

GRIMSHAW, BAGSHAW, AND BRADSHAW.

IN ONE ACT.

BY JOHN MADDISON MORTON,

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AUTHOR OF

" *Box and Cox,*" " *Friend Waggles*" " *My Precious Betsey*"
" *John Dobbs,*" " *Going to the Derby,*"
" *Slasher and Crasher,*"
&c. &c. &c.

HAILES LACY,
WELLINGTON STREET, STRAND,
LONDON.

*First Performed at the Theatre Royal Haymarket, Tuesday,
July 1st, 1851.*

CHARACTERS.

Grimshaw Mr. BUCKSTONE.
Bagshaw Mr. H. BEDFORD.
Bradshaw Mr. A. BRINDAL.
Towzer (*a Sheriffs' Officer*). . . . Mr. SELBY.
Fanny Sparks (*a Milliner*) Mrs. BUCKINGHAM.
Emily (*Towzer's Niece*) Miss VINING.

Time in Representation, Fifty Minutes.

COSTUMES.

GRIMSHAW—Black Oxonian coat, drab waistcoat, nankeen trousers.
BAGSHAW—Plaid Trousers, snuff-coloured coat, blue waistcoat, large
drab overcoat.
BRADSHAW—Modern suit, light drab paletot.
TOWZER- Long brown great-coat, boat hat, nankeen trousers.
FANNY SPARKS-Chintz muslin dress, flounced; purple silk apron.
EMILY-Pink muslin dress.

*Scale for Provincial Representation. 1st
Class, 10s.; 2nd Class, 7s.; 3rd Class, 5s.*

GRIMSHAW, BAGSHAW, AND BRADSHAW.

SCENE.—*An Apartment commonly furnished—At C. a recess, in which there is a small French bedstead, with curtains, &c.—At L.C. a door—at R.C. another door—doors also at R. 2 E. and L. 2 E., a small table, chairs, &c.; small deal chest of drawers—GRIMSHAW discovered arranging the bed, c.*

GRIM. (*yawns*) How sleepy I am, to be sure! I declare, I'm almost afraid to wink, in case I shouldn't be able to open my eyes again! (*yawns*) If the whole human race were now standing before me, inviting me with outstretched arms to throw myself into them, I should unhesitatingly select Morpheus as the individual into whose arms I should throw myself! (*yawning again; then taking pillow, which he shakes and thumps*) I wonder what this pillow is composed of?—my old landlady lays it's feathers—probably she meant quills—but I'm inclined to pronounce it *chaff*, Pon my life! it's rather early to go to bed—only nine o'clock. (*hanging his watch up at head of bed*) Just the time when the majority of young men of my age begin the day. But peoples tastes differ; besides, after being actively engaged in a perpendicular position all day long, I am only too glad to indulge in a horizontal position at night—especially as I have to be perpendicular again at half-past six in the morning—this it is to be a chemist and druggist—I mean, a shopman to a chemist and druggist—and such a chemist and druggist! If the shutters are not down and the shop swept by seven o'clock, he turns all sorts of colours like the bottles in his window, and addresses me in such dreadful bad language, that I really feel sometimes inclined to knock him down with one of his own pestles, preparatory to pounding him in one of his own mortars. I really wonder some ingenious creature or other doesn't immortalize himself by inventing shutters that would put themselves up at night, and take themselves down in the morning! I haven't been to the "Exhibition" yet, but I'm afraid there's nothing of the sort there. Now, then, for my dressing-gown! Oh! I know—it's in this closet, (*opens door, L.C., and shows a closet, at the back of which a dressing-gown and other articles of apparel are hanging up—takes down dressing-*

gown, closing door after him: takes off his coat and puts on dressing-gown) There! and now for my slippers—they're in this closet. *opens door of closet, R.C., and takes out slippers—closing door*) Let me see—where did I put the boot-jack?—I shall never be able to get these boots off without that jack. (*hunting about*) A bachelor's life has its advantages, no doubt; but if I was married, I should insist on Mrs. Grimshaw finding that boot-jack—in short, I should tell her, that if she didn't, I should go to bed in my boots! Ah! (*sighs*) what right has a chemist and druggist's shopman to think of matrimony?—and yet I do think of it, especially when I'm making up pills and penn'orths of salts for the poor people; and I suppose that's why I'm always making such dreadful blunders! I can't help it—my mind is always carrying me back to last. Friday three weeks, when I was induced to go to Cremorne to see a man go up in a balloon on a donkey. I did go,—there was the balloon—there was the man—there was the donkey,—some people said there were two donkeys, but I only saw one;—away they went; and as I stood watching the intrepid aeronauts for a considerable period after they were out of sight, it suddenly came on to rain in torrents, and I heard a female voice at my elbow exclaim in the most touching accents—"What a fool I was to put on my new bonnet!" I turned and beheld a sky-blue creature in a sweet young bonnet—I mean, a sweet young creature in a sky-blue bonnet. I instantly offered her half my umbrella—she thanked me, and took it all. I offered to escort her home; before we got half way, we were such good friends that we were actually calling each other by our christian names—Peter and Fanny,—*she* was Fanny. At length we arrived at her place of abode, which, to my unspeakable delight, I found to be exactly opposite *my* place of abode; there was only this one trifling drawback about it, that she occupies the front parlour, and I live in the two-pair back, which may perhaps account for my never being able to see her as I look out at my window,—nevertheless, I know that she is near me—that the same butcher probably supplies us both—that the same policeman certainly watches over us both—and I am happy! That being the case, I'll go to bed. Luckily I always sleep like a top here—everything is so remarkably quiet! I never hear even so much as a mouse stirring! (*goes towards bed—a KNOCKING heard without, R. 2 E.*) Holloa! who can that be? (*KNOCKING repeated louder*) I repeat, who can that be?—it can't be the hot rolls for breakfast at this time of night! (*KNOCKING again louder*) Well, as I can't *imagine* who it is, suppose I *see* who it is! (*goes to door R.H., and half opens it*) May I venture to inquire—(*the door is pushed violently open, nearly upsetting GRIMSHAW, and FANNY SPARKS hurries in R.D. 2 E.*) A female!

FAN. (*suddenly stopping, and turning towards him*) Hush! Shut the door!—quick!

GRIM. (*seeing her*) Eh? no—yes—'tis she—Fanny!

FAN. That'll do—shut the door, I say! (GRIMSHAW *goes and closes door R.H., then turns and watches FANNY, who goes to door R.C., opens it, and looks in*) A closet!—all right! (*shuts door—then goes to door L.C., opens it, and looks in*) Another closet!—all right again! (*shuts door, then goes to door L.H.*) What's this? a door, carefully and securely nailed up!—all light again! (*crossing rapidly to GRIMSHAW, who has been watching her movements in silent astonishment*) Now! (*grasping GRIMSHAW'S arm, find leading him suddenly forward*) Peter Thingummy! I don't know your other name—

GRIM. (R.) Fanny Thingumbob!—that's all I know of your's.

FAN. (L.) You are doubtless surprised—I might say *astounded*—to see me here—umph! such a proceeding on my part might very naturally make your hair stand on end! it doesn't—but I say it *might*—now, speak—be candid, and I'll listen to you with the patience of a lamb.

GRIM. Well, then, I really must be allowed to observe that—

FAN. I perfectly agree with you; listen to *me*, as patiently as I've listened to *you*. I watched your landlady out of the house—she left the street door ajar—I slipped in—and here I am!—of course I have a motive—a powerful motive!

GRIM. (*insinuatingly*) The pleasure of renewing our acquaintance?

FAN. (*sharply*) No such thing, Peter!—I don't know your other name.

GRIM. Grimshaw! I was christened Peter after my aunt Sarah.

FAN. I have a favour, a most particular favour, to ask of you.

GRIM. What is it, Fanny?—I don't know your other name.

FAN. Sparks! I was christened Fanny after my uncle Benjamin. The favour I have to ask of you is a mere trifle—will you grant it?

GRIM. If I can, I will.

FAN. Sir! (*offended.*)

GRIM. Very well, then, I will, whether I can or not.

FAN. A thousand thanks! Are these comfortable lodgings of yours—quiet, and all that sort of thing?

GRIM. Remarkably quiet, and particularly all that sort of thing!

FAN. That's enough! (*grasping GRIMSHAW'S arm again, and in an under tone to him*) I wish to occupy them till to-morrow morning.

GRIM. You call that asking a favour of me ? I call it *doing me* a favour! The longer the better, my adorable Fanny!

FAN. (*waving him off*) Peter, as you are evidently in the dark, allow me to enlighten you! When we first met under your umbrella, Peter, you impressed me with the notion that you were a very good-natured sort of creature, Peter; consequently, Peter, I felt the less hesitation in asking this favour of you—am I to occupy your lodgings till to-morrow morning, or am I not ?—that's the question, Peter ; do you consent, or do you not, Peter ?

GRIM. Of course I do—I jump at it! Oblige me by keeping your eye on me while I jump at it. (*about to make a vigorous spring*)

FAN. (*stopping him*) That'll do—now go!

GRIM. Go?

FAN. Go !

GRIM. Where?

FAN. That's your affair; I merely repeat, Go! for of course, if I stop here, you can't.

GRIM. Pooh, pooh! a joke's a joke. I think you must admit that when a young woman not only takes possession of a young man's lodging, but turns that young man out of that young man's lodging, the incident is rather a strong one.

FAN. Not at all—surely you can take a bed at a friend's for one night ?

GRIM. I beg you pardon—I've only one friend in all London, and he's at Birmingham.

FAN. So much the better, for you can make use of his lodgings.

GRIM. No, I can't—he's taken his lodgings with him—I mean, the key of his lodgings.

FAN. Then go to an hotel—or, even supposing you have to walk about the streets for a few hours, you'll be more than repaid by the knowledge that you are obliging *me*. (*in an insinuating tone and manner.*)

GRIM. True ! I never thought of that! What could I have been thinking about that I should never have thought of that? Miss Fanny, as you very properly observed just now, I *am* a good-natured creature—in short, a good-natureder creature doesn't exist; but I am not a pump—I am several degrees removed from a pump; therefore, if you still contemplate domesticating yourself in my apartment for the night, you must take me as one of the fixtures.

FAN. (*imploringly*) Peter!

GRIM. It's no sort of use trying it on with " Peter," (*imitating*) because " Peter " won't do, and what's more, Peter won't be done!

FAN. Cruel, barbarous man! (*sobbing.*)

GRIM. Now don't—I'm not cruel—I'm not barbarous!

FAN. I see how it is—you want me to go down on my knees to you; very well, I will. (*about to kneel.*)

GRIM. No, don't! (*preventing her.*)

FAN. (*struggling*) Yes, I will!

GRIM. Don't be absurd! (*suddenly and violently*) But, goodness gracious, if you'd only tell me what you want my apartment for!

FAN. I will—you shall know my secret—another time—there—now do go! (*offering him his coat.*)

GRIM. Well, (*aside, as he takes off his dressing-gown*) this is pleasant—turned out of my own apartments at nine o'clock at night—I might say a quarter past nine! Just like me—in short, it's me all over! (*putting on coat, then again, suddenly and violently, to FANNY*) One moment—you'll pledge me your word of honour as a gentleman, that you don't require my domicile for the purpose of getting-up a revolution,!

FANNY. Pshaw! (*offering him his hat*)

GRIM. (*taking if*) I'm going! (*stops*) By the bye, you'll particularly oblige me by not indulging either in pipes or cigars—ten-a-shiffing cubas especially, (*going—stops*) Might I venture to suggest one fond embrace, before we part? (*FANNY thakes her head*) Then when I come back—let it be when I come back, or I won't go at all.

FANNY. Very well. (*pushing him towards door, B.H.*)

GRIM. (*stopping*) You'll be kind enough, to take in the milk in the morning, and a penn'orth of watercresses, and—that'll do, now I'm off! (*stopping*) By the bye, if you should happen to require any refreshment, you'll find the remains of a penny loaf and a jar of pickles in that closet. (*pointing to door, B.C.*) Now I really *am* going, (*aside*) but not for long—no, no, Miss Fanny, it won't be long before I drop down upon you again like a thunderbolt! (*exit at door, B.H., FANNY hurrying him out—PETER pops his head in again.*) If you require the warming-pan, you'll find it under the bed. (*disappears. FANNY watches him, then closes the door and locks it*)

FAN. He's gone at last—Ha, ha! poor Peter, he's a dear, kind, obliging little fellow, that he is!—but now to work, (*looking about her*) Let me see—this must be the closet that Emily means. (*opens closet door, L.C., and hastily removes great-coat, cloak, &c., which are hanging up at the back, flinging them on the stage*) Ah, yes—here is the sliding panel, sure enough, (*pushes it aside, then in a loud whisper*) Emily—Emily!

EMILY. (*without*) Yes!

FAN. The coast is quite clear, you may venture.

Enter EMILY through open panel—comes on stage through door of closet, and shuts it after her.

EMILY. (*looking about her*) Is he gone?

FAN. Yes; but first let me replace these things, to prevent the discovery of this secret communication between the two rooms. (*FANNY and EMILY together hang the great-coat, &c. up again—they then come forward without closing the door after them*) So far, so well—and now, my dear Emily, thanks to my impudence and Mr. Grimshaw's good nature, you are safe from pursuit for some hours at least; but tell me, are you quite sure it was your uncle, Mr. Towzer, that you saw?

EMILY. Certain! there's no mistaking uncle Towzer! I saw him leaning up against the lamp-post on the other side of the street, with his eyes fixed on this second floor, as I sat down to breakfast this morning—he was there again when I sat down to dinner, and I'll be bound he's there now!

FAN. Then, depend upon it, there's mischief brewing—these Sheriffs' officers have such capital noses when they're once on the right scent—and yet, now I think of it, that room (*pointing towards back at L.C.*) you now occupy was formerly Mr. Bradshaw's, was it not?

EMILY. Yes.

FAN. Then it may *be* Mr. Bradshaw that Towzer's waiting for after all.

EMILY. Perhaps it is, for when my dear Bradshaw ran away with me three days ago, he gave the room up to me, and went to lodge in the next street, telling me to be sure and lie snug—not even to show myself at the window, till he had scraped money enough to buy our marriage license.

FAN. Which injunction you luckily disobeyed, or I should not have seen you from my front parlour, and then I shouldn't have known how cruel uncle Towzer insisted on your marrying his son John—a Corporal Major in the Blues, six feet four in his stockings—how you had already given your heart to a certain Mr. Bradshaw, and had run away with him as a preparatory step towards giving him your hand—in short, I shouldn't have been here to get you out of a scrape, which you must certainly and most unquestionably have got yourself into! Now, let's see how matters stand!—you love Bradshaw—Bradshaw loves you—uncle Towzer objects to Bradshaw—at least, I presume uncle Towzer objects to Bradshaw.

EMILY. Yes, though he has never even seen him.

FAN. Then *why* does uncle Towzer object to Bradshaw?

EMILY. I strongly suspect it's because he doesn't choose to give up the three hundred pounds he has of mine!

FAN. Very well!—where did I leave off? I know—uncle Towzer objects to Bradshaw, consequently Bradshaw runs away with you—Towzer discovers your hiding-place, at least you fancy so—you beckon to me to come to you,—I run across the street—hear your story—see Grimshaw enter this room—recog-

nize him in a moment—follow him the next—prevail on the poor little fellow to find a night's lodging elsewhere—and now, thanks to that sliding panel which you so accidentally and so fortunately discovered, if uncle Towzer makes his appearance in that room, you'll slip into this; if he comes into this room, you'll slip into that; in short, you'll give him the slip either way.

EMILY. Yes, capital! and in the meantime, my dear good aunt, who has always fought poor Bradshaw's battles with her good-for-nothing old wretch of a husband, has promised to send me word in case anything of importance occurs, (*listening, and suddenly*) Hark!

FAN. There's no danger, I've locked the door.

EMILY. I'm sure I heard a noise.

FAN. Pshaw! what of that? I've examined the room thoroughly; that (*pointing to closet door R.H. flat*) is a mere closet, with shelves; and that door, (*pointing to door L.H.*) which otherwise might have proved an awkward affair for us, is, luckily, firmly and securely nailed up.

Here the door L.H. suddenly opens with a loud crash, and BAGSHAW, with a cigar in his mouth, is thrown forward into the room.

FAN.

&

EMILY.

} Ah !(*screaming, and running to R. corner.*)

BAG. (*seeing them—aside*) Women?—the devil! (*aloud*) Hush! don't be alarmed, ladies, I beg; and above all, don't scream, I implore!

EMILY. But who are you, Sir ? and what do you want, Sir ?

FAN. Yes, Sir, what do you want, Sir ? and who are you, Sir?

BAG. One at a time, ladies, if you love me!

FAN. & EMILY. Sir!

BAG. My name is Bagshaw—John Bagshaw, a medical student, at your service. I live in the adjoining apartment; and finding one room not enough, I naturally concluded that door led to another;—the door wasn't disposed to yield—I was determined not to give way, and you—know the rest.'

FAN. Yes, Sir—and now that you find that this apartment is occupied, of course you'll return to yours immediately!

BAG. And leave two such charming neighbours ? oh dear, no! you don't know John Bagshaw!—the fact is, I have a favour to ask of you, which, from its trifling nature, I venture to consider as already granted.

FAN. What is it, Sir?

BAG. Simply that you will allow me to occupy your apartment till to-morrow morning, that's all!

FAN. With *us*?

BAG. Of course! Pray don't think of turning out on my account,—besides, I'm easily satisfied—I can sleep anywhere, and I never snore !

FAN. (*after a pause of speechless astonishment*) Never heard such a thing in all my life ! Leave the room this moment, fellow, or well turn you out !

EMILY. Yes, we'll turn you out !

BAG. Then, I must appeal to your sympathies, ladies. Were you ever in danger of being arrested for your tailor's bill ? I am! Eight pounds five—and I've only twelve pounds ten in my pocket.

FAN. Then why don't you pay it ?

BAG. Because, with that twelve pounds ten I've got to buy a gold watch and chain for the future Mrs. Bagshaw, Miss Amelia Jones—perhaps you know her—a sweet little creature, keeps a little tobacconist's shop, a little way up Little Windmill Street.

FAN. Then why not change your lodgings ?

BAG. I do nothing else but change my lodgings! I've changed them seventeen times already in the last six weeks; but the scoundrel sticks to me like my shadow!

FAN. Who?

BAG. The Sheriffs' officer ! I saw him just now leaning up against a lamp-post on the opposite side of the street, with his eyes fixed on the second floor. (*crosses to L.*)

FAN. & EMILY. Towzer!

FAN. (*aside to EMILY*) Then he's not looking for you or Mr. Bradshaw either, after all. (*aloud to BAGSHAW*) We're sorry for you, young man , but at any rate you can't be arrested to-night!

BAG. Ah, you don't know Towzer!

EMILY. Don't we, though! (*stops on a sign from FANNY*)

BAG. If he gets into the house before I'm out of it, he's just the sort of fellow to go to sleep on the rug outside my door, and pounce upon me the first thing in the morning.

FAN. Nevertheless, you must return to your own room again, Sir.

BAG. No, anything rather than that. I'll get under the table—hide in a closet—Ah! (*running to closet, L.C.*) Here's the very thing. Holloa! (*moving the great-coat, &c. aside*) You've got another room here, why didn't you mention it before? I'm very much obliged to you! (*goes in through panel*)

FAN. No come back, sir !

BAG. (*putting in his head again between the cloak and the great-coat*) I'm very much obliged to you ! (*disappears*)

FAN. Was there ever such a cool, impudent fellow as this Bagshaw ! (*suddenly*) Oh ! Emily, such a capital idea ! he knows nothing of the sliding panel, so I'll just shut him in (*goes into closet, and quietly shuts the panel—runs out again*) there—and now, if uncle Towzer *has* come to look for you—he'll go into that room—find Mr. Bagshaw—arrest him—take him off—and so we shall get rid of both our tormentors at once. (a KNOCKING *heard at door*, R.H.) Who can this be ? (KNOCKING *repeated, and the door shaken*) Who's there ?

GRIM. (*without*) It's me—Grimshaw—open the door ! (*shaking it again*)

EMILY. (*alarmed*) Don't do any such thing—what will become of me !

FAN. Run into that room (*pointing* L.H.) for a minute—I'll soon get rid of Mr. Grimshaw—in—in !

EMILY *runs into room*, L.H., *closing the door after her*.

FAN. (*at door*, R.H.) Now, what is it you want ?

GRIM. (*without*) I've left something of the utmost importance behind me.

FAN. What is it ?

GRIM. I don't know—yes, I do—it's my purse. I've only got a fourpenny piece in my pocket, and do what I will, I can't get a bed at any hotel, including the chambermaid, for that !

FAN. You'll not stop long ?

GRIM. Not a moment—so open the door—make haste—here's somebody coming !

FANNY *opens* R.H.D., and GRIMSHAW *runs in*.

FAN. (*looking out through door*) I don't hear any one.

GRIM. Well, to confess the truth, I should rather be surprised if you did ! the fact is, it was only an ingenious device of mine to induce you to open the door.

FAN. For shame, Sir, to have recourse to an unworthy artifice to gain admission into my apartment !

GRIM. Your apartment ?—come, I like that ! (*suddenly*) Holloa ! you've been smoking.

FAN. Pshaw ! leave me, I beg—I implore ! consider my reputation !

GRIM. What's your reputation compared to mine ?—if you had only seen the look my old landlady gave me just now as I came in—she's not what you'd call a particularly handsome woman at any time, but at that moment she was repulsive in the highest degree ; and then, the fiendish grin she put on when she said—" I thought I heard a female voice in your room, Sir ;"—and then she gave me this letter. (*shewing letter*.)

FAN. A letter for *you* ?

GRIM. There's no address; but the landlady said it was to be delivered immediately to the gentleman on the second floor; and as I have every reason to believe that I am the only gentleman on the second floor——

FAN. Exactly. Then why don't you read it? (GRIMSHAW opens letter) What's the signature ?

GRIM. (*reading*) " Soosan Towzer."

FAN. (*aside*) Emily's aunt!—the letter was intended for Mr. Bradshaw, and she didn't know that he had left the house, (*aloud*) Well, go on.

GRIM. Why should I ? I know nothing about Soosan Towzer—I never even heard of Soosan Towzer !

FAN. (*impatiently*) I insist upon knowing what's in that letter, Sir !

GRIM. (*aside*) She's jealous, I declare! (*reading*) " Sir, I am sorry to say that my husband's nose "—no, no—"I am sorry to say that my husband knows everything"—n-o-s-e, for knows—then all I can say is, that Soosan's husband is a devilish clever fellow!"

FAN. (*impatiently*) Go on.

GRIM. (*reading*) " He has found-out where you live, so mind your"—what's this?—"mind your peas and"—oh! your p's and q's—p-e-a-s, p's—and k-e-w-s, q's.

FAN. This is what I dreaded! (*walking about.*)

GRIM. (*following her*) Now, Fanny, don't take on so—I don't know this Soosan—I give you my honour I never took the slightest interest in any Soosan in all my life, except Black-eyed Soosan at the Surrey ! Well, since you won't believe me, this is no place for me ! (*with dignity, and moving towards the door.*)

FAN. Stay ! (*aside*) Yes, he had better stop—we may need his protection, (*aloud*) You needn't go, Peter! (*coaxingly*) You wouldn't leave your Fanny ?

GRIM. (*aside*) Holloa! This sudden change means something,—as Soosan would say, I must mind my " peas and kews." (*aloud*) Of course, where Fanny is there would Peter be likewise.

FAN. (*aside*) Emily must be made acquainted with her aunt's message—but how ? I have it! I can reach that room by means of the corridor. (*going towards door R.H.*)

GRIM. Holloa, halloa ! it's you that are leaving your Peter!

FAN. Only for a minute, (*hastens out at door, R.H., shutting it after her*)

GRIM. She says, only for a minute; then I'll take care nobody else shall come in. (*locks door*) That's a very remarkable young woman—she's something out of the common, and that's why I like her; but I confess I should like to know why she was so excessively anxious to turn me out of my apart-

ment. (*suddenly*) Good gracious! she may have had somebody else here! a favoured lover, perhaps, that she couldn't receive at home—that 'd account for the powerful smell of tobacco! How shall I find out? I have it—perhaps she'll talk in her sleep—for I *hope* she will go to sleep—I can't keep awake all night. By the bye, where am I to sleep? I know—a couple of chairs will do very well—one for my head, and the other for *my* feet; but then, what's to become of my—that won't do at all—no, I'll put, the two chairs together for my—no, that won't do either, for what shall I do with my head and my feet?—never mind, I'll manage it somehow. I declare I feel quite chilly—I've half a mind to light the fire, we shall be all the more comfortable—I *will* light the fire. (*opens door of closet, R.H.F., and goes in.*)

*Enter BAGSHAW, hurriedly, through panel at back of closet, L.C.
—comes on stage through door)*

BAG. Towzer's got into the house—I saw him distinctly through the keyhole, crossing the passage towards the door of that room! Egad! it was lucky I happened to see my charming neighbours shut that sliding panel upon me as I left them, or I should have been nabbed to a certainty; and now I must beg and entreat them not to betray me. Where the deuce are they? they can't surely have gone to bed—I'll just take a peep. (*advances on tip-toe towards bed—at the same moment, GRIMSHAW comes out of closet, R.C., with a bundle of wood, and shovelful of coals—they meet face to face.*)

GRIM. (*after a moment's pause, puts bundle of wood and shovel of coals on table then takes BAGSHAW by the arm and brings him down*) Now, Sir! (*in a violent tone*)

BAG. Hush!

GRIM. I won't hush! Who are you, Sir? what do you want here, Sir? and how did you get here, Sir—in my apartment, Sir?

BAG. Your apartment? no, no—that won't do—I know better.

GRIM. Oh, you know better, do you? ha, ha! (*with a forced laugh*) You're a funny fellow, you are! I don't know whether you're aware of it, but you're an exceedingly funny fellow!

BAG. You're very kind, I'm sure! (*trying to take GRIMSHAW'S hand, who snatches it away*) A relation of the ladies, I presume?

GRIM. The lady's! (*aside*) He means Fanny! I'll frighten him. (*aloud*) Yes, Sir, I'm her big brother!

BAG. So much the better—then of course you're in the secret?

GRIM. (*aside*) I rather suspect I am—Oh, faithless Fanny (*aloud and pointedly*) Do you smoke, Sir?

BAG. Yes—allow me to offer you a cigar ! (*presenting case*)

GRIM. Pooh, pooh! (*knocking cigar case away.*)

BAG. Then of course you know all about it, eh ? (*poking him in the side.*)

GRIM. It! what?

BAG. Why, about me and Towzer!

GRIM. Towzer? what! Soosan's husband?

BAG. Hush! he's here—in the house—you'll not betray me ?

GRIM. Not I! Oh, you good-for-nothing Don Juan you! By the bye, between you and me, a few lessons in the rudiments of English Grammar wouldn't do Soosan any harm! (*a loud KNOCK at door R.H.*)

BAG. Hush ! What's that ?

TOW. (*without*) Open the door !

BAG. Towzer's voice! (*to Grim.*) Where shall I go ? put me somewhere—Ah! (*rushes into closet L.C., and closes door after him*)

GRIM. He's shut himself up in the closet—he'll be suffocated to a certainty.

TOW. (*banging at R.H.D., and in a loud voice*) Open the door, I say, or I'll split it into ten thousand pieces !

GRIM. (*shouting*) Don't be absurd—call again to morrow! I've just gone out!

TOW. (*without, and thumping again at door*) Open the door, I say!

GRIM. (*shouting*) I'm coming! I'd better let Towzer in—I'll soon get rid of him! (*opens door R.H.*)

Enter TOWZER, who immediately seizes GRIMSHAW by the collar, and brings him forward.

TOW. Now, sir, your name, if you please!

GRIM. Peter.

TOW. Pshaw! / GRIM. No, not Shaw—Grimshaw!

TOW. That's near it, but not quite the thing! Suppose we say Bradshaw, eh ?

GRIM. We'll, say Bradshaw, or Clapshaw, or Scrimshaw, if you prefer it; but, nevertheless, it's *Grimshaw!*

TOW. I know better, and so do you—my name's Towzer—you hear, Sir ? Towzer—and now, Sir!

GRIM. Towzer and Nowzer ? TOW. Pshaw! where is she ?

GRIM. She! (*aside*) I see it all—he's come after Mrs. Towzer, and takes me for my facetious young friend there, in the closet. Ha, ha, ha!

TOW. I repeat, where is she ?

GRIM. Soosan

TOW. No, my niece.

GRIM. What niece?

TOW. I've only one—Emily.

GRIM. Don't know her.

TOW. She's here! you brought her here—you've got her here—but you shan't keep her here!

GRIM. Wait a minute—let's understand each other; perhaps when you say Emily, you mean Fanny./ TOW. No, if I meant Fanny, I shouldn't say Emily. / GRIM. Well, she *said* her name was Fanny. TOW. Likely enough—where is she?—produce her!

GRIM. I can't—she's gone—she's this moment stepped out.

TOW. Gone! (*pointing to table and showing FANNY'S bonnet*) Stepped out without her bonnet, eh? Now what d'ye say?

GRIM. Really, you put me in such a dreadful state of confusion! (*pulling his handkerchief out, drops SUSAN'S letter.*)

TOW. Ah! what's this? (*picking up letter*) A letter from Mrs. Towzer! (*reads*) "Sir, my husband knows everything—he has found out where you live"—so, she's in the conspiracy against me too, is she? but she always took your part, Bradshaw.

GRIM. (*shouting*) Grimshaw! (*suddenly*) I tell you what, Towzer, you're a remarkably pleasant creature; but strange to say, I've had quite enough of you. (*takes BAGSHAW'S hat off drawers, L.C., and about to go.*)

TOW. No, no. (*snatches hat out of GRIMSHAW'S hand!*)

GRIM. Holloa, give me my hat!

TOW. (*looking into hat*) Certainly—there it is, *Bradshaw*.

GRIM. (*shouting again*) Grimshaw!

TOW. Of course, you know best, and yet people generally write their own names in their own hats.

GRIM. I never do write my name in my hat, Sir—I merely put the initial, Sir—G. for Grimshaw! (*looking into hat*) Holloa, this is a B!

TOW. Yes, B. for Bradshaw!

GRIM. Pooh, pooh! it's a mistake—this is not my hat—in the first place it doesn't fit me; (*putting it on, it is much too large for him*) besides, if it was my hat, I shouldn't go and serve it in this sort of way. (*knocks the crown out with a blow of his fist*)

TOW. It won't do, Bradshaw.

GRIM. (*shouting*) Grimshaw! (*aside*) My mind misgives me! Fanny—I mean Emily—no—yes—I don't know what I mean—however, her anxiety to get me out of the house—her motion when I read Soosan's letter—Bradshaw's hat—the wing's clear!—I've been imposed upon!—(*seizing TOWSER by the arm*) Towzer, you came here for Grimshaw—I mean Bradshaw!—you shall have your Bradshaw. I mean Grimshaw—no, *your* Bradshaw. Just keep your eye on me (*runs to closet,*

¹⁶ GRIMSHAW, BAGSHAW, AND BRADSHAW.

L.C. *(and throws door open)* Bradshaw, you're wanted!
I'm sorry for you, Bradshaw, but—*looking in*) Holloa! he's gone.

TOW. *(laughing satirically)* Is he ? what a pity ! Ha, ha, ha!

GRIM. *(seriously)* This is no laughing matter, Towzer; I saw him distinctly go into that closet—yes, Towzer, distinctly into that closet did I see him go, Towzer. Now, as he can only have got out of that closet through the keyhole, I repeat that this is no laughing matter !

TOW. Bradshaw, as I said before, it won't do. Listen—my son John, Corporal-Major in the Blues, six foot four in his stockings, is down stairs. I give you five minutes to restore my niece Emily to my arms—if you don't, my son John, six foot four in his stockings, runs you through the body. Au revoir!

GRIM. Well, but——

TOW. Au revoir! I say, remember, five minutes, or else—sword through your body !

GRIM. But, Towzer, Towzer! no damned nonsense, Towzer!

(TOWZER hurries out at door R.H., GRIMSHAW following him, and trying to stop him.)

Door L.H. opens and FANNY appears, followed by EMILY—they enter cautiously.

FAN. *(as she enters)* They're gone !

EMILY. If I could only let Bradshaw know what has happened !—here's my letter ; but who's to take it ?

FAN. I will.

EMILY. No, no ; I wouldn't be left for the world.

FAN. Then here's the man to do it. *(seeing BAGSHAW, who puts his head in at door L.C.)* / BAG. The coast seems clear.

FAN. Mr. Bagshaw ! *(BAGSHAW pops his head back again)* Mr. Bagshaw, I say—you needn't be afraid—there's no danger.

BAG. *(putting his head in again)* You're quite sure ?

FAN. *(impatiently)* Yes, yes!

BAGSHAW *enters, comes down C.*

—Now Mr. Bagshaw, one good turn deserves another. Thanks to us, you have escaped from the clutches of Mr. Towzer,—prove your gratitude by taking this letter to its address immediately, *(gives him EMILY'S letter)* it's only in the next street.

BAG. Of course I will—you're sure Towzer's gone ?

FAN. Yes ; besides, he couldn't recognize you in the dark.

BAG. That's very true, especially as he has never seen me. *(looks at letter)* What's this ?—Bradshaw !—not Bob Bradshaw?

EMILY. Yes.

BAG. Commercial traveller ?

EMILY. Yes.

BAG. In the fancy chip and bonnet line ?

EMILY. Yes—do you know him ?

BAG. Know him ? we're inseparable ! I borrowed thirteen and sixpence of him, five years ago, and I have never seen him since. I'll go to him this moment. (*going*) By the bye, the twelve pounds ten I spoke of just now—here they are. (*pulling out purse*) Now if I should run against Towzer, I may be obliged to pay him; Amelia Jones will then be done out of her watch and chain, so I'll leave 'em behind me.

FAN. Very well; here, put the purse in this drawer. (*opens drawer, and BAGSHAW puts purse in it*)

BAG. Now I'm off! No message, I suppose—merely deliver the letter ? All right! (*takes his mutilated hat off table and puts it on*) Halloo! (*takes hat off*) this can't be my hat—it must be your big brother's! I wouldn't own such a thing. (*puts on Grimshaw's hat, which is much too small for him, and goes towards door, R.H.*)

FAN. No, not that way—you can slip out by the back staircase, and I'll close the door after you.

EMILY, FANNY, and BAGSHAW go out at door L.H.

Enter GRIMSHAW at door R.H.

GRIM. Towzer sticks to it—he called me Bradshaw no less than seventeen times before he got to the street door; and he's in earnest too about his son John, for I looked through the keyhole, and saw him—six feet-four in his stockings ? he's ten feet if he's an inch! The five minutes are nearly gone, so I think the best thing I can do is to go before they're quite gone. I will—(*taking BAGSHAW'S hat off table and putting it on*) Oh! this is too bad ! somebody has taken my new hat, and left this mutilated tile. I can't go out with such a thing as this on my head. I can't have a crowd of dirty little boys running after me and crying—" What a shocking bad hat!" I have it—I'll shut the door and barricade myself in.

Enter EMILY, he crosses behind to R.H, turns and sees EMILY. — Good gracious ! here's somebody else—ha, ha, ha! (*laugh-ing hysterically*) It's done nothing but rain men and women in my second floor back ! I shall have to walk about with my umbrella up. (*to EMILY*) Who are you ?—what do you want here?—how did you get here ? not by the door—I should have seen you. If you came down the chimney, you'd be black; who are you, I say ?

EMILY. Hush, I entreat!—hark! a step on the stairs. (*runs in at closet, R.C.*)

GRIM. Now she's gone and shut herself up among the pickles ! (*turns and finds himself face to face with TOWZER, who has entered at door, R.H.*) Here's another. Ha, ha, ha,'

TOW. Here I am again !

GRIM. I see you are, Towzer; but where's the Corporal. Major ? why didn't you bring young six foot-four with you ? the more the merrier—ha, ha! (*seizing TOWZER suddenly*) Towzer, I shall do you a serious mischief—yes, Towzer, in spite of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, I feel I shall do you a mischief—Towzer, will you go ?

TOW. No, Bradshaw!

GRIM. He's at it again. (*shouting*) *Grimshaw !*

TOW. Not without. Emily.

GRIM. (*shouting*) But I tell you that—(*stopping—then aside*) Good gracious! perhaps that's Emily among the pickles! of course it must be. (*here FANNY, who has entered cautiously at door, L.H., crosses behind towards door, R.C., unperceived, and listens.*)

GRIM. Towzer, you shall have your Emily.

FAN. (*aside*) Ah!

GRIM. I repeat, Towzer, you shall have your Emily. (*about to go towards door of closet, R.C., meets FANNY face to face*) Here's another—ha, ha, ha! /FAN. (*taking his arm*) Here I am, dear ! / GRIM. (*aside*) She calls me dear !

FAN. (*to TOWZER, with pretended surprise*) A stranger ! I beg your pardon, Sir; I thought my husband was alone.

GRIM. Husband? pooh, pooh!

FAN. (*aside, and pinching, him*) Hush ! back me in all I say, (*aloud and taking GRIMSHAW'S arm*) I'm rather late, dear; but you won't be angry with your poor little Amelia?

GRIM. Amelia ! (FAN. *pinches him*) Affairs are getting more complicated than ever; if this goes on much longer, I shan't know my head from my tail; but never mind, I rather like this—(*looks at FANNY—then suddenly kisses her.*) Say no more—I forgive you—there! (*hisses her*) I decidedly like this—I forgive you again. (*about to kiss her again*)

TOW. (*looking at them suspiciously*) Um! rather odd you didn't tell me you were married, eh! Bradshaw?

FAN. (*with pretended surprise*) Bradshaw! what does he mean by Bradshaw, dear ?

GRIM. I don't know—he will insist upon calling me Bradshaw, though I've been telling him all along that my name is— / FAN. (*with intention*) Bagshaw!

GRIM. No. (FANNY *pinches him*) Yes, of course, Bagshaw!

FAN. John Bagshaw, medical student. TOW. Indeed! Then, Mr. John Bagshaw, I beg to say that I've been running after you for the last eighteen months.

GRIM. You don't say so ! Well, as you must be rather tired by this time, perhaps you'd like to take a chair.

TOW. No, thank you—I'd rather take you. (*laying his hand on GRIMSHAW'S shoulder, and producing writ.*)

GRIM. Take me?

TOW. Yes, at the suit of Stephen Stitch, tailor, for eight pounds ten. So come along, Bagshaw!

GRIM. The thing's clear! the entire human race is combined in an atrocious conspiracy against me!

FAN. My dear Johnny! (*pretends to cry.*)

GRIM. Pooh, I'm not your Johnny!

TOW. There, you've set your wife crying—for shame, Bagshaw!

GRIM. She's not my wife—I'm not Bagshaw !

TOW. Pooh, pooh I just now you said you were; come, pay the money, or come along with me.

FAN. Yes, Johnny, pay the man the money, and let the man go.

Here EMILY opens closet door at R.C., shutting it after her—crosses cautiously out, and enters door L.C.—shuts it. —It's very true you meant to buy your Amelia a gold watch and chain, but your Amelia can do without it. So, as I said before, pay the man his money. Let me see—I think you left your purse in this table-drawer. (opens drawer, and takes out BAGSHAW'S purse) I thought so—here it is—pay the money! (gives purse.)

GRIM. Oh, of course! I'll pay the money with the greatest pleasure in the world. (*aside*) Especially as it isn't mine, (*to TOWSER*) How much ?

TOW. Eight pounds five.

GRIM. (*giving TOWZER money*) There—and now go !

TOW. Not without Emily—no, no, Bradshaw!

GRIM. Now, I'm Bradshaw again! You get eight pound ten out of me as Bagshaw, and now you come down upon me for Emily as Bradshaw! Well, you shall have your Emily.

FAN. (*anxiously*) No, no! (*trys to stop him.*)

GRIM. It's no use ! why not give the man his Emily, and let the man go ? (*throws open door of closet R. C., and in a loud voice*) Emily, come forth! My heart bleeds for you, Emily, but—(*looking into closet*) She's not there ! (*takes down a large jar of pickles, and looking in*) No, she's not here! (*staggering*) The house is haunted! I'm bewitched! (*in a pathetic tone, to TOWZER*) Towzer, oblige me by calling in your son John, and desire the Corporal-Major, as a particular favour, to run his sword several times through my body; for I feel—I feel—oh lud! (*drops suddenly into TOWZER arms.*)

Re-enter BAGSHAW, hastily at door, L.H.

BAG. (*out of breath*) Wheugh! here I am again! it's all right! I've delivered the letter, and here's Bradshaw's answer,

which he begged me to deliver immediately—perhaps you'll do that for me, for I can't, it's addressed to Towzer.

TOW. (*overhearing*) A letter for me ? (*letting GRIMSHAW drop, and comes down*)

BAG. Towzer? the devil! (*runs up, jumps onto led, drawing the curtains.*)

TOW. (*takes letter from FANNY, and reads*) " Sir—let me call Emily mine, and her three hundred pounds are yours." (*rushes up to GRIMSHAW, and drags him down*) Noble, liberal man! allow me to embrace you! (*embraces him.*)

GRIM. (*helplessly*) I haven't the most distant idea what you're talking about; but never mind, go it—I'm resigned to my fate ! Does anybody else want to embrace me?

TOW. Bradshaw, you've conquered! She's yours, Bradshaw—Emily's yours!

EMILY. (*running out from door, L.C.*) Oh, thanks, thanks, my dear uncle!

GRIM. As I said before, I'm resigned to my fate! (*embracing EMILY.*)

EMILY. My dear uncle, *this* isn't Mr. Bradshaw !

TOW. No—then who the devil are you, Sir?

GRIM. Whoever you like, my little dear! the fact is, that I'm in such a state of confusion, that I neither know, nor care who I am ; but to the best of my belief, I'm not Bradshaw—and I think I can take upon myself to assert that I'm not Bagshaw, tho' I *have* paid his tailors bill—

BAG. (*putting his head through curtain*) You have ?

GRIM. Holloa! (*dropping again into TOWZER's arms—then suddenly rushing up to bed*) Come out of my bed, Sir! (*seizes BAGSHAW, and pulls him out of the bed, and down to the front.*)

FAN. Yes, Mr. Bagshaw, your debt is paid, and with your own money—I believe you will find the account quite correct (*returning purse.*)

BAG. Then, my poor Amelia must go without her watch and chain after all!

TOW. Your Amelia? his Amelia? (*points to GRIMSHAW.*)

FAN. No, not his Amelia, but his Fanny, if he will take her for better or worse. (*offers her hand to GRIMSHAW.*)

GRIM. Take you? of course I will—better you may be, but worse you can't—no, I mean—really, as I said before, what with Towzers, and Bradshaws, and Bagshaws, and Grimshaws, and Fanny's, and Emily's, I'm in such a state of confusion that——

FAN. That I'm afraid you will scarcely forgive me for being the cause of it. I can only plead, as my excuse, my anxiety to unite my dear Emily to the man of her heart.

TOW. But where is this man of her heart ? Where is this Bradshaw ?

GRIM. You mean Bagshaw—no, Bradshaw—no—I shall never understand how matters exactly stand! No matter, there's one interesting fact clearly established, you consent to become Mrs. Grimshaw. I don't care what becomes of anybody else—much as I love them—I don't care one straw what becomes of them ! But, as you say, where *is* this Bradshaw?

BRAD. (*who has entered during his speech, being beckoned on by BAGSHAW—and touching GRIMSHAW'S shoulder*) I'm BRADSHAW!

GRIM. Oh, here you are! (*embracing him.*) and how are you Bradshaw? I mean Bagshaw—no! it's no use ; I never shall be able to understand!

BAG. My dear Sir, I give you joy! (*to GRIMSHAW*)

GRIM. Do you? then perhaps you'll give me my hat, (*crosses to BAGSHAW*) and take your own. (*exchanges them—slaps bad hat on BAGSHAW'S head*) Come, it's quite early yet, so suppose we make a night of it—what d'ye say to a supper ? I propose that Towzer finds the supper. (*crosses to C.*)

OMNES. Agreed, agreed!

GRIM. Carried unanimously! Don't go and throw away a lot of money, Towzer; do the thing well, but not extravagantly; and all I can say is, that if you'll send in the cold fowls and the lobsters, I'll stand the pickles—that's what I call doing the thing liberally—and (*to audience*) if you will only provide a liberal supply of approbation, there won't be a happier party sit down to supper in the Haymarket, than Grimshaw, Bagshaw, and Bradshaw!

TOWZER. EMILY. BRADSHAW. GRIMSHAW. FANNY. BAGSHAW.
R. L.

Curtain.