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BRANN THE PLAYWRIGHT

With the Text of His English Society Drama

THAT AMERICAN WOMAN

By

EDWARD G. FLETCHER

and

JACK L. HART

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**PUBLISHED BY THE UNIVERSITY FOUR TIMES A MONTH AND ENTERED AS
SECOND-CLASS MATTER AT THE POST OFFICE AT AUSTIN, TEXAS,
UNDER THE ACT OF AUGUST 24, 1912**

The benefits of education and of useful knowledge, generally diffused through a community, are essential to the preservation of a free government.

Sam Houston

Cultivated mind is the guardian genius of Democracy, and while guided and controlled by virtue, the noblest attribute of man. It is the only dictator that freemen acknowledge, and the only security which freemen desire.

Mirabeau B. Lamar

PREFACE

For permission to examine the manuscripts of his father's plays and to print *That American Woman*, Mr. Hart and I are indebted to Brann's youngest and only living child, Mr. William Carlyle Brann of Santa Monica, California. For bringing the plays to my attention, giving me access to all his Brann material, letting me draw freely upon his knowledge of Brann's activities, and supplying me with all the biographical material in the Introduction, I am obliged to my co-author, Mr. Hart, who is at work on a full-length biography of Brann. Mr. Hart and I are not in agreement about *Retribution*, which he believes to have been written as a deliberate burlesque. I wish to thank my colleague, Professor Theodore Hornberger, for several suggestions which have improved the Introduction. The printing of this pamphlet has been made possible by a grant of money from the University Research Institute.

In printing *That American Woman* I have retained most of Brann's idiosyncracies, e.g., "dont" for "don't" and "have'nt" for "haven't." The capitals and small letters of the manuscript are in some cases so similar that I have sometimes had to decide arbitrarily which is intended. I have regularized the manuscript in the following ways: by beginning every stage direction with a capital letter; by omitting final punctuation in stage directions; by inserting omitted periods in all such abbreviations as "C.E." and "L.U.E.," i.e., center entrance and left upper entrance. I have occasionally made some other slight change, usually to insert a punctuation mark or to alter a small or a capital letter.

The material on page 27 (and its arrangement) is modified slightly from the equivalent material on the first and third pages of the manuscript.

Two of the plays are written in bound notebooks eight by twelve and one-half inches; *Cleon* is written on twenty loose sheets, each folded to make four pages, which have been put inside the covers of a similar notebook from which all the original pages have been torn out. Each notebook has on its front cover in gilt letters the name of the play it contains. *Retribution* is seventy-seven pages long; *Cleon* and *That American Woman* are each seventy-four pages long. In the manuscript of *Retribution* a number of stage directions

are underlined or put in parentheses in an ink (occasionally with pencil) different from that in which the play is written, which probably indicates that this manuscript was used in preparing the San Antonio production of the play.

The two or three references to Brann's *Works* in the Introduction are to *The Complete Works of Brann the Iconoclast*, New York, The Brann Publishers, Inc., 1919, twelve volumes. Biographical material about Brann is to be found in volume XII of the *Works*, in Hyder E. Rollins' article, "William Cowper Brann," in *The South Atlantic Quarterly*, XIV, 53-67 (January, 1915), and in Adolph E. Meyer's article, "Advocatus Diaboli," in *The American Mercury*, XII, 68-74 (September, 1927). Some of Brann's writings are now easily accessible in a one-volume Blue Ribbon reprint, *The Writings of Brann the Iconoclast*, New York, 1938.

During 1940 Barrett H. Clark's twenty-volume series, *America's Lost Plays*, began to appear. "We have established as one of our aims," he writes in the first volume, "the intention of stimulating the further search among the vast stores of texts that remain to be rescued and made available to students." This pamphlet, with its text of one of Brann's plays, is in a way a first-fruit of Mr. Clark's interesting project.

E. G. F.

BRANN THE PLAYWRIGHT

In February, 1889, W. C. Brann had the job of telegraph editor on the Galveston *Daily News*; he was already becoming known as a Texas newspaperman worth watching. Within ten years he was to be dead—killed by a bullet wound he received in the Waco street fight—but they were to be full and profitable years for him—years in which he would be chief editorial writer of the Houston *Post* and of the San Antonio *Daily Express*, columnist for the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, and editor of the Waco *Morning News* and of his own widely read publication, *Brann's Iconoclast*; years in which he was to achieve a national reputation for his vigorous and courageous lecturing and writing. On February 18, 1889, when the first year of this last decade of his life was almost over and he was barely thirty-four, he paid a dollar and a half to enter three plays in the office of the Librarian of Congress for copyright registration.¹ This introduction is an account of Brann's playwriting, an aspect of his activities which has remained almost unknown.

One of these plays that he copyrighted in 1889 was a melodrama entitled *Retribution*, probably the only one of the three plays which has ever been performed, and the revision of a play he had already copyrighted twice, first as *Retribution*, September 15, 1886, about a year after he had first come to Galveston to work as a reporter on the *Evening Tribune*, and again as *Ray Hamilton*, on February 14, 1887, after he had become editor of the paper. That Brann cared enough about it to revise it twice, to copyright it three times, and to choose it for the San Antonio production, suggests that it may have been his favorite of the three. The San Antonio *Express*, indeed, reported on June 25, 1893:

"Retribution" was the first written of Mr. Brann's dramas ["the product of Mr. Brann's youth"—the *Express*, June 30], and while it lacks the finish of some of his late works, he has ever regarded it with special favor and insisted that its popularity would outlast that of its more pretentious companions.

¹Brann seems to have registered his plays by title only; apparently he never deposited in Washington any manuscript of any of his plays.

Here is a synopsis to tell its remarkable plot:

Twenty-six years before the time the play begins a titled Englishman lost his little child, Marjorie. She was kidnapped from him by two wandering beggars, man and wife, a couple named Fitch, who taught and forced her to beg in the streets. When she became ill, however, the Fitches abandoned her. Sick and destitute, she was found by a boy, a little older than herself, who brought her home to the Widow Hamilton's cottage. The Widow adopted Marjorie, just as she had previously adopted this boy Ray, another abandoned child.

Ray's past was this. His father, the wealthy Colonel Boynton of Oaklands Manor, had had an affair with a gypsy girl who loved him devotedly and bore him a son, Henry. The Colonel, however, had cast off the gypsy to make a conventional marriage, and by his wife he had another son, Ray. The gypsy was so infuriated by what she regarded as her lover's faithlessness that she somehow effected the death of his wife, exchanged Ray for Henry as Mrs. Boynton lay dying, and then abandoned Mrs. Boynton's infant to die also. Ray, the true heir of Oaklands, was found by Jarius Judkins, a Yankee peddler, who left him on the doorstep of Widow Hamilton. She adopted him and brought him up to be honest, though poor, while the gypsy's son was brought up at Oaklands, the interchange of the children apparently never having been noticed. The Colonel, after the death of his wife, died of a broken heart. The gypsy's son inherited his father's mill, his father's money, and the family estate, Oaklands.

It is at this point in the story that the plot of the play begins. The gypsy, who now always dresses in red and is supposed to be crazed, appears in front of the cottage in which Ray and Marjorie are living and, telling Marjorie's fortune, repeats what is already well known in the neighborhood, how the Widow Hamilton had adopted her as she had adopted Ray, etc. She goes on to warn Marjorie that a wealthy rival for her love for Ray has paid to have him killed. Marjorie faints at this news, just in time for Ray, Jarius, and Kate, the Yankee house servant Jarius is in love with (these two characters speak a Yankee stage dialect and provide most of the comic relief in the play), to appear and revive her. She shows Ray a letter she has received from Henry Boynton proposing marriage. Unamorously Ray replies that her future is his dearest care, but when Jarius assures him that she loves him and promises to help him get on in the world, Ray happily joins her under a crab-apple tree. Boynton comes for his answer, and gets it from Jarius. "Spurned by a nameless waif; rejected for a common workman—despised and defied by a peddler!" he exclaims as the woman in red enters. She calls him son and begs him not to hurt Ray Hamilton. "I caused his mother's death, I broke his father's heart, I robbed him of his name and heritage for you, but I will not keep silent and see him struck down by a coward's hand!" Boynton replies that Ray must die because he stands between himself and Marjorie (there are hints that his knowledge of Marjorie's real parentage rather than his love for her is involved), and because if he lives discovery is sooner or

later certain. So he half strangles his mother. Her gasps for help bring Ray, to whose cry, "Who has done this?" she replies, "Your brother!"²

Gabriel Griggs, a scoundrelly lawyer, now goes to those thieves and vagabonds, John and Margaret Fitch, and tells them to claim Marjorie in court as their long-lost daughter. He persuades them to do this by promising them a hundred dollars, and by threatening, if they refuse, to expose Fitch as the man who had kidnapped Marjorie when she was little. All this, of course, is a scheme of Boynton, who thinks that Marjorie will be glad to marry him to get rid of two such parents. Jarius appears disguised as a Jewish peddler; Griggs gives him fifty dollars to get Judkins (*i.e.*, himself) out of the way for a week or two while he himself is getting Marjorie away from Hamilton.

At the court hearing, although Marjorie is to marry Ray the next day, Griggs has no difficulty (aside from some comic byplay) in getting the corrupt judge to hand Marjorie over to the two impostors posing as her parents. Marjorie marries Ray just the same, but he disappears at the end of six months, and is soon thought by almost everyone to be dead. Marjorie bears his son.

Ten years go by, during which Marjorie lives on alone in Ray's cottage, supported by Jarius until he is tricked out of his money by Boynton, who is still trying to get Marjorie to marry him. Boynton seeks Jarius' approval of the match; he tries to bribe and threatens to kill him, but Jarius spurns his threats and offers. The woman in red suddenly appears, sick and delirious, raving about her husband and her son.

Ray meanwhile is a prisoner, chained to a rock in a gloomy cave used by smugglers on the New England coast. His jailers, of course, are the Fitch couple, who are being paid by Boynton to keep him there. Griggs and the judge of the court scene come to the cave, and in his drunkenness the judge states that Ray is the true heir of Oaklands and that they might do best for themselves by releasing him and putting him into possession of the property. Boynton suddenly appears, and, suspecting that the judge is plotting to betray him, shoots him. He then announces that Ray too must die that night. Ray has overheard the conversation of Boynton, Griggs, and the judge, has a vision of Marjorie, and in a desperate struggle breaks his chains and gets the pistol which Boynton left on a table after shooting the judge. Boynton returns with a dagger to kill him, and the pistol turns out to be empty, so the two men clutch and struggle desperately. Ray has a foot on Boynton's neck, and the dagger in his uplifted hand, when the woman in red rushes in with a shriek and stays the blow. Because of her prayers, Ray does not kill Boynton.

Not long after this eventful evening Boynton disappears on the very day it becomes known that Ray Hamilton and not he is the true heir to the Boynton estate. Marjorie, as Ray's wife, consequently becomes a wealthy woman and goes to live at Oaklands. As a result of his long confinement, his escape, and the terrible struggle, Ray develops amnesia. He leaves the cave, wanders about, and is found by Jarius and Marjorie, neither of whom,

²Most of the paragraphs in this and in the following synopsis correspond either to a scene or an act.

however, recognizes him. Marjorie takes the unfortunate stranger to Oaklands, where he slowly recovers his health and falls in love with his own wife. Jarius, meantime, takes a trip to Europe, and on his return tells Marjorie that after a twenty-year search he at last visited a real English lord, whose little girl was stolen by beggars years before, and that her own father and mother are coming by the next boat to visit their daughter and their grandson. Boynton, determined on revenge and disguised in a full beard as Thomas Hogarth, a New York detective, and Griggs, who hopes to be rewarded by Marjorie for revealing to her that the unknown convalescent is her own husband, now turn up. Boynton offers Griggs five thousand dollars to help him accuse and convict Ray Hamilton (the unknown) of his own murder (Ray Hamilton's fate has remained a mystery). Ray's love for Marjorie has increased, and he decides that perhaps in some former state of existence he was married to her. She is somewhat alarmed by his actual declaration of love, but she no sooner lets him leave her as if to go away than she confesses her own love for him to Kate and a moment later affectionately rejoins him. At this point Boynton, in his detective's disguise, informs Marjorie that he has been searching long and patiently for her husband's murderer, one Victor St. Clair, thief, swindler, and highwayman, who had put his dagger into Ray's heart for a handful of yellow dross and was seen doing it by three witnesses. He then pretends to recognize Ray as St. Clair, calls upon Griggs to identify him, and has him arrested, to escort him to the gallows. The woman in red is there at the end, as usual; she rushes in R.U.E., her clothes torn and her hair disheveled.

Ray is convicted of his own murder, sentenced to be hung, and sent to jail. The day before his execution Marjorie visits him, wearing a long black cloak, to assure him that she knows he is innocent. Concealed in the cloak he escapes; Boynton, still in disguise as Hogarth, is of course the one who discovers the interchange and sounds the alarm. He suggests to her that perhaps she and the unknown conspired together to cause Ray Hamilton's death, and that perhaps Hamilton was sacrificed for her own guilty love; he threatens to have her arrested as an accessory to her own husband's murder.

Ray flees to the vicinity of the cave on the rocky coast. Kate feeds him, and Jarius waits for a chance to get him away. Jarius now, at last, brings to a head the comic love-making he and Kate have been carrying on all through the play; he proposes to her and she accepts him. Shots and cheers off stage indicate that Hogarth with his posse of worthless fellows and hounds has at last found Ray.

But Ray is not immediately taken. He gets away from his pursuers and takes refuge in the same cave in which he was formerly imprisoned, where the woman in red happens to be apostrophizing a locket image of her former lover. Before she can hide him in a secret recess of the cave, his pursuers are upon him. Just as Boynton shoots she throws herself in front of Ray, and falls dead with the speech: "My son! My son! Oh God! this is thy retribution!" Boynton tries to get a rope around Ray's neck, but Jarius prevents this, rebukes him for inciting people to take the law into their own hands, and in a struggle pulls off his false beard. Griggs and the Fitches beg

for mercy. As a result of all this excitement Ray's memory begins to come back to him. He hears Marjorie singing a simple melody; he has a vision of her standing by a rose embowered gate. "I see my wife! She's waiting for me—waiting for me at the little garden gate! Marjorie! Marjorie! I am coming home! [*Marjorie listens*] I am coming home! [*She smiles and holds out her arms*] Marjorie! dont you know me? My God! I am Ray Hamilton!"

As this account of its story reveals, *Retribution* is primarily a rather crude nineteenth-century American melodrama, but it also belongs to the genre of the Yankee play, and it is furthermore interesting for its comic relief, much of which results from the characterization through their speech of several of its *dramatis personae*.

Jarius, as might be expected, uses the vocabulary of the typical stage Yankee:

afeerd, afore, allers, argyment, arterwards, cackalate, caliker, cap'n, chipper, dew, dumdest, ef, eout, fer, fit, Gadzickitty, a gallavantin, generally, hisself, hosses, a hummer, kerriage, naow, orter, passel, perlite, perpose, a power of, purty, ruther, sarvice, apple sass, shet, snake him away, tech, tew year old, thar, yeourn, yerself, widdered, etc.; the slickest piece o' caliker in the keounty, I've got suthin orful pertickler t' say t' yeou!, etc.

This is his first speech:

Wal gerate Jerusilam! Marjorie in tears! An' Ray dogon nigh the same way! Naow thar's nothin curus about me, but I'd jist gin a settin o' eggs t' know what the matter be! I nigh about raised that air boy! I've been a father 'n, a mother 'n, a gran'mother tew him, an' I never see him lose his grip like that afore! I'll jist bet my sorrel nag agin a three-legged clotheshoss as haow it's a lovers' quarrel! Oh love'll fetch a feller sometimes when greenapple colic wont faze him! Love's jist like seasickness—everybody laughs at it but the feller that's got it. But I aint curus—Oh I haint a spilin t' know—but I'm powerful feard that if I dont find eout purty soon I'll have a sick spell! Look-a-here boy! What's the meanin' o' all this? Spit it eout, an' dont be mealy-mouthed about it, fer Jarius Judkins has been yer friend ever since that summer mornin' nigh onto twenty-five year ago when old Widder Hamilton found yeou, a tiny baby a squallin on her front doorstep.

When Jarius disguises himself as a Jewish peddler, he speaks like this:

So hellup me crashus! Of I dond got efen py dose Yankee Shudkins I hope I may lif a tousand years! I dond got me keeked py some shentlemans! Dots vot! Nefer mind! I got me sometimes efen or my name vos not Isaac Apraham Solomon Tavid Yacob Oppensteimer! Dot's vot. . . . Gootmornin

mine frent! Can I sole you sometings today? I haf der ferry ladesd styles o' shentlemen's furnishing goots, yoosd imborded und der finesd on der markud!

Gabriel Griggs, the lawyer, is also deliberately characterized by his speech:

Ah here you are! huh? huh? Ah Mrs. Fitch, I salute you! You are looking charming this evening! huh? huh? My name is Griggs, Gabriel Garibaldi Gooseberry Griggs, senior member of the celebrated law firm of Griggs & Graball, Millville, Spindle street, Shoddy building, room 119, third floor, entrance on the alley; divorce cases a specialty, huh? huh? Quite a remarkable name, doncher think? And if I do say it myself, quite a remarkable man! huh? huh? My esteemed friend, the late Honorable J. Salomon Snooks, used frequently to say to me—Gabe, sez he, you are a most extraordinarily remarkable man! huh? huh? But now to business! Business is what brings money, and money buys good liquor, eh Mag? huh? huh? [She replies, "That it do deary!" and he continues, at first aside] Now just listen to that! deary! Poor thing, she cant help falling in love with me! huh? huh? They all do that! Just as natural for a woman to fall in love with me as it is for her to wonder how her back hair looks! huh? huh? Ah yes, deary—I—I mean Mrs. Fitch! huh? huh? Ah yes, yes, yes! I've got a little scheme afoot that there's money in, and I want y' t' help me. But first, have you any scruples? Sure? huh? huh?

Finally, here is one of the love passages between Jarius and Kate:

KATE. W'y howdy-do. Jist have a cheer 'n sot down. Well la Suz! If taint Jarius! All dressed up in store clothes 'n his boots actually blacked! When did y' git back from England? Whatever kin be the matter? Did y' git seasick? Well Jarius Judkins! be you a goin crazy or t' see the gals?

JARIUS. Both I guess. Do look kinder slick dont I? It's English y' know!

KATE. Slick? You jist look scrumptious! Well du tell! I'd as soon expected t' see the brindle cow climb the limburdy poplar as t' see you with a biled shirt on! So you're agoin t' see the gals be yer? Spose you'll give that cross-eyed old maid down t' Persimmon Flats a call fust?

JARIUS. Wal I kinder cackalate as haow I'll drop daown that a way. I tell yeou that yeoung lady's a hummer 'n no mistake!

KATE. Young? She haint young! She's forty if she's a day!

JARIUS. Sho!

KATE. Sho? Well did'nt Misses Higgins tell Mary Jane Smith that Lucy Jones told her that Nancy Brown said as how old Miss Padgitt's sister's husband seen the family record, an' she's *forty!* so there!

JARIUS. Wal I allers thought as haow she was about yeour age.

KATE. Jarius Judkins!

JARIUS. Ma'am?

KATE. You're jist real mean, so you air! I haint forty! I haint but twenty-se-v-en! [*Covers face with apron and sobs*]

JARIUS. Wal gerate Jerusilam! Naow Kate, I did'nt mean nothin! I swow I did'nt! Kate I—I— [*She lays her head on his shoulder and cries loudly—business for Jarius*] Wal gerate Jerusilam! [*Aside*] I'll squeeze her if it kills me! [*Extravagant embrace*] Kate I declar I must have a kiss!

KATE. Don't you do it Jarius!

JARIUS. Can't help it Kate! [*Kisses her with a resounding smack*] Wal gerate Jerusilam! Flapjacks 'n applesass haint a sarkumstance t' this! [*Enter Marjorie. Jarius kisses Kate again—sees Marjorie*] Wal gerate Jerusilam!

MARJORIE. Pardon me! I intrude.

JARIUS. No, no, no! I—I was jist a smellin Kate's breath t' see if she was agoin t' have the dumb ager agin this fall! [*Aside*] Phew! aint it hot!

Retribution is probably the only one of Brann's plays ever to have reached the stage; on June 30, 1893, it was acted at popular prices (15c, 25c, 35c, and 50c) at the Grand Opera House in San Antonio. Brann had been the chief editorial writer of the *Express* since the previous autumn. He was known to be the author of three plays; perhaps he had read them to a few of his friends. The Curran family (J. P. Curran may have been a professional actor) were interested in amateur theatricals. Someone probably made the suggestion that, the regular dramatic season being over, it would give everybody a good time ("the object being fun,³ the proceeds to be applied to the expense account," the *Express* noted on June 30) if Mr. Curran directed a performance of one of Brann's plays.

The cast chosen for the performance (it is given in the *Express* on June 30) was the following:

Ray Hamilton, the hero, Edwart Stuart Curran.

Henry Boynton, the handsome villain, Jack C. Colford.

Gabriel Griggs, a shyster lawyer, Fred Mussey.

John Fitch, a tough, Fred Stone.

Judge, Arthur Bowles.

³But this production of *Retribution* cannot be interpreted to mean that Brann no longer took his plays seriously, or that he had given up all hope of successful professional productions. An article in the *Waco Morning Times*, September 29, 1895, quotes W. H. Ward, Brann's business manager, as saying: "Two of the Apostle's plays will be mounted in New York about February next with magnificent scenic effect and every possible accessory to give it the proper entree into dramatic favor there and elsewhere. One of these plays will be a spectacular melodrama and it is the intention of the manager to expend \$50,000 in mounting it. Mr. Brann will go east January 1 to be present at rehearsals, etc."

Clerk of the Court, A. R. Williams.
 Jailor, J. R. Thompson.
 Marjorie Hamilton, Mrs. J. P. Curran.
 Kate, Yankee help, Mrs. Hattie Bowles.
 Woman in Red, a gypsy, Miss Annie O'Keefe.
 Mag, an old hag, J. P. Curran.
 Jarius Judkins, a Yankee who is always awake and drawing pay, Mr. Brann.

The public was prepared by the *Express* on June 25 to expect something pretty good:

"Retribution" is a powerful melodrama, permeated throughout by a vein of sparkling comedy. The plot is unique and well worked out, the "business" snappy and the climaxes of great dramatic force. . . . the characters are all strongly drawn and the tragic and comic elements so blended that it is purely a question of individual effort on the part of the company whether laughter or tears predominate.

On the day of the performance the *Express* added:

While it may not be so finished as his "Cleon," or his "American Women [sic]," it is said to equal either in interest. Mr. Palmer of the Madison Square theatre, New York, pronounces it the superior of "Monte Christo," a drama of the same school.

The day after the performance the *Express* referred to the play as "an interesting and realistic melodrama," and went on to comment:

The play is cleverly constructed, abounds in clever comedy and is highly sensational. There are several important parts and they were all in very competent hands. The presentation last night, though its first one, passed off very smoothly. Mr. Brann was cast in the leading comedy role, and his characterization of Jarius Judkins was cleverly carried out. . . . A detailed notice will be given in Sunday's issue.

This Sunday notice (could it have been by Brann himself?) was perfectly frank:

The performance of Mr. Brann's play was witnessed by a very good mid-summer audience. The play though a trifle long has undoubted merit. It is a melo-drama of the most pronounced type full of thrilling situations, and strong climaxes. . . . The plot is intricate, but the story is well worked out. With proper setting and a good company the play no doubt would have given genuine pleasure, but Friday night it was seriously handicapped by improper stage setting, stage management, and above all by a too apparent

lack of proper rehearsing. The players stumbled over their lines to such an extent as to ruin several of the climaxes, and in the last act by an accident the curtain was rung down in the middle of the act. It was unfortunate that the play did not receive a better presentation.

Mr. Brann in assuming the leading comedy role . . . attempted a part somewhat out of his line, some of his work merited praise, but the part as a whole required much of Mr. Brann, and in addition he was apparently bothered by the stumbling of the rest of the company. The most creditable work was done by F. Mussey as Griggs, his was a very clever sketch, though his work, like all the rest, was marred by his not being up in his lines. Mr. Colford made a fair Henry Boynton, and E. Stuart Curran and Fred Stone did fairly well, that is when they did not forget their lines. The Kate of Hattie Bowles was good, but the Woman in Red of Annie O'Keefe and the Marjorie of Mrs. Curran was disappointing. Mag was down on the bills as played by J. P. Curran, but his friends credit this as a mistake, he certainly could not have done such a miserable piece of work. It may not be hardly just to thus score an amateur performance, but it is sometimes merited and in this instance it certainly is.

Another of the three plays Brann copyrighted in 1889 was *Cleon*, hailed by a writer in the *Galveston Daily News* on December 30, 1888, as "truthfully . . . a masterpiece, both in conception and execution." *Cleon* is an American nineteenth-century romantic historical play, in which, according to this writer, Brann "followed as near as possible the early traditions and legends, and as his study and research have been extensive, the play has the additional merit of being semi-historical." It seems likely, because of its inferior merit, that *Cleon* was written before *That American Woman*, but of course it may not have been. It is interesting, at any rate, that these two plays are not repetitions of the melodramatic formula of *Retribution*. It even looks as if Brann may have deliberately decided that he wanted to try his hand at different types, and so, having begun with a melodrama, gone on to write a romantic historical play and a modern society drama. The story of *Cleon* is as follows:

One day in ancient times Midas, the King of Phrygia, rides into a forest on a boar hunt, with a retinue of nobles, amazons, ladies, and attendants. Helena, his daughter and his only child, wanders away from the hunting party, who search for her in vain. The lost princess is chased by a wild boar, but fortunately an unarmed, brave, strong, and handsome peasant, Cleon, strangles the beast and so saves her life. As she is binding a tusk wound in his arm with her kerchief, Venus appears and casts a love spell over the

couple. Cleon explains that he is the son of an armorer, and happened to be wandering about the forest trying to decide whether to forge swords with his father or to join Midas' army and use them. Helena, whom he takes to be a peasant girl, gives him a jewel, to enable him, by recompensing his father, to join the King's service; but she repulses him when, instead of kissing her hand, which she offers him, he tries to kiss her on the mouth. When the hunting party approaches, however, she herself offers him a farewell kiss. Arctinus, a nobleman who loves her, tries (but fails) to prevent this kiss by interposing his spear between their faces.

Back at the court of Midaeum the eighty-year-old Midas, whose approaching death has been predicted by an oracle, keeps his promise to make his daughter the bride of whatever Phrygian noble rescued her, and announces her marriage within thirty days to the absent Arctinus. Ion, another noble, arrives with the news that the Syrians, led by their giant king, had invaded Phrygia, and would have put its army to flight if a common soldier had not stopped the rout. Cleon had stripped Arctinus (whom he did not recognize and who was fleeing) of his armor, and then, wearing it himself, had killed the giant king, rallied the troops, led them in a general slaughter of the petrified enemy, and, by the submission of Syria, doubled Midas' kingdom. Arctinus, just returned, appears with Cleon in chains his prisoner, and accuses him of seizing the chief command and inciting the soldiers against the generals. He asks for his death, but Midas, grateful, although afraid that Cleon's apparent ambition is dangerous to the state, decrees that he shall be sold as a slave instead. Helena urges a different sentence, pleading in his behalf that he saved her life. A bold speech by Cleon infuriates Midas, who orders him beheaded at once. Before Arctinus' sword falls, however, Midas drops dead from his excitement, and Helena is hailed Queen of Phrygia.

Cleon remains at the court, and the Queen raises him to high honors and unbounded wealth. But because she is a woman, she cannot bring herself to declare her love, and he feels the difference in their rank too keenly to declare his love for her. Arctinus, of course, hates him for standing between himself and Helena, that is, the throne. So he suggests to Cleon that there is gossip about his ambiguous relation to the Queen, that the only way he can keep her name from infamy is to marry some other woman at once, that, in fact, he has a bride waiting for him even then at the temple. Helena angrily summons Cleon, as soon as Arctinus tells her of this hasty marriage, and accuses him of cowardice in fleeing from her own pursuing love. When he protests his own love, she says she will annul the marriage, buy his freedom, and make him hers. Cleon, however, replies that this would dishonor the woman he has just wed, and that having sworn a marriage oath to guard her happiness, he will not now bring shame upon her. This so angers Helena that she banishes him, decreeing also that his wife may not accompany him into banishment.

His banishment, however, does not affect her love for him. Although the law does not allow her to recall him, within three days she is telling Arctinus

that she will never marry except for love, and ordering Cleon's wife to take him quantities of gold and the message that his queen weeps for shame at having wronged him so. Myrina replies that she has never loved Cleon, that she married him only for the honors he has now lost, and that by the law his banishment frees her from her vows. The Queen nevertheless orders her to her duty. Eurydice, a favorite cousin of Helena who has always loved Cleon far more than Ion, the noble to whom she is engaged and is shortly to marry, overhears this conversation. She declares to Myrina her own infatuation for Cleon, and snatches at Myrina's suggestion that she take her place and go to him as his wife. "Cleon never looked carefully upon this woman's face or mine. She doth much resemble me! Should I to him and say, I am thy wife, he'd question not, but take me to his heart."

Cleon goes into exile by becoming a toiler at the forge in a Thracian wood. Four months later he is still in so great distress over his banishment and dishonor that he throws himself on the ground and calls upon Venus to teach him to forget. So she appears with a group of wood nymphs, to assure him that love will triumph over all and that sorrow is better than shame. Eurydice, who has joined him and whom he believes to be his wife Myrina, tries to comfort him. She has hardly re-entered their cottage before Ion, returning to Phrygia from a diplomatic mission to Thrace, appears with some soldiers and Myrina's father and decides to pitch camp near the forge. Ion, giving Cleon the news of Midaemum, tells how Eurydice, only a week before he was to marry her, had been stolen away from him by some vile thief or fiend. "But thy wife; thou dost not ask of her," Ion goes on. Eurydice's deception is soon discovered, of course, and as the two men begin to quarrel the King of Thrace appears. Ion demands Cleon as his captive, to kill, and when Cleon, to protect Eurydice's reputation, declares that he did take her by force, as Ion accuses him of doing, the King hands him over to Ion for justice to be done. When, however, Eurydice denies this lie, and kills herself with a dagger, the King declares Cleon is free, since in the cause of justice he is willing to risk his crown. When he realizes that Cleon is the famous Cleon who "slew the giant Leucosyrian King," he asks him to lead the Thracian army against Phrygia in the war which Ion has threatened, and overcomes Cleon's reluctance by reminding him that his wife has been made a slave at the court, "the sport of Knaves, the ribald jest of wantons . . . a consort for human toads." Venus enters and weeps for the dead Eurydice.

Myrina, meanwhile, preferring luxury to duty, has married the hunchback treasurer of the Queen, the richest noble of the realm. The great council of the nobles repeals the law of banishment. Helena straightway recalls Cleon, and orders festivities and joyfulness to celebrate his return. Ion, back from Thrace, reports that Eurydice has been found and is dead, and that Cleon confessed he had stolen her away. Helena, furiously angry, orders that Cleon be brought before her to hear his doom. The court jester makes it known that Arctinus engineered the marriage of Cleon to the fickle Myrina, and that Eurydice had been infatuated with Cleon. News arrives that the Thracian

army, led by an unarmored youth, is almost at the city gates. In the fighting that follows Ion and Arctinus are killed. Cleon demands his wife of Helena, but when he learns that she has already married another, decrees that both she and her husband shall live, but as slaves to the crown, which he lovingly places upon Helena's head. Venus, of course, except for an echo by Omnes, has the last word:

"Though Furies madly rage, and Hate's barbed arrows fall,
Love's Queen from age to age, doth triumph over all!"

One rather curious character to find turning up in a play set largely in an ancient court is an Elizabethan fool, the Jester:

More knavery! and all for love! Love! love! Everybody, from the Queen to the scullion, is mad in love! All but me, and I'm a fool! If I was not a fool I'd be in love and play the fool as never yet did fool so act the part assigned him by the gods, so the gods be thanked that made me as I am! Love! Love! 'Tis a mental sickness from parents dear bequeathed, that spreads from brain to blood; that lifts the spirit to highest heaven to dash it to deepest hell; that winks at faults most vile, makes idle speech God's oracles, and ugliness so rank 'twould fright the devil's imps seem beauty most divine! Oh dear! I fear that I too am in love! [*Feels stomach*] The Gods be praised! I'm only hungry . . . he is a heedless man who falls in love, a reckless man who cures his malady with a marriage, and a brave man who regrets not having ta'en the physic! . . . How madly will a woman love a man she cannot get; and how she will trample on and much abuse the sighing, love-sick swain who grovels at her feet! "Take me!" cries he. "The idea!" mocks she. "I love you dearly!" prates he. "Go to!" sneers she. "I'll die! I'll die!" moans he. "Small danger!" flouts she. "Fare-thee-well," says he. "You'll b-b-break my h-heart!" wails she, and reaches for him straight.

The Jester's special fondness for Helena is one of several Shakespearean echoes in *Cleon*.

The lines contain many "thee's" and "thou's" and "st" and "th" forms of verbs; the language of the play abounds in stilted and conventional expressions:

rob me of my breath, spent with the long struggle, service unto a maid forlorn, fresh from the field of war, dark with the smoke of sacrifice, hot haste, turned my raven locks to whitest snow, a youth of humble birth, I do protest he does me wrong, cup of joy o'erfilled, dearer than all the world beside, the objects of thy dear regard, fair as the blush of morn, thy dear honor, a maid of chastity unblemished, sole mistress of my heart, thy doom is sealed, a cruel dagger rived her heart in twain, etc.

From time to time a speech contains an aphoristic statement:

Find a maid, a fool thou'lt sure discover.

Rank suspicion, false and foul as hell, doth like a leprosy attain the minds of all mankind.

The carping world is ever swift to doubt that beauty great doth mask a heart of gold.

Maids are but tiresome creatures, the composite of which is foolish mirth and vanity, sighs and tears in equal measure.

My friends are every man who loves truth above gain and honor above life.

'Tis the nature of womankind to rail 'gainst that which most they prize, and chide those whom most they—love.

Maids enjoy the sport of angling.

The speeches of the play, although never lined off as blank verse, often fall into a loose iambic rhythm, as, for example, in the speech with which Midas opens the play, and in Cleon's rebellious speech to his king:

Lost! My dear daughter's lost in this dark wood, all filled with robbers vile and savage beasts! The night draws on apace and the god of storms doth ride upon the breeze!

I humbly thank thee that thou dost teach me a soldier's duty to his king! Now let every soldier know that when the god of battles rears his bloody front, and his captains do turn cowards, he must betake himself to flight! that valor is a crime, and to meet an arme'd [sic] foe and hurl him to his knees begets but infamy! [*To soldiers*] Oh comrades, what a sight is here! men of blood and brawn, who might with mailed hand rock the majestic world, the creatures of a weak old man, swayed by every poisonous breath blown from atween the wolfish teeth of rankling jealousy!

An interesting feature of this over-rhythmical prose is that in several passages of heightened emotional content the effect is tightened by the use of rhyme.

CLEON. Thy tears, sweet maid, do pain me more than the scratch inflicted by the angry boar.

HELENA. To thee, brave youth, all thanks are due; I had perished miserably but for you.

CLEON. May my sword ne'er rest by day or night until this slander be put to flight!

ARTINUS. Cleon, had'st thou as many hands as hairs, and every hand did wield a hundred swords thou could'st not conquer calumny! Blows give

fleeter wings to grievous tales of shame; in one only way canst thou guard our sov'reign's name.

CLEON. Good Arctinus, I pray thee give it breath!

ARCTINUS. And doom thee, friend, to worse than living death!

CLEON. I will not shrink! I know what you would say! 'Tis banishment! I must go far away!

ARCTINUS. The state doth need thee in these days of strife; here must Cleon tarry, and take—a wife.

CLEON. A wife say you? not that I pray!

ARCTINUS. My friend, there is no other way!

CLEON. Then can I find a maid who'll wed a peasant born, I'll lead her to the temple and make her all mine own!

ARCTINUS. A moment tarry. There is among the ladies of the court one most divinely fair, who would do honor to e'en so brave a soldier as Cleon.

CLEON. But she may answer nay!

ARCTINUS. Not so, for I do know her pure heart is already thine. Go thou to the temple and I will bring the maid.

It may be that the anonymous critic of this play already quoted wrote the first and only printed criticism *Cleon* has so far received. For him it was even more than a "masterpiece":

The plot is a strong one, the action is smooth, the climaxes models of dramatic power. Altogether the play is a superb one, and after reading it one experiences a feeling of surprise that there is a writer in Galveston possessed of sufficient dramatic and literary ability to produce such a meritorious work. Mr. Brann has done better than well, and if Cleon does not bring him fame and fortune it will be through no fault of the play itself. . . . the author of three such plays . . . can not long remain in the background . . .

The third play Brann copyrighted in 1889 was *That American Woman*, printed for the first time in this pamphlet, following this introduction. *That American Woman* is, of course, melodramatic, but in 1889 it would probably have been regarded as some sort of serious realistic play⁴ rather than as a good example of a genuine melodrama. A real melodrama then was a sensational play like *Retribution*, or a play, like Boucicault's *After Dark*, mentioned below, with really spectacular effects. Clarence Hartley, for example, is not the typical melodramatic villain. He is, to be sure,

⁴The descriptive phrase on the title page of the pamphlet, "an English society drama," was used in the article in the *Galveston Daily News*, December 30, 1888; a number of English and American nineteenth-century plays belong to this type.

a gambler and blackmailer, quite willing to kill a man, and fully intending to drive Pauline into a life of infamy if she will not yield to his wishes. But what are his wishes? There are no suggestions that he wants to seduce her, or even to mistreat her except to soften her affections toward him. When he first knew her in New York he apparently did not try to force her into becoming his mistress; he proposed marriage to her. It was not an empty proposal. His pursuit of her throughout the play is the pursuit of an infatuated man. He wants Pauline terribly, he is willing to go to any lengths to get her, but he wants her honorably; he wants a marriage, and as his "honored wife" he wants to take her away where "no breath of scandal will ever reach you!"

Brann does little to develop what his title might seem to suggest, the inability of his heroine, an American woman, to adjust herself to English life, or the way English life brings out the most typically American traits of a woman. This failure is not surprising; he had himself no more than a book and play knowledge of English life. Moreover, Brann partly makes up for any lack of distinction in his heroine by his characterization of Maud as a typical American girl of the tomboyish sort, a characterization which certainly gains from the English setting in which Maud is presented.

Brann, for one thing, seasons her speech with American slang and colloquialisms:

I thought you was agoin' t' stay here; he's awful nice; all befuddled; why cert; old chappie; chock full; I dont care a copper; you sneaking, treacherous coyote; cut sticks, will you; I'm not dead sure; it dont go—I aint built that way; 'fess up; fib; Auntie would have a fit; I thought I'd fixed her; pull your freight; but t'aint no go; haint; huh; I knowed that; pards; the miserable Piute; this poky old country; pretty middlin' civil; punkin pie; save your scalp; make yourself scarce; skedaddle; I could sling hash; 's matter?; straight goods; vamoose; etc.

Maud is a living character; she is, in fact, the one really living and memorable character in the three plays. Probably because she is a portrait from life, she is neither a faded shadow nor a conventional type. For Maud seems to have been an imaginative sketch of Brann's own oldest child, Inez, who in 1888 was ten years old. As one reads *That American Woman* Maud never seems to be as old as she must be, as old, indeed, as she is indicated to be.

Is this not because Brann, writing about Maud, a girl of sixteen or seventeen, was thinking of the boyish vitality of his own ten-year-old daughter? Inez, indeed, was a tomboy. One can still read in her own handwriting the postscript of an undated letter to her father, "Mamma says I am improving in manners," and the note she wrote to her parents the day before she committed suicide in July, 1890, "I was born for a rowdy and you would be ashamed of me." Maud-Inez is a character who deserves some attention in accounts of the young people who appear in nineteenth-century American plays.

Why did Brann stop writing plays in 1888? Perhaps the answer is that he was a good enough critic of his own work to realize that his abilities as a playwright were inferior to his abilities as a journalist, and that he would do best for himself by throwing all his abundant energies into his newspaper work. He may have brought with him the original version of *Retribution* when he settled in Texas in 1885, but it must have received its last revision in Galveston sometime during 1888, when *Cleon* and *That American Woman* were undoubtedly written.⁵ He would have been blind indeed that year, unless he stayed away from the theatre, and never noticed the advertisements or reviews of plays, not to have realized that considerably more exciting melodramas than *Retribution* were being written, that *Cleon* was a kind of play that was practically dead in the American theatre, and that what he had tried to do in *That American Woman* was being better done by others.

For during 1888 he might have seen at Galveston's Tremont Opera House:⁶

⁵The article in the *Galveston Daily News*, December 30, 1888, states that Brann "has lately completed two new plays . . ."

⁶No mention is made here of performances by minstrel companies, opera companies, variety and vaudeville troupes, a marionette troupe, a company of educated horses, and a few other miscellaneous attractions. Another Galveston theatre in which a few performances were given during 1888 was the Harmony Theatre in Harmony Hall. The Harmony Theatre, however, seems to have played a very minor part in the theatrical life of the city. An interesting note about this theatre, "A New Venture," is to be found in the *Galveston Daily News*, November 15, 1888, p. 5.

Gretchen, a version of the Faust and Marguerite story; *Othello* and *Hamlet*, with Louis James and Marie Wainwright; *Virgilius*, Knowles' old play with a Roman setting; *Romeo and Juliet*, with Margaret Mather; *Leah, the Forsaken*, an adaptation from the German; *The Honeymoon*, Tobin's comedy; *Francesca da Rimini*, Boker's tragedy; *The Hummingbird*, a farce with songs and other interpolations; *Davy Crockett*, with Frank Drew in the cast; *The White Slave*, a romantic drama of prewar Southern life;⁷ *The Shadows of a Great City*, a comedy drama of romantic and picturesque aspects of American life in and around New York; these during January.

Ingomar, an adaptation from the German with a Greek setting; *Pygmalion and Galatea*; *As You Like It* and *The Merchant of Venice*, with Marie Prescott and R. D. McLean; *Othello* and *Julius Caesar* with Edwin Booth and Lawrence Barrett; *Love and Duty* and *Bob, the Wild Flower*, two comedies; *John the Penman*, a crime-in-high-society play; *Gaston Cadol* and *Galba, the Gladiator*, two adaptations from the French; *Brutus*, Payne's tragedy; *Kerry Gow* and *Shaun Rhue*, two Irish comedies; *Frou Frou* and *Fairy Fingers*, two French comedies; Milton Noble's *From Sire to Son*, apparently regarded—at least on the road—as a specimen of the best modern American drama; *Rip Van Winkle* with Joseph Jefferson; *A Wife's Peril*, an adaptation from Sardou, *As in a Looking Glass*, a new English play, and Bulwer Lytton's old romance, *The Lady of Lyons*—all three with Lillie Langtry and Charles Coghlan; these during February, March, and April.

The Bandit King and *The Cattle King*, two melodramas with a quartet of acting horses; Minnie Maddern in *In Spite of All*, an adaptation from Sardou, and in *Caprice*; *Struck Gas* and *Later On*, two comedy farces with music; *Richard III*, *Othello*, and *Julius Caesar* with Thomas W. Keene; *Zo-Zo, the Magic Queen*, a musical comedy; *Faust*, with an elaborate Brocken scene; *Shane-Na-Lawn* and *The Irish Minstrel*, two Irish plays; these during September and October.

⁷The advertised itinerary of this play was: Galveston 1/23-24; Houston 1/25; Brenham 1/26; Austin 1/27; San Antonio 1/28; Waco 1/30; Fort Worth 1/31; Dallas 2/1-2; Denison 2/3; Sherman 2/4; Paris 2/6; Texarkana 2/7; Hot Springs 2/8.

Lost in London,⁸ a melodrama; *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*; *The Humming Bird* again and another comedy with music, *Three of a Kind*; *The Streets of New York*, Boucicault's melodrama; *Robinson Crusoe*, a spectacular burlesque; *The World Against Her*, a play "perfect in plot and portrayal"; *The Two Orphans*; *Bleak House*; *Engaged*, an English comedy; *Our Governor* and *The Mighty Dollar*, two comedies; *She*, a dramatization of Rider Haggard's novel; these during November.

Alone in London, "perfect both in plot and stage effect"; *Si Perkins from Pughtown*; *Jim the Penman* again; another melodrama, *Lights and Shadows*, in which "500 gallons of water [are] poured on the stage in the interval of forty-five seconds . . . and glass windows and doors are really smashed and broken to pieces by the anxious lover eager to go to the rescue of his sweetheart"; Lillian Lewis in four plays, *L'Article 47*, an adaptation from the French, and three English plays, *As in a Looking Glass*, *The New Magdalen*, and *An Unequal Match*; Boucicault's melodrama, *After Dark*, "A Huge River of Real Water on the Stage. Real Boats. Real Swans. Real Locomotives";⁹ *The Private Secretary*, a version of *Der Bibliothekar*; *Around the World in 80 Days*; and *Theodora*, an historical play from the French; these during December.

It is not unlikely that Brann saw a number of these plays; some of them may well have influenced his own three plays. *Virgilius*, for example, not only has a classical setting, but is written in a mixture of prose and blank verse which may have suggested the rhythmical prose of *Cleon*. Like *Cleon*, *Francesca da Rimini* contains among its characters a jester and a hunchback. And a two sentence synopsis of Frank Harvey's *The World Against Her* in the

⁸The advertised itinerary of this play was: Galveston 11/2-3; Houston 11/5-6; Columbus 11/7; San Antonio 11/8-9; Austin 11/10; Waco 11/12; Fort Worth 11/13; Dallas 11/14-15; Denison 11/16; Paris 11/17.

⁹So the advertisement. The review stated, "Manager Greenwall, in order that the railroad tunnel scene should not be less realistic than the great water scene, attempted to secure from Captain Jim Phillips of the Santa Fe a real locomotive and train, but the inconvenience of getting such properties into the theatre necessitated the abandoning of this scheme, and the nearest approach to railroad reality was a locomotive headlight attached to a dummy train, an exceptionally good imitation, which rumbled across the stage in a manner producing a very realistic effect."

News certainly suggests *That American Woman*: "It tells the story of a wife suspected by her husband of inconstancy, owing to the ingenuity of a villain, and abandoned to face the cruelty and scorn of the world. Her struggles to save her child and her misadventures in London, alone and helpless, are graphically told."

That American Woman is the most interesting of Brann's three plays; that is why it is the one printed here. It is likely that if Brann had written more plays they would have been rather like it than like either of the other two. It is, indeed, tantalizing to imagine what they might have been. By 1891 he had had the happy idea of going onto the lecture platform, and undoubtedly his desire to be a playwright must have been partly satisfied by his very great success as a lecturer, for on the platform he seems to have been an actor. If he had only used as the subject matter of some plays the kind of material which he partly did use in his lectures, his editorials, and in the *Iconoclast*, and if, in a few plays about social problems and conditions, he had brought to the subject matter his own vigorous way of saying things, the result would have been plays that, acted or unacted, would have been of ten times more importance to the history of American drama than the ones he did write. He may have realized this himself. At any rate, he has been quoted as having said to a questioner in Atlanta: "I'm tired of it [the *Iconoclast*], most infernally tired. I am anxious next year to devote myself to a higher class of work. I have a novel about half done, and also a play, and I am very hopeful that they may both succeed."¹⁰

Retribution, *Cleon*, and *That American Woman* fall short of the ability as a writer which Brann abundantly displays in his best work. His customary vigor of expression, his extensive, even if often florid, vocabulary, all the things, in fact, that make a typical piece of his writing so unmistakably his are for the most part lacking in the plays, which show a conventionality of expression and feeling and a lack of individuality that, for example, one does not feel in the 1893 editorial columns of the *San Antonio Express*.

¹⁰This conversation was reported by Orth H. Stein in an article in the Atlanta, Georgia, weekly, *The Looking Glass*, reprinted in the *Works*, XII, 68-70.

The three plays, however, are far from being of negligible interest. The professional theatre in Texas was only fifty years old in 1888. The plays make Brann a Texas playwright, and he seems to be the first Texas playwright more than one of whose plays have been preserved in either printed or manuscript form. However slightly, the plays illuminate and illustrate the history of American drama in the eighties. Maud especially is a memorable characterization of a tomboyish American girl, and Inez, Brann's first child, may be longer remembered as the model for Maud than as the subject of "The Last Lesson."¹¹ Brann has always been known to have been a versatile person, and his plays, especially in their variety, are admirable further evidence of his very considerable abilities. They are part of the literary work of the liveliest, most interesting, and most widely known and read newspaper man that the state has ever produced.

¹¹This article or editorial about his daughter was probably first printed in one of the newspapers Brann was connected with. It was later reprinted in one of the *Scrapbooks*, the May, 1898, *Iconoclast*, and the *Works*, XII, 85-87.

THAT AMERICAN WOMAN

by

W. C. BRANN

THAT AMERICAN WOMAN

A Drama in Four Acts

Persons Represented

Sir Harry Ainslee

Colonel Victor Easton

Clarence Hartley

Captain Frank Martin

John

French Servant

Pauline Ainslee

Maud

Mrs. Blake

Mabel Blake

Servants

Etc. Etc.

Place: England

Dress: Modern

Note:

Songs may be introduced for Maud
at the option of the Stage Manager

ACT ONE

SCENE—*Drawingroom at Elmswood.*

[Mabel seated at piano L., playing. Mrs. Blake seated R.C. at small table dozing over crochet work. Terrific crash off R. Mrs. Blake springs up.]

MRS. BLAKE. In mercy's name! what's that?

MABEL. *[Laughs]* Compose yourself mother; 'tis only Maud.

MRS. BLAKE. Maud?

MABEL. Of course. Who else could make such a frightful noise? She is a strange child. *[Looks over music]*

MRS. BLAKE. Child? She's a savage! What could have possessed Pauline to take her up? I would as soon have a wild buffalo in the house! I tell you Pauline had some stronger reason than pity for her friendless condition. *[Picks up crochet work—settles back with a heavy sigh—Mabel crosses to her]*

MABEL. What other reason could she have?

MRS. BLAKE. That's the question! Mabel, that woman has a secret that is not shared by her husband; mark that!

MABEL. Mother, what do you mean?

MRS. BLAKE. That you should have been Lady Ainslee, and may be yet if we can only unravel this American woman's history.

MABEL. Oh mother, how can you speak so!

MRS. BLAKE. Suppose that this woman's life has been an evil one?

MABEL. I will suppose nothing of the kind!

MRS. BLAKE. Well, you are indeed a generous rival!

MABEL. I am not her rival but her friend! She is Harry Ainslee's wife. Harry is lost to me forever! *[Turns away, hdk to eyes—Mrs. Blake adjust[s] spectacles and looks at her]* How foolish I am! There! there! the storm has passed! *[Crosses up stage—looks out of window]*

MRS. BLAKE. *[Aside]* The storm has not passed—it has not yet broke! When it has passed that American woman will no longer stand between my daughter and the title. *[Terrific crash off R. Mrs. Blake starts]* Mercy! There's that awful barbarian again! *[Rings bell on table—Enter John C.E.]* Send Maud to me at once!

[*Exit John C.E.*] I'll give the young savage a lecture that she'll not soon forget! [*Enter Maud R.U.E. torn apron, disordered hair—has bird cage with a rat in it—Dances*] Well Miss, are you practicing for the ballet?

MAUD. Eh? the what Auntie?

MRS. BLAKE. Never mind! At Lady Ainslee's earnest solicitation I have undertaken to supervise your education.

MAUD. Huh?

MRS. BLAKE. Huh? Is that another of your American idioms?

MAUD. Eh? Who's an American idiot?

MRS. BLAKE. Come here. Put that old cage down! [*Maud puts it on table*] Take your finger out of your mouth and do stop that everlasting swinging back and forth! I declare! you are incorrigible!

MAUD. Inco-what-ible? Say Auntie have I got to learn all those big words? Inco-inco—I pass! It's too many for me!

MRS. BLAKE. Upon my soul! How dare you?

MAUD. Well if I dont know the game I cant play it can I?

MRS. BLAKE. I'll have Sir Harry put you in a straight jacket!

MAUD. 'Smatter with this one Auntie?

MRS. BLAKE. Oh good gracious!

MAUD. Im 'fraid taint no use Auntie—you'll never make a society swell o' me! It dont go—I aint built that way!

MRS. BLAKE. You're a disgrace to the family!

MAUD. Well Auntie I cant help it—indeed an' indeed I cant! When Pauline gets tired o' me I'll go 'way! [*Apron to eyes*]

MRS. BLAKE. Where would you go?

MAUD. Back to Goodluck Camp I 'spose! Pa 'n ma's both dead, but I could sling hash in Mrs. Mahoney's boarding house, an—an— [*Sobs*]

MRS. BLAKE. The young beggar!

MAUD. I haint a beggar! so now! [*Mabel puts arm about Maud*]

MABEL. There! there Maud! Mother didn't mean to hurt your feelings.

MAUD. She did! she did! But Pauline likes me, an' so do you, an' Sir Harry, an' Captain Martin, an' the servants, an' the dogs, an—an—I dont care a copper for that old sage hen! So there! [*Business for Mrs. Blake*]

MABEL. Gently mother. [*Enter John C.E.*]

JOHN. [*Announcing*] Captain Frank Martin. [*Withdraws—Enter Frank C.E. Usual courtesies—Maud shakes his hands*]

MAUD. Ouch! Why didn't y' tell me y' was agoin' t' squeeze my hand, an' I'd a took that pesky ring off! [*Frank embarrassed*]

MRS. BLAKE. Maud, please sit down.

MAUD. Oh now please let me talk to Frank! Why we're old pards; haint we Frank?

FRANK. [*To Mrs. Blake and Mabel*] Miss Maud and I became acquainted in America.

MAUD. Now what have I done to you? *Miss Maud!* You used t' call me little Bright-eyes! [*Frank confused—Mrs. Blake motions to Maud to sit—Mabel amused*]

FRANK. Eh? Oh come now—

MAUD. Oh but you know you did! And when you kissed me in the summer-house—

MRS. BLAKE. Maud I am shocked!

MAUD. Well was'nt I though! Just 'spose Auntie that Frank was to kiss you right in the mouth when you was'nt looking, and—

MRS. BLAKE. Maud, go dress for dinner! You are too young to talk of kisses.

MAUD. Well goodness knows I dont get many to talk about since I come to this poky old country! [*Sighs*] If it was'nt for Frank— [*He scowls at her*] Why Frank! what are you making up such horrid faces for? [*Mabel breaks into a ringing laugh—Frank helpless—Maud looks from one to the other*]

MABEL. Really I beg your pardon Captain Martin. [*Toys with cage on table*] A rat! a rat! [*Overturns table and cage—stands on sofa—Mrs. Blake screams and clings to Frank—Maud picks up cage*]

MRS. BLAKE. Take it out! take it out! [*Maud shakes it out on floor*] No! No! Out doors! Out doors!

MAUD. Oh! [*Picks rat up by tail*] Why Auntie it's dead. See! [*Holds it near Mrs. Blake who screams, clings to Frank and motions her away—Exit Maud C.E.—puts head in*] Rats! [*Laughs—runs off—Frank puts Mrs. Blake in chair R.C. picks up table*]

MRS. BLAKE. The most remarkable child I ever saw! Captain Martin, do you know anything of her antecedents?

FRANK. Very little. Her father and mother died when she was ten years old and left her to the care of a warm-hearted but uncultured woman, who went west and kept a miner's boardinghouse. Amid those rough surroundings the child grew up, a veritable wildflower. When Sir Harry and his bride visited America they stopped a day at Goodluck camp to enjoy the mountain scenery. There Lady Ainslee saw Maud and adopted her. [*Enter Pauline and Ainslee C.E. Greetings*]

MRS. BLAKE. [*To Pauline*] I attempted to give your protege a lesson in deportment, but she was so rude that she actually frightened me.

PAULINE. Poor child! She was reared amid rough surroundings and never knew a mother's love. [*Mrs. Blake adjusts glasses and looks searchingly at Pauline*]

MRS. BLAKE. Captain Martin was just telling us that she was ten years old when her mother died.

PAULINE. [*Confused*] Why—I—that is—I believe I did hear as much. [*Converses with Ainslee*]

MRS. BLAKE. [*Aside*] That was a blunder my lady! You nearly betrayed yourself that time! [*Adjusts glasses—looks at Pauline—to Ainslee*] Did you ever notice how strangely Maud's eyes resemble Lady Ainslee's?

AINSLIE. Yes; I have mentioned the resemblance to Pauline, but it seems to displease her.

MRS. BLAKE. The very same expression. Have'nt you observed it?

AINSLIE. Very frequently. Their dispositions are much alike also.

MRS. BLAKE. Could'nt be more so if they were mother and daughter! [*Pauline starts violently—Mrs. Blake adjusts glasses and looks at her*] Why how pale you are! Support her Harry! I believe she's going to faint! [*Ainslee places her in easy chair R.C.—Mabel applies restoratives*]

PAULINE. The heat—the room is very warm!

MRS. BLAKE. [*Shivers*] Warm? I find it quite chilly! 'Tis very strange! It must have been our conversation that affected you.

PAULINE. There—I'm better now.

MRS. BLAKE. I'll be very careful not to speak again of Maud's strange resemblance to you.

PAULINE. I—I do not mind it; 'tis but a coincidence.

MRS. BLAKE. Why of course! what else could it be? [*Aside*]
What else indeed? [*Enter John C.E.*]

JOHN. [*Announcing*] Mr. Clarence Hartley. [*Retires*]

PAULINE. [*Aside*] Clarence Hartley! He has found me at last!
[*Enter Hartley C.E. Ainslee greets him warmly and presents him*]
Oh what shall I do? what shall I do?

AINSLIE. Lady Ainslee, a particular friend of mine and a countryman of yours, Mr. Clarence Hartley. [*Pauline startled—Mrs. Blake adjusts glasses and observes them—Ainslee looks at them curiously*]

PAULINE. Welcome to Elmswood Mr. Hartley. [*Ainslee leaves them*]

HARTLEY. I think we have met before, Lady Ainslee.

PAULINE. Indeed? Surely you must be mistaken.

MRS. BLAKE. [*Aside*] Oh no he is'nt!

HARTLEY. So you are Lady Ainslee now? You have done remarkably well—considering.

PAULINE. Sir! did you come here to insult me?

HARTLEY. Does your husband know your history?

PAULINE. What is that to you?

HARTLEY. Dont you think you had best answer me?

MRS. BLAKE. [*Aside*] Oh if I could only hear!

PAULINE. He does not know. If you value my happiness you will depart at once and keep my secret.

HARTLEY. Why should I value your happiness? Why should I keep your secret?

PAULINE. S-sh! we are observed! Keep it until I see you again! Promise me that!

HARTLEY. So be it. [*They cross up stage conversing*]

MRS. BLAKE. [*Aside*] Happiness! Secret! Goodness, I wish I could have heard!

FRANK. [*To Ainslee*] Where did you pick that fellow up?
[*Hartley*]

AINSLIE. Got acquainted with him in New York. Jolly good company. Lawyer I believe.

FRANK. Worse than that.

AINSLIE. Is't possible? [*Frank nods*]

FRANK. He is a cardsharp and a professional blackmailer.

AINSLEE. Are you sure? [*Frank nods*]

FRANK. Sure.

AINSLEE. I'll kick him out! [*Starts forward*]

FRANK. No; he's got no kick coming; you invited him here. Fire him gently—he's a killer.

MRS. BLAKE. Captain Martin, will you give me your arm for a turn in the garden?

FRANK. With pleasure. [*Gives her his arm—Exit all but Ainslee and Mabel R.U.E. Mabel takes Ainslee's arm—they move R.*]

AINSLEE. 'Tis very strange! [*They pause R.C.*]

MABEL. What is strange cousin?

AINSLEE. The meeting of Pauline and this man Hartley. You heard what Frank said of him?

MABEL. Yes.

AINSLEE. Lady Ainslee and he know each other well and are trying to disguise it. What does it mean? Mabel, several times of late your mother has hinted that my marriage was too hasty. You have ever been like a dear sister to me, and will, I know, keep naught from me that concerns my happiness and my honor.

MABEL. Mind it not dear cousin! My mother's suspicions—

AINSLEE. Suspicions?

MABEL. Pardon cousin; that word was illy chosen.

AINSLEE. Do you mean to say that your mother suspects my wife of being unworthy.

MABEL. No, no! not so bad as that cousin! but mother seeks for faults in Pauline instead of virtues.

AINSLEE. And why?

MABEL. Because—because—

AINSLEE. Because?

MABEL. Harry you are cruel! Because she imagines that but for Pauline I might—might have been— [*Turns away*]

AINSLEE. Mabel! [*She turns to him*]

MABEL. Cousin, let no doubts assail your heart! Look upon your wife's sweet, womanly face! Sin has left no record there!

AINSLEE. God bless you Mabel! [*Kisses her—Pauline and Hartley appear C.E. Hartley calls Pauline's attention to Ainslee and Mabel—laughs—they pass on*] Your words roll back the

clouds that were gathering dark and heavy on my soul. [*Leads her R. Exit Mabel R.S.E. Enter John C.E.*]

JOHN. [*Announcing*] Colonel Victor Easton. [*Retires—enter Easton C.E. Ainslee greets him warmly—leads him front*]

AINSLEE. Well this is a surprise indeed! I had about given you up for dead—not a line from you for half a year!

EASTON. I got touched in a skirmish six months ago. What has been happening in England, Harry.

AINSLEE. And you have'nt heard of my marriage?

EASTON. What! You dont mean it! By Jove! I congratulate you! [*Shakes his hand*] Married? You dont look it! Who is the fortunate lady? or rather who was she?

AINSLEE. Cant you guess?

EASTON. Not in a month!

AINSLEE. She will be in presently and I will not spoil the surprise!

EASTON. Oh come now!

AINSLEE. Not a word! But what brought you to England?

EASTON. Well—er—fact is old fel, I've come home to get married.

AINSLEE. You dont say! Let me—[*Offers hand*]

EASTON. Not yet! You see I have'nt spoken to the lady yet, and—well, she might refuse me you know.

AINSLEE. Small danger!

EASTON. Well, I've come from India to ask her. If she accepts me I'll resign my commission and settle down to domestic enjoyments; if she rejects me, why I suppose I'll be off to the wars again; but it'll be devilish tough, old fellow!

AINSLEE. May the Fates prosper you in the fair lady's eyes! [*Shakes his hand*] Excuse me a moment old fellow; I'll bring my wife to you.

EASTON. Certainly. [*Exit Ainslee R.U.E. Easton looks after him*] Ainslee I envy you! a loved and loving wife—a beautiful home in England! Oh I'm so weary of foreign camps! Twenty years in arms—twenty long years of blood and death, of toils and grisly wounds! Oh if she *should* refuse me! [*Enter Pauline C.E.*] Pauline!

PAULINE. Victor! [*Springs into his arms—he kisses her as Mrs. Blake appears C.E.—she adjusts her glasses and looks at them*]

EASTON. I did not expect to find you here!

PAULINE. Did not expect to find me here! Why Victor! I wrote you three several times regarding my marriage.

EASTON. Your marriage?

PAULINE. Yes; Harry and I were married six months ago. Why do you look at me so strangely? Oh Victor! I thought that you would be pleased!

MRS. BLAKE. [*Aside*] Well, here's another mess! Sir Harry should see this! [*Exit C.E.*]

PAULINE. Surely you are not angry Victor?

EASTON. Angry? no; but very, very sorry!

PAULINE. Victor you alarm me! Is not my husband all that a man should be?

EASTON. A woman and yet so blind! [*She looks searchingly at him—starts slowly back*]

PAULINE. Oh Victor!

EASTON. Pauline, ever since I took you out of the streets, a friendless girl in a strange land, and gave you a home, I have loved you! I was wrecked in fortune—my sword was my only dependence. I could not ask you to wed me under those conditions! For fifteen years I have hoarded my pay with a miser's care that I might be able to leave the army and make you my wife. I came home from India to tell you my love, only to find you lost to me forever.

PAULINE. Victor, this is not like you! Remember that I am your friend's wife.

EASTON. No Pauline, 'tis not like a soldier to cry out with pain, but even the bravest will sometimes play the coward when the iron strikes deep!

PAULINE. [*Gently*] Victor, you must forget that you ever loved me.

EASTON. No Pauline; this wound is too deep for forgetfulness. But no more of this. Let me remain near you a few days and then I'll go back to India—will bid England a long farewell. [*Pauline puts hdk to eyes and bows her face on Easton's shoulder*] Tears Pauline? [*Ainslee appears C.E.*]

PAULINE. I weep that one so near and dear to me is unhappy, and I the unwitting cause! [*Easton puts arm about her—leads her off R.U.E. Harry comes forward—Enter Mabel C.E.*]

AINSLEE. Well by Jove!

MABEL. What is the matter cousin?

AINSLEE. [*Pointing R.*] Have you no eyes? Lady Ainslee weeping on Colonel Easton's shoulder!

MABEL. Perchance she has cause to weep. Why should he not comfort her? Has he not acted a dear father's part toward her for fifteen years? You jealous of Victor Easton? Oh fie cousin! [*He looks at her*]

AINSLEE. Mabel you are an angel! [*Exit both C.E. Enter Maud L.U.E. with bag of books, slate etc. Sits in easy chair R.C. takes books out of bag, whistling—business studying*]

MAUD. Mathematics! I hate mathematics! This old book's just chock full o' impertinent questions! [*Reads*] "A and B leave Greenwich at noon January onct 1850, A traveling east and B west." Now I wonder which way the rest of the alphabet goes? [*Reads*] "A travels 100 miles a day while B travels but 50." I guess A's going to collect a bill and B to pay one! [*Reads*] "What will be the date of their meeting, and what the longitude?" Oh goodness! [*Figures on slate*] B travels west. I wonder if he'll go through Goodluck and see old Missus Mahoney and the rest of the boys? Well, they wont know him if he does, that's certain! He'd better be pretty middlin' civil while he's in Goodluck or there's exactly where A'll find him! B—B travels—oh Im all *be-fuddled!* [*Clock on the mantel R. strikes one—Maud looks at it—makes face at it—throws books at it—enter Mrs. Blake R.—book strikes her—she faints*] Oh great scott! what have I done? Auntie! Auntie! [*Tries to lift her—pulls her wig off—horror*] Oh mercy! I've scalped her! What shall I do? Where can I hide the body? [*Runs about*] Oh dear! Oh dear! [*Sees galvanic battery on table*] Frank's galvanic battery! Just the thing! Frank says it will raise the dead, and I do hope it'll raise Auntie! [*Puts handles in Mrs. Blake's hands—pulls out slide—Mrs. Blake springs up twitching and screaming*]

MRS. BLAKE. Murder! eouw! O-h-h! Take it off! take it off! [*Runs after Maud who screams and climbs on table*]

MAUD. Drop it Auntie! drop it!

MRS. BLAKE. I cant! I cant! O-h-h! eouw! help! help! [*Con-tortions—enter John C.E.*]

JOHN. A female lady in distress? John Tompkins to the rescue!
[Seizes battery—sticks fast—business for all three—all shouting—Frank rushes in C.E.—laughs—rolls on floor and shouts—Mrs. Blake and John seesawing, twitching and screaming—Frank shuts off current—Mrs. Blake faints in his arms—John puts hands in pockets and walks gingerly around the battery]

FRANK. John, take that battery to my room.

JOHN. Haw now master Frank, hi would'nt tech hit fer a ten pun note! *[Frank fans Mrs. Blake, who revives]*

FRANK. Nonsense! Take it and be off! *[John picks it up gingerly with tail of his coat—moves C.E.]*

MAUD. Lookout! it's loaded! *[John drops battery and rushes off C.E. yelling]*

FRANK. How did this happen?

MRS. BLAKE. *[Points to Maud]* The barbarian! the barbarian!
[Exit R.U.E. Frank holds out arms—Maud springs into them from the table]

FRANK. Maud, you'll be the death of that old lady yet!

MAUD. I thought I'd fixed her that time sure, and when she misses this *[Holding up wig]* I spect I'll wish I had! Where's Pauline?

FRANK. Walking in the garden with Colonel Easton I believe.

MAUD. That handsome soldier? Oh aint he grand!

FRANK. Eh?

MAUD. I think he's awful nice!

FRANK. Oh you do?

MAUD. Pauline's often told me about him. She says he's a regular—a regular—

FRANK. Old stick-in-the-mud?

MAUD. No, that aint what she called him. He's a hero, and I do love heroes!

FRANK. Well, as I'm not a hero I might as well go! Goodbye Miss Maud. *[Exit C.E. looks slyly in—Maud sits R.C. looks at book]*

MAUD. Goodbye Captain Francis Marion Martin. *[Pause]* I said goodbye; why dont you go? *[He disappears—she looks slowly around]* Why he's gone! I dont care! *[Reads—bursts out crying]* Frank! *[Runs C.E.]* Frank! Come here a minute! *[Enter Frank]*

C.E.] I—I forgot to ask you where you are going. Perhaps you'd better leave your address in case any mail comes for you.

FRANK. Oh send it to Chicago. [*Turns to go*]

MAUD. Goodbye.

FRANK. Goodbye.

MAUD. Is that all?

FRANK. All?

MAUD. Yes; you might shake hands with a feller before you go. [*He does so*] Say Frank, that black dye on your moustache wont come off will it?

FRANK. Oh I supposed that Colonel Easton had them all reserved! [*Kisses her*]

MAUD. No; there's *two* or *three* he's got no claim on. [*He kisses her again*]

FRANK. Oh Maud, why will you break my heart?

MAUD. I aint a breaking it!

FRANK. You are too! [*Kisses her*]

MAUD. Well, you seem to be doing pretty middling well for a man struggling with a fractured heart and a bad breath!

FRANK. You said that you loved Easton better than anybody!

MAUD. Did'nt! did'nt! did'nt!

FRANK. Oh Maudy!

MAUD. Oh Frankie! [*They embrace*]

FRANK. Aint this nice?

MAUD. Kinder. Goodbye Frank.

FRANK. Eh?

MAUD. Goodbye old chappie! When you get to America go out to Goodluck and kiss old Missus Mahoney and the boys!

FRANK. Eh?

MAUD. Just for me you know!

FRANK. Maud I love you!

MAUD. Ho! I knowed that a longtime!

FRANK. [*Kneels*] Here on my knees I swear—

MAUD. Oh for pity's sake dont swear here! Auntie would have a fit! Please get up Frank. You'll make your new spring pants bag at the knees!

FRANK. Maud is'nt your soul full of a wild, deep yearning, a kind of a strange longing, a—

MAUD. It is! it is!

FRANK. Oh I knew it Maud!

MAUD. Yes; I'd just give anything for a good oldfashioned punkin pie, such as old Missus Mahoney used to make for Christmas! [*Smacks her lips—sighs—Frank turns away*]

FRANK. Oh Maud, why will you be so bitterly cruel! [*She goes up to him*]

MAUD. Why Frank, dont you like pie? [*He puts one arm around her—She looks at it, then at his other arm*] Say Frank, that's an awful one-sided piece o' business! [*Puts both arms about her—she sighs*] Oh Frank you remind me of the time I was hugged by a grizzly out near Goodluck! [*Enter Mrs. Blake C.E.—she holds up her hands—Frank sees her*]

FRANK. Come into the garden Maud! [*Exit Frank and Maud R.F.E.*]

MRS. BLAKE. Bless me! the young minx! [*Sits R.C.—smooths hair—looks startled—runs hands over head—starts up—screams*] my wig! It's gone! O-h-h! and a minute ago I was trying to make an impression on Colonel Easton! Well, I must have succeeded! [*Sees wig on table—puts it on wrong side before*] Tut! tut! tut! Ever since Sir Harry married that American woman and brought that young barbarian here my nerves have been kept in a perfect quiver! [*Sighs—Enter Ainslee L.*]

AINSLEE. Aunt, do you know where I'll find Lady Ainslee?

MRS. BLAKE. I saw her and your American *friend*, Mr. Hartley, in the summer house a few moments ago.

AINSLEE. [*Aside*] Pauline with that gambler again? After being informed of his true character! [*Aloud*] Aunt, you must be mistaken.

MRS. BLAKE. Unfortunately I am not mistaken.

AINSLEE. Unfortunately? Aunt, what do you mean?

MRS. BLAKE. Oh nothing! nothing!

AINSLEE. But you do mean something! This is not the first time that you have spoken strangely of my wife. Aunt, if you know aught against the fair fame of the woman who bears my name 'tis your duty to speak!

MRS. BLAKE. [*Rising*] I *know* absolutely nothing against her.

AINSLEE. By heaven you mock me! You suspect her? Of what? [*Seizes her wrist*]

MRS. BLAKE. Oh do not ask me! Perchance I wrong her in my thoughts! Oh pray heaven it may be so!

AINSLEE. Oh why will you torture me! Speak.

MRS. BLAKE. I suspect that her past life has not been altogether blameless.

AINSLEE. You wrong her! by heaven you wrong her!

MRS. BLAKE. What do you know of her past?

AINSLEE. Her past? [*Throws gold piece on table—Pauline and Maud appears C.E.—unobserved*] 'Tis not necessary that I should know the history of that piece of metal to determine its value—I know that it is pure gold! So with my wife! I look upon her honest face, into her truthful eyes, and there read, in letters traced by the finger of God, the certificate of her moral worth! [*Maud pulls off her hat—swings it*]

MAUD. Hip, hip— [*Pauline puts hand over her mouth*]

MRS. BLAKE. Oh what is blinder than the eye of love! Right where you stand, not an hour ago I heard Lady Ainslee pleading with Hartley to keep her secret—heard him threaten to betray her—heard this American adventurer speak to her—to Lady Ainslee—to your wife—in terms of scorn! and yet she would have you believe that they were strangers until today!

AINSLEE. No more! I will hear no more!

MRS. BLAKE. I beg your pardon; I thought you bade me speak! [*He motions her to proceed*] How came Pauline in England? the protegee of a British officer famed for his amours? A soldier of fortune finds a beautiful girl in the streets of London—a girl who has drifted across the sea alone! He takes her to his home and keeps her secluded for fifteen years, and then kindly allows her to become Lady Ainslee!

AINSLEE. Oh woman! woman! for God's sake have mercy! why will you fill my heart with foul suspicion and make my heaven a hell!

MRS. BLAKE. Are you content to play King Arthur to your *friend's* Sir Launcelot?

PAULINE. [*Advancing*] No! nor will he play Othello to your Iago! Woman what would you do? How have I wronged you that you seek such cruel revenge as this? Do you envy me my jewels? my wealth? my home? Take them all, but leave me my good name—

leave me my husband's love! [*Extends arms to Ainslee—he turns from her—Easton appears C.E. Hartley L.*] Husband! you turn from me! Oh will you suffer me to be slain by an envious woman's perjured tongue?

MRS. BLAKE. How dare you? Had I told your husband all I knew you would not now be beneath this roof! [*Easton restrains Maud*]

PAULINE. Tell him woman, in God's good name! If you do know aught that I have done that ill becomes an honored wife I charge you speak! You cannot! Woman, you have lied!

MRS. BLAKE. And this to me! Can you deny that Maud's your daughter?

PAULINE. My daughter?

MRS. BLAKE. Your daughter—a child of shame—yours and Clarence Hartley's! Deny it if you can!

AINSLEE. Pauline! speak to me! One word and I'll believe you 'gainst all the world! You do not answer me! My God! 'tis true!

PAULINE. [*With an effort*] No!!! [*Falls fainting in Ainslee's arms—Maud crosses R. and faces Mrs. Blake—Easton L. and faces Hartley—Maud puts hands on table and looks into Mrs. Blake's face*]

MAUD. Old girl, you're in the soup!

CURTAIN

ACT TWO

SCENE—*Same as act 1.*

[Frank lolling on sofa L. Ainslee pacing the floor. Frank sits up and looks at him.]

FRANK. Say old fellow, I'm not at all inquisitive, but I confess that I'd like to know what's been the matter with you for the past two or three days.

AINSLEE. The matter with me?

FRANK. Exactly. You're growing so insufferably dull, even for an Englishman, that I'm tempted to pack up and be off to America!

AINSLEE. To America? Just the thing! when do you start?
[Frank looks at him with a grimace]

FRANK. Say old fellow; you'll find ice in that pitcher.

AINSLEE. Ice?

FRANK. Yes; you might slip a small piece of it down my back just to take the chill off!

AINSLEE. Forgive me Frank! You spoke of returning to America, and I only thought of the very great service you could do me there.

FRANK. I accept the apology. Now stop that eternal wear and tear of the carpet and tell me what I can do for you in the land of the free and home of the bonanza king.

AINSLEE. Frank, I want you to acquaint yourself with Lady Ainslee's history, from her birth until she came to England. Do this, report to me, and name your own reward.

FRANK. What does this mean?

AINSLEE. Ask no questions. Will you accept the mission?

FRANK. Not unless I know its object.

AINSLEE. Very well. *[Turns R.—Frank whistles softly]*

FRANK. *[Aside]* Jealous husband, by the Eternal! *[Goes up to Ainslee—puts hand on his shoulder]* Have I offended you old fellow?

AINSLEE. Not that; but I did not expect a refusal; I would do anything for you!

FRANK. Then perhaps you will tell me why you have suddenly become so deeply interested in your wife's past. *[Pause]*

AINSLEE. Frank you are my friend—I will confide in you! There be those who dare hint that Lady Ainslee's past life was not altogether blameless. I desire to vindicate her.

FRANK. No! Some poisonous reptile has been distilling its venom in your ear, and you want me to go to America and spy into every page of Lady Ainslee's early life in order to set your own base doubts at rest! There's not gold enough in England to tempt me to the work!

AINSLEE. [*Seizing Frank's hands*] Then you believe her true?

FRANK. Good God! dont you?

AINSLEE. I do, and yet—

FRANK. And yet? And yet you doubt! Lady Ainslee is my countrywoman, and were you other than her husband and my dear friend I'd call you out! By heaven Sir Harry, you dont deserve good steel—you deserve the lash!

AINSLEE. Frank, those are hard words!

FRANK. But true ones! You want me to search your wife's record and lay the result before you. Suppose I do; may I then scan yours and report to her? Are you willing that Lady Ainslee should know your past, even as you seek to know hers?

AINSLEE. My past? Tell Pauline? I'd kill the man who dared do it!

FRANK. Oho! Then she took you on trust, even as you took her? She only knew that she loved you—never asked if you had committed a crime.

AINSLEE. A crime? Oh Frank be merciful!

FRANK. Forgive me old fellow! I had no idea I was striking a sore tooth.

AINSLEE. Frank, since you will not accept the mission of a spy perhaps you will undertake one of love and justice. [*Sits on arm of sofa*] When but nineteen years old I visited America. I was wild, and fully expecting to get into some scrape I dropped the Ainslee from my name and was known as Harry Rodney, the latter being my middle name. I became enamored of a beautiful young girl, the daughter of a clergyman. I well knew that my father would not consent to our union, but resolved to wed her when I attained my majority, regardless of consequences. I returned to England and corresponded regularly with my fiance. Suddenly her

letters ceased. My father died and I hastened to America, only to learn that her father had driven her from his door with a curse upon her and her helpless babe. She had gone—heaven knows whither—to hide her shame! [*Starts up*] Frank, find that wronged girl—find my child!

FRANK. Find her? That you may tell her that you have placed it beyond your power to right this grievous wrong?

AINSLEE. That I may beg her forgiveness—that I may provide for the child! Frank, I searched ten years for her!

FRANK. You should have searched ten years more before making another woman your wife. But what's done cant be undone, so you might as well rest easy.

AINSLEE. Rest? For fifteen years rest by night or day has been to me a stranger! I loved Louise!

FRANK. [*Looking L.*] S-sh! Whisper it gently, for here comes your wife. [*Enter Pauline and Maud L.*]

PAULINE. Good evening Captain Martin. Why husband, what's the matter? Are you ill?

AINSLEE. No—no! 'tis nothing.

PAULINE. Nothing indeed? Captain Martin, I appeal to you!

FRANK. Ah—you see—that is—Sir Harry and I have been quarreling again.

PAULINE. Quarreling? And again?

FRANK. Uh huh—Yes'm! Why that's nothing for us!

PAULINE. Quarreling! and about what?

FRANK. [*Aside*] Oh the devil! [*Aloud*] Why—er—you see Sir Harry maintains that you are handsomer than Miss Maud, and I—er—well you see—

PAULINE. Nonsense Captain Martin! [*Takes Ainslee's arm—they cross L.*]

FRANK. Yes'm. [*Aside*] Lord! She had me stuck!

MAUD. [*To Frank*] The English do say that the Americans are the most talented liars in the world!

FRANK. Eh?

MAUD. Frank, what made you tell that fib?

FRANK. [*Aside*] I dont believe that girl's got much confidence in me!

MAUD. Come, come! 'Fess up!

FRANK. I was just telling him that I must sail for America by next steamer and—

MAUD. And leave me here? Oh Frank!

FRANK. Why this is your home. Dont you like the people here?

MAUD. Yes; I like Sir Harry, an' Pauline, an' Mabel, an' hate old Mrs. Blake pretty well, an—an—but I thought you was agoin' t' stay here all the time!

FRANK. Another Indian war has broken out in the west. I am a soldier and must go where duty calls.

MAUD. But you may be killed!

FRANK. And if I am, will you—

MAUD. See that your grave's kept green? Oh Frank! How can you ask? I'll have it enclosed with a beautiful iron railing, and get you the prettiest tombstone, with a lamb carved on it and—why what's the matter? dont you want the lamb?

FRANK. I never was partial to mutton! But Maud, you have'nt given me your promise yet!

MAUD. S-s-h! They'll hear you!

FRANK. I dont care! I love you dearly and want you to be my wife. Will you promise? [*Maud laughs—brings doll carriage front*] What's that?

MAUD. It's my dolly. Say Frank, dont you think you'd best wait 'till I shelve my toys before talking to me of love and marriage? Come; dolly wants to take the air. Carry her down the steps for me while I bring her cab. [*Puts large doll in his arms—he glances at Ainslee and Pauline—holds it behind him by one foot*]

FRANK. The devil!

MAUD. No; her name's Rose. [*Exit Frank and Maud C.E. Exit Ainslee L.U.E.—Pauline moves L.C. and drops wearily into arm chair*]

PAULINE. Oh how is this all to end? My husband grows more suspicious every day and Hartley more insolent and threatening! Would to heaven that I had told Sir Harry all when first he sought my hand! What shall I do? What shall I do? Is there no one to whom I can turn for aid? There is! Victor Easton! I will

tell him all and be guided by his counsel! [*Rings bell—Enter John C.E.*] John, tell Colonel Easton that I desire to see him here. [*Enter Hartley C.E.*]

HARTLEY. [*To John*] Dont risk your precious health by untimely haste my good man. An hour hence will do. [*Slips coin into his hand—exit John C.E.*]

PAULINE. [*Rising*] Mr. Hartley, why are you here?

HARTLEY. [*Blandly*] Because I have business with you. You failed to come to me, so I have come to you.

PAULINE. If my husband finds you here there will be trouble!

HARTLEY. Very likely, so let us be expeditious. I asked you to leave this Englishman and go to America with me. Your answer if you please.

PAULINE. You insult me sir! Remember that my husband is within call! [*Hartley rings bell violently*] What would you do?

HARTLEY. Send for your husband—You appear to desire his presence at this interview! [*Enter John C.E.*] John, tell your master that Lady Ainslee and Mr. Clarence Hartley request his presence here.

PAULINE. [*To John*] Stop! I will let you know when I want him! You may go! [*Exit John C.E.—puts head in C.E. looks at them with a grimace—disappears*] What would you say to my husband?

HARTLEY. Tell him your history and watch him turn you into the street! By heaven Pauline, I'm not to be trifled with!

PAULINE. Have you no mercy?

HARTLEY. Mercy? Pauline, years ago when I asked you to be my wife and you spurned me as you would a mangy cur I swore that you should be mine—that if another stood between us I would kill him! Go with me and I will take you to America, Australia—where you will—where no breath of scandal will ever reach you! Ainslee is already tired of you—he loves his cousin better than he ever loved you! He will procure a divorce and marry Mabel and I will make you my honored wife. Refuse, and you well know what will happen. Your answer? Will you go with me quietly, or will you wait to be turned into the street? [*Raises hand to strike bell*]

PAULINE. Give me time to think!

HARTLEY. Think quickly. Your husband may come in at any moment and if he does I do swear to tell him all!

PAULINE. Oh have you neither honor, manhood nor shame?

HARTLEY. Is it for you to talk to me of honor? I fear nothing but the law—You fear even those who love you! Will you answer me?

PAULINE. Give me until tomorrow!

HARTLEY. Why hesitate? Your husband is lost to you turn which way you will.

PAULINE. Give me until tomorrow!

HARTLEY. Very well. In the meantime allow me to observe that my purse is low. How much can you let me have?

PAULINE. I have no funds.

HARTLEY. No? That necklace is valuable: I could realize quite a handsome sum upon it. [*She gives it—he examines it*] But not enough. Just tap Sir Harry for five thousand pounds for me will you?

PAULINE. I'll get you the money on one condition.

HARTLEY. Well?

PAULINE. That you leave me in peace. The necklace is worth as much more; take it and the sum you ask for and go!

HARTLEY. I refuse.

PAULINE. Then my answer is ready. [*Strikes bell—Enter John C.E.*] John, bring your master and Colonel Easton here at once. Tell them to come armed!

HARTLEY. John, there's no hurry. Just wait outside a moment. [*Slips coin into his hand—exit John C.E.*] Well, what do you propose to do?

PAULINE. What I should have done at first—tell Sir Harry all! I have but dallied with you to gain time! My husband may turn from me; I may be sent forth in disgrace; I may beg my bread from door to door or bury my shame in the Thames, but the deep damnation of being aught to *you* will never be mine!

HARTLEY. [*Whistles—aside*] Hang it! I've been too hasty! [*Aloud*] I'll take the money and the necklace and let you off. Better ten thousand pounds than nothing.

PAULINE. Then go! In fifteen minutes I'll bring you a check. Wait for me at the fountain in the garden. But remember—no treachery! Even the worm will turn sometimes!

HARTLEY. [*Laughs*] Are you so very dangerous Lady Ainslee? [*Enter Easton unobserved C.E.*]

PAULINE. Clarence Hartley beware! You may force me to rob my husband; you may then betray me; but if you do there is one man who will never rest until you are in your grave!

HARTLEY. Indeed? And where is this knight errant with whom you threaten me? [*Easton comes forward*]

EASTON. He is here. Go! [*Points C.E.—Hartley scowls at him—Enter Ainslee and Mrs. Blake L.—Ainslee starts towards Hartley—Easton restrains him with a gesture—Hartley moves sullenly C.E.—turns—mock bow—exit. Easton gives arm to Pauline and they go off R.*]

MRS. BLAKE. More mystery!

AINSLEE. [*Savagely*] Be quiet will you! Pray leave me to myself!

MRS. BLAKE. [*Regarding him through glasses*] Dear me! You need not snap me up so rudely!

AINSLEE. Forgive me Aunt—and—and—oh do leave me! [*She moves L. observes him through glasses*]

MRS. BLAKE. [*Aside*] The poison is working! The poison is working! [*Exit L.*]

AINSLEE. More mystery? Yes, more and more! How is this all to end? When I am with my wife I think her true—in her dear presence I forget all else but that I love her—but when alone my doubts return to torture me! By heaven I can endure this no longer! I'll follow that miserable gambler and tear his secret from him or I'll take his life! [*Moves C.E.—enter Pauline R.U.E.*]

PAULINE. Husband! [*She goes up to him*] Harry, why do you look at me so strangely? [*Attempts to embrace him—he checks her and holds her hands*]

AINSLEE. Pauline, I requested you not to speak to that fellow Hartley again, yet you receive him here. I find him and Colonel Easton at daggers' points in your presence—in short, I see enough every day to condemn you in any eyes but mine. Pauline, what does this mean?

PAULINE. Oh husband, how can you be so cruel! Mr. Hartley came in unannounced. I bade him go, and when he hesitated Colonel Easton enforced the order. Oh Harry believe me, I am your loyal wife—as true as the stars above us!

AINSLEE. [*Embracing her*] Pauline I do believe you! Forgive my jealous thoughts!

PAULINE. And you do love me?

AINSLEE. With all my heart!

PAULINE. And will you grant me a favor?

AINSLEE. You have but to speak, and it is done.

PAULINE. And you will trust me and ask no questions?

AINSLEE. I will trust you and ask no questions.

PAULINE. Then give me your check for five thousand pounds.

AINSLEE. Eh?

PAULINE. Give me your check for five thousand pounds. [*He looks searchingly at her*] Remember your promise Harry. [*He sits at table—writes check—puts it in her hand*]

AINSLEE. You American women are so different from your sex here! [*She comes behind him as he sits—puts arms about his neck*]

PAULINE. Are we? Well you are the dearest husband in the world! [*Kisses him*] But I must go dress for dinner! [*goes C.E.—throws him a kiss—exit*]

AINSLEE. [*Sighs*] In some respects women are the same the world over! they tap your purse—and then get rid of you as quickly as possible. [*Goes to window—looks out*] Five thousand pounds! what can she want with it? “Trust me and ask no questions.” I will trust her! [*Starts*] By heaven! She’s talking to that gambler again! She gives him a note! If it aint my check damme! I’ll kill him! [*Moves towards C.E. Enter Easton C.E.*]

EASTON. Why Ainslee, what’s the matter?

AINSLEE. Victor Easton, this has gone far enough!

EASTON. What do you mean?

AINSLEE. I mean that you have permitted me to make your mistress my wife! that here, beneath my roof, you and a miserable adventurer are quarreling over her!

EASTON. Why Ainslee! You amaze me!

AINSLEE. Is it not true? Answer me!

EASTON. I will answer nothing! Words are worse than wasted on a madman. When it does please kind heaven to restore you to your reason, upon your knees—aye groveling at her feet—will you ask pardon of the noblest woman in all this world for that base calumny! Pauline my—why you jealous-minded dolt! I came from India to ask her to be my wife!

AINSLIEE. No more of this! begone! Tomorrow at daylight meet me on the cliffs!

EASTON. No, Ainslee; we have been friends too long to cross swords now.

AINSLIEE. You refuse to meet me? Then will I post you throughout the army as a cowardly knave!

EASTON. Do so if you like. If my hard-earned reputation can be blown away by the idle breath of any one man, 'tis not worth the keeping. [*Exit C.E.*]

AINSLIEE. Can it be possible that I am wrong? I'll set all doubts at rest! [*Rings bell violently—Enter John C.E. hastily*] Tell Lady Ainslee that I desire to see her here at once! [*Exit John C.E.*] That check! Could it have been something else that she gave Hartley? Pauline rob me of five thousand pounds for that miserable knave? Oh heaven! It cant be true! [*Enter Pauline C.E.*]

PAULINE. Did you want to see me Harry?

AINSLIEE. Yes Pauline. Let me see that check a moment. Perhaps I forgot to sign it.

PAULINE. Oh you signed it!

AINSLIEE. Let me see it.

PAULINE. No, no! You have repented giving it me!

AINSLIEE. Nonsense! Give me the check! [*Pauline clings to him*]

PAULINE. The check's all right Harry! What do you want to bother about it for? [*He holds her off and looks at her*]

AINSLIEE. Pauline you have'nt got it! What did you do with it?

PAULINE. Have'nt got it? What did I do with it?

AINSLIEE. By heaven you echo me! Where is that check? I want it—this moment!

PAULINE. Then let me go to my room and fetch it.

AINSLIEE. Very well; I'll go with you.

PAULINE. No, no! I'll bring it!

AINSLEE. Pauline, you have not been near your room since you left me; you know 'tis not there! Where is it?

PAULINE. Where is it?

AINSLEE. [*Fiercely*] Answer me!

PAULINE. I—I cannot say.

AINSLEE. Well I can! One of your lovers has it!

PAULINE. One of my lovers? Oh husband!

AINSLEE. Call me by that dishonored name no more! You rob me to keep your miserable paramour in funds!

PAULINE. Harry as God is my Judge you wrong me!

AINSLEE. Wrong you? And you dare protest your innocence after all that I have seen?—after all that I have heard?

PAULINE. Oh husband do not turn from me! Surely, surely you'll not cast me off to die of shame! Oh pity and forgive!

AINSLEE. No! You have deceived me! I gave you a check for five thousand pounds; you gave it to your lover! Now take yourself and child to him and let me see your face no more!

PAULINE. Oh Harry, my husband, be merciful! I am not what you think—Indeed indeed I'm not! Do not turn away! do not drive me from your heart and home! Oh for God's sake Harry, my husband, my love, pity poor Pauline! [*Clasps his knees—he throws her off—Rings bell—Enter John C.E.—enter Easton L.U.E.*]

AINSLEE. John, show this woman out. [*Enter Mrs. Blake R.—adjusts glasses and looks at Pauline who gropes her way up stage—Turns—holds out her arms imploringly to Ainslee—he points to the door—She turns—falls—Easton catches her—Ainslee starts forward threateningly*]

EASTON. Stand back, or approach her on your knees!

CURTAIN

ACT THREE

SCENE ONE

SCENE—*A street in London.*

[Enter Maud L.]

MAUD. Well! I've walked till my feet are sore and my shoes in rags, an asked questions till my tongue's got the cramps, but I have'nt struck Pauline's trail yet! Oh dear! what shall I do? Colonel Easton's hunted, an Frank's hunted, an I've hunted, an the police have hunted, an the reporters have hunted, an we've all hunted, but taint no go! *[Covers face and sobs—Enter Ainslee L. crossing stage R.]* Oh Sir Harry! *[Runs up to him and embraces him—He repels her]*

AINSLEE. Young lady, what can I do for you?

MAUD. Can you tell me where Lady Ainslee is?

AINSLEE. I cannot. Dont you know?

MAUD. Well I'd hardly be tramping the streets looking for her if I did. Colonel Easton took us to his old mother with whom Pauline lived before she made the mistake of marrying you! Yesterday she went out on an errand and has not returned.

AINSLEE. I know absolutely nothing of her whereabouts.

MAUD. Say Harry, what's the trouble between you and Pauline?

AINSLEE. I must refer you to Lady—to Pauline.

MAUD. But I cant find her! She's lost—lost in this great city! dead maybe! *[Seizes his hand]* Oh Harry, come help us find her—help us find Pauline! *[He throws her hand off]*

AINSLEE. No! *[Turns away]*

MAUD. Harry—I—loved you—loved you better—better than I ever loved my father! but if you desert Pauline this way I'll—I'll hate you! So there! *[Covers face with her hands—crosses L. Cries—Ainslee looks at her]*

AINSLEE. *[Aside]* Strange child! How my heart went out to her the first time I saw her! How strong my love for her grew in the few short months she was beneath my roof! *[Turns as though to go to her—Enter Hartley L. Ainslee turns R.]* Her father! *[Exit*

R. Hartley looks after him—looks at Maud—takes her hands from her face]

HARTLEY. Why Maud, what are you crying about?

MAUD. I was'nt crying—I was laughing!

HARTLEY. Laughing.

MAUD. Yes; to think that the police will round you up before night for kidnapping Lady Ainslee!

HARTLEY. The police? are they on my trail?

MAUD. Full cry! Every outlet of the city is guarded and Captain Martin and Colonel Easton are gunning for you!

HARTLEY. But how did they find out?

MAUD. Ah? So you're the man? I thought so the minute I laid eyes on you! Now tell me where Pauline is and I'll see what can be done to save your scalp!

HARTLEY. [*Aside*] Oho! So she was only bluffing! [*Aloud*] Maud, your idea that I know aught of Lady Ainslee's whereabouts is absurd. I thought you were in jest and humored you.

MAUD. [*Aside*] What a colossal liar he is! [*Aloud*] Forgive me Mr. Hartley! I am sorry that I offended you! I had no idea that you would take my thoughtless railery so seriously.

HARTLEY. Give it no further thought. But I hope you will excuse me now Miss Maud; I have a very pressing engagement.

MAUD. Why cert. Goodbye.

HARTLEY. Goodbye little friend. [*Exit Maud L. Hartley pauses R. looks after her*] Clever girl that! She suspects me! Hang it! I'd rather have all Scotland Yard at my heels than that quick-witted daughter of Uncle Sam! [*Exit R. Enter Maud L. Looks after him*]

MAUD. Well my more or less respected fellow citizen, you appear to be in something of a rust! He's my man! I must not lose sight of him now! I've struck the trail at last! [*Exit R.*]

SCENE TWO

SCENE—*Scantily furnished room. Small table R.C.—Screen up stage R. Small trap door C.—Grated window with closed blinds in flat R.C.*

[*Pauline pacing floor and wringing her hands. Rattle of chains off C. turning key—Pauline starts.*]

PAULINE. He comes! Angels of God defend me! [*Enter Hartley C.E.*]

HARTLEY. Good morning my dear. [*Pause*] What? Sullen yet? Come, come Pauline! this will never do! You'll break my heart! [*Laughs*] I have brought you a morning paper. [*Offers it*] You may find something on the first page that will interest you. Oh you wont have it? You dont appear to appreciate these little acts of kindness! It gives a very lurid description of the upheaval in the family of that popular English gentleman, Sir Harry Ainslee; dwells at considerable length on your history; speaks of your precocious but fatherless daughter, and vouchsafes the information that you have retired from society, presumably to bask in the smiles of one of your numerous lovers! The article may be a trifle overdrawn, but I know that the main points are correct because I furnished the information myself. [*Laughs—She turns on him fiercely*]

PAULINE. You infamous monster! You unprincipled, cowardly villain! Oh that I could coin words that would describe your moral hideousness—words that would express how I loathe and despise you!

HARTLEY. By Jove! I did not know what a treasure I had secured! I'll take you to America and bill you as a tragic star! You'll have the entire dramatic world at your feet in less than a year! [*She tries to pass him—he stands between her and the door*] Now dont hurry away my dear! [*Laughs*]

PAULINE. Stand aside and let me go forth from this loathsome place! Back I say! I am desperate, and if you oppose me I will strike you down! [*He stands in door with hand on either jamb and laughs*]

HARTLEY. Magnificent! You could'nt do that better if you was to practice it before a mirror for a month!

PAULINE. Clarence, long years ago you asked me to be your wife.

HARTLEY. I remember; and you told me that you'd see me hanged first, or words to that effect! Oh I made a note of it, and the note's about due!

PAULINE. Clarence, by the love you then bore me I now conjure you to let me depart in peace! Think Clarence—you are a strong man, I but a weak woman whom you have covered with undeserved

disgrace! Oh Clarence, [*Kneels*] for God's sake have mercy and let me go! Never will I speak of this cruel detention—I will shield you from all blame! I will even befriend you! I will go forth to labor and give you all my scanty earnings if you will but let me leave this loathsome place! [*He lifts her to her feet*]

HARTLEY. Pauline you misjudge me! I love you better than ever did the husband you have lost! He has cast you off—he will procure a divorce and marry his cousin; 'tis so arranged already! The moment you are free I will make you my wife. See—I have five thousand good English pounds, and there is a bauble worth as much more! [*Throws purse and necklace on table*] Left to yourself with this disgrace upon you you will starve. I am about leaving for America; will you come?

PAULINE. No! a thousand times no! Better starvation in the streets—aye, death and a pauper's grave than life and luxury with you!

HARTLEY. You still refuse?

PAULINE. Refuse? How dare you ask me? Stand aside! [*Rushes C.E. He seizes her wrists and drags her rudely front*]

HARTLEY. You defy me?—scorn me? Now listen Pauline Ainslee! Should you escape me now I'd follow you while life endures—go where you go and spread the story of your shame! In all the earth you'd find no refuge! By the prince of hades I do swear that I'll humble your proud spirit—that I'll drive you to infamy or I'll drive you to the grave! [*Enter Maud C.E.*]

PAULINE. Monster! release me! [*They struggle—Maud puts pistol to side of Hartley's head*]

MAUD. Hands up! [*Hartley starts back*]

HARTLEY. You here?

MAUD. Well here or hereabouts. [*He tries to reach purse and necklace on table—Maud puts her hand on them*] Dont burn your fingers Sonny!

HARTLEY. Those are mine!

MAUD. Yours? That's the Ainslee necklace. Sit down!

HARTLEY. Eh?

MAUD. Eh? You heard what I said! [*He sits sullenly*] Now you sneaking, treacherous coyote, what brings you here?

HARTLEY. Courteous, upon my word! [*Maud points pistol at him*]

MAUD. Now you wobble that chin to suit me or I'll shoot it off!

HARTLEY. I called to see Pauline.

MAUD. Lady Ainslee if you please. You are becoming entirely too familiar. Did my sister invite you to call?

HARTLEY. Your what?

MAUD. I call her sister; now what would you have me call her?

HARTLEY. Well, since you ask, I would suggest that you call her mother.

PAULINE. Mr. Hartley, have you no mercy?

HARTLEY. Oh she might as well know the truth; she'll find it out sooner or later. [*Maud goes up to him*]

MAUD. What do you mean?

HARTLEY. Simply that Lady Ainslee is your mother. Perhaps she can acquaint you with your father's name—I confess that I cannot. [*Maud slaps his face*] Thank you!

MAUD. Dont mention it! [*Slaps his face again—turns, embraces Pauline*] Mother!

PAULINE. My daughter! [*Kisses her—Hartley snatches pistol from Maud—takes purse and necklace from table*]

HARTLEY. Now you young tigress, your claws are clipped! Just make yourself comfortable in the society of your dear mama. [*Moves C.E. Maud dashes at him—he seizes her wrists*] Oh would you? I'll tame you too my little beauty; trust me for that! Oh if my dear Colonel Easton, and my dear, dear Captain Martin only knew! but they dont! [*Laughs—exit C.E. locking door after him—Maud tries the door—Shakes it*]

MAUD. Well the miserable Piute! Mother, what does this mean?

PAULINE. It means that we are in the power of Clarence Hartley—a stranger to honor, Justice and Mercy! There's no wickedness so great, no crime so damnable, no infamy so foul in the sight of Gods and men that he'd not perpetrate it!

MAUD. Oh when a Yankee is mean he's the meanest thing in all Christendom!

PAULINE. Oh daughter we are lost!

MAUD. Patience, mother! Perhaps we shall be found again! [*Examines room*] Mother, who was that old fellow who said "Give me liberty or measure me for a pine box"?

PAULINE. Oh Patrick Henry I believe.

MAUD. Well I stand pat on his deal! Give me liberty in great big hunks or count me out of the game!

PAULINE. What would you do?

MAUD. Make a bonfire o' this old rookery! Perhaps the alarm will be sounded in time to save us!—if taint, why the reporters will have a big "spread" in the morning! Here's a hole in the floor; we can light papers and drop them down.

PAULINE. Oh let us make haste! [*They look about*] Good heavens! We have no papers!

MAUD. Wait a minute! [*Goes behind screen—Pauline walks floor and wrings her hands—Maud comes out holding a paper bustle by the strings*] The bustle must go! Strike a match mother! [*Tears up bustle—Pauline strikes match*]

PAULINE. On this fitful blaze more than life depends! [*Maud lights papers—throws them down trap door—gets on knees and looks after them*]

MAUD. My kingdom for a gallon of kerosene!

PAULINE. Oh Maud, I fear it has failed!

MAUD. No! it's taking like measles in a country school! Cant you smell the burning pine? [*Rises—they embrace*]

PAULINE. Heaven be praised! Deliverance or death is nigh! [*Presses Maud to her bosom—Maud sobs*] Courage daughter!

MAUD. I aint sorry for myself—I'm sorry for you—and—and I'm sorry—sorry for Frank. [*On knee—clasping Pauline's waist—Pauline puts hand on her head*]

PAULINE. Oh Father in heaven, scourge me as thou wilt and spare me not, but let not thy awful vengeance fall upon my guiltless child! [*Rattle at the door C.E.—Maud starts up—Pauline clasps her in her arms—Enter Hartley C.E.*]

HARTLEY. A delightful picture truly! I am almost sorry to spoil it, but I have concluded to seperate [sic] you.

PAULINE. Surely, surely you will not rob me of my child! Have mercy! do not take her from me!

HARTLEY. How unreasonable you are! Why there's a rich swell waiting to make her acquaintance! [*Laughs*] Come, my little beauty! [*Seizes Maud's arm*]

MAUD. I will not! help! help!

HARTLEY. Oh you may cry "help" 'til your heart breaks and no aid will come! [*Forces them apart*]

PAULINE. Oh leave her with me a moment yet—just one little moment longer!

HARTLEY. Not a moment! Come I say! [*Throws Maud roughly C.E.—she pulls the door shut*] Confound you! that's a spring lock, and my keys are on the outside!

MAUD. Then you are not likely to get out in a hurry.

HARTLEY. Oh you desire my company do you?

MAUD. Why certainly! The building is on fire, and misery always loves company you know!

HARTLEY. The building on fire? Impossible!

MAUD. Well it is. [*Smoke or steam begins to ascend through the trap door—Maud points to it*] Do you see that?

HARTLEY. Good heavens! We are lost! [*Red glare*]

PAULINE. Oh craven! You tremble now! Yes; you are lost indeed—lost for time—lost for eternity! [*Hartley throws himself against door C.E.*]

HARTLEY. Oh help! help!

MAUD. Oh you may cry help 'til your heart breaks and no aid will come!

HARTLEY. Oh God! I cannot die like this! [*Rushes at window—tears bars off—breaks glass—kicks shutters open—looks out*] Help! help! [*Red glare increases—Hartley staggers C.—falls through trap door with a shriek. Pauline screams and clings to Maud*]

MAUD. Well Mr. Hartley, that settles your hash!

PAULINE. The window! the window! perhaps we shall be seen and rescued! [*They look out of window—a torrent of steam pours through trap door—little jets of flame here and there*] The people see us! How white their faces are! They cannot reach us! We are lost!

MAUD. Oh mother! There's Colonel Easton and Frank! [*Points*] Across the street! No! they're gone! [*Calls*] Oh Frank! Frank!

PAULINE. Oh for a sight of my husband's face before I die! No! He is not there! He is not there! Maud! My daughter! I—I am suffocating! Goodbye! Oh Harry! my husband! [*Sinks down*]

MAUD. Mother! Mother! She's dying! [*Drags her up to window*] Dying! Oh will no one come! [*They sink down*] Oh the smoke! 'tis strangling me! Mother! Mother! [*Sinks down—face on Pauline's bosom. Flames burst up through floor—sparks fall—sound of fire engines and cries in street below*]

EASTON. [*Off L.—Calling*] Pauline! Pauline! Pauline!

FRANK. [*Off C.*] Here Vic! they must be here! [*Smashes door C.E.—Enter Frank and Easton*] Maud! Maud! Where are you? [*They grope about*] Oh damm the smoke! I cannot see!

EASTON. Pauline! [*Frank stumbles over Maud*]

FRANK. Here! here they are! Quick Victor! [*Lifts Maud—Easton supports Pauline as a ladder crashes into the window and a fireman turns stream of water on*]

EASTON. In time, thank God! in time!!

CURTAIN

ACT FOUR

SCENE—*Lawn in front of Madame De Stael's boarding school.*

[Enter Pauline L. reading letter. Crushes it in her hand—sinks in rustic seat L.C. in half faint. Enter Easton L.]

EASTON. Pauline! I have been looking everywhere for you. *[Comes behind her and kisses her forehead—looks at her]* Why you are pale and ill! Pauline, this teacher's drudgery is killing you!

PAULINE. No Victor; labor is my salvation from despair, and even that is denied me. *[Puts letter in his hand—puts hdk to face and sobs]*

EASTON. *[Reads]* "Madam Ainslee—Your services are no longer required as teacher at this seminary. Your work has been satisfactory—your conduct irreproachable—but your history has become known and I am compelled to dismiss you. Madam De Stael. *[He crushes letter in hand—walks stage—stops before her]* Pauline, why will you not come back to my home?—to my mother's roof? There you will be secure from insult—no harm can reach you there.

PAULINE. Victor I cannot! The world says that you are my lover, and the slander of the world must be disproved.

EASTON. If the world says that I love you it says true! There is not one moment in the day when my thoughts are not of you!

PAULINE. Oh fie Victor!

EASTON. Pauline, I am but a plain, blunt soldier to whom fine words are strangers;—I can only say that I love you. I know not how much those simple words may mean to you, but to me they mean all of life! Pauline, when you are free—

PAULINE. Free Victor? *[Rises]*

EASTON. Yes, for Ainslee will assuredly seek the courts to set him free. Pauline, when he does so may I not hope that the woman I have loved so long will become my wife?

PAULINE. Victor, I am still Sir Harry's wife, and you have no right to talk to me of love and marriage.

EASTON. No right Pauline? No right? He has renounced all claim to you—driven you forth to starve or beg! I love you, and

have the right to tell you so—you the right to listen;—the right to cheer my fainting heart with a word of hope!

PAULINE. Victor, my heart is filled with gratitude for your kindness—with compassion for your love; but I am Harry Ainslee's wife, and though he has turned from me my heart is as true to him as ever. He may never forgive me; he may invoke the law to release him—he may even wed another—Yet will I love him in spite of all! [*Bows her head on his shoulder*]

EASTON. Forgive me Pauline! I was selfish I know. 'Tis God's will that we should be dear friends—no more! [*Places her in rustic seat L.C.*] Goodbye Pauline. [*Kneels and kisses her hands—rises—moves L.*] Goodbye. [*Exit L. Enter Hartley R. He stops C. and looks at her*]

HARTLEY. Well Lady Ainslee, you dont seem to be particularly happy this evening. [*She starts up*]

PAULINE. Clarence Hartley! I—I thought you were dead!

HARTLEY. And you were weeping for me? Oh Pauline be comforted! Your true-love still lives! [*Laughs*] By the way, I hear that you are out of a situation. Can I aid you to secure another?

PAULINE. Then 'twas you who secured my dismissal?

HARTLEY. Well, I'm only keeping my promise. You might as well give up, my girl—there's but one refuge for you.

PAULINE. And that is—?

HARTLEY. Here! [*Holds out arms—She turns from him with a shudder*] What of your young daughter, Pauline? What of her future if we remain enemies? A week ago she was the idol of the school; now she is shunned by all—an object of scorn—the victim of cruel jests.

PAULINE. [*Pointing R.*] Go!

HARTLEY. And you?

PAULINE. I will appeal to Victor Easton for protection!

HARTLEY. Happy Easton, to be the champion of so beautiful a woman—even though she be a discarded wife. Victor and Pauline! How sweetly the names sound together! and sounded together they are in every club in England! Of course it was very wrong for the grisly old soldier to betray his friend; but the woman was so very beautiful you know, and was in love with him before she ever

met Ainslee! Poor Hartley! She discarded him, and he is dying of a broken heart. [*Sighs*] So they say!

PAULINE. Clarence Hartley, I beg of you to leave me!

HARTLEY. And you will not go with me, far from England, where you can rear your daughter as a lady?

PAULINE. No! If my daughter cannot live an honored life she can at least die a shameless death! Go!

HARTLEY. Your pride is not yet broken I see! Well, I can wait! I can wait! [*Exit R. Pauline sinks down by rustic seat and bows head on arms. Enter Ainslee L. Approaches Pauline and looks at her*]

AINSLEE. Pauline. [*She starts up—stretches out her arms to him—He puts her gently back—she sinks down at his feet and buries her face in her hands*] Pauline, I am about leaving England—I may never return—and I could not go without bidding you goodbye. [*She sobs bitterly*] Think not that I have ceased to love you. You have humbled my pride, made my name a name of scorn, my love an idle mockery, but my heart still clings to its shattered idol.

PAULINE. [*Sobbing*] Forgive me!

AINSLEE. Bitterly have you sinned Pauline, but I forgive you—forgive you as I hope to be forgiven—forgive you, but cannot restore your name and fame. Pauline, there was a time when angels envied me, but heaven was not for this world—God willed it beyond the grave! Farewell Pauline— [*Turns L.—soft music—turns suddenly—lifts her up—puts her hair back from her face—looks at her*] God pity us both! [*Exit L.—Pauline looks after him*]

PAULINE. He's gone—gone out of my life forever! And he still loves me! What did he say? Heaven is beyond the grave? [*Enter Mabel R.*] Beyond the grave I will wait his coming! beyond the grave! [*Turns R. Mabel stops her*]

MABEL. Pauline, what madness is this? What would you do?

PAULINE. Oh Mabel, I am all awearry of my life!

MABEL. Courage Pauline!

PAULINE. Courage? What do you know of courage or suffering? What do you know of a husband's scorn, of the proud world's contumely, of a wife's dishonor!—no! let only those teach me courage who have learned to despair!

MABEL. Then will I teach you—I, who have drained the most bitter cup ever placed to a proud woman's lips—I, who saw the man I loved take another to his heart! my cousin loved you—loves you yet—and wretched as you are I envy you!

PAULINE. Mabel!

MABEL. Is it for you to talk of despair? Is it for you to play the coward and refuse life's cross? [*Pauline embraces her—weeps on her bosom*] God knows best Pauline. Bide his time. [*Exit both R. Mabel with her arm about Pauline. Enter Maud L. singing and dancing*]

MAUD. Well thank goodness the lessons for the day are done! Lessons! lessons! lessons! And everytime I turn around or agitate my foot [*Dances a clog*] old Madame Step-an-go-fetch-it shrugs her shoulders and wondaires if le petite Americaine zinks zhe is in ze foreste wiz ze wild saivages! Oh would'nt I like to get her out to Goodluck camp once! Whew! [*Enter Servant L. with letter on a tray*]

SERVANT. A lettaire for Mdlle room numbaire seexteen. [*Maud takes it*]

MAUD. An answer to my advertisement! Oh ze powaire of ze press! It ess wondaireful! It ess ze great wondaire of ze age! I kees my hand to ze editaire, ze reportaire, ze printaire an ze printaire's what-you-call-heem? ze devil. [*To servant*] Absquatulate. [*Sits R.C.*]

SERVANT. [*Low bow*] I beeg pardon Mdlle!

MAUD. Dont mention it! [*Looks at envelope*] Oh! Oh! this letter is from my father! [*Sees servant*] Say! cut sticks will you?

SERVANT. [*Low bow*] I beeg pardon Mdlle!

MAUD. Dont mention it! [*Looks at envelope*] Oh I wonder what he says! Here I've lived sixteen years without a father, and I'm to have one at last! [*Sees servant*] Say! did'nt I tell you to vamoose?

SERVANT. [*Low bow*] I beeg—

MAUD. Stop it! Do that again and I'll hurt you! Clear out will you! Make yourself scarce! Skedaddle!

SERVANT. [*Low bow*] I beeg— [*Maud springs up*]

MAUD. No you dont! [*Turns him around*] Postive git, comparative got, superlative gone! [*Rushes him off L.*] Oh I'm all in a

shake! [*Opens letter—reads*] “In this morning’s paper I find the following advertisement: ‘If Harry Rodney, who visited the western part of New York state, U. S. A., seventeen years ago, desires to learn the whereabouts of his daughter, he will please address, room number 16, Madame De Stael’s Seminary.’ I will call at 5 o’clock this afternoon. Respectfully, Harry Rodney.” Oh my! the old boy’s coming to see me! What would Pauline say? Five o’clock? Why it’s nearly five now! [*Enter servant L. with letter on tray*]

SERVANT. A lettaire for Mdlle room numbaire seexteen. [*Maud takes it*]

MAUD. Pull your freight.

SERVANT. [*Low bow*] I beeg pardon Mdlle! [*Maud looks at him*]

MAUD. Say! you dont savvy the vernacular do you?

SERVANT. [*Low bow*] I beeg—[*Maud slips up her cuffs, spits on her hands and starts for him—he runs off L.—Maud looks at envelope*]

MAUD. Another answer to my advertisement! [*Opens letter—reads*] “Thank Heaven I have found my child at last! I will call at 5 o’clock this p.m. Harry Rodney.” Well! this thing is growing serious! Two Harry Rodneys and both looking for a daughter! I wonder if the returns are all in? [*Enter servant L.—announces*]

SERVANT. Monsieur Harry Rodney. [*Retires—Enter Hartley L. disguised with long beard*]

MAUD. [*Aside*] Great Scott! What a villainous-looking old chromo he is! Looks like a billy goat!

HARTLEY. I called to see the occupant of room number sixteen.

MAUD. And you are Harry Rodney?

HARTLEY. I am. And you?

MAUD. I am Harry Rodney’s child.

HARTLEY. My daughter! [*Starts forward—She checks him*]

MAUD. Now dont be so effusive! I’m not dead sure that you are the right man.

HARTLEY. I am Harry Rodney and you are Maud, my darling child.

MAUD. How did you know my name?

HARTLEY. [*Aside*] Sharp as a Yankee steeltrap! [*Aloud*] I—I made inquiries of the servants. Believe me little one and come to my arms! I am yearning to press you to my heart!

MAUD. Well you'll have to yearn a little longer. Give me time to think. [*Aside*] I must hold him till the other Harry Rodney comes! I believe this man's a fraud!

HARTLEY. [*Aside*] Once I get you in my power I'll wring your proud mother's heart! [*Enter servant L.*]

SERVANT. [*Announcing*] Monsieur Harry Rodney. [*Retires*]

HARTLEY. [*Starts*] Who's that?

MAUD. Only another alleged parent of mine. Pray sit down.

HARTLEY. I—I believe I will call again. [*Moves R.—Maud takes him by arm*]

MAUD. Nay, wait a little! [*They struggle—She tears off his beard*] Hartley!

HARTLEY. The devil!

MAUD. Same thing! [*He moves L. Enter Ainslee L. Hartley turns—hangs head—moves R. Enter Frank and Easton R. Hartley runs into their arms before he sees them—they seize him by either arm and force him to his knees—Frank seizes him by throat—Easton restrains him*]

EASTON. No—leave him to the law! [*Lifts Hartley by collar and throws him roughly into rustic seat R.C. and stands behind him—Frank crosses to Ainslee—they shake hands*]

AINSLEE. What of Louise?

FRANK. Louise is in England; we must search for her here.

AINSLEE. Louise in England! Is't possible? [*Maud comes forward*]

MAUD. Sir Harry the servant announced you as Harry Rodney.

AINSLEE. [*Embarrassed*] I—yes; I believe he did.

MAUD. [*Pointing to adv. in paper*] Are you here in answer to this advertisement?

AINSLEE. [*Tartly*] Well miss, suppose that I am? I dont see how that concerns you!

MAUD. Oh dont you? Well, I am the occupant of room number 16.

AINSLEE. You?

MAUD. Exactly. I was looking for my father, and lo! I find two of him!

AINSLIEE. What do you mean?

MAUD. That you and this other villain [*Hartley*] both claim to be Harry Rodney. Now I would like to know which one I am to believe.

AINSLIEE. What are you saying girl? The mother of my child was Louise Markham. [*Enter Pauline and Mabel R.U.E.*]

MAUD. My mother's name was Louise Pauline Markham. She was Harry Rodney's cherished love—She is Lord Ainslee's discarded wife.

AINSLIEE. Impossible! [*Enter Mrs. Blake L. Surveys scene through glasses*]

MAUD. Straight goods!

AINSLIEE. And you are my child?

MAUD. Looks very much that way dont it? [*Pauline advances—looks at him—He looks from Maud to her—she springs into his arms with a little cry*]

AINSLIEE. Louise! my wife! my child! [*Embraces them—Mabel puts hdk to eyes—Frank hugs Mrs. Blake, much to her disgust—Hartley springs up—draws a knife*]

HARTLEY. Pauline, remember the gambler's oath! [*Starts toward Ainslee—Easton seizes him—Hartley strikes him with knife—he staggers back—Hartley starts toward Ainslee, Frank fires on him and he falls R.C.—Pauline leads Easton C.—low gas*]

AINSLIEE. Old friend, are you much hurt?

EASTON. Yes, yes!—a death wound.

PAULINE. No, no Victor, dont say that! [*Enter from school building several servants and others with torches—they stand R. and L.—Easton puts Pauline's hand in Ainslee's*]

EASTON. I am content. [*Head sinks on bosom—they lower him gently—place his head in Pauline's lap—soft music—Ladies with hdks to eyes—men kneel and uncover their heads. Ainslee holds one of Easton's hands—Frank the other—Maud sobs on Mabel's bosom. Pauline smooths back Easton's hair—Mrs. Blake regards the scene through her glasses—Easton releases his hands—*] Pauline!

Pauline! [*Puts arms about her neck—she kisses him, her hair streaming over his face—his arms fall back heavily*]

PAULINE. Victor! Victor! [*Places hand over his heart*] Victor is dead!

CURTAIN

