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THE
HERMIT,

OR THE

DEAD COME TO LIFE:

A Comic Dramatic Tale,

IN THREE ACTS,

ADAPTED FOR THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION.

BY JOHN BURNES,

PRIVATE IN THE FORFAR MILITIA,

AUTHOR OF THE TRAGEDIES OF SIR JAMES THE ROSE,—
CHARLES MONTGOMERY,—ROSMOND AND ISABELLA,—AND
THE TALES OF THRUMMY CAP,—GREGOR AND FLORA,
&c. &c.

This Piece is founded on Mr Smith's Trevelian.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

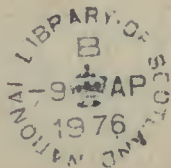
MEN.

<i>Sylvester</i> ,	THE HERMIT.
<i>Weatherby</i> ,	AN OLD MERCHANT.
<i>Grenvile</i> ,	A WEST INDIAN PLANTER.
<i>Henry Grenvile</i>	HIS SON.
<i>Edward Blackley</i> ,	HIS FRIEND.
<i>Clinton</i> ,	A COUNTRY SQUIRE.
<i>Sandy McLean</i> ,	SERVANT TO GRENVILE.

WOMEN.

<i>Mrs Harley</i> ,	WEATHERBY'S DAUGHTER.
<i>Miss Louisa Harley</i> ,	HER DAUGHTER.
<i>Miss Clinton</i> ,	CLINTON'S SISTER.
<i>Miss Letitia Clinton</i> ,	CLINTON'S NEICE.

SCENE—Lies sometimes in London, and sometimes in Bath, and sometimes at other places in the Country.



THE HERMIT,
OR,
THE DEAD COME TO LIFE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Weatherby's House.*

Enter WEATHERBY and Mrs. HARLEY.

Weatherby.

DEAR Amelia, compose yourself;—indeed, my daughter, you afflict yourself too much, without any reason.

Mrs. Harley. Reason!—I think I have the greatest reason in the world, if you consider what I have suffered—to lose my husband and infant son, in such a shocking manner, before we had been eighteen months married;—my reputation blasted too:—O! my father, had it not been for my dear Louisa, I had not been enabled to drag on a miserable existence for so long a period.

Wcath. There now—there it is—and pray, who had the primary occasion of all this?—Why nobody but yourself.—You see now, and know by woeful experience, the effects of the heinous crime of disobedience to parents.—Zoons! When I think of it I can hardly yet keep my temper:—Was Tom Harley, my clerk, a proper match for you?—However, you took your own way, and consequently can throw no blame on me.

Mrs Harley. Dearest father, I reproach nobody but myself; had my poor dear Thomas been spared to me I had been happy even in any situation.

Weath. Amelia, you're a fool, an absolute fool!—if you have any senses, whether are they wandering?—to greive so long for a worthless miscreant—the ungrateful spawn of a dissipated prodigal!—did not I take him into my counting-house to keep him off the street? after the rake, his father, had squandered his whole substance, and broke the heart of a worthy woman his wife; and then, to make amends for his misconduct, put a period to his own existence.

Mrs Harley. Alas! that was only my poor Thomas's misfortune:—'tis cruel to impute to him the misconduct of his father.

Weath. Yes, your poor Thomas has proved himself, exactly, a son worthy of such a father.—Did not I take pity on his helpless situation, and assisted him both with my purse and my counsel?—the smooth-tongued sycophant took occasion of my weakness, ingratiated himself into my esteem, and then, like a real villain, as he was, wounded me in the tenderest part, and stung to death the bosom that fostered him.

Mrs Harley. Dear Sir, consider he is the father of our Louisa.—Oh! spare his memory, if you have the least regard for your wretched daughter.

Weath. Amelia—Amelia—What a dupe you have been, and still are;—'tis plain as day he never had the least regard for you; he only stole your affections in order that he might get possession of my wealth; but, finding himself disappointed in that, he threw off his cloak; and not only left you to your fate, but stigmatized your reputation—for which the vengeance of heaven overtook him—and sent him to a watery tomb.—But come, we have spent too much time on so disagreeable a subject; if the wind continue fair, the Jamaica fleet will be here by to-morrow morning, of course Mr Grenville will be here, what shall we say to him concerning the absence of his son?

Mrs Harley. 'Tis the most strange thing in the world where he can be gone to, without any reason assigned for his absence:—Heaven grant that some misfortune has not befallen him.—I observed that some-

thing sat heavy on his spirits for these two days past, yet he explained himself to no one, no not even to Louisa, who, I imagined, knew all his secrets; the poor girl, since he departed, is quite inconsolable.

Weath. 'Tis indeed unaccountable:—I do not know how to look Mr Grenville in the face, he will think me the most careless guardian in the world;—'tis the more singular as I never observed any thing in his conduct the least blameable before.—What can I say for myself? I was buoyed up with the hope, that when Mr Grenville arrived, I should present him a son whose morals and accomplishments should exceed even the fondest father's wish.—How am I disappointed?—Parents and guardians are surely the most unhappy persons in the world.

Mrs Harley. I have too good an opinion of him to think that he has been guilty of any thing dishonourable.—I know his pure heart is free from every species of guilt; he always treated me with the affection of a son, and I likewise felt for him a mother's regard—in fact, I expected he would have been my son indeed.

Weath. Such indeed were my hopes; I perceived with pleasure the growing attachment betwixt him and Louisa;—the match would have been every way suitable; but some unfortunate destiny hangs over my head and always thwarts my schemes, be they ever so judiciously arranged.

Mrs Harley. Poor Henry! Whether hast thou hid thyself?—Alas! didst thou know the pangs which thou hast inflicted on the hearts of thy sorrowing friends, thou wouldest soon return to their longing arms; but doubtless some terrible calamity has befallen him.—I am afraid he has gone never more to return.

Weath. Dearest Amelia! try to compose yourself, go to Louisa, and give her all the consolation in your power.—I am just going to look over Mr Grenville's accounts, that all his affairs in my hands may be ready for his inspection when he arrives.—I still hope there will be some news of Henry in the course of the day.

Manet Mrs Harley. [Exit Weatherby.]

Mrs Harley. Poor Amelia! when will thy sorrows have an end? Certainly my heart is made of adamant, otherwise it had ceased to beat long ago.—Alas! my poor misguided Thomas! had you not been so hasty, my character, that you so unjustly aspersed, would soon have been cleared to your satisfaction.—My poor little Joseph, too,—had he been spared to me, 'twould have been some consolation; but alas! husband and son—were both snatched from me by the ruthless elements.—And my poor Thomas's posthumous daughter, Louisa, was all that made life bearable to me, and I fondly hoped, before I had bidden adieu to this world, to have seen her happily settled under the protection of the worthy youth of her choice;—even that hope I am deprived of by his mysterious disappearing:—What shall I say to her?—Instead of giving her comfort, I have none left for myself. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

A Room in an Inn at Bath.

Enter Henry, solus.

Hen. Well, so far have I proceeded, in obedience to a father's strict command,—'tis something strange, however, to leave my good old guardian, his amiable daughter, and sweet lovely blooming grand-daughter, who all doated upon me with the most extravagant fondness, and with whom I have lived in the utmost harmony from my infancy till now, only to obey the mysterious commands of a father, whom I never saw since I was two years old.—Let me read his letter once more, to see if I can comprehend his meaning any better. (*Takes out the letter and reads.*)

“Dearest Son,

“As soon as you receive this, leave Mr Weatherby's house immediately, without acquainting him, or any of the family, of the matter: and hold no correspondence with any of them till such time as you shall see me; and as soon as you hear that the West India Fleet arrive at Portsmouth, hasten hither to meet me.

—Dear Henry, as you value my everlasting peace,—as you regard your own peace and the peace of all those who are dear to you, fail not to obey my commands, however mysterious they may seem.—I cannot at present explain them more fully; but when we meet, it shall be explained to you.—Above all things, beware of entering into any matrimonial connexion with any person whatsoever till I see you.

Your affectionate father,

THOS. GRENVILE."

A strange epistle, upon my word! However, I shall religiously observe the conditions, if I should never be able to solve the mystery.

(A noise is heard, as of different persons talking in the entry.)

What the deuce! if ears don't deceive me I hear my friend Blackley's voice.—*(opens the room door.)*—What! my friend, Ned Blackley, have I the pleasure of seeing you at Bath?

Enter Blackley.

Black. Harry Grenville! What in the name of wonder has brought you here?

Hen. Faith, Ned, 'twas the stage coach, there was nothing wonderful in it at all.

Black. Indeed!—Pray is Mr Weatherby, or any of his family here?

Hen. Not one of them, Edward.

Black. O! you are here on business then.

Hen. I am—and I am not.

Black. Prythee, Harry, be intelligible.

Hen. In short, Ned, I do not know what,—it is one of the most unaccountable adventures I ever had in my life.

Black. Explain, explain, you deal in riddles.

Hen. Yes, but they are riddles that I cannot read myself.

Black. Lets hear them, man, perhaps I may be able to read them for you.

Hen. Yes, Edward, I will; but I am afraid you will be as bad a diviner as I am myself; you know you

have often heard me speak of my father, who is a merchant and planter in Jamaica; he has been a widower since I was but a few months old, and as he wished me to receive my education in England (which is his native country) he sent me over, at a very early age, and consigned me to the care of Mr Weatherby, (who has had large dealings with him) and has been his agent in London these many years; for sometime past he has had thoughts of disposing of his property in Jamaica, and coming over here to end his days;—a few days ago I received this letter from him, and I am here in consequence of the order it contains; please to read it, and try if you can be able to explain what I have beat my brains to do—to no purpose.

(Gives the letter.—After looking it over.)

Black. Upon my word, a very singular command, indeed,—however, I think I can decypher a part of the meaning of it.

Hen. Can you indeed?—then you are a cleverer fellow than I took you to be.

Black. Ha! ha! ha! Why, Harry, do you really think that I am so very dull? Why 'tis as plain as day; the old gentleman has got intelligence of your attachment to Miss Harley, which some how or other does not meet with his approbation, and takes this method to keep you asunder till his arrival, in case in the interim you should steal a march.

Hen. Attachment to Louisa!—Why, Ned, you are quite in a mistake,—I feel no other attachment for her than what a brother should feel for an amiable sister.—Such reports, I confess, are in circulation; but, believe me, Ned, they are utterly void of foundation.

Black. Are you serious, my friend?

Hen. Serious! I have no occasion for duplicity; especially with my friend.

Black. Indeed!—then, my dear boy, give me your hand, you have made me the happiest fellow in England;—then I may still hope that I may be able to make some impression on the heart of the fair Louisa myself.

Hen. I sincerely congratulate you, my friend, on your happiness, as I am well assured, that you are no more indifferent to the grand-daughter of Mr Weatherby than she is to you.

Black. Stop! Stop! for heaven's sake, don't exalt me upon stilts, only that you may have an opportunity of pushing me down in the mire.

Hen. O! Blackley! were I as certain of the affection of my enslaver as you are of Miss Harley's, I would be the happiest fellow in the universe.

Black. Better and better:—Who in the name of wonder can this prodigy be?—Who has caught you so fast in her chains, that you are blind to the charms of the matchless Louisa?

Hen. Why I allow that Miss Harley is every thing that is amiable; her person, beautiful as it is, is no way comparable to the excellent qualities of her mind; but, some how or other love is not voluntary:—We have been brought up together from our infancy, and know one another's dispositions perfectly, and have always considered one another as brother and sister.—Mr Weatherby and his daughter, to be sure, imagine that there is a more tender attachment betwixt us, because they wish it, and I believe have our union in view; but, believe me, my friend, it would only make us both miserable.

Black. But you have not informed me of the name of your own paragon yet.

Henry. From you I shall not conceal it, her name is Miss Letitia Clinton.

Black. What! the niece of the old misanthropical country squire, who had lodgings in your street last winter?

Henry. The same.—Oh! Blackley, that angel has made me feel what it is to be really in love!—I never before had any idea what the passion meant.

Black. Have you made any interest in the affections of your mistress?

Henry. I thought so; but her old suspicious aunt, (who watches her with all the vigilance of a Spanish

duena) as soon as she perceived it, whipt her off to the country ; since which time I have had no opportunity of renewing my addresses, though my passion for her is the same as ever.

Black. Why you are certainly in luck.—Some good genii has taken you under his protection.—Mr Clinton, with his sister and niece, are now at Bath ; and at this moment lodges in the same house with yourself.

Henry. Indeed ! thanks to Cupid.—I shall then have an opportunity of seeing my charmer once more.

Black. Don't be so lavish in your thanksgivings to the little blind deity, till you are sure that he smiles on the wishes of his faithful votary.—Consider the singular humour of her guardian, and the envious scoulings of the old tabby, her aunt, who would love to see every lovely young girl as old a maid as herself.

Henry. I must accommodate myself to the humour of the uncle—flatter the aunt,—true love is never destitute of contrivances to gain its point.—Ned, as you are acquainted with the old gentleman, you must introduce me as your friend ;—Perhaps I may have it my power to serve you on a similar occasion.

Black. With all my heart ; I'll introduce you in the morning.—But I believe the supper that I ordered is ready, you must come and take a little with me, and afterwards we'll have a talk on our respective affairs over a bottle.

Henry. By all means.—Dear Ned, you have made me so happy, that I almost forgot what brought me to Bath.—To-morrow I expect my father ; but I must have an interview with my mistress before his arrival, if possible, for fear the old gentleman should have other views for me.

Black. This way then.—

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Another Room in the Inn at Bath.

CLINTON, Miss CLINTON and LETITIA are discovered.

Clin. Pshaw! tell me no more stuff; I told you before, and I tell you again, that Bath is the most wicked dissipated place in Christendom.

Miss Clin. La, Brother, you are always so censorious; you always find fault with the most innocent diversions.

Clin. Innocent diversions!—I'll tell you what, Bridget, 'tis extremely ridiculous for a person of your years to talk as you do.

Miss Clin. Charles, you talk as if I was an old dot-tard on the brink of the grave.—Do you imagine, that though you be disgusted with the world, are other people to deny themselves the fashionable amusements of it to please your testy humour; I should rather think you would study to introduce your niece in some of the fashionable circles of this place.

Clin. What! introduce her amongst a set of cox-combs, rakes, debauchees, and fortune-hunters;—No, no, nister, she has vanity enough in her composition already:—Even your example would be sufficient to turn her young brain, was it even more steady than it is.

Letitia. Dear uncle, be not so hard on my poor aunt; she only wishes to do me a pleasure, but she is mistaken; I assure you that I prefer the innocent amusements of the country infinitely above the unmeaning, noisy, dissipated routs I have here witnessed.

Clin. Pretty dissembler! do you take me to be such an old fool as to believe this?—However, I shall take you at your word, and set out for the country again to-morrow.—I shall never forgive myself for coming here at all; for if I shall stay another day, some fop, not worth a shilling, will have got a hold of you:—You are too inexperienced to be trusted here; and your wise aunt is a great deal worse than yourself.

Miss Clin. Brother, 'tis folly to talk to you:—I am sure I would be the last person to introduce my niece into improper company; no, no, I have always been extremely careful of that.

Enter a servant.

Serv. Mr Edward Blackley and another gentleman desire to wait on you, Sir.

Clin. Edward Blackley! who can he have got to introduce? (that young man's visits are something suspicious; I'll get rid of him as soon as possible.)—(*Aside.*) Shew them in. [*exeunt Servant.*] This visit must be placed to your account, Letty; but I should like to know his expectations a little better before I encourage any intimacy between you.

Enter Blackley and Henry.

Black. Good morning, Mr Clinton;—ladies, I hope you are well.—Give me leave to introduce my particular friend, Mr Henry Grenville, to you, who would be proud of the honour of your acquaintance.

Letitia. [*Aside.*] Good heavens! Henry here; what can this mean?

Clin. Thank you, thank you, Mr Blackley, I shall be happy to be acquainted with any of your friends.—(what the d—l can this be for?—I must keep a sharp out-look. [*Aside.*])

Miss Clin. O! Mr Grenville, I hope you are well; I think I had the honour of being in your company last winter, if I don't mistake.

Hen. I believe you had, Madam:—I hope I see you in good health and spirits.—Miss Letitia, I hope you are likewise well.

Miss Clin. Thank you, Mr Grenville, indeed I have been but very poorly this long while; I have been recommended to the waters here: however, I am afraid, that drinking them will have small efficacy with me; but Letty here is always in high health and spirits.

Clin. Heyday!—Why Mr—a—a—Grenville, I find these ladies and you are old acquaintance.

Henry. Yes, Sir, I had the pleasure of being in their company last winter, in town.—I lived with Mr

Weatherby the merchant, in Cheapside ; perhaps you know him.

Clin. What, old Joseph Weatherby ! know him ? ay, better than he knows himself : a warm old codger, but keeps a devillish grip.—Why about twenty years ago I was very intimate with him, but for his unnatural usage of a particular friend of mine, I gave up all correspondence with him, and have never enquired about him since.

Henry. I am sorry to hear it, for he has been a second parent to me, and I have lived with him from my infancy till within these few days past.

Clin. Indeed ! and what made you leave him now ?

Henry. Why, Sir, to meet my father, whom I expect every day with the West India fleet.

Clin. O ! I understand you ; I remember your friend Mr Blackley here, was speaking of you to me one day, I think he told me you was soon to be Mr Weatherby's grandson.

Henry. What, by wedding Miss Harley, his granddaughter ? if that was the case, Mr Blackley would hardly call me his friend.—Would you Mr Blackley ?

Black. To say the truth, I hardly think I would.

Clin. O, you are therabouts, are you, Blackley, you are scenting after that great city heiress.—But have a care, my fine spark, you hardly know what you are about :—Be sure, in the first place, to secure old grand-dad's consent, or, depend upon it, he'll use you as he did my friend, poor Tom Harley.—Pray, Mr Grenville, did you ever hear your guardian speak of his son-in-law ?

Henry. I have indeed, Sir, often.

Clin. And what did he say of him ?

Henry. Why, he always represented him as an unworthy person, who was under diverse obligations to him ; who seduced his daughter, and married her privately with sinister views ; but finding himself disappointed in his expectations, vilely slandered his wife, by affirming that she was false to his bed ; then he eloped, and carried his infant son with him, and em-

barked for America; but the vessel was lost, and every person on board perished.

Clin. And his daughter, no doubt, would perfectly agree with her father.

Henry. Not altogether, Sir, she has always taken her husband's part against her father, and much altercation has been between them on that account: she is still inconsolable for his loss, has rejected several good offers since, and is determined to dedicate her life to his memory.

Clin. [Shaking his head.] The hypocritical cockatrice, what an assurance she must have! after her infidelity to the best of husbands, and by her abandoned conduct, occasioning his untimely death. She and her father has amused the world with a fine story, at the expence of her injured husband's memory!—But I know them, however; have a care of them, Mr Blackley, if you are wise.

Henry. Pardon me, Mr Clinton, I am certain that you labour under some very great mistake. Mrs Harley is a woman of the most consummate virtue and goodness of heart! beloved, respected, and pitied by all who have the happiness of her acquaintance.

Clin. Young man, I forgive your warmth, but you must not think to impose on me; but I need not say that you are imposed upon yourself: but I know her, and think it my duty to expose her, as I look upon her as the murderer of my friend.

Henry. Sir, I beg your pardon, but I must not bear any thing to the prejudice of her whom I have always considered as a mother, and still revere her with filial regard.

Enter Servant.

Serv. The breakfast waits.

[*Exit.*]

Clin. Mr Grenville, I've begun to have a regard for you, and shall, perhaps, let you hear more on this subject than ever you heard before.—Your friend and you must do me the honour to breakfast with me, and afterwards I'll make you acquainted with the whole history

Henry. I shall be very happy to hear it, but I do not think it will make any alteration in my opinion.

Clin. Pass no hasty judgment, Sir.—This way, good people, if you please. [Exit.]

End of the first Act.

ACT II.

SCENE I. *A solitary heath.*—[Thunder and lightning.]

Enter Grenville and Sandy McLean.

Gren. Sandy, it appears we have fairly lost our way.

Sandy. Deil hae my saul, master, gin ever I was the rout on sic a night i' my life, an it wasna ae night about a dozen a years syne, that I gael weil, comin' atweesh Dumbarton and Callender, that I was amaist drowned in Loch Lommond.

Gren. How unfortunate that the carriage should break in this dreary spot; we have certainly past the inn they directed us to.

Sandy. The inn! deil tak me, gin I believe there be sae muckle as a sheep cot here; I canna think that ony Christian creature can live i' this wilderness;—Why this place is waur than the forest o' Badenoch.

[Thunder.]

Gren. Horrid!—Why have I encountered so many dangers, both by sea and land, in a foreign clime, to perish in my own country the first night of my arrival after so long an absence:—Let us try, Sandy, if we can regain the road again.

Sandy. Find the road again! egad, ye may as weil think to find a black sow at twall o'clock at night in the middle o' the Sherra Muir.—[Grops about, and falls.]—Hoot! shame fa' me, gin I bina o'er the lugs in a moss hole:—Help me out again, measter.

Gren. [Lifting him up.] Come, Sandy, let us endeavour to find some place to shelter ourselves, till the storm blaw a little over; 'tis simply impossible to walk at present.

Sandy. Guid troth, Sir, I needna care muckle for shelter, for I'm as weet already as gin ye had trailed me through the mill-dam :—Here's some bushes, an scroggs, let's try an we can get by the lythe side o' them.

Gren. This way, Sandy :—As I live, here's a cottage, this is fortunate however, if there should be any inhabitants in it.

Sandy. Stop, measter, I'm nae sae very sure o' that; by my saul, we'll may be be frae the deil till the deep sea; I've an ill gridge, nae body but robbers dwell here about.

Gren. Robbers, you fool! if they are men they will not refuse us shelter in a night like this.—[*knocks.*]

Sylvester. [within.] Who's there?

Gren. Two unfortunate travellers who have lost their way; whoever you are, if humanity possesses your bosom, grant us admittance for a little from the inclemency of the weather.

[*The door opens, and Sylvester comes forward, dressed in a night-gown of coarse russet, a woollen nightcap, and a long white beard which reaches to his middle.*]

Sylv. Gentlemen, you are extremely welcome to such accommodation as my poor hovel contains; come in and dry yourselves at the fire.

Gren. Reverend father, we humbly thank you; my poor servant is very wet, and a fire will be very acceptable.

Sandy. [*Aside.*] Deil hae my saul, but he's a queer figure:—Egad, he's either a Jew or a Conjuror—I wadna swear we're safe wi' him; but I'll gang in however.

Sylv. Come in, Gentlemen, from the rain.—[*They go in, and the scene shuts.*]

SCENE II.

Henry's lodgings at Bath.

Enter HENRY and BLACKLEY.

Black. Well Harry, how do you like Mr Clinton?

Hen. Why, I can't say, I have a very favourable

Sylv. Mistake me not, Sir, perfect happiness is not the lot of mortals; I only enjoy happiness in a comparative degree, contrasted with the world.—Alas! Sir, when I take a retrospect of the scenes I have seen, and the part I acted whilst I lived in the busy world, I am amazed to think that a wretch such as I has been permitted to enjoy the comforts and peace of mind that I now do.

Gren. I understand you, Sir, you have had misfortunes, which have disgusted you with the world.

Sylv. Misfortunes indeed! but they were of my own seeking:—I was miserable because I justly deserved to be so.—Weary of the follies of mankind, and indeed of my own folly and guilt, I have lived twenty-three years in this cottage, and am now more happy than I deserved, or ever hoped to be.

Sandy. [*Aside.*] Preserve us a', Deil tak' me but he's a murderer; egad, I wis we were fairly out o' his house;—At ony rate, I'm positive he's a warlock.

Gren. I suppose, Sir, your history would be very interesting.

Sylv. No Sir, not in the least.—My early life was spent as most young mens' are, that is, in thoughtless dissipation and excess: I have experienced false friends, and faithless mistresses:—I was an easy dupe to every species of deceit, till I soon squandered a large patrimony. I was united to an amiable young woman, who mildly remonstrated with me on my conduct, but I lent a deaf ear to her wholesome admonitions, till at last I was reduced to absolute want; then I was in a situation similar to the unjust steward, in the sacred volume, "I could not dig, and to beg I was ashamed."—In short, suffice it to say, that I deviated widely from all the rules of propriety: my afflicted partner struggled long with her misfortunes, and then left this world for a better: one surviving son was all that was left me; him I did not chuse to see, as I had ruined him by my prodigality: I therefore forsook society, and choose this retreat, where I soon had the mortification to learn that my unhappy son had been as unfortunate as myself, and in

consequence, found an early grave.—Thus all my ties to the world being broken, I continued here, and diligently applied myself to study the oracles of truth, in which I found a balm that healed my wounded mind, and instilled into my bosom that peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

Gren. [Much agitated.] Dear Sir, your narration interests me exceedingly, and thoughts come across my mind which I cannot account for: if it be not impertinent, be so good as favour me with your name.

Sylv. I have been known here these many years by the name of Sylvester the recluse; and I was once known in the gay world by the name of Arthur Sylvester Harley.

Gren. Good heavens! my father! my father!—

[Falls on the hermits's neck, and faints.]

Sylv. My son Thomas! can it be possible?—it is it must be so!—[Supporting him.] Get a little water friend.

Sandy. [getting water, and sprinkles a little in his master's face] Preserve us a', an' keep's i' our right wits; this is wonderfu'—my master's dying.

[Grenville recovers.]

Sylv. See, he recovers.—Dear Thomas, how is it?

Gren. My dear father, can it be possible that you still exist, after 'twas supposed that you was many years ago numbered with the dead?

Sylv. Thomas, it is possible! in me you behold your unfortunate, guilty father, who foolishly squandered what should have been yours;—who has been the primary cause of all your misfortunes; and who also thought that you was long since in the land of forgetfulness.—How comes it that you are still alive?—Did not the vessel in which you embarked perish at sea?

Gren. The vessel in which I was said to be, perished indeed, but happily I was in another.

Sylv. Then I may hope that your boy too was preserved.

Gren. Why, I perceive you know my whole story: What miracle is this?—you was thought to be drown-

ed in the river Thames some years before I had a boy ; nay, the person who found the body, shewed me the clothes which was on it afterwards, which I knew to be yours, and this put the report beyond a doubt.

Sylva. That I can account for.—When I left London, I met a poor peasant, whom I persuaded to change clothes with me, as I did not wish to be known :—That peasant, I afterwards learned, was found drowned in the Thames, and was supposed to be me ; that report I never contradicted, as I wished to be dead to the world ; however, I found means to make myself acquainted with your distress on my supposed death ; of your living with Mr Weatherby, and espousing his daughter ; of his inflexibility towards you both ; of the birth of your son ; and lastly, of the infidelity of your wife, and your flight in consequence thereof, which was supposed terminated your life by being drowned at sea.

Gren. Dearest father, how mysterious are the ways of Providence ; I see you are acquainted with all that befell me in this country, and I have only to inform you of my adventures since I left it.

Sylva. Dear son, be so good as satisfy my impatient curiosity.

Gren. Why after I was convinced that my wife was unworthy of my regard, as you have heard, I took my son and went directly to Portsmouth, whence I wrote back that I was to embark next morning on board of the Charming Sally for America ; but I slept too long, and she was sailed before I was ready, very happily for me, as she and all her crew were lost :—however, I found a vessel bound for Barbadoes ; next day I went on board of her, and arrived there without any accident ; from thence I embarked again for Jamaica, where I found my uncle, Mr Reynolds ; he received me very kindly, and when I told him my story, he took me to his own house, and used me in all respects as his own son. As I wished my relations in England to believe I was dead, I assumed the name of Grenville, (my uncle's deceased wife's maiden name) and commenced, in a short time, business for myself ; soon after I took it

into my head to write to Mr Weatherby, desiring him to be agent for me in my mercantile affairs at London, to which he consented : sometime after, I wrote him that I had an infant son, whom I wished to be educated in England, and wished him to take the charge of his education ; this he also consented to ; accordingly I sent my boy Joseph, but under the name of Henry Grenville, to his grandfather, and his mother, who have ever since taken care of him and educated him as the son of an utter stranger. About ten years ago my uncle died, leaving me heir to his whole fortune, by which means I became possessed of property to the amount of 40,000*l.* sterling ; every packet that sailed I still kept up a correspondence with Mr Weatherby, and even with his daughter, who has indeed taken great care of my son's education ; but, some months since, I received a letter from Mr Weatherby, acquainting me that my son had conceived a violent attachment to his grand-daughter, Miss Louisa Harley, and requesting my approbation. Thunder-struck at this proposal, I instantly wrote my son to leave Mr Weatherby's house immediately, and hold no correspondence with any of the family till I should see him, as I was to be in England with the first fleet. Accordingly, I set sail, and arrived yesterday at Portsmouth, from whence I took coach for Bath, intending first to call on my old friend Charles Clinton, when the coach broke, and I lost my way : but it was heaven that guided my steps to meet a long lost parent.

Sylva. My dear Thomas, I see that Heaven always protects the virtuous.—Your misfortunes have been great, but they were unmerited ; widely different were mine ; I richly deserved all that befell me.—Let me with humble gratitude adore that power, who, out of evil has brought forth good,—I, (as a punishment for my wickedness,) was not permitted to assist you ; but Providence directed you to your uncle, and opened his heart in your favour, though it was always steeled against me. But I murmur not ; let me be silent and thankful. I never thought to enjoy such happiness on this side the grave as I do at this moment. Thomas, can you forgive your father ?

Gren. I can,—I do,—let us think no more of it:—You must now leave this obscurity, and proceed with me to London;—I have more than sufficient to make your remaining days as happy as you can wish.

Sylv. No, no, my son;—What, would you have me to leave this peaceful retreat, where I have experienced such happiness, and mix again with the world, at my age?—Thomas, I have long since bid the world adieu; may you be happy; may the evening of your days glide smoothly away in the society of your worthy friends:—my few remaining hours shall be spent here in prayers for your prosperity.

Gren. Dear father, I must not leave you so; as soon as I have seen my son, and settled my affairs in London, I shall be with you again;—I shall discharge what debts you may have, so you need not be ashamed to return to your own house;—I understand it is to be sold, and I shall purchase it for you directly.

Sylv. Thomas, your goodness overpowers me;—I cannot speak,—I must retire and compose myself:—Farewell, my son, for the present, pursue your journey, settle your affairs; if I am spared till your return, I shall be glad to see you, and my grand-son; but I will not leave my habitation.

Gren. Father, adieu! (embracing) your affairs shall be first in my remembrance.

Sylv. Thomas, farewell.

(Exit Sylv.)

Gren. Come, Sandy, what are you asleep?

Sandy. Na, guid troth,—I was only musing at sic strange ferleys as I have witnessed:—wha cud imagine that the auld hermit was your honour's father!—I mind just o' sic anither story happening whan I was a callan, ca'n the pleugh, about twa miles frae Dumblane; it was a clear moon-light night, i' the go o' the year—

Grenv. Come, let us be going, I can hear your story by the way.

(Exeunt.)

End of the second Act.

ACT III.

SCENE I. *The Inn at Bath.*

Enter Clinton, Miss Clinton, and Miss Letitia Clinton.

Clin. Come, come, I tell you I will not be contradicted; you are all of you set to plague me: don't tell me of his obedience to the stupid commands of his father, I have altered my opinion of him entirely; I once thought him worthy of your hand, Letitia, and would have given my consent with all my heart; but I find he is only trifling with you.

Let. I don't think so, uncle; 'tis only his prudence; I do not see the propriety of hurrying into engagements of this nature, without due consideration.

Miss Clin. Perfectly right, my dear; and let me tell you, brother, I do not think that you act with decorum, nor even with common decency; did not you tell him that if he wished to marry your niece, he must do it directly, and neither ask the approbation of his father nor any one else?

Clin. Yes, I did; and he hesitated, which induced me to brake with him; and I likewise told him that since he would not do as I desired, he should not wed you at all, Letitia; and I charge you, as you value my favour, to give over all thoughts of him; nay, you must not so much as speak of him.

Let. That is somewhat hard.

Miss Clin. Brother, will you favour me with your reason?

Clin. Why d——n it, you women want reasons for every thing: I think when 'tis my pleasure, 'tis a sufficient reason.

Miss Clin. Monstrous!—Why, Charles, what is the meaning of all this?—I do not comprehend your conduct at all!

Clin. Why that's your dullness. Young Grenville I understand has large expectations, and that old miserly rogue Weatherby, and his virtuous daughter, have desig upon him that I meant to prevent: had he really loved you as he pretended, Letitia, he would have

taken my advice, and married you directly; then I would have had my revenge on old Weatherby complete; but his foolishly refusing, till he had seen his father, and gained his approbation, has deranged my plan; and now I am determined he shall not have you, nor shall he ever see you again if I can help it:—You must get ready to leave Bath immediately.

Let. As soon as you please, uncle, I have little pleasure in staying here. (*Aside.*) However, I hope to see Henry again for all that.

Miss Clin. Brother, I am not pleased with your conduct at all.

Clin. Why I never intended to please you, Mrs. Wisdom, if I please myself you have no business in the affair.—Get ready as as soon as possible, whilst I go and give directions for our departure. [*Exit Clinton.*]

Miss Clin. How unaccountable a brute my brother is grown; but never mind, Letitia, his passion will soon blow over:—depend upon it you will soon see your lover again, even with your uncle's approbation, notwithstanding the fuss he is in at present.

Let. Dear aunt, I hope I shall; I shall live in hope however:—Henry to be sure is the only man I ever saw that I think could make me happy; but I entirely disapproved of my uncle's hasty plan of marriage, it shocked my delicacy;—but time they say works wonders, I must just have patience.

Miss Clin. That's right, my dear, keep up your spirits; you know I was never your enemy, I strove to keep you at a distance from him before, to be sure; but then I did not know of his worth and circumstances so well as I do now:—depend upon it, I shall exert myself in his favour whenever I have an opportunity.

Let. Thank you, dear aunt, thank you; but let us go and make ready for our journey. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. *Weatherby's House in London.*

Mrs and Miss Harley are discovered.—Enter to them, hastily, Weatherby.

Weath. News, Amelia, news! come, cheer up, I have got intelligence of the runaway.

Mrs Harley. Indeed! Where is he?

Weath. Mr Gubbins is just now come from Bath, where he spoke with Henry, in company with Edward Blackley.

Mrs Harley. I am glad of it, from my soul; but he should have told us:—I shall be seriously angry with him.

Miss Harley. Dear mother, do not say so; I am sure you cannot be angry; for my part, I feel as if a load was removed from me to hear he is safe.

Weath. Blackley I suppose has decoyed him off; but I shall give him such a lecture, when I meet him, as he never had since he was born. I must set off for Bath immediately and fetch him home; and if Mr Grenville should arrive ere I return, tell him that his son and I are on business at Bath that will admit of no delay; but that we will soon be home; I would not, if possible, have him know any thing of his son's elopement.

Mrs Harley. Very well, Sir, be as expeditious as you can.

Weath. I shall lose no time; I shall be back ere I sleep. [Exit.

SCENE changes to Bath.—A Hotel.

Enter Grenville and Sandy McLean.

Gren. Sandy, 'twas unlucky that my friend Charles Clinton was not at his seat in the country; but I understand he is here; pray ask the waiter if such a gentleman is in the house?

Sand. Troth sall I, Sir; but I think the fowk here about very ill-mannered, they glour an' laugh at me, just as gin I war a warld's wonder.

Gren. They don't understand your Scotch accent, that's the reason.

Sand. My Scotch accent! Deil tak me, gin a think they speak wi' ony accent at a' here;—I never saw sic can a pack o' ill bred tykes! [Exit Sandy.

Gren. Now for my interview with Clinton; I wonder if he will know me.—(walks about a little.)—[re-enter Sandy.

Sand. Measter Clinton is out a whyllie syne ; but here's a young gentleman wants to see you.

Gren. Shew him in.

Enter Henry.

Well Sir, have you any commands with me ?

Hen. I beg your pardon, Sir, I understand you are lately arrived from the West Indies.—Pray, Sir, can you inform me if there is a merchant of the name of Grenville arrived ?

Gren. There is.

Hen. Can you let me know where I may find him ?

Gren. If it be not impertinent, what are your commands with him ?

Hen. He is my father, Sir.

Gren. [*Aside.*] My son !—very good ; but I must not discover myself till I examine him a little.—Indeed ! O, I understand ; I have heard him speak of you ;—you was brought up in London, with a Mr Weatherby.

Hen. I was, Sir, but I left him some days ago, in order to meet my father :—Will you be so good as inform me where he is ?

Gren. I cannot exactly tell at present, but I have a letter here, I got from him, to deliver you if you should enquire at me ; most likely it will inform you. (*Gives a letter.*)

Hen. [*Steps aside and reads.*]

“ Dear Son,

“ As soon as this comes to your hand, hasten to Clinton-hall, near Windsor, where most likely you will find me ; but if I be not arrived when you come, deliver the inclosed to the master of the house, and wait till I come.

Your loving father,

THOMAS GRENVILLE.”

(*Looks at the inclosed and reads.*)—Charles Clinton, Esq. Clinton-hall,—my mistress's uncle !—Are my father and him acquainted ? it cannot be possible ; however, this is an opportunity for my seeing my charmer again.—(I understand she and her aunt left Bath this morning.)—[*Aside.*] I thank you, Sir, this informs me

that my father is at Windsor.—I must set off directly to meet him. Good day, Sir. *[Exit Henry.]*

Manet Grenville.

Gren. So, I have got him off; the discovery will be better at my friend's house, than at a public inn:—let him wait till I arrive.

Enter Sandy.

Sand. Sir, here's a gentleman, that ca's himsell Measter Clenton, he wants to ken what ye're wantin wi' him, as he is gaan awa out o' the town i'now.

Gren. Shew him in. *[Exit Sandy.]*

Enter Clinton.

Clin. Well, Sir, what are your commands?

Gren. Your servant, Mr Clinton, how have you been this long while?

Clin. Pretty well, Sir; but I am something at a loss:—I have not the honour to know who asks.

Gren. Impossible,—look at me again, and try if you cannot recollect an old acquaintance.

Clin. Your features I think I have seen before; but upon my honour I cannot remember where.

Gren. Time has been, Mr Clinton, when you would not have been so long of distinguishing your friend Tom Harley.

Clin. Harley!—Let me look at you again,—'tis he indeed;—in the name of heaven, what is the meaning of this? Are you returned from the grave, or are you a spirit?

Gren. Neither, Sir, I am real flesh and blood, and happy to see my old friend look so well.

Clin. (Running into his arms.) My dear friend, I rejoice to see you;—to what fortunate accident have I the pleasure of beholding you alive again, after lamenting your death these twenty years?—All your friends supposed you was lost in the Charming Salley, which foundered at sea.

Gren. So it was reported, Sir; but you see all was not true:—You knew my motive for leaving England, and as I was reported to be dead, I had reasons for not contradicting the report.—My story is too long to relate

at present ; but this I can assure you, that after a multiplicity of adventures, I am once more arrived in my native land, in perfect health, and possessed of a larger fortune than even my utmost wishes either expected or desired.

Clin. I congratulate you sincerely, on your good fortune ; but, may I ask, you had a son who was supposed to have shared your fate.

Gren. And have still, Mr Clinton, a worthy youth, I hope will be the comfort of my declining years.

Clin. I am overjoyed to hear it : is he in England ?

Gren. He is ; I shall soon have the pleasure of introducing him to you.

Clin. I shall be happy to see him.—O, Harley ! how glad I am that fortune is weary of plaguing you at last ; but, by the by, how did you know that I was here ?

Gren. Why, Sir, immediately upon my arrival I went to Clinton-Hall to see you before I made myself known to any of my acquaintance ; there I understood you was at Bath ; off hither I set, and arrived about half an hour ago.

Clin. How unfortunate you have had such a journey ; had you staid till night, I had been home, for I am just now going to set out for Clinton-Hall : my sister and niece are already gone in my carriage ; I only staid to settle some affairs, and am now ready to follow them.—Now you and I will go together.

Gren. With all my heart !—I hope your sister is well—as for your niece, I have not the pleasure of knowing her.

Clin. No, Sir, you could not know her ; she was not born when you left the country ;—she is the daughter of my deceased brother, and heiress to his fortune, which is considerable.—I have acted as her guardian since my brother's death.—She is a lively, smart, handsome girl ; and, as she has a large fortune, she is likely to give me a good deal of trouble ; every coxcomb in the country wants to be dangling after her.

Gren. You should endeavour to select a proper match for her amongst them.

Clin. Why, Sir, I'll tell you, I had a curious piece of business on her account since I came here, which is the reason of our leaving Bath so rapidly.

Gren. Indeed!

Clin. You shall hear, Sir, perhaps 'twill make you smile.—There is a young man of the name of Grenvile, (son to a planter, or merchant, in Jamaica) who has been brought up with your quondam master and father-in-law, Weatherby.—This young man having fallen in company with my niece, pretended to take a fancy to her; and, as he was a likely like fellow, of a good character, and had good expectations, I had no objections as to his marrying her; but as I understood old Grip-all, in conjunction with his daughter, had laid a plot to palm Miss—what shall I call her—Tomley,—or Harley, on him for a wife, I wished him to espouse my niece immediately, in order to disappoint the avaricious old rascal; but he, forsooth, would not consent to that till he had consulted his father, whom he expected over with the first fleet, (because he had, in a letter, forbidding him to marry till he saw him;) whereupon I was so exasperated at the fellow, that I set him a-tramping, and ordered my niece to think of him no more; she is therefore in the dumps at present; but for fear of some trick being played, I have sent her off for the country again.

Gren. How fortunate he has not then conceived a passion for his own sister, as I was made to believe! [*Aside.*] Very singular, truly!—Why I'll introduce my son to her as a lover, perhaps he may comfort her for the loss of young Grenvile, if you have no objections of me for a father to your niece.

Clin. Give me your hand, Tom, for egad, an excellent proposal; she shall be his before any other person in the world.—When shall I have the happiness of seeing him?

Gren. Why, I suppose he will be at your house before us; I gave him a letter of introduction to you, in case I had not seen you here.

Clin. Better and better!—Let us be gone, my friend; I am now quite impatient to be home.

Gren. As soon as you please, Sir—[*calling.*]

Enter Sandy.

Sandy, get the horses ready immediately.

Sandy. I sall, Sir—an deil hae my saul, but I wis we were out o' this town—Ane o' the waiter chaps had the assurance to ca' me a lousey Scotch blockhead;—gad, an' I had my will o' him I sud gie him some Scotch diversion; I sud shake the pickle bear-meal out o' his crown.—I was never ca'd the like sin' I left Dumb-lane.

Gren. Never mind him, Sandy, he is beneath your notice.

Sandy. Troth is he, I ken that fu weil, but his tinkler-jaw is ill to thole for a' that. [*Exit Sandy.*]

Clin. Ha! ha! ha! where, in the name of wonder, did you pick up this wild Caledonian hero?

Gren. Who, my faithful Scotchman? I got him in Jamaica—The poor fellow's attachment to me is unaccountable; he saved my life at the hazard of his own, by plunging into the sea and bringing me ashore, one day when the boat in which I was was upset; he has ever since been in my service, and I would not part with him for the world.

Clin. Poor fellow! What had induced him to go so far from his own country?

Gren. Why, I don't know—It seems he had taken a fancy to go to sea, and had sailed from Leith in the transport service, but disliking it, afterwards rather chose to enter into mine.

Clin. He is a whimsical fellow, faith; his broad Scotch dialect is very diverting, but it may lead him into scrapes in the country.—The Scotch are generally choleric, and hot-headed, and very often put upon.

Gren. O no! Sandy is the best natured creature in the world;—'tis true he is something jealous of the honour of his country, when he imagines it is insulted, and is any thing but a coward; I have no fear of him at all.

Re-enter Sandy.

Sandy. The horses are ready and like your honour.

Gren. We are just coming.—Are you ready Mr Clinton?

Clin. Whenever you please.

Gren. Come along then.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE *changes to Clinton-Hall.*

Enter Miss CLINTON and LETITIA.

Miss Clin. Well, my dear, here we are again ;— what an unaccountable boor my brother is, to make us leave Bath just in the very best of the season ?

Letitia. I do not care about Bath, it has no charms for me ; this retirement, at present, far better suits my inclinations.

Miss Clin. Come, come, Letty, you must not give way to melancholy.

Letitia. No more I do, aunt ; am I not as cheerful as you could desire ?

Miss Clin. You endeavour to make me believe so, but it will not do ; I can see chagrin painted in your countenance, notwithstanding your assumed tranquil appearance :—but give yourself no trouble, I think I may assure you, without the gift of prophecy, that matters will soon be made up with regard to Henry ; for as soon as his father arrives, he will make instant application to your uncle ; and I see no reasonable objection he can have to your union.

Letitia. My dear aunt, that is indeed my hope ;— the last words that Henry spoke to me were to the same effect.

Enter a Servant:

Serv. A young gentleman who calls himself Grenville, desires to see you.

Miss Clin. Grenville ! in the name of wonder what brings him here so soon ?—Shew him in. [*Exit servant.*]

Letitia. We shall see presently—perhaps his father is arrived.

Enter Henry.

Henry. Your servant, Ladies.—Is Mr Clinton returned ?

Letitia. Not yet, Sir, but we expect him every moment.—For goodness sake what has happened that you are here ?—is your father arrived ?

Henry. He is, indeed, Madam, I expected to have found him here :—I have his letter to that effect.

Miss Clin. You have seen him then, Sir ?

Henry. No, I have not had the pleasure, but I have seen a gentleman who came with him, who delivered me a letter from him ; wherein he informs me, that probably he would be here before I arrived, but if not I should wait till he came :—and inclosed was a letter for Mr Clinton.

Miss Clin. Surprising ! my brother and he cannot be acquainted ?

Henry. I cannot tell, Madam, it would appear to me that they were :—however, I shall wait the result.—I wish your brother was returned.

Miss Clin. I am afraid he will be in a passion at finding you here, he is much incensed at you.

Henry. I cannot help it ; I only acted as my dear Letitia here wished, and in obedience to my father's commands, and 'tis from the same motive that I am here now.

Letitia. Dear Henry, you may be assured your company always gives me pleasure ; but for my sake, do not exasperate my uncle at present.

Henry. I shall only deliver him my father's letter, perhaps when he has read it we may come to a better understanding.

Enter servant.

Serv. Mr Clinton and a strange gentleman are just alighted, and coming up immediately.

Henry. Now for my letter.

Miss Clin. Who can the stranger be, I wonder ?

Henry. We will see presently.

Enter CLINTON and GRENVILLE.

Clin. Good day, ladies ; you see I have not been long behind you :—Give me leave to introduce my old friend Mr——[*Seeing Henry*] what the d—l do you want here ?

Henry. I have brought you a letter, Sir, from my father.

Clin. I know nothing of your father, and I want to know as little——this is the door, Sir, if you please.

Henry. Wont you read the letter, Sir, and I shall go presently?—[*to Greavile.*] If I mistake not, Sir, you are the gentleman who got it from my father.

Gren. I am, young man.

Clin. Mr Harley, this is the individual Grenvile I was talking to you of:—Are you acquainted with his father?

Gren. Perfectly well, Sir.

Clin. Well, but it does not signify, I am determined he shall not have my niece.—Sir, you have had your answer before; I wonder how you have had the assurance to come here.—This gentleman has a son, an accomplished young man, of an immense fortune, who wishes to pay his addresses to you, Letitia, so you must prepare to receive him as your future husband.

Letitia.—No, uncle, as you have hindered me to wed the man, whom I am not ashamed to confess, I love, I am determined to live single for his sake.

Gren. O, madam, do not make rash promises—love is easily transferable:—Stop till you see my son, I will here take a bet, that you will be as much in love with him, as at present you are with this gentleman.

Letitia. Indeed, Sir! this is strange doctrine!—you surely take me to be very changeable.

Gren. I know most of your sex to be so, and I will hold one hundred pounds, that it will be as I say.

Letitia. Done, Sir! I think it will be easy gained money.

Gren. Don't be too confident, madam, else you may reckon without your host.—Mr Clinton, pray be so good as read that young man's letter.

Clin. Well, Sir, to oblige you I will.—What can be the meaning of this?—[*Takes the letter and reads.*]

“DEAR FRIEND,

“You will no doubt be surprised that I
“am in the land of the living; however, it is so, and I
“shall soon have the pleasure of seeing you.—The
“bearer of this letter is my son, who has been known
“by the name of Henry Grenvile: receive him as
“such, and in a short time you will see your friend,

THOMAS HARLEY.”

Can it be possible?—Henry Grenville your son?—

Gren. Even so, Mr Clinton; this youth, whom you have known by that name, is no other than Joseph Harley, my son:—this letter I had previously wrote, to send you by him, in case I had not met with you at Bath.

Hen. Stand off—let me recollect myself—did I hear aright!—are you indeed my father,—and Mrs Harley my mother?

Gren. 'Tis very true, my boy!—Come to my arms, you have been a dutiful son; and as you have done violence to your own desires, in order to fulfill my commands, 'tis now my duty to reward you, *(they embrace.)* Mr Clinton, you must forgive my son.

Glin. The surprise has made me stupid, I think.—Come, young man, you must forgive me:—I now see the oddness of my conduct.—Letitia and you I see are designed for one another,—*(joining their hands.)*—There—heaven bless you together.

Hen. On my knees let me thank you:—This hand I receive as the greatest blessing on this side heaven.—Dear father, I hope you will give us your blessing.

Gren. With all my heart and soul, and if you are as happy as I wish you,—you will never know sorrow all the days of your life.—But, young lady, I am afraid you have lost your hundred pounds.

Let. Not at all, Sir, though his name be changed, the person is still the same;—'tis yourself that has lost the wager.

Gren. Well said, my girl, I love your spirit;—make a good wife to my son, and you shall have the wager with proper interest.

Let. I shall make it the study of my whole life to make him as happy as I can.

Hen. Were my mother acquainted with this, my happiness would be complete:—Poor woman, many a tear has she shed for your supposed death; let me fly to communicate the joyful tidings to her.

Gren. Not so fast, my boy; I mean to visit your mother myself;—her former unworthiness yet remains fresh in my memory.

Hen. Dearest father, your friend Mr Clinton, here, was the first whom I ever heard of, who credited that tale:—do not think me impertinent, if I tell you that I am sure you are imposed upon.—I have often heard my mother say, that if you had not been so hasty in leaving her, she could easily have cleared her conduct to your (and every body's else) satisfaction; and her numerous acquaintance, who all greatly respect her, know that she has never ceased a day to lament you.

Gren. Would to heaven it were so;—but 'tis impossible,—I surely ought to credit my own eyes before any one's assertion whatsoever.—However, I mean to see her myself, and hear her defence; and if 'tis possible that she can be innocent, she shall have an opportunity of proving it.

Glin. What, Thomas, are you going to be a fool? take my advice, and go no more near that perfidious woman.—Depend upon it, she'll deceive you by some artful tale or another.

Gren. No, Mr Clinton, I am determined she shall not deceive me:—I mean to visit both her and her father under my assumed name of Grenville, and shall act as circumstances require, before I make myself known to them.

Glin. O! they will know you immediately, you are not so much altered as you may imagine; I wonder now why I did not know you sooner myself.

Gren. If you think so, I will disguise myself a little; cannot you assist me, Mr Clinton? I am determined on putting my scheme in execution.

Glin. With all my heart; since you are determined to play the buffoon:—I have a large black wig, which I sometimes wear in the winter season; you may put it on, and then I shall lend you a Russian fear-nought great-coat, which you may pretend you wear, as the climate is too cold for you; and in this dress, if you behave right, you may venture to see them without being detected.

Gren. You speak this in ridicule; however, I approve the dress, and early to-morrow morning I shall put my scheme in practice.

Clin. Very well, I shall look them out for you; in the mean time let us step into the other room and see what refreshment we can have, for we have had a long journey, and I am weary; however, I have got some excellent Burgundy, and to-night we shall have a few bottles of the best of it.—Come this way, all of you.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE—*Weatherby's House.*

WEATHERBY, *Mrs and Miss HARLEY are discovered.*

Mrs Harley. So, you saw Mr Blackley at Bath.

Weathb. Yes, and he told me that Henry was gone to meet his father, whom he was informed, was arrived.

Mrs Harley. Then we may depend upon seeing them both very soon.

Weathb. Why I expect them every minute; and if they should come, let me have notice instantly;—I am just going into the counting house.

Mrs Harley. We shall, Sir.—[*Exeunt Weatherby.*]

Louisa, my dear, you look sad.

Miss Harley. Do I, mother!—then I must endeavour to brighten up my countenance; I am sure I know of no reason why I should be sad.

Mrs Harley. I am sure you have not, as Henry and his father will both be here to-day; I think you may be cheerful; Mr Greenville, I am certain, will have no objection to your union with his son.

Miss Harley. I don't know, mother, but I am apt to think that his son has objections himself;—I am sure I never heard him talk on the subject.

Mrs Harley. Pshaw! ridiculous!—we all know better, child; 'tis folly for to talk thus to your mother; but, if Henry should actually have objections, how would you bear it?

Miss Harley. Faith, mother, like a heroine, for I have so long considered Henry in the light of a brother, that I think I could hardly bear him in the character of a lover,—much less as a husband.

Mrs Harley. The girl is certainly beside herself!

Did any person ever hear such nonsense?—I suppose you had rather have Edward Blackley.

Miss Harley. Dear mother, I have had neither of them in my offer yet;—when that is the case, it will be time enough for me to choose.

Mrs. Harley. Your grandfather and I have both set our minds on your marriage with Henry, because we are certain he will make you happy.

Miss Harley. Very well, let us talk of this subject afterwards; I am not in the humour for it now.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Mr Grenville desires to wait on you.

Mrs Harley. Shew him in.—[*exit serv.*].—My heart flutters terribly at the introduction of this stranger.—What can this mean? [*Aside.*]

Enter Grenville dressed in a Russian great-coat and a black wig.

Gren. Ladies, your humble servant.—Mrs Harley, I presume.

Mrs Harley. At your service, Mr Grenville, I hope you have had a favourable passage;—give me leave to welcome you to England.

Gren. [*Eyeing Miss Harley.*] I thank you, Madam, my passage was very pleasant.—Is this your daughter?

Mrs Harley. It is, Sir, my only child; I am happy in introducing her to you.

Gren. [*Aside.*].—(Good heavens! how my heart pants to embrace them both;—I will never be able to go through with this.) Give me leave to congratulate you, Madam, on your happiness, in being mother to so fine a young lady; my son spoke largely in her praise, but I find he has not done justice to her merits.

Mrs Harley. I understand, Sir, you have seen your son since you arrived.

Gren. I have, Madam, he will be here by and by; I can never repay Mr Weatherby and yourself for the uncommon care you have taken of him.

Enter Weatherby.

Weath. O! Mr Grenville, I am happy to see you

in England ; your affairs in my hands are all ready for your inspection.

Gren. No doubt of it, Sir, I shall look them over at leisure ; in the mean time, let me return you my grateful thanks, as the faithful guardian of my son.

Weath. It was an easy task, Sir ;—I understand you have seen your son, and I am certain, that when once you know all his good qualities, you will find him every thing you can wish.

Gren. I have not the least doubt of it ; thanks to your wholesome instructions. So, I find by your last letter, that he is attached to this young lady.

Weath. He is, Sir ;—and I humbly hope you will have no objections to the match : This young lady, my grand-daughter, will be heiress to all I am worth.

Gren. If the young people are pleased, so am I ; and I am so far from opposing to be related to your family, Mr Weatherby, that I mean to make another proposal, which I hope will meet with success.

Weath. I shall be glad to hear it.

Gren. You shall then, in a few words : As I am now possessed of a very large fortune, I mean to give over business, and dedicate the residue of my life to retirement, in this my native country ; and as I would like a partner, with sentiments congenial to my own, to be my companion in my retirement, I make bold, Mrs Harley, to address you on this subject ; for though a stranger to your person, I am not so to your excellent qualities :—your entertaining letters, replete with sentiments and ideas so exactly the counter part of my own ;—this, with your steady affection and great care you have taken of my son here, induces his father to lay his hand, heart, and fortune at your feet.

Mrs Harley. Mr Grenvile, I sincerely and humbly thank you, for the honour you intend me ; but I am sorry 'tis not in my power to comply with your request. Alas ! Sir, my heart has long been dead to tender attachments :—I once loved indeed ; but the object of my affection has long been numbered with the dead.—An unhappy misunderstanding drove him from me be-

here I had an opportunity of vindicating my innocence of a crime he falsely supposed me guilty of.—O! had he staid another day, we had both been happy; but fate said otherwise;—the ruthless elements snatched him from me. Yet, though he did wrong me, I will ever revere his memory while I live; and I have long since determined never to give him a successor.

Walt. Mr Grenville, I thank you for your very advantageous offer to my daughter; but indeed I am afraid you will not succeed; she has already rejected several good offers of the same kind. My advice has no influence over her in the matter, otherwise she had long ago made choice of a more proper match than her first. She has grieved too long by far for so worthless a fellow;—this, Sir, is the only subject that she and I disagree upon.

Gren. I am sorry for it, Sir;—and it grieves me madam, that you cannot comply with my request; yet I cannot but commend your attachment to the memory of your deceased husband, especially as he wronged you; I think it highly generous of you.—Strange as it may seem to you, I have heard all your story; and, if I am not greatly mistaken, I have been in company with your late husband, after he left you.

Mrs Harley. Is it possible, Sir! how could that happen?

Gren. I'll tell you, Madam:—'Tis now twenty years since the last time I was in England; and I remember when I was at Portsmouth, waiting the sailing of the vessel I was going to embark in, for Jamaica, a genteel looking young man came into the inn I put up at; he was dressed in a blue coat and nankeen pantaloons, and wore his own hair cropt and powdered.

Mrs Harley. The very description and dress of my poor Thomas! and the very time exactly that he left me!—Go on, Sir.

Gren. He carried a male infant in his arms, seemingly about a year old:—he seemed much agitated when I accosted him. He told me his name was Harley:—(I am sure it was your husband)—We had a long talk together that night.

Mrs Harley. And what did my poor misguided Thomas say?

Gren. Why, he said that you had falsified your vows to him, by listening to the addresses of Mr Tomley, the gentleman at whose house you lived; that he had suspected you for some time; at last, he saw you, after it was dark, enter the summer-house, leaning upon Mr Tomley's neck, and, that he heard you say, "My dearest Sir, I was never completely happy till this moment:"—This convinced him of your guilt, and induced him to act as he did.

Mrs Harley. What an unfortunate mistake! but I can easily account for it.—'Tis very true that the wretch Tomley did endeavour to seduce me, and tried several means to attack me in private: fain would I have made my husband acquainted with the treachery of his friend, but I durst not, as, unfortunately at that time, we were under diverse obligations to the villain, owing to my father here not being reconciled to us after our marriage; so had I informed my husband, I knew the consequence would have been terrible: so I wrote my father privately, and stated to him the whole matter: his heart at last softened, and he arrived that very night in the twilight, as he sent me word that he would, so I walked out by myself to meet him, and it seems my husband followed us at a distance; I met him by the garden wall, where he caught me in his arms, and forgave me; 'twas in consequence of this paternal embrace that I pronounced, that I had never till now experienced complete happiness; I then led my father into the arbour to tell him all: thus my husband, mistaking my father for Tomley, occasioned all the misery that has since happened to us all.

Gren. [Much agitated.] Dear Madam, your conduct needs no vindication; your husband was to blame; sure you could never have forgiven him, had it pleased heaven that he had returned to you?

Mrs Harley. Could I have forgiven him! O! Mr Grenville, had that blessed lot been mine, the world would not have contained such a happy creature.

Weath. Pshaw! such stuff, I never heard the like of it.

Gren. Then, Madam, I shall yet be happy!—thus I restore your long lost husband to you!

(Throws off his great-coat and wig, and appears dressed in a blue coat and nankeen pantaloons, with cropt hair, and powdered.)

[He kneels.] Forgive me! my dearest Amelia;—can you forgive your guilty, repenting Thomas?

Mrs Harley. Gracious heaven support me! 'tis my Thomas indeed!—*(Flies to his arms and faints.)*

Weath. Harley! what wonder is this, is it you indeed?

Gren. The same, Dear Sir;—help me to recover my dear wife.—*(They assist Mrs Harley, who recovers.)*

Mrs Harley. Away! give me air.—Was I in a dream? or am I still in one?—is my husband restored me from the dead?

Gren. Yes, my dearest Amelia; now I am convinced I wronged you;—I receive you with far greater pleasure to my arms, than I did when I took your vows at the altar.

Mrs Harley. Thou Great First Cause, I give you thanks for all things.—But my dear Thomas, one thing I would still ask.

Gren. Do, my love.

Mrs Harley. We had a son.

Gren. We have still, Amelia, but you know more of him than I; you have been blessed with his company, and knew it not:

Mrs Harley. More wonders still! is Henry—

Gren. No more Henry, but Joseph Harley, your son and mine.

Mrs Harley. Blessed Powers! I again thank Thee. I always considered myself as his mother, now I find I am so indeed.

Weath. What, is there no such person then as Mr Grenville?

Gren. Mr Grenville, Sir, is an impostor, but being detected, is now again plain Thomas Harley.

Weath. And does all that great fortune belong to you?

Gren. Yes, and a great deal more, Sir, than you know of.

Weath. Then give me your hand, Tom, you are a worthier man than I supposed: I am perfectly reconciled to you; We shall all yet be happy.—This is your daughter, Sir, give her your blessing.

Gren. My dear child, come to my arms.—(*Embracing Louisa.*) Such was thy mother when first I beheld her.

Miss Harley. Dear father, give me your blessing; this unlooked for meeting surprises me so much, that I cannot speak.

Gren. May you be happy in all your wishes.—But here comes your brother, and a few friends that I invited.

Enter Clinton, Blackley, Henry, Miss Clinton, and Letitia.

Clin. Well, my friend Thomas, how goes it now?

Gren. Give me joy, Charles; all has terminated to my entire satisfaction: I find you and I both wronged this excellent woman, my wife: but I have received certain proofs of her innocence.

Clin. I rejoice to hear it, and I wish you all manner of happiness.

Weath. What, my old acquaintance Charles Clinton?

Clin. The same, Mr Weatherby.—I congratulate you on your son's restoration.—But I wish this young lady your grand-daughter, be not disappointed in her fortune.

Weath. Thank you, Charles.—I must confess, my views, with regard to her, are disappointed.

Clin. Then, as that is the case, let me speak a good word for my friend Mr Blackley here, who, I am sure, will make her a good husband.—As for her brother, he has already made choice of this young lady, my niece; and I hope we will have a double wedding.

Weath. I have no objections;—but refer now to her father here.

Gren. And I have none.—Mr Blackley, take my daughter; I have heard a good character of you, and I hope you will make her a good husband.

Mrs Harley. Nor I, Edward, I wish you all manner of happiness.

Black. I sincerely thank you all, and if my Louisa consents, I shall be completely blessed.

Louisa. Here, then, Edward, take my hand, my heart was yours long ago.

Black. Now I defy fortune to vex me.

Hen. Sister, give me leave to congratulate you on your happiness; you know I regarded you as a sister before I knew of the connection.

Louisa. Brother, I thank you from my soul: may all happiness attend you.

Enter Sandy McLean.

Sandy. Weel, measter, I'm just i' now come back; by my saul, I've had a gay jaunt o't;—the auld man was unco sweer to come, but guid feggs, I forced him into the carriage, an' here he is waitin' for you.

Gren. Very well, Sandy, where is he?

Sand. Troth, Sir, he is just down i' the tither room here; he wants you to come till him.

Gren. I'll be with him presently:—Ladies and gentlemen, I am going to introduce another person amongst you, whom you all likewise supposed to be long ago in the land of forgetfulness. [*Exit. Gren.*]

Weath. Who the deuce can this be now?

Clin. I cannot tell; we are every day seeing new wonders, Sir.

Re-enter Grenville, leading Sylvester.

Gren. Good people, give me leave to introduce Mr Arthur Sylvester Harley, my father, to you;—I suppose he is a guest you did not expect.

Weath. Your father!—'tis he indeed! come from the grave:—We are all certainly under the power of magic.

Clin. Egad, Mr Weatherby, it is certainly so;—so many persons restored to us from the dead.—After this, I should not be a bit surprised if old Methusalah,

who was said to have died before the flood, should come in amongst us.

Sylv. Good people, you are no doubt surprised at seeing me alive; but I am come here, at my son's desire, to let you know, that guilty as I have been of many crimes, I am innocent of suicide, which was laid to my charge.—I have lived twenty-three years in seclusion from the world; where, by contrition and penitence for my many follies, I hope they are forgiven. My thoughts are now above this world, and all its concerns; and nothing could have drawn me from my solitude at present but to wipe off the stigma which some might have cast upon my worthy descendants, by reporting that I had embued my hands in my own blood: This I trust I have now done, to all your satisfaction; and I now return to my sequestered cottage, to spend my few remaining hours in praying for all your happiness.

Gren. And now, my friends, may the scenes we have lately witnessed, strike deep into our hearts; let us consider, that if we are really pursuing a virtuous course, never to despair, nor cast down our hearts by misfortunes; for assuredly if we persevere in that which is right, we shall sooner or later arrive at happiness.

Sylv. And, if any of you has strayed from the paths of rectitude, take example by Sylvester the Hermit; leave your evil courses in time; seek for happiness where it is only to be found, and assuredly you also will obtain it.

Exeunt omnes.

