

**MIXED MARRIAGE;
A PLAY IN FOUR
ACTS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649756964

Mixed marriage; a play in four acts by St. John G. Ervine

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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BY ST. JOHN G. ERVINE

MAUNSEL & COMPANY, LTD.
96 MID. ABBEY STREET, DUBLIN

1911

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To
NORA

PERSONS IN THE PLAY

JOHN RAINEY

Mrs. RAINEY

TOM RAINEY

HUGH RAINEY

NORA MURRAY

MICHAEL O'HARA

MIXED MARRIAGE

ACT I

SCENE.—*It is the evening of a warm summer day at the beginning of July. The living room of JOHN RAINEY'S house, by reason of the coal-fire burning in the open grate, is intolerably heated; to counteract this, the door leading to the street is partly open, and the scullery door, leading to the yard is open to its widest. Near the fireplace, above which is suspended a portrait of King William the Third in the act of crossing the Boyne, a plain deal table, covered with dark-coloured American cloth, stands. It is laid for the evening meal. At the fire, placing a plateful of buttered toast on the fender, is MRS. RAINEY, a slight, gentle woman, patient with the awful patience of a woman who has always submitted to her husband's will, without ever respecting him. Whilst she is completing the preparations for the meal, the street door is pushed hurriedly open and JOHN RAINEY, dirty from his labor, enters. He is grey-haired, but not bald; he speaks with the quick accent of one used to being obeyed.*

RAINEY. Is the tay ready?

MRS. RAINEY. It'll be ready in a minute! Ye'll have to wait til Tom an' Hughie come in.

RAINEY. What are they not here fur? They haven't anny fardher nor me to come, an A'm here afore them. An' me an ould man an' all.

MRS. RAINEY. Ah, now don't be puttin' yerself out. Sure, they'll be here in a minute or two. Gw'on into the scullery now an' wash yerself.

RAINEY. Has the wee boy wi' the *Tellygraph* come yit?

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MRS. RAINEY. He'll be here in a minit. Lord bless us, ye're in a quare hurry the night.

RAINEY. He's always late, that wee lad!

MRS. RAINEY. Wus there annythin' pertickler ye wur wantin' t' see in it?

RAINEY. Aye, about tae strack.

MRS. RAINEY. The strack! Ye're not out on strack, John?

RAINEY. Aye, we come out this avenin'.

MRS. RAINEY. Aw, God help us, this is tarrible!

RAINEY. It's goan t' be a long job too, A can tell ye. The masters an' the men are determined.

MRS. RAINEY. Ye nivit tould me there was goan t' be a strack.

RAINEY. Och, what wud a lock o' weemen want t' be talkin' about stracks fur. What do they know about it?

MRS. RAINEY. It's on'y us that does know about it. It's us that has t' kape the heart in you while it's on.

RAINEY. Aw, now, hould yer tongue! You weemen are always down in the mouth about somethin'. Ye wud think t' hear ye talkin' we come out on strack fur the fun o' the thing. It's no joke, A can tell ye!

MRS. RAINEY. It is not, indeed.

RAINEY (*taking off his coat and loosening his waistcoat*). Where's the towel?

MRS. RAINEY. Behin' the scullery door.

(He goes into the scullery, and the noise of great splashing is heard whilst he washes himself. A newspaper boy is heard coming down the street, crying, "Telly-ger-ab!" He flings a paper into the little porch, utters his cry in the door, and passes on. Mrs. RAINEY goes to the door and picks the paper up. As she does so, her son, TOM, appears in the doorway. They enter the kitchen together.)

TOM. Is that you, Ma?

MRS. RAINEY. Aye, Tom! Where's Hughie?

TOM. Och, he's away after them Sinn Feiners. He'll be here in a wee while. Is me da in yet?

(JOHN RAINEY appears, towelling himself vigorously.)

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RAINEY. So ye're here at last, are ye? Kapin' the tay waitin'!

TOM. Och, sure, A cudden help it. A wus wi' Hughie!

RAINEY. Aye, ye're sure t'be late if ye're wi' him. Where's he?

TOM. A left him in Royal Avenue talkin' to Michael O'Hara.

RAINEY. What, thon Papish fella?

TOM. Aye, they went intil the Sinn Feiners' Hall thegither. (*He sits down and takes off his boots.*) He'll not be long. (*He takes off his coat and loosens his waistcoat.*)

RAINEY. A don't like Hughie goin' aiter Papishes. He knows a quare lock o' them.

MRS. RAINEY. Och, now, what harm is there in that. A'm sure Micky O'Hara's as nice a wee fella as ye cud wish t' meet.

RAINEY. Aw, A've nathin' agenst him, but A don't like Cathliks an' Prodesans mixin' thegither. No good ivir comes o' the like o' that.

(*TOM goes into the scullery where the splashing noise is renewed.*)

MRS. RAINEY. They'll have to mix in heaven, John.

RAINEY. This isn't heaven.

MRS. RAINEY. Indeed, that's true. What wi' stracks an' one thing an' another, it might be hell.

RAINEY. There's no peace where Cathliks an' Prodesans gits mixed up thegither. Luk at the way the Cathliks carry on on the Twelfth o' July. Ye have t' have the peelers houlin' them back for fear they'd make a riot. D'ye call that respectable or dacent?

MRS. RAINEY. Well, God knows, they git plenty of provokin'. What wi' them men that prache at the Custom House Steps an' yer or'nge arches an' the way the *Tellygraph* is always goin' on at them, A wonder they don't do more nor they do.

RAINEY. Aw, ye wur always one fur Cathliks!

MRS. RAINEY. A belave in lavin' people alone. Come on, an' have yer tay fur dear sake. Sure ye'd go on talkin' fur a lifetime if A wus to let ye.