

**GEORGE
BAKER**

THE DUCHESS
OF DUBLIN

George Baker

The Duchess of Dublin

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George M. Baker

The Duchess of Dublin / A Farce

CHARACTERS

Dr. Adam Aconite, a Young Physician.
Frank Friskey.
Oliver Oldbuck, rich and gouty.
Silas Sharpset, a Speculator.
Dennis Doolan, a Widower.
Peter Plumpface, with a bad cough.
Annie Aconite, the Doctor's Sister.
Lucy Linden, a Milliner.
Miss Abigail Alllove, an Autograph Hunter.
Maggie Mullen, "The Duchess of Dublin."

COSTUMES

Dr. Aconite. Black suit, white necktie, light side whiskers, and light wig.
Frank. Dark coat and vest, light pants, roundabout hat.
Oldbuck. Gray wig, blue coat with brass buttons, double-breasted vest, white neckerchief, foot swathed in bandages, cane.
Sharpset. Gray suit, red cop wig, full red beard, Kossuth hat.
Dennis. Red wig, blue overall suit, rusty white hat.
Plumpface. Made up fat, very red face, dark, old-fashioned suit. Eye-glasses attached to a string, which drop from his nose when he coughs.
Annie. Neat morning dress.
Lucy. Tasty street dress and hat.
Abigail. Close-fitting black dress, hair "a la Grecian," black lace cape, broad straw hat, red nose.
Maggie. Neat dress of a kitchen girl, sleeves rolled up.

THE DUCHESS OF DUBLIN

A Farce

Scene. —*Dr. Aconite's office. Table, C., with a display of vials, one or two books, writing materials, &c. Chair, L. of table. Two chairs back. Small table, R., with chair beside it.*

Maggie discovered dusting. Her left hand is wrapped in a thick covering.

Maggie. 'Pon my sowl, it's the docthor's a jewel, that he is! Didn't I burn me wid the hot fat, that made me howl wid the pain uv it? And didn't the blissid docthor tind me loike his own sither – wid the cooling and haling salve for me fisht, and the wee sugar pills for the faver that was burnin' me up intirely? And didn't the blissid crayther, wid the bountiful heart in 'im, charge niver a cint for it, or sthop it out uv the wages uv a poor girl, as many a hathen would do, bad luck to 'em. To be sure he did; and, by that same token, it's Maggie Mullen would run the wide worlrd over for the sakes uv him. Och, but it's little docthorin' he has onyhow, and perhaps I did him a sarvice giving him the practice loike. Will, if the sick folks only knew how handy he is, there'd be little rist for the sole uv my fut answering the bill.

Enter Friskey, L.

Friskey. Hallo, Maggie! Where's the doctor?

Maggie. Sure it's at his briakfast he is. Can't you lit him have a little pace for his sowl? What wid bein' up all night, and runnin' to sick folks all day, it's little rist he finds onyhow.

Friskey. That's right, Maggie. Keep up a show of business if there is none. But I'm in the secret.

Maggie. Sacret, is it? Sure there's none.

Friskey. Ah, we know, Maggie, that our friend the doctor has yet to get his first patient.

Maggie. Indade you're wrong there, Masther Frank. Haven't I been under his charge, and don't I know the skilful arts uv him? Indade I do, and can give him the highest charachter.

Friskey. O, I forgot that, Maggie. He's made a commencement. How's your hand, Maggie?

Maggie. As comfortable as it can be wid the finest midical attention.

Friskey. That's good. Well, I'll wait for him. (*Sits at table; takes up newspaper.*)

Maggie. That's right, sir. He'll be glad to say ye's. But mind, don't interfare wid his business. Don't tak his mind off the purshuit uv patients, for it's much they're wanted, ye's can belave.

[Exit, R.]

Friskey. I do *belave* it. Now here's a man who has passed a splendid examination, received his diploma, and settled down in his native village to practise medicine, but so set are the good people that they will never patronize him until age and experience have fitted him to be their medical adviser. Stuff and nonsense! While he is growing he must starve, unless some way is found to move their stubborn will. Not a patient – no, I'm wrong – there's his free patient, Maggie, "The Duchess of Dublin," as *Lucy* and I facetiously call her. A free patient! If we could only contrive to get one of the high and mighty snobs of the village into his clutches, we'd physic him until the whole population flocked to his office. (*Knock, L.*) Come in. (*Enter Lucy Linden, L.*) Ah, Lucy, come in. How d'ye do? (*Shake hands.*)

Lucy. Where's Adam?

Friskey. The first of men is at his breakfast, replenishing his exhausted system before renewing the toil of practice.

Lucy. You're too bad, Frank. The dear fellow must not be laughed at. You know he has no practice.

Friskey. O, there you're wrong. The first patient has been found.

Lucy. You don't mean it? Who is it – Squire Prim, or Aunt Lucy Spear, Mr. Plumpface, or Mr. Oldbuck? Do tell me. I'm dying to know!

Friskey. A person of greater importance. One with a high-sounding title.

Lucy. Title – Judge Higgins? General Proof? You mysterious fellow, why don't you tell me.

Friskey. It's "The Duchess of Dublin."

Lucy. O, pshaw! Maggie Mullen. Frank Friskey, you're a torment. I really thought 'twas some distinguished character.

Friskey. Well, the duchess had a fine *character* from her last place. By Jove! an idea.

Lucy. Get rid of it, Frank; it's dangerous.

Friskey. Hush! This is really a magnificent idea. Our doctor must have patients, for several reasons: First, he is engaged to a beautiful young lady, whom he will not marry until his practice will allow him to support her as he desires —

Lucy. Just as if I cared. I'm sure I'd rather help him up hill, than to wait for the elegant mansion he hopes to rear on the summit.

Friskey. There *you* are interested. In the second place, his sister is engaged to a fascinating young gentleman, ahem! and him she will not marry until her brother can afford to let her leave his house, of which she is the toiling mistress.

Lucy. And there *you* are interested.

Friskey. Exactly. Therefore we are both interested in increasing the doctor's practice as soon as possible.

Lucy. The sooner the better.

Friskey. Now listen to me. Suppose that a high-born lady, a titled lady of Europe, should visit this country; should pass through this village; should suddenly be taken sick. The aid of our good friend the doctor is required. He is called in. The news spreads like wildfire through the village. Patients flock to his office. His fortune is made, and we are happy in our loves.

Lucy. Ah, but where can we find such a patient?

Friskey. She's here beneath this humble roof – "The Duchess of Dublin," *incog.*

Lucy. Why, Frank, what a desperate idea!

Friskey. Desperate cases require desperate means. What say you, will you join me?

Lucy. In what way?

Friskey. We will leave this house at once, separate, you go to the right, I to the left. Drop in here and there quite accidentally, and, in confidence, disclose the interesting news that "The Duchess of Dublin," *incog.*, is in the skilful hands of Dr. Aconite. Magnify it a little, and await the result. I am confident that before night Adam will be as happy as a rush of complicated disorders can make an M. D.

Lucy. Capital! only if we are found out —

Friskey. We'll laugh it off as a capital joke. If, in the mean time, Adam gets a good patient, he'll make his way to a good practice.

Lucy. It's an absurd idea to exalt our Maggie to so high a position. Should anybody see her —

Friskey. Ah, but nobody must see her. The duchess is *incog.* You must communicate in the strictest confidence, and have it distinctly understood that not a word must be said to the doctor about his grand patient.

Lucy. I understand, and you may depend upon me; only if the worst comes I shall throw all the responsibility upon you.

Friskey. And I'll agree to take it all. Come, let's set out.

Lucy. Without seeing Adam?

Friskey. Yes, for I shan't trust you with him until you are fully committed to this arch plot. Come.

Lucy. What, would you rob me of a sight of my Adam?

Friskey. Eve-n so. Am I not robbed of the sight of my Annie?

Lucy. Not even one embrace?

Friskey. As a substitute embrace me. (*Throws his arms around her.*)

Lucy (screams). You horrid wretch! (*Runs off, L., followed by Friskey.*)

Dr. Aconite appears, R.

Dr. A. Am I awake? My friend, my bosom friend, with his arms about my affianced bride! Pills and powders! pestle and mortar! am I awake? Well, it's my usual luck. Day by day I've seen my stock of provisions sensibly decrease. I have this morning devoured the last fishball that could be manufactured from the slender stock of codfish and potatoes. It has vanished, and so has my love, with the friend of my bosom. There's nothing left for me now but to make a few slender meals of my sugar-coated pills, fricassee the canary, and then slowly but surely starve. (*Sinks into chair, L.*)

Enter Annie Aconite, R.

Annie. Well, brother, what would you like for dinner?

Dr. A. Dinner? ha, ha! Dinner! Well, what say you to roast turkey with cranberry sauce?

Annie. Brother!

Dr. A. Or roast goose, with guava jelly?

Annie. Brother!

Dr. A. Or roast buffalo, with venison steak, devilled kidneys, and salmon, with oyster sauce on the half shell.

Annie. Adam, are you crazy?

Dr. A. Why not? Our dinner must be an imaginary one, so let's have it as costly and luxurious as possible. There's nothing in the larder. Let's be extravagant, and cook it all.

Annie. Why, how you rave! Is the money all gone?

Dr. A. Every cent.

Annie. But the butcher?

Dr. A. Would carve me with his meat-axe if I asked for credit.

Annie. Then I'll try him. He won't carve me. Now don't be despondent. We have always had a dinner, and, depend upon it, you shall to-day.

Dr. A.

"O Woman, in our hours of ease,
Uncertain, coy, and hard to please;
But, when the dinner seems to lag,
You'll have it, if you boil the puddin'-bag."

Annie, why don't you marry Frank Friskey?

Annie. Adam, why don't you marry the little milliner?

Dr. A. Because I have no patients.

Annie. And I have patience to wait until you get them before I marry Frank.

Dr. A. But I never shall have a patient. There's a dead set against me. They're determined I shall not cure or kill anybody until I kill myself with waiting.

Annie. Not so bad as that, Adam. Be patient, and wait.

Dr. A. O, humbug! My instruments are all getting rusty, my pills old, my plasters cracking, and my drops drying up. Hang it, I'll go and doctor myself for amusement. (*Knock, L.*)

Annie. Hush! Perhaps there's a call.

Dr. A. The undertaker, perhaps, in search of a job. Come in.

Enter Dennis, L.

Dennis. The top uv the mornin' to ye's. Is the docther man in – I donno?

Dr. A. Yes, I'm the doctor.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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