

**THE FOUNDLING OF  
SEBASTOPOL:  
A DRAMA**

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The Foundling of Sebastopol: A Drama by W. Tandy

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THE

# Foundling of Sebastopol.

*A Drama.*

BY

W. TANDY, D. D.,

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of Antioch, &c.

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DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THE REVEREND MOTHER OF THE SISTERS OF CHARITY, attached to  
the French army in the Crimea.

SISTER CATHARINE, }  
SISTER MARIE, } her companions.

MISS QUIGLEY, mistress of a boarding-school in England.

MADAME LACROIX, French teacher in the same.

ROSE, the Foundling of Sebastopol, a boarder in the same.

AMELIA SHARP, }  
BESSY GOODENOUGH, }  
VICTORIA ARMSTRONG, } her fellow-pupils.  
AUGUSTA NOBLE, }

WIDOW MALONEY, Rose's nurse.

JEANNETTE, servant of the Sisters.

SUSAN, servant of Miss Quigley.

THE  
FOUNDLING OF SEBASTOPOL.

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ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The interior of a tent in the French camp before Sebastopol. At the back, a little altar, with a statue of the Blessed Virgin and other objects of piety upon it.*

REVEREND MOTHER and SISTER CATHARINE seated, sorting shreds of linen to serve as bandages, &c.

*Sister Catharine.*—Our stock of linen is getting low, Reverend Mother. Unless our good friends in France send us a new supply, and that shortly, our store will be quite empty. And then, if another battle were to take place, what should we do for the poor creatures whom it would pour into our hospitals?

*Reverend Mother.*—If it comes to the worst, dear Sister, we must tear up the convent linen, and be glad to sacrifice our personal comforts for the brave soldiers who expose themselves to be so cruelly mangled for their country's welfare.

*Sister C.*—Yes. No sacrifice can equal their deserts. Oh! when I see them carried in, so gashed and mutilated, so convulsed with agony, so pale and haggard—yet, withal, content to suffer, even glad to die, for our dear France—my heart reproaches me that I can do so little for them; and I wish that I could be their substitute in suffering, to send them back in health and vigor to the combat.

*Rev. M.*—And all this for France?

*Sister C.*—France is our country. Ought we not to love it?

*Rev. M.*—Yes. It is a duty. But it needs a higher love than that which makes the soldier to brave wounds and death, to waken and sustain a wish like yours.

*Sister C.*—Nay, do not praise my wish as if it were something heroic.

*Rev. M.*—I did not wish to praise you, but to note the motive that should guide us all in the performance of our arduous task ; for there is fear lest, living in a camp, we give in to the worldly views which there too commonly prevail.

*Sister C.*—I often think that, in this point of view, our soldiers must have greater souls than mine ; for I could not endure such perils and such hardships as are theirs, had I no better prize than theirs to animate my courage. I confess that I should shrink from all the miseries I daily witness, were I upheld alone by love of country and the hope of honor.

*Rev. M.*—I have fancied, my dear child, sometimes when I have seen you bending, pale and careworn, o'er the bed of agony, that you do, e'en though sustained by higher motives, find your task too arduous for your courage, or, perhaps, your constitution. Is it not so ? I grieve to see you pine away, and will relieve you of the burden, if it be too great for you to bear.

*Sister C.*—Dearest Reverend Mother, when our good superiors chose you to take the charge of the army hospital at the seat of war, you know I offered voluntarily to share the work with you. At that time I knew nothing of the horrors that awaited us. But now I know them. In the cholera-stricken camp ; within the reeking surgeon's tent, the while the fight was raging ; in the stifling hold of the transport-ship, crammed with the sick and dying, have I stood by you, to gaze on scenes that fancy would in vain attempt to picture. Well, were I now about to make my choice, I would embrace the task with tenfold eagerness.

*Rev. M.*—Then why is it you ever seem so pensive—yea, so melancholy ?

*Sister C.*—Can I be otherwise amid such scenes as these ? O war ! Men call it glorious. Thousands will read the harrowing details of what is going on around us, and gloat o'er the feats and perils of the fight with kindling ardor in their breasts. Yea, even mothers will exult, and point with pride to the page which tells how their own sons have earned undying honor, as they call it, for their families. Oh ! could they see, as we have seen, how, in the fight, when foot to foot they meet, the fiery struggle stifles in their breasts all sense of pity, and brings forth demoniac passions from the heart, to stamp them on the countenance in livid characters, and makes each one, though gentle he have been till then, and tender-hearted, to exult and revel in the anguish he is causing to his fellow-man ! Could



they but hear the combination of demoniac sounds that make up the battle-cry—could they behold the field when all is over, and join in the midnight search for wounded mid the dead—surely no longer would they try to gild the wretchedness of war with high and sounding titles. We have seen all this, and more, in gaunt reality. Can we be otherwise than sad?

*Rev. M.*—War is, indeed, an awful thing—the greatest of the scourges sent by God to man. But still we must not dwell too much on the dark side of the picture. It has some more pleasing features. It can bring forth love as well as hatred. It can waken gratitude—at least for us, dear Sister. Are we not oftentimes rewarded for our pains by looks of love that greet us in our labors?

*Sister C.*—True. We have some pleasures, even here. For is it not a pleasure to behold the tear of gratitude steal from the eye of suffering? Never shall I forget the look which a poor wounded Russian gave, when in my hand he recognized the crucifix. Till then, he had been sullen—had resisted every effort to relieve him—tearing away the bandage from his wound. But when I put this to his lips, he smiled a smile, the like of which I never saw before, and from that moment was as calm and docile as a little child.

*Rev. M.*—I well remember him, and how, when afterward our Reverend Chaplain came to him and showed him the same emblem of redemption, he held his hands imploringly toward him, as if to claim the blessings of his ministry.

*Sister C.* [*musings*].—Would it in aught avail him?

*Rev. M.*—Yes, if, in ignorance of the truth, he was sincere in faith, and contrite.

*Sister C.*—True. For the illiterate common soldiers there is ground for hope. But [*more anxiously*] how about the learned—officers and nobles?

*Rev. M.*—Why such questions, Sister? 'Tis to seek too curiously to know the ways of God.

*Sister C.*—His ways are always just, I know. But, ah! [*turning away and trying to hide her tears*] they are mysterious, too.

*Rev. M.*—Why, how is this? In tears? Why do you talk of mysteries? Let not these gloomy thoughts have such effect upon you, lest I be obliged to send you back to France.

*Sister C.*—O Reverend Mother! say not so. No change of place can cure my sadness. But 'tis wrong, I feel, to

dwell on painful thoughts. I have deserved reproof. Now I will try to be more calm and cheerful.

*Enter JEANNETTE.*

*Jeannette.*—There's a woman outside, Reverend Mother, asking to speak with you. I think she comes from the English camp, and wants to tell you something about a baby, as far as I can make out.

*Rev. M.*—Bring her in.

*[Jeannette goes out, and returns immediately with the Widow Maloney; then retires.]*

*Widow Maloney [falling on her knees].*—Glory be to God this day, as glads my eyes wid the sight of a raale living nun. Surs, now, put your hand on me, and bliss me.

*Rev. M.*—It's only from bishops and priests you should ask a blessing, my good woman.

*Wid. M.*—Och, niver mind that. A praste's blessing's one thing, and a nun's blessing's another; but they're both good in their way.

*Rev. M.*—Well, may God bless you. Only stand up, and tell me what I can do to serve you.

*Wid. M.*—*[standing up]*.—Faith, not much for myself. Poor as she is, Winny Maloney's old enough to take care of herself, all the world over.

*Rev. M.*—Then what is it you want of me?

*Wid. M.*—It's all about a little darlint of a baby, as I'm come to spake wid you.

*Rev. M.*—Is it your own baby?

*Wid. M.*—Why, for that, it ain't and it is, the darlint! seeing as it hasn't got no one ilse in the wide world to look after it.

*Rev. M.*—Is it an orphan, then?

*Wid. M.*—That's a quistion I can't rightly answer, seeing as how I niver knowed whether it had father or mother at all at all.

*Rev. M.*—Never had any father or mother! what do you mean?

*Wid. M.*—Only as I niver heard of them.

*Rev. M.*—How, then, did you come by the child?

*Wid. M.*—That's jist what I was a-going to tell you of, if you'd give me time.

*Rev. M.*—Well go on; I won't interrupt you.

*Wid. M.*—Why, you see, afther we came ashore out of the stame-vessel—that's to say, myself and my poor man, Barney Maloney, God rest his soul!—well, afther we got

ashore, we gev the Roussians a sound drubbing there, on the banks of the River Almer. Och, sure! didn't we fight valiant!

*Rev. M.*—You don't mean to say that you fought in the battle of the Alma?

*Wid. M.*—No, not myself intirely; but Barney did,—and, you know, it's all the same, specially as I wasn't far behind; for didn't I come up to him just as he was emptying the flask of a dead Roussian? For the boy, you see, had always rayther a liking for the craythur. So I boxed his ears, and towld him he'd ought to be ashamed of himself, wasting his time, whin he might be afther taking Serbatopol. Howsomever, we didn't take it that day, more's the pity.

*Rev. M.*—Pity, indeed? Had it been taken then, how many would be now exulting in their victory who are laid low forever!

*Wid. M.*—Thru for ye, and for Barney too.

*Rev. M.*—Is your husband dead, then?

*Wid. M.*—Och hone! that's what he is, poor boy! He was killed in the last great battle. But stay—I'm not come to that yet. Let me see,—where was I? Och, I remember. Afther we beat the Roussians, you know, we had to march across the counthry, where thers was no roads at all, or next to none. It was a weary day that. Through the mud, over the rocks, tearing through the briers, and tumbling over the stones,—on we wint, and on and on, till I fairly thought we should niver come to the end of it at all.

*Rev. M.*—But pray do come to the end of your tale.

*Wid. M.*—I'm jist at it now. At last, all of a sudden, what should we see, but the beautifulest house, standing in a garden all full of flowers, and grapes, and trees, and roses, and I don't know what besides. But the red-coats soon began to knock it to pieces, and little was the beauty they left there in less than half an hour.

*Sister C.*—O dreadful war! thou sparest nothing!

*Wid. M.*—You might well say so, if you'd seen the inside of the house when we got there. But it wasn't all our work. For there was a score of thim big dirty Cossacks, as didn't know we were so near, a-rummaging and hacking and smashing the tables and beautiful looking-glasses, to see if they could find any thing hid. So "Have at 'em!" was the word. And wasn't there a nice scrimmage atwixt thim and our brave boys!

*Sister C.*—What a contrast to the peaceful, happy scenes