

# GEORGE BAKER

A TENDER  
ATTACHMENT

George Baker

**A Tender Attachment**

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# Содержание

CHARACTERS	5
COSTUMES	6
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	9

# **George Melville Baker**

## **A Tender Attachment / A Farce**

### **CHARACTERS**

- Mr. Clapboard, Proprietor of “Bachelors’ Paradise.”
- Ebenezer Crotchet, a retired manufacturer.
- Horace Crotchet, his son.
- Peter Picket, a soldier.
- Obed Oakum, a sailor.
- Timothy Tinpan, a tinker.
- Louis Loopstitch, a tailor.

## COSTUMES

Clapboard, gray wig, brown coat, dark pants.

Ebenezer, gray wig, blue coat with brass buttons, dark pants, hat, and cane.

Horace, modern suit, neat and tasty.

Peter, United States army overcoat, fatigue cap, red wig, red side whiskers.

Obed, light Yankee wig, pea-jacket, tarpaulin hat, wide sailor trousers, blue shirt.

Timothy, black crop wig, smutty face, overalls, and woollen jacket.

Louis, tight black pants, with short legs, slippers, white stockings, black coat, with short arms, buttoned to the throat, black cravat, without collar.

Scene. —*Apartment in Mr. Clapboard's home. Lounge C., back. Black velvet breakfast-jacket and smoking-cap lying across the corner. Small table, R. Chairs, R. and L. Entrances, R. and L.*

### ***Enter Mr. Clapboard, R., followed by Ebenezer Crotchet***

*Clapboard.* This is the room, sir.

*Ebenezer.* O, it is! This is the mysterious abode of my runaway son. Well, I don't see anything very inviting here; a few miserable chairs, a rickety lounge, a mean little table —

*Clap.* Come, come, sir; don't abuse my furniture.

*Eben.* O, pooh, pooh! What business have you harboring a runaway scamp who ought to be at home, you old, gray-headed ruffian?

*Clap.* Come, come, sir; once for all, I won't be abused in my own house. If your son chooses to hire a room in my house, to pay handsomely for the same, and to behave himself in a gentlemanly manner, here he stops just as long as he pays, you old heathen.

*Eben.* Old heathen! Confound you, do you know who you are talking to, Mr. Claptrap? *Clap.* Clapboard, sir; Clapboard is my name.

*Eben.* Do you know who you are talking to?

*Clap.* I've a pretty good idea. Some fiery old lunatic just escaped from Bedlam.

*Eben.* Fire and fury! I'll break this cane over your head, insolent!

*Clap.* Do; and then I'll throw you and the pieces down those stairs, catamount!

*Eben.* (*Aside.*) O, this won't do. (*Aloud.*) I beg your pardon, Mr. Claptrap.

*Clap.* Clapboard, sir.

*Eben.* Mr. Clapboard, I was a little hasty. You must attribute it to the anxiety of a devoted parent. I have a son.

*Clap.* So I understand.

*Eben.* A week ago he left the parental mansion, for the purpose, as he said, of recruiting himself at a quiet place in the country. All very well, of course. I could bring nothing to say against that; but yesterday I received an anonymous note, mailed at this place, bidding me look out for my son, who, the note said, had formed a tender attachment. Do you hear? — a tender attachment!

*Clap.* Well, what of it?

*Eben.* What of it? Hear the man! Sir! Mr. Claptrap!

*Clap.* Clapboard, sir.

*Eben.* Mr. Clapboard. Ten years ago I retired from the soap and candle business with a fortune. This boy is my only son; young, impulsive, thoughtless, he has come to the country; his susceptible heart is a target, at which a thousand loving glances will be thrown by the eyes of rural beauties —

*Clap.* Humbug! There isn't a female within three miles of the place. This is called "Bachelors' Paradise." There's Jobson's house, Seymour's, and mine; specially erected for the convenience of artists, fishermen, and such like gentry, who want a quiet place in the country.

*Eben.* Is it possible! Then my son's tender attachment —

*Clap.* It's some trick played to frighten you.

*Eben.* Perhaps it is, but I have my doubts. Who lodges in this house besides my son?

*Clap.* Well, sir, on the floor below, there's Mr. Timothy Tinpan, a nice, gentlemanly — tinker.

*Eben.* A tinker? — (*Aside.*) Bachelors' Paradise! (*Aloud.*) Gentlemanly humbug! Who else?

*Clap.* The next floor above is occupied by Mr. Peter Picket, a military gentleman, who served his country in the great rebellion.

*Eben.* A soldier! (*Noise outside.*) What's that?

*Clap.* That's him. He's always going through his tactics. He dropped his gun.

*Eben.* Did he! Then Mr. Peter Picket had better *pick it up*. Well, who else?

*Clap.* Next above him is Mr. Oakum, a well-mannered mariner, engaged in the lumber trade.

*Eben.* Is that all?

*Clap.* No, sir; the floor above him, next the roof, is occupied by Mr. Loopstitch, a tailor, a native of France.

*Eben.* Soldier, sailor, tinker, and tailor! Here's nice company for my boy.

*Clap.* O, they're a nice, gentlemanly set, I assure you; very quiet. Mr. Picket is apt to be a little restless nights; walks in his sleep; and sometimes wanders about the house with a loaded musket. Mr. Oakum is of rather a musical turn, and has his "bark upon the sea" a little too often. Mr. Tinpan is very fond of rehearsing his war-cry, "Old kettles to mend;" and Mr. Loopstitch is making frantic efforts to master the trombone. But generally they are quiet, gentlemanly, respectable individuals.

*Eben.* I should say so. And my son abandons his luxurious home, his highly respectable connections, for such society as this?

*Clap.* Lord bless you, young gentlemen have their little freaks, you know.

*Eben.* And so have old gentlemen too. I have a very sudden one myself. For how long has my son engaged this room?

*Clap.* Let me see; he has paid me for it up to six o'clock to-night.

*Eben.* And after that I suppose it will be to let.

*Clap.* Of course. Though probably he'll keep it himself.

*Eben.* Hark you, Mr. Claptrap.

*Clap.* Clapboard, sir.

*Eben.* Mr. Clapboard, I want to hire this room myself. What does my son pay you?

*Clap.* Six dollars a week. Cheap enough.

*Eben.* All right. I'll engage it for a week myself, for which I will pay you twelve.

*Clap.* But, sir, he has the first choice.

*Eben.* No, he hasn't; he's not of age. I am his guardian, and I want it myself; so here's your money. At six o'clock I shall come and take possession.

*Clap.* But, Mr. Crotchet —

*Eben.* No more words are necessary. You keep a house for the entertainment of gentlemen who wish a quiet place in the country. You certainly cannot refuse so handsome an offer as I have made you.

*Clap.* But your son —

*Eben.* Has comfortable quarters at home, where he belongs. You can inform him of my appearance here, and of the bargain I have made. Tell him to go home and amuse himself; that I shall positively take up my quarters here at six o'clock. (*Aside.*) There's something wrong here; "a tender attachment," I'll be bound; and I'm determined to find it out. (*Aloud.*) Good day, Mr. Claptrap.

[*Exit, R.*

*Clap.*



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