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PADERBORN

# **The Works Of Horatio Walpole, Earl of Orford**

In Five Volumes

**Walpole, Horace**

**London, 1798**

Nature will prevail, a Moral Entertainment

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**Nutzungsbedingungen**

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NATURE WILL PREVAIL:

A

MORAL ENTERTAINMENT,

IN ONE ACT.

VOL. II.

Pp

PERSONS.

NATURE WILL PREVAIL.

PERSONS.

MEN.

CURRENT.

PADLOCK.

WOMEN.

ALMADINE, a Fairy.

FINETTE, a Country Girl.

IN ONE ACT.

PERSONS

13

Vol. II

# NATURE WILL PREVAIL:

A

## Moral Entertainment, in one Act.

SCENE, *a Desert Island.*

*Enter* CURRENT.

WHAT an unfortunate mortal am I! to have so many virtues and not a soul to communicate them to! I love to know, I love to impart all I know! Not the least mystery in my whole composition. Then my memory is as good as my heart; and though I remember every thing I hear, still I have no peace till I have made somebody else as wise as myself. Yet in this cursed desolate island all my curiosity, all my frankness are thrown away. I cannot find a creature but that morose animal Padlock, who, though I have told him all the secrets I ever heard in my life, has never imparted a tittle to me but which way the wind was; and that with as much circumspection as if he was afraid the wind should overhear him. We have no chance of escaping hence, and yet he will not own even what party he is of. I abused the Tories. He answered, they were very loyal gentlemen. I changed my battery, and railed at the Whigs. The Whigs, replied he, have the merit of bringing in the present royal family. Other people praise and abuse; Padlock has an excuse for every body; yet with so little warmth, that I can often perceive he is glad when I rail at them, but will not join in it, for fear we should ever return and I should betray him. We are shut up in a desert, and he is as cautious as if he were in the drawing-room. I long to tell him how frightened I was by a tiger this morning, but I know he would assure me he has known many a tiger with very sociable qualities— Well, I must acquaint him, however, for I have nobody else to tell it to.

P p 2

*Enter*

Enter ALMADINE.

CURRENT.

Bless me, a woman! Well, now I shall have conversation enough—pray heaven she be no relation of Padlock!

ALMADINE.

Stranger, lay aside your fears—in me you behold—

CURRENT.

A woman, and a charming one.—My lovely madam, do you think I fear a handsome woman, with whom I am alone in a desert island, where there is no one human creature, but a fellow called Padlock—and who, between you and me, is the dullest fellow on this side of the Atlantic?

ALMADINE.

I know it; but I should be sorry he knew any thing of me. You will never behold me more, if you mention having seen me.

CURRENT.

Dear madam, I give you my honour it shall never go out of my lips but to Padlock. He is my friend, and I am bound in honour to keep no secrets from him.

ALMADINE.

Your life depends on your taciturnity.

CURRENT.

[*Afide.*] What signifies whether I burst, or die any other way? Pardon my curiosity, as my being it seems is at stake. How can my life depend on keeping your secret? How can you avoid Padlock's seeing you? Nay, has not he seen you? Perhaps you are a private friend that he keeps concealed in some cave—You may trust me, he shall never know I have found out his secret.

ALMADINE.

I cannot be sure of that. You seem so communicative, that, having no other confidant, I should not be surpris'd if you told him even that.

CURRENT.

CURRENT.

What then, you own I have gueſſed right? How kind to prefer me to him! Where is your retreat? I will come to you the moment he is gone to reſt. One kiſs firſt—

ALMADINE.

Raſh mortal, forbear! Know, I am not of your ſpecies—

CURRENT.

My dear lady, you have lived in this damned iſland till you have forgot your own language—You mean, you are not of my ſex.—I ſee it by that ſnowy boſom, and I flatter myſelf you are not ſorry that we are of different ſpecies. Lord! what pleaſure it will be to hear our children prattle!

ALMADINE.

Offend not the purity of ſupernatural organs by your licentious ideas—I tell you I am—

CURRENT.

A ſupernatural beauty, I allow; but your organs, I truſt, are not over-natural.

ALMADINE.

Be dumb for a moment, if poſſible. I am a fairy.

CURRENT.

The devil you are! You are monſtrouſly grown. I have always heard that fairies were not a thought taller than Lilliputians.

ALMADINE.

I am of a ſuperior order. This iſland is under my patronage. I am ſovereign of the weſtern ocean. You and Padlock were both ſhipwrecked on this coaſt by my order. Your deſtiny is in my hands. You can never depart hence but by my permiſſion: and I repeat it to you, your life will end the moment you reveal the inviolable ſecret of having ſeen me.

CURRENT.

What, not even to Padlock?

5

ALMADINE.

ALMADINE.

Above all men, not to him.

CURRENT.

Bring any other man hither, and I will not desire to tell Padlock; for, between you and me, he is the worst person upon earth for a confident.

ALMADINE.

What, is he as communicative as yourself?

CURRENT.

Oh, lord! for a fairy you are a woful guesfer! He communicative! Why, he would not tell if I bid him—nay, I don't think he would, even if I swore him to secrecy.

ALMADINE.

I find the trust I place in you, is in good hands—but you know the penalty. [*vanishes.*]

CURRENT, *alone.*

Stay, stay; where the devil is she? Madam fairy, lady patroness, what's your name, queen of the ocean—Zounds, she is gone.—Supernatural indeed! Not say I have seen you? 'Faith, I don't know whether I have or not. I had fifty questions to ask her—Seen her; seen whom? Whom can I say I have seen? A gentlewoman stalks in from behind a rock, acquaints a body with her supernaturality, which was not at all the thing I wanted with her, tells me I am a dead man if I mention having seen her, and whiff! she is out of sight, without even leaving me a card with her direction. Who the devil will believe me? Aye, and moreover she says she ordered me to be shipwrecked—Very kind, truly! I am certainly bound in honour to keep so obliging a secret.—And Padlock, too—she shipwrecked him likewise—Well, she did not bid me not to tell that. I may certainly acquaint him with what relates to himself—I will do it, thus: "A certain fairy, that shall be nameless—Don't, Padlock, don't press me—a lady's name, you know, must not be imparted to the nearest friend—nay, nor don't ask me how I came to know it; but be assured a certain fairy—not that I have seen her, I don't say I have; I cannot help what you may conjecture."—Ay, that will do; I can never be struck dead for what he may guess—I hope he

I will

will guess.—Guess! what can he guess? If I was to tell him ever so plainly, he would not believe me.—Padlock, with all his religion, I am convinced is an unbeliever—and therefore where can be the harm of telling him what he will think a lie?—Well, but suppose I tell him upon my honour I have not seen a woman these twelve hours—his suspicious nature will conclude by the abruptness of the assertion that I have seen one, and thus he will find out my secret while I endeavour to keep it from him. It shall be so.

ECHO. It shall be so.

CURRENT.

Ha! who was that? 'Faith, I believe it was an echo—What a fortunate discovery!—Egad, I'll tell Echo the secret; and if she tells Padlock, it is no fault of mine—If he is within a mile he shall know it—*[bawls very loud]* Padlock, Padlock, I have seen a— *[ALMADINE appears.]*—a tiger. *[She disappears.]*

CURRENT.

A fairy, quotha! Why, she is an errant hocus pocus—It is good, however, to have presence of mind—I see I must be upon my guard—Now for telling my secret, without telling it—*[bawls]* Padlock, Padlock, don't believe I have just seen a fairy—

ECHO. Believe I have just seen a fairy.

CURRENT. *[ALMADINE appears.]*

Oh! oh! I am a dead man!

ALMADINE.

What were those sounds I heard? Is this your secrecy? Do you insult my power? Do you proclaim to the echos what I charged you never to utter?

CURRENT.

As I hope to be saved, your majesty, that Echo is a damned liar. She blunders like an Irish footman. I was but dictating a card to her to carry a stone's throw, and she forgot the first word of it.

ALMADINE.



## ALMADINE.

As you have not totally disobeyed me, for the present your life is respited—but as you are in some degree guilty, you will ere long be deprived of faculties that are very dear to you.

## CURRENT.

Lord, madam, which? which? If I must be deprived of some of my faculties, may I not at least choose which?

[ALMADINE *disappears.*]

ECHO. Choose which.

## CURRENT.

Alack! alack! what shall I do? How can I choose? My poor dear faculties, which of you must I give up? My eyes, my ears, my tongue, my hands, my—Oh, it is impossible to resolve—Yes, yes, yes, I have it—I have an aversion to sorrow—Echo, take notice, I have made my option; I will give up my tears—

ECHO. Ears.

## CURRENT.

Ha! my ears! No, no, thou abominable jesuitical quibbling prostitute! I did not say my ears—

ECHO. Ears.

## CURRENT.

No, no; I tell you [*as loud as he can bawl*] my tears, my t, e, a, r, s.

ECHO. E, a, r, s.

*Enter* FINETTE.

Methought I heard a man's voice—I have not seen a human creature since I was in this dismal place.—There he is—Sure he will not hurt me—I have been told I am pretty, and that no man will hurt a pretty woman; I'll venture.—[*curtsies*].—Good sir, have compassion on an innocent virgin—

CURRENT.

CURRENT.

She is a sweet creature—but why does not she speak? Her lips move, but no sound comes from them. Who are you, pretty maiden? Can you speak English?

FINETTE.

Yes, an' please you.

CURRENT.

Do you mock me, child? Are you a fairy too? Can't you articulate?

FINETTE.

I don't understand your honour.

CURRENT.

Child, I am not deaf; I don't comprehend the motion of the lips without sounds. Speak aloud, if you have a mind I should know what you mean. I am not used to talk in dumb show.

FINETTE.

What can he mean? Perhaps he is a little deafish—I'll speak louder. My name is Finette, your honour; my parents are poor, but very honest, I assure ye.

CURRENT.

This is certainly some trick of the fairy. Young woman, I'll kiss you till you find your voice—

FINETTE.

O dear, I hope your honour won't be rude—Indeed I will cry out.

CURRENT.

Very well; I have no objections to the conditions, if you have not—since kisses must do the business—*[offers to kiss her.]*

*[FINETTE screams.]*

*Enter* PADLOCK.

What have we here? Current and a pretty wench! Very well, very well, Mr. Current, I wish you much joy!

CURRENT.

Oh, Padlock, I was trying to open this girl's lips; she does nothing but make mouths at me. Try if you can make her speak.

PADLOCK.

Very willingly, if I may make use of your method.

CURRENT.

What the devil, are you dumb too?—Have you learnt the silent language of this country? You was taciturn enough before.

PADLOCK.

I thought the language I found you practising was the tongue of every country.

CURRENT.

Ha, what, ha! Come, come, have done fooling. You don't want to be kissed too, I hope?

FINETTE, to PADLOCK.

Alas, sir, the poor gentleman is either deaf or mad. I have screamed as loud as I could.

PADLOCK.

Yes, in good truth, for I heard you to the bottom of the hill.

CURRENT.

They talk to one another—seem to understand one another—and yet I don't hear a word they say.—Lord, lord, lord, sure I am not deaf! Padlock, am I deaf?

PADLOCK.

You are not dumb, at least; your tongue runs as fast as ever.

CURRENT.

Now, for heaven's sake, Padlock, tell me, I conjure you; have you spoken aloud to me? Am I deaf? Or are you in a plot with this imp of the fairies to torment me?

PADLOCK.

The girl's in the right, he is certainly gone mad—he has talked himself out of his senses.

FINETTE.

FINETTE.

Indeed, your honour, I am afraid the poor gentleman's head is a little askew, as it were—pardon my boldness.

CURRENT.

What shall I do to know whether I am really deaf or not? Dear Padlock, sweet lass, bawl as loud as you can.

PADLOCK and FINETTE.

Do you hear me?

CURRENT.

Pho! you only gape.

PADLOCK.

I tell you, we roared.

FINETTE.

Yes, indeed did us.

CURRENT.

O lord, I don't hear a word they say.—I will go let off a pistol at my own ear.

[Runs out.]

PADLOCK, FINETTE.

PADLOCK.

Well, pretty maiden, don't look after that fool—my friend, I mean. He is a little apt to be thick of hearing—he is quick at times.

FINETTE.

Indeed, your honour, his worship seems to be a very civil gentleman in the main.

PADLOCK.

Oh, he does, does he? And pray how long have his worship and you been acquainted?

FINETTE.

Oh, not the time of drawing a drap of small beer, indeed and indeed!

PADLOCK.

But what made you scream out so lustily?

Q 2

FINETTE.

FINETTE.

Oh,—stay ; yes, he trod upon my best gown.

PADLOCK.

So you did not cry out because he kissed you?

FINETTE.

Yes ; no—yes, I might scream, but indeed I believe the gentleman meant matrimony. Don't all gentlemen that kiss poor girls, mean to make them their wives ?

PADLOCK.

Oh, yes, yes, some time or other. But are you poor ; very poor ?

FINETTE.

Yes, an' please your honour ; and it would be an act of charity, if you would be so good as to give me away.

PADLOCK.

Give you away ! To whom ?

FINETTE.

To yon fine gentleman in the gay clothes that was here awhile ago.

PADLOCK.

Why, sure you don't like that sot ?—my friend, I mean. He is a very worthy man ; but he will never marry you without a portion. You shall marry me—and as there is no clergyman in the island, we may live as man and wife in the mean time ; and if ever we get back to England, or Scotland—

*Enter* CURRENT.

O lord ! Padlock, I am certainly deaf, stone-deaf ! I fired a pistol, and did not hear it—I bawled to the echo, I banged great stones against the anchor, and all in vain : nay, I don't hear my own voice—Do I speak ? I hope I am not dumb too.

PADLOCK.

[*Aside.*] I wish you were. Egad, I will make him believe he is ; and then the double misfortune may make him drown himself. [*Shakes his head.*]

CURRENT.

## CURRENT.

No, you don't say so! What, don't you hear me? [PADLOCK *shakes his head.*] Upon your honour! Oh, I shall go distracted—[*barwls very loud.*]—Don't you hear me yet? [PADLOCK *shakes his head.*] Oh, undone, undone, undone!—To have but three people in this world, and not be able to hear them, nor make them hear me!—And you, my angel, don't you hear me neither?

## FINETTE.

Yes, indeed, your honour; and I never heard so fine a spoken gentleman in all my born days.

## PADLOCK.

[*Aside.* The girl's a fool, and in love with him; but at least he does not hear her: I'll make him believe she does not distinguish a word he says.

[*Pushes her aside, points to her, and shakes his head, as if FINETTE did not hear CURRENT.*]

## CURRENT.

Don't she, upon your soul?—Oh! what will become of me? I cannot even have the satisfaction of a dialogue with the echo.

FINETTE, *angrily, to PADLOCK.*

Don't impose upon the poor gentleman; you may be ashamed of yourself. [To CURRENT.] Sir, I do hear you: speak to me. [Very loud.]

## PADLOCK.

O nature, nature, didst thou form fools only to baffle the cunning of wise men? Now will love teach this simple girl to defeat all my art!

[FINETTE *points to CURRENT's mouth, then to her own ear, and then nods to him.*]

## PADLOCK.

Ay, ay; see, I said it would be so.—Damn her, but I must have her—

## CURRENT.

'Faith, I believe *she does* hear me.—My life, my angel, nod again if you hear me. [FINETTE *nods, and smiles upon him.*] Oh! transport! You have a devilish

a devilish pretty mouth, when you smile; but the quickness of your ears is ten times better still—And does Padlock hear me too? [FINETTE  *nods.*] I thought so.—Now do I long to tell them both the secret—but if that cursed fairy is within reach, she may make them deaf to. Oh, but now I remember, she did not forbid my telling it to this girl—Lord, it is quite reviving to have somebody to tell a secret to.—Heark you, heark you, my dear; a word in your ear.

PADLOCK.

[*Aside.*] He is going to tell her something to my prejudice. I must prevent him.

[*Pulls FINETTE away, and makes professions to CURRENT, by laying his hand to his heart; and expressing concern for his deafness, by pointing to CURRENT's ears, and looking grieved.*]

FINETTE.

It is very unhandsome in you, Mr. Padlock, to interrupt lovers. The gentleman might be going to propose matrimony, for aught you know.

CURRENT.

Good Padlock, let us alone; I was going to tell her a secret, and I dare swear she will tell it you the moment my back is turned—I must go about a little business the moment I have whispered her, and will leave you alone.

PADLOCK.

[*Aside.*] Good! One fool at least counteracts another. We cunning people always succeed sooner or later. [*To FINETTE.*] Go, go and hear what the gentleman has to say to you. It is no business of mine.

FINETTE.

So I will, without your leave. One may whisper with one's sweetheart without offence, I hope. [CURRENT *whispers her.*] A fairy! Have you seen a fairy? Lord, you make me tremble all over.

PADLOCK.

[*Aside.*] What nonsense is the blockhead talking to her?

CURRENT.

[*Aside.*] I hope she has told him. [*To her.*] Why, sure you have not divulged my secret? Padlock, you must not believe her. Where should I have seen a fairy? I do not say there are no such beings—nay, I know there are—Not that I say I ever saw one—I may, or I may not—

PADLOCK.

His brain is certainly cracked—

FINETTE.

For sartin, it is for love—And yet, Mr. Padlock, you will bear me witness I have not been cruel. Would it not be better, think you, if I made him signs that I will marry him?

PADLOCK.

Pray, my dear, what signs will you make him? [*Aside.*] As he is mad already, I don't know but matrimony may bring him to his senses.

FINETTE.

Oh, you shall see in a trice.

[*She takes a ring from CURRENT's finger, gives it him, and holds out her own finger; then pulls PADLOCK between them, takes out a prayer-book and turns to "Matrimony," shows it to CURRENT, and then gives the book to PADLOCK.*]

CURRENT.

What the devil is all this? Matrimony? What, child, have you a mind I should marry you? Nay, with all my heart—[*Aside.*] It is the best way of securing the only woman in the island to myself.—But, my angel, who is to give you away?

ALMADINE *appears.*

That shall be my office.

CURRENT.

Oh! ecstasy! at least I can hear fairies speak.

ALMADINE.



## A L M A D I N E.

And every body else: your hearing is restored. Know, Current, and thou, Padlock, that a vain endeavour to correct nature has cured me of presumption; though I have not been able to amend the respective faults in each of you. I caused you all three to be transported hither to make the experiment. What has been the result? You, Padlock, in an uninhabited island, have not been able to divest yourself of caution, reserve, suspicion, cunning, self-interest and treachery. One man alone was your companion; it was out of his power to betray you; and yet you could not bring yourself to trust him: the first woman you saw, tempted you to betray him. Of what use has good sense been to you? It has only given edge to the badness of your heart. Go back to men; you are fit to live amongst them. You, Current, are more fool than knave; but you too are incorrigible. The threats of death, the loss of hearing, could not cure you of your loquacity. It would be hard to punish you for what you cannot help. This innocent pretty creature loves you sincerely, loves you honestly. I will see you married; you shall remain here with her for ever, and shall be as happy as your nature will suffer you to be. It is no more in my power to make you happier, than it was to make you better.

## F I N E T T E.

Dear gracious, shall I live alone with this fine gentleman for ever?

## C U R R E N T.

No, no; I hope her majesty will now and then have a fit of making experiments, and send us more company. Adieu! Padlock; be sure you put all that has happened to us into the newspapers.

## A L M A D I N E.

That he will not. He does not like newspapers meddling with characters like his.

## F I N I S.