

# Quality Street

— a new musical based on the play by J. M. Barrie —

Book & Lyrics  
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Music  
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QUALITY STREET was first workshopped in the 1990s by New York City's MUSICAL THEATRE WORKS, then presented as part of THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF MUSICAL THEATRE FESTIVAL on 42nd Street, later presented by Alex Cohen as a staged reading at THE STAMFORD ARTS CENTER and subsequently workshopped by THE YORK THEATRE.

### SETTING

The action takes place in various parts of a small English town in 1805 during the Napoleonic Wars and ten years later in 1815 after the defeat of Napoleon.

### CAST OF CHARACTERS

- [1] THE RECRUITING SERGEANT, aged 35 to 45
- [2] HENRIETTA TURNBULL, aged 20 to 30
- [3] MISS FANNY WILLOUGHBY, aged 20 to 30
- [4] Her older sister, MISS MARY WILLOUGHBY, aged 29 to 39
- [5] MISS SUSAN THROSSEL, aged 27 to 37
- [6] Her younger sister, MISS PHOEBE THROSSEL, aged 20 to 30
- [7] PATTY, their maid, aged over 30 to over 40
- [8] MR. VALENTINE BROWN, a surgeon, aged 25 to 35
- [9] TWO YOUNG OFFICERS at a ball
- [10] TWO YOUNG LADIES at a ball

CHORUS OF (Soldiers, Servant Girls, Townspeople)

### PRODUCTION NOTES

The script uses the Americanized "on" Quality Street, but the English would more authentically use "in" Quality Street. The choice would be determined by the locale of the production.

HENRIETTA can be a dual role, with the actor also playing one of the YOUNG LADIES in Act Two where HENRIETTA does not re-appear.

A vocal and dance skilled chorus of at least 2 MEN and 2 WOMEN would help serve the needs of the play as written.

## SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

### ACT ONE

Time: 1805

Prelude:	EXTERIOR QUALITY STREET	Early evening.
Scene 1:	EXTERIOR QUALITY STREET	Late morning.
Scene 2:	THE DRAWING ROOM	Afternoon.
Scene 3:	THE KITCHEN	Later.
Scene 4:	THE DRAWING ROOM	Later.
Scene 5:	PHOEBE'S BEDROOM	Immediately after.
Scene 6:	EXTERIOR QUALITY STREET AND INSIDE A TAVERN	Later.
Scene 7:	PHOEBE'S BEDROOM	Later.
Scene 8:	EXTERIOR QUALITY STREET	Ten years are passing.

Time: 1815

Scene 9:	DRAWING-SCHOOL ROOM	Ten years have passed.
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### ACT TWO

Scene 1:	EXTERIOR QUALITY STREET AND THE DRAWING ROOM	Early evening.
Scene 2:	EXTERIOR QUALITY STREET AND AT THE BALL	Later that evening.
Scene 3:	INSIDE THE PAVILLION AT THE BALL	The same evening.
Scene 4:	INSIDE A TAVERN IN ANOTHER PART OF TOWN	Later that evening.
Scene 5:	THE DRAWING ROOM	Around midnight.
Scene 6:	THE KITCHEN	Days later.
Scene 7:	EXTERIOR QUALITY STREET	A few days later.
Scene 8:	THE DRAWING ROOM	Not long after.

## MUSICAL NUMBERS

### ACT ONE

1. OPENING SCENE - (Orchestra)
2. "QUALITY STREET" - (COMPANY w/o PHOEBE, VALENTINE)
3. "A MAN" - (HENRIETTA, FANNY, MISS WILLOUGHBY, SUSAN)
4. REPRISE: "QUALITY STREET" - (HENRIETTA, FANNY)
5. PART 1: "A YEAR" - (PHOEBE)
6. "WHO GETS ME" - (PATTY, SOLDIERS, SERVANT GIRLS)
7. PART 2: "A YEAR" - (PHOEBE)
8. "HIS NAME WAS WILLIAM" - (SUSAN)
9. PART 3: "A YEAR" - (PHOEBE)
10. PART 1: "REMEMBERED PLEASURES" - (VALENTINE)
11. PART 2: "REMEMBERED PLEASURES" - (VALENTINE)
12. REPRISE: "QUALITY STREET" - (Orchestra)
13. "REASONS" - (SERGEANT, SOLDIERS, VALENTINE)
14. INTERMEZZO - (Orchestra, WOMEN, SERGEANT, VALENTINE)
15. REPRISE: "REASONS" - (SOLDIERS)
16. PART 1: "YOUNG AGAIN" - (PHOEBE)
17. "GOOSE" - (PHOEBE, SUSAN)
18. PART 2: "YOUNG AGAIN" - (PHOEBE)
19. INCIDENTAL: "THE GOWN" - (Orchestra)
20. PART 3: "YOUNG AGAIN" - (PHOEBE)

## MUSICAL NUMBERS

### ACT TWO

21. "ENTR'ACTE" - (Orchestra)
22. REPRISE: "QUALITY STREET" - (MISS W, FANNY)
23. "ONE GRAY HAIR" - (VALENTINE, MISS W, FANNY)
24. "A NIECE" - (VALENTINE, MISS W, FANNY)
25. "MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE" - (COMPANY)
26. "FLIRTATION" - (PHOEBE, TWO OFFICERS, TWO LADIES)
- 27A. "SCENE CHANGE & DANCE" - (Orchestra)
- 27B. "AN UPPER CLASSES BALL" - (SERGEANT, PATTY, SOLDIERS,  
SERVANT GIRLS)
28. SCENE CHANGE: "AFTER THE BALL" - (Orchestra)
29. "SURELY YOU RECALL" - (PHOEBE)
30. SCENE CHANGE: "TOO LATE" - (Orchestra)
31. "SETTLE" - (SERGEANT, PATTY)
32. REPRISE: "QUALITY STREET" - (MISS W, FANNY)
33. "ONE OF ME" - (PHOEBE'S SOLILOQUY)
34. "THE ALGEBRA LESSON" - (VALENTINE)
35. "DAMN THE LADY!" - (VALENTINE, PATTY, SUSAN, PHOEBE,  
MISS WILLOUGHBY, FANNY)
36. INCIDENTAL: "PATTY'S INSTRUCTIONS" - (Orchestra)
37. REPRISE: "MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE" - (VALENTINE, PATTY,  
SERGEANT, SUSAN)
38. INCIDENTAL: "LIVVY'S FAREWELL" - (Orchestra)
39. "FINALE" - (VALENTINE, PHOEBE, COMPANY)

[1] OPENING SCENE - OrchestraACT ONEScene 1

EXTERIOR QUALITY STREET: The soft rumble of thunder. In half-light appear HENRIETTA, FANNY, MISS WILLOUGHBY, SUSAN THROSSEL, PATTY, THE RECRUITING SERGEANT and TWO YOUNG MEN. THEY are LIVING SCULPTURES.

Behind them, perhaps in silhouette, A YOUNG WOMAN (PHOEBE THROSSEL) appears, followed by A YOUNG MAN (VALENTINE BROWN). There is another crack of thunder. As the sound of a steady rain grows louder, SHE struggles to open her parasol. HE gallantly assists. Together, THEY awkwardly manage to open the too-small umbrella, attempting to share, laughing at the hopelessness of it. HE pulls her closer, gently wipes water from her face--then, clearly unexpectedly, HE kisses her. A nervous, silent pause lingers between them. There is another faint roll of thunder, and THEY are gone--as the CAST comes to life.

[2] QUALITY STREET

HENRIETTA & FANNY

WHEN ONE RESIDES ON QUALITY STREET  
ONE HAS A CERTAIN AIR--  
IF YOU WOULD LIVE ON QUALITY STREET,  
TAKE CARE--

HENRIETTA

THE RULES ARE STRICT ON QUALITY STREET--  
THEY'RE THAT WAY BY DESIGN--

FANNY

WHOSE RULES ARE THEY ON QUALITY STREET?

MISS WILLOUGHBY

THEY'RE MINE!

GOOD BREEDING IS A REQUISITE  
TO JOIN THE FAVORED FEW--  
A LITTLE MONEY HELPS A BIT,  
BUT NEVER, NEVER NEW--

HENRIETTA & FANNY

FROM BIRTH WE'RE TAUGHT WE'RE NEVER COMPLETE  
UNTIL WE'VE NOTHING LESS  
THAN HUSBANDS AND A QUALITY STREET  
ADDRESS!

(MUSIC continues under dialogue)

HENRIETTA

(speaks)  
Speaking of husbands, I just saw Phoebe Throssel outside the  
draper's shop, and she was talking with--a certain gentleman--

FANNY

A certain medical gentleman?

HENRIETTA

Whose initials are--

FANNY

V.B.!

HENRIETTA

Oh, Fanny, he's bound to propose to her any moment!

FANNY

How do you know?

HENRIETTA

Because when he took his leave--he twirled his cane!

FANNY

How romantic! How--Parisian! Even though I know we're supposed  
to hate Napoleon!

HENRIETTA

Bother Napoleon!

BOTH

THERE'S SOMETHING HERE ON QUALITY STREET  
THAT'S NOT FOUND ANYWHERE--  
UN TRÈS JE-NE-SAIS-QUALITY STREET,  
MA CHERE!

SUSAN

Good Morning, Miss Willoughby--

MISS W

Miss Susan. Another library book, I see--

SUSAN

Yes. For our next literary session, you know--

MISS W

Something uplifting and ennobling, I trust? The last one was  
just a trifle--uncombed--

SUSAN

Oh, dear. Did you think so?

MISS W

The scene was set in Italy, was it not?

SUSAN

Yes--



MISS W

There, you see--

SUSAN

I beg your pardon.

MISS W

My dear Susan, one cannot be too careful. Once across the Channel, I have been told, debauchery reigns.

SUSAN

Oh, yes--of course--

THE BOUNDARY LINES ON QUALITY STREET  
ARE VERY CLEARLY THERE--

MISS W

THEY CROSS THOSE LINES ON QUALITY STREET  
WHO DARE!

PATTY

THE MAIDS WHO WORK ON QUALITY STREET  
ALL HAVE THEIR BIT OF FUN  
BY DOING WHAT ON QUALITY STREET'S  
NOT DONE--

SERGEANT AND OFFICERS

THE DRAWING ROOMS ARE CLOSED TO SOLDIERS  
THAT'S WELL UNDERSTOOD--  
BUT FOR A DAB OF WHAT WE LIKE,  
THE KITCHEN'S JUST AS GOOD.

SERGEANT

(hugs PATTY)

And it's your warm kitchen I like best of all, Patty, my love!  
I'll be by later.

PATTY

Oh, I don't know! Miss Susan's an innocent lamb, but Miss Phoebe suspects.

SERGEANT

She doesn't suspect--she knows! And bless her for it! She wouldn't turn out a poor soldier looking for a bit of affection before going out to die for his country!

PATTY

Ha, listen to him! You don't do the dying--just the recruiting!

SERGEANT

And not too much of that, lately!

(sees TWO YOUNG MEN)

All right, lads, who'll take the King's shilling? Come on, who'll be the first to enlist? You there--you've been hanging about for days. How about you? Don't you want to fight Napoleon?

1st YOUNG MAN

Not me. I might get killed!

SERGEANT

Ah, but think of the glory! Think of your sweetheart's pride!  
Think of your sweetheart's tears!

2nd YOUNG MAN

Think of your sweetheart's new sweetheart!

SERGEANT

THEY'RE FIGHTING HARD FOR QUALITY STREET  
I'M OFFERING THE COIN--  
WHO'LL BE THE FIRST FROM QUALITY STREET  
TO JOIN?

ALL

EVENTS INTRUDE ON QUALITY STREET,  
BUT WAR IS FAR AWAY--  
NO DANGER NEAR TO QUALITY STREET  
TODAY--

MISS W, HENRIETTA & FANNY

WE HAVE NO DOUBT THAT HEAVEN'S A TREAT,  
FOR SOMEDAY WE SHALL FIND  
THAT GOD,

MISS W

OF COURSE,

THE THREE

HAD QUALITY STREET  
IN MIND--

MEN

OUR LOYALTY TO KING AND COUNTRY  
GROWS BEYOND COMPARE--  
WHEN WE INCLUDE THIS OH-SO-ENGLISH  
ENGLISH THOROUGHFARE--

ALL

THE WORLD AS SEEN FROM QUALITY STREET  
MAY ONE DAY SOON BE GONE,  
BUT LIFE FOR US  
ON QUALITY STREET--  
WITHOUT A FUSS  
ON QUALITY STREET--  
QUITE GLORIOUS  
ON QUALITY STREET  
GOES ON!

Scene 2

PHOEBE and SUSAN THROSSEL's DRAWING ROOM. SUSAN, MISS WILLOUGHBY, and HENRIETTA are knitting or sewing. FANNY is reading aloud.

FANNY

(reads)

"And so the day passed and evening came, black, mysterious and ghost-like. The wind moaned unceasingly like a shivering spirit and the vegetation rustled uneasily as if something terrifying were about to happen. Suddenly, out of the darkness, there emerged--"

[3]     A MAN

HENRIETTA

(interrupts)

A man!

FANNY

A MAN?

BOTH

THERE EMERGED, THERE EMERGED  
A MAN!

HENRIETTA

DELIGHTFUL!

FANNY

SO CHARMING!

MISS WILLOUGHBY

REVOLTING, QUITE VILE!

SUSAN

(agrees quickly)  
DISTINCTLY ALARMING!

MISS W

(to SUSAN)  
BUT ALL THE WHILE,  
I SAW YOU SMILE--

SUSAN

I DID?

MISS W

YOU SMILED--

SUSAN

FOR A MAN?

MISS W, HENRIETTA & FANNY

A MAN!

HENRIETTA & FANNY

THAT DELIGHTFUL WORD  
SENDS SHIVERS DOWN MY SPINE!

MISS W

I AM HAPPY TO SAY  
THERE IS NEVER A DAY  
WHEN THAT SYLLABLE ACTS ON MINE!

FANNY

(resumes reading)  
"The unhappy Camilla was standing lost in reverie when,  
without pausing to advise her of his intentions, he took both  
her hands in his--"

HENRIETTA

HER HANDS?

SUSAN

WHAT, BOTH?

MISS W

DID HE DARE TO USURP HER HANDS?

HENRIETTA

IT GIVES ME THE FIDGETS!

FANNY

I KNOW, DEAR--IT SHOWS--

MISS W

IT STARTS WITH THE DIGITS,  
THEN HEAVEN KNOWS  
WHERE ELSE IT GOES  
FROM THERE!

SUSAN

YOU'RE RIGHT!

MISS W

WELL, OF COURSE!

SUSAN, HENRIETTA & FANNY

OH DEAR!

HENRIETTA & FANNY

IT'S A TRUTH THAT MUST BE FACED  
WITHOUT A FLINCH!

MISS W

WITH A CASUAL SMILE,  
THEY'LL DEVOUR A MILE  
IF YOU GIVE 'EM A HALF AN INCH!

FANNY

(resumes reading)  
"Slowly he gathered her in his arms--and rained hot--burning--"

KISSES--	HENRIETTA
YES--	FANNY
APPALLING!	MISS W
(reads greedily) "ON EYES"	FANNY
FANNY!	MISS W
"MOUTH"	FANNY
SISTER!	MISS W
"NOSE--EARS"	FANNY
KISSES--	HENRIETTA
YES--	FANNY
ON EYES--	HENRIETTA
MOUTH--	FANNY
NOSE--	HENRIETTA
EARS--	FANNY
KISSES!	HENRIETTA & FANNY
Stop!!	MISS W
(sings) SINCE TIME BEGAN, WE HAVE HAD TO PUT UP WITH MAN!	

MISS W (continued)

OUTRAGEOUS  
THEIR HABITS!  
THEIR LANGUAGE  
AS WELL!  
THE MORALS OF RABBITS!

HENRIETTA

BUT TRUTH TO TELL,  
A LOVELY SMELL--

FANNY

THEY HAVE?

HENRIETTA

OH, YES!

MISS W

PLEASE DESIST  
AT ONCE!  
THEY'VE AN EVIL  
AND A CALCULATED PLAN!  
(to HENRIETTA)  
SO BE CAREFUL, DEAR FRIEND,  
HOW YOU'RE LIABLE TO END--

HENRIETTA & FANNY

HOW WE'RE LIABLE TO END, WE HOPE,  
IS WITH  
A MAN!

(collective sigh)

MISS W

Miss Susan, this one is worse than the other was!

SUSAN

I'm so sorry.

(SHE goes to FANNY who is quietly  
reading to herself)

If you please, Fanny, my dear--

MISS W

(stern)

Fanny! At once!

(FANNY reluctantly hands book to SUSAN  
who, walking away, starts to read)

FANNY

Miss Susan is looking at the end!

SUSAN

(closes book guiltily)

Forgive my partiality to romance, Mary. It's the mark of an  
old maid.

MISS W

Susan! That word!

SUSAN  
It's what I am. And you, too, my dear.

FANNY  
Miss Susan, I protest--

MISS W  
No, dear, it's true. Susan and I are known everywhere as "the old maids of Quality Street."

SUSAN  
But neither you nor Henrietta will, Fanny. Nor, I'm happy to say, will Phoebe.

HENRIETTA  
If you're referring to Mr. V.B.--

FANNY  
(interrupts)  
Henrietta saw them talking outside the draper's.

HENRIETTA  
Fanny! It's my story.

SUSAN  
Oh, they're seen everywhere. They walk. They talk. He talks about her, too. He calls her--  
(shy)  
Phoebe of the Ringlets--

HENRIETTA  
Other people have ringlets, Miss Susan.

SUSAN  
But you and Fanny have to use curling papers.  
(proud)  
Phoebe--never!

FANNY  
(annoyed)  
Just the same--he hasn't proposed yet.

MISS W  
Or has he?

SUSAN  
I expect it hourly.

PHOEBE  
(off, her voice excited)  
Susan! Where are you?

SUSAN  
Maybe momentarily!  
(calls)  
In here, dear.

PHOEBE

(enters)  
I have such news about--(sees THE OTHERS)--someone--  
(to the others)  
Miss Willoughby-- Henrietta, dear-- Fanny--

FANNY

Oh, tell us!

HENRIETTA

Was it something he said at the draper's?

PHOEBE

The draper's. No, dear, that was the weather. It was later.  
I was visiting with Mrs. Brill--

SUSAN

Poor thing.  
(to others)  
Her husband was killed in the war.

FANNY

Dreadful--go on.

PHOEBE

And when I came out, he was passing.

HENRIETTA

Or waiting!

PHOEBE

He offered me his arm. At first he was very silent, as he has  
often been lately.

SUSAN

We know why.

PHOEBE

Don't say that, Susan, dear. We don't know why. Suddenly he  
stopped--and twirled his cane. You know how gallantly he  
twirls his cane!

HENRIETTA

Oh, yes!

PHOEBE

And he said--he said--"I have something I want to tell you,  
Miss Phoebe. Perhaps you can guess what it is--"

MISS W

Dear me!

PHOEBE

Of course, to say I could guess would have been unladylike. I  
simply said, "Please don't tell me in a public street, sir."  
To which he instantly replied, "Then I shall call and tell you  
this afternoon."



(hugs her)  
Phoebe!

SUSAN

(firm)  
Henrietta... Fanny... We must leave at once.

HENRIETTA & FANNY

Oh, no!!

MISS W  
It would be most unseemly--most unseemly--for a certain gentleman to arrive and find--an audience--as if he were a play?

FANNY  
But it's so exciting!

MISS W  
Precisely. You are twenty, my dear, and at twenty excitement can be--and quite often is--fatal. Susan--Phoebe--we bid you good day.

(THEY hug each other, knitting and bonnets, etc. are gathered)

(MUSIC starts)

[4] REPRISE 1: - QUALITY STREET

HENRIETTA & FANNY  
A GENTLEMAN OF QUALITY STREET  
WILL SOON WALK THROUGH THAT DOOR--  
(prayerful)  
PLEASE LET THERE BE, ON QUALITY STREET,  
TWO MORE!

(MISS W, HENRIETTA and FANNY exit)

PHOEBE  
Susan, just think, it's only been a year!

SUSAN  
We met at Mrs. Fotheringay's Quadrille.

PHOEBE  
We didn't even know Doctor Edwards had a new partner--

SUSAN  
--until he said, "Allow me to present Mr. Valentine Brown--"

PHOEBE  
Susan, the picnics--!

SUSAN  
Phoebe, the day he first drank tea in this house--!

PHOEBE  
He invited himself.

SUSAN  
He just laughed when I said it would cause such talk!

PHOEBE  
He is absolutely fearless! Susan, he has smoked his pipe in this room!

SUSAN  
Oh, I wonder exactly what he'll say!

(MUSIC starts)

PHOEBE  
I know exactly what he'll say. Here--  
(PHOEBE seats SUSAN in chair)  
You shall be I--

(PHOEBE exits and immediately enters pretending to be VALENTINE. SHE bows solemnly to SUSAN who nods her head demurely)

[5] PART 1: A YEAR

PHOEBE (continued)  
GOOD AFTERNOON, MISS PHOEBE--  
I TRUST I FIND YOU WELL--  
I'VE COME TO CALL, MISS PHOEBE,  
FOR I'VE SOMETHING I MUST TELL--  
AND I'VE MADE UP MY MIND--  
AND TODAY IS THE DAY  
THAT I'VE FINALLY FOUND THE COURAGE  
TO SAY--

A YEAR--  
A YEAR--  
INCREDIBLY, I HAVE KNOWN YOU FOR  
A YEAR--

A SPRING, A SUMMER,  
AN AUTUMN, AND THEN  
THE WINTER FLIES AND SUDDENLY SKIES  
ARE FILLED WITH SPRING AGAIN--

BUT I--  
TOO SHY--  
HAVE FOOLISHLY LET THIS PRECIOUS YEAR  
GO BY--  
AND NEVER ONCE HAVE KEPT MY VOW  
TO TELL YOU THAT I LOVE YOU--  
TIL NOW!

(Exuberant, PHOEBE reverts to being herself)

PHOEBE (continued)

A YEAR--  
A YEAR--  
IMPOSSIBLE, BUT IT'S REALLY BEEN  
A YEAR--

AT PARTIES, COTILLIONS,  
AND CONCERTS WE'VE MET--  
THE WORDS HAVE HUNG ON HIS COWARDLY TONGUE,  
BUT NOT BEEN SPOKEN YET--

HE'S TRIED--  
IMPLIED--  
WHENEVER HE'S FOUND ME STANDING  
BY HIS SIDE--  
BUT NEVER ONCE HAS TOLD ME HOW  
SO VERY MUCH HE LOVES ME--

(breaks off)  
Oh, Susan, does he love me?

SUSAN  
Of course, darling! And he's coming to tell you so--today!

(Lights fade)

Scene 3

THE KITCHEN. PATTY and the RECRUITING SERGEANT are locked in a long kiss. Finally--

SERGEANT  
Thank the Lord for your hour off every afternoon, Patty, or I couldn't stand the deprivation.

PATTY  
You're luckier than the other soldiers. This is the only kitchen on Quality Street that the girls' mistresses don't snoop around in.

SERGEANT  
(kisses her)  
Then bless Miss Susan--  
(another kiss)  
--and Miss Phoebe--  
(now HE stretches her backwards on kitchen table, still kissing her)

1st SERVANT GIRL  
(off)  
You! Patty!

(kitchen door opens carefully and 1st SERVANT GIRL sticks her head in)

1st SOLDIER  
(off)  
Is the coast clear?

1st SERVANT GIRL  
(stares at the two on table)  
I'd say so, yes.

(1st SERVANT GIRL and 1st SOLDIER enter and immediately go into embrace. After a moment, 2nd SERVANT GIRL and 2nd SOLDIER enter, already locked in a kiss. A 3rd SERVANT GIRL enters eagerly, leading 3rd SOLDIER by the hand. HE stops dead when HE sees others)

3rd SOLDIER  
You said we'd be alone.

3rd SERVANT GIRL  
(pulls him to her)  
We are alone.

(THEY all finally break for air)

SERGEANT  
Ah, my darlin' Patty!

PATTY  
I am not your Patty.

SERGEANT

(alarmed)  
You're not someone else's--!

1st SERVANT GIRL

She's her own, right, Patty?

PATTY

Right! I'm the queen of Quality Street, I am, and I'm going to think long and hard before choosing my prince consort!

ALL

To the Queen!

(MUSIC starts)

PATTY

Oh, you can laugh. But a day doesn't go by that I don't stand at this window--or the bedroom windows--or the drawing room windows when I'm closing them for the evening or opening them for the morning--and I look out--up and down Quality Street--and I think to myself, any moment he may turn the corner--any moment! I've been looking out at windows waiting for him to oblige by turning the corner these five years!

SERGEANT

Five years and still hopeful!

PATTY

There's not a more hopeful woman in all the King's dominions.

SERGEANT

And he'll be better than me, I suppose.

PATTY

Better--taller--richer--handsomer--smarter--and not a soldier! And every time I look at myself in the glass I say, "Who is it going to be to have the great advantage of loving this face?"

[6] WHO GETS ME

PATTY (continued)

WHO'S TO BE THE LUCKY MAN  
WHO GETS ME, WHO GETS ME?  
LET HIM WIN ME IF HE CAN--  
I'M A CATCH, YOU'LL AGREE--

PERFECTION BOTH OF SHAPE AND SIZE  
NO WHERE ELSE IS A FINER PRIZE--  
STARTING UP AROUND MY HAIR  
AND CONTINUING DOWN FROM THERE--

EVERY WISH AND EVERY WHIM  
SHALL BE HIS, AND WHAT'S MORE,  
I'LL JUST LIVE FOR SHOWING HIM  
WHAT A WIFE'S REALLY FOR--

AND WHEN THE RIGHT MAN COMES ALONG,  
TO THAT LORD I SHALL BEND THE KNEE--  
WHO GETS ME!

PATTY (continued)

LASSIES, ALL YOUR HOPES ARE DIM,  
FOR ALTHOUGH YOU MAY TRY,  
IF I'VE SET MY CAP FOR HIM,  
YOU CAN KISS HIM GOODBYE!

WHATEVER MAY BE YOUR ALLURE,  
OF ONE THING YOU MAY BE QUITE SURE--  
IN YOUR IGNORANCE THERE IS BLISS,  
TILL YOU HAVE TO COMPETE WITH THIS--

(There is a dance as PATTY flirts with  
the SOLIDERS. The GIRLS look on and  
eventually retrieve their partners in an  
affectionate promenade)

EVENINGS HE'LL BE PROUD TO WALK  
BY MY SIDE IN THE SQUARE  
OR AT HOME WE'LL SIT AND TALK,  
LOVE WILL BE EVERYWHERE--

AND SO I WAIT, BUT NOT IN VAIN,  
FOR THAT MAN OF FELICITY  
WHO GETS ME!

WHEN SAINT PETER AT HIS GATE  
WELCOMES MY HUSBAND DEAR,  
AND HE HAS TO STAND AND STATE  
HOW HE SPENT EVERY YEAR--

WHEN ASKED THE GREATEST THING HE DID  
HE'LL CRY OUT TRIUMPHANTLY,  
HE GOT ME!

(SUSAN suddenly appears carrying a large  
dress box. All the SERVANT GIRLS and  
SOLDIERS scamper out the door except the  
SERGEANT, who seems amused, and PATTY  
who tries to seem defiant)

SUSAN

Patty--Sergeant--Patty--I--I am wishful of scolding you, but  
I--this dress--well, it needs to be ironed immediately, and  
I-- you--it--oh, please take it away and do it at once, then  
bring it to me--in the box, please--in the drawing room.

(PATTY curtsies, takes the box, and  
hurries off)

SERGEANT

(salutes)

Your servant, ma'am.

SUSAN

Oh, no sergeant, you must stay! I mean--since Patty is busy,  
I must scold someone--I should, you know, or what would people  
think? Would you--I mean, could you be so obliging as to--  
to stay--and let me--scold--you--?

SERGEANT  
With all the pleasure in the world, ma'am.

SUSAN  
Sergeant, I--you mustn't--oh, Sergeant, have you killed people?

SERGEANT  
Dozens, ma'am, dozens.

SUSAN  
How terrible! Is it true that Napoleon eats babies?

SERGEANT  
I have seen him do it, ma'am.

SUSAN  
The man of sin! Oh, Sergeant, I shudder when I see you in the streets enticing these poor young men.

SERGEANT  
It's not all fighting, ma'am. There's the sacking of captured towns--the looting--

SUSAN  
An English soldier never sacks or loots.

SERGEANT  
No, ma'am. And then there's the girls--

SUSAN  
(puzzled)  
Girls? What girls?

SERGEANT  
In the town, ma'am, that we--don't sack.

SUSAN  
How they must hate the haughty conqueror!

SERGEANT  
Well--we're not as haughty as all that.

SUSAN  
I fear, Sergeant, that you don't tell those poor young men all the noble things I thought you told them.

SERGEANT  
I must tell them what they want to hear. There've been five men, all this week, listening to me, and then showing me their heels, but by a grand stroke of luck, I have them at last.

SUSAN  
Luck?

SERGEANT  
A gentleman of the town has enlisted, ma'am. That gave them the push forward.

SUSAN

A gentleman! Incredible! I wonder who--oh, Sergeant, I've not been scolding you at all! Will you allow me to turn you out of the house? Somewhat violently, I'm afraid--

SERGEANT

I'm used to it, ma'am.

SUSAN

I won't really hurt you.

SERGEANT

Your servant, ma'am.

SUSAN

(stern)  
I protest, sir! We permit no soldiers in this house! Should I discover you in my kitchen again, I shall pitch you out--neck and crop!

SERGEANT

Well done, ma'am!

SUSAN

(pleased)  
Thank you, sergeant. Here is where I say "begone."

SERGEANT

I'm all attention, ma'am.

SUSAN

Begone!  
(HE turns to go, stops, looks back)

SERGEANT

Never better, ma'am! Never better!  
(HE goes)

SUSAN

(to herself, in different tones)  
Begone! Begone! Begone!



Scene 4

THE DRAWING ROOM. PHOEBE is at the window, looking out.

[7] PART 2: A YEAR

PHOEBE

(quietly)

A YEAR--

A YEAR--

INCREDIBLE, BUT IT'S REALLY BEEN

A YEAR--

A SPRING, A SUMMER,  
AN AUTUMN, AND THEN  
THE WINTER FLIES AND SUDDENLY SKIES  
ARE FILLED WITH SPRING AGAIN--

(SUSAN enters)

SUSAN

No sign?

PHOEBE

Not yet.

SUSAN

Mrs. Valentine Brown. Just think. My dearest little sister  
married and--and--gone--

PHOEBE

Never gone! You'll live with us, dear.

SUSAN

Nonsense, Phoebe.

PHOEBE

But you must! Not only because I want you, but because--  
because--because I have something distressing to tell you--

SUSAN

(startled)

My dear!

PHOEBE

You know Mr. Brown advised us how to invest half our money?

SUSAN

I know it gives us eight percent, though why it should do so I  
cannot understand. But I'm much obliged, I'm sure.

PHOEBE

The money's lost.

(SUSAN stares at her)

I had the letter several days ago.

SUSAN

Lost!

PHOEBE  
Something burst and then--someone absconded--

SUSAN  
But Mr. Brown--

PHOEBE  
I haven't told him yet, but I will today. I hope he won't blame himself.

SUSAN  
Oh, Phoebe, how much have we left?

PHOEBE  
Only sixty pounds a year, dearest, so you see, you must live with us.

SUSAN  
But Mr. Brown.

PHOEBE  
(grand)  
Mr. Brown is a man of means, and if he is not proud to have my Susan, I shall say at once, "Mr. Brown, the door!"

SUSAN  
My Phoebe!  
(SHE takes PHOEBE's hands)  
Dearest, I--I have a wedding gift for you.

PHOEBE  
Not yet!

SUSAN  
It's been ready for a long time. I began it--  
(SHE breaks off, calls)  
Patty!

I began it many years ago.

PHOEBE  
Susan! But what--

(PATTY enters, carrying dress box)

PATTY  
It's ready ma'am.

(MUSIC starts)

(PATTY hands box to her, exits. PHOEBE stares wonderingly at box)

SUSAN  
(looks down at her)  
I began it when I was a young woman, and you were not ten years old. I meant it for myself. I had hoped that he--

He?

PHOEBE

[8] HIS NAME WAS WILLIAM

SUSAN

HIS NAME WAS WILLIAM  
AND HE WAS TALL--  
HIS LEGS WERE STRAIGHT,  
HIS EYES WERE BROWN,  
AND HE WAS TALL--

HIS NAME WAS WILLIAM,  
AND ALL IN ALL,  
A MOST ATTRACTIVE MAN--  
A MOST ATTENTIVE MAN--  
A MOST--DID I FORGET TO SAY  
THAT HE WAS TALL?

HIS NAME WAS WILLIAM--  
SO LONG AGO--  
I WASN'T PRETTY  
LIKE THE REST,  
BUT EVEN SO--

I CALLED HIM WILLIE--  
HE CALLED ME SUE--  
AND SO YOU SEE, I THOUGHT--  
I KNOW I SHOULDN'T HAVE THOUGHT--  
IT WAS A FOOLISH THOUGHT  
TO THINK THAT I WOULD DO--

BECAUSE ALONG CAME CICELY,  
CICELY PEMBERTON--  
THE BEAUTIFUL  
CICELY PEMBERTON--  
I HAVE ALWAYS LIKED CICELY,  
CICELY PEMBERTON--  
SHE'S A DEAR--

A MAN NAMED WILLIAM  
WHOSE EYES ARE BROWN,  
WHOSE LEGS ARE STRAIGHT,  
WHO'S WELL-REGARDED  
IN THE TOWN,

IS NOT SO LIKELY TO SETTLE DOWN  
WITH ONE WHO CANNOT BE--  
ALTHOUGH SHE'D LIKE TO BE--  
THAT IS, SOMEONE LIKE ME,  
AND SO THERE IS THIS GOWN.

PHOEBE

A gown?

SUSAN

A wedding gown, my dear. Even plain women--Phoebe, we can't help it, when we're young, we have romantic ideas, just as if we were pretty.

PHOEBE

Susan, you're very pretty! Your eyes--

SUSAN

I have sometimes thought my eyes were not wholly disagreeable.

PHOEBE

And your profile--

SUSAN

Perhaps the right side of my face has a certain charm, but the left! He always sat on my left side, Phoebe, and so the wedding gown was never used. Long before it was finished, I knew he would not propose, but I finished it anyway and put it away. I have always hidden it from you, darling, but I brought it out last week, altered it--Patty's just ironed it, and--

(SHE holds out box)

My dear--

PHOEBE

(eagerly opens box, takes out dress)

Oh, how sweet, how beautiful!

SUSAN

You will wear it, love, won't you? On your wedding day?

PHOEBE

(hugs her)

Oh, my Susan!

(SHE whirls, holding dress before her,  
then stops suddenly)

Oh, Susan, he kissed me once!

(MUSIC starts)

SUSAN

Kissed you? When?

PHOEBE

That evening--a week ago, when he was taking me home from the concert. It was raining and my face was wet. He said that was why he did it.

SUSAN

Because your face was wet?

PHOEBE

It doesn't seem a sufficient excuse now.

SUSAN

Oh, Phoebe, before he proposed!

PHOEBE

I fear it was unladylike. Oh, but Susan, we'd known each other a whole year--!

[9]     PART 3: A YEAR

PHOEBE (continued)

(excited)

A YEAR--

A YEAR--

IMPOSSIBLE, BUT IT'S REALLY BEEN

A YEAR--

AT PARTIES, COTILLIONS,

AND CONCERTS WE'VE MET--

THE WORDS HAVE HUNG ON HIS COWARDLY TONGUE,

BUT NOT BEEN SPOKEN YET--

HE'S TRIED--

IMPLIED--

WHENEVER HE'S FOUND ME STANDING

BY HIS SIDE--

BUT NEVER ONCE HAS TOLD ME HOW

SO VERY MUCH HE LOVES ME--

(PATTY enters)

PATTY

Mr. Valentine Brown.

PHOEBE

--TIL NOW!!

(SUSAN hurriedly puts the dress back  
into the box. VALENTINE enters, bows to  
PHOEBE and SUSAN, who curtsy)

VALENTINE

Thank you, Patty.

(PATTY exits)

Miss Susan, how do you do, ma'am?

SUSAN

This is indeed a surprise, Mr. Brown.

VALENTINE

Miss Phoebe, though we've already met today, I insist on  
shaking hands with you again.

SUSAN

Always so dashing!

VALENTINE

And my other friends, I hope I find them in good health. The  
armchair seems quite herself today. I trust the table passed  
a good night.

SUSAN

(delighted)

We are all quite well, sir.

VALENTINE

May I sit on this couch, Miss Phoebe? I know Miss Susan likes  
me to break her couches.

SUSAN

Indeed I don't, sir. Phoebe, how strange that he should think so.

PHOEBE

The remark was humorous, was it not?

VALENTINE

How you see through me, Miss Phoebe. So, Miss Susan, you think I'm dashing. Am I dashing, Miss Phoebe?

PHOEBE

A little, I think.

VALENTINE

Well, I've something to tell you today which I really think is dashing.

SUSAN

(rises)  
One moment--

VALENTINE

You're not going before you know what it is?

SUSAN

I--I--I do know, sir. I mean, I don't know. I mean, I can guess. Oh, Phoebe, explain, my love!

(SUSAN exits with dress box to the  
bedroom)

VALENTINE

The explanation being, I suppose, that you both know--and I had flattered myself it was such a secret. Well, why should it have been, when it was you who first put it in my head.

PHOEBE

I? Oh, I hope not!

VALENTINE

Your demure eyes flashed so every time the war was mentioned--the little Quaker suddenly looked like a gallant boy in ringlets!

PHOEBE

(stares at him)  
The war! Mr. Brown, what is it you have to tell me?

VALENTINE

That I've enlisted, Miss Phoebe. Why? Did you think it was something else?

PHOEBE

(uncomprehending)  
You're going to war?

VALENTINE

Yes. I thought from what Miss Susan said that you knew--that perhaps the recruiting sergeant had talked.

PHOEBE

I see.

VALENTINE

These are stirring times, Miss Phoebe. I've been impatient to go for months. I want to see if I have any courage. And since being an Army surgeon doesn't appeal to me, it was enlist or remain behind. Today I found that there were five waverers. I asked them if they would take the shilling if I did, and they agreed. Miss Phoebe, it isn't one man I've given to the King, but six.

PHOEBE

You have done bravely.

VALENTINE

I'm leaving for London tomorrow--so this is goodbye.

PHOEBE

We shall pray for your safety, Mr. Brown.

VALENTINE

And will you write--with all the stirring news of Quality Street?

PHOEBE

It has seemed stirring to us--but it must have been merely laughable to you.

(MUSIC starts)

VALENTINE

Dear Quality Street--that thought me dashing. But I made friends in it, Miss Phoebe. Your sister--and especially--yourself. I'll have lovely memories--

[10] PART 1: REMEMBERED PLEASURES

VALENTINE (continued)

REMEMBERED PLEASURES  
WILL FILL EACH DAY--  
QUITE UNFORGOTTEN,  
THEY'LL COME TO STAY--

COULD I FORGET  
I CAME TO CALL ONE NIGHT,  
AND DIDN'T WAIT TO BE INVITED?  
SHOCKING!  
CAN I ERASE  
YOUR WADING IN THE SEA,  
REMOVING, MOST DEFIANTLY,  
ONE STOCKING?

VALENTINE (continued)

THE SUNDAY PICNICS  
AND ALL THE REST  
ARE CLEARLY TREASURES,  
BUT QUITE THE BEST  
WILL BE MISS PHOEBE OF THE RINGLET--  
PHOEBE AND HER RINGLET--  
THE MOST REMEMBERED PLEASURE  
OF ALL.

(MUSIC continues under dialogue)

PHOEBE

It was you who gave the pleasure. You've been so kind to us.  
Why, I wonder?

VALENTINE

At first, to tell the truth, because you both amused me so.  
Miss Susan so terribly proper--and Miss Phoebe trying to be.  
I soon realized that you were far more--alive--than you  
pretended to be.

PHOEBE

Too alive, I'm afraid--for Miss Willoughby and some of the  
others.

VALENTINE

I felt sorry that one so sweet and young should have to live  
so gray a life. I wondered whether I could put any little  
pleasure in it.

PHOEBE

The picnics! It was very good of you.

VALENTINE

Do you know what you've been like to me? Like an old-  
fashioned English garden--full of daisies for innocence, and  
hyacinth for constancy, and violets for modesty. When I'm far  
away, I'll be able to close my eyes and walk there--

MISS PHOEBE'S GARDEN  
WILL ALWAYS BE  
THE GREATEST TREASURE  
SHE GAVE TO ME--  
EXCEPT THE MEM'RY OF THOSE RINGLET--  
PHOEBE AND HER RINGLET--  
THE MOST REMEMBERED PLEASURE  
OF ALL.

(SUSAN enters, looks expectantly from  
one to the other)

SUSAN

Have you--? Is it--?



PHOEBE

(quick)  
Susan, what Mr. Brown came to tell us is not at all what we expected. Just think, my dear, he has enlisted and came to say goodbye.

SUSAN

(faint)  
Enlisted--

VALENTINE

Am I not the ideal recruit, ma'am, a man without a wife or a sweetheart?

PHOEBE

(brisk)  
Susan, we shall have to tell him. Oh, Mr. Brown, you'll laugh and say how like Quality Street, but since we met and you told me you had something to tell, we concluded that you were going to be married! So like women, you know, we thought we might know her, and wondered what we should wear at the wedding, and--and foolishness like that--

VALENTINE

Foolishness indeed, Miss Phoebe. Who'd have me--except the Army? I wonder--would you walk with me one more time on Quality Street? I promised to stop in at the soldiers' tavern to have some wine with the men who enlisted with me, but before that--

PHOEBE

Yes, of course. I'll be ready in a moment. Susan, will you help me?

SUSAN

(helpless)  
Yes, dear.

VALENTINE

(as PHOEBE starts to leave)  
Miss Phoebe--  
(SHE turns)  
Don't wear a bonnet.

SUSAN

(shocked)  
Mr. Brown!

VALENTINE

As we walk--I'd like to see her ringlets--

PHOEBE

(after a moment)  
Very well, Mr. Brown. No bonnet--

(PHOEBE and SUSAN leave)

[11] PART 2: REMEMBERED PLEASURES

VALENTINE

REMEMBERED PLEASURES  
WILL FILL EACH DAY--  
QUITE UNFORGOTTEN  
THEY'LL COME TO STAY--

COULD I FORGET  
THAT TRULY LOVELY SIGHT--  
A LILAC BUSH, WITH HER IN WHITE  
BESIDE IT?  
AND NOT RECALL  
THAT BRAVE AND RECKLESS TYPE--  
WHO DARINGLY PICKED UP MY PIPE  
AND TRIED IT?

MISS PHOEBE'S GARDEN  
WILL ALWAYS BE  
THE GREATEST TREASURE  
SHE GAVE TO ME--  
EXCEPT THE MEM'RY OF THOSE RINGLETS--  
PHOEBE AND HER RINGLETS--  
THE MOST REMEMBERED PLEASURE  
OF ALL.

Scene 5

PHOEBE'S BEDROOM. PHOEBE is brushing her hair, SUSAN watches her, angry.

PHOEBE  
Smile, Susan. It was a mistake--just a misunderstanding.

SUSAN  
He's a fiend in human form!

PHOEBE  
We had no right to assume.

SUSAN  
After a year? After all the attention? He gave nowhere near as much to anyone else!

PHOEBE  
He was being kind. We--we amused him. He told me so.

SUSAN  
The wretch! You'll at least tell him about the money--?

PHOEBE  
Certainly not. And neither will you.

SUSAN  
But--

PHOEBE  
Would you have him propose to me out of guilt? I must go--

SUSAN  
(bitter)  
For a walk! A final walk!

PHOEBE  
Walking is what we do on Quality Street, dear.  
You know that--

[11] REPRISE 2: QUALITY STREET - Orchestra

Scene 6

EXTERIOR QUALITY STREET. PHOEBE and VALENTINE exchange greetings with MISS WILLOUGHBY, HENRIETTA, FANNY. The walking is mannered, choreographed, sedate and contrasts with the boisterousness of the SOLDIERS in the tavern. The strollers gradually fade from view as the SOLDIERS take over completely. VALENTINE enters the tavern and the SOLDIERS, along with the SERGEANT, greet him respectfully.

SERGEANT  
(as drinks are served and drunk)  
It'll be an honor for these men to serve with you, sir.

VALENTINE  
Sergeant, it's rather an honor for all of us to serve with each other. After all, we're soldiers together.

(MUSIC starts)

SERGEANT  
Yes, sir, but not all for the same reason.

VALENTINE  
Surely for King and for country.

SERGEANT  
Oh, aye, sir. But a few others besides--

[13] REASONS - SOLDIERS' CHORUS

SERGEANT (continued)  
OH, THE REASON, THE REASON WE'RE SOLDIERS--  
FOR JOINING THIS VALOROUS CROWD--  
FOR BEING QUITE WILLING  
TO TAKE THE KING'S SHILLING,  
ARE REASONS FOR WHICH WE ARE PROUD--

1st SOLDIER (blond)  
I CHOSE TO DO WAR WITH THE TYRANT--  
THAT CRUEL BARBARIAN WILD--

SERGEANT  
HE CHOSE TO ESCAPE  
FROM A BLACK-HEADED HUSBAND  
WHOSE WIFE HAD A BLOND-HEADED CHILD--

2nd SOLDIER  
TO FIGHT FOR MY KING AND MY COUNTRY--  
I HARDLY CAN WAIT TO BEGIN--

SERGEANT

HE'S HOPING THAT SOMEWHERE  
OUTSIDE OF HIS COUNTRY  
HE MIGHT FIND A GIRL WHO'LL GIVE IN--

SOLDIERS

OH, WE'VE REASONS FOR BEING A SOLDIER--  
WE'VE PLENTY OF REASONS IN STORE--  
YOU MAY THINK THEY'RE SOLELY  
FOR FIGHTING NAPOLEON,  
BUT WE HAVE REASONS GALORE--

3rd SOLDIER

I LEFT MY POSITION AS SEXTON--  
WITH GODLY DEVOTION AFIRE--

SERGEANT

HE LEFT WHEN THEY FOUND  
HE WAS JUST AS DEVOTED  
TO ALL OF THE BOYS IN THE CHOIR--

4th SOLDIER

I MAY HAVE TO FALL IN A BATTLE--  
IF SO, I'LL FALL BRAVELY, I HOPE--

SERGEANT

THEY GAVE HIM A CHOICE--  
HE COULD FALL IN A BATTLE,  
OR FALL FROM THE END OF A ROPE--

SOLDIERS

OH, THE REASON, THE REASON WE'RE SOLDIERS--  
FOR JOINING THIS SPIRITED THROG--  
FOR LEAVING OUR SWEETHEARTS  
WITH SAD, INCOMPLETE HEARTS,  
ARE REASONS BOTH NOBLE AND STRONG--

5th SOLDIER

I'LL GO INTO BATTLE UNFLINCHING--  
I'LL FACE DEATH WITH RESOLUTE JAW--

SERGEANT

HE'D RATHER FACE DEATH  
THAN HIS WIFE, SEVEN CHILDREN,  
NINE COWS, AND A MOTHER-IN-LAW--

6th SOLDIER

I JOINED TO DISCOVER THE COURAGE  
THAT MAKES US ALL PROUD TO BE MALES--

SERGEANT

HE JOINED WHEN HIS WIFE  
DOWN IN BRIGHTON DISCOVERED  
THE WIFE THAT HE HAD UP IN WALES--

ALL  
OH, THE REASON, THE REASON WE'RE SOLDIERS  
MAY BE EITHER SPLENDID OR SMALL--  
WHATEVER THE REASON,  
WHEN FIGHTING'S IN SEASON,  
WE DON'T NEED A REASON AT ALL!

Scene 7

PHOEBE's BEDROOM. PHOEBE sits very quietly as SUSAN paces nervously.

SUSAN  
Sixty pounds a year! How on earth are we to live on that?  
Why, a quarter loaf has just gone up to one and tenpence!  
Sixty pounds! That's only six pounds a month!

PHOEBE  
Five.

SUSAN  
Are you sure?  
(PHOEBE nods)  
We're paupers! Maybe Brother James--  
(PHOEBE shakes her head emphatically)  
No, I suppose not. James has never helped us--he wouldn't help us now.

PHOEBE  
A school.

SUSAN  
What?

PHOEBE  
A little school--for genteel children only, of course. I would do most of the teaching.

SUSAN  
You a schoolmistress! Phoebe of the Ringlets! Everyone would laugh.

PHOEBE  
I shall hide the ringlets in a cap like yours. People will soon forget them, Susan. I shall try to look staid and to grow old quickly. The quicker the better, I think. It will not be so hard--

SUSAN  
There were other gentlemen--they were attracted by you, Phoebe, but you turned from them--

PHOEBE  
I didn't want them.

SUSAN  
There'll be others.

PHOEBE  
No, dear, never speak to me of that any more.  
(remembers suddenly)  
I let him kiss me!

SUSAN  
You couldn't stop him.

PHOEBE

Oh, I could have--I could have. I wanted him to do it. Never speak to me of others after that. Maybe he saw that I wanted it, and only did it to please me. But I--I loved him. He didn't love me, and--and I let him kiss me. Oh, Susan I could bear all the rest, but--but I've been unladylike--

(SHE buries her face in her hands)



Scene 8

EXTERIOR QUALITY STREET. As the lights fade on SUSAN and PHOEBE, the sound of drums and fife are heard. Loud at first, then gradually becoming distant but still audible. PATTY, MISS WILLOUGHBY, HENRIETTA and FANNY and OTHER WOMEN have appeared. They form a military style formation.

[14] REPRISE 3: QUALITY STREET - INTERMEZZO

## WOMEN

WITH SOUND OF DRUM AND STAMPING OF FEET  
THEY WENT TO MEET THEIR FATE,  
AND WE WERE LEFT ON QUALITY STREET  
TO WAIT--

THAT MEN ARE BRAVE ON QUALITY STREET  
THOSE FRENCH SHALL QUICKLY SEE--  
BUT JUST AS BRAVE ON QUALITY STREET  
ARE WE--

WHILE THERE SHALL BE NO LAUGHING,  
THERE SHALL ALSO BE NO TEARS--  
WITH HEADS HELD HIGH, WE'LL COUNT THE DAYS,  
THOUGH MONTHS MAY TURN TO YEARS--

Ten years are passing. The music of "A YEAR" accompanies the change of many seasons. Eventually, it is interrupted by a distant bugle. MISS WILLOUGHBY & FANNY (without HENRIETTA) appear. There is a noticeable change in their fashion. PATTY appears with THE SERGEANT, eager to spread the news.

## PATTY

TO WATERLOO OUR WELLINGTON'S FLOWN,  
OH, HE OF MIGHTY HEART!

## SERGEANT

AND BONAPARTE IS TOTALLY  
BLOWN APART!

## MISS W

I'M PLEASED AS PUNCH NAPOLEON'S BEAT--  
THAT MAN WAS SUCH A BORE!  
(to FANNY)  
NOW WE'RE IN CHARGE OF QUALITY STREET  
ONCE MORE!

## ALL

THE WAR AT LAST IS OVER  
THERE'S REJOICING IN THE TOWN--  
THE SOLDIERS, AFTER TEN LONG YEARS,  
ARE BACK--

(VALENTINE has appeared. With him are  
other soldiers, some wounded, limping)

FANNY

AND CAPTAIN BROWN!

VALENTINE

SOME LIVES WERE LOST TO WIN A DEFEAT,  
SOME OTHERS RE-ARRANGED--  
(looking around)  
THOUGH WAR CAME NEAR ON QUALITY STREET,  
IT'S VERY CLEAR ON QUALITY STREET  
THAT NOTHING HERE ON QUALITY STREET  
HAS CHANGED.

(The drawing room has re-appeared)

Scene 9

THE DRAWING-SCHOOL ROOM: The drawing room has been transformed into a schoolroom. Desks, chairs, maps and other school paraphernalia crowd the room which is now dull and practical.

PHOEBE enters. Her curls are concealed underneath a plain cap. Her dress and manners are very prim. Life and sparkle have gone. She looks much older.

SHE goes to the window and looks out wearily, then sits. SHE places a pair of reading spectacles on her nose and begins marking papers.

SUSAN puts her head in the door.

SUSAN

Phoebe, dearest, how much is fourteen and seventeen?

PHOEBE

Thirty-one.

SUSAN

Thank you.

(SHE goes...and returns)

Phoebe, if a herring and a half costs three half-pence, how many for eleven?

PHOEBE

Eleven.

SUSAN

Oh, dear. William Smith says fifteen and he's so large. Do you think I should contradict him?

PHOEBE

Of course.

SUSAN

Maybe I'll just say there are differences of opinion. After all, no one can really be sure, dear.

PHOEBE

It's eleven. I once worked it out with real herrings.

SUSAN

Oh, dear, whatever will I do?

PHOEBE

Susan we must never let the children think we're afraid of them. Stamp strongly, speak ferociously and stare unflinchingly.

SUSAN

(timid)  
Yes, dear.

PHOEBE

Isabella's father insists on her acquiring algebra!

SUSAN

Oh, Phoebe! What is it exactly?

PHOEBE

Oh, it's  $X$  minus  $Y$  equals  $Z$ . Things like that. And all the time you're saying that they're equal, you feel in your heart "Why should they be?"

(In the distance, part of the SOLDIERS' CHORUS is heard a capella, gradually fading off. SUSAN and PHOEBE look at each other)

[15] REPRISE: REASONS

SOLDIERS

(a bit sloppy)  
OH, THE REASON, THE REASON WE'RE SOLDIERS--  
FOR JOINING THIS SPIRITED THRONG--  
FOR LEAVING OUR SWEETHEARTS  
WITH SAD, INCOMPLETE HEARTS,  
ARE REASONS BOTH NOBLE AND STRONG--

OH, THE REASON, THE REASON WE'RE SOLDIERS  
MAY BE EITHER SPLENDID OR SMALL--  
WHATEVER THE REASON,  
WHEN FIGHTING'S IN SEASON,  
WE DON'T NEED A REASON AT ALL!

(chorus repeats, as the voices fade)

SUSAN

Soldiers gathering for tonight's ball. It's not every year there's a Waterloo to celebrate.

PHOEBE

(lost in memory)  
A ball--

SUSAN

My Phoebe should be going.

PHOEBE

Oh, Susan--

SUSAN

You should! You should! Especially--

PHOEBE

Especially what?

SUSAN  
--since he'll be there. We haven't seen him for ten years,  
Phoebe.

PHOEBE  
Yes, ten years.

SUSAN  
Don't you want to see him dear?

PHOEBE  
Our old friend? Of course. But--not at a ball.

SUSAN  
Here, then. He's certain to call.

PHOEBE  
Oh, I don't want to see him.

SUSAN  
But you just said--

PHOEBE  
Susan! Look at me! When he sees me again, what will he see?

SUSAN  
Phoebe Throssel, of course. His dear friend.

PHOEBE  
But--but which Phoebe Throssel?

[16] PART 1: YOUNG AGAIN

PHOEBE (continued)  
TO BE THEN INSTEAD OF NOW--  
TO BE SHE INSTEAD OF ME--  
TO BE ABLE TO CHANGE A MIGHT-HAVE-BEEN  
TO A STILL-CAN-BE--

TO BE WAS INSTEAD OF IS--  
WOULDN'T THAT BE VERY FINE?  
IN A TWINKLING TO TURN AN OLD "GOODBYE"  
INTO "PLEASE BE MINE"--

IT WAS ONCE UPON A TIME--  
I WAS THERE INSTEAD OF HERE--  
AND THAT ONCE UPON A TIME  
STILL SEEMS IMPOSSIBLY,  
POSSIBLY NEAR--

THOUGH SHE IS INSTEAD OF WAS--  
THOUGH SHE'S NOW INSTEAD OF THEN--  
IF HE ONLY COULD SEE  
THAT SHE'S STILL ME,  
I'D BE YOUNG, YOUNG, YOUNG  
AGAIN.

(PATTY enters)

PATTY  
Mr. Valentine Brown.

PHOEBE  
(horrified)  
Oh, I can't. I can't.

(SHE rushes off)

SUSAN  
Phoebe!  
(VALENTINE enters, also older looking,  
but as handsome, maybe more so)  
Captain Brown.

VALENTINE  
Reports himself at home again, Miss Susan!

SUSAN  
Home? You think of this house as home?

VALENTINE  
When the other men talked of their homes I thought of this  
room.  
(HE looks around)  
But not, I confess, of maps--and books--and desks. She never  
mentioned all this in her letters. Why not?

SUSAN  
She didn't want to concern you. She didn't want you to think  
that we were--needful.

VALENTINE  
But you shouldn't be--not with the returns from that  
investment I advised.

SUSAN  
Money--doesn't seem to go as far as it once did.

VALENTINE  
You should have invested all your money, instead of only half.

SUSAN  
We--we never thought of that.

VALENTINE  
And so now you keep a school. And you teach--what?

SUSAN  
Oh, everything--even algebra, beginning next term.

VALENTINE  
(laughs)  
I would dearly love to watch Miss Susan teaching algebra!

SUSAN  
Me?--Never--it will have to be Phoebe. I don't even  
understand herrings.

VALENTINE

Phoebe... Phoebe of the Ringlets. How is she? Unchanged as you, I hope.

SUSAN

(unhappy)

Ah. Phoebe of the Ringlets. You needn't expect to see her, Captain Brown.

VALENTINE

Not see her! But--

(PHOEBE enters, perfectly controlled)

PHOEBE

Captain Brown. Welcome home.

VALENTINE

How do you do, ma'am.

PHOEBE

Very well, thank you, Captain. And you, sir, do you find it pleasant to be on Quality Street again?

VALENTINE

You must forgive me, ma'am. Ten years absence has dulled my brain. I'm sure we must have met and your voice is familiar, but I cannot recall...I do apologize.

SUSAN

Why, Captain.

(PATTY re-enters)

PATTY

Beg pardon, Miss Phoebe. Miss Isabella says may she tell her father that you will give her the algebra next term?

PHOEBE

Yes, Patty. She may.

(PATTY exits. There is an embarrassed silence)

VALENTINE

(unable to keep himself from staring)

Miss Phoebe--!

PHOEBE

Yes. I've changed a lot. I--I've not worn very well.

VALENTINE

(awkward)

We're both older.

(There is an unhappy pause)

PHOEBE

Tell me of yourself. We're so proud of the way you won your commission. Are you going to leave the Army now?

VALENTINE

Yes. I'm planning to return to my medical practice here on Quality Street. I--

(HE looks away)

Forgive me. I'm not in very good spirits.

PHOEBE

(quiet)

The change in me depresses you.

VALENTINE

I was hoping that you and Miss Susan would be going to the ball--

SUSAN

Ohh!

PHOEBE

But now you see that my dancing days are over.

VALENTINE

Ah, no!

PHOEBE

But you'll find many charming partners there. Many of them have been our pupils.

VALENTINE

(HE can't help it)

You look so tired!

PHOEBE

I have a headache today.

VALENTINE

Headache! You don't get them often, do you?

PHOEBE

(laughs)

Ever the doctor! No, not often, just--when I'm tired. But today's the last day of school.

SUSAN

And by tomorrow all these dreadful school things will be gone, and our room will be its old self again!

VALENTINE

This lovely room! Then I'll return tomorrow and it will really be old times!

(Another pause... THEY all look silently  
at each other for a moment)



VALENTINE (continued)

(salutes)  
Your servant, ladies.

(HE exits. There is a pause)

PHOEBE

I hate him! Oh, I hate him! I could hate him if he wasn't a hero!

SUSAN

My dear.

PHOEBE

He thought I was old because I'm tired, but he should not have forgotten! I'm only thirty! Susan, why does thirty seem so much more than twenty nine?

(addresses an imaginary VALENTINE)

How dare you look pityingly at me! Is it because I have had to work so hard? Is it a crime when a woman works? Because I've tried to be courageous--have I been courageous, Susan?

SUSAN

God knows you have.

PHOEBE

Being courageous gives me headaches--and tires my eyes. Alas, Miss Phoebe, all your charm has gone because you have a headache and your eyes are tired. Soon he'll be dancing with some foolish girl. "I vow, Miss Foolish, you're selfish and silly but you're sweet eighteen." "Oh, la, Captain Brown, what a tease you are!" That delights him, Susan--see how he waggles his silly head!

SUSAN

That's what men like, geese.

SUSAN

Quack, Quack.

(MUSIC starts)

PHOEBE

That is a duck, Susan.

SUSAN

Is it?

[17] GOOSE

PHOEBE

IT'S NO USE--  
IF YOU'RE NO GOOSE--  
NEITHER EMPTY-HEADED, NOR AT ALL OBTUSE--

THERE'S NO SWAIN--  
IT'S VERY PLAIN--  
WHO WOULD WANT A WOMAN WITH A WORKING BRAIN--

SUSAN

BUT IF YOU BABBLE,  
GUSH AND GABBLE,  
IT'S NOT HARD TO OBTAIN A HUSBAND--  
SO FOR ME,  
PLEASE BE A GOOSE!

PHOEBE

I'M A GOOSE  
SO TURN ME LOOSE  
AND I'LL HAVE THEM HANGING FROM  
A WEDDING NOOSE--

SUSAN

AS A RULE  
IF YOU'RE A FOOL,  
YOU'LL TAKE PRIZES AT THE  
WIN-A-HUSBAND SCHOOL--

BOTH

JUST TALK IN GIGGLES,  
WALK IN WIGGLES--  
YOU'LL HAVE PARTNERS FOR EVERY DANCE--  
SO COME WHAT MAY  
DO STAY A GOOSE!

PHOEBE

DON'T SPEAK A SINGLE SENTENCE  
THAT MAKES A BIT OF SENSE--

SUSAN

AND NEVER SHOW REPENTANCE  
FOR BEING QUITE DENSE--

PHOEBE

USE ANYTHING BUT ENGLISH--  
JUST BLEAT AND BLUSH AND BLINK--

SUSAN

AND CLAIM YOU'D GO ALL TINGLISH  
IF YOU HAD TO THINK--

PHOEBE

PLEASE AGREE  
TO SAY "DEAR ME"  
IF A WORD HAS SYLLABLES OF MORE THAN THREE--

SUSAN

HE WILL FLEE  
IF HE CAN SEE  
THAT YOU'RE CLEARLY EVERY BIT AS SMART AS HE--

BOTH

BUT WILLY-NILLY, BE A SILLY,  
AND YOU'LL GLIDE TO THE MARRIAGE ALTAR  
YOU CAN CHANGE YOUR FATE--  
IT IS NOT TOO LATE--  
LEARN TO BE A GREAT BIG GOOSE!

PHOEBE

If there were enough geese to go around, no woman of sense would ever get a husband.

SUSAN

My Phoebe is not only sensible, but lady-like!

(MUSIC starts)

PHOEBE

Oh, I'm tired of being lady-like! I'm still young, and to be lady-like isn't enough! I want to be bright and thoughtless just like Miss Foolish at the ball. My eyes are tired because for ten years they've seen nothing but maps and books and students and desks. Ten years! Ten years ago I went to bed a young girl and woke with this cap on my head. It's not fair. This isn't me, Susan, this is some other person. I want to be myself--

[18] PART 2: YOUNG AGAIN

TO BE THEN INSTEAD OF NOW--  
TO BE SHE INSTEAD OF ME--  
TO BE ABLE TO CHANGE A MIGHT-HAVE-BEEN  
TO A STILL-CAN-BE--

Susan, I have a picture of myself as I used to be. Sometimes I take it out, look at it, and say "Poor girl, they've all forgotten you--" But I remember--

TO BE WAS INSTEAD OF IS--  
WOULDN'T THAT BE VERY FINE?  
IN A TWINKLING TO TURN AN OLD "GOODBYE"  
INTO "PLEASE BE MINE"--

SUSAN

A picture? Did you ever show it to me? I don't remember it--

PHOEBE

I keep it locked away in my room. Would you like to see it? I'll bring it down--

IT WAS ONCE UPON A TIME--  
I WAS THERE INSTEAD OF HERE--  
AND THAT ONCE UPON A TIME  
STILL SEEMS IMPOSSIBLY,  
POSSIBLY NEAR--

(SHE breaks off, exits, passing PATTY  
who enters)

PATTY

Miss Phoebe seems excited.

SUSAN

Did you want something, Patty?

PATTY

I thought you and Miss Phoebe might want your ball gowns freshened.

SUSAN

(sad)  
No, Patty, we're not--  
(sudden)  
Patty! Were you listening at the door again when Captain Brown was here?

PATTY

Yes, ma'am.

SUSAN

How many times have we told you to stop doing that?

PATTY

Once or twice a day for the past fifteen or so years, ma'am.

SUSAN

And when are you going to obey?

PATTY

Probably never, ma'am. Would you like some tea, ma'am?

SUSAN

(thoughtful)  
No, thank you. Fifteen years. Good heavens, I hadn't realized. Patty--why have you never married?

PATTY

Maybe this year. This will be a great year for women, Miss Susan. Think of all the men coming home who've had their fill of glory. And who'll be here to greet them? Me, ma'am. And you.

SUSAN

Patty!

PATTY

(stubborn)  
Or Miss Phoebe. The pretty thing she was.

SUSAN

Do you remember? I don't think anyone else does, except maybe Miss Willoughby.

PATTY

Oh, ma'am--give her a chance--make her go to the ball!

SUSAN

She won't. She thinks she's too old.

PATTY

She's not too old--she--

(SHE breaks off suddenly, staring off.  
SUSAN follows her gaze)

(MUSIC starts)

[19] INCIDENTAL - Orchestra

SUSAN

(soft)

Ohh--

(PHOEBE enters, a young PHOEBE. SHE looks young and beautiful. SHE is wearing SUSAN's wedding gown. Her ringlets are tumbling, her figure youthful, her eyes light)

PATTY

Oh, Miss Phoebe--

SUSAN

Sister--

PHOEBE

Please leave us, Patty.

PATTY

(curtsies deferentially)

Yes, ma'am.

(PATTY backs from the room, unable to take her eyes from PHOEBE)

PHOEBE

Susan, this is the picture of my old self that I keep locked away in my room, and sometimes take out of its box to look at. This is the girl who kisses herself in the glass and sings and dances in the privacy of her room--until I put her away, frightened that you might hear.

SUSAN

How marvelous! Oh, Phoebe--

PHOEBE

Perhaps I shouldn't have done it, but it was so--so easy. You see, I've been here all along--

(SUSAN hugs her)

And tonight we'll have our own Waterloo celebration ball--just the two of us. One dance, Susan, for Phoebe of the Ringlets--just one--and I'll put her away in her box and never look at her again. Ma'am, may I have the honor?

(THEY dance. After a few moments, PATTY enters)

PATTY

(flustered)

Miss Susan-- Miss Phoebe--

PHOEBE

Not Miss Phoebe, Patty. Tonight I'm someone else. I'm--let me see--I know! Tonight I'm my niece!

PATTY

But--it's Captain Brown!

SUSAN  
Captain Brown! Oh, stop, Phoebe! Stop!

PATTY  
(suddenly commanding)  
No! Let him see her! Let him see her!

(VALENTINE enters, carries a small package)

VALENTINE  
I ventured to come back because--oh, I beg your pardon, Miss Susan. I thought Miss Phoebe was here with you.

(PHOEBE is surprised at his mistake, but, on a sudden impulse, curtsies to him and turns away)

PATTY  
It's my mistresses' niece, sir--from the country--

SUSAN  
(aghast)  
Patty!

PATTY  
(ignores SUSAN)  
--here on a visit.

VALENTINE  
Ah, yes.  
(HE bows to PHOEBE's back)  
How do you do?  
(to PATTY)  
Patty, I obtained this at the druggist's for Miss Phoebe's headache. It should be taken at once.

PATTY  
(takes package)  
Yes, sir.

VALENTINE  
Is she asleep?

PATTY  
No, sir. I'm sure she's wide awake.

VALENTINE  
This may soothe her.

PATTY  
I'll take it at once, sir.

(SHE starts to go)

SUSAN  
(horrified)  
Phoebe--

PHOEBE

(quick)  
Exactly. Aunt Phoebe always likes you there when she has to take medicine, you know that.

SUSAN

(after staring incredulously at PHOEBE for a moment)  
Yes--dear--

(PATTY and SUSAN exit)

VALENTINE

Perhaps I may present myself, Miss-- Miss--

PHOEBE

Miss--Livvy, sir.

VALENTINE

I'm Captain Brown, Miss Livvy, an old friend of your aunts.

PHOEBE

Captain Brown--

VALENTINE

I was sure you must be related. Indeed, for a moment the likeness--even the voice--

PHOEBE

La, sir, you mean Aunt Phoebe. Everyone says so--but it's no compliment.

VALENTINE

It would have been once. Niece--you must be their brother James' daughter.

PHOEBE

That's right.

VALENTINE

And you're in town for the ball?

PHOEBE

(she hadn't thought of that)  
Oh--! But--I have no invitation.

VALENTINE

I have two for your aunts. As your Aunt Phoebe isn't feeling well, your Aunt Susan must take you.

PHOEBE

Oh, yes--yes! Oh, no--I daren't.

VALENTINE

Why on earth not?

(SUSAN enters nervously)  
Miss Susan, I've introduced myself to your charming niece.

PHOEBE  
Aunt Susan, don't be cross with your Livvy--your Livvy, Aunt Susan. This gentleman has invitations for us for the ball. Of course, we cannot go--we dare not go--oh, Aunt, we must go!

SUSAN  
But my dear, my dear--

PHOEBE  
Aunt Phoebe wants me to go. And if I say she does, you know she does.

SUSAN  
But--

PHOEBE  
Oh, Auntie--stop talking!

VALENTINE  
I'll see that she has a good time, Miss Susan.

PHOEBE  
He means he'll find me dozens of dancing partners.

VALENTINE  
(to PHOEBE)  
I mean I'll be your partner.

PHOEBE  
See, Aunt Susan, he still dances--

VALENTINE  
Still, ma'am?

PHOEBE  
In spite of your--you know--

VALENTINE  
Indeed I don't!

PHOEBE  
Gray hairs.

VALENTINE  
There's not one in my head!

PHOEBE  
Then I beg your pardon.

VALENTINE  
You're teasing me. I don't mind, tease all you like. Only--come to the ball.

SUSAN  
We cannot, Captain. Truly--

(MUSIC starts)



PHOEBE  
Oh yes we can! We can--and we will!

(The lights fade on everyone but PHOEBE)

[20] PART 3: YOUNG AGAIN

PHOEBE (continued)  
I AM THEN INSTEAD OF NOW!  
I AM SHE INSTEAD OF ME,  
AND CAN CHANGE  
A MIGHT-HAVE-BEEN  
TO A STILL-CAN-BE!

POOR MISS PHOEBE'S MUCH TOO ILL!  
BUT MISS LIVVY, FEELING FINE,  
CAN RETURN  
AN OLD "GOODBYE"  
TO A "PLEASE BE MINE!"

IT IS ONCE UPON A TIME--  
I CAN SEE IT VERY CLEAR--  
AND THAT ONCE UPON A TIME  
NOW IS INCREDIBLY,  
CREDIBLY HERE!

SINCE I'VE JOURNEYED BACK TO WAS,  
AND AM LIVING NOW IN THEN,  
EVERYBODY WILL SEE  
MISS USED-TO-BE  
HAS GROWN  
YOUNG, YOUNG, YOUNG, YOUNG,  
YOUNG, YOUNG, YOUNG, YOUNG,  
YOUNG, YOUNG, YOUNG  
AGAIN!

END OF ACT ONE

[21] ENTR'ACTE - Orchestra

ACT TWO

Scene 1

EXTERIOR QUALITY STREET.

[22] REPRISE 4: QUALITY STREET

MISS WILLOUGHBY & FANNY  
MOST EVERYONE ON QUALITY STREET  
IS GOING TO THE BALL--  
MOST EVERYONE ON QUALITY STREET--

MISS W  
NOT ALL!

FANNY  
THE STANDARDS HERE ON QUALITY STREET  
ARE SADLY IN DECLINE--  
WHOSE STANDARDS HERE ON QUALITY STREET?

MISS W  
NOT MINE!

THE VIC'TRY CELEBRATION,  
I AM VERY MUCH AFRAID,  
INCLUDES BY INVITATION  
EVEN THOSE WHO ARE TRADE--

BOTH  
AND SO TONIGHT ON QUALITY STREET  
WE'LL PASS THE EVENING HOURS  
WITH TWO WHOSE RULES CAN ALMOST COMPETE  
WITH OURS!

As Patty admits MISS WILLOUGHBY,  
and FANNY to the drawing room,  
still containing its school  
paraphernalia, VALENTINE is  
worriedly studying the hair on his  
head in a small table mirror.  
Patty leaves as the ladies stare at  
him.

VALENTINE  
Damn!  
(The ladies give little cries. VALENTINE  
whirls)  
I beg your pardon, ladies. I didn't hear you. Why, it's Miss  
Willoughby and Miss Fanny, isn't it?

FANNY  
Oh, Mary, it's Captain Brown!

VALENTINE  
Your servant, ladies.

MISS W  
We heard you were back, Captain--

FANNY  
--and that you had so distinguished yourself at Waterloo!

VALENTINE  
Oh, that must have been another Brown--it's a common name.

MISS W  
But weren't you wounded, sir?

VALENTINE  
(pats himself)  
Not that I know of. Why do you ask?

MISS W  
Because just now you seemed to be--to be--

FANNY  
--examining a scalp wound!

VALENTINE  
(laughs)  
Oh, it's a wound right enough--  
(mock solemn)  
Ladies, I am finished!

(MUSIC starts)

FANNY  
Oh, Captain! What do you mean? Is it fatal?

VALENTINE  
I'm afraid so--

[23] ONE GRAY HAIR

VALENTINE (continued)  
WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOUR LIFE IS OVER?  
HOW DO YOU FACE PROFOUND DESPAIR?  
WHEN YOU HAVE LEARNED YOU'VE BEEN CURSED--  
WORST HAS AT LAST COME TO WORST--  
AND YOU ARE FACED WITH YOUR FIRST  
GRAY HAIR?

I'VE NEVER FLINCHED FROM A BATTLE'S DANGER--  
BRAVELY I'VE FOUGHT IN THE COMBAT'S GLARE--  
STARED AT THE END OF A GUN--  
STOOD WHEN I WANTED TO RUN--  
NOTHING'S AS BAD AS THAT ONE  
GRAY HAIR!

MISS W & FANNY  
DASHING CAPTAIN BROWN!  
MODEL OF MANLY VIRILITY!

VALENTINE

DASHING CAPTAIN BROWN!  
DASHING TOWARDS THE BRINK OF SENILITY--

BUT AFTER ALL, DOES IT REALLY MATTER,  
ONE LITTLE FOLLICLE GROWING THERE?  
TELL ME I'VE NOT SEEN IT RIGHT--  
SAY IT'S A TRICK OF THE LIGHT--  
WHAT DO YOU SEE?

(THEY look)

MISS W & FANNY

IT'S A BRIGHT  
GRAY HAIR!

VALENTINE

So you see, ladies, I have returned an old man.

MISS W

Ah, but you have returned, Captain, and that's the main thing.

FANNY

And surely we're all older--a little older--

MISS W

Or a great deal. Have you seen Miss Phoebe?

VALENTINE

(sad)

Yes.

(MISS W and FANNY exchange knowing  
glances)

But tell me--isn't there someone missing? Ah yes--your friend  
Miss Henrietta. Where is she?

FANNY

Poor thing.

VALENTINE

Not--?

FANNY

Oh, no. Married.

MISS W

A most unfortunate marriage.

FANNY

Oh, I warned her. After all, he was my best friend. I told  
her she was throwing herself away.

MISS W

Miss Fanny, my dear sister, has higher standards, I am happy  
to say. Learned, of course, from me.

VALENTINE

Of course. So poor Miss Henrietta has married a blackguard,  
has she?

FANNY

Worse. He's extremely good-looking, Captain Brown.

MISS W

And as I've warned over and over, a too-handsome man is sure to be a philanderer after marriage. He also has too much money.

FANNY

Much too much. Poor Henrietta's been dreadfully spoiled. It's quite ruined her.

MISS W

All those vulgar jewels.

FANNY

And the houses! City houses--country houses! She's quite worn herself out trying to run them all. Even with all the servants.

VALENTINE

I am indeed sorry to hear it.

MISS W

It suddenly occurs to me, Captain--you are here all by yourself. Where's Miss Phoebe?

VALENTINE

Lying down with a headache, I regret to say.

FANNY

Poor Phoebe. She does that quite a bit, I'm afraid.

MISS W

Then it will only be you, myself, and Miss Susan at cards tonight, Fanny.

FANNY

(eager)  
Unless you'd like to make a fourth, Captain Brown?

VALENTINE

I would be honored, but I'm going to the ball. And Miss Susan is going with me.

MISS W

Indeed!

VALENTINE

Oh, but there's no impropriety. Miss Livvy is coming with us.

FANNY

Miss Livvy?

MISS W

Who, pray, is Miss Livvy?

VALENTINE

Why, their charming niece.

(MISS W and FANNY stare at each other,  
then at VALENTINE)

[24] A NIECE

THEIR WHAT?	MISS W
THEIR NIECE--	VALENTINE
WHAT ON EARTH DOES HE	MISS W & FANNY
MEAN BY NIECE?	
(explains)	VALENTINE
THEIR BROTHER--	
(nods)	MISS W
JAMES THROSSEL--	
HIS DAUGHTER!	VALENTINE
HIS WHAT?	MISS W & FANNY
HER CHARM IS	VALENTINE
COLOSSAL!	
WHAT UTTER ROT!	MISS W
THEY HAVEN'T GOT	
A NIECE!	
BUT, OH, YES	VALENTINE
THEY HAVE--	
THEY'VE NOT!	MISS W & FANNY
YOUR OBSESSION WITH THIS RELATIVE	MISS W
MUST CEASE!	
FOR THERE WOULDN'T DARE BE	
SOMEONE HIDDEN FROM ME	
AND ESPECIALLY NOT	
A NIECE!	

(SUSAN enters dressed for the ball, but  
quite simply. SHE'S taken aback at the  
sight of MISS W and FANNY)

(faint)  
SUSAN  
Mary-- Fanny-- I--

MISS W

(cool)  
We have only just been advised of your intentions for this evening, Miss Susan.

FANNY

(also cool)  
We regret the intrusion.

SUSAN

Oh, please don't be angry. I know we had plans for the evening, but-- but--

MISS W

I didn't know that your brother James had any children, Miss Susan.

SUSAN

What? Oh-- James-- Children-- I-- oh, yes, indeed. Oh, yes. Dear me, quite a lot.

FANNY

Really? But you've never mentioned--

MISS W

(implacable)  
How many?

SUSAN

(in panic)  
Four.

MISS W & FANNY

Four!

SUSAN

Three sons and--and Livvy.

VALENTINE

Wait til you meet her, ladies. A lovely creature--and so like--

(As MISS W and FANNY are facing VALENTINE as HE speaks, THEY don't see PHOEBE enter. PHOEBE wears SUSAN's wedding gown as her ball gown, and a short, flowered veil, though her face is uncovered. PHOEBE takes one look at MISS W and FANNY and quickly veils her face as VALENTINE see her and MISS W and FANNY turn towards her)

VALENTINE (continued)

--ah, here she is!

(MISS W and FANNY stare hard at PHOEBE but can't really see her face)

MISS W

Well, Miss Susan, aren't you going to introduce us to your niece?

SUSAN

Oh-- yes-- of course. Livvy, dear, this is Miss Mary Willoughby, and her sister Miss Fanny Willoughby--

MISS W

How do you do?

VALENTINE

Ladies, forgive my impatience, but--the ball--

MISS W

One moment, Captain. Miss Livvy, how many brothers have you?

PHOEBE

(too quick)

Ah-- two.

(see SUSAN, frantically holding up three fingers)

Except for the unhappy Thomas, of course.

(SHE bows her head)

SUSAN

(also bows her head)

We never mention Thomas.



Scene 2

EXTERIOR QUALITY STREET AND AT THE BALL. During the number, a canvas pavilion comes into view, decorated and lit with lanterns. Moonlight enhances the scene. The pavilion is used as a retiring room. There is an opening at the back where ladies and soldiers enter and exit and through which we have glimpses of the festivities. Movement and dancing can be seen in silhouette through the canvas.

[25] MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE

VALENTINE

MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE  
IS PURE PERFECTION--  
ONE SELDOM SEES  
SO MANY CHARMS--  
WHEN FIRST SHE TURNED  
IN MY DIRECTION,  
I NEARLY FOUGHT A LOSING BATTLE  
WITH MY ARMS--

MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE  
IS COMING DANCING--  
AND AS WE GLIDE,  
AND AS WE WHIRL,  
I'LL FIND HER  
EVEN MORE ENTRANCING--  
AND BE SO GRATEFUL  
THAT MISS PHOEBE'S ELDER BROTHER  
HAD A GIRL!

PATTY

MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE,  
IT'S MY PREDICTION,  
WOULD BE THE TOAST  
OF ANY BALL!

MISS WILLOUGHBY

MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE  
IS SURELY FICTION--

MISS W & FANNY

WE SIMPLY DON'T BELIEVE A WORD  
WE'VE HEARD AT ALL!

(THEY exit)

PHOEBE

THIS VERY NIGHT  
I'M GOING DANCING

VALENTINE

AND AS SHE MOVES  
IN ALL HER POISE,  
I'LL FIND IT MORE AND MORE  
ENTRANCING  
THAT PHOEBE'S ELDER BROTHER  
DIDN'T WANT TO SETTLE  
JUST FOR BOYS!

SUSAN

(to PHOEBE)  
YOU'RE NOT MY NIECE!  
YOU'LL CAUSE A SCANDAL!

PHOEBE

I'VE LOST MY FEAR!

SUSAN

YOU'VE LOST YOUR MIND!

PATTY

NO OTHER GIRL  
CAN HOLD A CANDLE  
TO OUR MISS PHOEBE  
WHEN SHE'S STUBBORNLY INCLINED!

(PATTY exits in the opposite direction  
of the others. By now the BALL is in  
progress)

PHOEBE

MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE  
WILL BE ENTRANCING  
FOR JUST TONIGHT--  
BUT NEVER FEAR--  
WHEN SHE HAS HAD  
HER FILL OF DANCING,  
YOU'LL SEE MISS PHOEBE'S  
ELDER BROTHER'S LOVELY DAUGHTER  
DISAPPEAR--

MEN

MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE  
IS QUITE DELIGHTFUL--  
SHE'S STEALING HEARTS  
BOTH LEFT AND RIGHT--

WOMEN

THAT AWFUL NIECE  
IS TRULY FRIGHTFUL!  
NOT ONE OF US HAS HAD A SINGLE DANCE  
ALL NIGHT!

ALL

MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE  
HAS NOT STOPPED DANCING--  
JUST SEE HER GLIDE!  
JUST SEE HER WHIRL!

MEN & VALENTINE

WE FIND HER MORE AND MORE  
ENTRANCING,  
AND FEEL SO GLAD  
MISS PHOEBE'S ELDER BROTHER  
HAD A GIRL!

WOMEN

MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE--  
WE CERTAINLY HOPE THAT  
WE SOON SEE THE LAST OF

ALL

MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE!

Scene 3

IN THE CANVAS PAVILION AT THE BALL.  
At the end of the number, SUSAN is seated, distraught and nervous. TWO OFFICERS are hovering on either side of her. Nearby, TWO LADIES are eyeing the OFFICERS. THEY are clearly annoyed, alternating between watching the dancers through the opening in the canvas and looking at the OFFICERS.

1st LADY

(looks off)  
Just look at her! It's revolting!

2nd LADY

(also looks off)  
It's a scandal! She's dancing with one, talking with a second and flirting with a third!

1st OFFICER

(to 2nd Officer)  
Leave us!

2nd OFFICER

I have as much right to stay near Miss Susan as you do.

1st OFFICER

I've been here longer.

SUSAN

You've been here almost all evening! Why, I should like to know?

1st OFFICER

Because you're her aunt, ma'am. I shall never leave you, never!

(SUSAN stares at him)

It's a scheme of mine, you see, by which I hope to soften her heart. I'm not clever, so I had to invent something easy.

SUSAN

What are you talking about?

1st OFFICER

Her affection for you, ma'am, is beautiful to see, and if she could be persuaded that I seek her hand from a passionate desire to have you for my Aunt Susan--do you perceive anything hopeful in my scheme, ma'am?

SUSAN

No, sir, I do not.

1st LADY

(to 2nd OFFICER)  
La, sir, I have not danced with you once this evening.

2nd OFFICER

No, you haven't.

(to SUSAN)

Can you tell me, ma'am, if Miss Livvy is affianced to Captain Brown?

SUSAN

(firm)

No, she is not.

2nd OFFICER

Then by what right does he interfere? Your lovely niece had consented to accompany me to the garden to look at the moon--

2nd LADY

The moon!

1st LADY

The minx!

2nd OFFICER

--and now Captain Brown forbids it! It's infamous!

2nd LADY

(to 2nd OFFICER, looking upward and pointing)

You can see the moon from here, sir.

2nd OFFICER

(after a glance up)

I believe not, ma'am.

SUSAN

I am happy he forbade her.

2nd OFFICER

Only because he himself is accompanying her!

1st OFFICER

Who cares about the moon! It's a dance I want!

2nd OFFICER

(glares at 1ST OFFICER)

Are you disparaging the moon, sir? If a certain female has been graciously pleased to signify approval of that orb, any slight cast upon the moon, sir, I shall regard as a personal affront!

1st OFFICER

(glaring back)

If ladies weren't present, you'd be looking at the moon--from your back!

SUSAN

Oh, sirs!

(PHOEBE enters, breathless, smiling, her eyes shining, the TWO OFFICERS hover adoringly)

PHOEBE  
Just think, Susan--I mean, Aunt Susan--another proposal--Major Linkwater--stout man, brown whiskers, fierce expression--he has rushed away to destroy himself.

1st OFFICER  
Miss Livvy, what about my dance?

2nd OFFICER  
And the moon? You're even more beautiful by moonlight.

1st OFFICER  
I say you're more beautiful in the full light of day.

PHOEBE  
(ponders)  
Could it be that I am equally beautiful day or night?

(MUSIC starts)

BOTH OFFICERS  
Oh, yes! Yes!

PHOEBE  
I wonder which of you really understands just how beautiful I am?

SUSAN  
(shocked)  
Livvy! Really!

[26] FLIRTATION

PHOEBE  
I HAVE SKIN LIKE--?

1st OFFICER  
MILK!

PHOEBE  
NO, IT'S MORE LIKE--?

2nd OFFICER  
SNOW!

PHOEBE  
I HAVE HAIR LIKE--?

2nd OFFICER  
SILK!

PHOEBE  
BUT--

1st OFFICER  
WITH SATIN'S GLOW!

PHOEBE  
I HAVE EYES AS--?

2nd OFFICER  
BLUE  
AS TWO EYES CAN BE!

1st OFFICER  
I'M AFRAID I SHALL HAVE TO AGREE!

PHOEBE  
YOU WOULD WALK THROUGH--?

1st OFFICER  
FLAME!

PHOEBE  
YOU WOULD SWIM THROUGH--?

2nd OFFICER  
FLOOD!

PHOEBE  
TO PROTECT MY NAME--

BOTH OFFICERS  
I WOULD SHED HIS BLOOD!

1st OFFICER  
I'D REMOVE HIS HEAD!

2nd OFFICER  
I WOULD KILL HIM TWICE!

PHOEBE  
OH, HOW VERY NICE!

TWO LADIES  
(eyeing the flirtation)  
IT'S CLEAR SHE CAN'T BE A LADY--  
HER IMMODESTY GIVES HER AWAY--  
AND SINCE SHE CAN'T BE A LADY,  
WHAT SHE IS WE'RE NOT PREPARED TO SAY--

SUCH LOW, DISGUSTING DEPORTMENT  
OUGHT TO SHOCK ANY MAN THROUGH AND THROUGH--  
BUT HER DISGUSTING DEPORTMENT  
QUITE DELIGHTS THEM, SO WE MUST  
NEVER, NEVER TRUST  
MEN--FOR THEY'RE DISGUSTING TOO!

1st OFFICER  
IF YOU SMILED AT ME--

2nd OFFICER  
I'D BE IN DESPAIR!  
IF YOU TOUCHED MY HAND--

1st OFFICER  
I WOULD TEAR MY HAIR!

PHOEBE

IF I SPURNED YOU BOTH,  
BUT WITH GENTLE TACT--?

BOTH OFFICERS

WE WOULD DIE IN A SUICIDE PACT!

TWO LADIES

OF COURSE, IT ALL MIGHT BE WITCHCRAFT--  
JUST A SPELL SHE CAN WEAVE WITH NO FUSS--  
IF IT TURNS OUT TO BE WITCHCRAFT,  
THOUGH IT COMES FROM DARKEST HELL,  
MAYBE SHE WILL TELL-  
TEACH A LITTLE SPELL  
TO US!

PHOEBE

(to TWO OFFICERS)

TO ACCEPT JUST ONE,  
I AM TRULY LOATH,  
AND IT ISN'T DONE  
TO SAY YES TO BOTH,  
SO I'LL MAKE MY CHOICE  
ON ANOTHER DAY--  
MEANWHILE--

(VALENTINE enters, looking for PHOEBE.  
SHE sees him and dismisses the TWO  
OFFICERS)

GO AWAY!

(The TWO OFFICERS leave disconsolately,  
trailed by the equally disconsolate TWO  
LADIES)

VALENTINE

Here you are! What happened to the old gentleman you were  
dancing with, Miss Livvy?

PHOEBE

If he's a gentleman of his word, Captain, he has shot himself  
by now.

VALENTINE

(to SUSAN)

Your niece has conquered every male heart tonight, Miss Susan.  
Aren't you pleased she's here?

SUSAN

I'm equally well pleased with Livvy here or--far away!

VALENTINE

(offers his arm to PHOEBE)

The moon--and the garden--await.

PHOEBE

(takes his arm)

The moon and the garden. Tell me, Captain Brown, do I still  
remind you so much of my Aunt Phoebe?



VALENTINE  
The resemblance is fading fast--

(THEY exit, but in only a few seconds,  
during which SUSAN is shaking her head  
sadly, THEY return, PHOEBE in  
VALENTINE's arms. SUSAN jumps up)

SUSAN  
Dear heaven, what's happened!

VALENTINE  
The moment we entered the garden she fainted.

(HE seats her gently)

SUSAN  
I'll get some water.

VALENTINE  
No, I'll go. I want to fetch my bag from the carriage. It's  
just in the driveway--

(HE hurries off. PHOEBE sits up  
instantly)

PHOEBE  
They're here!

SUSAN  
(astonished)  
Who's here? Phoebe, dear, are you all right?

PHOEBE  
Yes, I'm fine--but I won't be if they find me--

SUSAN  
Who?

PHOEBE  
Miss Willoughby and Miss Fanny.

SUSAN  
(horrified)  
But that's impossible! They never go to balls!

PHOEBE  
(grim)  
They went to this one. As soon as I saw them, I dropped to  
the ground. I don't think they saw me.

SUSAN  
They suspect. If they find you here--! Oh, Phoebe, the  
scandal!

PHOEBE  
I know. A little happiness went to my head like brandy! Oh,  
if there's a scandal we won't be able to open the school. How  
wonderful!

SUSAN

Phoebe!

PHOEBE

I don't know what I'm saying!

SUSAN

It's all his fault.

PHOEBE

(angry)  
Yes, yes it is! To weary of Phoebe--to turn from her with a "Bah, you make me feel old!" and become enamored in a night of a thing like this!

(SHE indicates herself)  
A mindless, foolish, empty-headed, simpering girl! Oh, how could he?! How could he?!

SUSAN

(quiet)  
Sister--you still love him.

PHOEBE

I did love him all those years, though I never spoke of it to you. I love him because he was noble--but he isn't, he isn't--and Livvy found it out in an hour.

(VALENTINE enters hurriedly, carrying his bag)

VALENTINE

Miss Livvy! You've recovered!

PHOEBE

(instantly LIVVY)  
La, sir, it was nothing! Too much dancing--though, indeed, I don't believe there can be such a thing.

VALENTINE

I'll take you home. You, also, Miss Susan--

SUSAN

I can't. I promised to chaperone some young ladies during supper. But do take Livvy home safely, Captain, and quickly, please.

VALENTINE

My honor, ma'am. Miss Livvy!

PHOEBE

(takes his arm)  
Thank you, Captain Brown. Oh, and Aunt Susan, if you--see anyone--

SUSAN

(firm)  
I shall say you are at home--indisposed.

(As VALENTINE and PHOEBE exit on one side, MISS WILLOUGHBY appears on the other)

MISS W  
Susan! Was that not Miss Livvy I just saw leaving?

SUSAN  
No, Mary. It most definitely was not.

[27A] SCENE CHANGE & DANCE - Orchestra

Scene 4

A VICTORY CELEBRATION DANCE in another part of the town. The tavern is full SOLDIERS and SERVANT GIRLS, along with PATTY and THE RECRUITING SERGEANT. There is dancing in progress, drinking and general revelry. After a few moments, PHOEBE and VALENTINE appear, watching unnoticed. PHOEBE is delighted with what she sees, but VALENTINE is uneasy.

VALENTINE

Miss Livvy, I've kept my part of the bargain--though how I allowed you to persuade me, I cannot imagine! You've seen a soldier's dance. Now, please allow me to escort you home.

PHOEBE

But it's so exciting! None of the balls I've ever gone to were like this!

VALENTINE

I should hope not! And if your aunts ever discovered that I took you to this one, they should forbid me the house forever-- and quite right. Miss Livvy, I must insist--

PATTY

(who has spotted PHOEBE)  
Miss Phoebe!

PHOEBE

(quick)  
--is still at home, Patty, and knows that I'm here.

VALENTINE

Indeed she doesn't!

PATTY

Oh, sir, if Miss-- Miss--

PHOEBE

(helpful)  
Livvy--

PATTY

--Livvy says that Miss Phoebe know she's here, you can be sure she does!

PHOEBE

(delighted)  
Patty! You've been drinking!

PATTY  
A wee drop, ma'am, just to celebrate Waterloo's victory at Wellington.  
(offers a cup)  
Have some.

VALENTINE  
Certainly not. Miss Livvy, I--

PHOEBE  
(intrigued)  
What is it?

PATTY  
Oh, just a little brandy, rum, and whiskey--with a bit of beer for flavor.

PHOEBE  
Dare I?

VALENTINE  
Absolutely not!

PATTY  
Oh, go on, ma'am--it's better than that swill you get at them balls, and I should know--I've made enough of it!

(PHOEBE drinks)

PHOEBE  
Why, it's delicious!  
(looks around)  
Oh, Patty, this is a wonderful place!

SERGEANT  
(approaches, bows)  
That it is, ma'am.  
(to VALENTINE)  
Evening, sir. Welcome to our soldiers' dance.

VALENTINE  
Thank you, Sergeant, but we must be on our way.

PHOEBE  
Oh no!

SERGEANT  
No, indeed, sir. Let the lady have a bit of fun.

(MUSIC starts)

A SOLDIER  
Right, sir! We've all been orderlies or servants at the kind of ball this lady is used to--so we know how dull they are!  
(to PHOEBE)  
Tell me, ma'am--have you ever been pinched at one of 'em?

PHOEBE  
 (wide-eyed)  
 No, never!

SOLDIER  
 Well, you will be tonight!

(and PHOEBE's delightful gasp tells us  
 that SHE now has)

[27B] AN UPPER CLASSES BALL

SOLDIERS  
 THERE'S NO PINCHING, THERE'S NO KISSING,  
 AND WHAT MAY BE WORST OF ALL--  
 THEY DON'T EVEN KNOW IT'S MISSING  
 AT AN UPPER CLASSES BALL!

GIRLS  
 NOTHING EVER SEEMS TO HAPPEN  
 THAT IS WORTH A GIRL'S RECALL--  
 MEN DON'T EVEN NEED A SLAPPIN'  
 AT AN UPPER CLASSES BALL!

PATTY  
 SEE EACH LADY'S OSTRICH FEATHERS  
 WAVING DAINTY AS SHE COMES--  
 THERE MUST BE A-SHV'RING SOMEWHERE  
 LOTS OF NAKED OSTRICH BUMS!

SOLDIERS  
 IN THE BALLROOM OR THE CARRIAGE  
 CHAPERONES ARE SEEING ALL--

A GIRL  
 TRY TO TRAP A MAN IN MARRIAGE  
 AT AN UPPER CLASSES BALL!

(The dancing resumes, in which PHOEBE is  
 taught the intricacies of drinking,  
 flirting, dancing lower-classes style,  
 and general carousing)

SERGEANT  
 WHEN OUR BETTERS TRY TO FROLIC,  
 THEY DON'T HAVE MUCH FUN AT ALL--  
 FROLIC STAYS NON-ALCOHOLIC  
 AT AN UPPER CLASSES BALL!

GIRLS  
 SEE THE GENTRY, SEE THEM TALKING,  
 STROLLING BY A GARDEN WALL--  
 THEY THINK LAWNS ARE MADE FOR WALKING  
 AT AN UPPER CLASSES BALL!

A SOLDIER  
GENTLEMAN MUST BOW TO LADIES,  
MAKING LADIES BEND THE KNEE--  
SO THEY DO A LOT OF BOWING  
JUST TO SEE WHAT THEY CAN SEE!

ALL  
THOUGH WE'RE NEITHER SMART NOR CLEVER,  
WE WON'T NEED MUCH TIME AT ALL--  
YOU'LL FORGET THAT YOU WERE EVER  
AT AN UPPER CLASSES BALL!

(More dancing brings the number to an  
exhausted finish, with Phoebe in the  
middle of it all)

[28] SCENE CHANGE - Orchestra

Scene 5

THE DRAWING-SCHOOL ROOM. SUSAN is peering anxiously out the window, pacing worriedly, then peering again. SHE gasps and goes to the door, staring as a still-dancing PHOEBE comes gaily in, followed by a penitent VALENTINE.

VALENTINE

Please forgive me, Miss Susan. I--I felt that a ride in the cool evening air might be a restorative for Miss Livvy--

SUSAN

Indeed. I can see that's she's quite restored, but it's been hours!

PHOEBE

Oh, no, dear Aunt Susan, surely it's only been a few minutes!

SUSAN

I think we had best retire, Livvy. If you'll excuse us, Captain--

VALENTINE

I beg a few more minutes indulgence, ma'am. I--I have something to say to Miss Livvy--

SUSAN

But it's so late--

PHOEBE

(gazes at VALENTINE)

Aunt, I--I think I should like to hear what Captain Brown has to say.

(to SUSAN)

Please--

SUSAN

Oh, dear, I--very well. But quickly, please! And quietly. I wouldn't want Patty disturbed.

PHOEBE

(laughs)

We'll never disturb Patty! She's much too far from here--

(SUSAN stares)

--in dreamland, or course!

(SUSAN exits uneasily)

VALENTINE

(after a long appraising look at PHOEBE)

You are an extremely pretty, girl, but you're a shocking flirt.

PHOEBE

Fiddle-dee-dee.



VALENTINE

Though I admit that if there's a rapier in your one hand, there's a handkerchief in the other, ready to bind their wounds.

PHOEBE

(contemptuous)  
I've not observed that they bleed much.

VALENTINE

One may, perhaps.

PHOEBE

Perhaps I wish to see him bleed! Who is this poor wounded man?

VALENTINE

I've no idea.  
(VALENTINE doesn't see her astonishment)  
Nor, I'm sure, have you, or else you'd be gentler in your conduct. But someday, Miss Livvy, the right man will come. What will you do then? Hide your behavior from him? There'll be plenty of others to tell him, if you don't. And if you did tell him, ma'am, his face would change as you did so.  
(gently)  
I'm speaking as a friend, of your aunts as well as yours.

PHOEBE

(unhappy)  
I see.

VALENTINE

This has been hard to say, and I've done it badly. But, believe me, Miss Livvy, it's not the flaunting flower men love, but the modest violet.

PHOEBE

You dare to say that!

VALENTINE

Yes, I do. And when you know what love really is--

PHOEBE

Love! What do you know of love?

VALENTINE

Enough to know when I'm in love myself.  
(SHE stares at him)  
And with someone who was once very like you. I hadn't meant to tell you, but why shouldn't I? Yes, I love your Aunt Phoebe. I've always loved her, I think.

PHOEBE

(bitter)  
You think?!

VALENTINE

I want to be honest. Never in all that time had I thought myself in love. Your aunts were my dear friends, and that was all, or so I believed. Then today, when I saw her again, all my memories of her came rushing back. Phoebe of the Ringlets--her laughter--her playful ways. I remember so much!

(MUSIC starts)

PHOEBE

(quiet)

Do you remember a walk you once took with her--when it was raining?

VALENTINE

Raining? No.

PHOEBE

She told me all about it once.

[29] SURELY YOU RECALL

PHOEBE (continued)

IT WAS LONG AGO--  
AN EVENING IN SEPTEMBER--  
SHE WAS WALKING BY YOUR SIDE,  
AND THE AIR WAS SWEET  
ON THAT LOVELY NIGHT--  
SURELY YOU RECALL?

IT WAS LONG AGO,  
BUT SHE CAN STILL REMEMBER  
FEELINGS THAT SHE TRIED TO HIDE--  
THEN A JOY COMPLETE,  
UNFORESEEN AND RIGHT--  
SHE CAN STILL RECALL--

THERE  
CAME A GENTLE RAIN--  
AND IN THAT GENTLE RAIN  
SUDDENLY YOU KISSED HER--

IT WAS LONG AGO--  
A FLAME BECAME AN EMBER--  
THEN THE EMBER ALSO DIED--  
BUT SHE'S NOT  
YET FORGOT--  
SURELY YOU RECALL?

VALENTINE

(quiet)

I'd forgotten.

PHOEBE

(flares)

She let you kiss her because she loved you and she thought you loved her! But you didn't. You kissed her because her face was wet--that's what you told her. How often do you think that shameful memory has made her face wet since? The face you love, Captain Brown, you were the first to give it pain. The tired eyes--how much less tired they might be if she had never known you!

PHOEBE (continued)

You once called her a garden--yes, she told me that, too. And now you think you can bring back the bloom to that faded garden, and all the pretty airs and graces that fluttered around it once like birds? Bring them back to her if you can--it was you who took them away! And now you dare to say you love her? Liar! Liar!

VALENTINE

I do love her--and it was Miss Livvy who made me know it!

PHOEBE

(incredulous)

Me??

VALENTINE

Yes. It's odd--yet very simple. You, who so resembled her as she once was--you bewitched me. Only for a time, but yes, you did. How like her, I first thought, but finally I realized you were nothing like her! Miss Phoebe--even when she was as young and beautiful as you--more beautiful!--would never have flirted or teased or fiddle-dee-deed or played foolish, love-sick men against each!

(VALENTINE doesn't notice that every word is destroying PHOEBE)

She would never have cavorted like a guttersnipe or persuaded a fool like myself to lie for her to her worried aunt. God, I used to tease Miss Phoebe for being so lady-like, for living every moment with such--such joyous dignity! A kiss from a man who she thought didn't love her wouldn't have worried you for an instant! But Miss Phoebe is a lady--was, is, and will be to her grave. And the more I looked at you this evening, the more I saw her--and that is how I fell in love with her at a ball she wasn't even at!

PHOEBE

(desolate)

You don't know her at all. She's not what you think!

VALENTINE

You said she loved me once. I'll beg her forgiveness for the wasted years, and she'll love me again.

PHOEBE

Never!

VALENTINE

"Miss Phoebe," I'll say, "Miss Phoebe, most beautiful, most estimable of women, let me take care of you--"

PHOEBE

Ha, beautiful!! Aunt Phoebe!

VALENTINE

"Marry me, Miss Phoebe," I'll say, "and instead of growing older, you'll grow younger."

PHOEBE

Can't be--can't be!

She will.

VALENTINE

Never.

PHOEBE

VALENTINE

You're severe, Miss Livvy, but that's because your fond of her, and I admire you for it.

PHOEBE

Fond of her!? I despise her. If you only knew what she really is!

VALENTINE

I know what you really are.

PHOEBE

That paragon who's never been guilty of the slightest deviation from strict propriety! That--that garden!

VALENTINE

Miss Livvy! For shame!

PHOEBE

That garden's been destroyed! It's all weeds and brambles!

VALENTINE

What do you mean?

PHOEBE

I'll tell you--

VALENTINE

I'm waiting.

PHOEBE

I--I can't.

VALENTINE

No, of course you can't. There's nothing to tell.

PHOEBE

There is, there is! Only, it's too--terrible--

(SUSAN enters)

SUSAN

Please, Livvy-- Captain-- it's so late--  
(SHE looks from one to the other)  
What is too terrible?

VALENTINE

I'll leave her to tell you, Miss Susan--if she dares.  
(to PHOEBE, cold)  
Good night, Miss Livvy. And--and I devoutly hope that those are the last words I shall ever have to say to you.

(HE goes)

SUSAN

Phoebe--dearest--what awful thing has he said to you?

PHOEBE

Not awful! Wonderful! Susan, it's Phoebe he loves! Me! Not  
Livvy! Me! Me! But--but--

(SHE bursts into tears)

--it's too late!

[30] SCENE CHANGE - Orchestra

Scene 6

THE KITCHEN. THE SERGEANT is making passionate love to PATTY, but she's obviously lost in thought.

SERGEANT  
Ye gods, woman, in the fifteen years you've been accepting my kisses, you were sometimes less than passionate, but at least I always knew you were in the room!

PATTY  
Oh, I know--I'm sorry--but it's Miss Phoebe. She'll grieve herself to death over this Livvy business.

SERGEANT  
I still can't believe it--that wild, dancing creature--Miss Phoebe! That nice old maid--

PATTY  
She's not old! And she's not an old maid--at least not yet.

SERGEANT  
All right, all right. She's always been the kindest lady on Quality Street, I'll say that for her.

PATTY  
And now she's going to be the unhappiest--for the rest of her life. It's not right. He loves her--and she loves him--but she won't have him. I don't understand--

SERGEANT  
Well, it's the same with us, and I don't understand! Fifteen years, Patty! Marry me--

PATTY  
You're not who I was waiting for.

SERGEANT  
Ah! You said "was." Not "who I am waiting for," but "who I was waiting for"--

PATTY  
So?

SERGEANT  
So you're not waiting any more, and you know it! Come on, Patty--let there be one less old maid on Quality Street.

PATTY  
You're not handsome enough--or smart enough--or rich enough--or--

SERGEANT  
(exasperated)  
Well, you're not exactly who I've been waiting for either!

PATTY  
(taken aback)  
I'm not?

SERGEANT  
Not by half--but what's the difference?

PATTY  
(after a moment, thoughtful)  
Does anyone ever get all they want?

(MUSIC starts)

SERGEANT  
Ay, in the hereafter--

PATTY  
Oh, sergeant--  
(SHE kisses him)  
--that's far too long to wait--

SERGEANT  
Call me Albert--

[31] SETTLE

SERGEANT (continued)  
A BIG-BOSOMED  
HEAVY-HIPPED  
GODDESS OF A WOMAN  
HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY VISION AND MY PLAN--  
BUT THE YEARS ARE GETTING FEW, I GUESS--  
SO IT'S TIME TO SETTLE FOR LESS--

PATTY  
A TALL, BRAWNY  
MASCULINE  
STATUE OF ADONIS  
HAS ALWAYS BEEN MY IDOL OF A MAN--  
BUT I'M GETTING VERY COLD OF NIGHTS,  
SO I THINK I'LL LOWER MY SIGHTS--

SERGEANT  
A LIFETIME QUICKLY FLIES--  
YOU LEARN TO COMPROMISE--  
GO FOR WOOL IF YOU CAN'T GET SILK--  
IF THERE'S NOT ANY CREAM, TAKE MILK--

PATTY  
A WISE AND A  
WONDERFUL  
HUSBAND AND COMPANION  
IS WHAT I HAD IN MIND WHEN I BEGAN,  
BUT MY HEALTH IS NOT  
WHAT IT USED TO BE--

SERGEANT  
I'M A LITTLE DEAF,  
AND I'VE GOT THIS KNEE--

PATTY

AND WE NEITHER LOOK  
LIKE WE USED TO LOOK--

SERGEANT

BUT I STILL CAN WORK--

PATTY

AND I STILL CAN COOK--

BOTH

SO WE'D BETTER DO  
WHAT WE'D BETTER DO,  
WHICH IS GLADLY SETTLE  
FOR YOU!

SERGEANT

A TRULY HUNGRY MAN  
WILL DO THE BEST CAN,  
AND HE'LL STILL HAVE A LOVELY TIME,  
THOUGH THE BEEF MAY BE PAST ITS PRIME--

PATTY

I LONGED FOR  
A CHIVALROUS  
KNIGHT IN SHINING ARMOR  
WHO'D COME ALONG AND CARRY ME AWAY--  
BUT WHAT CAME ALONG  
IS WHAT'S STANDING THERE--

SERGEANT

WELL IT'S YEARS SINCE YOU'VE  
BEEN A MAIDEN FAIR--  
WHILE I'M STILL THE MAN  
THAT I USED TO BE--

PATTY

MAYBE NOT QUITE ALL,  
BUT ENOUGH FOR ME--

BOTH

SO WE'D BETTER DO  
WHAT WE'D BETTER DO,  
WHICH IS GLADLY SETTLE  
FOR YOU!

(THEY kiss)

SERGEANT

I love you, my girl! I'd do anything for you!

PATTY

There's one thing you can do--

SERGEANT

What?

PATTY

(grim)  
Murder Miss Livvy!



Scene 7

EXTERIOR QUALITY STREET. FANNY and  
MISS WILLOUGHBY are staring hard at  
SUSAN's and PHOEBE's house.

[32] REPRISE 5: QUALITY STREET

FANNY

THE NEWS HAS SPREAD ON QUALITY STREET--  
MISS LIVVY'S CAUGHT A CHILL--  
MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE ON QUALITY STREET  
LIES ILL--

MISS WILLOUGHBY

THERE IS NO SKILL ON QUALITY STREET  
AS MEDICAL AS MINE  
TO HELP AVOID A TRULY COMPLETE  
DECLINE--

BOTH

YET THOUGH A FRIENDLY HAND WE GRANT--  
INDEED, A GREAT DEAL MORE--  
NO MATTER WHAT, WE SIMPLY CAN'T  
GET THROUGH MISS LIVVY'S DOOR--

MISS W

TILL WE GET IN, I'M HERE TO REPEAT,  
THERE ISN'T ANY DOUBT  
THAT SHE WILL NOT, FROM QUALITY STREET,  
GET OUT!

Scene 8

THE DRAWING ROOM. All the school paraphernalia are gone, and the room is as it was at the beginning. PHOEBE has reverted to her old maid persona and stands at the window with an algebra book, occasionally glancing out to the street.

[33] ONE OF ME (SOLILOQUY)

PHOEBE

OH LOOK, THERE'S MISS WILLOUGHBY OUT WALKING--  
HER DAY NOW IS HAPPILY COMPLETE--  
AS ALWAYS SHE'S DOING ALL THE TALKING  
ON QUALITY STREET--

FOR YEARS I'VE BEEN STANDING AT THIS CURTAIN  
AND WATCHED AS THOSE YEARS HAVE HURRIED BY--  
AND NOW I AM ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN  
I'M HERE TIL I...

(suddenly angry, SHE turns away from the  
window)

PHOEBE--  
HE LOVES MISS PHOEBE--  
AND NOT MISS LIVVY--  
BUT I DON'T CARE!

PHOEBE--  
HE LOVES MISS PHOEBE--  
I KNOW HE SAID IT--  
FOR I WAS THERE--

COWARD--  
THE MAN'S A COWARD  
HE MIGHT HAVE TOLD ME  
RIGHT TO MY FACE--

BUT THEN, OF COURSE, HE DID--  
HIS FEELINGS WEREN'T HID--  
THE QUESTION IS, WHOSE FACE HE TOLD?

BUT NOW IT'S FAR TOO LATE--  
IT'S PHOEBE HE WILL HATE--  
AND SHE'LL GO ON JUST GROWING OLD!

LIVVY--  
THAT AWFUL LIVVY--  
I'D LIKE TO KILL HER  
FOR WHAT SHE'S DONE--

SHE MADE  
ME SEE THAT PHOEBE  
MAY BE A LADY,  
BUT NOT MUCH FUN--

WHEN HE  
FINDS OUT I'M LIVVY--  
I CANNOT STAND IT!  
I'LL GO INSANE!

PHOEBE (continued)

I THINK I'LL GO AWAY--  
FOREVER AND A DAY--  
AND HE'LL BE LEFT UPON A SHELF!

OH, IT WILL SERVE HIM RIGHT--  
I'LL FACE IT WITH DELIGHT--  
WITH LOTS OF TIME TO HATE MYSELF!

MEM'RIES--  
I'LL HAVE MY MEM'RIES--  
THE SUNDAY PICNICS,  
AND ALL THE REST--

PLEASURES--  
REMEMBERED PLEASURES  
WERE CLEARLY TREASURES,  
BUT QUITE THE BEST

(WERE) RINGLETS--  
MISS PHOEBE'S RINGLETS--  
HE LOVED THOSE RINGLETS,  
AND I LOVED HIM--

BUT WHAT AM I TO DO?  
NOT ONE OF ME IS TRUE--  
BUT ONE OF ME IS ALL THERE IS--

JUST ONE OF ME WAS BORN--  
JUST ONE IS LEFT TO MOURN  
THE ONE OF ME THAT'S ALWAYS HIS!

(SUSAN enters, gazing sadly at PHOEBE  
who pretends to study the algebra book.  
After a moment, PATTY appears)

PATTY

Miss Willoughby--

(SUSAN and PHOEBE exchange unhappy  
glances)

MISS WILLOUGHBY

(enters)  
I just ran across, Susan, to ask how Miss Livvy is.

SUSAN  
She is still very poorly, Mary.

MISS W  
Dear me. I think it must be a nervous disorder.

SUSAN  
(glib)  
Quite right. Accompanied by tremblings, flutterings, and  
spasms. Is it not, Phoebe?

PHOEBE  
(who's been gazing into the distance)  
What? Oh, yes--

MISS W  
That book seems to tire you, Phoebe.

SUSAN  
Indeed it should. It's that dreadful algebra that Phoebe will have to teach next term.

PHOEBE  
(trying to be light)  
I'm hoping to master chapter two before I begin teaching chapter one--but I doubt if I will.

MISS W  
(indicates closed door)  
I would so like to see her, poor thing.

SUSAN  
(goes to door)  
I'm sorry, Mary, but she requires complete rest.  
(opens door)  
Lie quite still, Livvy, my love--quite still.

(SUSAN exits)

MISS W  
Has Captain Brown been told of her illness?

PHOEBE  
She declines to see any physician.

MISS W  
Is this right, Phoebe? Everyone at the ball saw how taken he was with her. My dear, it is hard for you, I know, but have you any right to keep them apart?

PHOEBE  
Is that what Quality Street think I am doing?

MISS W  
Well--such a mysterious illness--and the curtains at her window always drawn.

SUSAN  
(pops her head through door, not seeing  
MISS W)  
Is she gone?

MISS W  
(insulted)  
Not yet, Susan, but I am now!

(MISS W exits indignantly)

SUSAN  
Oh, dear! Now I've insulted her.  
(PHOEBE suddenly puts her face in her hands)  
Oh, Phoebe, please stop! You've been unhappy for days. You'll make yourself ill.

PHOEBE

I don't care.

SUSAN

And what on earth are we to do with her?

(indicates room)

We gave her an illness to keep her out of sight, but she can't go home because they're always watching!

(looks through window)

Fanny's watching now--I can tell by the way her curtains move. Do you know, I almost feel as if Livvy really exists!

PHOEBE

I didn't mean any harm. It seemed such a lark at first, and he was so easily deceived.

SUSAN

(tentative)

Phoebe--he loves you. He wants to marry you. Why couldn't you--?

PHOEBE

Without telling him how I'd deceived him? Never! And if I told him--his face would change--as he told Livvy some man's face would change when she told him about her behavior--and I couldn't bear it.

PATTY

(enters, a little excited)

It's Captain Brown!

PHOEBE

Oh, no!

(VALENTINE enters)

VALENTINE

Miss Susan-- Miss Phoebe. Forgive me for not calling sooner, but--but the truth is, I was hoping Miss Livvy would have gone home before I came. But now I hear that she is ill.

PHOEBE

She is--in a little discomfort.

VALENTINE

Well, a little discomfort may do her some good, but if you wish me to see her as a physician--

SUSAN

Oh, she won't see anyone but us. But it's really not serious.

VALENTINE

Good--because I don't really want to see her again. Anyway, Miss Phoebe, it's you I came to see--

(HE glances at SUSAN)

SUSAN

I'll just see if--if Livvy wants anything--

(SUSAN exits)

VALENTINE  
Miss Phoebe-- No--just--Phoebe--

PHOEBE  
(quickly)  
Do you know anything about algebra, Captain? I have to teach it next year and--

VALENTINE  
Don't teach it! Hang algebra! Don't teach anything. Close the school.

PHOEBE  
Impossible. Oh, please--Captain--the algebra--please--only the algebra--

VALENTINE  
(after a moment, sighs)  
Very well.  
(HE picks up book, opens it)  
"One number is four more than the other. If the sum of the larger number and three times the smaller number is ten, what is the smaller number?"

PHOEBE  
(after a moment, appalled)  
There can't possibly be an answer to that!

VALENTINE  
But there is! You see, we must let  $x$  equal the smaller number. Since the larger number is four more than the smaller, then  $x$  plus four will represent the larger number. Do you understand?

PHOEBE  
(near tears)  
No!

VALENTINE  
(after a moment, quietly)  
Then let me give you another problem--one you might understand--

(MUSIC starts)

PHOEBE  
A problem--in algebra?

VALENTINE  
Yes--of course--

[ 34 ] THE ALGEBRA LESSON

VALENTINE (continued)

IF "A" IS A MAN  
WHO'S BEEN MUCH TOO BLIND,  
AND "B" IS A WOMAN  
HE HAD LEFT BEHIND,  
AND "C" IS THE LOVE  
THAT TOOK TOO LONG TO GROW--  
HOW MANY WAYS DOES HE TELL HER SO?

IF "A" IS A MAN  
WHO'S COME HOME AT LAST,  
AND "B" IS A WOMAN  
WHOM THE YEARS HAVE PASSED,  
AND "C" IS THE LIFE  
THAT SHE HAS HAD TO LIVE--  
HOW MANY WAYS DOES HE SAY "FORGIVE?"

AN ALGEBRAIC PROBLEM,  
BUT TRUE SOLUTION'S THERE--  
TREAT "A" AND "B"  
NOT SEPARATELY,  
BUT SIMPLY AS A PAIR--

IF "A" IS A FOOL  
WHO COULD ONCE FORGET  
THE KISS THAT HE GAVE HER  
WHEN HER FACE WAS WET,  
AND "B" IS THE WOMAN  
WHO REMEMBERS, THEN  
HOW DOES HE ASK FOR THAT KISS AGAIN?

VALENTINE (continued)

You loved me once. If only you had told me.

PHOEBE

Impossible. And then--then you went away to your battle.

VALENTINE

And you stayed to fight yours.

PHOEBE

Women, as well as men, have flags to fly, Captain.

VALENTINE

But you don't love me anymore--

PHOEBE

Please--no more talk of love. Let's speak of--of your work--

VALENTINE

Oh, I'll work. I'll resume my practice and get some drab old housekeeper to neglect me and the house.

PHOEBE

Oh, no--

VALENTINE

Can't you see the cobwebs gathering in that unhappy place?  
Can't you see me with my clothes all awry, gravy stains on my  
sleeve, gradually turning into a crusty, grumpy old bachelor--

PHOEBE

Oh, please--you break my heart--

VALENTINE

By God, Miss Phoebe, you do still love me!

SUSAN

(enters)  
She does, Captain.

PHOEBE

Susan!

SUSAN

(defiant)  
You know you do.

VALENTINE

(to PHOEBE)  
Then you'll marry me if I have to carry you in my arms to the  
church!

SUSAN

That settles it. You must marry him to avoid such a scandal.

PHOEBE

No!

VALENTINE

Very well. Since I'm determined to take care of you two  
ladies--will you marry me, Miss Susan?

SUSAN

I'd be delighted.

PHOEBE

Susan Throssel!

SUSAN

Of course you must come and live with us, Phoebe, dear--

PATTY

(enters)  
Miss Fanny--

(FANNY enters as PATTY starts to leave)

FANNY

One moment, Patty. Miss Phoebe, I think you should know that  
as I came in, I distinctly heard a man's laughter from the  
kitchen.

SUSAN

Patty! The sergeant again!



PATTY  
(glares at FANNY)  
It's all right, ma'am. The sergeant has proposed marriage.

PHOEBE  
Oh, Patty, how marvelous!

PATTY  
And I've accepted, ma'am, with your permission--

PHOEBE  
Of course!

FANNY  
Well, he's certainly kept you waiting long enough--

PATTY  
(as SHE goes)  
Oh, I don't mind, ma'am. Some wait forever--

(SHE exits)

FANNY  
The cheek!

PHOEBE  
You asked for it. Susan, we must go and congratulate them.

SUSAN  
Yes, of course. We might even ask him to have some wine.

PHOEBE  
Oh, I think he's been doing that for years. Please excuse us for a moment, Captain-- Fanny--

(SUSAN and PHOEBE start to exit)

SUSAN  
(turns around)  
Oh, by the way, Fanny... I, too, have had a proposal.

(THEY leave. FANNY is open-mouthed)

VALENTINE  
(amused)  
And how is your health, Miss Fanny?

FANNY  
Well, Captain. Better than poor Miss Livvy's at least. How do you find her?

VALENTINE  
I haven't seen her.

FANNY  
(astonished)  
You haven't seen her?! How very mysterious.

Why is that? VALENTINE

FANNY  
For one thing, you're a doctor. For another, no one's seen her--not since the ball. She hasn't left that room!

VALENTINE  
That is odd.  
(HE glances at door, curious)  
I just think I'll--  
(HE goes to door, knocks)  
Miss Livvy? Miss Livvy?  
(HE waits a moment, then--)  
I think--as a physician--I'd better--

(VALENTINE exits, leaving FANNY in an agony of suspense and curiosity)

FANNY  
Maybe I'll just--  
(draws back)  
No! It is a test of me as a lady. It is also most annoying.

(VALENTINE re-enters, very puzzled)

FANNY  
Is she very poorly?

VALENTINE  
Ah--

FANNY  
The case puzzles you?

VALENTINE  
Ah--

FANNY  
Do you imply fever?

VALENTINE  
Ah--

FANNY  
Or something--worse?

VALENTINE  
Ah--

FANNY  
Something worse than fever! And Patty getting married! And a proposal for Miss Susan! Captain, will you excuse me? Dear heaven, if my sister should hear these things from someone else! Good morning, Captain Brown!

(SHE rushes out)

VALENTINE  
(after a long moment of pacing, lost in  
thought)

AH!!

(PHOEBE and SUSAN enter)

PHOEBE  
(looks around)  
Why did Miss Fanny leave so quickly?

SUSAN  
(horrificed)  
She didn't--go in to see Livvy?!

VALENTINE  
No, ma'am. But I wish to see Miss Livvy.

PHOEBE  
Impossible.

VALENTINE  
I won't leave until I do. That is final.

(HE seats himself. PHOEBE and SUSAN  
stare at him in anguish)

SUSAN  
Maybe--we should discuss it--in private, dear. I--I really  
think we should.

VALENTINE  
I also think you should.

SUSAN  
Maybe--maybe if we went in to see her--she might be feeling  
well enough--

PHOEBE  
Oh, no, Susan!

SUSAN  
Phoebe, I--I don't think we have any choice!

VALENTINE  
Very wise.

(VALENTINE watches them as THEY move to  
LIVVY's door, and then leave. HE goes  
to other door and opens it, finding  
PATTY there)

VALENTINE  
Thank heaven you still listen at doors. Come in here.

(PATTY follows him)

(MUSIC starts)

VALENTINE (continued)  
All right, Patty. Why has this trick been played upon me?

PATTY  
(innocent)  
What trick is that, sir?

[35] DAMN THE LADY!

VALENTINE  
YOU MUST NOW BE TRUTHFUL, PATTY--  
THIS MISS LIVVY, WHO MAY SHE BE?

(SUSAN and PHOEBE can be seen in  
bedroom)

SUSAN  
I'M BECOMING FEARFUL THAT HE  
MAY SUSPECT THAT LIVVY'S PHOEBE--

PATTY  
WHY, MISS LIVVY'S JUST MISS LIVVY--  
POOR SICK THING, AND SHE SO PRETTY--

SUSAN  
IF WE ASK HIM TO FORGIVE, HE--

PHOEBE  
NEVER! WE DON'T WANT HIS PITY!

VALENTINE  
TO A SECRET YOU'VE BEEN PRIVY,  
NOW I WANT TO KNOW IT, PATTY--  
WHO'S THIS GIRL THEY'RE CALLING LIVVY?  
TELL ME--

PATTY  
I'M NOT FEELING CHATTY--  
IF YOU WANT TO KNOW OF LIVVY,  
I SUGGEST YOU ASK MISS PHOEBE--

PHOEBE  
FOR AS LONG AS HE MAY LIVE, HE  
NEVER SHALL BE TOLD, THOUGH WE BE  
WHISPERED OF THROUGHOUT THE CITY  
HE WILL NOT DISCOVER THAT HE  
KNOWS I'M LIVVY--

SUSAN  
MORE THE PITY--  
BUT WE'D BEST BE WARNING PATTY  
NOT TO TELL THAT LIVVY'S PHOEBE--

PHOEBE  
NEVER MIND HOW HE MAY CHIVVY--

ALL  
AND WE SAY, WHOEVER SHE BE  
DAMN THE LADY KNOWN AS LIVVY!

(MISS WILLOUGHBY and FANNY can be seen  
outside)

MISS W & FANNY  
LIVVY, LIVVY--  
WHO'S THE LADY KNOWN AS LIVVY?  
LIVVY, LIVVY--  
WHO CAN LIVVY BE?

VALENTINE, PHOEBE, SUSAN & PATTY  
THIS CONFUSION, WE AGREE, BE--  
SPEAKS A PROBLEM FOR MISS LIVVY,

SUSAN  
WHO MUST LEAVE BEFORE OUR PHOEBE,  
LIKE A FRIGHTENED LITTLE SKIVVY,  
  
DARES TO SHOW HER FACE, SO THAT HE  
ONCE AGAIN BEHOLDS THE WITTY  
PHOEBE--

PHOEBE  
LEST HE SMELL A RAT, HE  
MUST NO LONGER FIND THE PRETTY  
  
LIVVY LIVING HERE WITH PHOEBE--

SUSAN  
THOUGH WE KNOW THAT THERE'S NO LIVVY--

PHOEBE  
IT'S A FAIRY TALE THAT HE BE-  
LIEVES, THOUGH LEAKING LIKE A SIEVE, HE  
  
MUST BE FOOLED ONCE MORE SO THAT HE  
CAN BE TREATED LIKE SOME ITTY  
BABY WHO'D BELIEVE THIS TATTY  
SILLY LITTLE CHILDREN'S DITTY!

ALL  
PHOEBE, LIVVY--LIVVY, PHOEBE--  
BOTH ARE PHOEBE, BOTH ARE LIVVY--  
NOW, WHICHEVER ONE THAT SHE BE,  
CAN'T BE PHOEBE AND BE LIVVY--

PHOEBE & SUSAN  
SO IT'S ALL THE FAULT OF PATTY  
WHO BEGAN THIS NOT-SO-WITTY  
LITTLE CHARIVARI

PHOEBE  
THAT HE  
NOW WILL END WITH NO MORE PITY

ALL  
FOR HOWEVER WE MAY DIVVY  
WE ALL DOUBLE-DAMN MISS LIVVY!

DAMN THE LADY KNOWN AS  
LIVVY!

MISS W & FANNY  
WHO IS  
LIVVY?

VALENTINE  
Miss Phoebe has been Miss Livvy all the time, hasn't she?

PATTY  
(defeated)  
Yes, sir.  
(hopeful)  
Are you laughing, sir?

VALENTINE  
(stern)  
I'm very far from laughing.

PATTY  
(desperate)  
It was you who started it--all by not knowing her in the white gown.

VALENTINE  
But why has she kept up the deception? It's infamous!

PATTY  
Don't you dare call Miss Phoebe infamous!  
(collects herself)  
Oh, sir, it was nothing but a game, at first. But now she's weeping herself ill, and none of us can get her out of it. I try--I say, "The sergeant will be calling every day, Miss Phoebe, and I shall give him all the wine he can drink!" and all she says is, "By all means, Patty"-- and ill she can afford it, you having lost all their money for them!

VALENTINE  
Lost!

PATTY  
That investment, sir--it was lost even before you went away.

VALENTINE  
Are you sure of that?

PATTY  
Positive, sir.

VALENTINE  
But why didn't she tell me?

PATTY  
She didn't want an offer of marriage out of pity.

VALENTINE

(quiet)

I see.

(after a moment)

But why don't they just say Miss Livvy has gone home?

PATTY

Miss Willoughby and Miss Fanny watch the house all day! Others, too, all up and down Quality Street. And Miss Susan and Miss Phoebe are so distraught because they're afraid that Miss Livvy might be bed-ridden here for all time!

(VALENTINE starts to laugh)

Thank the Lord you're laughing at last!

(PATTY also starts to laugh, re-infecting each other, til--)

[36] INCIDENTAL - Orchestra

VALENTINE

All right, Patty. Here's what I'm going to do--but I'll need your help.

PATTY

Anything, sir.

(HE walks slowly to the other door with her, talking, PATTY nodding eagerly, as SUSAN appears from the bedroom)

SUSAN

I am happy to tell you, Captain, that Livvy is much improved and will be out in a moment.

PATTY

(horrified)

Oh, but ma'am--

VALENTINE

It's all right, Patty. I'll deal with Miss Livvy. Now then--don't you have things to do?

SUSAN

At once, Patty.

PATTY

As you say, ma'am.

(PATTY goes)

SUSAN

(goes to door)

Are you ready, Livvy?

PHOEBE

(off, faint)

Yes, aunt--

(PHOEBE appears as LIVVY, walking slowly)

VALENTINE  
Your servant, Miss Livvy. Allow me--

PHOEBE  
No, I--I can walk alone--

(SHE walks to a chair, sits)

VALENTINE  
Bravo! Excellent, Miss Livvy. How are you feeling?

PHOEBE  
Much better.

VALENTINE  
Good. Then I have good news for you. You're going home.

SUSAN and PHOEBE  
Home?

SUSAN  
When?

VALENTINE  
Today. Not only today, but now.

PHOEBE  
But I can't!

VALENTINE  
Now! My carriage is outside. It shall take you to your home.

SUSAN  
But! But!

VALENTINE  
No buts, Miss Susan. If she stays the climate on Quality Street might kill her.

PHOEBE  
I refuse to go.

(SHE rushes out, followed by distraught SUSAN)

VALENTINE  
(calls)  
Patty!

(PATTY and SERGEANT enter. THE SERGEANT wheels a dressmaker's dummy and PATTY carries a large, deep box)



PATTY  
 (indicates SERGEANT)  
 He already knows everything, sir, so I brought him along. I think we found everything you ordered, sir, in Miss Susan's sewing room.

VALENTINE  
 Good. Sergeant! Patty! To work!

(MUSIC starts...During the following, the dressmaker's dummy is brought center stage. From the box comes various articles of clothing, hats for the milliner's head, etc. all of which cleverly transform the lifeless form into "MISS LIVVY")

[37] REPRISE: MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE

VALENTINE  
 MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE  
 WILL SOON BE LEAVING,  
 AND WHEN SHE'S GONE  
 IT'S VERY CLEAR--

MISS LIVVY'S AUNTS  
 CAN STOP THEIR GRIEVING--

PATTY  
 WE'VE GOT THAT SCHEMING LITTLE HUSSY  
 OUT OF HERE!

SERGEANT  
 MISS LIVVY WILL BE  
 SHORTLY TRAV'LING--  
 HER QUICK DEPARTURE  
 HEAVEN SENT--  
 HER MYST'RY  
 BIT BY BIT  
 UNRAV'LING--

VALENTINE  
 AND NONE OF US WILL EVER CARE  
 JUST WHERE THAT SILLY LADY WENT!

PATTY  
 (indicates dummy)  
 MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE  
 CUTS QUITE A FIGGER--  
 HER MANY CURVES  
 DO MAKE ME BLUSH--

SERGEANT  
 I'D LIKE HER HIPS  
 A WEE BIT BIGGER,  
 BUT BEGGARS CAN'T BE  
 CHOOSERS WHEN YOU'RE  
 IN A RUSH.

ALL

MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE  
DISPLAYS EXCEEDING-  
LY LOVELY FORM IN ALL ITS GRACE--  
SHE HAS SUCH CHARM--  
SHE HAS SUCH BREEDING--

PATTY

SHE HAS MOST EV'RYTHING  
A GIRL COULD EVER WANT  
EXCEPT A FACE!

(SUSAN enters and is instantly  
bewildered, finding herself amidst the  
others, changing partners and eventually  
waltzing with "Livvy")

SUSAN

MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE,  
THE DEAR DEPARTED,  
WILL NOT BE MOURNED--  
WILL NOT BE MISSED--

VALENTINE

HER LIFE HAD BARELY  
GOTTEN STARTED--

SERGEANT

SO IT WOULD NOT BE VERY KIND  
TO LET HER LEAVE AND NOT BE KISSED.

PATTY

IF SHE COULD SEE  
WHAT LIVVY'S STUFFED WITH,  
HOW SHE'S BEEN PINNED  
AND DRAPED AND SEWED--

IF SHE COULD SEE  
WHAT LIVVY'S PUFFED WITH,  
I DO BELIEVE  
MISS WILLOUGHBY  
WOULD RIGHT EXPLODE!

ALL

SO SAY FAREWELL  
TO THROSSEL'S DAUGHTER,  
AND MAY HER JOURNEY  
NEVER CEASE--  
AND WHEN SOME LAD  
HAS FINALLY CAUGHT HER,  
WE WISH A VERY HAPPY ENDING TO  
MISS PHOEBE'S NIECE!

VALENTINE

(presenting the finished "Livvy")  
Here she is. I'm afraid she had another relapse, Miss Susan,  
but I have no doubt the drive in the carriage will revive her.  
Patty, would you and the Sergeant help me carry poor Miss  
Livvy to the carriage?

Certainly, Captain. SERGEANT

With pleasure, sir. PATTY

I think I'm going to faint. SUSAN

[38] INCIDENTAL - Orchestra

VALENTINE  
No you're not, Miss Susan. You're going to go to the window and wave a fond farewell to Miss Livvy as Patty and I help her into the carriage so that all the ladies on Quality Street may see. Sergeant, you'll drive out of the city and come back--alone--in about three hours. Till later, Miss Susan. Say goodbye to Miss Phoebe for Miss Livvy.

(PATTY, THE SERGEANT and VALENTINE exit with "Miss Livvy." SUSAN nervously waves goodbye from the window as the carriage pulls away. Then, unable to watch any more, moves away and sinks into a chair. PHOEBE, as herself, cautiously sticks her head through a doorway)

Is he gone? PHOEBE

Phoebe, he--he knows everything. SUSAN

Of course he does--now. Did his face change? Oh, how he must hate me! PHOEBE

Phoebe, he took Livvy with him. SUSAN  
(PHOEBE stares)  
Patty and the sergeant helped him.

Sister--sister-- PHOEBE

And I-- SUSAN  
(gesturing)  
--waved goodbye!

(PHOEBE feels SUSAN's forehead as VALENTINE enters)

(MUSIC starts)

It was me, Captain, who did all those dreadful things-- Not PHOEBE  
Livvy, me--

(As SHE speaks, VALENTINE approaches her)

Phoebe, the flirt--      PHOEBE (continued)  
Phoebe, the guttersnipe--

[ 39 ]      FINALE

VALENTINE

FOR ALL  
THESE YEARS--  
UNKNOWNLY, I HAVE LOVED YOU  
ALL THESE YEARS--

THROUGH SPRINGS AND SUMMERS  
AND WINTERS APART  
I DIDN'T KNOW  
I NEEDED YOU SO  
BUT YOU KNEW FROM THE START--

VALENTINE &amp; PHOEBE

SO WHY  
DID I  
QUITE FOOLISHLY LET THESE PRECIOUS YEARS  
GO BY?--  
AND NEVER ONCE COULD TELL YOU HOW  
SO VERY MUCH I LOVE YOU  
TILL NOW!

(VALENTINE removes the cap from PHOEBE's head, letting the ringlets fall. SUSAN rips the pages from the algebra book, flinging them into the air as VALENTINE and PHOEBE kiss)

COMPANY

THE WORLD AS SEEN FROM QUALITY STREET  
MAY ONE DAY SOON BE GONE,  
BUT LIFE FOR US  
ON QUALITY STREET--  
WITHOUT A FUSS  
ON QUALITY STREET--  
QUITE GLORIOUS  
ON QUALITY STREET  
GOES ON!

CURTAIN