JOHN BUCKSTONE

A ROUGH DIAMOND

John Buckstone

A Rough Diamond

«Public Domain»

Buckstone J.

A Rough Diamond / J. Buckstone — «Public Domain»,

© Buckstone J.
© Public Domain

Содержание

ADVERTISEMENT 5
A 6
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента. 10

A Rough Diamond A Comic Drama in One Act

ADVERTISEMENT

THE two little Dramas of A ROUGH DIAMOND and GOOD FOR NOTHING, would not have been published but for the loss to the English Stage of one of its greatest ornaments, – the original representative of Margery and Nan. Whatever of goodness of heart, affection, cheerfulness, honesty, and self-sacrifice may be found in those characters, the truthfulness with which she pourtrayed such qualities may be mainly ascribed to the fact, that they existed in her own genuine and most genial nature.

It was intended by the Author to keep these with other productions unpublished, and solely for the professional use of the late Mrs. Fitzwilliam; but the affliction he has suffered in losing one so dear to him having changed this intention, and prevented him ever again appearing as Cousin Joe or Tom Dibbles, he has been induced to print the Dramas in the hope that the female characters may be found suited to young and rising talent, of which the Stage at the present time unfortunately stands so much in need.

A
ROUGH DIAMOND

SCENE. —*A Country Residence – Door* C.*, opening on a lawn with carriage way; on each side of the entrance are Statues – Door* L.H.U.E. *– An open door,* R.H.U.E.*, leading to a Shrubbery – High flower stands on each side of the Stage, containing flowers – Plain chairs, &c. &c.*

SIR WILLIAM EVERGREEN, *heard without*

SIR WILLIAM. Come in, come in – I'm delighted to see you. Harry, lead the horse to the stable.

***Enter* SIR WILLIAM *and* CAPTAIN BLENHEIM *from the back,* C.D**

SIR W. I thought it was a face I knew. I'm very glad to see you – it's more than two years since we met! Where do you come from? – where are you going to? – and how d'ye do?

BLEN. My regiment is quartered about a mile off – we arrived there but yesterday – I knew you had a country house in the neighbourhood, and I had come in search of you.

SIR W. Excellent! now I have indeed a companion, for I shall expect you to pass all your leisure with me. I thought you were abroad, as I had not heard from you so long.

BLEN. I have been stationed in Ireland.

SIR W. You're looking in excellent health, and your spirits are as buoyant as ever, I'm sure.

BLEN. I have nothing to complain of as regards my health – my spirits I can't say much for.

SIR W. What, any old creditors troublesome, or —

BLEN. No, I've nothing to fear from them.

SIR W. Some love affair – some tender attachment.

BLEN. Now you're right; I may as well be candid and tell you so.

SIR W. Jilted, or rejected, or —

BLEN. Shortly after you left me at college, I formed an attachment to a young girl that I idolized with all the enthusiasm of youth.

SIR W. Aye, aye; we generally begin that way.

BLEN. My passion was returned with equal fervor; when it became necessary that I should select my position in life. My friends suggested the army, and my inclination led me to adopt their views. Ireland soon became my destination – a constant correspondence with the object of my passion was my only solace in exile, and for months I almost daily opened a letter written by her dear hand.

SIR W. How delightful! I have often thought how charming it must be to receive an eloquent letter from a much-loved source – to have the colloquial grace of a Sévigné mingled with the fervor of a Heloise, or the moral delicacy of a Chapone. Oh, my dear fellow, I envy you!

BLEN. Have you never experienced that happiness?

SIR W. Never; – but proceed with your history, mine shall follow – you went to Ireland, and there received letters from the lady of your love.

BLEN. A long silence ensued.

SIR W. What anxious hours you must have passed.

BLEN. Till one morning my servant placed a letter on my table – the object of my passion had married during her silence.

SIR W. I guessed as much – always something ominous in a woman's silence.

BLEN. Her parents had met with misfortunes – a wealthy match presented itself – a match with a title.

SIR W. A match with a title! – ignition at once, of course.

BLEN. The temptation, added to the prayers of her friends, were too much for her. She yielded, but assured me she had done so with a broken heart – implored me to forget her – that her lot in life was cast, that the stern duties of her future existence should be fulfilled if she died in the struggle, yet confessed that I still occupied one little corner in her heart, and concluded with a beautiful quotation from Milton.

SIR W. A refined mind, an educated divinity, no doubt – one formed to adorn the rank she had gained.

BLEN. She was indeed accomplished.

SIR W. I thought so. Spoke Italian, no doubt?

BLEN. Fluently.

SIR W. And French?

BLEN. Better than a native.

SIR W. What a woman! Understood music?

BLEN. An enthusiast in the science.

SIR W. And mineralogy and archæology?

BLEN. Perfectly.

SIR W. And the steam engine?

BLEN. Yes.

SIR W. And the vestiges of creation?

BLEN. Yes, and chaos, and everything.

SIR W. What a woman! I should have adored her. And you lost this professor in petticoats?

BLEN. Irrevocably! She concealed the name and title of her husband, as she did not wish me to write in reply, as any reproach from me would but add to her wretchedness – and now you know the cause of my dejection.

SIR W. I pity you from my heart. If you have *lost* a treasure, you should see the one that I have *found*.

BLEN. *You* are married, I hear.

SIR W. Yes, I also formed an attachment to a young girl that I idolised. You have known me some years – that is to say, I was leaving college shortly after you entered, and you know how I have ever prized education – that it has been my watchword, my constant theme when I had a seat in Parliament. I don't sit now, but that's not *my* fault; but when I *did* sit, my constant agitation was education. "Educate," said I, "educate! that is the panacea for every social evil!"

BLEN. I've read your speeches.

SIR W. You should have heard them – will you hear one now?

BLEN. Don't trouble yourself.

SIR W. Well, after dinner. One day, Sir, in riding through the country, my horse stumbled, and I was thrown violently. My head encountered the edge of a stone wall; the wall being the hardest I was the only sufferer. Stunned and bleeding I was carried into a farm-house. My injuries were so severe that I was compelled to remain there for some weeks. The farmer's daughter constantly waited on me, paid me so much attention, so amused me, so anticipated my every wish – in short, made herself so necessary to my comforts, that —

BLEN. You —

SIR W. Exactly! I used to watch her every action as I reclined on my sofa. She was rude and odd, but there was a heartiness in her nature and a comeliness in her person that pleased me, that really fascinated me, till at last I began rather to love her.

BLEN. You love an uneducated country wench?

SIR W. It was silly, wasn't it? but we are not our own masters in such matters. However, don't laugh at me yet. I anticipated the pleasure of rightly directing her mind, of the happiness in possessing a subject on which to practise my favorite theory – in short, I pictured a whole life of felicity in educating the object of my affection.

BLEN. For which purpose you married her.

SIR W. I did, to the great disgust of my connexions; indeed, my uncle, Lord Plato, has never visited me since my union – has never written, or noticed me in any way.

BLEN. But you found happiness in combining the character of husband and tutor?

SIR W. I surrounded her with masters – an English master, a French master, a music master, a dancing master, a singing master, a philosophical lecturer, and a political economist.

BLEN. And what has been her progress?

SIR W. Her progress has been entirely stationary. I can do nothing with her – she seems to rejoice in her ignorance – and, though I sometimes think she has a capacity for learning, my hopes have been so often disappointed that I now give her up. She's a female Orson, Sir, though I confess I was once her Valentine.

MARGERY, ***laughs without***

– There she is.

BLEN. Very merry, at any rate.

SIR W. Oh, she's merry enough, and good-humoured enough; but, my dear Sir, with *my* prejudices, with *my* ideas of refinement, with *my* delicacy as regards conduct in society, conceive my agony in possessing a wife who is as wild as an unbroken colt, finds a nickname for everybody, and persists in being called by her Christian name of – of —

BLEN. What?

SIR W. I'm ashamed to tell you – Margery.

BLEN. Margery?

SIR W. I have tried to persuade her to change it to Matilda, or Magaretta, or Marguerite, but all in vain – she says her mother's name was Margery, her grandmother's name was Margery, that her name is Margery, and Margery she'll be to the end of the chapter.

MARGERY. (*without*) Now, come along, Jack! and you, Tom, mind how you carry my kitten.

Enter MARGERY from the back, in a fashionably-made dress, but which she wears awkwardly – She is followed by TWO SERVANTS.

MAR. Now, Jack, mind what I say – how many pigs is there in the last litter? Oh, I know – eight! Well, you may send one to my cousin Joe – I'll tell you where he lives by and by – two to my old dad, and one to Betsy Buncle, my old playfellow in Lancashire – the three black ones I shall want to have in the parlor to play with.

SIR W. Pigs in the parlor to play with? Lady Evergreen, do you not perceive a visitor?

MAR. Wait a minute – I'll speak to him presently. Do as I bid you; and you, Tom, give my kitten her lunch, and turn all the young terriers loose on the grass plot, because I like to see 'em tumble over one another – and now go.

Exit SERVANTS at back.

– Well, Sir, and how d'ye do, Sir? and (*to* BLENHEIM) how are you, and who are you?

SIR W. My dear, my dear, *do* think of your station! This is an old friend of mine – we were at college together. Captain Blenheim – Lady Evergreen.

MAR. (*dropping a country curtsey*) Hope you're well, Sir – fine weather for the hay, and nothing can look better as yet than the taters.

SIR W. Hush, hush! don't talk, my dear.

MAR. Then what did you bring him here for?

BLEN. I am delighted in being introduced to the wife of my old friend.

MAR. Well, I ain't sorry to see you, if it comes to that, if only for a bit of a change, for my Billy here seldom lets anybody come a-visiting, and when I ask him why he don't have a few friends now and then to kick up a bit of a bobbery —

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, купив полную легальную версию на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.