forgot the soot, you shall come to them presently. In the mean while, I will only embrace this opportunity of requesting all who have clean hands, to clap them heartily together, in confirmation of the free pardon granted to the Jacobite.

THE END.