

DIRTY DEALINGS IN DIXIE

*Or
Gone Through the Windows*

By Craig Sodaro

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Fiddledeedee! Just as beautiful young Charlotte O'Mara is starting to have a good time at Magnolia Plantation's annual barbecue, that darned Civil War breaks out! All the eligible young men rush off to join the fight—all except Magnolia's faithful servant, Bret Butler, who suffers from fallen arches.

Four years later, as the war draws to a close, the O'Maras owe back taxes on Magnolia and unless they can come up with the money, their former overseer, Carlton Creepstone, now a villainous carpetbagger, will take it over! He and his slithery sidekick, Sherman, and the voluptuous Lotta de Passion want to turn Magnolia Plantation into the Sassafras Saloon!

Pa finds money he has stashed away but unfortunately, it's only worthless Confederate currency. Bret who has just now enlisted and earned, by sheer coincidence, the exact amount of money, gives it to the O'Maras as he's conned into looking for Confederate troops regrouping "up north"—in the Yukon!

But the money is stolen and Charlotte is reduced to marrying Creepstone unless Prickly, the O'Mara's loyal maid, can find Bret Butler in time. Do the O'Maras ever get their plantation back? Will Bret Butler get home in time to save the family—and marry Charlotte?

Frankly, if you give a hoot about letting all members of your company have great fun and producing a crowd-pleasing comedy, DIRTY DEALINGS IN DIXIE is the play for you.

CHARACTERS

(10 M, 10 W, 3 Flexible parts)

CHARLOTTE O'MARA: Headstrong belle, heroine.

BRET BUTLER: Faithful butler, our hero.

PA O'MARA: Her doting father.

MA O'MARA: Her saintly mother.

ASHLEY BILKES: Her neighbor, owner of Two Oaks Plantation.

MELODY BILKES: His long-suffering wife.

COL. CARLTON CREEPSTONE: Villainous Yankee, former overseer of Magnolia.

SHERMAN SLITHERSIDE: Late of Savannah, a silly sidekick.

PRICKLY: The loyal maid at Magnolia.

***MACK TWITTERTON:** Suitor to Charlotte.

***ZACK TWITTERTON:** His brother, also a suitor.

AUNT WITTYLACK: Never without her fan; from Atlanta, dizzy.

LOTTA DE PASSION: A mysterious visitor from Chattanooga.

CHARLES WISHYMAN: A suitor quite taken with Charlotte.

ELLEN HART: Devoted to Charles.

***PINKY:** A beggar.

***WINKY:** Another beggar.

***MRS. PETTYBONE:** A gossip.

***MRS. CHATAWAY:** Another gossip.

***REVEREND MERIWETHER:** A man of the cloth.

***CORINE:** A friend of Charlotte.

BERNARD BANKS: From mortgage company.

***NEWSBOY:** An extra! extra!

**(Possible doubling: Twitterton Twins as Pinky and Winky, Minister as Newsboy, Corine as Pettybone or Chataway.)*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I

- Scene 1: Spring, 1861, midday in Magnolia parlor.
Scene 2: Four years later, street of Blushing Blossom.
Scene 3: Next day, Magnolia parlor.
Scene 4: Later that day, street of Blushing Blossom.

ACT II

- Scene 1: Later that night, Magnolia parlor.
Scene 2: A month later, street of Blushing Blossom.
Scene 3: That night, Magnolia's parlor as a saloon!

THE SETTING

The play takes place at Magnolia, a beautiful plantation, and on the streets of Blushing Blossom, the nearest town. The street scenes are played before the curtain. The parlor of Magnolia is a lovely old room with a large French windows up RC. On the wall LC we find a fireplace with a portrait of Honest John O'Mara hanging above it. On the mantle is a clock that chimes. A screen stands UR. CL we find a couch and chair grouping. CR is a table set with several chairs. DR is a wing entrance leading in from the outside, while DL sits a desk with several drawers. A wing entrance DL leads to the rest of the mansion. Plants, lamps, paintings, curtains, and so on all decorate the room and give it a feeling of opulence.

Scene 1

(AT RISE: Spring, 1861. Parlor of Magnolia, brightly lit, for it is midday. The table is set with a cloth and vase of flowers. CHARLOTTE bursts in SL followed by MA, carrying Charlotte's plate of food.)

CHARLOTTE: *(Pouting)* But Ma! I don't WANT to eat another thing.

MA: Why, you're nothin' but skin and bones, child.

CHARLOTTE: Fiddledeedee! My waist is up to 14 inches. I might as well be the fat lady in the circus!

MA: Charlotte, listen to me. No man wants a woman who disappears when she stands sideways. Now, here, eat your plate of chitlins and hog jowls.

CHARLOTTE: You KNOW those are my favorite things in all the world...so you come a step closer and I'll hold my breath 'til I drop. I mean it!

MA: Now that's the silliest thing I ever heard.

CHARLOTTE: All right, then! *(SHE gasps one last breath and holds it.)*

MA: Now, Charlotte, this is silly. A young girl today's got to keep her strength up, what with all this talk of the Yankees and how they might attack the South and ravage every plantation from Blushing Blossom to Atlanta! Oh, Charlotte...please! Oh, dear! Bret! Bret Butler! Come, quickly!

(As CHARLOTTE still holds her breath, BRET BUTLER races in, as a hero.)

BRET: You rang?!

MA: It's Charlotte!

BRET: Oh, Miss Charlotte! What's wrong? You're so blue!

MA: She's not breathing.

BRET: Oh, for a moment, I thought she was depressed. *(After a slight pause)* But, why is Miss Charlotte not breathing? *(CHARLOTTE passes out to the floor.)* Goodness! Now she's not even standing!

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MA: Oh, Bret, DO something!

BRET: But what?! *(An idea)* Wait! I know — mouth-to-mouth resuscitation! *(HE kneels down.)*

MA: Mouth-to-mouth what?

BRET: Resuscitation! It's the latest thing!

CHARLOTTE: *(Sits up suddenly)* In your dreams, Mr. Butler! I am a lady and I don't resuscitate with the help! *(SHE stands up.)*

MA: Charlotte, Mr. Butler was only trying to help.

CHARLOTTE: And I was only trying to prove my point. And if you think I'm too weak to stand up to ANY Yankee who might come prowlin' down here at Magnolia, watch this!

(She slugs BRET in the jaw. HE falls onto chair like a felled tree.)

MA: Charlotte! *(Moving to BRET)* Oh, Mr. Butler! I'm so sorry!

(AUNT WITTYLACK enters with a tray of food.)

AUNT: Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Where should I put the horses...hors doors...hoovres de Vors... Where should I put these things?

CHARLOTTE: Goodness, Aunt Wittylack! The hors d'oeuvres go there!

(PA enters with a punch bowl.)

PA: Punch! Punch! Who wants a punch?!

BRET: *(Awakening, rubbing his jaw)* I've already had mine!

PA: How could you, son? I just finished putting the finishing touches on the world-famous O'Mara punch not two seconds ago. *(HE places punch on the table.)* This recipe was passed down from —

CHARLOTTE: *(Mimicking)* My grandfather from his grandfather and so on to the grand days of Honest John O'Mara, *(Pointing to the portrait)* the most famous used carriage salesman in all of Ireland.

End of Freeview

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