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THE

PRISONER AT LARGE;

A

COMEDY,
IN TWO ACTS.

AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRE-ROYAL, IN THE HAY-MARKET,
WITH UNIVERSAL APPLAUSE.

WRITTEN BY
JOHN O'KEEFFE, Esq.

DRAWN FROM:
A COLLECTION OF
FARCES
AND OTHER AFTER-PIECES

SELECTED BY
MRS INCHBALD
VOLUME II

London, 1815

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LORD ESMOND,	<i>Mr Claremont.</i>
OLD DOWDLE,	<i>Mr Munden.</i>
COUNT FRIPON,	<i>Mr Wilde.</i>
JACK CONNOR,	<i>Mr Farley.</i>
FRILL,	<i>Mr Beverly.</i>
FATHER FRANK,	<i>Mr Waddy.</i>

TOUGH, *Mr Atkins.*
LANDLORD, *Mr Abbot.*
PHELM, *Mr Sarjant.*
TRAP, *Mr Davenport.*
MUNS, *Mr Fawcett.*

ADELAIDE, *Miss Logan.*
RACHEL, *Miss Waddy.*
MARY, *Mrs Gibbs.*

Servants, Peasants, &c.

SCENE—*In the West of Ireland.*

Time—A Night and Morning.

THE

PRISONER AT LARGE.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Garden to Lord ESMOND'S House, a Gate in the back leading to the Road.*

Enter FRILL and MUNS, quarrelling; MARY interposing.

Muns. Conceited fop!

Frill. Impertinent savage!

Mary. Gentlemen——

Frill. 'Pon my honour I shall pink you.

Muns. And by my fist, I'll thump you.

Mary. But, my dear rival lovers, my town fop, and my country beau; silly to quarrel about me; for when one gets thump'd, and t'other pink'd, as you call it, probably I may have neither of you.

Frill. Didn't you confess my little Spanish guitar tickled your heart?

[Shewing it.

Muns. And, my sweet, didn't you own that my great French horn roused your soul?

[Shewing his Horn hung.

Mary. Yes; but 'pon my reputation, gents, I have not yet determined whether I ever was roused or tickled.

Rachel. *[Calls without.]* Mary!

Mary. My mistress!—Coming, madam.

Count. *[Calls without.]* Frill!

Frill. My master!—Yes, sir.

Old Dowdle. *[Without.]* You Muns! Why, Muns!

Muns. My master! zounds!—Sir, I'm here—I'm there.—Mary, don't stay with that fellow.—Coming, sir.

[All run confused.

Frill. I can't bear to leave 'em together.—Coming, sir.

Enter RACHEL.

Rachel. Mary, see where's Miss Adelaide.

Mary. Yes, ma'am.

[Runs off.

Enter Count FRIPON.

Count. My riding hat and switch cane.

[*Exit* FRILL.]

Enter Old DOWDLE.

Dowd. Here, Muns! you loitering cursed vagabond, what are you at? Call, call, call!—Desire Yemon to get the horses ready. [*Exit* MUNS.]—Ay, count, since my master, the lord of this house, has been so unlucky as to lose his estate, and you and your friends in Paris have been lucky enough to win it, now I am your steward; and as they sent you over here to Ireland, to collect the rents, to pay his lordship's bonds to them, I'll go now about and make the tenants pay them into your hands, on condition you marry my daughter Rachel here.

Count. I will.

Rachel. You will not.

[*Aside.*]

Count. But all de clown of tenant, when I did go to gather in de l'argent, did throw de mud and stone at my head, spoil my curl, knock o' my hair out of my buckle; ma foi, call me Jack Frog. Now, mademoiselle, am I like dat Jacky de Frog?

Rachel. Ha, ha, ha!

Dowd. Fools! they never saw their landlord, Lord Esmond, since he was a boy. No, he spent his time and money flying over Italy and Germany, like a wild-goose, till he's got himself now cooped up in a prison at Paris! Ha, ha, ha! Come, count, I hope to bring all the tenants to reason—but that sneering rascal Jack Connor—Daughter, I insist you'll never speak to him.

Rachel. Not I, sir—till you go out. [*Aside.*]

Dowd. Here, you Muns! [*Calling.*]

Count. Frill!

Enter FRILL, *who whispers the Count.*

Frill. A servant without from one Mr Nugent, from Paris.

Count. Nugent! one of our club—I come. Monsieur, excuse moi pour un moment.

[*Exit with* FRILL.]

Enter MUNS.

Muns. Sir, the horses are ready.

Dowd. Rachel, as 'tis late, we sha'n't be home to-night; the count and I'll take a bed where we can—some of the tenants——

Rachel. This is charming! [*Aside.*]—Dear papa, sure you won't sleep out all night!

Dowd. Business.—You Muns. [*Apart.*]

Muns. Sir.

Dowd. You'll let me know if Jack Connor meets my daughter, whilst I am away. There's a retaining fee, you dog.

Muns. [*Looking at it.*] I will, sir. [*Apart.*]

Rachel. [*Apart.*] Muns, run and tell Jack Connor to come here to me as soon as my father's out of sight. There's something to drink our health by the way. [*Gives him money.*]

Muns. [*Looking at it.*] I will, miss.

Dowd. Now you'll be on the watch; I may depend on you? [*Apart to MUNS.*]

Muns. You may, sir. [*Apart.*]

Rachel. You won't fail?

Muns. I won't.

Dowd. Mind, don't stir out.

[*To MUNS apart, and exit.*]

Muns. [*Looking at the money.*] Not a leg.

Rachel. You'll run now to Jack Connor? [*Apart to MUNS.*]

Muns. [*Looks at her money.*] Every foot.

[*Exit.*]

Rachel. My dear Jack Connor, I love him more than ever for his fidelity to my lord; and surely the man of honour and integrity can never prove a faithless lover.

Enter ADELAIDE.

Ah, you sly one! you come down here to the country on a visit to me, yet prefer birds and groves to all we can invent to amuse you. Now isn't it love?

Adel. My dear Rachel, I'd make you my confidante, but you're such a giddy creature.

Rachel. I! Me? Ha, ha, ha! What would I give that you had a lover!

Adel. I had.

Rachel. O precious! Who is he?

Adel. Let these tears tell you my lover is no more.

Rachel. Dear me!

Adel. 'Tis now ten years since I saw my Nugent at Montpellier.

Rachel. Ten years! You constant soul!

Adel. I was scarce fifteen: his fortune was doubtful; my father forbid our intercourse—my Nugent was seized by ruffians, (I could never find the cause,) and carried up to Paris; but have since been assured, by my father, of his death.

Rachel. Lord! had I known, I should not have revived a painful idea. Come, I must keep up your spirits. My father won't be home all night, and I've sent for my dear Jack Connor to sup with us. Come, now, I wish I dare be angry with

my father, for joining this sharpening count against his own master, Lord Esmond: no wonder, for his mother, the old lady, not to rest in her grave. Adelaide, as sure as I live, I heard the ghost sing last night in the Belvedere room—the sweetest voice!

Adel. Very strange!—I've now sat up purposely three nights, but I have neither seen nor heard this wonder.

Rachel. Oh, but my dear, the poor dead lady is certainly disturbed by the misfortunes of her son, Lord Esmond:—it must be she, for the apparition is dressed exactly like her picture that hangs in the room where it walks.

Adel. All fancy. Ah! if the dead were suffered to revisit us, I should be comforted by my Nugent.

Rachel. Come, we must have no more thoughts of dead lovers:—you shall hear my living lover rattle, court, and sing at our little party; we'll be so jolly! Come along. *[Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*A fine Country. Sun going down. Lord
EDMOND'S House at a Distance; at the side JACK House.*

Enter Lord ESMOND, plainly dressed, TRAP, and Servant.

Lord Esm. Then the count will meet me?

Serv. Yes, my lord.

Lord Esm. You called me Nugent?

Serv. I did, my lord.

Lord Esm. Very well, take the horses back to the inn. Well, Trap, I've been your prisoner ten years, and your suffering me to come here from Paris is a stretch of good nature. Yonder's my house: here am I in the centre of my own estate, and, thanks to fortune, not master of one foot of land.

Trap. Night's coming on, and not a roof here will shelter us. In view of your house, I can't get a mug of beer. *[Music and laughing without.]* Country people leaving off work: I'll see if I can't get a drop amongst 'em.—But, my lord, don't run away, for if I hav'n't you to bring back with me to jail, I shall get hanged.—Hollo! neighbours.

[Exit.

Lord Esm. Somewhere here stood *[Looking.]* the cottage of poor old Connor—a good house; he thrives; I'm glad on't. His son Jack was my little play-fellow.

[Laughing and Music without.

Enter JACK CONNOR.

Jack Con. Ay, merry be your hearts. Good-night, neighbours.—All going to their comfortable homes; whilst I—this bachelor's life is plaguy stupid—I will marry my little Rachel. *[Going to his own House.]*

Lord Esm. Hollo! Friend, d'ye know where I can get a bed?

Jack Con. I've two or three spare beds in my house here.

Lord Esm. One will do for me.

Jack Con. Then one you shall have, on one condition though—that you drink one jug of ale with me after supper.

Lord Esm. Supper and a jug of ale! Your terms are rather severe to a hungry, thirsty, weary traveller.

Jack Con. Thirsty! Oh! [*Aside.*] Phelim. [*Calls at his Door.*]

Enter PHELM, to whom JACK CONNOR whispers.

Jack Con. You shall have a traveller's welcome to the house of Jack Connor. [*To Lord ESMOND.*]

[*Exit PHELM.*]

Lord Esm. 'Tis he! the companion of my youth.

Re-enter PHELM, with a Jug of Ale and drinking Horn.

Jack Con. I'll fill for you, sir—Come——

Lord Esm. The good-natured boy ripened into the benevolent man. [*Aside.*]

Jack Con. My first toast, always a bumper;—Here's freedom to my landlord, Lord Esmond.

Lord Esm. Pray, where is my lord now?

Jack Con. In prison, near ten years; and I fear for life. [*Wipes his eyes.*]

Lord Esm. What's the matter?

Jack Con. I beg your pardon, sir; but when I toast my friend in distress, I mix my drink with water.

Lord Esm. Affectionate fellow! [*Aside.*] But I've heard say, my lord is rather a dissipated worthless sort of character.

Jack Con. What's that? [*Fiercely.*] You're welcome to what my house affords, but sup by yourself; for I'll never sit at one board with him who could slander the man I esteem and honour.

Enter MUNS, and whispers JACK CONNOR.

Jack Con. Her father out? and sent for me? My kind Rachel! If I had but Father Frank, now—he might—Muns, how go on the count's affairs? [*Apart.*]

Muns. A mystery there.—But [*Takes a horn of Ale.*] I'll get to the bottom on't. [*Drinks.*] Now I'm primed for love or war; if Frill dare but look crooked, or Mary but frown—oh! how I'll bang him, and touzle her. [*Exit.*]

Lord Em. As I find all here have lost every remembrance of my person, I'll venture up to the castle, and see the count, in my character of Nugent. [*Aside.*]

Jack Con. Phelim, let this gentleman want for nothing till I come home—Your hand, sir; I was angry, but you're a stranger; perhaps in necessity and my doors shall never be shut against the weary traveller. [*Exit.*]

Lord Esm. You are an honest fellow, that I'll be sworn for. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*An Apartment in Lord ESMOND'S House.*

Enter FRILL.

Frill. I suspect here's something going forward against my master.—Here comes Muns and Mary.—See—kiss—oh the traitress! [*Retires.*]

Enter MUNS and MARY.

Muns. True. Ha, ha, ha! But Mary, my dear, how could you listen to such a cur as Frill?

Frill. [*Aside.*] I'm a cur! Oh you puppy.

Mary. Frill is a creature—but really since this ghost has appeared, the house is so frightful that any company is acceptable.

Muns. That for the ghost! To-night we are to have a jolly little party.—Hush, my dear, [*With joy.*] Jack Connor's coming to Miss Rachel, I'm with you, and cook is preparing a nice bit of supper for us all, tol, lol!

Mary. A supper! delightful!

Muns. Old master don't come home to-night, and we'll be so merry, tol, lol.

Mary. Charming! Then I'll go superintend supper.

Muns. And I'll make Tooten the black, my pupil, prepare his horn. Oh, how sweetly we played on the water yesterday! They may talk of fine views, and vistas, and beauties of nature; but 'tis to hear the divine echoes of my horn, that brings the gentlefolks all the way from Cork, and even Dublin, down here to the lake of Killarney. But now for supper. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Hall.*

MUNS and MARY placing Tables, and a Screen between.

Muns. There! the lovers sha'n't be overlooked by us, ha, ha, ha! Here Tooten and I'll sit and take our pleasure—while they mingle lips we'll jingle glasses. Oh, how I love to see good cheer going forward!

[*Exeunt.*]

FRILL advances.

Frill. So, here's rare doings in the old gentleman's absence; master and I bubbled by such clowns as Muns and Jack Connor—oh revenge!

Old Dowd. [*Without.*] Who is here?

Frill. Oh choice luck! Here comes the old codger home unexpectedly. Such a hobble as I'll bring 'em into! Ha, ha, ha!

Enter Old DOWDLE.

Dowd. Oh my bones! Who's that I see there? What, are they all gone to bed? Well I'll go too, and not disturb any body.

Frill. What, sir, go to bed without your supper, the nice supper that Miss Rachel has prepared for you?

Dowd. [*Seeing the Table laid.*] Hey! what is all this?

Frill. The table laid for your supper, sir.

Dowd. Why who knew I was coming home?

Frill. Miss Rachel, sir.

Dowd. Eh! then she knows I had a fall from my horse?

Frill. The devil a word of it. [*Aside.*]—Oh yes, sir, Mary told her that.

Dowd. Mary! who told Mary?

Frill. Oh sir—she saw you, sir, as she was taking a walk.

Dowd. She took a devil of a long walk then; for I fell six miles off.

Frill. That was a great fall indeed, sir.

Dowd. Eh?

Frill. Walk—yes, sir—ride—Sir—Mary was riding too—the evening being fine, Miss Rachel gave her leave to go see her brother.

Dowd. Mary?

Frill. Yes, sir; Muns rode before her.

Dowd. After my orders to stay at home on the watch!—Before Mary? Then I suppose the rascal took my chesnut pad?

Frill. Don't say I told you—but I fancy he did—they would not wish you to know it, sir—they'll all deny it to you.

Dowd. Mary!—he—indeed I heard a woman squall.

Frill. Yes, sir, she said she squalled.

Dowd. Then perhaps 'twas she sent the 'pothecary to me.

Frill. It was, sir.—One lie has drawn me into a dozen. [*Aside.*]

Dowd. A busy slut! He was a farrier—called himself a surgeon, though he was a farrier; for the fellow out with a fleam, up with my leg, and swore he'd bleed me in the fetlock.—Where's your master?

Frill. Lord, sir, didn't he come home with you?

Dowd. No, he said somebody from France was to meet him at an inn three miles off, he, he!—But I'm glad my daughter had so much thought as to provide a morsel for me. Oh what happiness, after all one's crosses abroad, to come to one's own home, when one's children and servants are so attentive to render it agreeable!—Muns! [*Calls.*] Where's this cursed fellow, with his galloping my horses about the country?—Frill, shall I trouble you to help me on with my gown, and then I can come and sit down to my supper in comfort. [*Exit.*]

Frill. Yes, sir.—Oh what a rare hobble I shall bring them into, ha, ha, ha!

[*Exit.*]

Enter RACHEL, ADELAIDE, *and* JACK CONNOR.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Rachel. And there now is my old papa, trotting from cottage to barn, like a cunning little exciseman, with his green book under his arm, and his pen stuck in his wig.

All. Ha, ha, ha!

Jack Con. But why won't Miss Adelaide give us her company?

Rachel. You must.

Adel. My dear, suffer me to go to rest, if I can rest. The death of my Nugent, the misfortunes of Lord Esmond—though I never saw him—it may seem an affectation of sensibility—I can't account for it, but I feel something inexpressibly horrid hanging over me, ever since you shewed me the old lady's clothes.

Rachel. Sure?

Adel. Not a night I don't dream I'm rummaging her clothes-press in the haunted-room, as you call it.

Rachel. Well, my dear, if you will retire, suffer Jack to see you across the gallery.

Jack Con. Ay, miss, under my guard, show me the ghost that dare affront you.

[*Exit with ADELAIDE.*]

Enter MARY with Supper, which she puts on the Table.

Mary. There, miss.—Let's see, I must bring another bottle; for your lover is a good fellow, and a good fellow deserves a good bottle.

[*Exit.*]

Rachel. [*Sits down.*] I wish Jack Connor would make haste. [*Begins to carve.*] Ha, ha, ha! my little dad, if he knew what we were at here now!

Enter DOWDLE, in an undress. RACHEL carves with her back to him as he enters.

Rachel. Yes, my poor father's fast asleep by this, in some peaceful cottage. Ha, ha, ha! I would not care if he had a taste of this turkey; I know the old lad likes a bit o' the merry-thought—How long my deeree stays!—Is that you?— [*Speaks without looking round.*] Eh! you've been giving her a kiss, I suppose—come, whilst it's hot; sit down, you foolish fellow.

[*DOWDLE comes round, and sits down opposite to her.*]

Ah! [*Screams.*]

Dowd. What's the matter with you?

Rachel. Sir, I—I—I thought it was the ghost.

Dowd. Why, did you invite the *ghost* to supper?

Rachel. If Jack returns we're undone. [*Aside.*]—Lord, sir, who expected you?

Dowd. Indeed I should not have been home to-night, but for the tumble.

Rachel. What tumble, sir?

Dowd. Sure you—oh true, I wa'n't to know she let Muns gallop my horses about the road. [*Aside.*] Well, ha, ha, ha! I forgive you and him, since it has procured me so good a supper. Ha, ha!

Rachel. Forgive us! Then, sir, you know all?

Dowd. Yes, yes, I'm not angry—call the fellow.

Rachel. O precious! Then, sir, you'll let him sup with us?

Dowd. Sup! What, your servant?

Rachel. True, sir, I am his mistress, and he loves me dearly.

Dowd. Who, Muns?

Rachel. Muns!

Dowd. If your Muns dare to sit down at a table with me, I'll knock the scoundrel to the devil.

Enter MUNS and Black, who sit at the other Table.

Muns. Now, Tooten, don't look towards the lovers; here we'll sit, play, and take our glasses. [*They drink.*] Now up with Black Sloven.

[*TOOTEN and MUNS play the Horns.*

Dowd. Hey! [*Lays down his Fork.*]

Muns. How d'ye like that, my lad o' wax?

Dowd. What's that?

Muns. Eh! [*Surprised; softly rises, and peeps over the Screen, which he had placed between the two Tables; at the same time DOWDLE turns up his face.*]

Enter MARY with Wine.

Mary. Here's two bottles for the jolly dog.

[*Sets them on the Table where MUNS sits.*

Muns. [*In a smothered laugh.*] Ha, ha, ha! Go give it to the jolly dog yourself.

Mary. [*Goes round the Screen, and seeing DOWDLE, screams.*] Ah!

Dowd. Curse your squalling! I believe it was you that frightened my horse.

Mary. Me!

Dowd. Where the devil did you pick up such an apothecary?

Mary. I pick up an apothecary! Sir, I'd have you to know——

Dowd. He was a farrier [*Enraged.*]; and, sirrah, the next time you take the road——

Muns. I take the road!

Dowd. So you must go on the pad?

Muns. I go on the pad! oh Lord!

Dowd. You scoundrel! cantering about.—Where's the pillion?

Muns. Mary, fetch my master the pillow.

Dowd. So, sirrah, she's in love with you?

Muns. Yes, sir—eh, Mary? ha, ha, ha!

Dowd. And you must sit down and sup with me?

Muns. Eh! well—thank ye, sir.

Dowd. Fine! Hadn't you better ask the black-a-moor? [*Ironically.*]

Muns. Tooten, sit down, boy.

[*Black sits down.*]

Dowd. Get along, you infernal impudent son of a—

[*Beats him.*]

Muns. Oh Lord, he's mad!

Dowd. Where's my saddle, you villain?

Muns. His saddle! Going to ride this time o' night—yes, the devil's got into him.

Dowd. I'll beat him out of you, you damn'd rogue.

Muns. The ghost has bit him—Oh!

[*MUNS and MARY run off.*]

Dowd. A knave!

Enter JACK CONNOR.

Jack Con. This old mansion has so many windings I thought I should never have found my way back again.—Come, sit down, my dear—Zounds!

[*Seeing Old DOWDLE, runs off.*]

Dowd. Stop the fellow—thieves!

[*Runs out after him.*]

SCENE V.—*Another Apartment.*

Enter MARY.

Mary. I wonder if Miss Rachel's gone to bed.—Jack Connor must have slipped out when he heard master scolding us—Yes, I hear him locking the great gate.—Near one o'clock—I wish I were in my own room—I dread crossing that dismal gallery: if I meet any thing, I should die, I'm so frightened.

Enter MUNS.

O Lord, what's that?

Muns. 'Tis I, my dear.—D'ye think master saw Jack Connor?

Mary. I hope not; but I can't conceive how he got off.

Muns. No matter, as he wa'n't seen we're safe.—But here's a strange gentleman, I saw him just now at Jack Connor's, knock'd at the postern, and ask'd for a bed, as he's benighted, and——

Mary. The deuce! Were you mad, to let a stranger in at this time of night? He may be a white boy.

Muns. Lookee, Mary, I let him in out of good-nature—let those that are ill-natured turn him out.

Mary. Why, 'twould be cruel indeed! only master's so cross.—Stop—I've a thought—the finest opportunity!—Let's put him to sleep in the haunted room; as he don't know on't he won't be afraid, and if the ghost walks he'll certainly speak to it, and then——

Muns. Why yes, if it is our dead lady, she may tell him what disturbs her, then may be she'll vanish, and trouble the house no more—I like it hugely.

Mary. Where have you left the gentleman?

Muns. In the lodge. Come—[*Going.*]

Mary. You needn't run away from a body. [*Takes him under her arm.*]

Muns. Ah! how loving these women are, when they stand in need of our protection. Hem! [*Swaggers.*] Eh! bless me! tol, lol, lol. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.—*An antique Apartment. A Lady's Picture hanging over the Chimney.*

Enter MUNS and MARY, with lights, introducing LORD ESMOND.

Mary. This is the room, sir.

Muns. [*In terror, yet trying to conceal it.*] Yes, sir, this is the room, sir.

Lord Esm. I'm very much obliged to you.

Mary. The bed's in the alcove, sir. [*Points to it.*]

Muns. Well Mary, put on the sheets, and air it well for the gentleman.

Mary. Can't you?

Muns. Psha! [*Apart—each urging the other to go in.*]

Mary. Sir, the bed is very well air'd.

Muns. Yes, sir, it has been laid in, not above—eight years ago. [*Aside.*] Go—[*To MARY, who with much hesitation*

and terror goes into the alcove.]

Lord Esm. The gentleman of the house is gone to rest?

Muns. Yes, sir, the gentleman of the house has rested in prison these ten years—

Lord Esm. Indeed! Poor gentleman.

Muns. Ay, sir, he's a lord; the cards and dice have left him a very poor gentleman—but my master, his steward, is now quietly snoring.

Lord Esm. Then I shall return him thanks in the morning.

Muns. Oh, sir, you may as well not thank him, sir.

Lord Esm. Oh then 'tis entirely to you I'm obliged?

Muns. Yes, sir.

Lord Esm. As I was left by the man of the house, when you saw me, but for your humanity, I must have lain in the fields all night—Here.

[Offers money.]

Muns. As I didn't buy my humanity, I never will sell it. *[Refuses the money.]*

Re-enter MARY.

Mary. There, sir, the bed's ready—Lord!—so frighten'd!—thought I should never get done.—*[Apart to MUNS.]*

Muns. Hush! hush! *[Apart.]* Sir, we'll leave you a light, sir, and you may leave it burning—that he may see the ghost. *[Apart.]*

Mary. Wish you a good night, sir.

Muns. A good night's rest, sir. O what a clawing will be here by and by!

[Exeunt MUNS and MARY.]

Lord Esm. For the first time indeed, since my infancy, I shall sleep under my own roof. Since I find this Count not here, I shall, if possible, get out early and meet him at the inn where I appointed. The dead of night seems very awful in these antique mansions. This room was, I think, my dear mother's—yes, there's her picture—my fond parent—*[Clock strikes one.]*

Enter ADELAIDE, from a door which opens in the wainscot—walks as in her sleep.

Who's here? a lady! Heav'ns, she's asleep! *[He stands fixed with wonder, ADELAIDE crosses, opens a clothes-press, takes from her head a hood, scarf, and night-rail, somewhat resembling the picture in the room, and puts them into the press; then to return to the door where she entered, walks with her face towards Lord ESMOND.]*

Lord Esm. Is it possible?—'tis my Adelaide!—Hold! to wake her—the sudden fright may—yes, this ring, her last pledge of affection when we parted—*[Puts a ring upon her finger, which he had taken from his own.]* This ring may afford her comfort, without discovering that it is I that have been here.

[Exeunt severally.]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*Open Country, before a public Inn, sign of the Shoulder of Mutton.*

Enter MUNS, his Horn round his neck, and Box under his arm.

Muns. Oh that wicked old master, to turn me off for only letting in that strange man!—a strange man he was, for none could tell how he got out this morning. Master swears he was a thief, and threatens to prosecute me for an accomplice, if I even ask for my wages—and then I've left my sweet Mary-gold all to Frill. Here have I tramped two miles, as hungry—and not a shilling in my pocket. Now here's a house of entertainment—yet I'm afraid even to sit down on the bench, lest I should be ask'd to pay for it. I'm so hungry—House! [*Calls faintly.*] Oh! what an effect an empty pocket has upon a man's voice at the door of a public-house!

Enter Landlord.

Landlord. What wou'd you be pleased to have?

Muns. Any thing, sir.

Enter Landlady.

Landlady. What do you want?

Muns. Every thing, ma'am.

Landlord. Who are you?

Muns. A poor servant out of place.

Landlady. We want a waiter, husband.

Landlord. Did your master give you a character?

Muns. No, sir, he had none for himself.

Landlord. What can you do?

Muns. Sir, I don't know what to do.

Landlord. What are you capable of?

Muns. Oh, sir—I can play a duet upon the horn.

Landlord. I want no horn.

Landlady. No, that you don't, husband.

Landlord. You understand horses?

Muns. Yes, sir, and cookery.

Landlord. I want one in my stable.

Muns. A horse?

Landlord. Psha! my stable.

Muns. Yes, sir, but I'm best in the kitchen—Ma'am, I'll do any thing for bread—only employ me—I'll be humble as a spaniel—secret as a fish—watchful as a cat—I'll sleep like a cock, upon one leg, with the other ready to pop down to run on a message.

Landlord. Come in, my lad, you're the very man for the Shoulder of Mutton.

Muns. That I am, sir, either baked or roasted.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room in the Inn.*

Enter Lord ESMOND and LANDLORD.

Lord Esm. Only if Count Fripon enquires for Mr Nugent, shew him in.

Landlord. Yes, sir.

[*Exit.*]

Lord Esm. Luckily, in the time of my distress at Montpellier, I took the name of one of their confederates, who, from being stationed in a distant quarter, probably the Count has never seen. They supposing me one of their rascally club, I may get at their secret schemes, and so be prepared to counteract them.

Enter COUNT.

Count. Fal, lal, lal! Ha, Monsieur Nugent, I never ave de honeur of seeing you, but know you are of our club in Paris: Sir, I am rejoice at your coming.

Lord Esm. Thank ye, Count—I'm sent—deputed by our friends, to see how you go on with my Lord's affairs.

Count. Ah! malheureux! very bad—no money—been out now all last night, and got but abuse—no—dey will pay none but my Lord himself—One Jack Connor will not let 'em.

Lord Esm. Rascal!—My friendly school-fellow.

[*Aside.*]

Count. Monsier Nugent—eh—I have de thought—has Monsieur Dowdle, de steward, ever see you?

Lord Esm. I think not.

Count. Bon! It vil do—since de tenant vil pay none but my Lor himself, I vil pass you on dem for Lor Esmond, and I warrant in tumble de money, ma foi, ha, ha!

Lord Esm. Excellent! You'll say I'm his lordship, ha ha! they pay me, and we return to Paris, and share it with our club, ha, ha! admirable!

Count. Dat is it, ha, ha, ha! But hold—if dey even believe you are he, how will dey tink how you got out of prison in Paris? Ah! ah! dat is to be consider.

Lord Esm. What do you think of my making my valet pass for my jailor, whom I'll say, I prevail'd upon for a bribe to accompany me on this ramble to see my estate?

Trap. [*Without.*] Ay, I'll have him.

Lord Esm. Ha, ha, ha! d'ye hear him?

Count. Diable! dat is he!

Lord Esm. Why, to tell you the truth, I had adopted this very scheme of yours, and already tutor'd my valet to play his part of my jailor.—Now Trap will help me without knowing. [*Aside.*]

Count. Oh den dis is your valet?—ha, ha, ha! admirable! ha, ha, ha!

Lord Esm. Now only observe how he'll keep up his character.

Enter TRAP, looking surly.

Trap. Oh you're there—I'm glad I've found you.

Lord Esm. Well, Trap—I call him Trap—

[*Apart to COUNT.*]

Trap. I thought you'd run away from me; but you frighten me so no more, as back you come to prison directly.

Count. Ha, ha, ha! bravo! Oh he does it capitally!

Lord Esm. Now I'll give you a specimen how I can act the lord. [*Apart to COUNT.*] But, my honest jailor, indulge me in this little frolic—I paid you well for it.

Count. Bravo, my Lor; now, jailor.

Trap. Yes, but what's your pay if I get hang'd for letting you out?

Count. Ah, ah, ah! dat is capital. Ha, ha!

Lord Esm. But I am now going to my castle.

Trap. But first, my lord, you'll come back to *my* castle!

Count. Oh charmante! ha, ha, ha! to *my* castle—Oh dat is admirable—ha, ha!

Trap. Yes, damme, what do you laugh at? If I had you peeping through the bars of my castle, then you might grin like a baboon.

Count. Yes, but as dere is nobody by, you may now as well drop the jailor.

Trap. But I won't drop the jailor. Nobody by?—Damme, do you want to rescue my prisoner, eh?

Count. Begar, if I was not told you was valet, you almost make me tremble.

Trap. Valet! what do you mean?

Count. O I warrant he is de careful diligent; I wish such to ave de care of my clothes.

Trap. Your clothes! ha, ha, ha! I'd desire only one suit and your body in it, I warrant I'd take care of it.

Count. You will drink my health?

[Gives him Money.]

Trap. Why, as for your health that's no business of mine, but I'll drink your wine—My lord, I'll have an eye upon you—can he drop from this window? No, no. [Exit.]

Count. Ha, ha, ha!

Lord Esm. Well, don't you think we are safe in our jailor? Ha, ha!

Count. Ay, I hope you'll play de Lor half so vel, and we touch de cash. Ha, ha!

Enter MUNS as a Waiter.

Muns. Do you call, gentlemen?

Count. Ventre bleu! more acting! diable! You Muns, vat bring you here?

Muns. Master turn'd me off for letting in, and giving a bed in the haunted room, to a half-starved poor devil, that— [Sees Lord ESMOND.] Oh! how d'ye do, sir? La, sir, did you see master, coming away?

Count. Den you vere at de house, eh?

Lord Esm. Last night to look for you. [Apart.]

Count. Oh!—vel, my Lor Esmond, ven you return to your castle as yourself—

Lord Esm. Immediately.

Muns. This my Lord Esmond! huzza! my fortune's made!

Enter Landlord.

Landlord. Hey! What, have you got lazy already, sirrah? [To Muns.]

Muns. Eh! fellow! who do you talk to? my lord, hadn't we best quit? No accommodation for your lordship in these paltry inns.

Count. Hey, fellow, you must dispatch all your servants and horses round the country, dat all my lord's vassals and domestics may show their duty and respect in his welcome home.

Muns. And since you did entertain me, to show my gratitude, I open your house.

Lord Esm. Well said, honest Muns; and for your disinterested generosity in receiving me last night, you may change places with your old master.

Muns. Make me steward! Oh, my lord, I shall grow mad with joy! Clear the way there for his lordship.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE III.—JACK CONNOR'S *House*.

Enter JACK CONNOR and PHELIM.

Jack Con. The stranger gone! I shou'd have stay'd to entertain him, but for his reflections on my lord—and the call of love.

Phelim. Yes, and here has been old Tough, the grazier, making such a riot about a lamb, he insists has been taken out of his field.

Jack Con. Psha! the fool! never mind him—if my darling will but come, and Father Frank will but marry us—Oh! here comes his reverence.

Enter FATHER FRANK.

F. Frank. Well, Jack Connor, what is this business?

Jack Con. The first is, that your reverence will breakfast with me.

F. Frank. Well, that's a business of no harm, if it be a good breakfast.

Jack Con. The next, that you marry me to my dear Rachel, who designs to slip out to me this morning.

Tough. [*Without.*] I will have it.

Jack Con. Now here's that litigious blockhead, old Tough, the grazier, come wrangling about—

Enter TOUGH.

Tough. So, Jack Connor, now that Father Frank is here, I'll make my complaint, if you don't restore my lamb.

Jack Con. She's not your's—you know my shepherd saw you t'other night sneak into my field, and brand two of my sheep with your own name.

F. Frank. Oh! that was a grievous sin, neighbour Tough.

Tough. Ah, Father Frank, I see which way your opinion goes where good eating is to be had; but I'll lay my case before my lord's steward, that I will. *[Exit.*

Enter RACHEL hastily.

Jack Con. My love!

Rachel. Well, here I've run to you. Oh! I'm so frighten'd. Now if you have not brought Father Frank here to marry us!

Jack Con. Ha, ha, ha! guess'd it. Ah, sly one!

F. Frank. But have you her father's consent?

Jack Con. I've her own, which is worth fifty fathers—eh, Rachel?

Rachel. You have. [*Gives her hand.*]

F. Frank. I will not marry you without her father's consent.

Enter PHELM.

Phelim. Here's the steward.

Rachel. Lud, my father!

Phelim. And yonder comes old Tough again, swearing he'll complain to him.

Jack Con. Will he? 'Gad I've a thought—Ha! [*Aside.*] Father Frank, only step in; Rachel will make breakfast for you—suffer me to say a few words to her father, and I promise you he consents to our marriage—Hush! step in.

F. Frank. Your hot cakes and your eggs are good, and that that's good is the delight of a churchman.

[*Exit with RACHEL.*

Enter DOWDLE.

Dowd. Jack, I am come again to demand your rent, to pay off my Lord's debts to the Count.

Jack Con. Well, you shall have it, if you'll oblige me.

Dowd. Oblige you, that's doing all manner of rogueries to thwart and perplex me!

Jack Con. Well, my frolics are all over—for as I lost every hope of your giving me Rachel——

Dowd. You've no hope, indeed—this evening I give her to the Count.

Jack Con. Well, I knew you would; so I struck up to the daughter of old Tough, the grazier; unknown to him she has scamper'd off here to me, and is this moment in that room.

Dowd. No! Well you're a devil of a——

Jack Con. I am—and how can I help it?

Dowd. You can't.

Jack Con. We've Father Frank here ready to marry us, but he's afraid of your anger.

Dowd. My anger! What is it to me who he marries?

Jack Con. Why yes, as 'twas all about my courting your daughter, he will not marry me to this girl without you are willing.

Dowd. What! you knave, do you think I'll connive at your running away with any man's daughter? 'Gad, I might be served so myself.

Jack Con. And you shall—for by all the beard on your chin, if you don't call to Father Frank, to marry me to the girl within,—there, [*Points to the Room.*] as I lose her through you, I'll again tack about, and run away with Rachel in spite of your teeth. I tell you, you'll never be able to hold your daughter till I'm tied up.

Dowd. Then I wish you were tied up. Damn the fellow, he's as dangerous in the village as a fox. Well, I consent; so call Father Frank.

Jack Con. Call a priest from his breakfast! are you mad?

Dowd. Call the wench hither.

Jack Con. I will, thank ye—[*Going, returns.*] But I think you'd as good not be present.

Dowd. No?

Jack Con. No.—Old Tough will owe you a sad spite.

Dowd. Well, I'm obliged to you.—Indeed her father is a wicked old rogue.

Jack Con. So he is, sir; he's a wicked old rogue: why I told him so just now.

Dowd. Did you? What! to his face?

Jack Con. To his face, as I talk to you this moment.—Says I, you old knave, I'll marry your daughter.

Dowd. Do—go in and do it; ha, ha, ha!

Jack Con. I will—I'll do it.

Dowd. Ha, ha, ha! I like to see a crabbed old numskull bamboozled, ha, ha, ha!

Jack Con. So do I, ha, ha, ha!

Tough. [*Within.*] I'll have her.

Dowd. Eh! here he is.

Jack Con. Yes, he has missed her. Now only mind the sordid fellow's manner of talking of his family—all in the grazier's style. Why, sir, his wife he calls his ewe.

Dowd. Then I suppose he'll call his daughter here within, his lamb, ha, ha!

Jack Con. Eh! why no; I think he'll scarce do that.

Dowd. I'll bet you half-a-crown he does.

Jack Con. Done! he won't.

Dowd. He will. Zounds, don't I know the fellow's mode of phrase? a mere savage!

Jack Con. Well, but do you call to the friar.

Dowd. I will.—Here, Father Frank, marry the couple directly; go in and do it. [*Pushing him in.*] Oh! this will make a rare laugh against the old fellow, ha, ha, ha! Here he comes.—Father Frank, make haste and marry them.

Enter TOUGH.

Tough. He shall restore her. Mr Dowdle, do you authorise these doings?

Dowd. What doings? ha, ha, ha! [*Smothering a laugh.*]

Tough. What doings! Jack Connor to take away my lamb?

Dowd. His lamb! ha, ha, ha! by the Lord I have won my half-crown—I knew the grazier would come out, ha, ha! She's Jack Connor's lamb by this, ha, ha, ha!

Tough. His! For ten guineas she carries my name.

Dowd. Ha, ha, ha! For twenty guineas by this she carries Jack Connor's, ha, ha, ha!

Tough. Why, zounds! he's not tarring her over again!

Dowd. Tarr'd, yes; and she'll be soon feather'd.

Tough. Feather'd!

Dowd. Yes; when she's dressed; 'tis all the fashion, you know.

Tough. Zounds! Then he intends her for his own table?

Dowd. Yes, certainly, she'll head his table, ha, ha, ha!

Tough. He's plaguy dainty.

Dowd. Yes, he's a dainty fellow.

Tough. He's a thief.—I thought to have sent her to market to-morrow.

Dowd. Father Frank, if the job's over, let the lamb come out here, and ask the old ram's blessing. [*Calls out.*]

*Enter RACHEL, handed in by JACK CONNOR and
Father FRANK.*

Rachel. [*Kneels to DOWDLE.*] Father, your blessing.

Dowd. Eh! zounds! if this should be the lamb!

Tough. Egad, and I believe you are the old ram, ha, ha, ha!

Dowd. Father Frank, what the devil's this you've been doing?

F. Frank. Fie, fie! this is unseemly.—I've been joining this pair in holy wedlock, as you desired me.

Tough. As you desired him, ha, ha, ha! Egad, 'tis my turn to laugh now.

Jack Con. Father-in-law, to keep the laugh from yourself, you'd best join in it.

Rachel. Father, don't be angry, for upon the word of a bride, I had no notion of marriage,—but as you desired it, I complied, to show my obedience.

Dowd. Oh, plague of your obedience! [*Going in a rage.*]

Jack Con. Sir, father-in-law, here's the half-crown you won.

[*Old DOWDLE breaks from him, and exit in a fury.*]

Tough. Ha, ha, ha! I'm so pleased. Jack, if you even have my lamb, keep it, and let your lamb carve it for the wedding-day supper. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Lord ESMOND'S House, Gothic Chamber.*

Enter ADELAIDE.

Adel. It must have been my Nugent; every circumstance confirms it; and this ghost must have been I that walked in my sleep. I shudder to think of the dangers I've escaped, but my Nugent lives, and danger vanishes. [*Aside.*]

Enter DOWDLE.

Dowd. Ah, jade! Pray, miss, did you know of my daughter's elopement?

Adel. Dear sir, did you see the gentleman?

Dowd. The devil's in the women! I ask about my daughter, and a gentleman is slapp'd in my teeth! Hussey, were you her confidante? [*To Mary.*]

Mary. Pray, sir, can you think where Muns is gone?

Dowd. Get along, you jade, you and your Muns; the rascal, I suppose, is starving in a ditch by this—[*A loud knocking.*] Hey! what great man is this!

Enter MUNS, in a rich Livery.

Muns. Hey! nobody to throw open the gates for us—Hey! [*Swaggering.*]

Dowd. You! you scoundrel, how dare you show your saucy face here?

Muns. [*Without attending to DOWDLE.*] Come, we must have the rooms now in some order. This table—chairs—sopha—[*With great haste, and very consequentially, he moves the Furniture.*]—We must have a total change here—by'r leave—

Dowd. Hey! Turn out.

Muns. Stop—we shall soon see which of us is to turn out. [*Shouting without.*]

*Enter Lord ESMOND, (richly dressed,) and
the Count.*

Lord Esm. My beloved Adelaide! [*Embracing.*]

Muns. My darling Mary! [*Embracing.*]

Adel. 'Tis my Nugent!

Count. Nugent! Oh! she vill spoil all. [*Aside.*] De lady is mistake; dis, Mr Dowdle, is your master.

Dowd. Eh!

Count. [*Apart to ADELAIDE.*] Miss, say with us, and you shall ave de much money.

Adel. And does Mr Nugent come here an impostor? Lord Esmond has been already too much wronged—deprived of liberty and fortune; and, though I never saw him, and once dearly loved you, [*To Lord ESMOND.*] could I suppose you one of his unprincipled oppressors, I'd banish you for ever from my heart.

Lord Esm. My Adelaide! what joy to prove your probity unshaken, as your innocence is spotless! I should scarce wish to recover my fortune, but to render myself more worthy of your love.

Count. He does act de Lord charmant! I must help him on. [*Aside.*] Monsieur Dowdle, I have received lettres from my friends in Paris; to shew dere generosité, dey desire me to deliver him up his bonds—Dere, my lor. [*Gives Lord ESMOND Papers.*] Now as we have no claim on his lordship, I hope de tenants will now pay dere rents.

Lord Esm. I am sure, Count, I am vastly obliged to you for this. [*Noise without.*]

*Enter JACK CONNOR and RACHEL; he with a large
stick stands before Lord ESMOND.*

Jack Con. I'll die before they take my lord again to a gaol.

Enter TRAP, and Officers.

Lord Esm. So, Connor, you'll die for me, and not return to sup with me? ha, ha!

Jack Con. [*Looking at Lord ESMOND.*] And was it you, my lord, I affronted at my house?

Count. Diable! Are you really my Lord Esmond? Oh, I am ruined!

Lord Esm. My ruin, I hope, will teach our nobility, instead of travelling to become the dupes of foreign sharpers, to stay at home and spend their fortunes amongst their honest tenants, who support their splendour. [*Exeunt.*]

[The end of *The Prisoner at Large* by John O'Keeffe]