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**Brierley, Benjamin (1825-1896)**

***The Three Buckleys: A Local Farce in One Act***  
**(1870)**

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

George Buckley, Esq. J.P.

Jabez Buckley, a distant relation.

Mr John Buckley, a cousin.

Mrs George Buckley.

Miss Ada Buckley.

Servants.

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Scene I. *A room in “Roydon House”, the residence of George Buckley. Mrs Buckley and Miss Ada Buckley discovered.*

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Mrs Buckley. Your pa's a long time, Ada. Surely your cousin can't have missed the train. You didn't forget to state the right time in your letter?

Miss Ada Buckley. No, ma; I was very particular about the time. Twelve-thirty; due at Roydon Station at one-fifteen.

Mrs B. Dinner at three?

Miss B. Dinner at three.

Mrs B. Train due at one-fifteen (*looks at her watch*), and now it is within seven minutes of two. Nearly forty minutes overdue. Something must have happened, or there must have been some mistake. What time is the next train?

Miss B. There isn't another till a quarter to three.

Mrs B. Look if you can see pa on the road.

Miss B. (*looking through window*)---I can't see him. There isn't a conveyance of any kind in sight.

Mrs B. Dear me! if we have to wait for the next train the dinner will be spoiled. I must tell Lizzie to keep it back. (*Exit*).

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Miss B. (*solus*) Nothing goes right in this stupid place. We might as well be buried. To be disappointed after all this expectation! Nobody seems to care for Roydon. Well, what is there to care about? A wooden box of a railway station, a smithy, a public-house, two farms, and a lunatic asylum. A very cheerful picture! Society---the rector's two daughters, as ancient as our kitchen clock, and always begging. I'm sick of it. Oh, the bright days when I was at school, reading and dreaming of princes and lords and heroes, and falling in love with all of them! I have thought about cousin until I have made a hero of him. I wonder what he is like. Pa says that when a little boy he had light curly hair, a sweet fair face, beautiful blue eyes, and could thrash every boy in the village. I am sure I love him! I wrote to ask him for his carte, but he says in reply that he had never the vanity to sit for one. Oh, the modesty of some people! Plain ones send out their ugly faces by the gross. I (*with a sigh*) have only sat once myself. Oh, this torturing suspense! (*Goes to the window*). Ha! here comes our carriage. Now for a---no;

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I hope not a surprise. May he be all that my fancy has painted him! Ma (*Re-enter Mrs B.*), they're here.

Mrs B. Bless me! What can have detained them? Ada, go and tell Lizzie to get on with the dinner. You need not return till I send for you. We have some little matters to talk over that you won't care to listen to. You hear what I say. (*Exit Miss B, reluctantly*). (*Mrs B. looks through the window*). Why, I declare, George is alone. Cousin hasn't come, after all. What can have happened? Has that girl made some mistake? The giddy thing, she seems off her head sometimes. No, cousin hasn't arrived. Well, dinner must go on. If he isn't here at three, we shall have to do without him.

[*Enter Mr George Buckley*]

Mr Geo. Buckley. No go, Carrie; Jack hasn't turned up. Train was late, and when it came he was not in it. Dash the fellow!

Mrs B. He may come by the next train.

Mr G. B. Then he'll have to take pot look. I shan't wait. I feel sharp-set already. Where's Ada?

Mrs B. Gone down to the kitchen, to tell Lizzie to get on with the dinner. I had told her to keep it back.

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Mr G. B. That's right, Carrie. And now, what shall we do with ourselves after dinner, supposing the youngster doesn't turn up? (*Seats himself*).

Mrs B. The weather is too cold for a drive. (*Seats herself*).

Mr G. B. Not a bit of it. A little bracing, that's all. Drive round by the Top-end; and, if it isn't too dark, call and look at the church decorations; then look in at the Elms, and stare for a tea. But, I say, Carrie, does Ada look anyways disappointed?

Mrs B. She doesn't know but cousin was with you.

Mr G. B. The deuce! was she fidgety at all.

Mrs B. On pins for the last hour.

Mr G. B. She's got some notion, then? I hope Jack is quite as good looking as a man as he was when a boy.

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Mrs B. How long is it since you saw him?

Mr G. B. It must be fifteen or sixteen years.

Mrs B. He'll have grown out of all knowledge since then.

Mr G. B. He was shaping for being tall and strong. A bonny lad he was; fair as a girl.

Mrs B. It sometimes happens that the prettiest boys turn out to be the ugliest men. I have known many instances.

Mr G. B. And vice versa. Look at Ada. I used to think when she was a baby she was a little monkey. And look now, what a splendid girl she's grown!

Mrs B. I only hope she'll get a husband worthy of her.

Mr G. B. Well, a fortune of twelve thousand pounds is not to be sneezed at, even if the young fellow has grown rather plain. You know, Carrie, people can be plain without being downright ugly.

Mrs B. I grant it; but plainness is seldom looked upon with much favour where the very pink of comeliness has been expected. You have said so much of your cousin in Ada's hearing, that I'm afraid you've made her silly about him. The girl is scarcely her own person just now.

Mr G. B. If she's in love she isn't. Takes a little of her mother. You didn't carry much ballast, my dear, when you were her age.

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Mrs B. But I was brought up a simpleton; and believed all you said. Ada has seen more of the world than ever I saw.

Mr G. B. Then she ought to be a much better judge of what there is in it. But look here, Carrie, do you think it possible that Ada's mind can be so fixed by you upon her cousin, that she'd marry him at all risks?

Mrs B. What! one woman control the desires of another? It never was possible. A man may have some influence; but it will depend upon his position. He must be younger than a father.

Mr G. B. I see. Well, if the young sprig is the man I take him to be, he won't require any of our assistance. Dash it, I wish he'd turn up. (*A loud knocking at the door*). Is it

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possible? Can he have driven? You don't expect anyone beside you, do you, Carrie? (*Runs to the window*). I don't see any conveyance at all. Put up at the "Roydon Arms", perhaps.

[*Enter Servant*]

Servant. Mister Buckley.

Mr G. B. Show him this way, Sophy. (*Exit Servant*). So here at last. Somehow, I couldn't get it into my head that he'd disappoint us. Now, Carrie, spread your best snares; we must catch the young fledgling. (*Commotion without; and a voice: "Fairly caught, owd brid"*). Whatever's the matter? There might be a dozen. Has Jack brought company? An old country custom, but I'd rather he'd have come alone.

[*Enter Mr J. Buckley; anything but an Adonis*].

Mrs B. (*aside*). What a fright!

Mr G. B. Good morning, cousin; better late than never.

Mr J. Buckley. Reet, owd lad! Good mornin!

Mr G. B. (*to Mrs B.*) Carrie, my dear, allow me to introduce you to my cousin, Mister John Buckley.

Mr J. B. No' so mich o' that "John Buckley". Co me Jay Buckley; that's th' properest. (*Introduction*). Oh, I'm as reet as a tow-bar.

Mr G. B. Anyone with you, cousin? (*To Mr J. B.*)

Mrs B. (*aside*). I hope not.

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Mr J. B. What dost ax that for?

Mr G. B. I thought by the noise in the hall you had company.

Mr J. B. Nay, I nobbut caught th' sarvant under th' kissin-bush; an' I gan her a smack theau could a yerd a fielt off. Company! Eh, nay, lad. Theau'll find me company enoogh afore theau's done wi' me, unless thy kitchen's weel fortified.

Mr G. B. Well, give me your hat, and take off your coat.

Mr J. B. Dost' want me t' sit i' my shirt sleeves?

Mr G. B. No, I only want you take off your overcoat?

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Mr J. B. I wear no overcoat; do I hecky as like! What, an owd Saddlewo'th Buckley lapt up like a dumplin? Ger eaut. (*Pitches his hat across the room*). Th' hat'll do there; it's bin at mony a foumart hunt. I'll tell thee what, George, there's a rare smell comes fro' somewhere.

Mr G. B. The dinner. Come, take a seat. (*Pushes forward easy-chair. Mr J. B. sits down, but instantly jumps up, and examines the seat*).

Mr J. B. I'm no' ready for gooin t' bed yet, George. Han yo' some sort of a marlock on, as it's Kesmas?

Mr G. B. No; only a spring cushion.

Mr J. B. Oh, I thowt I're gooin through th' floor. (*Seats himself again*). Theigher! Good neet! Wakken me in an heaur. (*Closes his eyes*).

Mrs B. (*rising*). I'll see about the dinner, George. (*To Mr J. B.*) You will excuse me, cousin. (*Looks disdainfully at the guest as she retires*).

Mr J. B. Ay, if yo'r gooin i'th' cellar. I'm as dry as a lime chap's clog. Nowt less than a pint'll find th' roots.

Mr G. B. Oh, beg your pardon! I'd quite forgot. So seldom we have company. Would you prefer beer?

Mr J. B. Ay, if it's any bant in it. I'd as lief drink alegar as yo'r thin wine. Sperrits I never taste. I dunno' want my inside brunt eaut yet.

Mr G. B. (*To Mrs B.*) My dear, send Sophy with a jug. (*Exit Mrs B.*) Well, now, cousin, how are things moving? What is the best news?

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Mr J. B. News! There's no news ut I know on. Never is i' Saddlewo'th. It's th' wrong side th' hills for Yorkshire; an' Lancashire'll ha' nowt t' do with it. I did yer they'd a keaw deed yesterday th' next farm to eaur.

Mr G. B. (*aside*) Chiefly th' mouth. It geet frozen up, so ut th' keaw could noather ate nor get its wynt. It's a bad time for farmers. Ducks han done badly; an' hens are on th' strike.

Mr G. B. Very unfortunate. You're not farming yourself?

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Mr J. B. I do a bit just for a hobby; that's o. Anybody ut farms for a livin has to mind what he's dooin.

Mr G. B. I daresay they've enough to do. How did you come, made you be so late?

Mr J. B. I shanked it. Bad weather for droivin; an' th' railroad I never trust mysel on. That ale's a good while o' comin. Oh, here it is. (*Enter Servant with jug*). That's her I had th' fluster with i'th' lobby. Hoo's a rare sort. (*Servant sets down beer, and retires as if disgusted*). Never mind a glass, George; I con messur it wi' my meauth as weel as if I'd a gill pot. Come, I'll help myself (*Rises from his seat*).

Mr G. B. Make yourself quite at home, cousin.

Mr J. B. I meean dooin that. (*Goes to the table, and takes up the jug*). Here's fortin, George. (*Applies the jug to his mouth, and drinks deeply*). Theigher! Better stuff than they han at yon' owd shippon deawn th' road. Theirs wants buryin. (*Looks round at the room*). This is not a bad looking cote, owd sloven! But I reckon theau coes thysel o'th' nobs.

Mr G. B. Well, I can't say that---a---

Mr J. B. I know, lad; J.P. to thy name---Judge o' Pigs. (*Comes down the stage*). But, I say, owd ticket!---heaw didt get cured o' thy skennin?

Mr G. B. I don't know that I ever did squint.

Mr J. B. Yoi theau did, when theau're a lad; an' theau'd a hairshorn lip, too.

Mr G. B. (*aside*). He's confounding me with my namesake and

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neighbour, Mister George Buckley, of the Elms. There's some mistake. (*Aloud*). You got my daughter's note?

Mr J. B. I geet one fro' someb'dy; but I thowt thy wife had happen written it. I didno' know theau'd a dowter.

Mr G. B. Oh, yes; and here she comes with her ma. (*Enter Mrs and Miss Buckley*). Shall I introduce you to Miss Buckley? Ada, Cousin, Mister J. Buckley; Mister Buckley, my daughter. (*Introduction; after which Mrs and Miss Buckley retire up the stage*).



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Mr J. B. An' a nice bit o' ginybread hoo is. I wish I're as good lookin as some young chaps. But my feyther said I should be fit for nowt nobbut th' shippon, soalin keaws, an' stuffin leawp-holes. I reckon hoo's bin spoken for afore neaw?

Mr G. B. What do you mean?

Mr J. B. Entered for th' show.

Mr G. B. I don't understand you.

Mr J. B. Well, for t' be plain, is there anybody comes whistlin at th' dur, an' knockin again th' heause-end?

Mr G. B. I understand you now. Oh, no, she's quite free.

Mr J. B. Well, if I're offerin a price for her, like bargainin' for a tit at a sale, I shouldno' be to a theausant or two.

Mr G. B. Nonsense, cousin; you're joking.

Mr J. B. Am I joking? Trot her eaut, an' theau'll see. (*Enter Servant, who speaks aside to Mrs B.*) I should bid like owd boots.

Mrs B. (*coming down the stage*). George, dinner's waiting.

Mr G. B. Cousin, will you take Miss Buckley's arm?

Mr J. B. What mun I do with it when I've takken it?

Mrs B. Ada will show you. (*Ada takes Mr J. B.'s arm; but evidently with reluctance*).

Mr J. B. Neaw, then, we're yoked. What's th' next move?

Mrs B. George, will you lead? (*Mr and Mrs Buckley march off the stage in a stately manner, followed by Mr J. B. and Ada. Mr J. B. steps upon Ada's trail, and a scene of confusion follows. Exeunt omnes*).

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Scene II. The Dining Room, "Royden House". Dinner laid. Enter Mr and Mrs George Buckley; followed by Mr J. Buckley and Ada.

Mr G. B. (*To Mr J. B.*). Cousin, will you take the turkey?

Mr J. B. (*looking awkward and embarrassed*) Wheere mun I tak it to?

Mr G. B. Will you carve it, I mean? (*The ladies seat themselves*).

Mr J. B. Carve it! That meean gettin it i' pieces, I reckon.



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Mr G. B. We can't very well eat it whole.

Mr J. B. If it meean's gettin it i' pieces wi' a knife an' fork, I'd as lief try my hond at weelbarrow, or a milkin stoo. I did manage a duck once, witheaut knife an' fork.  
(*Takes the seat pointed out*).

Mr G. B. (*taking the head of the table*). Surely you didn't carve it with a spoon?

Mr J. B. Nawe, I're whittlin away at it as weel as I could; an' when I're just gotten into summat like a basket, crash th' plate an' o' went on th' floor.

Mr G. B. How did you manage to carve it after that?

Mr J. B. Well, as ther nob'dy nobbut me for t' ate it, I pounced it i' pieces. A nice bit o' stuff it wur too. (*All laugh, except Ada, who appears disgusted*).

Mr G. B. Well, shall I help you to a little fish?

Mr J. B. What sort is it?

Mr G. B. A nice bit of sole.

Mr J. B. Well, I never did taste any yet, nobbut cockles an' red herrin'; so I dunno' mind tryin what it's lile. (*Servant hands plate to Mr J. B.*)

Mr G. B. (*to Mrs B.*) You'll take a little, dear? And you? (*To Ada*).

[*Mr J. B. appears at a loss how to begin eating. He watches Mrs B., and tries to follow the example, but very clumsily.*]

Mr G. B. Well now, cousin, what do you think of Lord

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Upperton's Bill for the repeal of the probate and administration duties?

Mr J. B. Let's yer that again.

Mr G. B. What do you think of Lord Upperton's bill for the repeal of the probate and administration duties?

Mr J. B. (*after a pause*). Ay; just so. Very good, I'm sure. Did he do it?

Mr G. B. You don't seem to understand me. I'll put it a little clearer.

Mr J. B. Ay, do; an' next time dunno' give me so mony booans. They lien here like rows o' pins.

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Mr G. B. But you don't think it a great hardship that you should have to pay---I don't know the exact amount---but I'll stay two hundred and fifty pounds on the little patrimony you have received?

Mr J. B. Patri---what's that big word?

Mr G. B. Patrimony; the money inherited from your ancestors.

Mr J. B. Money---inher---I could as soon carve this turkey as sort that. Theau's bin to th' skoo moore than me, George.

Mr G. B. Nonsense, John; you've had every facility for education that could have been given to a young gentleman of your position. I know your father didn't spare anything.

Mr J. B. Ther abeaut an inch thick of an ash saplin he didno' spare, when he're at one end an I're at th' tother.

Mr G. B. We've most of us required parental correction.

Mr J. B. Aye, I've bin corrected till my skin wur spotted wi' black an' white as a Shudehill pig. Lorgus, heaw he used to strike when he geet feawn below th' buttons.

Mrs. B. (*to J. B.*) I'll take a little turkey, if you please, cousin.

Mr J. B. Wait a bit (*puts his hand to his mouth*). Oh---ha---haw---gosh!---hecky!---dash! (*Jumps up from the table*).

Mr G. B. / Mrs G. B. Whatever is the matter?

Mr J. B. I've gotten a row o' pins i' my meauth. (*Crams the*

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*napkin his mouth and withdrawn it*). Theere they are, twenty to th' inch. I'm reet neaw. (*All seat themselves*).

Mr G. B. I'm very sorry I gave you that piece, cousin.

Mr J. B. Oh, it doesno' matter. Is'e ha' to pay for my larnin, I reckon. But I didno' know that soles wur palisaded reawd, like a churchyard. Let's see; yo' wanten a bit o' turkey, dunno' yo', missis? (*To Mrs B.*)

Mrs B. If you please.

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Mr J. B. If this wur a pie crust I could cut any road, an' be reet; but as it's a turkey, an framed i'th' way of a duck, I'm bothered heaw to use my tools. Should I cut it i' two for a start?

Mr G. B. I'm afraid you'd find the operation a difficult one.

Mr J. B. No if I'd a saw, an' a pair o' pincers. Let's try, shus heaw.

Mrs B. Give me a little off the breast, please.

Mr J. B. Well, as booath ends are so mich alike, which is th' breast?

Mrs B. (*pointing*) That is the breast, cousin.

Mr J. B. Here, wench (*to Ada*), get howd o' ths plate, an' stck fast to it, while I pay upo' this fiddle.--- (*Ada reluctantly takes hold of the dish. J. B. sticks fork into a sausage, and holds it up*). What part of a turkey is this? Is it what they coe'n th' giblets?

Mr G. B. Only the sausage, John.

Mr J. B. Dun yo' ate sossinger wi' turkey, then?

Mrs B. Of course we do.

Mr J. B. Well, be gettin on wi' this lach bobbin while I get summat else ready. (puts sausage on plate). Neaw, then, for it! (*Commences sawing at the turkey*).

Mr G. B. I'm afraid, cousin, you've not been accustomed to carving fowls. We don't divide it into two halves, like we do cocoa nuts. I think you'd better hand the turkey over to me.

Mr J. B. There never wur two folks narr bein i' one mind than we are neaw. Tak it; an' get th' owd basket stript as soon as t' con. It's moore than I know how to do. (*The turkey is passed to the other end of the table*).

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Mr G. B. You'll take a little, won't you, cousin?

Mr J. B. Well, I con use my teeth if I conno' carve. An' if I fail at hondlin a knife an' fork, I con fo back on my fingers. They'rn made afore Sheffield goods. Let it be as straightforrad ploughin as theau con shap it.

Mr G. B. (*carving*). I'll give you a leg. Any of the stuffing?

Mr J. B. What's stuffing? Dost meean that---that red black-puddin'?

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Mr G. B. No; sage and onions.

Mr J. B. Oh, ay, theau may give me a dollop o' that, an' a bit o' red blackpuddin too.  
(*Plate handed to J. B.*)

Mr G. B. (*to Mrs B.*) Now, my dear, a tit-bit for you. (*Plate handed to Mrs B.*) You'll take a little, Ada? There, now. Well, cousin, what will you take to drink?

Mr J. B. I'll stick to th' own keaw. There's noane gi'es better milk.

Mr G. B. I don't quite understand.

Mr J. B. Ale, then; con't gawm it neaw?

Mr G. B. Won't you try a little hock or sherry?

Mr J. B. Nawe; I'll drink nowt they selln i' toffy shops.

Mr G. B. Would a drop of champagne be agreeable?

Mr J. B. Champagne! Wheay, has theau gotten some?

Mr G. B. Here it is. (*Points to a bottle.*)

Mr J. B. I'll try a dose then. Never tasted i' mi life. They tell me a quart o' that stuff would blow a chap i' pieces, like brastin a steam churn boiler. I'll risk my waistcoat for once. (*Bottle passed to him.*) Neaw, Geroqe, here's thy good health, an' thy missis an' th' dowter's, an' a happy new year to yo, as it leaves me at present. (*Empties his glass.*) By th' mack, George, that's gone bo oath int' my nose an' my ears. I couldno' be dooin better than dooin weel, so here goes for another churnin. (*Pours out wine.*) George, another happy new year! (*Empties glass.*) I feel my buttons are gettin on th' stretch neaw. There'll be a blow up afore long, if I keep on. Trayele drink's a foo to it.

Mr G. B. Well, now, cousin, before you take flight, what is your opinion of Lord Upperton's Bill for repealing the Probate

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and ADministration duties. Don't you think it a very grievous impost?

Mr J. B. To be sure. Has someb'dy said it wurno'? Let 'em say it to me, an I'll knock 'em into th' middle o' next week. Lesh see. Whash it?

Mr G. B. (*aside to Mrs B.*) I'm afraid our kinsman is getting slightly elevated.

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Mrs B. (*aside to G. B.*) I'm expecting a sweep among the glasses presently. Now he's pouring champagne into the claret glass. Dear me!

Mr J. B. (*taking up claret glass*)---Hallo, it's turned green. I mun be getting on famously. It'll be blue an' red afore I've done. (*To Ada*). Neaw, my doll o' wax; bless thee! I ha' no' drunken thy health yet. Soon con do. Come, owd crayther. Eh, dear! I wish I're a bit younger an' a bit handsomer. I wur once. My mother said I're too pratty to live.

Mr G. B. Your mother was a good woman.

Mr J. B. Good un, dost a say, George? Never a better. If hoo'd bin livin I wouldno' cared for th' best wife i' England. It broke her heart when hoo seed I're grooin ugly. Well, I conno' help it; my brass is as pratty as anybody's, an it'll goo as far. Besides, beauty's nobbut skin deep. George, wilt' spake a good word for me to this wench o' thine? Theau gan me a hint i' thy letter that it would be o reet.

Mr G. B. Now, John, that is rather too much in Miss Buckley's presence. Do have a little consideration for her feelings. Ada, dear (*to Ada*), I think you had better retire. (*Mrs B. and Ada rise from the table, and retire*). Now, John, what have you got to say?

Mr J. B. What dost' keep John-in me for? Co me Jay B. I'll not ha' John at any price.

Mr G. B. Don't you like to be called by your proper name?

Mt J. B: Nawe, I dunno'. I'd rather ha' Jay B. than owt. Some folk co'en me Jab, an' some Buz; but those are vulgar folk, theau sees. Eh, owd mon! Co me Jay, with an hip-hip, hooray! It's gooin deawn again, George. (*Drinks*). Theigher.

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[*Enter Servant, rushing on*]

Servant. Mister Buckley, a gentleman has just been thrown out of his trap. He lies in the lane now, and I'm afraid he's killed. Mrs and Miss Buckley have gone to him.

Mr G. B. (*hastily raising*) Come, cousin, we must go to the young gentleman's assistance. Lucky the Doctor's at home.

Mr J. B. (*staggering, and looking at the door*) Which o' these durs mun I goo eaut at?

Mr G. B. Follow me. (*Rushes off*).

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Mr J. B. (*solus*) It's o' very weel tellin me t' follow him when he's gone eaut at two durs at once. I couldno' split mysel that road; but I feel like splittin neaw. I think I'd better stop where I am. I con do no good if I goo eaut. Champagne's rare stuff; but it makes me so sleepy. (*Yawns*). I wish ther a couch-sheear; I'd have a stretch eaut, shus heaw th' cat jumped. I've a good mind to creep under th' table. They'd ne'er know, unless I snored. I'll risk it. Egad, they'n think I've hooked it. Steady, Jabez, owd lad. Theau's drunken thysel under th' table once. (*Creeps under the dining-table, and lies down*).

[*Re-enter Mr and Mrs G. Buckley, leading in Strange Gentleman, followed by Ada and Servant*].

Mr G. B. (*to Stranger*) Do you feel better?

Stranger. Yes, thank you. Nothing serious; only a severe shock.

Mr G. B. Glad to hear it. I need not send for the doctor.

Stranger. Oh, no; I shall be all right with a short rest.

Mr G. B. We'll place you in the easiest chair we've got. (*They seat the Stranger*). Anything more we can do for you?

Stranger. If it wouldn't be too much to ask---would you kindly send a telegram home for my man to come by the next train?

Mr G. B. Oh, most willingly. We'll sent the servant at once. What name shall we say, please?

Stranger. John Buckley, Saddleworth.

Mr G. B. / Mrs B. John Buckley!

Stranger. You see to know the name.

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Mr G. Are you Abraham Buckley's son?

Stranger. I believe I am.

Mr G. B. And live at Moor Hall?

Stranger. No; that is Jabez Buckley, a distant relative.

Mr G. B. What kind of a man is he?

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Stranger. A big, coarse-looking fellow, but thoroughly honest and good natured.

Mr G. B. (*aside to Mrs B.*) There's something very strange about this, I addressed my letter to J. Buckley, Esquire, Moor Hall, and the other fellows must have got it. Jabez Buckley, And now what has become of him?

Mrs B. He must have gone, to avoid being found out.

Mr G. B. Well, this is a mystery! Between the two we're in a fix. This man must have known about my letter, if he didn't get it, otherwise he wouldn't have been here.

Mrs B. ask him.

Mr G. B. (*to Stranger*). Did you get my letter?

Stranger. Your letter? You are a perfect stranger to me.

Mr G. B. But I wrote you to dine with me to day.

Stranger. Strange! I'm here not by invitation, but by accident. I'm in search of a young lady I met last summer; and if I'm not mistaken, I have found her. (*Looks at Ada, who averts her face*).

Mr G. B. You don't mean my daughter, surely.

Stranger. I mean this young lady. I can't be mistaken.

Mr G. B. Why she is my daughter, Miss Ada Buckley. I am George Buckley; and this lady is my wife, Mrs Buckley.

Stranger. You are not Simon's son, are you?

Mr G. B. But I am, though.

Stranger. Then you are my cousin. (*They shake hands*). So we are all Buckleys together. (*A voice from under the table*). "An there's another here."

*Jabez rolls from under the table. Surprise.*

[15]

Stranger. Why, Jabez, what are you doing here?

Mr Jabez. Wheay, Jack, owd lad! what art theau dooin here.

Mr G. B. I see it all now. You (*to Jabez*) have got the letter I addressed to J. Buckley, Esquire. And you (*to John*) are here by accident. More than that, it appears you've had a previous acquaintance with my daughter. Well, it will all come round as I wished it, I



**The Salamanca Corpus: *The Three Buckleys* (1870)**

see. Such a mixing up of chances and mistakes I never knew. Why didn't you come earlier?

Mr John B. You may say why didn't I get pitched out of my trap earlier? I owe this meeting to a misfortune; but one I don't regret having happened. May I explain to Miss Buckley?

Mr G. B. At your pleasure, cousin.

Mr Jabez (*aside*) It's domino wi' me neaw.

(*Mr John Buckley takes Ada aside. Mr G. B. and Jabez attack the champagne with vigour*).

Mr John B. (*leading Ada to the front*). Don't you remember Blackpool?

Ada. Yes; but I didn't know we were cousins then.

Mr John B. I hope I am none the less dear to you on that account.

Ada. No; but why did you call yourself Charlie, and make me believe you were a poor clerk?

Mr John B. Only to try your affection.

Ada. You naughty man! I've a good mind to have nothing to say to you.

Mr John B. You've a better mind than that, though.

Mr G. B. (*bringing Jabez down stage*) Cousin, here's to many Happy New Years, and to the better acquaintance of the Three Buckleys. (*Drinks off a glass of champagne*).

TABLEAU.