

**THE TWO LORDS: A
COMEDY IN
THREE ACTS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649307104

The Two Lords: A Comedy in Three Acts by Thomas Smelt

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THOMAS SMELT

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BY
THOMAS SMELT.



MANCHESTER:
THOMAS SUTCLIFFE, 8, MARKET PLACE.

1872.

23498.19.50

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PRINTED BY CHARLES SIMS AND CO.

INSCRIBED TO
R. E. EGERTON WARBURTON, Esq.,
ARLEY HALL, CHESHIRE,
WHOSE GENIUS, SPIRIT AND TASTE
HAVE JUSTLY RENDERED
HIM ONE OF THE
REPRESENTATIVE SQUIRES OF ENGLAND,
AND
WHOSE EFFORTS TO DEVELOPE AND EXALT
THE DIALECTIC AND TRADITIONAL
LITERATURE OF CHESHIRE
HAVE SO CORDIALLY ENDEARED HIM
TO THE WHOLE COUNTY.



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

THE EARL OF DEERSLEY.
THE HONBLE. CHARLES ASHLEY, his Son.
THOMAS WARDOUR, his Nephew.
ROBERT STAPLETON, a wealthy Cotton Spinner.
DOCTOR HOYLE.
MRS. STAPLETON.
LUCY STAPLETON.
JESSIE STAPLETON.



THE
TWO LORDS.

ACT I.

SCENE. — *The sea shore, with detached rocks, &c.*

MR. and MRS. STAPLETON, LUCY and JESSIE, seated on the rocks; MR. S. reading the newspaper, the ladies working or reading.

Lucy. I always loved the sea. Upon its shores, throughout the livelong day, I could sit companioned with Fancy, listening to the stories which it brings across its restless waves.

Jessie. You are romantic, dear.

Lucy. At times it tells of warlike ships and warriors brave that sentinel the deep with proud security,—of battles fought and the high fame that England's sons have won; and then it tells of more peaceful days, when England's commerce breasted every shore, bearing her proud supremacy in greater triumphs still.

Jessie. Really, my dear, you ought to have been a poet, your fancies are so very delightful.

Lucy. It is more than fancy that makes me love the sea; for when I think that England is its mistress, I am most proud to know that England is my country, and all her glories mine.

Jessie. Oh! you vain thing. Mama, listen to Lucy.

Mrs. S. I have overheard all, my dear; and I think, with Lucy, it is a glorious heritage.

Jessie. Oh yes! I know it is very jolly to be an English girl; but to take all the glory to herself.

Mrs. S. Why not, my love? If it is yours and mine, why not also hers? The love of country is a common inheritance, and a noble one.

Lucy. Dear mama, how much I owe to you. I know from whence these feelings spring.

Jessie. Well, that is good! Capital! I suppose I have no feelings. You are mama's first-born, and being the oldest, have inherited them all,—I mean the feelings. Oh! you spiteful thing. I have a good mind to be vexed.

Mrs. S. My love!

Jessie. But I wont, dear mama [*kissing her*]. You do not think I would be jealous of dear Lucy being like you? Why, I should love her all the more, if it were possible.

Mr. S. Hallo! What's this?

Mrs. S. What is it, dear?

Jessie. The mill on fire?

Mrs. S. Goodness, no!

Jessie. Then it must be cotton's up!

Mr. S. It's noather th' mill nor th' stapple this toim. So Jess is out on't.

Mrs. S. Then what is it, dear?

Mr. S. Why it's just a sale by auction.

Mrs. S. A sale by auction!

Mr. S. It's nowt else. Yo'll remember last summer, when we wur touring i' Shropshire, a foine owd place as we seed co'd Normanville.

Mrs. S. Normanville!

Mr. S. Aw sed it. Normanville. It wur that place, woif, yo took us to see that yo'd such a hankering after. Yo sed yo know'd it i' yore younger days. Aw remember it weel, an' a bonny place it wur, for sure; an' aw made up my moind if ever it wur for sale — aw'd buy it.

Mrs. S. And is it for sale now?

Mr. S. Of coorse it is. Didn't aw say so. What is there wonderful i' that? If th' aristocracy o'th' country will spend twenty thousand a yer when they'n only th' hawf on't, or may be not that, it meens, as sure as my name's Bob Stapleton, that only let things a be, an' there 'll be a sale.

Lucy. I remember it, papa. It was that place that I wanted to sketch, with an old castle and a drawbridge. The ancient seat of Ranulf de Normanville.

Jessie. With a modern hall in "the-house-that-Jack-built" style. Oh yes! I remember it, and the large lake with the swans upon it; and the beautiful boat in which I wanted to row, only — not being on visiting terms with the owner — it was paws off.

Mr. S. That's it. Well, it's gooin to be sowd, an' if aw buy it Lucy con sketch it as oft as hoo loikes, an' Jessie con row on th' lake until hoo's toired.

Mrs. S. Dear Robert! Are you serious?

Mr. S. Well, pinch me an' thae 'll see. But what's cum o'er th' owd woman? Hoo wur as quiet as a mill in a turn-out a bit sin', an' now hoo's workin' o'er toim.

Mrs. S. I remember it ever since I was a child. It was