

PASSION POISON AND PETRIFICATION

by G.B. SHAW

Cast

Lady Magnesia Fitztollemache

Lord George Fitztollemache

Adolphus Bastable

Phyllis the Maid

Policeman

Landlord

Doctor

- 1 INT. LONDON BEDSITTING ROOM -- NIGHT 1
- 1 FX: MUSIC INTRO UP & OUT
- 2 FX: CUCKOO CLOCK STRIKES SIXTEEN
- 3 LADY: How much did the clock strike,
Phyllis?
- 4 PHYLLIS: Sixteen, my lady.
- 5 LADY: That means eleven o'clock, does it
not?
- 6 PHYLLIS: Eleven at night, my lady. In the
morning it means half past two; so if
you hear it strike sixteen during your
slumbers, do not rise.
- 7 LADY: I will not, Phyllis. Phyllis, I am
weary. I will go to bed. Prepare the
couch.
- 8 PHYLLIS: Yes, my lady.
- 9 FX: BUTTON IS PRESSED AND BOOKCASE DROPS
AND CRASHES, REVEALING A BED. AT THE
MOMENT OF THE CRASH A PEEL OF DISTANT
THUNDER JOINS.
- 10 PHYLLIS: (quiet worried) It is a terrible night
and my master is late. I trust
nothing has happened to him.
- 11 FX: THUNDER

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

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12 PHYLLIS: Your bed is ready, my lady.

13 LADY: Thank you Phyllis. Goodnight.

14 PHYLLIS: Oh, my beloved mistress, I know not why or how, but I feel that I shall never see you alive again! (whispers) There is murder in the air.

15 FX: THUNDER w/ ANGEL CHOIR LOW BENEATH

16 PHYLLIS: Hark!

17 LADY: Strange. I thought I heard the herald of angels calling to me, Magnesia Fitztollemache.

18 PHYLLIS: Lady Magnesia Fitztollemache.

19 LADY: Yes. Well, in case we should never meet again in this world, let us take a last farewell.

20 PHYLLIS: (much sadness) My poor murdered angel mistress!

21 LADY: In case we should meet again, call me at half past eleven.

22 PHYLLIS: I will, I will. (exits crying)

23 FX: DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES

24 FX: SFX LADY MAGNESIA CLIMBS INTO BED. LIGHT SWITCH OFF.

25 FX: ANGELIC CHOIR UP AND OUT w/ THUNDER

2 INT. LONDON BEDSITTING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

2

26 FX: DOOR CREAKS OPEN

27 FX: HEARTBEAT LOW

28 FITZ: I can no longer cower here listening to the agonizing thumpings of my own heart. The bloody deed must be done and the time is nie.

29 FX: FOOTSTEPS SLOW ACROSS ROOM w/ HEARTBEAT GROWING LOUDER

30 FITZ: There she is, asleep in her bed. I'll do't! Now!

31 FX: THUNDER

(CONTINUED)

32 FX: ANGEL CHOIR UP

33 FITZ: Wha-!?! What is this? Has the beating of my heart warned Heaven of my plans?

34 FX: LIGHT SWITCH ON CHOIR & HEARTBEAT OUT

35 LADY: My husband! What, what on earth are you doing with that dagger in your hand?

36 FITZ: Ah. It is a present for you. A present from my mother. Pretty, isn't it?

37 LADY: But she promised me a fish knife.

38 FITZ: This is a combination fish knife and dagger. One day you have salmon for dinner. The next you have a murder to commit. See?

39 LADY: My sweet mother-in-law.

40 FX: KNOCK AT DOOR

41 LADY: That is Adolphus' knock. Oh! What has happened to your complexion, George?

42 FITZ: Nothing.

43 LADY: Why, you have turned green. Now I think of it, you always do when Adolphus is mentioned.

44 FITZ: Bah!

45 FX: KNOCK, MORE INSISTENT

46 LADY: Aren't you going to let him in?

47 FITZ: Certainly not. Adolphus: You cannot enter. My wife is undressed and in bed.

48 FX: BED SHEETS BACK

49 LADY: I am not.

50 ADOLPHUS: (without) Something most important has happened. I must come in for a moment.

51 FITZ: Something important happened? What is it?

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

2

52 ADOLPHUS: (without) My new clothes have come home!

53 FITZ: He says his new clothes have come home.

54 FX: FOOTSTEPS HURRY TO DOOR. DOOR OPEN/CLOSE

55 LADY: Oh, come in ... come in. Let me see!

56 ADOLPHUS: Are they not most striking?

57 LADY: The trousers are so ... yellow! And the coat so ... crimson.

58 ADOLPHUS: (proudly) I shall never be mistaken for a waiter again. Here, look at the waistcoat.

59 LADY: Such sparkling silver stars.

60 ADOLPHUS: So, what do you think?

61 FITZ: (low derision)

62 LADY: It is a dream! A creation!

63 FITZ: A drink, Adolphus?

64 ADOLPHUS: Thanks.

65 FX: GLASSWARE

66 LADY: You do look splendid, Adolphus.

67 ADOLPHUS: And I am so happy.

68 FITZ: Is the seltzer maker full?

69 LADY: Yes. You put in the carbonate powders yourself today.

70 FITZ: So I did. The special powders. Ha! ha! ha! ha!

71 LADY: Why do you laugh in that silly way at nothing?

72 FITZ: Nothing! Ha ha! Nothing! Ha, ha, ha!

73 ADOLPHUS: I hope, Mr. Fitztollemache, you are not laughing at my clothes.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

74 ADOLPHUS: I warn you that I am an Englishman. You may laugh at my manners, at my brains, at my national institutions; but if you laugh at my clothes, one of us must die.

75 FX: THUNDER

76 FITZ: I laughed but at the irony of Fate.

77 ADOLPHUS: Oh, that! Oh, yes, of course!

78 FITZ: Let us drown all unkindness in a loving cup.

79 FX: GLASSWARE

80 LADY: Allow me.

81 FX: DRINKS POURED

82 FITZ: Stay! No soda for me. Let Adolphus have it all -- all. I will take mine neat.

83 LADY: As you wish.

84 FX: SODA WATER SQUIRT

85 LADY: Pledge me, Adolphus.

86 FITZ: Kiss the cup, Magnesia. Pledge her, man. Drink deep.

87 ADOLPHUS: To Magnesia!

88 FITZ: To Magnesia!

89 FX: DRINKS SLAMMED

90 FITZ: It is done! Adolphus, you have but ten minutes to live -- if so long.

91 ADOLPHUS: What mean you?

92 LADY: My mind misgives me. I have a strange feeling here, in my heart.

93 ADOLPHUS: So have I, but lower down. That seltzer is disagreeing with me.

94 FITZ: It was poisoned!

95 FX: MUSIC STING

96 ADOLPHUS: P-p-poisoned? Help! Police!

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (4)

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97 FITZ: Dastard! You would appeal to the law!
Can you not die like a gentleman?

98 ADOLPHUS: But so young! When I have only worn
my new clothes once.

99 LADY: It is too horrible. (to Fitz) Fiend!
What drove you to this wicked deed?

100 FITZ: Jealousy. You admired his clothes,
you did not admire mine.

101 ADOLPHUS: My clothes! Have I indeed been found
worthy to be the first clothes martyr?

102 FX: ANGELIC CHOIR

103 ADOLPHUS: Hark! Angels call me. Welcome,
death! Yeeeoww. Oooooo (fades as in
last breath)

104 FX: CHOIR OUT

3 INT. LONDON BEDSITTING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

3

105 ADOLPHUS: The seltzer is disagreeing extremely.
Oh! Oh!

106 LADY: Monster! What have you done? That
was once a Man, beautiful and
glorious. What have you made of it?
A writhing, agonized, miserable,
moribund worm.

107 ADOLPHUS: Oh! Magnesia, really.

108 LADY: Oh, is this a time for petty vanity?
Think of your misspent life.

109 ADOLPHUS: Whose misspent life?

110 LADY: Look into your conscience. Look into
your stomach. (to Fitz) And this,
husband, is your handiwork!

111 FITZ: Mine is a passionate nature, Magnesia.
I must have your undivided love. I
must have it, do hear? Love! Love!!
LOVE!!! LOVE!!!!

112 LADY: You shall have it.

113 FITZ: Magnesia! I have recovered your love!
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

- 114 FITZ: Oh, how slight appears the sacrifice of this man compared to so glorious a reward! I would poison ten men without a thought of self to gain one smile from you.
- 115 ADOLPHUS: Farewell, Magnesia, my last hour is at hand. Farewell, farewell, farewell!!
- 116 LADY: At this supreme moment, George Fitztollemache, I solemnly dedicate to you all that I formerly dedicated to poor Adolphus.
- 117 ADOLPHUS: Oh, please not poor Adolphus yet. I still live, you know.
- 118 LADY: The vital spark but flashes before it vanishes.
- 119 ADOLPHUS: Oooooooooooooo.
- 120 LADY: And now, Adolphus, take this last comfort from the unhappy Magnesia Fitztollemache. As I have dedicated to George all that I gave you, so I will bury in your grave -- or in your urn if you are cremated -- all that I gave to him.
- 121 FITZ: I hardly follow this.
- 122 LADY: I will explain. George, hitherto I have given Adolphus all the romance of my nature ... all my love, all my dreams, all my caresses. Henceforth they are yours!
- 123 FITZ: Angel!
- 124 LADY: Adolphus, forgive me if this pains you.
- 125 ADOLPHUS: Don't mention it. I hardly feel it. The seltzer is so much worse. Ooooo.
- 126 LADY: Peace, poor sufferer, there is still some balm. You are about to hear what I am going to dedicate to you.
- 127 ADOLPHUS: All I ask is a peppermint lozenge for mercy's sake.

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- 128 LADY: I have something far better than any lozenge: the devotion of a lifetime. Formerly it was George's. I kept his house, or rather his lodgings. I mended his clothes. I darned his socks. I bought his food. I interviewed his creditors. I stood between him and the servants. I administered the domestic finances. When his hair needed cutting or his countenance was imperfectly washed, I pointed it out to him. The trouble all this gave me made him prosaic in my eyes. Familiarity bred contempt. Now all that shall end. My husband shall be my hero, my lover, my imperfect knight. He shall shield me from all care and trouble. He shall ask nothing in return but love, boundless, priceless, rapturous, soul-enthraling love, Love! LOVE!! LOVE!!!
- 129 FITZ: I am the happiest man on Earth.
- 130 LADY: But be sure my one remaining duty will be discharged: Like a good and devoted wife, I will spend the empty hours weeping at Adolphus' tomb.
- 131 FITZ: My ownest, this sacrifice makes me feel that I have perhaps been a little selfish. I cannot help feeling that there is much to be said for the old arrangement. Why should Adolphus die for my sake?
- 132 ADOLPHUS: I am not dying for your sake, Fitz. I am dying because you poisoned me.
- 133 LADY: You do not fear to die, Adolphus, do you?
- 134 ADOLPHUS: N-n-no, I don't exactly fear to die. Still --
- 135 FITZ: Still, if an antidote --
- 136 ADOLPHUS: (bounding) Antidote!
- 137 LADY: (wild hope) Antidote!
- 138 FITZ: If an antidote would not be too much of an anti-climax.

(CONTINUED)

139 ADOLPHUS: Anti-climax be blowed. Do you think I am going to die to please the critics? Out with your antidote, quick!

140 FITZ: The best antidote to the poison I have given you is lime ... plenty of lime.

141 ADOLPHUS: Lime!? You mock me! Do you think I carry lime about in my pockets?

142 FITZ: There is the plaster ceiling.

143 LADY: Yes, the ceiling! Saved! Saved!

144 ADOLPHUS: Ceiling?

145 LADY: There is lime in the plaster. Here, use my boots.

146 FX: BOOTS STRIKING CEILING, PLASTER PIECES FALLING

147 LADY: Take this piece of ceiling, Adolphus, it is the largest.

148 FITZ: Ha! A lump off the moulding. Try this!

149 ADOLPHUS: (desparately) Stop! Stop!

150 LADY: Do not stop. You will die.

151 ADOLPHUS: I prefer death.

152 LADY: Adolphus, persevere!

153 ADOLPHUS: No! Unless you can supply lime in liquid form, I must perish. Finish that ceiling I cannot and will not.

154 LADY: I have a thought -- an inspiration. My bust.

155 ADOLPHUS: Can I resist it?

156 FITZ: She refers to her statue, man. There by the door.

157 ADOLPHUS: Yes, of course.

158 FX: FOOTSTEPS

159 LADY: Here, try the hair bun.

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3 CONTINUED: (4)

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160 ADOLPHUS: (chewing, gagging) Yah, I cannot. I cannot. Not even your bust, Magnesia. Do not ask me. Let me die.

161 FITZ: Force yourself to take a mouthful. Down with it, Adolphus!

162 ADOLPHUS: Useless. It would not stay down. Water! Some fluid. Ring for some liquid (choking).

163 LADY: I will save you.

164 FX: BELL RINGS

4 INT. LONDON BEDSITTING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

4

165 FX: DOOR OPENS

166 PHYLLIS: My beloved mistress! You live!

167 LADY: Yes, Phyllis, but Mr. Bastable is dying.

168 PHYLLIS: Indeed? I hope he will not think it unfeeling for me to appear at his deathbed in curlers.

169 LADY: We know you have a good heart, Phyllis. Take my bust and dissolve it in a jug of hot water then bring it back instantly. Mr. Bastable's life depends on your haste!

170 PHYLLIS: (hesitating) It do seem a pity, don't it, my lady, to spoil your lovely bust?

171 ADOLPHUS: Tush! This craze for fine art is beyond all bounds. Off with you. (moans) Drink ... drink ... drink. My entrails are parched. Ahhhh-oh! A drink! (grabs seltzer dispenser)

172 FITZ: Not the seltzer! Madman, you forget, it is poisoned!

173 ADOLPHUS: I don't care. I must drink.

174 FX: A&F STRUGGLE TO THE SOUNDS OF THE SELTZER DISPENSER EMPTYING.

175 ADOLPHUS: (despair) Empty! Empty!

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176 FITZ: Magnesia, I have always pretended not to notice it, but you also keep a siphon of seltzer for your private use in my hatbox.

177 LADY: I use it for washing old lace.

178 FITZ: Of course.

179 LADY: Well, he shall have it.

180 FX: FOOTSTEPS/DRAWER OPENS

181 ADOLPHUS: Oooooooooo with haste, please.

182 FX: DRINK SHOT INTO GLASS

183 ADOLPHUS: Thanks, thanks, oh, thanks!

184 FX: GREEDY SLURPING OF THE DRINK FOLLOWED BY GREAT FIZZING IS HEARD

185 ADOLPHUS: Help! Help! The ceiling is effervescing! I am bursting!

186 FITZ: Quick, the rug strap! We shall clamp it down on him before he explodes!

187 FX: RUSTLING

188 FITZ: Is that tight enough?

189 LADY: (anxiously) Will you hold, do you think?

190 ADOLPHUS: Ahhhhhhhhhhhoooooooooooo

191 FX: LOUD BELCH

192 ADOLPHUS: The peril is past.

193 LADY: Thank heavens!

194 FX: FOOTSTEPS

195 PHYLLIS: Here, my lady, your bust is dissolved.

196 LADY: At last!

197 FITZ: You are saved. Drain it to the dregs.

198 FX: ADOLPHUS GLUGS ALL DOWN NOISILY.

199 FITZ: Well?

200 LADY: Well?

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4 CONTINUED: (2)

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201 ADOLPHUS: How inexpressibly soothing to the chest! A delicious numbness steals through all my members. I would sleep.

202 ALL: Let him sleep.

203 FX: ANGELIC CHOIR

5 INT. LONDON BEDSITTING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

5

204 FX: CHOIR OUT ABRUPTLY WITH DOOR CRASH

205 LANDLORD: Eah! Eah! Wot's this? Wot's all this noise? Ah kin ennybody sleep trew it? (notices ceiling) Ellow! Wot you bin doin te maw ceilin?

206 FITZ: Silence or leave the room. If you wake that man, he dies.

207 LANDLORD: If 'e kin sleep trew the noise you three mikes 'e kin sleep trew ennythink.

208 LADY: Detestable vulgarian, your pronounciation jars on the finer chords of my nature. Begone!

209 LANDLORD: (looking at Adolphus) Aw downt blieve eze esleep. Aw blieve eze dead. (calling) Pleece! Pleece! Merder! Merder! Pleece!

210 FX: THUNDER & DOOR CRASH

211 POLICEMAN: Who shouts of murder!

212 LANDLORD: Eah, pleecmin! These three's been an merdered this gent between em, an naw tore oy ashe dahn.

213 FITZ: Officer.

214 POLICEMAN: Sir?

215 FITZ: As between gentleman.

216 POLICEMAN: Sir.

217 FITZ: I may inform you that my friend had an acute attack of indigestion. No carbonate of soda being available, he swallowed a portion of this vulgar man's ceiling. Behold the result!

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218 POLICEMAN: The ceiling was poisoned! Well, of all the artful -- I arrest you for wilful murder!

219 LANDLORD: Wha-?! (appealing to the heavens) Ow, is this jestice?! Eea! Now ah could aw tell 'e wiz gowin' te eat moy ceilin'?

220 POLICEMAN: True. The case is more complicated than I thought. I shall examine the body. Hmmm. Stiff already.

221 LANDLORD: An' precious 'evvy! Woy, eze gorn 'ez awd ez niles.

222 FITZ: What!?

223 LADY: Oh, say not he is dead. Phyllis, fetch a doctor.

224 PHYLLIS: Yes, my lady.

225 FX: FOOTSTEPS DOOR OPEN/CLOSE

226 LADY: Come, come rouse him! Shake him!

227 FX: GREAT EFFORT w/ CLUNKING

228 POLICEMAN: (exhausted) Whew! Is he a man or a statue?

229 LADY: (screams)

230 POLICEMAN: What's wrong, ma'am?

231 LADY: (to Fitz) Do you not see what has happened?

232 FITZ: (strikes forehead) Horror on horror's head!

233 LANDLORD: Wotjemean?

234 LADY: The plaster has set inside him. The officer is right, he is a living statue. (quiet crying)

235 LANDLORD: Nawt so much livin'.

236 POLICEMAN: Such a case is not provided for in my book of instructions. It don't seem no use trying artificial respiration, do it? Here, landlord, lend a hand. We'd best take him and set him up in Tafalgar Square.

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237 LANDLORD: Aushd pat 'im in the cestern an worsh
it aht of 'im.

6 INT. LONDON BEDSITTING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS 6

238 FX: DOOR OPENS / FOOTSTEPS

239 PHYLLIS: The medical man, my lady.

240 POLICEMAN: A case of poison, sir.

241 DOCTOR: Do you mean to say that an unqualified
person! A layman! has dared to
administer poison in my district?

242 POLICEMAN: It looks like it. Hold up, my lady.

243 DOCTOR: Not a moment must be lost. The
patient must be kept awake at all
costs. Constant and violent motion is
necessary.

244 LADY: Wha- wha?

245 FITZ: Stop! That is not the poisoned
person!

246 DOCTOR: It is you then? Why did you not say
so before?

247 LANDLORD: Naow, naow, that ynt 'im.

248 DOCTOR: What, you?!

249 LANDLORD: Eah! Chack it!

250 FX: DOCTOR & LANDLORD WRESTLE

251 LANDLORD: Ye ah leonatic!

252 POLICEMAN: Come out of it, both of you! Now, you
will all come with me to the station.

253 FX: THUNDER & HARD RAIN

254 LADY: What?! In this frightful storm?!

255 PHYLLIS: I think it's raining.

256 LANDLORD: It's thanderin' and lawtnin'!

257 FITZ: It's dangerous.

258 POLICEMAN: Well, if you won't come quietly, then --

259 FX: QUICK FOOTSTEPS DOOR FLUNG OPEN

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260 FX: POLICE WHISTLE FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY
LARGE EXPLOSION AND SHOCKED SCREAMS.

261 LADY: I believe the doctor is dead.

262 FITZ: The landlord is dead.

263 PHYLLIS: The policeman's dead, too.

264 FITZ: The copper's helmet attracted the
lightning.

265 LADY: After life's fitful fever they sleep
well. Phyllis, sweep them up.

266 PHYLLIS: Oooo. Will they be in your way if I
leave them there until morning, my
lady?

267 LADY: I suppose they will not disturb us.
Goodnight, Phyllis.

268 PHYLLIS: Goodnight, my lady. Goodnight, sir.

269 FX: FOOTSTEPS/DOOR

270 LADY: And now husband, let us perform our
last sad duty to our friend. He has
become his own monument. Let us erect
him. He is heavy, but love can do
much.

271 FITZ: A little leverage will get him on his
feet.

272 LADY: True.

273 FITZ: Give me my umbrella.

274 FX: SOUND OF STRUGGLE AND ADOLPHUS IS
RAISED.

275 FITZ: That's done it! Whew!

276 LADY: For ever and for ever, Adolphus.

277 FITZ: The rest is silence.

278 FX: ANGEL CHOIR UP

279 FX: MUSIC UP & OUT

END