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THE

BIRTH-DAY;

A

COMEDY,

IN THREE ACTS.

AS IT IS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL, COVENT-GARDEN.

ALTERED FROM THE GERMAN OF KOTZEBUE,

AND ADAPTED TO THE ENGLISH STAGE,

BY

THOMAS DIBDIN.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CAPTAIN BERTRAM,	<i>Mr Munden.</i>
MR BERTRAM,	<i>Mr Murray.</i>
HARRY BERTRAM,	<i>Mr Claremont.</i>
JACK JUNK,	<i>Mr Fawcett.</i>
LAWYER CIRCUIT,	<i>Mr Waddy.</i>
WILLIAM,	<i>Mr Abbot.</i>
EMMA,	<i>Miss Waddy.</i>
MRS MORAL,	<i>Mrs Davenport.</i>
ANN,	<i>Mrs Whitmore.</i>

THE

BIRTH-DAY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Outside of BERTRAM'S House, a neat Cottage Building, with a Barn near it.*

Enter WILLIAM; ANN enters from the House.

Wil. Good morrow, Mrs Ann. Well, how does veyther's lodger, your master?

Ann. He has slept well, William; he mends every day.

Wil. I'm main glad, for Miss Emma's sake; and, ecod, for your sake, Mrs Ann. But I be afraid he is not quite so tightish yet; I often do hear un cough.

Ann. Ay, ay; but the doctor says, if the heart is sound, never mind the lungs.

Wil. Ecod, and zo do I zay. Better lose all the lungs than only have half a heart.

Ann. I'm sure my poor master has heart enough; I was his nurse from a child. He was always good-natured; and if Providence has denied him riches, it was to keep him from being a miser, like his brother.

Wil. They do zay that the captain and your master ha' gotten into a law-suit.

Ann. Ay, it has lasted fifteen years; and for what, I trow?—why, a shabby little garden. It's a shame for so rich a body——

Wil. I thinks an Miss Emma were to go to him——

Ann. She ha'nt seen him since she were a year old. She go! What, to be scoffed and jeered, I warrant, by the madam that governs him:—No, no, she's too good for that. The captain's son has been turned out of doors already, through her and that lawyer Circuit; and you may be sure she'll prevent any one else from coming into favour.

Wil. Here comes Miss Emma and the old gentleman. I do love the very sight of her: and, ecod, if the old housekeeper, or any one else, were to jeer at her, as you call it, I should like to have the pummelling o' un, that's all.

[Exit into Barn.]

Enter Mr BERTRAM and EMMA from House.

Bert. Here let me walk: Here the air is pleasant.

Enter HARRY.

Harry. Ah! charming to see you for the first time breathing the fresh air.

Bert. Welcome, my good sir; give me your hand.

Emma. Good morning, dear Mr Danvers.

Bert. How happy must a man feel, whose liberality saved the life of a father, and restored to a helpless orphan her only protector!

Harry. Were our profession always in unison with our wishes, we should be happy indeed.

Bert. Is it therefore less noble when you do your utmost endeavour? I knew you not, when poverty and the loss of my cause appeared inevitable; but you came day and night; you gave consolation and confidence, two things absolutely necessary for a sick man.

Harry. Why have I permitted you to say so much?

Bert. To-day I celebrate my sixty-third birth-day; for that I am to thank you. My child is not an orphan; for that also I thank you, my dear friend.

Harry. I must absolutely forbid this kind of conversation. I have done my duty, and I wish I could always succeed so well. When we spoke last night of your birth-day, I hoped that I should this morning be enabled to give you the welcome news, that your law-suit with your brother was at an end.

Bert. That would indeed be a delightful present to me.

Harry. And I have not yet lost my hopes. There is every reason to suppose my endeavours will be at last successful.

Bert. And what reason have *I* to suppose I shall ever be able to reward exertions so perfectly disinterested?

Harry. Not so disinterested as you may imagine.

Enter ANN from House.

Ann. Breakfast is ready, sir.

Bert. Will you, sir, partake with me?

Harry. I have a friend in the neighbourhood, whom I must visit.

Bert. Good morning, sir.

[Exit, led by ANN, into House.]

Emma. What will you think of me, my dear sir, that I was so silent when my father returned you his thanks? But I don't know how it happens, when I wish to speak, tears interrupt my words. Don't you think that my father will live to be very old now?

Harry. It he is careful not to exert himself too much.

Emma. That shall be my care.

Harry. And will you always remain with him?

Emma. Always, always.

Harry. But if other duties should call upon you?—

Emma. Other duties! What duties can be more sacred?

Harry. The duties of a wife, of a mother.

Emma. No—I never intend to marry.

Harry. Never marry?

Emma. Not if I should be obliged to leave my father.

Harry. Your husband would supply the place of a son.

Emma. And the son would take the daughter from the father.

Harry. But if a man could be found, who would bestow on your father a quiet old age, free from every sorrow; who, far from robbing the father of a good daughter, would weave the garland of love round three hearts, who would live under his roof, and multiply your joys, by reconciling your father and your uncle——

Emma. Such a one, indeed, if I could meet him.

Harry. Could you love him?

Emma. Could *you* do otherwise?

Harry. And if your father should bid you give your heart and hand to that man?——

Emma. I would do it with pleasure. But that is all I could give him, because we are poor.

Harry. Oh! you know not how rich you are! There are men yet in the world, who know the value of goodness. Adieu! But remember our conversation. A time may come when I shall remind you of it.

[*Leads her to the Cottage, and returns.*]

So far, so well. Were I to disclose to my friend Bertram, that I am the son of that brother with whom he is at variance, all my hopes of happiness would be quickly overturned; but if I can, undiscovered, pass a day longer as his friendly agent, my scheme will certainly be successful. And if, by means of it, I obtain my Emma, finish a law-suit, and reconcile a divided family, I shall have the satisfaction of doing a good office to my fellow-creatures, while, at the same time, I am laying up felicity for myself. [Exit.]

SCENE II.—*A Room at Captain BERTRAM'S.*

JACK JUNK *discovered drinking.*

Junk. My master's birth-day! [*Drinks.*]—Sixty-three years!—May he live—no matter how long, so he outlives me.—There's his son Harry, a dog! playing his masquerade tricks within hail:—but I've sent him a shot that will bring him to, I warrant.—Soh!—here comes our hypocritical housekeeper:—what a devil of a thing for an old tar, who has passed half his life at sea, to be plagued on shore by a purser in petticoats.

Enter Mrs MORAL.

Mrs Moral. What, drinking again! I tell you it's both immoral and ungenteel.

Junk. And I tell you it's damned good. It goes down, you see; for it's my master's health.

Mrs Moral. Psha! drinking healths makes people sick; and I dare say made our master's brother so ill.

Junk. Or who knows but he came alongside of a troublesome housekeeper? Your health, Mrs Moral: Psha! the toast

sticks in my throat. Will you drink, Mrs Moral? It's fine grog.

Mrs Moral. Grog! how ungenteel! [*Drinks hearty.*] What shocking stuff!

Junk. You drink as if you cou'dn't bear the sight of it. Well, how is the captain's gout? I hope he'll live.

Mrs Moral. Under my care, a couple of months at least.

Junk. What?

Mrs Moral. Till autumn; but when the leaves begin to fall——

Junk. Avast! No, no.—[*Moved, and then angry.*] The leaves fall! No, no, I say.

Mrs Moral. What immorality! If you say *no* till you're tired, and death says *yes* once, it's all over.

Junk. When the leaves begin to fall! has the doctor said so?

Mrs Moral. The doctor! nonsense! I warrant I know as much as the doctor. The captain has the gout, and if once it gets into his stomach he's gone.

Junk. I had better go too, or I shall lose my temper. The gout in his stomach—Well, well! only to think the captain should have taken so many prizes of all nations, to be run down by a Tartar at last.

[*Looking at Mrs MORAL. Exit.*]

Mrs Moral. The fellow! how ungenteel! and what a contrast to my dear friend Mr Circuit! Oh, here he comes.

Enter CIRCUIT.

Ah! Mr Circuit, so soon to see you——

Circ. So soon—so late, you mean. The lawsuit's ended, and so are our profits; for the brothers have just signed a bond of arbitration.

Mrs Moral. Arbitration! Without consulting you, or asking my advice?

Circ. It's true as I'm an honest man.

Mrs Moral. How vastly ungenteel! but what shall we do, Mr Circuit?

Circ. Defeat their projects: Create suspicions, and renew the quarrel.

Mrs Moral. But if we should not succeed in keeping them at variance——

Circ. Why, then, they must make it up. A fine theatrical scene will follow; the two old fools will fall a-crying, Miss will wheedle her uncle out of a good legacy, and we shall be nonsuited.

Mrs Moral. And have I been so careful of the captain for this? Ah! Mr Circuit, 'tis for you I have played my cards—'tis for you I have got Mr Harry turned out of the house. The thousand pounds I have amassed, and the legacy I expected, were destined to accompany a heart which—but no will is made yet, and none shall be made, but of your drawing up; and for the contents of it——

Circ. Trust to my honesty. Though I can't see the probability of the captain's disinheriting his son, after all.

Mrs Moral. Were his son in want, 'tis probable the old man's heart might relent; but the independence his godfather

has left him, has only irritated the captain more; for I have made him believe, that that very independence has been the cause of his disrespect.

Circ. But that may one day or other be explained away, Mrs Moral.

Mrs Moral. My dear sir, impossible! how very ungenteel to doubt my skill and foresight! And should we even fail, we have yet enough to secure a cottage, which, free from the immorality of the world, and sweetened by love and affection——

Circ. Better sweeten it with a rich legacy. But mum! Here comes the captain: Don't forget your morality.

Mrs Moral. How ungenteel to remind me of it!

Enter Captain BERTRAM. Mrs MORAL runs to get a Chair.

Capt. Good morning—good morning. I have slept rather too long: but for that I may thank my last night's late visitor.

Circ. Have you had company, sir?

Capt. Only one guest, only one; and the devil may take him—the gout, my friend, the gout. Take a seat, sir, if you like; or if you prefer standing, it's all the same to me. As for me, I am fit for nothing but to be nailed to a chair.

Circ. The gout, sir, is a complaint which often knocks at the door of the rich.

Capt. Knocks at the door! Zounds, it breaks into the house.

Circ. Hem!—Pardon me, captain; but I am told you have signed a bond of arbitration?

Capt. Yes, I have; and what of that?

Circ. And that you mean to settle your law-suit with your brother?

Capt. Yes, I will; and what of that?

Circ. Astonishing! And how came you to have such an idea after fifteen years?

Capt. There you are right; it should have been done fifteen years ago.

Circ. Now the business rests so well?

Capt. That is my reason; because it rests, and never advances.

Circ. The great point would have come on to-day.

Capt. And what should I have gained?

Circ. You would have known in what court of justice the action ought to have been brought.

Capt. And then I should have the pleasure of beginning the law-suit over again. A mighty matter indeed! that, after fifteen years quarrelling, I should at last know to which court of justice the action belongs.

Circ. That is not my fault: I am an honest man.

Capt. I know that.

Circ. Your brother's chicaneries——

Capt. That's my reason again. He had no desire to bring the action to an end till I was dead. But, now I have driven him from the ocean of law into the harbour of arbitration, I will blockade him there, and take care he shall not escape me.

Circ. He'll be the gainer by it.

Capt. And if he should?—the whole nonsense is not worth a hundred pounds. The law-suit has already cost me five times that sum.

Circ. But I should be very sorry so bad a man should gain his point against your honour.

Capt. Let him keep the garden; his injustice will never let him enjoy it.

Mrs Moral. Your father made *you* the heir of it.

Capt. He did so.

Circ. And while you were on the boisterous seas, fighting the waves and the enemies of your country—

Mrs Moral. Comes this wicked wretch—(I beg pardon, as he is your honour's brother)—and takes possession of the garden.

Capt. So he did,—a dog!

Mrs Moral. And if you settle the law-suit, a formal reconciliation will take place.

Capt. Never, no, never! Psha! It is not for my brother's sake I wish the law-suit finished—I do it only for my own repose. Fifteen years ago I would not have shrunk an inch from my right: But now I grow old—I am plagued with an ungrateful son—tormented with the gout:—and I should like to leave this world in peace.

Circ. Most humanely said.

Mrs Moral. And like a Christian.

Circ. Perhaps, my dear sir, you would wish to make your will.

Mrs Moral. Make his will! For heaven's sake don't talk of his honour's will. You break my heart at the idea.

Capt. Mrs Moral, you're a good soul! I have here a present for you. You have watched me in my illness with tenderness and anxiety. In return, I give you——

Mrs Moral. (*Suppressing her eager expectation.*) Give me!—O, dear sir, what?

Capt. This book. You love to read books of morality; and that contains something worth your attention. 'Tis an "Essay on Patience."

Mrs Moral. (*Aside.*) 'Tis a trial of patience, I'm sure, to be fobbed off with a book after all.—My dear sir, I shall never forget your liberality.

Capt. Stay till you peruse it, before you thank me.

Mrs Moral. A book, indeed!—how ungentee!

[*Puts it in her Pocket.*]

Enter JACK JUNK.

Junk. Good morrow, captain.

Capt. Good day, Junk.

Junk. To-day is your birth-day.

Capt. I know it.

Junk. I am glad of it.

Capt. Well, I know that too.

Circ. Your birth-day, captain!

Mrs Moral. Gracious heaven! and nobody thought of it. How ungenteel!

Capt. Nonsense.

Circ. Hem! I beg, captain, you would accept the congratulations of an honest man, on the return of this day.

Capt. Thank you—thank you.

Mrs Moral. May heaven preserve you to a good old age, and bestow on you its richest blessings, health and prosperity!

Capt. Belay! it is enough.

Mrs Moral. But, bless me! why do I stand here, when every thing should be arranged in honour of this day? The present you have done me the honour to make me, sir, is doubly valuable, on the anniversary of your birth.—Oh! how I long to throw patience behind the fire! (*Aside.*)

[*Exit.*

Circ. Captain, good day. Should your arbitration be unsuccessful, I hope you will command my services. In the mean time, I see no rule to shew cause why I shou'dn't be your most obedient humble servant.

[*Exit.*

Junk. You broke your tobacco-box yesterday.

Capt. Well, Junk, why do you remind me of that? it was stupid enough—I had a horrid pain in my feet—the salt-bath would not help me—I took the box, threw it on the ground, and broke it into a thousand pieces. To be sure that gave me no ease—but don't tell me of it again, Junk.

Junk. I meant no harm, captain;—only I have bought a box—if it is not too ordinary, and you would accept of it from the hand of your old servant and brother seaman, I should be vastly pleased.

Capt. Let me see it.

Junk. To be sure it is not gold; but it is what I could best afford.

Capt. Give it to me, honest Junk. I thank you.

Junk. And will you use it too?

Capt. Surely, surely.

Junk. But I hope, captain, you won't attempt to pay for it.

Capt. No, no; you are right.

Junk. Huzza! huzza!—now will I have a jolly day;—and as for Mrs Moral, under favour, captain, the old girl is good for nothing.

Capt. Avast!—slacken sail there, my lad. If I had a wife, perhaps she might think,—"Aye, there he sits with his gout, grumble, grumble, grumble—always a plague to me, and I must bear with him."—Now, I like Mrs Moral; she does every thing with so much good-will. She's fond of reading good books too. I have just given her one, in which I have inclosed a bank note: when she opens the book, she'll think of me, and find I have not forgot her kindness.

Junk. You are too good to her;—she carries all fair to your face; but when your back's turned, she's for stowing the gout in your honour's stomach, and sending you in a gale to old Davy.

Capt. Silence, I say—'tis no such thing.

Junk. I told her so, shiver me if I didn't. But she said, "Death had laid down your hull, and that your honour would be launched at the fall of the leaf:"—and then the stories she has told you of your son Harry——

Capt. Hold your tongue, Junk—you are a libellous rascal. You, and your box too, may go to the devil.

[Throws the Box away—a pause.

Junk. (Looking sometimes at the Box, sometimes on his Master with much feeling.) I a libellous rascal?

Capt. Yes.

Junk. You won't have the box?

Capt. Not I; I will take nothing from a man who thinks himself the only good one. (*JUNK takes up the Box, and throws it out of the Window.*)—Junk, what are you about?

Junk. The box may go to the devil, though I don't choose to follow it just yet.

Capt. Are you mad?

Junk. What should I do with the box? You won't accept it, and I cou'd'nt keep it myself. Whenever it came in my sight, I should think—Thou art a miserable wretch, Junk: a man, whom thou hast served thirty years honestly and faithfully, has called thee—damn it! I can scarce speak the words—"a libellous rascal." This would draw tears from me every day; but now the box is gone, all the rest is forgotten. (*With much feeling.*)—I will think my dear master was sick and in pain; and that, however harsh his words were, he never meant to hurt me.

Capt. (*Much moved—after a pause.*) Junk, come here—(*Gives him his hand.*) I didn't mean to hurt you.

Junk. I knew that:—For my part I meant honestly. But, when I see you abused by that hypocrite, and cheated by the lawyer——

Capt. Why, Junk, I fancy the devil's in you. What, Mr Circuit, too, my attorney, the honestest man in the world! But time will show:—And mind, Junk, if I find you tell me a lie, I'll turn you out of the house the next instant.

Junk. Turn me out of my berth! I don't think, captain, you would do that.

Capt. The devil I wou'dn't!—But I say, yes! I shall and will do it: And if you contradict me another word, I will do it this instant.

Junk. (*Very indifferently.*) Well, then, old Junk will go into the hospital.

Capt. In the hospital! What, what should you do there?

Junk. Die, to be sure.

Capt. Die in the hospital! Zounds! do you think I can give you no other place but the hospital to die in, when you are turned out of my house?

Junk. Oh yes, no doubt you might; but damn me, I would rather go a-begging than live upon a man who thought fit to turn me out of doors.

Capt. This fellow's pride is enough to give me a fit of the gout. Twenty years ago, when we fell into the hands of pirates—when they took every thing from me, you had concealed some guineas with which we got back to Old England. When a mutiny broke out in my ship, you discovered it to me, and helped to quell it at the hazard of your life; and now, damn it! you will die in the hospital!

Junk. (*Moved.*) Why, captain!

Capt. (*With rising enthusiasm.*) And once, when we had two Frenchmen on board, and one of them had just hove up his arm to split my skull, you fell upon them both, and saved my life; and yet (*Turning at once to JUNK, weeps.*)—I am to let you die in an hospital; take with me into the grave such ingratitude towards you! (*Weeps.*)—Speak instantly, you dog, and say you will die with me. Come, boy, give me your hand—(*Shake hands.*)

Junk. Ah, my good master! I only wish you to close my eyes when I am dead!

Capt. Go, go, Junk—fetch me the tobacco-box again.

Junk. With pleasure, captain—And now if I could but see you and your brother reconciled——

Capt. I doubt if that will ever be, Jack.

Junk. But I'm sure your honour wishes it.

Capt. Why ay, if I could but undo some things which have passed.

Junk. But who knows whether any thing is true that has been said? There are folks in the world, captain, who would sooner——

Capt. Yes, yes, Junk, you may be right.

Junk. Dear captain, do play the lawyer a trick: put your hand to sincere reconciliation—meet him half way—he is still your brother—you are twins—this is your birth-day. I remember the time when you celebrated it together with brotherly affection.

Capt. Yes, yes, those were better times indeed.

Junk. Your mother was always glad on that day.

Capt. Ay, so she was—she was, Junk.

Junk. On that day she always took you both in her arms, and requested you to love each other like brothers.

Capt. She did so—Oh! I remember it well.

Junk. In the last year of her life, she said,—“When I am dead, always remember that day; nothing must disturb your mutual harmony.”—And if your brother was to come now, with a friendly smile——

Capt. Come! What, come here!

Junk. Yes; and if he stretched out his arms——

Capt. (*With anxiety.*) What, stretch out his arms! (*He stretches out his arms involuntarily, and draws them back.*)

Junk. And should he say—“Brother Lewis, our mother sees us!”

Capt. Should he say that—(*Agitated.*)

Junk. And if he flew into your arms——

Capt. (*Stretching out his arms.*) O brother! brother! (*Falls on JUNK'S arm.*) That would indeed be too much! Junk, you have made a lubber of me.

Junk. And no disgrace, I hope, captain. A seaman never need blush at the tear of sorrow he sheds for a fallen enemy, or the tear of joy at making peace with him. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Outside of BERTRAM'S House.*

HARRY enters, reading a Letter.

"Your honour,

"When the commanding officer is disabled, it is the duty of every seaman to keep a good look-out ahead. And if so be, as you know, that the captain's timbers are ready to start, why it might become you more to take the helm at home, than to be sculking within sight of a ship in distress, without heaving to, as in duty bound. Seeing your father's gout will soon get possession of his upper works, and give him sailing orders for old Davy, why, if you wasn't my young master, I should like to put you in mind of your duty with a good round dozen; being all at present from

"JOHN JUNK, † his mark."

"P. S. Not being able to write myself, this letter was wrote by me, his honour's coachman; who am your honour's humble servant to command."

(*As he is reading, JACK enters behind.*)

So, so,—honest Jack has discovered me,—and, it seems, joins in the general prejudice.

Junk. Avast there!—give Junk your fist.—I know all your plots and plans—to-day must finish them—knock up old mother Moral, and reconcile your father to your uncle.

Harry. My dear Jack, forward my intentions, and I'll be for ever obliged to you.

Junk. Then tell your uncle the garden is his; invite him to pass the afternoon in it, and leave the rest to me.

Harry. This must hasten my intentions.—Retire, Jack; my uncle, as well as my father, is so warm in his resentment, that if he discovered me, by seeing you, before we effect the reconciliation——

Junk. It might never happen at all: So I'll go, and keep a good look-out at the castle.

[*Exit.*

Enter BERTRAM *and* EMMA *from the House.*

Bert. My dear sir, I am glad to see you. You are here in time to help me out of a strange perplexity. Would you think it, I hold in my hand two bills which have both been paid this morning without costing me a penny.

Harry. Pray, how may that be?

Bert. By some unknown benefactor.—Cannot you assist me in guessing?

Harry. I should think there is but one man likely to do such an action.

Bert. Ah! who is that?

Harry. Your brother.

Bert. What, my brother pay bills, who for fifteen years has put me to such expence, and made such bitter allegations against me in the courts of justice!

Harry. Those allegations were drawn by his attorney:—but your bills he has paid himself.

Bert. Do you really think so?

Harry. I have every reason at least to believe so. He enquired respecting your concerns.

Bert. Alas! you make my heart ache.

Harry. Should a brother's love, my dear sir, make your heart ache?

Bert. Benefactions from the hand of an enemy—

Harry. Are the first steps into the field of friendship.

Emma. (*With a Sigh.*) O that I were only permitted to love my uncle!

Harry. I hope, Miss Emma, you will soon be allowed to do so.—Dear Mr Bertram, I am, at length, the herald of peace. The law-suit is at an end.

Bert. To-day only I regret that poverty which prevents my rewarding this worthy benefactor.

Harry. Poverty! Can you be poor while in possession of such a daughter?

Bert. And what more can she do than mingle tears of gratitude with mine?

Harry. Perhaps she *could* do something more.

Bert. How, Mr Danvers?

Harry. Would you think the worse of me, if I were interested in all that I have done?

Bert. I do not comprehend you.

Harry. Do you not comprehend me, Emma? You blush!

Emma. I feel my cheeks burn; but I know not why.

Harry. Did not you tell me this morning you could love the man who would make your father's age free from care?

Emma. I did so, indeed, Mr Danvers.

Harry. And that you would give him your heart and hand!—(*Pause: EMMA looks down.*)—Did not you say that too?

Emma. I remember I did.

Harry. And will you shrink from your word?

Emma. No.

Harry. What, not if I were the man? (*Pause.*) Look at me, Miss Emma.

Emma. I cannot.

Harry. He can never be deceived in his choice of female excellence, who for seven months has observed a daughter at the bedside of her sick father. Your heart and hand are a greater treasure than monarchs could bestow; for these I solicit, not as a reward, but as an encouragement of my wishes to do well.

Emma. (*Overpowered, flies into her father's arms.*) My father!

Bert. Emma, my child, you have a father's blessing: Take him. With that embrace you have relieved me from years of sorrow. I shall leave no orphan unprotected in the world. The fortune of my child is truth and virtue; and these are now in the hands of a good man.

Harry. In your increased circle of domestic joys, your heart will play with greater freedom. Only one is now wanting to complete our felicity—your brother.

Bert. He will not make the first step, and I cannot.

Harry. Why not?

Bert. Because my brother is rich.

Harry. I honour that sentiment. You shall not make the first step. But allow me to request, that Miss Emma will go to her uncle, and congratulate him on his birth-day.

Emma. With all my heart.

Bert. Consider, how deeply hurt we shall all be, should she return without obtaining her wish.

Harry. There is no fear—I know your brother, and I know my Emma.

Bert. Well, I leave the event to providence.

Harry. And after that we will spend a happy evening. We will meet in your garden.

Bert. In my garden?

Harry. You must see how the garden looks which has disunited the hearts of two brothers for fifteen years: we and a couple more sincere friends—only a few of us; but in every breast a heart. I have arranged my plan, and you mustn't disappoint me.

Bert. Well, well!—my old nurse Ann shall go with us.—Ann! Ann!

[*Exit into the House.*

Harry. Go then, my Emma; and may the angel of peace aid the persuasions of your tongue!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A Room at Captain BERTRAM'S.*

Enter Mrs MORAL (with Papers.)

Mrs Moral. Nine hundred and fifty pounds! Come, that's very genteel; and then in the will—let me see——

Enter EMMA, anxiously looking round.

Emma. I think the whole house is empty.

Mrs Moral. (*Not seeing her.*) Ay, ay; no fear of the will, unless that Miss Emma should unluckily make her appearance; and—Eh! why bless me! (*Seeing EMMA, and putting up her Pocket-book, &c. hastily.*)—How ungentleel to interrupt people in this manner!

Emma. Your servant, madam.

Mrs Moral. Your servant, miss.—Pray who are you, child, and what do you want?

Emma. I wish to see the captain.

Mrs Moral. And what business can you have with the captain?

Emma. I come to congratulate him on his birth-day.

Mrs Moral. O, vastly fine! poor people might have a dozen birth-days in a year, and nobody would congratulate them. And pray now, young woman, what have you to do with the captain's birth-day?

Emma. That, madam, I wish to tell him myself.

Mrs Moral. Ay, ay, no doubt to tell him yourself. Yes, if you could but see him. But, child, I would have you to know I am mistress in this house—and so, any secrets you have must first be told to me.

Emma. I didn't know my uncle was married.

Mrs Moral. Your uncle? Why, I cannot suppose—Yes, yes, the face is nearly—What, you are one of Captain Bertram's poor relations, I suppose?

Emma. I am one of his relations, madam.

Mrs Moral. (*Looks at her contemptuously.*) Why, I think, young woman, you have some distant resemblance of your

mother.

Emma. Did you know my late dear mother?

Mrs Moral. By sight, child—But, good heaven; what do you do here? Don't you know that the captain won't see nor hear any thing of any part of the family?

Emma. That was formerly; but now the law-suit is ended.

Mrs Moral. What, is it finished?—And have they at last cheated my poor master?

Emma. We are all rejoiced that it is at an end.

Mrs Moral. O, I have not the least doubt of it; and now you think to build your nest here.

Emma. No, madam, we think no such thing, I assure you: we only think that it is both handsome and honourable that two brothers should love each other.

Mrs Moral. I suppose your father taught you that fine sentence. I dare say you have all your lessons by heart—And you are come with your smooth speeches to soften the captain: but go back, in the name of heaven—The captain is ill—he is asleep—he has forbidden all visitors; and particularly those from your father's house.

Emma. May I not see him then?

Mrs Moral. Lord, child, it would be of no use—you would only see an ill-natured old grumbler.

Emma. But may I come again in the evening?

Mrs Moral. No, to be sure—I dare not even say you have been here—He'd be so angry, it would bring on a fit of the gout immediately.

Emma. My poor father will be very sorry to hear this.

Mrs Moral. He must support it with Christian fortitude. I dare say he has bowed and cringed enough to procure a reconciliation: but you can have no idea, child, what sort of a man the captain is—he does nothing but swear and thunder all day, and for nothing—I have plague enough with him, I am sure—Go, get you gone, young woman, I advise you for your good; for, if he's once in a passion, he is the most ungentle being upon earth.

Emma. And yet my father always says, he has a good and honest heart.

Mrs Moral. Yes, yes, he may have an honest heart, but it is a grumbling one. Tell your father, child, that I, Mrs Moral, have for fifteen years tried all in my power to bring about a reconciliation; but my endeavours have been entirely fruitless.

Emma. My poor father!

Mrs Moral. Poor—Yes, I hear he is poor—Good heaven, every body cannot be rich: but I really feel compassion for both you and your father. I am much affected—And to alleviate your distress, I'll—yes, I will—a generous action never goes unrewarded, so I'll instantly—

Emma. (*With expression of hope.*) What, my dear madam!

Mrs Moral. Give you this little book—It's an Essay on Patience—it will teach your father resignation, and you morality. Nay, you need not look so scornful at it; it was the captain's own book, I assure you.

Emma. (*Takes the Book.*) Was it my uncle's? Then will I give it to my father. Alas, how cruel the tidings which must accompany it!

[*Exit.*

Mrs Moral. Aye, good bye to you, child!—I'm glad she's gone. It would be a pretty thing, indeed, to let people get in here, whom I have been employed in keeping out for these fifteen years.

Enter JUNK, bringing back EMMA.

Junk. What! the captain's niece and not see him!—Who's officer of the watch here, I wonder? When such a neat-rigg'd vessel brings a flag of truce, who shall lay an embargo?

Emma. Would to heaven I could bring peace!

Junk. And who has forbidden you?

Mrs Moral. I have forbidden her.

Junk. And by whose orders?

Mrs Moral. I warrant, Mr Boatswain, I know my business without orders from you. Let the young woman go her ways.—My master is asleep.

Junk. The captain asleep! Whew! Why I left him but this moment to fetch something for him to read. Miss, if you will but stop a moment, I'll pilot you to the captain in the turn of a handspike.

Emma. I'll wait with pleasure.

Mrs Moral. (*Places herself at the Door.*) I say, she shall not enter these doors, Mr John.

Junk. And I say, make a clear ship, or I shall fall foul of your morality. And let me tell you, mess-mate, that whoever would stand in the way of a treaty of peace, deserves to have no share in the blessings it produces.—Follow me, miss.

[*Exit.*

Mrs Moral. Well, miss, I congratulate you—I hope you are perfect in your part. Turn me from the door indeed! And for what? for at best but an honest beggar. It's very ungentee, indeed!

[*Exit.*

Emma. How cruel is this woman!—Should my uncle be so harsh as she represents—but, perhaps, it was only to frighten me. Yet, if he should be so, I make the sacrifice for a father. Be courageous, Emma! the most wretched quarter of an hour is over in fifteen minutes, and the fraternal enmity has lasted fifteen years.

[*Exit at the Door.*

SCENE III.—*The Captain's Apartment. The Captain in his Arm-chair, JOHN by his side, EMMA is seen just entering at the Door in the flat behind the Captain.*

Capt. My niece! and what does she want with me?

Junk. I don't know; but she looks so sweetly, that I'll lay a wager she comes to bring you some good news.

Capt. (After a pause.) Well, where is she?

Junk. There she stands, behind your chair.

Capt. And how am I to get at her with my gouty legs?

Junk. Come nearer, my dear miss.—(EMMA stops and hesitates.)

Capt. (Listening.) I don't hear any body stir.

Junk. She trembles so, she can scarcely walk.

Capt. Tremble! What the deuce does she tremble for?

Junk. She weeps.

Capt. The devil! what does she weep for?

Emma. (Coming forward.) I come, dear uncle, to congratulate you.

Capt. (Rather quick.) To congratulate me—on what?

Emma. On your birth-day.

Capt. Oh! I am much obliged to you. I suppose you have only just learned to walk, since you come to-day for the first time.

Emma. Ever since I have been able to think and to feel, my heart has drawn me towards you.

Capt. So! so!—How old may you be?

Emma. Seventeen, sir.

Capt. Yes, yes, it is about fifteen years since I came home. I remember you were then a little thing, not as high as my knee.

Emma. And then my good uncle took me up in his arms, and kissed his little darling, as he used to call her. So my nurse has often told me.

Capt. Ay, your good uncle was then a good fool.

Emma. I lost my dear mother too soon.

Capt. Your mother! ay, she was a good woman indeed! Yes, very good!

Emma. Had she been living, many things would not have happened.

Capt. That is very likely:—she prevented your father from doing many foolish things.

Emma. Dear sir, my father may be in the wrong. Malicious people may have led him astray; but his affection for his brother they could never erase from his heart.

Capt. He has given me a great many proofs of his affection for the last fifteen years.

Emma. All *that* is passed: Friendly decision has thrown a veil over what has happened.—"Go to my brother," said my father, "be thou the herald of peace.—He will not turn thee away.—Thou art innocent:—he loved you when you were

a little child:—he loved your mother:—for her sake, perhaps, he will reach out his hand towards you, and you shall then press it with filial affection." (*Much agitated.*)

Capt. (*Without looking at her.*) Why, to be sure, you are not the cause of my displeasure. You must do what your father bids you. I am not angry with you. But, now go, in the name of heaven.—What is your name?

Emma. Emma.

Capt. Emma!—Yes, yes, I believe I stood godfather to you.

Emma. And will my godfather—will he who first introduced me into Christian society, who promised me love when I could not prattle, let me go without one friendly look?

Capt. (*Turns his face quick towards her without resting his eyes upon her.*) There! there then! Now get you gone—You shall be remembered in my will. (*A pause.*)

Emma. Oh, that is very hard!

Capt. Very hard! What do you mean by hard?

Emma. My dearest uncle, I wish to stand in your heart, not in your will.

Capt. Why, aye, that's very well said, to be sure. But I must remember you in my will, because I am your godfather, and because you have given yourself the trouble to come here.

Emma. Trouble!

Capt. Here, take this little present. (*Gives her a Purse without looking at her.*)

Emma. (*Taking his hand with emotion, the Purse falls on the floor.*) I see only the hand you offer me, not the present. This hand I will keep—mingle tears with your present, and beseech you to take it back.

Capt. Why, girl, you are proud!

Emma. I will be proud if you give me your love. Here kneels the proud one by your side, and begs for a single look. My dear mother could leave me nothing but her features:—these features might remind you of the friend of your youth, who is now no more; they will soften your heart, and give me another father.

Capt. Junk, she has every line of her mother's face, has not she? O the deuce, Junk, I can't stand this! Take her away.

Junk. (*Crying.*) If I do I'll be damned!

Capt. What does the fellow cry for? Junk, I tell you take her from me.

[*JUNK takes up EMMA, and places her in the Captain's arms.*]

Emma. My good—my dearest uncle!

Capt. Stop—Stop!—this is running foul of a man by night, and in a fog.

Emma. I see a tear in your eye, that is worth more than all the guineas you offered me.

Capt. Well, well, I own myself overpowered. Go to your mother's grave, and thank her for this. After you were christened, I stood by her bed-side, and gave her my hand. She took mine with both hers, and looked—just as you do now.—"My dear brother," said she, "this child I commit to your kindness. When I am dead"—(*Pauses, much affected.*)

Poor soul! In four weeks after she died. Come, my child—come to my heart! (*EMMA sinks on his bosom. A pause.*)—Only look, Jack, this cunning gypsey has softened my heart, and made me cry like a woman. Emma! you hussey, get out of my sight. (*Embracing her closely.*)

Emma. Ah! now I know my uncle's heart, every fear is vanished.

Capt. What, you were afraid of me? Perhaps people told you I was a great sea-bear.

Emma. The lady here in the house quite frightened me.

Capt. Lady? What lady?

Junk. O! who but the sweet Mrs Moral, captain?

Capt. Ay, ay, Mrs Moral's name is like water to the mill of your clack.

Junk. Why, then, the devil may hold his tongue. When I came in, I found this dear, lovely girl, just going away with a tear in her eye:—the drop was but small—but I wou'dn't have it upon my conscience;—so, I asked Miss her business here.—Ah! said she, I dare not see my uncle.—Why not? said I. Every one dare go to him, particularly with a tear in their eye.—But Mrs Moral truly posted herself before the door; and, setting her fat arms a-kimbo, pretended to prevent my entering—*Me, Jack Junk*, that have served my good master these thirty years, she had the impudence to tell me I should not go, for my master was asleep.—I believe, however, I gave her such a shove, as we are apt to do to any lazy land-lubber that stands in the way aboard ship in a storm.

Capt. But look ye, Junk,—you are apt to take things the wrong way; perhaps she thought I *was* asleep: she meant well, no doubt.

Junk. Well, captain,—Miss Emma will best be able to tell how she was received.

Emma. I am so glad now, that I have forgot all.

Capt. Forgot!—Why, then there was something to forget.—Come, let us hear!

Emma. One thing only hurt me much—she said I came a-begging.

Capt. Stop—stop!—that was not good.

Junk. Good! Captain, I say it was damn'd bad.

Capt. Bad!—You are right, it was bad:—that must have escaped her in a hurry.

Emma. Besides, she gave me a present for my father,—a book which was once yours:—I now value it more than ever.

Capt. A what?—a book?

Emma. This, my dear uncle—(*Shews it him.*)

Capt. Why, Jack, only look.—Let's see—it's the same—and, egad, the same bank note for five hundred pounds doubled down between the leaves.

Emma. How unjust have I been to her!—was this her present?

Capt. Ay, what say you now, John, to Mrs Moral?

Junk. Say!—Why, that she was guilty of a good action without knowing it;—five hundred pounds!—why, an English ship of fifty guns would as soon strike to a French frigate of fifteen.

Capt. No matter; do you keep it, Emma; if she meant it for you, I'll double the sum to her, and if she did *not*, she deserves to lose it for her hypocrisy.

Junk. But come! there should be no clouds to spoil a day in which two brothers hoist the flag of friendship.

Capt. Nay, nay, Junk, belay there. The girl has never injured me: She is my godchild, and her mother's virtues are reflected in her face. As to my brother, he may walk the streets, but we must not meet.

Junk. Dear captain, in the end of our voyage, where all streets join, we must meet.

Capt. And then let him, whose conscience reproaches him, cast his eyes to the ground, I say!

Emma. Dearest uncle, you must be my father's friend.

Capt. No—no such thing!—Only see, Junk, I have hardly given the girl a little corner in my heart, but she wants to order about as if the whole belonged to her.

Junk. But only think, captain, how different this house would look:—You need not then smoke your evening pipe alone—You would talk over your school tricks, and the pleasures of your youth, with your brother, who would sit by your side, and the great cat would be turned off the sofa.

Capt. I won't hear any thing said against my cat: She never brought an action against me.

Emma. Well, I must go to my father, he expects me: but may I come again, my dear uncle?

Capt. Come again!—There's a stupid question. You may come again—you must come again! do you hear? (*Very tenderly.*)

Emma. With pleasure.

Capt. Well, now, and when will you return?

Emma. To-morrow—every day.

Capt. Well, then, go: and when you return, do you hear, leave your pride at home—Do you understand?—there lies something on the floor—I suppose you won't stoop to take it up.

Emma. Does disinterested love look so much like pride?

Capt. Yes, yes—you'll not take it up because you know it would give your good uncle pleasure.

Emma. (*Takes up the Purse.*) I thank you, dear uncle. I will lay it out in a present for my father—You will permit me to do that, won't you?

Capt. O, do what you like with your own money.

Emma. But surely one kind word from you would do him more good than any other present.

Capt. Well, zounds! speak as many kind words as you like to him—(*Quick, but good-natured.*)

Emma. (*Kisses him affectionately.*) Dear uncle!

[*Exit.*

Junk. Well, captain, what do you think of your niece?

Capt. Why, I think the little witch knows how to cure my gout better than the doctor. As long as she was present, my rebellious legs and feet were quiet; but now they begin to plague me again—gnaw, gnaw—pull, pull, pull.

Junk. What a wife she would make for your son Harry, captain! but you wouldn't let him have her.

Capt. Yes, yes, but I would—But her father will never resign her. What can I do?

Junk. I think you had better take both of them.

Capt. Both of them! Stop, stop, Jack, that will never suit me.

Junk. Your lawyer has been to tell you the award is made.

Capt. Is it? Thank heaven a thousand times!—I don't care in whose favour the award is; it is all the same to me.

Junk. The garden is yours for life.

Capt. I give it to my niece, now, this instant. Zounds! why did not the sweet wench come sooner?

Junk. You have been agitated to-day. Suppose you enjoy the open air this afternoon?

Capt. That I will most willingly. An old seaman is fond of a breeze.

Junk. 'Tis a delightful evening. Suppose, captain, you pass it for the first time in your garden? I have already been to see it.

Capt. My garden! I shall feel strangely at the sight of that same garden. Does the old door remain still? When I was a boy ten years old, I cut a ship upon it with my penknife.

Junk. The ship is visible yet, I assure you.

Capt. Is it indeed? That's curious!—Since then many of my old friends have died. Yes, yes, we will go there—And, d'ye hear? bid that baggage Emma attend me there. Send directly.

Junk. And her father——

Capt. No, not a word on that subject, or I'll keel-haul you, you dog. (*JUNK is going.*) But stay, Jack, you forget my gout. (*JUNK returns to assist him.*)—Thank ye! thank ye! So, the old ship remains where I left it. Well, well; if she had weathered as many tight gales as I have, 'tis a question if the hand of time would have left her legible. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment at the Captain's. Two Doors in the Flat, near it an Arm-Chair with Castors, in which the Captain is discovered.*

Capt. Now, if my boy was but good enough to become a match for his cousin Emma, what a harbour of content should I sail into in my old age! But it won't do: The man who is disobedient to the orders of his commander, should never be trusted with a command himself. Why, where's this Junk? Why, Jack, I say——

Enter JUNK.

Order the carriage, that we may go to my garden.

Junk. But, before you go, as you value your old servant, John, do grant him one favour.

Capt. Well, make haste. What is it?

Junk. Just permit me to lock you into that closet.

Capt. Lock me up!

Junk. You shall lock yourself up, only permit me to wheel you in:—Nay, it's a satisfaction you owe me. You said, to-day, I was a libellous rascal. You have now an opportunity of doing yourself and me justice; and, though you are my commanding officer, yet you have also a commander.

Capt. I! who?

Junk. Honour! who will not permit you, whilst you fight under his flag, to refuse an honest man a hearing.

Capt. Well, but Jack, this is the first time I ever heard that locking a captain in a cupboard was the way to give anybody a hearing.

Junk. In short, sir, the lawyer and his agent, that she-devil of a housekeeper, are coming here to balance accounts. You will have an opportunity of hearing all their cursed contrivances against your son, yourself, your brother, and your niece.

Capt. I tell you, I don't like to take anybody by surprise. I like to——

Junk. Sir, she is coming, and here's the key.—Now, pray, my dear master, if you have any regard for every body belonging to you—(*Puts the Captain into the Closet, entreating all the time; the Captain making a feeble resistance: at length he shuts him in.*)—So, the ship's cleared, and here comes the enemy.

Enter Mrs MORAL.

Ah, Mrs Moral, I come to make friends with you. Messmates shou'dn't disagree; and if I was on the wrong look-out, and happened to be deceived in your bearings, why I ax pardon, and there's no harm done, you know.

Mrs Moral. Bearings indeed! I'm sure there's no bearing your ungentility.

Junk. Why, as to ungentility, that's neither here nor there. And if some folks hav'n't so much gentility and morality as others, why, what's the odds,—we be'n't all born to be boatswains, you know. So let's shake hands. I like you for your care of the captain, and the captain has given you good proof that he likes you too.

Mrs Moral. Proofs! What, in grumbling and swearing?

Junk. No; in hard cash, or soft paper: It's all one, you know.

Mrs Moral. Me! Pay more regard to truth. Your immorality astonishes me!

Junk. What, then mayhap the captain didn't give you five hundred pounds this very day?

Mrs Moral. Five hundred pounds!—The captain give me five hundred pounds!

Junk. I say the captain gave you five hundred pounds, which you now have about you without knowing it. He gave you a book, that book contained a folded leaf, which leaf contained——

Mrs Moral. What!

Junk. Five hundred pounds.

Mrs Moral. Impossible! It can't be—I'll ask the captain myself.

Junk. You needn't go to the captain—Ask the book.

Mrs Moral. Tormentor, I have given it away!—(*Enraged.*)

Junk. Given it away!

Mrs Moral. To think that whining girl should——

Junk. What, Miss Emma? O! you good creature, if you have given it to her, I will have a kiss.

Mrs Moral. Stand off, wretch!—To be so cheated!

Junk. Patience.

Mrs Moral. Patience! I have given it away. Had I known the value of it, I'd sooner have—Oh, I shall never have patience again as long as I live!—(*Enraged.*)

Enter CIRCUIT.

Mr Junk, this apartment is one of mine. I have some business with my worthy friend Mr Circuit, and I beg you'll quit it directly.

Junk. What, you wou'dn't like a third person, mayhap?

Mrs Moral. Immoral wretch! There is One out of sight who hears all, and will testify the purity of our intentions.

Junk. You are right—There is One out of sight who hears all: if you steer by your proper bearings, he will reward you; but if you come here to plot against my poor master, or his son, or his niece, he'll be sure to find out all your tricks, and bring you to the gangway at last. So, keep a good look-out, and thank Jack Junk for his advice, that's all.

[*Exit.*

Mrs Moral. Impudent sea-bear! But I'll see that he is out of sight, and out of hearing too. (*Looks after him.*)—Ah! there he goes, grumbling and grunting like a beast as he is.

Circ. But, my dear Mrs Moral, suppose there should be any one to overhear?

Mrs Moral. There is no entrance to the room but this, which we'll lock, and keep away from as far as possible. Sit down, my dear Mr Circuit; and while we compare notes, oblige me by participating in a glass of delightful cordial from the captain's best liquor-chest.—(*Unlocks a small Closet, and produces Wines and Refreshments.*)

Circ. You also have your strong-box there, Mrs Moral.

Mrs Moral. All for you, Mr Circuit: pray use no ceremony. How discouraging to find our plans succeed so ill! The law-suit is certainly over.

Circ. The paltry garden I wou'dn't mind; but the whole family will be reconciled, and the captain persuaded to alter his will.

Mrs Moral. What's to be done, my dear sir?

Circ. Every thing to prevent visits from the other party. As for that Miss Emma——

Mrs Moral. But she has seen the captain; nay perhaps is with him now.

Circ. Who! Miss Bertram?

Mrs Moral. She; that hussey that has robbed me of all patience. She wished (*Mimicking*) to congratulate her dear uncle on his birth-day.

Circ. And you left them together?

Mrs Moral. Was it not to meet my dear Mr Circuit?

Circ. However flattering that may be to me, 'tis a great pity, a great pity. I know the girl—she has a tongue—such a tongue!

Mrs Moral. And do you think she has a tongue to overturn the labour of sixteen years? Why, sir, in addition to the anger I have created in the captain against his son, by intercepting letters, and giving it the appearance of Harry's neglect, I can now even prove this Emma to be the cause of it; for he visits her: that I have proof of, and that is more than sufficient to ruin all my opposers.

Circ. Indeed!

Mrs Moral. Besides, hav'n't I been for years a slave to him? Hav'n't I watched his gout with patience, in hopes, every day, it would pay me for my trouble, by sending him to a better world? Hav'n't I——

[*Captain gives an impatient exclamation in the Closet.*]

Circ. Eh! what's that?

Mrs Moral. That!—nothing. Have we not locked the door? And look, sir, in case of the worst, here is my darling, my favourite, my chest, the contents of which will always provide against calamity. That bag is full of silver, and this of gold. (*Puts two upon the Table.*)—A'n't they charming creatures?

Circ. Charming indeed! One is quite overpowered with sympathetic affection.

Mrs Moral. All this is destined for our intended marriage. You must insert in the will a small provision for the son and niece, to give us an appearance of disinterestedness. To-morrow I'll get Junk out of the way, and with tears, insinuations, and entreaties, persuade the captain to send for you; and if all succeeds, he may bid us good-night as soon as he pleases.

Capt. (*Vociferates in the Closet.*) Thunder and lightning!

Mrs Moral. O, undone! ruined! it was the captain's voice.

[*JUNK knocking at the Chamber-door.*]

Circ. He's at the door!—He mustn't find me here. (*Runs to it, the Doors fly open, and discover the Captain.*)

Mrs Moral. O, I faint! my dear friend, support me. (*Pretends to faint.*)

Circ. I cannot support a wife without a legacy. I had better remove this action out of court.—(*Takes a Bag from the Table, unlocks the Door, and is immediately seized by JACK, who enters.*)

Capt. At length I have breath. Here's a crew of pirates for you!

Circ. Gentlemen, I take my leave.

Junk. Yes; but you don't take this. (*Taking the Bag from him.*)

Circ. What do you mean, friend? I am an honest man, that all the world knows.

Capt. You're a rascal, sir, that's what I know. Get out of my house, and thank my gouty foot that I do not avenge the deceived world on a scoundrel.

Junk. (*Clenching his Fist.*) Captain, shall I——

Capt. No; let him sheer off,—and if ever his conscience calls him to a court-martial, we needn't doubt his punishment.

Circ. Conscience!—Sir, I'm a lawyer, and deny the authority of that court. Besides, I could relate the whole of this affair to your disadvantage; for, as I am known to be an honest man, my word would first be taken. But I will act liberally, and not mention a syllable.

[*Exit.*

Capt. So, so, he's right. Impudence is the best weapon in the hands of a rogue against an honest man.

Junk. And what must we do with the old puss, here?

Capt. When I am gone, let her go a-drift. Don't suffer her to heave in sight again.

Junk. That's a commission I have longed for these sixteen years.

Capt. Help me into my coach, and her out of my house, then make your report to us in the garden.—(*JACK helps him to the Door, he stops and looks back at Mrs MORAL.*)—'Tis strange! But would you think it? I'm sorry to discharge that woman. Habit reconciles us to every thing; and I do think that to get fond of the devil himself, one need only for a length of time be in the same mess with him.

[*JOHN leads him off.*

Mrs Moral. (*Immediately looks up.*) So, so! so, so! All that my honest industry has acquired will be at the mercy of that brute.—Here he is again.—(*Pretends to faint again.*)

Re-enter JUNK.

Junk. What, not recovered! Oh, we'll soon rouse her.—This money I shall take away.

Mrs Moral. (*Starting up.*) Where am I?

Junk. Where you have already been too long. So, pack up your ill-got property, and clear the decks as fast as possible.

Mrs Moral. You are an ungentle brute, and I shall not be commanded by you.

Junk. But the captain commands.—So secure your ill-gotten property, and call to-morrow.—I must go to my master.

Mrs Moral. (*Locks the Box.*) Nay, but till to-morrow—

Junk. I say, weigh anchor, and get out of the harbour.

Mrs Moral. Then, I say, I won't stir.—(*Sits in the Arm-chair.*)

Junk. No!

Mrs Moral. Not a step.

Junk. Then I must take the helm myself. (*Begins to wheel her off.*)—So, my dear Mrs Moral, a pleasant voyage; and if any body asks who steer'd you out of port, tell them it was your old friend Jack Junk, who hauled down your false colours, and sent you a cruising on your own bottom.

Mrs Moral. (*Speaking at the same time.*) My dear Jack, I'll share my profits with you—I entreat of you—I'll do any thing—I'll tear your eyes out! [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*A Garden; an Arbour on each side.*
On one side a Door with a Ship cut on it.

Enter Mr BERTRAM and ANN.

Bert. Every step in this garden recals the happy days of my youth to my remembrance. For years I have hated the very thoughts of this place—and why? because fraternal enmity hung over it like a cloud. At length, in the evening of my life, the sky clears, I breathe more freely, I feel my love for my brother return.

Ann. I hear, sir, he received Miss Bertram very kindly. I begin to love him again myself, and still hope to find the good-natured Lewis that I remember him when a boy.

Bert. O, he is naturally good. Bad men easily do mischiefs, which the hand of love with difficulty cures. Look at this tree. Do you see the letters of P and I on the bark? Thirty years ago I cut them there, and the tree is yet green and beautiful.

Ann. How often have I sat in this garden, sir, while you and your brother Lewis played together!

Bert. Let us sit down in this arbour, where oft I've conn'd my youthful lessons. (*They go into the Arbour.*) Who shall say age has no pleasures, when it can call up the ideas of past happiness? Youth enjoys present delight much less than age does the memory of those long passed.

Enter Captain BERTRAM, led by a Servant.

Capt. Stop here. (*He looks round with much emotion—after a pause.*) Go! leave me here! (*The Servant hesitates.*) Go, my good fellow; but stay at the gate till Junk comes; I can help myself till then.

[Exit Servant.]

I would not let the man see my tears. Such people are apt to laugh when they see an old seaman weep; and yet we have hearts like other folks. (*Leans on his Crutch, and looks round the Garden.*)

Bert. (*To ANN.*) My spirits revive, and I feel my health renewed.

Capt. Ah! there's the old chesnut-tree standing yet, and full of bloom. How often have I climbed up it with my brother! O! curse this gout! I should like to sit on the top bough of that tree:—and there too—ah! there it is—the old door and the ship on it. Why, I didn't think I could have drawn so well; for though it's not quite right as to the rigging, yet there's the British ensign at the top-gallant mast head. Well, there's no wonder at that having remained; for where is the enemy that has ever been able to pull it down?—Was not this my mother's flower-bed?—How wild and full of weeds the place looks now!—What do I see?—a toad creeping—that reptile would never have been here but for the law-suit:—what a damn'd thing it is for two brothers to quarrel!—I'll hobble into this arbour.—Eh! who can that sick gentleman

be?—he looks ill indeed.

Bert. I have surely seen that face somewhere.

Enter EMMA—Runs to her Father.

For heaven's sake, my dear Emma, tell me who that is?

Emma. A gentleman, sir, who is of our party, because it is his birth-day.

Bert. His birth-day! (*Astonished.*)

Capt. Emma, come hither, child.—Do you know that gentleman there?

Emma. Oh yes, sir, very well.

Capt. Who is he?

Emma. Fifteen years ago, my dear uncle, you would not have asked me such a question.

Capt. Zounds, I suspect!—Who is it?—Tell me.

Emma. (*Runs to the other Arbour and embraces BERTRAM.*) He is my father.

[*A pause—the Brothers look at each other.*]

Capt. (*Aside.*) How ill he looks!—Ah, he has had his sorrows. Zounds! he is coming this way.

Emma. (*Standing in the middle of the Stage, and looking alternately at both.*) Dear uncle, come nearer.

Capt. Well, there, then. (*Hobbles on one pace.*)

Emma. Nearer, my father.

Bert. My daughter!

Emma. Your hands—your hands:—nearer, nearer. (*She draws both together. The Captain throws away his Crutch, and the Brothers embrace.*)

Capt. (*Taking his Head with both his Hands, in the greatest emotion.*) Look at me, brother! Eye to eye—Let me see whether there yet exists on your brow one spark of discord.

Bert. This tear, Lewis, obliterates the remembrance of all that has passed.

Capt. (*Pointing to ANN.*) Who is that old woman snivelling yonder?

Bert. Poor creature!—she weeps for joy.

Capt. Zounds!—I really believe I know her too.—What, old Ann!

Bert. Yes, indeed;—our old nurse Ann.

Capt. Give me your hand, Ann:—how goes it, my old lass?

Ann. I cannot speak, sir.

Capt. Then hold your tongue by all means. Every one can see the tears spring from your heart.—But, the devil! what is become of my gout?—I believe I threw that away with my crutch.

Bert. I have promised my Emma in marriage to the worthy man to whose exertions I owe this happy moment.

Capt. Did you not know that I have a son, that I expect here, and with regard to whom I have been villainously imposed on?—I designed to unite us all more closely by matching him with Emma.

Bert. How unfortunate!—But, brother, my word is pledged: I have given my promise to an honest man, and should forfeit all claim to that title myself were I now to recal it.

Capt. Plague on it! I have been as hasty in my resentment towards my son, as towards you. Here was a method which at once presented itself to make him amends, and you also; but I no sooner behold the prospect than it vanishes.

Bert. I share in your regret most sincerely, my dear brother. But the youth of whom I speak has been a friend beyond example: He assisted me with money, professional aid, and advice. I could see that his regard for Emma was partly the occasion; but virtuous love is a source from which the most brilliant of our actions need not blush to owe their origin.

Capt. He assisted you with money in your distress, while I—(*Agitated.*)——

Bert. Nay, my dear Lewis, notwithstanding our disunion, you assisted me kindly.

Capt. What!—what, would you mock me?

Bert. Have not you paid my debts?

Capt. Heaven knows, not I. What debts?

Bert. The rent—the apothecary:—The very friend of whom we speak assured me it was you.

Capt. Alas! he has, then, himself done what was *my* duty. 'Tis a severe stroke, but I deserve it, and submit. The man who knew so well how to supply the place of a brother, ought to become a son to you.

Enter HARRY.

My dear Harry, you have been wronged. I hoped to have made you amends by the hand and heart of a good girl, but I am born to be disappointed.

Harry. Ah, sir, I have already made my election, would you but approve it.

Capt. I won't approve any thing. You're all leagued against me.

Harry. This lady, sir, must plead my excuse. She is my choice.

Capt. So much the worse. Your uncle says you can't have her.

Harry. Sir, he has promised her to me as his friend, and the arbitrator of your law-suit. I however have power to release him from all promises, in favour of the captain's son.

Bert. This your son!—This was our arbitrator too.

Capt. He!—What, Harry?

Harry. I am, notwithstanding, your nephew; and I will clear all by your fire-side. Permit me, then, in either character, to join my Emma in asking both your blessings. (*They kneel.*)

Capt. My children! (*They form a Picture.*)

Enter JUNK.

Junk. Joy! joy! I see how it all is. Don't take it amiss, old lady; but I'm so happy, that if I don't embrace somebody, I shall break my heart. (*Embraces ANN.*)

Capt. We'll have no hearts broke on such a day as this.—Sacred to the reconciliation of a divided family, it shall henceforth be a double anniversary; and who will refuse to hail the period which terminates a state of warfare by the smiles of returning peace?

[*Exeunt.*

[The end of *The Birth-day* by Thomas Dibdin]