

TRUE BLUE AND TRUSTED

By R. A. Anderson and R. L. Sweeney

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STORY OF THE PLAY

It's fun, it's laughs, it's "let-down-your-hair." Here's an old-time melodrama in which everyone has a good time. J. Tamarack Gargle, who is the villain and landlord of the heroine's home, threatens to evict the entire family unless Lily Lackamoney, the heroine, promises to marry him. Perplexed as what to do, Lily decides to go to the big city to find the hero, Balderdash Trustworthy, who is in the city trying to find a rich friend that will help in the plight of the Lackamoneys.

The first person that Lily meets is Maxine Mascarra, the villainess. Gargle employs Maxine to help him get rid of Trustworthy. They unknowingly attempt to "polish off" a wrong victim. Eventually they manage to dump Trustworthy into the river. When Maxine asks Gargle to pay her off for her help, he casts her aside. When Lily re-enters in the second scene, Maxine persuades her that she is very ill and only country air can cure her. Lily invites her to go home with her, naturally.

Mayhem and hilarity begin when Gargle discovers Maxine in the Lackamoney home. He copes with this situation with ease, but when Trustworthy shows up just as the preacher is pronouncing Lily and Gargle man and wife, Gargle is undone. Grandmama, the only person who ever openly defies Gargle, saves the day by knocking him out just as he is to knife the hero.

The play ends with a happy note when Lily marries the hero and is too shy to kiss him with people watching.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

MOTHER (*Mrs. Lackamoney*): Poor, but devoted mother.

LILY LACKAMONEY: A pure, virtuous heroine thrust by circumstance into the evil clutches of misfortune.

GRANDMAMA LACKAMONEY: Crude old lady with a good head on her shoulders.

J. TAMARACK GARGLE: Dastardly cad who preys upon the misfortune of others to further his own cowardly desires.

MAXINE MASCARRA: A conniving wench who would sell her soul for a sou.

COL. BEAUREGARD: Filthy rich horsefly collector who is susceptible to certain feminine charms.

BALDERDASH TRUSTWORTHY: Typical honored hero who goofs at the right time. He wears a "handsome" mustache.

REVEREND: A mail order preacher.

PLAYING TIME: Approximately 30 minutes.

SETTING

The setting may be as simple as desired. The first and last scenes require only three wooden chairs and a table. A more elaborate period type setting may be used if so desired. There are two entrances, SL to the outside and SR to other rooms within the house.

In scene two the only necessary on-stage props needed are a park bench, lamp post and a bush. Entrance to the park is SL, and exit is SR.

ACT I
SCENE 1

(AT RISE: Living room of the Lackamoney home. As CURTAIN rises, MOTHER is seated and LILY is standing.)

MOTHER: Oh, woe. Oh, woe is me. Lily darling, what are we to do? Oh, woe to us.

LILY: Mother, Mother, you must have faith. Everything will be all right. Let us have faith and hope. You will see.

MOTHER: *(Dejectedly.)* But my darling daughter, we have been without heat for three days. And just look at the snow coming through our broken door. *(Pause.)* Just look at the snow coming in the door. *(Pause. SHE looks towards doorway and shouts.)* Just look at the snow coming in the door!

(A hand reaches in and throws snow onstage.)

LILY: *(Arm to head.)* Alas, if only Balderdash would return. Brave, strong Balderdash; he has gone to the wicked, wicked city in search of our old friend, rich Colonel Beauregard, whom we have not seen for lo these many years. I fear for Balderdash; he is brave and strong, but who knows what may befall him in his quest.

MOTHER: But, Lily, if we cannot pay the rent, Mr. Gargle will throw us and dear old Grandmama out into the cold, cruel snow. The only way we can save ourselves is for you to marry Mr. J. Tamarack Gargle.

LILY: No. No. A thousand times no. I will jump into the city river first. *(Slight pause.)* I just know that Balderdash will find rich Colonel Beauregard some place in the great big city and the Colonel will pay the rent. *(Looks around quizzically.)* Mother, where is our sweet, lovable Grandmama?

MOTHER: *(Rises.)* Grandmama is out in the icy snow trying to find some fuel to keep us warm.

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(Heavy FOOTSTEPS are heard offstage, then GRANDMAMA enters carrying an ax and several pieces of fence which she drops on floor.)

LILY: *(Brushing snow off GRANDMAMA'S shoulders.)*
Grandmama, what have you been doing?

GRANDMAMA: You ninny-witted nincompoop, what does it look like I've been doing? I ain't been out chasing butterflies.

MOTHER: Where did you get the firewood?

GRANDMAMA: *(Holding up part of the fence.)* I think it was once a fence. I ain't sure, but I have a strange feeling it once belonged to Mr. J. Tamarack Gargle.

MOTHER & LILY: Mr. J. Tamarack Gargle?

LILY: Oh woe, all is lost. Dear, sweet, lovable Grandmama, you have chopped down the fence of Mr. Gargle, our landlord. Oh woe is me, what will become of us now. That vile, wicked villain will most assuredly prosecute us now. *(To GRANDMAMA.)* Oh, sweet Grandmama, do you know what you have done?

GRANDMAMA: You bet your sweet life I know. I'm tired of freezing in this band box.

LILY: Hush, Mr. Gargle may come along and overhear.

GRANDMAMA: Let the old pinch-penny overhear. If he were here I'd tell him a thing or two. Who does he think he is anyhow?

MOTHER: He holds our very lives in the palms of his hands. If we do not pay the rent or if sweet, virtuous Lily does not marry that odious creature, we shall be cast into the snow.

LILY: And I would rather die than marry Mr. J. Tamarack Gargle, besides, I do not love him. *(Hands clasped to HER chest.)* I am in love with brave Balderdash Trustworthy.

(Loud KNOCK on door.)

GRANDMAMA: Here comes that snake now; I'm leaving.

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(LILY goes off SL to answer the door and MOTHER and GRANDMAMA exit, SR. Lily backs in quickly from SL followed by GARGLE.)

GARGLE: Lily, my beautiful maiden. *(Bows deeply.)* I am here at your service. Come and allow me to cast my eyes upon your charming femininity. *(LILY freezes. GARGLE walks around HER and gazes upon her.)* My, what utterly fascinating poise you have, my dear. *(Takes HER hand.)* Come, Lily, come with me. Let me take you away from all this. Come, be my love forever and ever.

LILY: No., no, a thousand times no. I'd rather die than say yes.

GARGLE: If you don't flee with me, I'll force your entire family out into the driving, drifting snow.

LILY: No ... no.

GARGLE: Then marry me and your worries will be over, my fair beauty. *(HE puts his arm around HER waist.)*

LILY: *(Struggles away.)* No ... no ... I cannot, I will not.

GARGLE: *(To audience.)* Now watch me make this little wench squirm. *(Back to HER.)* Then you must pay the rent.

LILY: But I can't pay the rent.

GARGLE: But you must pay the rent.

LILY: But I can't pay the rent.

GARGLE: But you must pay the rent.

MOTHER: *(Enters quickly from SR.)* But we can't pay the rent.

GARGLE: But you must pay the rent.

GRANDMAMA: *(Enter quickly from SR.)* But we can't pay the rent.

GARGLE: *(To audience.)* Curses, there are too many women in this play.

MOTHER: Will you not give us another month to pay? Will you, please, Mr. Gargle?

GARGLE: I shall give you but two more days and then out *(Gestures.)* out into the snow you will go.

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