

THE  
**DRAMATICWORKS**

of  
*JOHN O'KEEFFE, Esq.*  
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OF  
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*THE PRINCE OF WALES.*

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1798.

**THE WORLD IN A VILLAGE**

IN

FIVE ACTS.

PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN,

IN 1793.

IN A NEW VERSION BY DANIEL O'BRIEN

**Act 1 Scene 1.**

*A Room in JOLLYBOY'S House. MARGERY discovered adjusting the furniture and singing, Enter JOLLYBOY.*

**JOLLYBOY**

Ah, dame! So that Miss Louisa's room is dizen'd out, all the rest of the house may go at sixes and sevens.

**MARGERY**

Husband! How crusty you've got with our lodger Miss Louisa, only because she's a lady, and you think she has a deal of money.

**JOLLYBOY**

Why, to be sure her money did not do much mischief when it bought warm cloathing for half the poor of our village, and the setting up a little school and paying you for teaching the children, as our rascally rich folks here refused to establish one; our gentry expect forsooth, 'cause I'm a miller, I must cringe and sneak; but I'll never bow to the golden calf! People to get money stick at no villany or meanness, and then they're as saucy – Dame, I've been round among

my customers to gather in rent for my landlord Master Allbut. Here. (*Takes out a bank note*)

**MARGER Y**

Ten pounds! I suppose it's having so much money that has made you so saucy this morning.

**JOLLYBOY**

Eh, I believe so. As I came up street cou'dn't tell what was the matter with me; met honest Dick the cobbler - came out with his "good 'morrow, Master Jollyboy." I felt a sort of a - thought he might as well have said nothing. Tom the farrier gave me a friendly smack o' th' shoulder; I had a mind to knock him down for his joke: then, now, coming into my own house, forgot to stoop, and bump'd my forehead against the top o' the door-case. Oh, ho! Then it is the cash has done all this! I wish 'twas gone, for while I have it I feel I shall be as impudent as the devil.

**MARGER Y** (*looking out*)

Madam Louisa.

**JOLLYBOY**

Doctor Grigsby with her! Tho' he's now our apothecary, and sets up also to be a wine-merchant, the lady wou'dn't be so proud of his company, did she know he was once a barber.

**MARGER Y**

Be quiet, husband. Doctor Grigsby is a fine man.

**JOLLYBOY**

What, because when you was sick his bottles came in packets, till I tasted, and found all the while the doctor had been supplying you with cherry-brandy.

*Enter LOUISA*

**LOUISA**

Well, my kind good friend, (*looking round*) Why how very handsome you've made my room! How much I'm obliged to you.

**JOLLYBOY**

Dr. Grigsby! I wouldn't let him cure my cat of a tooth-ache. The fellow has made money out of people's folly, and now don't know how to behave himself.

**MARGER Y**

I wish you'd learn how to behave yourself; strutting about with your hat on, and a lady in the room.

**JOLLYBOY**

I know nothing about ladies or gentlemen. That fellow was a good barber till money spoiled him - my hat! (*Takes it off*) My hat's here - and now it's there, (*puts it on.*) What signifies where a man's hat is? Hats and heads - ladies - gentlemen - good as another- hem! (*Exit muttering.*)

**MARGER Y**

Plague take you for a fool! - as good natur'd a man as ever broke bread, but when he gets these fancies in his noddle.

**LOUISA**

Where there is real worth these little oddities of humour rather excite pleasantry than resentment.

**MARGERY**

Od, I'll give it him!

**LOUISA**

Never mind, my kind Margery - but now for a surprise - I'm sorry I must leave you, my good woman.

**MARGERY**

Leave us! Well, if I didn't expect my silly husband's behaviour wou'd bring it to this.

**LOUISA**

Hush! Your husband has nothing to do in it: - I'm certain I can confide in you; - you know little of me; I'm a stranger; - but I'll not trouble you with more of my affairs than is necessary. You doubtless concluded from the trifling sums I expended on my first coming here into your village, that I must of course be some very rich person or other.

**MARGERY**

La, Ma'am, I didn't respect you for that!

**LOUISA**

I believe it! From certain family circumstances, immaterial to any but myself, I have been obliged - however, you know I came from Ireland - have been in France, and am unfortunately not on the best terms with my friends till a make-up can be brought about to my wish - Not being over strong in purse, I plann'd a frugal retirement; the variety of calls upon the feelings of my heart have at length exhausted my little finance; therefore - but mind, I'm not cast down - no, I'm as happy -

**MARGERY**

Dear, I'm so sorry.

**LOUISA**

Come, if you go to pity me, I shall be very much affronted.

**MARGERY**

I affront you!

**LOUISA**

Lord! I never was more gay or cheerful in my whole life: but I'll tell you - You know, you and your husband are very honest people, and get nothing but what you hardly earn; now, why should I from my extravagance become a burden to you?

**MARGERY**

Extravagance! 'twas your charity - burden! Your stay wi'll be a blessing to us- pay us when you can, or never (*weeping*) Oh! My sweet lady!

**LOUISA**

Come, perhaps I mayn't leave your village yet. Margery, I've conceiv'd a thought to stay among you without inconvenience to any one; I think I cou'd be useful to your Mrs. allbut, here. From her character of a passion for literary amusements, she might, perhaps, afford me a situation to read, or translate French; transcribe

her poetry, for I am told she has wrote a number of pretty things; or I cou'd, upon occasion, dress up a cap for her - eh, Margery, cou'd you recommend me? You know you told me she sometimes reads her poems to you.

**MARGERY**

Well, I'll call on her, my lady.

**LOUISA**

Come, none of your lady's to me - I must soon unlady myself. Upon my honour I shall be exceedingly angry if you are not even merry. There now, that's a dear good woman (*Shakes hands cordially, and goes to a chest of drawers*)

*Re-enter* JOLLYBOY.

**JOLLYBOY**

Wife, if Squire Allbut's corn comes, tell them it must wait; for I've got a bushel<sup>1</sup> to grind for old Budget the tinker first.

**MARGERY**

Don't talk to me.

**JOLLYBOY**

Eh! - What have you found a pot of gold under an old wall?

**MARGERY**

Ah, husband! This dear young lady our lodger -

**JOLLYBOY**

Ay, well.

**MARGERY**

Her distress.

**JOLLYBOY**

Well, if she's distress'd about any one's poverty, her hand knows the way to her pocket a road it has so often gone upon like occasions.

**MARGERY**

Ay, but I may as well put my hand into my pocket.

**JOLLYBOY**

Deuce o' your riddles - What's the matter with you and she?

**MARGERY**

I tell you, at last she herself is really distress'd, and won't stay because she can't pay us. [*Exit melancholy*]

**JOLLYBOY**

Distress'd!-One that was so ready to relieve every body else, now to want it herself! (*LOUISA advances, JOLLYBOY takes off his hat with respect*) Madam, I'm sure I'm vastly concerned that any past conduct of mine shou'd have given you the least uneasiness. You've done us too much honour in coming under our roof: and if any improper freedoms of ours have given you offence, you have only to

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<sup>1</sup> The bushel was originally a measure of capacity for grain. During the [Middle Ages](#), the bushel of wheat was supposed to weigh 64 [tower pounds](#), but when the tower system was abolished in the 16th century, it was described as 56 [avoirdupois pounds](#).

blame your own condescension. Madam, we are but ignorant people, and if we have fail'd in our respect, I humbly crave your pardon.

**LOUISA**

Then Margery has told him. This is an attempt at irony - Become the subject of ridicule! I thought I could endure poverty but I was wrong - (*aside*) Sir! it's not immediately in my power to discharge what I owe you, but I hope it will be soon; for I can assure you it wou'd give me infinite pleasure.

**JOLLYBOY**

Wou'd it? then tho' I go to jail for my own rent - (*aside*) True, I forgot-Ma'am, this was left for you just now; 'twas inclos'd in a paper - thought, at first 'twas for myself, so broke it open - I beg pardon - tho' there was nothing written in it. (*gives the note*)

**LOUISA**

Ten pounds- Who left it?

**JOLLYBOY**

I did ask, but can't find who.

**LOUISA**

Then my circumstances are known! Is there such benevolence? However, how to appropriate this doesn't want a consideration. Pray let me know what I'm indebted to you.

**JOLLYBOY**

Oh, Madam.

**LOUISA**

I request -

**JOLLYBOY**

Well, Madam, now have I given her what I had to pay my own rent; 'twill grind my heart to apologise to Landlord Allbut - but I've set her heart at ease, and that's good amends.

**GRIGSBY** (*without*)

No: I want my chay<sup>2</sup>; so put that hamper of wine, and the medicines in the little cart.

**JOLLYBOY**

Madam, now you should look above this Master Grigsby - you don't know him - a fellow taken from sitting with numb'd fingers, wig-weaving, into a doctor's service, to brush his coat and frizzle his pate and now, by jargon, smiles, lies, and cringes, has glided into the good graces of every family in the village - Oh, he's not dressed in his physical pomp! When he wants to shew his consequence, pops himself into one of the famous fine velvet and gold suits left him by his old master the physician.

**MARGERY**(*without*)

Indeed, Doctor: -

**GRIGSBY** (*without*)

But I will visit my patient..

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<sup>2</sup> Probably meaning tea here

**JOLLYBOY**

Now, for Dr. Grigsby's chattering! 'Till he's gone, we may put our tongues in our pockets. I wish I cou'd shut my ears in my tobacco-box.

**MARGERY** (*without*)

I tell you, Doctor, Miss Louisa is not in the humour for jaunting.

*Enter GRIGSBY and MARGERY wrangling*

**GRIGSBY**

The ladies must always have the preference. (*bows to LOUISA*)

**LOUISA**

Sir (*curtseying*) Teazing man! I wish he'd go away (*apart to MARGERY*)

**MARGERY.**

Doctor, the lady wishes you'd -

**LOUISA**

Hush!

**GRIGSBY**

My dear Madam, never deceive your doctor - but that is impossible.

**LOUISA**

For me to think of attempting a deception! - Upon my word, Doctor, you have the happiest mode of compliment -

**GRIGSBY**

Yes, Ma'am, the compliment I put in that mixture was two grains, or, as we of the faculty write in our Latin proscriptions, dux graniorum, six scruples, or cater-scrupolibus; and, Madam, I'll venture to affirm, that the whole material medicar does not furnish a cure of more efficacious efficacy, that is, when we talk of a case, razor-case - hem! I mean the soul-case; the body being the case of the soul, as a bottle is of a bottle of old port; the wine being the spirit; and so we doctors wax the cork to prevent evaporarion or fomentation; that is, what we of the faculty call the whole healing art - scammony<sup>3</sup>, wild poppy, the sublimate<sup>4</sup> of styptic<sup>5</sup> water, anthelmintic<sup>6</sup> wine, hiera picra<sup>7</sup> and the nervous system.

**LOUISA**

Sir, you've certainly a prodigious deal of skill; but nature prevents me from opportunities of putting it in practice.

**GRIGSBY**

True, Miss, I have an immense deal of practice - So much so, that upon my soul and honor I require now a doctor for myself, the fatigue is incurable.

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<sup>3</sup> A bindweed native to the countries of the eastern part of the Mediterranean basin

<sup>4</sup> Sublimation is the transition of a substance from the solid phase to the gas phase

<sup>5</sup> a specific type of antihemorrhagic agent

<sup>6</sup> drugs that expel parasitic worms (helminths) from the body

<sup>7</sup> In the 18th century physicians administered this substance to patients for practically any kind of illness. The name meant HOLY BITTER and it truly was. It was made up from aloe; a variety of acrid, foul tasting drugs and substances, and the medicine never cured anything. It actually made matters worse-often fatal.

**LOUISA**

Sir, pray excuse me, now I'm a little indisposed, and company is not over agreeable.

**GRIGSBY**

If indisposed, Madam, what's better company than your doctor? For in your case, as we of the faculty say, no aliment so mucilaginous<sup>8</sup> as sheep's head broth: some prefer buttermilk, and it is indeed as a lacteal lachrymoligon<sup>9</sup>; for, Madam, when the disease proceeds from viscid pituitous<sup>10</sup> substance obstructing the vessels of the lungs, we of the faculty call it a spurious peripneumony<sup>11</sup>; therefore ripe fruits roasted, bak'd, or' boil'd, such as green-goose, young parsneps, extract of Saturn - then we throw in the bark, and that is, my dear Madam, the - the - nervous system.

**MARGERY**

But, Doctor, Miss Louisa wants a little rest.

**GRIGSBY**

Ha, ha, ha! That's very well - then I know nothing of what a lady wants. I see she likes me by her wishes to turn me out. (*aside*) But, Madam, to promote an emulsive<sup>12</sup> dormitory, or, as Celsus<sup>13</sup> says, a bit of sleep or rest, nothing equal to a simple goss lettice.

**LOUISA**

I thank you, Doctor; but I don't need soporifics.

**GRIGSBY**

Soap! Dem this barber! How all my patients will be slapping suds in my teeth - but she must be some great heiress here incog. from her having dispersed so much money through the village. (*aside*)

**LOUISA**

Sir, I wish you a good morning.

**GRIGSBY**

Rest! The nurse of disease! You see, as a doctor, I speak against my own interest. Nothing but exercise and open air can brace and strengthen the animal functions when the caninus rabies, or dog-madness, which we of the faculty call vertigo of the foot, comes - the -the - and that is, Madam, the nervous system. Do me the honor of taking an airing in my chaise you may trust to my whip-hand - steady as if touching a vein - I'll drive you -

**JOLLYBOY**

No: but I'll drive you out of my house, - Don't you see that you've already bother'd the lady with your nonsense.

**GRIGSBY**

I've what? Oh, this is pretty! What's that you said I did to her?

**JOLLYBOY**

Poh! Go along.

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<sup>8</sup> moist, soft, and viscid.

<sup>9</sup> Lachrymology - the study of crying. Here then - milky crying!

<sup>10</sup> Consisting of, or resembling, pituite or mucus

<sup>11</sup> Another word for Pneumonia

<sup>12</sup> A suspension of small globules of one liquid in a second liquid with which the first will not mix

<sup>13</sup> a 2nd century Greek philosopher and opponent of Early Christianity

**GRIGSBY**

Go along! Very well that! Do you know, man, when you talk to a physician - Madam, my chaise is at the door - permit me the honor of whipping you round the circuitous circle in the grand tour of Esher, Weston Green, Molesey, Hampton Court, Bushy Park, Teddington Common, and Ditton Marsh - the sight of so fine a dress'd lady as you sitting by my side - no other barber - hem! Wine-merchant - physician -

**LOUISA**

Doctor, your politeness comes particularly acceptable, for I should like a little excursion, and I assure you my purse now cannot afford the expence of post-chaises - Well, Margery, you'll speak to Mrs. Allbut for me - Come, Doctor, now for your whip-hand.

**GRIGSBY**

Afford! Expence! Any thing broke? (*apart to MARGERY*)

**MARGERY**

Ah, we are all broke! Our hearts are broke!

**GRIGSBY**

Eh! All her flash end in smoke! Oh, ho! (*aside*)

**LOUISA**

Doctor, you shall set me down at Mr. Allbut's.

**GRIGSBY**

Eh! Mem! Your bill did you say? We never commit such trifles to book - carry it in my head - For best frontignac<sup>14</sup> - hem! Raisin wine (*aside*) lavender water, low de lucy<sup>15</sup>, and magnesiari holbar<sup>16</sup> - You are indebted to me the sum of three pounds three shillings and three pence three farthings.

**LOUISA**

But, Sir, the jaunt.

**GRIGSBY**

It rains, Mem - no head to my chaise - Margery, hav'n't you, as we of the faculty say - A miller should always have a parvisol<sup>17</sup> to keep off the rain, (*puts on his hat, whistles and walks about cracking his whip*)

**JOLLYBOY** (*staring*)

Eh!

**GRIGSBY**

All good for the nervous system! Mem, I'm making up some money, and if you can oblige me by discharging that trifle -

**LOUISA**

Then better remain in my landlord's debt than - This Wretch! - (*aside*) - there, Sir, take your bill out of that - (*gives the bank-note to GRIGSBY*)

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<sup>14</sup> white [wine grape](#) that is a member of the [Muscat family](#)

<sup>15</sup> Probably meaning L'eau de Lucy - although what kind of water that is I couldn't find!

<sup>16</sup> Can't source anything useful here either

<sup>17</sup> A mistake. He means, of course, parasol which keeps off the sun, not the rain!



**GRIGSBY**

Yes, Mem: I'll bring you the change in the frizzling of a toopee! But I'll advise you, Madam, to exercise. Miller, put up a swing in your garden between two cherry trees - swing, Mem - nothing but exercise and open air can brace and strengthen the animal functions - swing! Rest is the nurse of disease - you see, as a doctor, I speak against my own interest. From ten pounds deduct three pounds three shillings and three pence three farthings, and that is what we call the - nervous system - *[Exit.]*

**JOLLYBOY**

Carried, off my bank-note !- Hollo, nervous system! *[Runs off.]*

**LOUISA**

Come now with me to Mrs. Allbut's.

**MARGERY**

Ah, I'm sure you'll not like her, Ma'am. A deuced temper.

**LOUISA**

I understand that she is haughty and overbearing - that Mr. Allbut, puffed up with the pride of riches, is the great despot of the village; that all their wealth really belongs to a poor widow, Mrs. Bellevue, that lives in the cottage by the warren yonder; but if Mrs. Allbut is so proud, I must only temporize into humility<sup>18</sup>: Doctor Grigsby's behaviour has convinced me that I shou'd use every exertion to keep myself above pecuniary obligations. A pity it is not so! But, when destitute of particular defence and protection, the world shou'd be the guardian to a lone and helpless woman. *[Exeunt.]*

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<sup>18</sup> Temporarily adopt a particular course of humble behaviour