

FICTION

Ellis Parker Butler

The Revolt

A PUBLIC DOMAIN BOOK

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THE REVOLT

A PLAY IN ONE ACT

BY ELLIS PARKER BUTLER

Author of "Pigs Is Pigs" etc.

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No. 233

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CHARACTERS

GRANDMA GREGG--Founder of the Flushing Academy of Household Science for Young Ladies.

PAULINE--Working out her tuition.

SUSAN JANE JONES--An Emissary of the American Ladies' Association for the Promotion of Female Supremacy.

KATE--A student.

GRACE--A student.

EDITH--A student.

IDA--A student.

MAY--A student.

OTHER YOUNG LADYSTUDENTS.

THE IDEAL HUSBAND--by himself.

SCENE--The class room of Grandma Gregg's Academy of Household Science for Young Ladies, at Flushing.

TIME--Now or soon.

THE REVOLT

SCENE--*The Class-room. A table. Chairs arranged in semi-circle; an easy chair for Grandma Gregg. Screen in one corner. Chairs or couch upon which to lay wraps and hats. Otherwise an ordinary room. Tea things on the table.*

(PAULINE, center of stage, with pail, broom, dusting rag, scrubbing brushes and mop, is discovered on hands and knees scrubbing. As curtain rises she rises to her knees, throws scrubbing brush and soap into the pail, gets up with difficulty and mops the floor. She is singing.)

PAULINE. (singing) "All alone, all alone, nobody here but me. All alone, all alone, nobody here but me, All alone, all--" (*she stops mopping and leans on the mop handle*) Here it is now two weeks I've been workin' out my tuition in this Academy of Household Science for Young Ladies, and 'tis nothin' but scrub, scrub, mop, mop, sweep, sweep, from mornin' 'til night! I see plenty of work, but none of that tuition has come my way yet "Wanted," says the advertisement, "a young lady to work out her tuition in an academy." It says that, "Grandma Gregg's Flushing Academy of Household Science," it says, "fits the young ladies for to occupy properly their positions at the heads of their homes," it says, "It will be a fine thing for you, Pauline," I says, "to be tuitioned in an Academy," so I come, (*mops*) "We'll begin your lessons right away," says Grandma Gregg, "take th' scrub brush an' a pail of water an' some soap an' scrub th' cellar." I've been scrubbin' ever since. I don't care much for the higher education when there is so much scrub in it. (*mops*)

(GRANDMA GREGG enters. PAULINE, not seeing her, goes to table and examines tea things, books, etc.)

GRANDMA GREGG. Pauline!

PAULINE. (*beginning to mop hastily*) Yes'm!

GRANDMA. Don't forget your curtsy, Pauline.

PAULINE. (*making a curtsy*) Good mornin', Grandma Gregg. I hope I see you well to-day. (*changing her tone*) If it ain't askin' too much, mam, when does my tuitioning begin? I've been scrubbin' for two weeks now, from mornin' 'til night--

GRANDMA. Have you scrubbed the cellar, Pauline?

PAULINE. Yes'm.

GRANDMA. Don't forget your curtsy, Pauline.

PAULINE. (*curtseying*) No'm. (*curtsey*) Yes'm. (*curtsey*)

GRANDMA. You have scrubbed the cellar?

PAULINE (*curtseying*) Yes'm.

GRANDMA. And the garret? And the first floor? And the second floor?

PAULINE, (*curtseying*) Yes'm.

GRANDMA. Very good, very good, Pauline. Then, when you have finished scrubbing this class room, you may scrub the front porch and the stable. Then it will be time to scrub the cellar again. You are doing very nicely.

PAULINE. Yes'm, thank you, mam. (*curtsey*) But I was thinkin', mam, maybe I could have a little more tuition, and a little less work. "Work and tuition" was what the advertisement said, mam, an' I've seen nothin' but the work yet.

GRANDMA. My dear child! My dear, sweet child! I don't understand you. You have done no work yet.

PAULINE. (*looking at her dress and at pail and mop*) I've done no work? I wonder, now, what I have been doin'!

GRANDMA. (*placidly*) You have been receiving your tuition. In this academy the study of Household Science begins with the rudiments. Scrubbing is one of the rudiments. As a new scholar you begin with the rudiments, of course. And I must say you are doing very well. You are making excellent progress. Apply yourself earnestly to your lessons and in a short time you will be promoted to another class. (PAULINE *stands with her mouth open as GRANDMA talks. She seems to be stunned*) Let me see you scrub, Pauline.

PAULINE. (*dropping on her knees and taking brush from pail*) Yes'm.

GRANDMA. Don't forget your curtsy, Pauline.

PAULINE. (*curtseying on her knees*) No'm (curtsey. She scrubs)

GRANDMA. Very good indeed! Very good indeed! You are progressing, Pauline! You are progressing. Apply yourself faithfully to your lessons. You may study awhile on the front porch now. And don't be afraid to use your muscle.

PAULINE. (*gathers up her pail and mop, etc. At door she turns*) Good morning, Grandma Gregg. (*curtseys*) (*aside*) Rudiment, is it? If I haven't done any work yet, I wonder now what the work will be like.

GRANDMA. (*has dropped into her chair and taken up her knitting*) Pauline.

PAULINE. Yes'm.

GRANDMA. Did you curtsy, Pauline?

PAULINE. No'm. (*curtseys*) But I will, (*curtseys*)

GRANDMA. Pauline, have the new Professors come yet? I have hired two new Professors. A Professor of Husbandology, and a Professor of Rudiments. They are very highly recommended.

PAULINE. Beg pardon mam, but what's Husbandology?

GRANDMA. Husbandology is the Science of the Proper Treatment of Husbands.

PAULINE. And I know what Rudiments is. It's scrubbin'. No, mam, nothin' like them has come yet. "All alone. All alone--" (*sings*) (*exit PAULINE*)

GRANDMA, (*knits*) Dear me! Dear me! I thought when I started this Academy the girls would flock to it most eagerly. When I was a young girl my mother would have been glad to have an academy like this for me to attend. I don't know what the world is coming to. Suffragists and Suffragettes, and Suffrage--this and Suffrage--that! If this academy wasn't

sustained by the Anti-suffrage League it would have to close its doors. (*sees a book on table, takes it in hand*) "Woman and Her Rights." (*with disgust*) Augh! Who brought that here? (*throws it on floor*) I declare, I believe this is the last stronghold of the old-fashioned home-loving woman. I teach the girls to be good wives, (*door bell rings*) (*enter PAULINE*)

PAULINE, (*curtseys*) If you please, mam, there's a female at the door says she is the new Professor of Husbandology. It's Susan Jane Jones, mam.

GRANDMA. Show her in, Pauline.

PAULINE. Yes'm.

GRANDMA. Don't forget your curtsy, Pauline.

PAULINE. No'm. (*curtseys*) (*exit PAULINE*)

GRANDMA. I hope Susan Jane Jones will be a real nice lady. There's nothing in the world more necessary than lessons on the Proper Treatment of Husbands. Women don't seem to know how to treat husbands now-a-days. They neglect 'em, the poor things. When I was a girl--(*enter Susan Jane Jones.*)

SUSAN. (*strides into room with umbrella held by middle and hand bag under one arm. Slaps them on table, and begins pulling off her gloves*) Well, here I am--

GRANDMA. (*mildly*) Don't forget your curtsy, Miss Jones.

SUSAN. (*surprised*) Hey? What's that?

GRANDMA. (*gently*) All the faculty and students curtsy when they come into my presence, Miss Jones. It is a sweet old-fashioned custom--

SUSAN. (*briskly*) Well, I'll soon change that--I mean, Howdy! Howdy! (*bobs several times*) (*aside*) I must not forget I am here as a spy in the enemy's country. If you are going to do the Romans you must do as the Romans do. (to GRANDMA) Swell joint you've got here, old lady.

GRANDMA, (*rubbing knees*) Swell joints? Yes, my dear, a little rheumatiz makes the joints swell. But I don't complain. I'm an old lady. I have to expect some aches and pains at my time of life. I'm thankful I can do a little good work in the world. Do you understand What your duties will be?

SUSAN. Sure Mike! I'm the Husbandology lady. I teach the girls how to treat their husbands when they get 'em.

GRANDMA. Just so. You will lecture on How to Coddle and Pet a Husband. Five lectures. Then you will give five lectures on Smoothing the Lines of

Care from Hubby's Brow. Then--of course you show by example how all this is done.

SUSAN. By example? You don't have a man here, do you?

GRANDMA. We use the practical method in our classes. "Practice makes perfect," you know, (*calls*) Pauline!

PAULINE, (*off stage*) Yes'm, I'm comin'.

GRANDMA, (*calling*) Bring me the Ideal Husband, Pauline.

PAULINE. Yes'm. In a minute, mam.

(*Enter PAULINE with the Dummy Husband under her arm. She throws it into a chair. Exit.*)

GRANDMA. There! That is our Ideal Husband. He is all a husband should be. He does not drink nor smoke. He does not go to the club at night. He never says an unkind word. And he is happy. Do you know why?

SUSAN. Go ahead. I'll be the goat. What's the answer?

GRANDMA. He is happy because we are kind to him. Because we coddle and pet him. I think, before I finally engage you, Miss Jones, I would like to see an example of your method of coddling and petting.

(*SUSAN looks at the dummy thoughtfully, takes a step toward it and pauses, another step, and so on. Finally she jerks the dummy from the chair by the head and lays the head on her shoulder.*)

SUSAN. Poor hubby, does his poor head ache? (*pats dummy*) Was he out so late last night? (*puts dummy gently in*

chair) Let little wifey rub his poor head, (*does so*) What did hubby say? All right, little wifey will tie a nice cold cloth around poor hubby's head. (*does this*) Now, kiss little wifey. (*kisses dummy*) What did hubby say?

GRANDMA. What did he say?

SUSAN. He said "For goodness sake get away from here and leave me alone. Can't you see I'm a sick man? Get out of here and stop bothering me."

GRANDMA, (*admiringly*) How like a real man! And what do you do next?

SUSAN. (*looking around*) I get a pillow. (*gets one from couch and puts it lade of dummy*) And I wrap up his feet (*does it*) There, poor dear. He's sleeping now.

GRANDMA. Very good. You will do very well. Remember to teach that wives should obey their husbands and be kind to them. Husbands are such tender creatures. We should love them and obey them. I will see that your room is in order. No doubt you will wish to practise coddling the Ideal Husband a little longer before your classes begin. (*exit GRANDMA*)

SUSAN, (*alone*) Get off that chair, you big brute! (*jerks dummy of chair*) Come home intoxicated, will you? (*throws dummy back on chair*) Don't talk back to me! (*takes up dummy again*) You are going out, are you? Well, go out! (*walks toward screen with dummy*) Out you go! I'll stand no nonsense, I tell you! (*throws dummy behind screen*) Go, if you want to! There! Coddle and pet them! That's how I coddle and pet them! (*looks around*) This is a nice situation for Susan Jane Jones, Captain of Company A, First Regiment, Militant Suffragettes! But all is fair in Love and Votes for Women! This academy is the last stronghold of the old-fashioned woman, and from in it the tender young girls learn the vicious habits of keeping house, being good housewives and attending to their own affairs as their grandmothers did. From this root anti-suffragism might spread over the whole world, and I have crept in, like a spy, to corrupt and destroy it. Woman must and will rule! (*enter KATE pouting*)

KATE. (*not seeing SUSAN*) I don't care! I don't care one bit! I'm never, never going to speak to John Mason again as long as I live. I think he is just too horrid for anything, (*takes off coat and hat and throws them on sofa*) I just hate him. I hate every boy that ever lived, I do! I think they are mean, overbearing, egotistical things. (*wipes her eyes*)

SUSAN. (*clapping her hands once*) My sentiments exactly! I so consider all men.

KATE. (*startled*) Oh! I did not know anyone was here. Good morning! (*curtseys*) Please, you won't tell Grandma Gregg what I said, will you? (*with head on one side*) She wouldn't like it. (*picking at her fingers*) She says females should admire and worship all males.

SUSAN. Humph! Fiddlesticks! Absolutely exploded theory. Latest theory is, females should abhor and despise all males. What's a man? He's a worm. A poor silly worm. Now, here! (*takes KATE by arm and leads her across stage*) We understand each other. You have felt the cruel oppression of a man!

KATE. I--I--I just think John Mason treated me real mean, anyway.

SUSAN. Woman, how else do men ever treat us? We are slaves. But we must be free. You think I am the new Professor of Husbandology, don't you? You think I am here to teach you how to treat husbands, don't you?

KATE. I did think so.

SUSAN, (*threateningly*) Oh, I'll teach you how to treat husbands! (*PAULINE enters and overhears, unseen. She gradually comes closer to them*) I'll teach you how to treat all men. For ages man has crushed us under his cruel heel.

KATE. Has he?

SUSAN. But we will trample him under foot.

KATE. Will we?

SUSAN. We must throttle him. We must crush him.

KATE. Must we?

SUSAN. Pooh! He's a worm. We will do without him. We will drive him from the land. Absolutely. Man is a by-gone institution. I class him with the stage coach and the dodo bird. Woman can do his work better than he can. He must be driven from the land.

PAULINE. But, now, mam, if he's driven from the land, he'll be taking a death of cold in the water.

SUSAN. So much the better. The object that should burn in every true woman's heart is the utter extermination of man. (to KATE) You have felt a man's cruelty. (KATE *wipes her eyes*)

KATE. I don't see why boys have to be so mean.

SUSAN. And you, too, you poor creature. Have you not felt the heel of the oppressor?

PAULINE. Heel of the oppressor? Mercy sakes! That reminds me. Grandma Gregg sent me for to get the Ideal Husband and take him down cellar and black his shoes for him.

SUSAN, (*triumphantly*) You see! Man makes slaves of us all!

PAULINE. Has any of you seen the Ideal Husband? Grandma Gregg said he was in the Classroom conversin' with the new Professor.

SUSAN. (*carelessly*) Oh, he's gone to his club. I mean, look behind the screen.

(PAULINE *gets the dummy, and carries it out, its feet dragging behind her on the floor. Exit PAULINE.*)

SUSAN. My child, the time for the great revolution is at hand. Woman is about to take her rightfully supreme place in the world. In me you see one of the leaders of the Militant Suffragettes. Can I count on you?

KATE. I don't know. I think John Mason treated me just too mean--Oh! here Comes Grandma Gregg.

SUSAN. Hush. Not a word of this! (*in a changed tone*). Yes, my dear, when his head aches take a handful of chopped ice, and fold it in a bandage--

(*Enter GRANDMA GREGG.*)

KATE, (*curtseys*) Good morning, Grandma Gregg.

GRANDMA. Good morning, my dear. (GRANDMA *seats herself and begins knitting. KATE takes sewing from bag and sews. SUSAN picks up book from floor and begins to read.*)

(*Enter GRACE.*)

GRACE. (*curtseys*) Good morning, GRANDMA GREGG.

GRANDMA. Good morning, my dear.

(GRACE *seats herself and sews. Enter EDITH and IDA.*)

EDITH and IDA. (*curtsey*) Good morning, Grandma Gregg.

GRANDMA. Good morning, my dears.

(*Enter MAY and other girls.*)

MAY and Other Girls, (*curtsey*) Good morning, Grandma Gregg.

GRANDMA. Good morning, my dears. And now we are all here, have you all done your home work? Let me see it. (*the girls advance, by ones or twos and show their sewing*)

GRANDMA. Very good--The stitches are a little too large, sweetheart-- This buttonhole might be a little neater, precious, etc. (*girls take seats again, and sew*)

GRANDMA. Grace, will you act as monitor of the teapot?

GRACE. Yes, Grandma Gregg. (*curtseys, and makes tea*)

GRANDMA. Now, young ladies, will you repeat the Golden Text for the day?

ALL. "The way to a man's heart is through his stomach."

SUSAN. (*scornfully and aside*) Yes, feed the beast and he'll grin.

GRANDMA. Kate, do you know your precept?

KATE. (*curtseys*)

A husband is a precious thing,

He is the woman's lord and king.

SUSAN. *(aside)* He was, but now he's no such thing.

GRANDMA. GRACE?

GRACE. *(with a curtsy)*

*A wife should never hem and haw,
Her husband's word should be her law.*

SUSAN. *(aside)* Does any woman think that? Pshaw!

GRANDMA. Next.

EDITH. *(curtseys)*

*Woman within her home should stay
Her duties there should be her play.*

SUSAN, *(aside)* That sentiment don't go to-day.

GRANDMA. Next.

IDA. *(curtseys)*

*The man is noble, strong and brave;
Woman should be his loving slave.*

SUSAN. *That* notion's in its little grave!

GRANDMA. Very good, my darlings, *(she rises)* Edith, yesterday you could not tell me all the ingredients of bread. Do you know now what you omitted?

EDITH. Yes, Grandma Gregg. Add a cup of butter.

GRANDMA. Correct. IDA, if you had a husband and he came home very late, what would you do?

IDA. *(curtseys)* I would pretend to be fast, fast asleep.

GRANDMA. Yes. And what would you say the next morning?

IDA. "Good morning, dear. I was asleep when you came in. I hope you had a pleasant evening."

(GRACE passes tea. Door bell rings.)

GRANDMA. Now, Miss--

SUSAN. Susan Jane Jones.

GRANDMA. Don't forget your curtsy, Miss Jones. *(SUSAN curtseys)* You may take the class now, Miss Jones, and give it instruction in the proper treatment of husbands. Inculcate ideas of meekness and gentleness.

SUSAN. Oh, I'll inculcate. Have no fear of that. *(Enter PAULINE. She has a telegram which she hands to GRANDMA. Also has the dummy, which she throws on the floor carelessly.)*

PAULINE. Here's your husband.

GRANDMA. My dear child, you should not handle a husband in that manner.

PAULINE. I'll not be handling that husband in any manner very long, mam. I'm going to quit my job. Nothing but scrub, scrub, mop, mop, from morning to night. Look at them young ladies, a drinkin' tea and me doin' the scrub work. I'm tired of being scholar, I am.

GRANDMA. *(after reading telegram)* You are tired of being a scholar, are you, PAULINE?

PAULINE. Yes'm. I'm sick of it. I've learned this scrubbin' lesson from the cellar up.

GRANDMA. So you have, dear, so you have! You do it very well. And I am going to reward you.

PAULINE. *(happily)* Reward me, mam?

GRANDMA. Yes. I have just received word my newly engaged Professor of Rudimentary Household Science cannot

come. How would you like to be a professor, Pauline?

PAULINE. Oh, me a professor, mam! Me, who has nothing but rags to my name, a professor?

GRANDMA. Yes, Pauline. I have made up my mind. I am going to make you my Professor of Rudiments. Young ladies, this is our new Professor of Rudiments, (*all curtsey*)

PAULINE, (*wiping her eyes*) I feel like I ought to make a speech, mam, but I can't, I'm that overcome. I don't feel like I could do justice to the job, mam.

GRANDMA. Oh, yes you can, my dear. Now, your duties as Professor of Rudiments will consist in teaching the young ladies scrubbing--

PAULINE. Scrubbin'?

GRANDMA. Yes, scrubbing, and mopping, and blacking stoves.

PAULINE. Scrubbin' an' moppin' an' blackin' stoves?

GRANDMA. Just so. And you will teach by example. The young ladies will study your methods. You will scrub and mop and black stoves, and they will watch you.

PAULINE. I'll scrub and mop and--It's mighty like the job of bein' scholar, ain't it, mam? What pay do I get, mam, for all this scrub and mop?

GRANDMA. Pay? I am surprised you should ask for pay when I have given you such a position of trust and honor. But there. If you must have pay, you shall have it. I will give you the work you owe me for the tuition you have received.

PAULINE, (*puzzled*) Yes'm. Thank you, mam. Now, now, do you do that work I owe you, or do I do it?

GRANDMA. What a question! You do it, of course. You owe it to me, child, don't you? (PAULINE *stands puzzled*) Now, young ladies, I will leave you to your two new Professors, (*exit GRANDMA*)

(PAULINE, *when she is gone, stands puzzled. Turning her head she sees dummy. She grasps it, raises it above her head, and throws it down angrily*)

PAULINE. Get to work, you husband, get to work! (*goes to tea table and eats and drinks during the following scene*)

SUSAN. Fellow females! (*the girls ignore her. They chatter loudly with one another. Finally KATE's voice is heard*)

KATE. Well, I'll never speak to John again as long as I live.

GRACE. Well, he can't be a bit worse than Arthur. Oh, I'm so mad at Arthur. I was so mad I could have slapped him.

EDITH. What did he do, Grace?

GRACE. I met him on Main Street, quite by chance, you know, and he said, "Hello, GRACE, you don't want an ice cream soda, do you?" And I said, "Oh, I don't care." And he said, "Oh, well, if you don't care!"

IDA. The *horrid* thing. I think boys are just too horrid for anything. I oo-ooed at George to-day, and he didn't OO-OO back at me at all. I'm through with George!

EDITH. Imagine! When I Oo-oo at a boy and he doesn't OO-OO back I consider it a deadly insult. I suppose he was talking to some other girl.

IDA. No, he wasn't! He was riding his motor cycle, and he was only two blocks away--

EDITH. Perhaps he didn't hear you.

IDA. That's no excuse at all. When a girl oo-oo's it is a boy's duty to hear. I always hear when George oo-oo's.

MAY. Certainly! Any gentleman would OO-OO back at a girl if she oo-ooed at him.

KATE. I suppose you mean Henry would OO-OO back at you. You and Henry!

MAY. Thank you, but I don't speak to Henry any more. I've sent *him* about his business! I was going over to the tennis court yesterday, and I oo-ooed at him, and he said, "Where are you going, MAY?" and I said, "I'm going to play tennis, if I can find a partner." And what do you think *he* said?

GRACE. What did he say?

MAY. He said, "Well, I'm sorry I can't go with, you!"

All. Oh, how horrid!

EDITH. Well, I've had all of *Sam* I want! When I got home from school yesterday I sat on the front porch *all* afternoon. Of course I expected Sam would happen to pass by.

KATE. Of course. Any gentleman *would* happen, to pass by.

EDITH. Certainly. And there I sat. And sat. And sat. And no Sam came by. Oh, I was mad. And what do you think his excuse was? His mother had fallen down the cellar stairs and broken her arm.

KATE. And he let that keep him home! Girls, I think the way the boys treat us is perfectly outrageous! There are whole minutes in every day when they don't think of us at all.

GRACE. Oh, not *whole* minutes.

KATE. Well, parts of minutes, anyway. I understand that several times this term several of the boys almost knew their lessons. That couldn't happen if they thought of us *all* the time.

All. The horrid things!

KATE. Well, for my part, I'm through with boys! I wish they were all--all extinct.

SUSAN, (*rapping on table with her umbrella*) Ladies! Fellow females! I have heard what you said. Your wrongs are enormous, but what does man live for but to oppress us? We are down-trod, down-trod by man, that worm that like a roaring lion seeks to cast dust in our eyes with his soaring wings while he rends our heart with his cruel beak! Shall we, ladies, be slaves to a worm?

PAULINE. No, mam. (*curtseys*)

SUSAN. No! You wish the men were extinct. We will extinguish them. Why waste your lives here doing plain and fancy sewing--

PAULINE. And scrubbin'--

SUSAN. When woman was meant to occupy the noblest spheres? Wives? Faugh! Housewives? Faugh! Let us take the work of the men, and do it! Follow the bright banner of Susan Jane Jones, the Militant Suffragette, and drive the men into the sea! I have heard the story of your wrongs--

KATE. Well, I do think Henry was just too mean for anything.

SUSAN. Sewing! Scrubbing! Have you women never wished to do the work of men?

KATE. Yes, I have. I always wanted to be a doctor, but my father wouldn't hear of it.

GRACE. What kind of a doctor, Kate?

KATE. Oh, a handsome doctor with curly gray hair. And you, Grace?

GRACE. Oh, I want to be a lawyer, a plump, jolly lawyer. And you, Edith?

EDITH. I want to be an editor.

GRACE. Republican or Democrat?

EDITH. I don't know. The kind with a big automobile. And you, Ida?

IDA. I want to be a politician.

Mat. An honest one, of course.

IDA. Well, no. A successful politician. And you, May?

Mat. I want to run a vegetable market, where the women can come with their market baskets.

SUSAN. Where the *men* can come with their market baskets, (*to PAULINE*) And you, you poor creature, have you never felt the longing to usurp man's sphere? Have you never longed to do a man's work?

PAULINE. Oh, yes, mam. This humble heart (*tapping her waist*) has felt the what-you-call it many a time. I have always wished, mam, to be a pirate.

All. A pirate!

PAULINE. A pirate. And why not? That's men's work. Listen:--

*Since my mother's lap I played in
When I was a wee small maiden--*

SUSAN. Just so high!

All. Just so high!

PAULINE.

*I have had a great ambition
For to better my condition--*

SUSAN. So have I.

All. So have I.

PAULINE.

*Dolls was things I much detested
Toys left me uninterested.
Even as a little baby
I had hopes that sometime, maybe
I could be a roaring pirate,
Be a swearing, tearing pirate,
Be a shocking, wicked pirate,
With a cruel, cruel eye,*

SUSAN. I call that a very noble and uplifting ambition for a modern young lady.

PAULINE.

Listen:--

*I have dreamed of death and slaughter
On the wild tumultuous water*

SUSAN. Oh, how dear!

All. Oh, how dear!

PAULINE.

*I have longed to wear a dagger
And cut throats, and swear, and swagger.*

SUSAN, Hear! Hear!

All. Hear! Hear!

PAULINE.

*All around me, dead and dying,
I would see my victims lying;
And I'd laugh out loud and louder
As I smelled the blood and powder,
For I'd be a roaring pirate,
Be a swearing, tearing pirate,
Bloody-bones, the heartless pirate,
With a cruel, cruel eye.*

SUSAN. I consider Bloody-bones a very sweet name for a young lady pirate. Very!

PAULINE. Yes, mam. (*curtseys*) So, if it's all the same to you, I'd like to be a pirate, mam, SUSAN. Certainly. A pirate's life is a very mannish occupation.

KATE. Wouldn't it be lovely to be a pirate! It is much more interesting than being a doctor.

PAULINE. Yes, Miss Kate. And there's no scrubbin' on a pirate craft. The wash of the sea is merely a poetical term. And

if the men is drove off the land, they'll take to ships, do you see, and there'll be plenty of work for a respectable, blood-thirsty lady pirate to do, catchin' 'em and extinguishing 'em.

GRACE. Oh, girls, wouldn't it be lovely to be pirates?

SUSAN. Then be pirates! The Militant Suffragettes need a navy as well as an army. Every revolution needs its privateers.

KATE. No more sewing! (*gathers up sewing and throws it down*)

PAULINE. No more scrubbin'. (*throws away mop and brush*)

GRACE. No more rag bags! (*takes rag bag from chair, and is about to throw it, when red rags fall out*)

PAULINE. Hold on, Miss GRACE! Pirates is mostly dressed out of rag bags, (*winds red rag around GRACE's head, and a red rag as sash. All do likewise*) Wait till I get the swords, (*exit PAULINE*)

KATE, (*front, with clenched fists*) OO--I feel blood-thirsty!

SUSAN. And you look extremely blood-thirsty.

GRACE, OO--I feel ferocious!

SUSAN. And you look too ferocious for anything.

EDITH. OO--I feel wicked!

SUSAN. You are certainly a fear-compelling sight.

IDA. OO--I feel murderous!

SUSAN. You look like a most criminal character.

Mat. OO--I feel dangerous!

SUSAN. You look extremely dangerous.

PAULINE. (*entering with table knives, etc.*) OO--I feel like if I seen a cake of soap I could kick it! (*she distributes knives*)

SUSAN. Reserve your wrath for the men. (*drawing them all to her*) Hist! To-night--at dead of night--we will capture--a lumber schooner--at Copp's lumber yard--

All. Aye! Aye! Mam!

SUSAN. To-night--at dead of night--meet me--at the corner of--Main and Broadway!

All. Aye! Aye! Mam!

SUSAN. To-night--at dead of night--we will strangle the watchmen--

KATE. At dead of night? I don't think we ought to strangle watchmen at dead of night unless we have a chaperone, do you girls?

SUSAN. Nonsense! What kind of Suffragettes are you to need a chaperone? I don't have a chaperone.

GRACE. Well, I don't care! I'm not going out strangling at night without a chaperone! It isn't proper.

SUSAN. But you are a pirate.

EDITH. I don't care if we are pirates. We don't have to be improper pirates. I want to strangle and murder in a perfectly proper manner.

PAULINE. How about takin' the old lady with you?

KATE. Grandma Gregg? Why, she's no Suffragette. Oh, girls! The very thing! We *will* take Grandma Gregg! We'll capture her! We'll take her, in chains!

SUSAN. Excellent! *You* will have your chaperone, and I will be rid of the most dangerous Anti-suffra-gette! Seek her and seize her!

All. We go! We go! (*exit all, left, except PAULINE*) (*enter GRANDMA GREGG, right*)

GRANDMA. I thought I heard a noise, Pauline. How are the dear girls getting on with their lessons?

PAULINE, (*curtseys*) Fine, mam. They're learning new tricks every day.

GRANDMA. (*picking up dummy and laying it over chair back*) Very good. But I wouldn't wear a bandeau on my hair if I were you, Pauline. I don't like these ribbons bound around the head of young girls. They make them look like pirates. (*PAULINE starts uneasily*)

PAULINE. Pirates, mam? What a notion!

GRANDMA. Pirates, or Italian ditch diggers.

PAULINE, (*boldly*) Well, mam, let it be pirates, then. Pirate is what I am. (*hesitates*) Grandma Gregg, you've always been good to me, barring the scrubbing and mopping and blacking shoes and stoves. If I was you, mam, I'd pack some clothes, so as to be ready for the sea voyage.

GRANDMA. Me? A sea voyage?

PAULINE. Yes'm. (*curtseys*) This Susan Jane Jones is not what she seems, mam. I let on, mam, I was of her way of thinking, mam, but I ain't. A husband is good enough woman's rights for me, mam. A nice, quiet, well-behaved husband like that one there is all I want.

GRANDMA. I don't understand you.

PAULINE. Susan Jane Jones is a Militant Suffragette, mam.

GRANDMA. A Militant Suffragette? In this academy?

PAULINE. Yes, mam. (*curtseys*) She's here like a snake in the grass, mam, and her and the young ladies is goin' to extinguish all the men. They're all goin' to be pirates, mam, and most bloody minded pirates they be, too. And you, mam, that never did them any harm, they are going to capture and take along with them in chains. For a chaperone, mam.

GRANDMA, (*hanging her head*) And is this the reward for my efforts to make good wives of them!

(*Enter SUSAN cautiously. She beckons to the girls.*)

SUSAN. This way! She's here!

(*The girls creep in, knives in their teeth, swaggering like story-book pirates. SUSAN folds her arms.*)

SUSAN. Woman! Your hour has come!

GRANDMA. Well, I do declare!

SUSAN. These poor maidens you thought to corrupt into housework ways, I have won from you. Here, to-day, the revolution that will sweep the men from the land and sea, begins! We are resolved! ALL. (*shouting*) We are resolved!

SUSAN. In these hearts burns nothing but hatred and detestation of man.

ALL. (*shouting*) Hatred and detestation.

KATE. We don't want to have anything more to do with men.

GRACE. We are absolutely through with them. And with boys, too.

GRANDMA. Now, my dears--

SUSAN. Enough! Pirates, do your duty! Seize that man! (*two girls seize and bind the dummy*)

SUSAN. Ha! Ha! Now seize and bind and gag that woman, (*points to GRANDMA. The girls rush at GRANDMA, who skips backward*)

SUSAN, (*front, rubbing her hands with joy*) pirates! My faithful band of man-haters, (*to audience*) You men, your turn is next!

A BOY'S VOICE. (*offstage*) OO-oo!

(KATE, who it about to bind GRANDMA, stops and listens.)

KATE That's John!

SECOND BOYS VOICE. (*off stage*) Oo-oo! Oo-oo!)

GRACE. (*listening*) That's--that's Arthur!

SEVERAL BOYS VOICES. Oo-oo! Oo-oo! Oo-oo!

EDITH, IDA and Mat. That's Sam! That's George! That's Henry! (*all crowd to door and look out*)

KATE. (*eagerly*) Oh, girls! It's the boys, they want us to come out! Where's my hat?

(*All rush in a crowd to sofa and begin digging wildly into wraps and hats, putting them on as hastily as possible*)

SUSAN. Girls! Pirates! Stop! The revolution! Remember your cause!

KATE. (*pinning on her hat*) Revolution! I haven't time for revolutions, don't you hear the boys calling us?

SUSAN. Stop! Are you not women?

GRACE. (*as all come forward*) Women? Pirates? Why no, we are just the I. I. Club. Just girls. Just sweet girls!

VOICES, (*off stage*) Oo-oo!

GIRLS. Oo-oo! Oo-oo! Oo-oo! (*they rush out*)

(SUSAN slowly picks up umbrella and hand bag, and moves to door. GRANDMA takes up her knitting. PAULINE picks up her mop, and looks lovingly at dummy.)

PAULINE. I'm ashamed of you, sir. Why didn't you-oo at me when all them boys was oo-ooing? you had oo-ooed at me I would have oo-ooed back.

GRANDMA. (*with interest*) Did he speak to you, Pauline?

PAULINE. No, mam. He's an Ideal Husband, and Ideal Husbands don't talk back, mam.

(CURTAIN)