

**THE FASCINATING MR.
VANDERVELDT; A
COMEDY IN FOUR ACTS**

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The Fascinating Mr. Vanderveldt; A Comedy in Four Acts by Alfred Sutro

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ALFRED SUTRO

**THE FASCINATING MR.
VANDERVELDT; A
COMEDY IN FOUR ACTS**

The following is a copy of the original Bill

THE GARRICK THEATRE

Lessee and Manager: Mr. ARTHUR BOURCHIER

On Thursday, April the 26th, 1906, and every evening following.

A Comedy in Four Acts,

by

ALFRED SUTRO

ENTITLED

The Fascinating Mr. Vanderveldt

LADY CLARICE HOWLAND.....	Miss Violet Vanbrugh.
AGGIE COLES.....	Miss Muriel Beaumont.
THE MARCHIONESS OF HENDINGBY (pronounced Henby).....	Miss Nora Greenlaw.
LADY CLEMENTINA DESBOROUGH...	Miss Elfrida Clement.
MISS PELLING.....	Miss Henrietta Watson.
MRS. BREVELL.....	Miss Pamela Gaythorne.
MRS. MELLON.....	Miss Kate Phillips.
MARY.....	Miss Annie Stuart.
MR. VANDERVELDT.....	Mr. Arthur Bouchier.
COLONEL RAVNER.....	Mr. C. Aubrey Smith.
LORD WOOLHAM.....	Mr. Walter Pearce.
SIR BARTHOLOMEW CARDICK (one of (H.M.'s Judges).....	Mr. O. B. Clarence.
MR. GODDLESTONE.....	Mr. George Trollope.
REV. HUBERT LANGSTON.....	Mr. Charles V. France.
MR. MELLON.....	Mr. Charles Goodheart.
ALFIE.....	Master Hugh Wakefield.
FOOTMAN.....	Mr. Douglas Imbert.

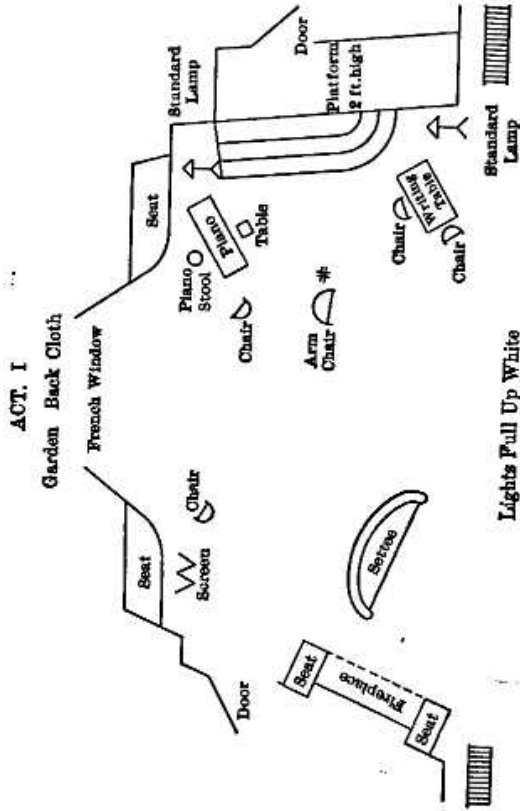
TIME—The present.

THE FASCINATING MR. VANDERVELDT

ACT. I

Garden Back Cloth

French Window



Lights Pull Up White
Parquet Stage Cloth

THE FASCINATING MR. VANDERVELDT.

ACT I.

The drawing-room of LADY CLARICE HOWLAND'S cottage in Sonning. The room, which is simply but pleasantly furnished, has at back French windows opening on to the lawn; there is a path outside that winds off to the right. In the room there is a door at R. U. E., and another at L., which, when open, shows a glimpse of the hall. There is a charming view, through the door and windows, of the winding river and the blue hills beyond.

AGGIE COLES, a very pretty American girl of twenty-three or twenty-four, is seated at the piano, playing a Sousa march. The door L. opens, and MISS PELLING enters and crosses to R. of AGGIE. She is a handsome woman of thirty, whose face, however, wears a permanent expression of discontent. She is dressed with studied simplicity. AGGIE stops playing, and turns. Rises.

MISS PELLING. (*stiffly*) Excuse me—I am Miss Pelling, Lady Hendingby's companion. Lady Hendingby is with Lady Clarice. You are Miss Coles, are you not? I was told to go to you.

AGGIE. (*who has risen*) Oh, won't you sit down? (*pushing arm-chair to C.*)

MISS PELLING. (*L. of settee R., sitting*) Thank you. I am afraid I am disturbing you. But I have to obey orders.

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AGGIE. (*puzzled*) Oh, you're not disturbing me at all! (*she sits on arm of chair c.*) I was merely trying to hammer out a tune. Do you play?

MISS PELLING. (*drily*) The piano is supposed to be one of my accomplishments. Also, I read well—aloud, I mean—know French and German, can trim a hat, and am cheerful.

AGGIE. Oh!

MISS PELLING. Now you know as much about me as you would gather from an advertisement. You are an American, aren't you?

AGGIE. Yes.

MISS PELLING. You don't speak with an accent.

AGGIE. (*smiling*) American women don't, as a rule, except on the English stage.

MISS PELLING. I suppose your father's a millionaire?

AGGIE. (*laughing outright*) That again, you know, is rather a stage convention. There really are quite a number of American fathers who aren't rich at all!

MISS PELLING. I hope yours is?

AGGIE. (*rather surprised*) Poor dad! he's comfortable, and he sends me enough to pay my bills.

MISS PELLING. Have you ever heard of my father?

AGGIE. (*politely*) I'm afraid—

MISS PELLING. Sir Richard Pelling—one of the most popular men in London. He kept open house—all his friends loved him—and borrowed money. He was *very* popular. He died two years ago, and left us—my mother and three daughters—without a penny.

AGGIE. (*sympathetically*) Oh!

MISS PELLING. The creditors swooped down the day after the funeral; his friends said, "Poor old Richard!" and I became companion to Lady Hendingby. I hope *your* father isn't too popular!

AGGIE. I don't know—he works very hard. But I'm so sorry, Miss Pelling!

MISS PELLING. (*drily*) Everyone was sorry—it's quite extraordinary how much unemployed sorrow

(*rises and moves to fire-place*) there is in the world. And I meet lots of people who say, "What! You a companion! Dear old Dick Pelling's daughter! How sad!" And the next minute they're calling no trumps, or doubling spades.

AGGIE. I'm afraid people are very callous.

MISS PELLING. Lady Hendingby at least engaged me, and gave me a salary. Do you know Lady Hendingby?

AGGIE. Clarice has spoken to me of her mother, of course, but I haven't met her.

MISS PELLING. You will—she'll be coming down soon. She's what they call a "grande dame."

AGGIE. (*laughing*) That sounds very alarming.

MISS PELLING. A "grande dame," you know, lifts her glasses to look at you, and usually has an imposing nose. She is inclined to be rude, doesn't encourage plebeians in her drawing-room, unless they're very wealthy; dresses rather shabbily, and is the daughter of a duke. (*moving to AGGIE*)

AGGIE. (*playfully*) Invariably?

MISS PELLING. At least in this case. My employer's father was the Duke of Trenby.

AGGIE. I didn't know.

MISS PELLING. The Duke of Trenby looked like a gamekeeper, was never without a straw between his teeth, and cared for nothing but oxen and turnips. (*sitting on settee*)

AGGIE. (*laughing*) You're making me giddy!

MISS PELLING. A companion has unusual opportunities for observation. Lady Clarice—

AGGIE. (*interrupting hers, gently, rises and moves to head of settee*) She's my friend, you know.

MISS PELLING. Oh, I wasn't going to say anything unkind! I never say unkind things. Besides, I like Lady Clarice.

AGGIE. I'm glad— (*sitting on arm of chair c.*) I'm awfully fond of her. Wasn't it sweet of her to ask me down here?

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MISS PELLING. You've known her long?

AGGIE. We met in Paris last month.

MISS PELLING. Lady Clarice is all right. Her sister 's a prig, and her brother 's a donkey—but I like Lady Clarice. I knew her husband. She wasn't happy.

AGGIE. She never speaks of her husband.

MISS PELLING. There's nothing to say about him except what's on his tombstone—he was the sort of man you Americans will soon be turning out by machines. My employer wants Lady Clarice to marry again.

AGGIE. (*laughing*) What a funny idea!

MISS PELLING. (*drily, turning sharply*) You don't approve of widows remarrying?

AGGIE. Oh, it's not that—but Lady Hendingby *wanting* her to!

MISS PELLING. My employer has made up her mind—and when *that* happens— She's lecturing Lady Clarice now: that's why I was sent to you. (*turns to* AGGIE) By the way, Miss Coles—

AGGIE. Colls.

MISS PELLING. I beg your pardon.

AGGIE. It's spelt with an "e," of course, and at home we speak it Coles. But I like to be in the movement.

MISS PELLING. I see.

AGGIE. Lady Hendingby calls herself Lady Henby—

MISS PELLING. It's the one privilege left to the aristocracy. Miss Colls, I've been very frank with you—you will of course not let my employer know—

AGGIE. Of course not! (*rise and moves to head of settee*) And, Miss Pelling, really, I think it's very hard lines.

MISS PELLING. You needn't! Why, I get fifty pounds a year—and the reversion of Lady Hendingby's dresses. And reversion, in this case, literally means "turning again!"

MARY comes from door R. U. E., and announces "Colonel Rayner," who follows her; she goes. The COLONEL is a soldierly, well-set-up and well-groomed man of forty-five, with a handsome, bronzed face. MISS PELLING rises, standing by fire-place R.

AGGIE. (*jumping up*) Ah, Colonel, how do you do? Lady Clarice is upstairs, with her mother. Let me introduce you to Miss Pelling. (*moves down L.*)

MISS PELLING. (*below settee R.*) I fancy Colonel Rayner and I have met before.

COLONEL. (*puzzled*) I've been out of England so long—

MISS PELLING. I am now Lady Hendingby's companion. But I used to be Sir Richard Pelling's daughter.

COLONEL. (*with genuine sympathy*) What! Dear old Dick Pelling's daughter a companion! Oh, I'm sorry! (*AGGIE sits in chair below writing table L.*)

MISS PELLING. (*quietly to AGGIE*) You see?

COLONEL. (*to MISS PELLING*) I was very fond of your father. If I could in any way—

MISS PELLING. (*with, for the first time, a gentle note in her voice*) Thank you, Colonel. Should you meet a thousand a year doing nothing, you might send it along. You've been in Africa, haven't you?

COLONEL. (*sitting in chair c.*) Yes—conducting unfashionable little wars, that no one ever hears of.

MISS PELLING. What they call punitive expeditions? (*sits on settee R.*)

COLONEL. (*nodding*) That's it! Nothing to be got from them, except enteric. I've had that twice!

MISS PELLING. You've been a colonel a long time, haven't you? Why aren't you a general?

COLONEL. I've given up asking conundrums, Miss Pelling. There's a machine they call the War Office—

AGGIE. (*suddenly bursting out laughing and clapping her hands*) Oh, you are lovely, you two!