

# How He Slept With Her Husband

An Amusing One-Act Play  
by Roy Vickers

## PERSONS IN THE PLAY.

Violet Renshaw  
James Renshaw  
Richard Brierley  
Webster

SCENE—Richard Brierley's Bachelor Apartment. Midnight.

**BRIERLEY**—Webster.  
**WEBSTER** (off)—Coming, sir. (Enter Webster.)  
**BRIERLEY**—Webster, clear out as quickly as you can.  
**WEBSTER**—Really, sir—  
**BRIERLEY**—Don't be an ass, man. I'm not sacking you. You've only got to take another holiday like you did before.  
**WEBSTER**—Oh, I quite understand, sir. And you wish me to go this moment.  
**BRIERLEY** (glancing toward door, left)—Yes, I'm afraid it's necessary. You can come in to-morrow—early—to fetch your things. But don't make any noise.  
**WEBSTER**—Shall I forward your letters to the same hotel, sir?  
**BRIERLEY**—Yes, yes. We shall probably go there to-morrow.  
**WEBSTER**—And the same name as before?  
**BRIERLEY**—Yes. Now, get along, Webster. Oh, here's some money on account of board wages. I'll send you more if necessary, but I expect to be home again within a month.  
**WEBSTER**—Excuse me, sir. My hat's in the pantry. (Exit, right, re-enters with hat. Is about to exit left.)  
**BRIERLEY**—Not that way. Can't you get out at the back somehow?  
**WEBSTER**—There's the fire escape, sir.  
**BRIERLEY**—That'll do excellently.  
(Exit Webster, right. Timid knock on door, left. Brierley opens it. Enter Violet Renshaw, carrying light valise, which Brierley takes from her.)  
**VIOLET**—Are we alone?  
**BRIERLEY**—Of course. I was just coming to fetch you.  
**VIOLET**—I couldn't wait a moment longer. D'you know, Dick, I had a horrid feeling that the taxi man understood everything. And he looked so terribly, so awfully respectable.  
**BRIERLEY**—You silly little thing. And I wish you wouldn't talk like that, even in fun. Surely you're not obsessed with the idea that we are doing anything disreputable! No one looks at it like that nowadays. Take the common sense view. You and Jim don't hit it off. No reflection on either of you. Matrimonial misfit. I come along. We find we were meant for each other and there you are.  
**VIOLET**—I wonder whether you and I will hit it off any better when the six months are up and we are man and wife?  
**BRIERLEY**—What a question.  
**VIOLET** (suddenly)—Dick, let me go back before it is too late.  
**BRIERLEY**—Violet!  
**VIOLET**—I ought never to have come. If I had waited another half hour I should not have come. I had to fly while he was out of the house.  
**BRIERLEY**—Exactly. The brute has made you afraid of him.  
**VIOLET**—He is not a brute, Dick. He simply doesn't understand me.  
**BRIERLEY**—Violet, if you honestly think that he has a shred of a claim on your affections after all you have told me about him, I advise you to go back.  
**VIOLET** (wavering)—I don't want to go back, Dick. But suppose we were to ruin his life?  
**BRIERLEY**—I quite understand. If one of us is to be broken it had better be I.  
**VIOLET**—Broken. (Going to him.) Dick, if I do go back, surely we can be friends as before.  
**BRIERLEY** (theatrically)—Friends! No, Violet. We can not go on being friends. Do you think I will subject myself to the constant torture of your presence when I know that you will not be mine! Mine! Mine in the sense that Fate and Nature intended you to be mine.  
**VIOLET** (unsteadily)—Dick, when you speak like that—  
**BRIERLEY**—When I speak like that you get a glimpse of the heaven to which I had looked forward when I might hold you in my arms.  
**VIOLET**—Dick. (They embrace. As they do so there is sound of a motor drawing up. Three hoots.)  
**VIOLET** (springing away)—What was that?  
**BRIERLEY**—It's all right.  
**VIOLET**—I believe it's Jim.  
**BRIERLEY** (going to window)—It's his car all right. Some one is getting out. Violet, you're right. Jim.  
**VIOLET**—Oh! If he finds me here he will shoot us both.  
**BRIERLEY**—Yes, yes, that will be best. I'll see him myself first. (Opens door, right.) In here, quickly. My room. (On the left.) You had better lock the door in case he's violent.  
**VIOLET**—Swear that you won't let him hurt me, Dick.  
**BRIERLEY**—Yes, yes. Quick.

(Exit Violet. Brierley sits, lighting cigar as James Renshaw enters, left.)

**RENSHAW** (boisterously)—Well, Dick, old man, I'll bet you ten to one in anything you like that you don't guess what's brought me here. Phew! Three fingers is about my mark. (Bus, with drink.)

**BRIERLEY**—What on earth—  
**RENSHAW**—Here's luck, Dickey. (Drinks health.) Now (feels in pocket), that'll tell you everything. (Throws note to Brierley.)  
**BRIERLEY** (reading note)—"Dear Jack: This is to tell you that I am leaving you forever. I am going to one who loves and understands me. I am sorry if this action of mine will cause you pain; but I am confident that once you have got over the shock you will realize that it is the best thing for both of us."  
P. S.—He will doubtless write you in a day or two and give you every facility for your divorce.

**BRIERLEY**—By heavens, Jim, you take it pretty coolly!

**RENSHAW**—What's the use of making a fuss. Can't tell where she's gone (glances at clock.) Wouldn't be much use now if I could. Ten past twelve. Besides, between ourselves, Dick, it isn't such a big knock as you think. Of course, I shall look a silly ass—have to go out of town for a bit and all that. But, hang it, man, you must have guessed that things weren't as smooth as they might have been between Violet and me.

**BRIERLEY**—I did have a sort of idea.  
**RENSHAW**—Before the honeymoon was over I knew I had made a mistake. I think the dress allowance was the first thing we quarrelled about. I hope I'm not a mean man, but I confess I thought her airy request for eight hundred a year a bit stiff. I was tactless enough to hint as much. We'd been married three days then. But I had the sense to give in before the week was out.

**BRIERLEY**—Hm! Perhaps you went the wrong way to work.  
**RENSHAW**—Don't doubt it, old man. Seems to me I must have rubbed her the wrong way all the time. She's quite right in saying I didn't understand her.

Soft as a kitten one moment, fiery as a tiger the next. She wasn't so bad in a real quarrel, though it was a bit humiliating with the servants listening. It was the

"Oh! If he finds me here he will shoot us both. What shall we do. Oh, hide me, Dick."

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About a Wife Who Thought She Was Misunderstood, but Who Found That Her Husband Was a Very Wise Man After All

week-long sulks that fed me up.

**BRIERLEY**—Hm, I say—

**RENSHAW**—Well?

**BRIERLEY**—I don't think it's quite nice of you to speak of her like that, Jim.

**RENSHAW**—Your mistaken chivalry, dear boy, does you credit. But still you can't pretend that I owe her any particular loyalty after what has happened.

**BRIERLEY**—No, no. Of course not. But it's a bit of a revelation you know. I always thought VI was a genuine tip-topper all round.

**RENSHAW**—So did I. Until I married her. Took me in completely. Dare say she's fooled the other poor idiot in the same way. Don't suppose she did it deliberately. Just her unfortunate temperament.

**BRIERLEY**—Are you sure you took enough care of her, Jim? She's a very attractive woman you know.

**RENSHAW**—M'yes. I suppose she did look rather pretty. When she was dressed up.

**BRIERLEY** (horried)—What?

**RENSHAW**—There are some things no decent man can tell about a woman, even to his best friend.

Whatever may have happened. But—well, things are not always what they seem, my dear Dickey. A nod's as good as a wink, eh, what?

**BRIERLEY**—Then you mean to say—that is—I suppose you know who the fellow is?

**RENSHAW**—Not as yet. It might have been any one of three or four blighters she always had more or less in tow. But there's something I do know about him.

**BRIERLEY**—Eh? What's that.

**RENSHAW**—That he's a wealthy man. Violet is no fool I can tell you. Not in that way. I'll bet she's picked a chap who is worth plucking, whatever kind of moral imbecile he may be.

**BRIERLEY**—Oh.

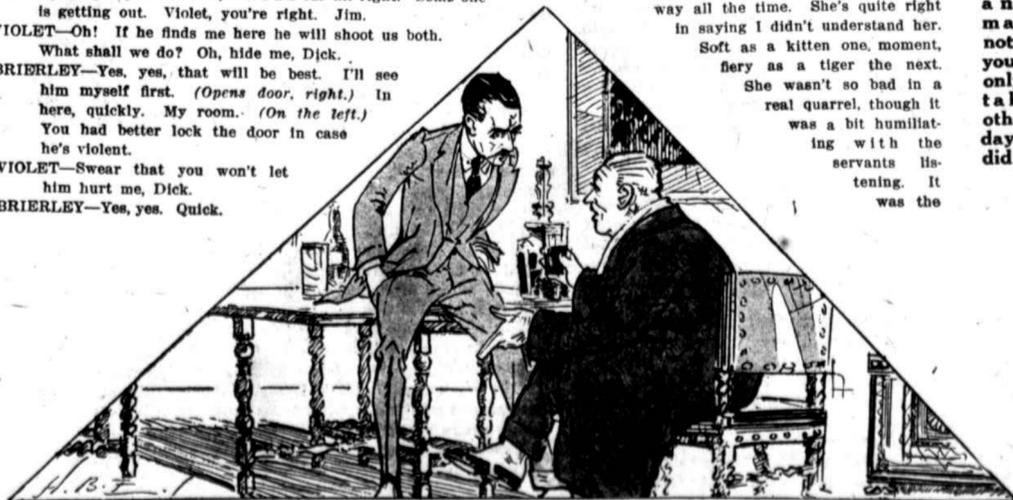
**RENSHAW**—Anyhow, if I don't get a letter to-morrow I shall put the detectives to work. They'll soon ferret them out.

**BRIERLEY**—And then?

**RENSHAW**—Why, naturally, I shall divorce her (yawns). Well, Dick, old man, I think I'll be toddling off.

**BRIERLEY**—No—No. Don't go.

**RENSHAW**—Why, what's the matter?



"I could have got rid of her before this. On two different occasions during the last three years. Two different ones. I forgave her each time."

"When I speak like that you get a glimpse of the heaven to which I had looked forward when I might hold you in my arms."