

**CATCHING A HUSBAND,
OR DYING TO MARRY: A
COMEDY IN THREE ACTS**

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Catching a husband, or Dying to marry: a comedy in three acts by James H. Carter

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JAMES H. CARTER

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OR DYING TO MARRY: A
COMEDY IN THREE ACTS**

CATCHING
HUSBAND;

OR,

Dying to Marry:

A COMEDY,

IN THREE ACTS,

By James H. Carter,

AUTHOR OF "LOVE'S MARQUESS; OR, MONEY GIVES CONSENT."

WITH THE CAST OF CHARACTERS, STAGE BUSINESS,
RELATIVE POSITIONS, ETC.

CINCINNATI:

MARSHALL & HSFLEY, CORNER VINE & SECOND STS.

1859.

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OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

THE new comedy of "CATCHING A HUSBAND; OR, DYING TO MARRY," by JAS. H. CARTER, Esq., of this city, was produced for the first time on Monday night, the evening of Mrs. KERR's benefit. It was well received and made a most decided hit. The incidents and points of the piece, as they were exhibited during the performance, drew forth rounds of applause. In a word, the comedy was entirely successful and established itself at once as being fully entitled to a place on the stage.—*Cincinnati Daily Times.*

CATCHING A HUSBAND.—Owing to other engagements, it was not in our power to attend the National to witness the performance of our friend J. H. Carter's new comedy; but, feeling a lively interest in the success of this domestic production, arising from the pleasure we had had in reading its many pleasing and amusing incidents, we could not refrain from ascertaining its success from those fully competent to judge, and we were much gratified to hear of its complete and decided triumph. In our humble opinion, we rank this new comedy among those that will live on the stage, and bear repetition from time to time, as one of the popular and meritorious plays of the day.—*Chs. Daily Register.*

THE NEW COMEDY.—We were told by a friend, well qualified to pass judgment on theatrical matters, that J. H. Carter's play, "Catching a Husband; or, Dying to Marry," went off with great success on the evening of its performance at the "National." The performers acquitted themselves handsomely, and the comedy was well played throughout. The plot as it unraveled itself, produced bursts of applause from the delighted audience, and as the curtain fell at the winding up of the *me*, there was a general shout of approval. We are glad to hear that the author has made such a decided hit, and we hope to see his play re-produced at the "National," for it has certainly proved itself worthy of being ranked among the standard comedies of the day. We must add, that we feel no slight pleasure in speaking thus, as it is not often that dramatic talent succeeds so admirably as has the effort of our friend the author of the *New Comedy*.—*Chs. Daily Gazette.*

CAST OF THE CHARACTERS,

As performed at the National Theater, June 11th, 1849.

CAPTAIN LINWOOD, of the English army,	Mr. Grosvenor.
MR. FRIPPET, in cog,	Mr. Thompson.
BEN SPOOT, Capt. Linwood's Footman,	Mr. Spear.
MR. GORDON, a Clergyman,	Mr. Gourley.
WAITER,	Mr. Myers.
LADY MERLIN, a gay widow,	Mrs. Thompson.
LUOT SUMMERS, Lady Merlin's Maid,	Mrs. Kent.

LOCALITY—ENGLAND.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

ENTRANCES AND EXITS.—R. H. means right hand; R. H. 1 E., right hand first entrance; L. H., left hand; L. H. 1 E., left hand first entrance; 2 E., second entrance; U. E., upper entrance.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.—R. means right; L., left; C., center; R. C., right of cent.

*. THE PUBLICATIONS.—This play has been published by subscription, by the friends of the author, as a matter of compliment to him, and as a source of amusement and gratification to them.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1849,

By JAMES H. CARTER,

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States for the Southern District of Ohio.

REMARKS BY THE AUTHOR.

This comedy was first introduced to the public, on the stage of the National Theater of Cincinnati, on the occasion of Mrs. E. KENT's benefit, June 11th, 1849, and was received with great favor and pronounced a decided success. It was again placed upon the stage of the National Theater, by the manager, on the night of June 7th, 1850, when it was received with renewed favor and success, and was performed for several consecutive nights. The part of Lucy Summers was personated by Mrs. KENT, on all of these occasions, and was performed by her in that unequalled style of acting for which she was so justly celebrated. This lady was a great favorite, as an actress, with the author, and he wrote the part of Lucy Summers especially for her. He trusts, therefore, that the reader will pardon the introduction here of the following simple monody, written by him on the occasion of Mrs. KENT's death in July, 1850:

RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED TO THE MEMORY OF MRS. ELIZABETH KENT.

SHE has made her last exit,
Our own player queen;
Death's dark gloomy curtains
Now drops o'er the scene.
Yes, the last act is finished!
Life's drama is o'er;
Her gay voice of pleasure
Will be heard here no more.
But, bright in our memory,
A star will o'er shine,
Whose light will remind us
Of one, now divine.
Tho' the tear drop of sorrow
May quietly flow
O'er our cheeks, as we dwell
On this scene of woe,
We must think of that Heaven,
Where her spirit finds rest,
Where the scenes never change—
The abode of the blest.
Yes, the last act is finished!
Life's drama is o'er!
The curtain has fallen
To rise never more!

CINCINNATI, February, 1850.

J. H. C.

CATCHING A HUSBAND;
OR,
DYING TO MARRY.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—A room in LADY MERLIN'S house.

Enter LADY MERLIN and her Maid, LUCY. E. H.

LADY M. Lucy, I do not know what to make of Captain Linwood! He appears to have a feeling of love for me sometimes; and then, again, he seems only polite and courteous in his attentions—the same as other gentlemen.

LUCY. I can't tell, ma'm, what he means; but I think he does love you, ma'm.

LADY M. What makes you think so, Lucy?

LUCY. Why, ma'm, I have watched him when he has been here, and have guessed, from his actions, that he must love you. I can see these things better than you can, ma'm, because I am only a spectator.

LADY M. Well, Lucy, it gives me pleasure to hear you speak thus, for I know you are a very knowing and sagacious girl.

LUCY. Yes, ma'm—for others, but not for myself, ma'm.

LADY M. What mean you, Lucy?

LUCY (*abashed*). Why, you must know, ma'm, that—that Captain Linwood has a Mr. Benjamin Short in his employ—his footman—who has—who has—

LADY M. Well, what has he done?

LUCY. Why he has, ma'm—stolen—

LADY M. What! is he a thief? I'll inform the Captain, immediately, and have him arrested.

LUCY. No, ma'm. He has rob—

LADY M. Well, Lucy, do speak out! What has he been guilty of doing?

LUCY. Then, ma'm, he has—has stolen—my heart.

LADY M. O, that is the matter, is it?

LUCY. Yes, ma'm. And he keeps me in the same cruel suspense that Captain Linwood does you, ma'm. But excuse me, ma'm, for being so very familiar. (*curtsying.*)

LADY M. I do, Lucy, for you are my confidential maid; and this is the reason why I have spoken to you thus freely of Captain Linwood and myself. I have many female friends, as you well know, Lucy. But I can not confide to any one of them a secret of so dear a nature. All women have tongues, you know; and the most discreet will, at times, forget themselves, when love is the theme.

LUCY. Yes, ma'm.

LADY M. I can trust you though, Lucy.

LUCY. Yes, ma'm. You have been such a kind and good mistress to me, that I will ever love and honor you; and you may be sure I never could be any thing but faithful to you, ma'm.

LADY M. Well, Lucy, I may want you to assist me a little in my design. I am now about—no, I won't say how old I am. But I am not too old to marry again, and marry I will, and that, too, Captain Linwood. I have been a widow, now, nearly six years, and ever since I resumed my position in the gay and fashionable world, I have had many admirers; but none ever had the power of making my heart feel the least emotion of love, till the fascinating Captain came. You know, Lucy, that I am my own mistress; and I have now resolved to marry the Captain—and that, too, soon. I always had a preference for a military gentleman; for my brother, whom I dearly love, and whom I have not seen for more than two years, is a lieutenant in the army.

LUCY. I will give you all the help I can—you may be sure of that, ma'm.

LADY M. I want to discover or invent some plan, Lucy, that will oblige the Captain to make me an immediate proposal. He has been paying me marked attention for a good while, and driven away all my other admirers, except that Mr. Frippery. But he has not sense enough, however, to see that his room is preferable to his company.

LUCY. That's very true, ma'm. Some men have very little sense in some things. Now, there's Mr. Benjamin Short: he can not see how much better it would be for him to marry a decent woman like me and make himself respectable for life.

LADY M. Well, Lucy, I will permit you to win the Captain's footman in your own way; and I hope your wits will make you successful. But, in the mean time, I shall require your assistance to further my designs. Come to me in my chamber in a short time.

[Exit Lady Merlin. R. H. I. E.]

LUCY. I do love my mistress, that's a fact—and I must do all I can to help her to become Mrs. Linwood. She loves the Captain, and I know the Captain loves her; and I think that our two heads will be more than a match for him. Then, I have to manage Mr. Benjamin Short. He is a very insinuating young man, just like his master, the Captain. I have made up my mind to become *Mrs. Short* before *long*, and nothing *shorter*. [Sings:]

Air—"I SHOULD LIKE TO MARRY."

O, I intend to marry
 My little Benny Short;
 I can no longer tarry
 A maiden of this sort.
 He's such a handsome fellow,
 And has such winning ways,
 He's made my heart so mellow,
 'T will melt some of these days.
 O, I intend to marry
 My own dear Benny Short,
 I can no longer tarry
 A maiden of this sort.

My mistress has consented,
 I'll win him as I please—
 I'll never be contented
 Till I see him on his knees.
 But when we are united
 I'll be a loving wife;
 His wants shall ne'er be slighted—
 I'll stick to him through life.
 O, I intend to marry
 My own dear Benny Short,
 I can no longer tarry
 A maiden of this sort.

[Exit Lucy. R. H. I. E.]