

# "BOB."

SCENE.

*London: Showroom in the establishment of MONSIEUR ET MADAME SARSENET, Fashionable Court and Fancy Costumiers. Doors R. and L. Curtained entrance L.C. Window overlooking street R.C.; about the room are arranged two or three milliner's dummies showing various costumes.*

*Scene discovers MINNIE HILL alone.  
She is looking at a dance programme.*

MINNIE. [*reading*] Bob! Bob! Bob! Bob! one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten— ten Bobs— and then there were two extras danced with Bob. [*Kisses card and sighs.*] Ah, me! it all seems like a delightful dream. But it isn't. It was all delightfully real. [*Reads.*] "Portman Rooms: Last Cinderella Dance of the season." Oh! if there might only have been one more, that I might have had just one more valse with — Bob. How he did valse! and how all the other girls did glare at me with envy! Oh! Bob, what a pity I did not catch your full name when the M.C. introduced you to me, and what a silly noodle I was to decline to give you any particulars of my own identity beyond "Minnie." Of course I felt sure I should see you again: but, unfortunately, Madame, who chaperoned me hurried me off without allowing me the opportunity of saying even "Good-bye." Bah! what nuisances chaperones are! Well, it's all over now. I shall never see Bob again; and, if I did, what good could come of it? He only came like other fellows to the Cinderella to have an evening's flirtation with the shop girls. Yet he was *such* a gentleman, treating me not as a poor milliner, but with the respect I might have expected had he known that I am a lady by birth and education, forced by circumstances to work for a living. Oh, Bob! Bob! Bob! I wonder who you were, and where you are now? Possibly at your Club, boasting how you captivated the heart of a little milliner. Ah! it may be a joke to you, but it isn't to me. Probably, Bob has already quite forgotten "Minnie." Well! the best thing "Minnie" can do is to try and forget Bob.

I.—SONG.

O sweet, sweet spell!

O subtle necromancy!  
Would I could tell  
If this be only fancy.  
Naught, but the vision of my fevered brain,  
Dream of a treasure I may live to gain,  
O, No! No! No! I love, but love in vain.  
I know too well  
My only joy, may be his name to spell.

B. O. B. Bob,  
See, oh, see, Bob,  
How it makes my heart throb  
When I spell your name!

Be, oh, be — Bob,  
Ever true to me, Bob,  
B. O. B. Bob,  
Robert toi que j'aime!

O sweet, sweet name!  
What pleasure to rehearse it!  
It sounds the same,  
However I reverse it.

Hark how it echoes from the happy past,  
Through those bright scenes, alas! too bright to last,  
When in his arms he held me firm and fast.

O cruel shame!  
That I could not find out Bob's other name.

B. O. B. Bob, etc., etc.

*[She goes up to window and gazes out.]*

*Enter C., MONSIEUR SARSENET in a state of flurry.*

MONS. S. Mam'selle 'Ill — Miss 'Ill — Miss 'Ill — vere is dat Miss 'Ill?  
*[She comes down.]* Ah, vat for you not do nothing when there is beezness,

much beezness to be done? Ah, I tell Madame she should not take mine lady assistants to the dance. Nevare fit for nothing on to-morrow morning.

MINNIE. Pardon me, Monsieur, I am fit for anything.

MONS. S. Ah, vell, Miss Minnie 'Ill, I must forgive you— you are my favourite artiste, my chef d'atelier — that you know, and if there was never no more Madame Sarsenet—

MINNIE. [*Interrupting him.*] But Monsieur said there was much business—

MONS. S. Certainement — but I do like some time to mix a leetel pleasure with much beezness — but now it must not be, another time, my dear Mam'selle MINNIE. See — Madame has received this billet from Lady Mabel Margravine, but Madame is too ill to attend to beezness. [*Reads.*] "Lady Mabel Margravine presents her compliments to Madame Sarsenet, and begs to intimate her intention of calling upon Madame tomorrow at noon to see the fancy costume which Madame has completed for her Ladyship. Lady Mabel will be accompanied by her friend the artist who designed the costume for her Ladyship, and so will feel obliged if Madame could arrange that one of her assistants may appear before her Ladyship in the costume, and so give the artist a better opportunity of judging the effect of the dress complete." [*Looks at watch.*] Now, my dear Miss 'Ill, I vant you to be so good as make quick and put upon you ze costume.

MINNIE. Which costume is it, Monsieur?

MONS. S. Vat, you not know? Le costume de l'esclave Grecque.

MINNIE. The Greek Slave! O Monsieur — must I?

MONS. S. Vat! Vy not? Ah, ma cherie, you are much too modest. If Milady Margravine think it good to appear in public as the Greek slave you shall not think it bad to appear so in private — certainement.

MINNIE. [*Aside.*] Being an English slave.

MONS. S. It is beezness — goot beezness.

MINNIE. Very well, Monsieur, I will obey. [*Aside.*] O Bob! [*Exit.*

MONS. S. Zat is good girl, one real English lady, only a leetel too *old* English, certainement. Ma foi, ze English miss of to-day is much like ze French demoiselle of yesterday — certainement.

II.—SONG — MONSIEUR SARSENET.

I am a man of beezness,  
My heart is in my trade;  
By sticking to my beezness  
Big fortune I have made.  
Since number two in beezness  
Comes after number one,  
The secret of goot beezness  
Is do, and don't be done.  
The 'cutest beezness man to-day  
Is Monsieur Henri Sarsenet.

Sometimes I mix with beezness  
Un leetel *jeu desprit*:  
I love, and by goot beezness  
I make the girls love me.  
You like to learn this beezness,  
And how the trick is done?  
Well, keep one eye on beezness  
And wink ze other one.  
The 'cutest man at work or play  
Is Monsieur Henri Sarsenet.

[*Exit L. as enter R. LADY MABEL MARGRAVINE, followed by her cousin, BOB BERKELEY, to whom she is betrothed.*

LADY M. Come along, Bob; don't be bashful.

BOB. Bashful! I'm not a bit *bashful*. I'm awfully grateful for this treat; but I warn you, Mabel, you will only have yourself to blame if during my visit to this "no man's territory" I fall a victim to the wiles of Madame Sarsenet's pretty modistes.

LADY M. My dear cousin, don't flatter yourself that pretty modistes take notice of insignificant boys. They fly at higher game— a milliner girl is proud.

BOB. I suppose that's why she is called "*modiste*."

LADY M. Oh, you are really too clever, Bob; but as you are not yet my husband you have nothing to fear.

BOB. [*Aside.*] But much to hope.

LADY M. I wonder where Madame is—

*Enter C., MONSIEUR SARSENET.*

MONS. S. Bon jour, Milady.

LADY M. Bon jour, Monsieur Sarsenet. Where is Madame?

MONS. S. Hélas, Milady, Madame is to-day *hors de combat*. She has sick headache, after ze Cinderella Dance she go to last night at the Portman Rooms.

BOB. [*Aside.*] Portman Rooms — last night. By Jove, it's lucky for me Madame is *hors de combat*.

LADY M. Madame received my note?

MONS. S. Certainement, and I attend you. My chief modiste, Mam'selle 'Ill will show off ze costume to Milady.

LADY M. [*Introducing BOB.*] Thanks. This is Mr. Berkeley, who kindly designed the costume for me.

MONS. S. [*Bowing.*] I am proud, sare; you are a clever artist.

BOB. But I say, Monsieur, isn't it rather against the rules for gentlemen to enter here?

MONS. S. All contraire, sir; gentlemen, especially artist gentlemen, is always welcome to Madame's atelier.

LADY M. We are going to be married shortly.

MONS. S. Ah, so, then ze husband of Milady will be always twice welcome. We always prefer ze ladies to bring their husbands to select ze articles.

LADY M. How so?

MONS. S. You see, Milady, ze husband he always choose ze best of everything and so everybody is satisfied.

LADY M. Ladies are afraid to run up too large an account.

MONS. S. Ah no, never so always, Milady, but our modistes they have not so much trouble to please Milord as Milady. The modiste, she say to Milady, "You like this," and Milady she say, "Yes, but my husband won't like the price!" But when modiste show politely Milord ze best article in my establishment, and say she strongly recommend it, it is enough. Milord he say, "Zat will do, ze best is goot enough for me," , certainement.

BOB. Thanks, Monsieur, I shall remember your tip.

MONS. S. Ah! non, Monsieur, that was only leetle joke I make. Now you excuse me, I go find ze Greek slave.

*[Exit MONSIEUR SARSENET. BOB examines elaborate costume on frame.]*

BOB. Look here, Mabel—

LADY M. What's the matter, Bob?

BOB. You ought never to have brought me here.

LADY M. Good heavens! why?

BOB. These lay ladies, coupled with Monsieur's remarks, convince me that marriage is an awfully serious matter for a man.

LADY M. Oh, indeed!

BOB. As a bachelor I can gaze fearlessly, nay, admiringly upon these enticing baits set to catch you; as a married man I shall look upon them as scarecrows or rather, scare-husbands.

LADY M. My dear Bob, rest assured when you are my husband this will be forbidden ground to you. Don't fret yourself on that score.

BOB. No, but I shall have to fret myself on a much bigger score.

LADY M. Don't anticipate evils. Since we have been condemned by our parents and guardians to penal servitude for life together, we may as well make the most of the few weeks of single blessedness left to us. Besides, after all, if my milliner's bills are to be the worst troubles of our married life, the future may not be so black as we anticipate.

### III.— DUET — BOB and LADY MABEL.

BOB. I'm really beginning to think, love,  
(I hope you'll not take it amiss)  
'Twere better to pause on the brink, love,  
Of this very awful abyss.  
I am not devoted to you, love,  
You are not devoted to me,  
And so the best thing we can do, love,  
Is to let one another go free.  
Let us be wise, love,  
Let us despise, love,  
Other folk's eyes, love,  
Using our own.  
I can't conceal, love,  
All that I feel, love,  
I am like steel, love,  
You, like a stone.

LADY M. Alas, it is only too true, love  
(I hope you'll not think me unkind)  
A less loving lover than you, love,  
I never could possibly find.  
Our prospects are gloomy indeed, love,  
Our marriage we're certain to rue,  
But since it is sternly decreed, love.  
What else can we possibly do?  
Would it be wise, love,  
Thus to despise, love,  
Other folk's eyes, love,  
Using our own?  
Let us conceal, love,  
All that we feel, love,  
Though you are steel, love.  
And I a stone.

BOB. [*Looking at himself in a large cheval glass, which is placed to reflect the centre entrance.*] Ah, well! I suppose there's no help for it, so I must face my fate as boldly as— Great Heavens! [*He sees reflected in the glass MINNIE who, with MONSIEUR SARSENET, enters C., dressed as Greek slave. LADY MABEL, who has been looking in an opposite direction, does not see MINNIE enter, and is surprised at BOB's ejaculation.*]

LADY M. Bob, what's the matter?

MINNIE. [*Aside.*] Bob!

BOB. [*Nervously.*] Matter — nothing.

LADY M. Anyone would think you had seen your future fate in that glass.

BOB. [*Aside.*] Would it might be so.

MONS. S. Milady, if you please.

[*LADY MABEL turns and sees MINNIE, who is trying to conceal her dismay.*]



LADY M. Oh! How lovely — look, Bob, isn't it charming?

BOB. [*Absently.*] Awfully — awfully!

LADY M. [*To MINNIE*] But you look pale — perhaps this gentleman's presence—

MINNIE. Oh, not at all, my Lady.

MONS. S. Miss 'Ill is evare ver' shy; I tell her it is silly, mais, ze pale complexion suits well ze costume of ze Greek slave. [*Turning to BOB, who stands perplexed and buried in thought.*] You, sare, what you think as ze artist?

BOB. [*Absently.*] Yes, I think—I think it will be all right, all right at night.

LADY M. Bob, you are disappointed.

BOB. No, indeed. It's far beyond my expectations.

LADY M. It's really very kind of you, Miss Hill, to have put yourself to such trouble for me.

MINNIE. Don't mention it.

LADY M. I'm sure you will forgive my cousin Mr. Berkeley coming to see the costume.

MINNIE. He designed it, I understand.

LADY M. Yes, anyone might think he had designed it for you, it becomes you so well— doesn't it, Bob?

BOB. Awfully, awfully well.

LADY M. It won't become me half as well, will it Bob?

BOB. No. By Jove— at least— that is—

LADY M. There, Miss Hill. It's well to have the candid opinion of one's fiancé in these little matters, and that's why I brought Mr. Berkeley.

MINNIE. One's future husband *should* be a prejudiced judge, I should imagine, my Lady.

LADY M. Mr. Berkeley is full of prejudices, but I regret to say they are not always favourable to myself; but I say, Bob, joking apart, how do you think the dress will look when I'm dancing.

BOB. Oh! the *dress* will look alright.

MONS. S. Milady would like to see ze effect general of ze costume in ze dance?

LADY M. I should indeed. And if Miss Hill would not mind giving us a few steps [*To MINNIE*] Can you dance?

BOB. [*Aside.*] Can she dance? Ye gods— can't she!

LADY M. Bob, how do you know?

BOB. Oh, I can always tell if a lady can dance.

LADY M. After you've tried her for a partner?

BOB. Yes, of course. If it didn't seem rather out of place here, I would ask Miss Hill to give me the pleasure of the next dance.

LADY M. Well, I must say Bob, your assurance beats the impudence of an ape; but *I* don't object if Miss Hill doesn't.

MINNIE. I may not refuse— I am— a Greek slave.

LADY M. But would it not be against the rules of your establishment, Monsieur?

MONS. S. Certainement, Milady; I have not ze dancing licence, but ze Council of ze County will not see nothing. Beside Miss 'Ill, she dance the

gavotte lovely-- parfaitement; Madame, my wife, she tell me so, so if you please I will make ze space. [*He moves the lay figures to back of stage.*]

LADY M. This is a good joke, isn't it Bob?

BOB. Awfully splendid joke! [*To MINNIE*] May I be your partner?

LADY M. I warn you he's a shocking dancer. We can never get on at all together.

BOB. [*To MINNIE*] *We* can— can't we?

MINNIE. I shall be pleased to do my best.

#### IV.—QUARTETTE (Gavotte)

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| LADY M.  | What a charming little lady!  |
| and      | What a lovely form and face,  |
| MONS. S. | Dainty duchess would look shady<br>Placed beside such modest grace.<br>O'er her cheeks the rosy blushes<br>Creep like sunbeams on the waves<br>And a timid sigh she hushes<br>Whilst she plays the Grecian slave.   |
| BOB.     | In this lovely little lady<br>I can very plainly trace<br>Visions of Don Juan's Haidée,<br>Exquisite in form and face.<br>Through my heart the warm blood rushes,<br>Minnie, just one smile I crave,<br>One sweet glance from out those blushes<br>And I live for aye your slave. |
| MINNIE.  | Since I am an English lady<br>Surely it is out of place<br>To appear as Byron's Haidée—<br>Person of the Grecian race.<br>Whilst I cannot hide my blushes,<br>I my character must save;<br>Though humiliation crushes<br>I must play the Grecian stave.                           |

*[They dance. Gavotte; in which, after an interval, MONSIEUR SARSENET and LADY MABEL join, thus affording an opportunity for BOB and MINNIE to flirt. After dance exit MINNIE C. as if rather faint.]*

MONS. S. Now what you think, Milady?

LADY M. The dress is a great success, and if I were half as pretty as that girl I should create a sensation at the ball.

BOB. Yes, and if you could dance half as well Cousin Mabel—

LADY M. I can't say I saw much in her dancing.

BOB. Because you did not watch it [*Aside.*] fortunately.

LADY M. I suppose you want to make me jealous; but that, my dear cousin, is a sensation you have as yet failed to awaken in my soul. Now Tom Cousans, whose opinion I do value, prefers me to any other partner.

BOB. That's intended to arouse my jealousy, but as yet the green-eyed monster only winks the other eye at all your efforts, my sweet cousin.

MONS. S. [*Aside.*] Mon Dieu, and they will marry. [*Exit L.*]

LADY M. Bob, you are very rude. If you have no suggestions to offer about the dress I wish you would make yourself scarce. Go and sit in the carriage whilst I visit another department where you are not wanted. I shall not be more than an hour. [*Exit L.*]

BOB. No, I'll remain here. I must see her again. What an adventure. Surely 'twas Fate brought us together again; sweet little Minnie, what though you are a humble milliner, I would throw over fifty Lady Mabels to win your love, and by Jove I'll do it; not only for my own sake, but for Mabel's; we don't care a brass farthing for each other. Yes, I'll do it, even if my uncle cuts me off with less than a brass farthing.

V.—SONG — BOB.

BOB. Dear little maid, although thy lot be lowly,

Thy birth obscure, and all unknown thy name,  
Thou art as fair as angel pure and holy,  
Thy loveliness has set my soul aflame.  
Shall gilded rank, shall sordid wealth still bind me?  
No, from these fetters love shall set me free.  
Leaving the earth and all its cares behind me,  
I'll soar to Heav'n— for Heav'n is life with thee.  
My Heav'n above— my Earth below,  
Goddess! my all in all! I love thee so.

Dear little maid, while to my heart I hold thee,  
Bid timid fear for ever fly away;  
Will thou still doubt it was the truth I told thee?  
Love that is true love, lives for aye and aye.  
What tho' the world shall frown upon our wooing,  
What tho' false friends shall strive us twain to part,  
Still hand in hand the path of Love pursuing,  
Earth shall be Heav'n for Heav'n is where thou art.  
My Heav'n above— my Earth below,  
Goddess! my all in all! I love thee so;

*[He goes up and gazes out of window. Enter C. MINNIE with loose cloak thrown over the Greek slave costume: she anxiously searches for something she has lost, not seeing BOB.]*

MINNIE. I must have dropped it here; oh, if she has found it what would happen! *[turns and see BOB. Aside.]* He is here!

BOB. *[Coming down and taking her hands.]* Minnie!

MINNIE. Miss Hill, if you please, sir.

BOB. "Minnie" was the only name you would give me last night. "Minnie" is written twelve times on this card *[takes card from pocket]*. "Minnie" is written once here *[with hand to his heart]*. "Minnie" will remain there always *[drawing her close to him.]*

MINNIE. Sir— Mr. Berkeley— don't, please don't be so mad — please let me go. You forget yourself, you forget another.

BOB. I forget all others, all else, in the remembrance of last evening. After the dance I searched for you everywhere, but like Cinderella, you had slipped away without saying good-night.

MINNIE. It was not my fault. I did not intend to be— so rude.

BOB. I was mad with disappointment, but I vowed not to rest till I had found you.

MINNIE. Mr. Berkeley, you are engaged to be married, this is worse than folly, I must not— will not listen.

BOB. 'Tis true I am engaged to my cousin, but our engagement was not of our own contracting. We had no voice in the matter. If we had, we should most certainly and must cordially have declined each other. We are both dying to do so now, feeling that life-long misery must follow our union. I have only waited an opportunity to ask to be excused further obedience to the whim of my wealthy, but far from wise uncle and guardian, Lady Mabel's father; that opportunity is come. [*Clasps her.*] Minnie, I love you. Be my wife.

MINNIE. Oh, Bob! — Mr. Berkeley, I mean — you bewilder me; I cannot tell, I cannot realise what this all means. Let me go, someone is coming. [*Tears herself away from him and exit hurriedly C.*]

BOB. Come what may I don't intend to budge from this until I have her promise. [*Looking off L.*] Here comes Mabel. Shall I break it to her at once? No, I must be diplomatic. If she finds me here she'll drag me off with her. If she does not see me, she will imagine I've gone home. If I leave this, how shall I find an excuse to return. No, I'll not quit the field until the victory is won. Where can I hide? Ah, the very thing. [*Hides beneath costume on frame.*]

*Enter L., LADY MABEL and MONSIEUR SARSENET.*

MONS. S. Yes, Milady, Miss 'Ill is ver' pretty and ver' goot girl.

LADY M. So refined! —so ladylike.

MONS. S. Ah, certainement, she is real lady. Madame Sarsenet, she tell me Miss 'Ill's father was very brave soldier, Colonel Hilton. He had much money one time, but ze bank is broke and ze Colonel he loose all his money and die— and so his daughter she work to live.

LADY M. How strange! Colonel Hilton, one of my father's best friends. I have often heard him speak of the Colonel's misfortune and death; and this is his daughter.

MONS. S. Certainement.

LADY M. Poor girl. I must see her again.

MONS. S. If Milady is not impatient to go—

LADY M. I'm in no hurry.

BOB. [*Aside.*] But I am.

MONS. S. Then I will go fetch Miss 'Ill, but Milady will pardon me. [*LADY MABEL bows assent.*] Milady will not too much flatter Miss 'Ill. Spoil my *chef d'atelier*, spoil my beezness.

LADY M. A little human sympathy spoils no one, Monsieur Sarsenet.

BOB. [*Aside.*] Mabel's a good sort, hanged if she isn't.

MONS. S. Then I go and send Miss 'Ill to Milady. [*Exit C.*]

LADY M. Poor Bob! I expect he's growling his head off for being kept in the carriage all this time. [*Laughs.*] Ha! ha! A lesson in patience will do him no harm. Poor old Bob, he's not a bad fellow, I wish I loved him as I ought to. I've tried to, but I suppose one never can educate oneself up to an attachment of this sort. Love is a gift, not an accomplishment. It's all Papa's fault. [*She moves round stage inspecting the costumes, when approaching that under which BOB is concealed, she sees and picks up the dance card which MINNIE has dropped; she looks at it callously.*] Hullo, what's this? [*Reads programme.*] "Bob, Bob, Bob, Bob" somebody's dance programme! It isn't mine.

BOB. [*Aside.*] What's that she's reading?

LADY M. This is mysterious— but stay— I think I can solve the mystery. This Bob, I suspect, is my Bob. He has been gallivanting. I wonder with whom and where. [*Reads.*] "Portman Rooms — Cinderella Dance" — last night! So-ho! my true and faithful, I've found you out, have I? Yet if it is really my Bob, why should he leave the girl's programme in his possession? And how could he drop it here? No, it *must* be some other Bob.

*Enter C., MINNIE, she wears her ordinary black dress,  
she appears very nervous.*

MINNIE. You wish to speak with me, Lady Mabel?

LADY M. Ah! Miss Hill, yes, d'you know I want to have a little friendly chat with you.

MINNIE. Friendly! What object can your Ladyship have in wishing to chat with me— a humble milliner?

LADY M. This — I have found out--

MINNIE. [*Excitedly.*] Oh, Lady Mabel! The fault was not mine!

LADY M. Fault! No, but the misfortune is yours, and it is to express my sympathy with you in your present trying position.

MINNIE. Your sympathy— then you are not angry with me?

LADY M. Angry, my dear girl, should I be angry with you because cruel circumstances have driven you to work for your living, when you should be enjoying the same society as myself.

MINNIE. [*Relieved.*] Oh, is that all?

LADY M. All! Then you are happy and content as you are?

MINNIE. Yes, Lady Mabel, I am content, I was quite happy until—



LADY M. Yes, I have learnt all, and I should so much like to assist you to a position more worthy of your rank.

MINNIE. It is very— very good of you, but— I don't deserve it.

LADY M. Nonsense, we none of us deserve the gifts the gods bestow— at least we say we don't, yet how we fret and fume when we don't get them. Look at me! I certainly don't deserve the gift of such a husband as my father is pleased to bestow upon me.

BOB. [*Aside.*] That you don't.

LADY M. But perhaps if I didn't get him after all, I might fret and fume, not that I think I should.

BOB. [*Aside.*] You certainly would not.

LADY M. By the way, I wonder if by any chance you could help me to elucidate a mystery.

MINNIE. What is it, Lady Mabel?

LADY M. I have just picked up this dance programme.

MINNIE. Oh, Milady. [*Trying to snatch the programme.*]

LADY M. Ah, the mystery is quickly solved. It is yours. [*Hands her the card.*] Ha, ha! what a strange coincidence. You too have a special Bob in attendance. [*Seeing MINNIE'S distress.*] Well, there, don't be silly, I'll keep your secret; I only hope your Bob is as sterling and honest a one as mine, and that you value him more than I do mine.

*[During the conversation BOB has stealthily approached them under the costume frame, his head now and then appearing above the top— at this point MINNIE turns and sees him. She utters a hysterical cry.]*

LADY M. Good heavens! what's the matter? You are ill? [*Turning she sees BOB'S head above the costume.*] Bob!

BOB. Don't be alarmed. I'm caught in this trap and shall be much obliged if you will release me.

LADY M. [*Half laughing.*] Bob! What's the meaning of this? Your practical joke has frightened Miss Hill out of her senses.

BOB. I'm awfully sorry.

LADY M. Bob, you have overheard all our secrets.

BOB. I confess, cousin, unwittingly, I have; and to atone for the mean advantage I have taken, I am now going to let you into our secret.

LADY M. *Our* secret!

MINNIE. Mr. Berkeley— spare me ——

BOB. Miss Hilton, since the suppression of our secret can benefit no one, let's out with it.

LADY M. Out with it then, Bob, I hate mysteries.

BOB. Well, then, I have to confess to being the honoured individual whose happiness it was last evening to subscribe the name of "Bob" a dozen times on Miss Hilton's dance programme, at the Portman Rooms.

LADY M. [*To MINNIE.*] Is this a fact?

[*MINNIE bows her head in assent.*]

BOB. Now as I'm not one of those Bobs that can be changed into two sixpences and divided between you, and as I certainly object to being tossed for, I'm going to suggest that you, my dear cousin, who have confessed not to value me at my true worth, will yield me to one of whom I can only hope in time to prove worthy— to Minnie Hilton.

LADY M. Cousin Bob, I must say I am a little bit staggered by all this, but I have quite sufficient good, sound sense left me to second the proposition you have made.

MINNIE. Lady Mabel, can you mean this?

LADY M. Yes, Minnie, I mean all this and more. From Monsieur Sarsenet I discovered your identity with the daughter of my father's old friend. Colonel Hilton, of whose misfortunes I have often heard my father speak.

MINNIE. Indeed, how very, very strange.

LADY M. And thus, in perfect ignorance of your love secret my heart went out to you in sisterly sympathy. I longed to help you out of your troubles, little dreaming how soon you would assist me out of mine.

MINNIE. Your trouble?

BOB. Mabel means *me*, I've been a terrible trouble to her, but I hope she will forgive me, seeing it was all to oblige her fond but foolish father.

LADY M. I do forgive you, and I am sure papa will rejoice to find in my substitute the daughter of his old comrade.

BOB. Yes, Mabel, and your father will not be the only one to rejoice in the alteration of our matrimonial programme. By my resignation, a vacancy occurs which, if I'm not much mistaken, will be very promptly and very worthily filled by one Tom Cousans.

LADY M. Well, I suppose there's nothing left me but to try to console myself with Tom. So Minnie let us exchange a kiss of mutual sympathy and congratulation. [*They kiss.*]

MINNIE. This must be a dream!

LADY M. Yes, of course, that's what we all say when we are a little bit surprised. Bob, give her proof positive that it is all reality. Don't mind me, I won't look.

TABLEAU:

*[BOB embraces MINNIE as MONSIEUR SARSENET  
appears at C. entrance.]*

MONS. S. Mon Dieu! Vat is ze moral of this scene?

*[Both girls, seeing MONSIEUR SARSENET,  
exclaim together "Bob"!]*

VI.

Now the simple tale is ended,  
Gladly as all tales should do—  
Gladly if as 'twas intended,  
We succeed in pleasing you.  
If your hearts have been delighted,  
At your hands reward we crave,  
Cheer the lovers here united.  
Bob, and Min, the Grecian Slave.

*CURTAIN.*