
ALAN'S WIFE Now credited to ELIZABETH ROBINS AND FLORENCE BELL
From the 1893 anonymously published London edition

Text of the play
Title Page

TERRY'S THEATRE,
STRAND, W.C.

THE INDEPENDENT THEATRE,
FOUNDER AND SOLE DIRECTOR, J. T. GREIN.

SECOND SEASON, TENTH PERFORMANCE.
TUESDAY, 2ND MAY, 1893,

ALAN'S WIFE

A STUDY IN THREE SCENES, FOUNDED ON A STORY BY
ELIN AMEEN.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

<i>Jean Creyke</i>	Miss Elizabeth Robins
<i>Mrs. Holroyd</i> (Jean's Mother)	Mrs. E. H. Brooke
<i>Mrs. Ridley</i>	Mrs. Edmund Phelps
<i>1st Woman</i>	Miss Mabel Hardy
<i>2nd Woman</i>	Miss Annie Saker
<i>Jamie Warren</i>	Mr. James Welch
<i>Colonel Stewart</i>	Mr. Mervyn Herapath
<i>Roberts</i> (Chief Warder)	Mr. Waller
<i>1st Warder</i>	Mr. Charles Greeven
<i>2nd Warder</i>	Mr. E. G. Waller

The Play produced under the direction of
Mr. H. de Lange

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ALAN'S WIFE

SCENE I.

A village street runs transversely from front corner, R, to back, L. At right angles to it, starting from front corner, L, the outside of a workman's cottage. Door leading to passage: a window on each side of it, through which glimpses can be obtained of cottage interior. The central portion of the stage, in the angle between the street and the cottage, represents the cottage garden, shut off from the street by a low fence with a gate in it. A bench runs along the cottage wall: by it a table, on which are piled up plates, knives, etc., ready for the table to be laid.

(Mrs. Holroyd discovered sitting on bench outside house to the right of door, knitting. People passing along the street. Two men pass with a little child between them, then a little girl, then a woman carrying a child.)

WOMAN. *(as she passes to Mrs. Holroyd)* A fine day!

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MRS. HOLROYD. (*nodding*) Ay, it's a fine day! (*The woman passes on.*)

MRS. RIDLEY. (*comes along with a basket on her arm--she stops*) Good morning,
Mrs. Holroyd!

MRS. HOLROYD. Good morning to you, Mrs. Ridley: it's a warm day!

MRS. RIDLEY. And you look very comfortable there.

MRS. HOLROYD. Yes, it's nice out here--sit you down and rest a bit; you'll be tired
after your marketing.

MRS. RIDLEY. (*sitting down by her on the seat*) Well, I don't say I won't be glad of
a rest. It's fine to see you settled in your daughter's house for a
bit, like this.

MRS. HOLROYD. It's the only place I do feel settled in, now she's married. I just
feel lost in my own house without her.

MRS. RIDLEY. Ay, you will that. It's bad when lassies take up with their husbands
and leave their mothers alone.

MRS. HOLROYD. Ay, you may well say so! And Jean is all I have. I never had a
lad of my own, or another lass either, and it's hard to be left
when one is getting into years.

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MRS. RIDLEY. Still, you must be glad she has got a good husband, that can work hard and give her all she wants.

MRS. HOLROYD. Ay, Alan Creyke's a fine fellow, no doubt, and they say he'll soon be foreman. But I did think my Jean would have looked higher. I always thought she would marry a schoolmaster, as I did, or even a minister, --seeing all the book-learning she got from her poor father. She knows as much as any lady, I do believe.

MRS. RIDLEY. Ay, it's wonderful what the books 'll do. They say young Mr. Warren, that's just come to the chapel here, has got more book-learning than the schoolmaster himself, and can talk about it so as no one can understand him. Eh, but it's fine to know as much as that!

MRS. HOLROYD. (*with a sigh*) It is indeed! And, Mrs. Ridley, as sure as you see me sitting here beside you, there was a time when that young man was after our Jean, and she might have been the mistress of yon pretty house near the chapel, instead of living in a cottage like this.

MRS. RIDLEY. Dear, dear! To think of that! Ah well, it's no wonder you're put about at the way she chose.

MRS. HOLROYD. I don't say that Alan isn't a good husband, mind you, and a good worker took--only I did hope to see my girl a bit grander than she is, as mothers will.

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MRS. RIDLEY. Ah well, young people will do their own way. You must just make up your mind to it, Mrs. Holroyd. I fear the book-learning doesn't go for much with the lassies, where a fine fellow like Creyke is concerned--and after all, as to the cottage, it's a nice little place, and she keeps it beautiful!

MRS. HOLROYD. She does that--and she wouldn't be her mother's daughter if she didn't. And the pleasure she takes in it, too! keeping it as bright and shining as if there were five or six pair of hands to do it! She and Allan are nobbut two children about it, and their house is just like a new toy.

MRS. RIDLEY. Well, that's right! let them be happy now, poor things; they'll leave it off soon enough.

MRS. HOLROYD. Eh, yes, I doubt they will, like other folk.

MRS. RIDLEY. Where is Jean? I should like to wish her good morning. Is she in?

MRS. HOLROYD. Yes, she's in the kitchen, I believe. (*Calls*) Jean, Jean! What are you doing, honey? Here's a neighbour come to see you.

JEAN. (*from within room to the L*) I'll come directly. I'm getting Alan's dinner ready. I can't leave the saucepan.

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MRS. RIDLEY. (*smiling*) Ay, getting Alan's dinner ready! That's the way of it.

MRS. HOLROYD. Yes, it's always Alan's dinner, or Alan's tea, or Alan's supper, or Alan's pipe. There isn't another man in the North gets waited on as he does.

MRS. RIDLEY. Eh, but that's what he'll want to keep him in his home; they're bad to please, is the men, unless you spoil them. (*Bell begins to ring outside.*) There's the mid-day bell from the works. Creyke'll soon be here now--I must be getting home too.

MRS. HOLROYD. Eh, now, but Jean would have liked to shake hands with ye. (*Calls*) Jean! Jean! Be quick, child!

JEAN. (*from within*) Just ready, mother--I'm lifting it off the fire.

MRS. RIDLEY. (*looking along the street*) And in the nick of time, too, for here are the men. (*Two or three men walk past.*) Yes, hurry up, Jean, or your man will be here before his dinner's ready.

JEAN. (*from within*) No, no, he won't. (*Appears in doorway of cottage.*) Here it is! (*Comes out carrying a large smoking dish in her hand, which she puts on the table.*) There! How are you, Mrs. Ridley? (*Shakes hands with her.*)

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MRS. RIDLEY. Nicely, thank you. And are you going to get your dinner outside then?

JEAN. Yes, indeed; let's be in the air while we can--it's not often we have it as fine as this.

MRS. HOLROYD. I never saw such a lass for fresh air! and Alan is just as bad.

MRS. RIDLEY. Well, they'll take no harm with it, I daresay; fresh air is bad for nowt but cobwebs, as the saying is.

JEAN. (*laughs*) Ah, that's true enough! (*arranging table*) Now then, if that isn't a dinner fit for a king!

MRS. RIDLEY. And I'll be bound, if it is, you won't be thinking it too good for your husband.

JEAN. Too good! I should think not! Is anything too good for him? Is anything good enough?

MRS. HOLROYD. (*smiling*) Ah, Jean, Jean!

JEAN. Well, mother, you know quite well it's true! Isn't he the best husband a girl ever had? And the handsomest, and the strongest?

MRS. HOLROYD. Ah, yes, he's all that, I daresay.

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