

**MY SPOUSE AND I:
AN OPERATIONAL
FARCE IN TWO ACTS**

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My Spouse and I: An Operatical Farce in Two Acts by C. Dibdin

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C. DIBDIN

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AN OPERATIONAL
FARCE IN TWO ACTS**

67
UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

MY SPOUSE AND I:

AN

OPERATIONAL FARCE,

IN TWO ACTS.

BY C. DIBDIN, JUN.

AUTHOR OF THE FARMER'S WIFE, &c. &c. &c. &c.

FIRST PERFORMED AT THE

Theatre Royal, Drury Lane,

ON THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1815.

THE MUSIC COMPOSED BY MR. WHITAKER.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR WHITTINGHAM AND ARLISS,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

1815.

Price Two Shillings.

THIS PIECE

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED

TO

THE HONOURABLE GEORGE LAMB,

WHOSE JUDICIOUS ADVICE

WAS OF ESSENTIAL SERVICE TO

HIS MOST OBEDIENT

AND OBLIGED SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

December 11, 1815.

829174

My Spouse and I, cordially thanking *all* whose talents and exertions introduced this trifle to Public favour, beg leave respectfully to acknowledge the gentlemanly attention of the Noblemen and Gentlemen composing the Subcommittee. More might be said, but "*Many words won't fill a bushel*," as I say to my Spouse; and "*Least said's soonest mended*," as my Spouse do say to I.

SADLER'S WELLS,
Dec. 11, 1815.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Wilton	-----	MR. BELLAMY
Friak	-----	MR. HARLEY
Dick	-----	MR. G. SMITH
Paddock	-----	MR. OXBERRY
Scorem	-----	MR. GATTIE
Pross	-----	MR. HUGHES
Ned	-----	MR. BARNARD
Lawyer's Clerk	-----	MR. COVENEY
Hodge	-----	MR. EBSWORTH
<i>Lambert</i>	-----	<i>W. Austin</i>
Harriet	-----	MISS KELLY
Dame Paddock	-----	MRS. HARLOWE
Janet	-----	MRS. BLAND

Peasants, &c.

MY SPOUSE AND I.

ACT I. SCENE I.

*Paddock's Farm House on one Side, with a Pigstye ;
opposite Side an Alehouse, Sign The Barley Mow,
written under it, " Pay to-day, trust to-morrow ;" in
the Distance, Fields, and a Windmill going.*

*Enter Peasants from different Entrances going to
Labour.*

CHORUS.

Well met, well met, good neighbours all,
To our daily toil away ;
Ever ready at the call
Of those for toil who pay.

The sun now smiles o'er dale and hill,
And labour rouses rustic life ;
Click clack goes old Hopper's mill,
And click clack goes old Hopper's wife.

TRIO.

Merrily whirls the sounding flail,
Till pleas'd we see departing day ;
And then we quaff old Scorem's ale.
And then——

SCOREM (entering from the ale-house.)

—— Why then I make you pay.

CHORUS.

The sun now smiles o'er dale and hill,
And labour rouses rustic life ;
Click clack goes old Hopper's mill,
And click clack goes old Hopper's wife.

DAME PADDOCK (*entering from the farm house.*)
 And Hopper's wife be i' the right;
 If lazy hinds like you appear,
 The corn will ne'er be cut to-night—

PADDOCK (*entering from the field.*)
 Not if you keep 'em loitering here.
 The sun has beam'd an hour or more:
 To work, and prate when labour's o'er.

CHORUS.

Master and Dame, we'll haste away,
 And labour kindly all the day;
 And when our toil is o'er regale
 And drink your health in Scorem's ale.
 [*Exeunt all but Paddock and Scorem.*]

Scorem. Are you for a drop of my best home brewed this morning, master Paddock?

Paddock. They who do drink in a morning, neighbour Scorem, do generally get the head-ach by noon, and the heart-ach by night; and they be two troublesome companions. A clear head be the next thing to a clear conscience.

Scorem. (*Ironically.*) And you have both, they say.

Paddock. Why as to that, my conscience, thank heaven, be like my crop, pretty fairish; and *Though my head be thick*, as I say to my Spouse, *There be nothing in that*, as my Spouse do say to I.

Scorem. Your spouse is a very sensible woman; but, by the bye, the whole village is curious to know who that stripling is you have lately hired; who, with his pretty looks and smart clothes has turned the heads of half the girls in the place.

Paddock. Poor lad, he do seem to have known better days; he came to us a child of misfortune, and he be no christian who do refuse to receive the wandering stranger.

Scorem. True, master Paddock, and though I keep an alehouse, and some people are wicked enough to say I chalk double, my door is open to every stranger.

Enter FRISK shabbily genteel.

Frisk. I'm glad to hear it. I am a stranger, and want to walk in.

Scorem. Welcome, sir, to the Barley Mow, that's the house; there's the sign—and under it, "Pay to-day—trust to-morrow." (*Aside.*) A broad hint; he seems as poor as Job.

Frisk. Trust to-morrow? couldn't you make it to-day? there's an inconvenience in waiting.

[*Discovering to the audience that his pockets are empty.*

Scorem. That's my reason for not trusting.

Frisk. Didn't you say your door was open to the stranger?

Scorem. Aye, that could pay his reckoning—coming, coming!

[*Runs in to the Barley Mow, and closes the door in Frisk's face.*

Frisk. (*To Paddock.*) A pretty fellow to insult a gentleman in distress. I'll expose him in the County Chronicle as a warning to hungry travellers, whose stomachs and purses are in unison. I'll give him his true character; you can give me a hint, and I'll make bad worse by improving on it.

Paddock. Why, as to that, I mun beg to be excused; he who do pick a hole in his neighbour's coat deserves to live in a house without a neighbourhood.

Frisk. Give me your hand, I should like to be better acquainted with you. Feeling in a flail, and sentiment in a smock frock! Your haystack is no relation to the Barley Mow—why you'd make a famous character in a novel.

Paddock. A novel! What may that be, sir?

Frisk. Don't you know what a novel is? one village in the kingdom without a circulating library—then there are hopes. A novel is a book, whose title is *new*, and contents generally *old*—the hero, a queer good for nothing, well meaning, comical fellow, though tolerably engaging, like me; the heroine, a pretty, languishing, silly girl, like most of her female readers; her guardian, a crusty, hard-hearted, pay to-day and