

Excerpt Terms & Conditions

This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity of scripts.

Family Plays

VIRTUE IS ITS OWN REWARD

or,
ALL THAT GLITTERS MAY BE GOLD

An old-fashioned musical melodrama in two acts

Book by
ALICE McDONALD

Music and Lyrics by
CAROL ZADNIK



VIRTUE IS ITS OWN REWARD

OR,
ALL THAT GLITTERS MAY BE GOLD

Nine tuneful songs fully scored for piano and Alice McDonald's book provide a lively old-fashioned musical melodrama that has entertained thousands of theatre patrons throughout America.

Melodrama. Book by Alice McDonald. Music and lyrics by Carol Zadnik. *Cast Size: 2m., 5w.* Centered around pure, sweet, virtuous Verity Vale who, recently orphaned, heads to the Wild West to live with her Aunt Belle—not knowing that Belle is dead. But Belle's greedy, conniving twin sister Estelle steps into the void intent upon corrupting sweet, trusting Verity. Estelle finds an eager collaborator in villainous Rupert R. Rupert. Coming to the aid of Verity is brave and noble Noble Mann, who is searching for a lost gold mine. He discovers gold in his family's defunct mine, making Verity, who owns some "worthless" shares, a rich woman. Mrs. Mann now welcomes Verity into the family as Belle's "spirit." She helps cause the villains to "eat their just deserts" as they flee. This play is intended for all groups. *Set: one int. set: lavish sitting room in a Nevada mining town. Costumes: period clothes of 1856. Approximate running time 60 to 90 minutes. Music score available. Demo/Accompaniment CD available. Code: V41.*

Family Plays

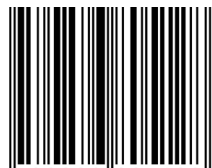
311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098-3308

Phone: (800) 448-7469 / (815) 338-7170

Fax: (800) 334-5302 / (815) 338-8981

www.FamilyPlays.com

ISBN-13 978-0-88680-512-8



9 780886 805128 >

Virtue Is Its Own Reward or,
All That Glitters May Be Gold

VIRTUE IS ITS OWN REWARD

or

ALL THAT GLITTERS MAY BE GOLD

An Old-Fashioned Melodrama in 2 Acts by Alice McDonald

Music & Lyrics by Carol Zadnik

Family Plays

311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098

© Family Plays

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by FAMILY PLAYS without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website www.FamilyPlays.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: FAMILY PLAYS, 311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

© 1985 by
ALICE MCDONALD

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(VIRTUE IS ITS OWN REWARD)

ISBN: 978-0-88680-512-8

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play *must* give credit to the author(s) of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author(s) *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author(s), if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
Family Plays of Woodstock, Illinois”

Cast of Characters

VERITY VALE:	Pure, sweet, virtuous, and put-upon; a beautiful young orphan
NOBLE MANN:	Stalwart and brave, he truly lives up to his name
RUPERT R. RUPERT:	As vile and conniving a charlatan as ever walked the face of the earth
WINIFRED MANN:	A wealthy, social-climbing dowager who enjoys keeping her son tied to her apron-strings
ESTELLE DARCY:	A Philadelphia beauty who takes good care of herself - and only - herself
BELLE DARCY:	Estelle's twin sister; now sadly deceased, she was a diamond in the rough
MADELINE SAUNDERS:	Winifred's snobbish, tongue-wagging best friend

PROPERTIES

ACT 1

Scene 1

2 Cups & Saucers

Letter

Suitcase (ESTELLE)

Suitcase(s) (NOBLE)

ACT 2

Scene 1

Vase

Pocket Watch (RUPERT)

Painting

ACT 2

Scene 2

Vase

ACT 2

Scene 3

Dust Cloth (VERITY)

Locket On Chain (VERITY)

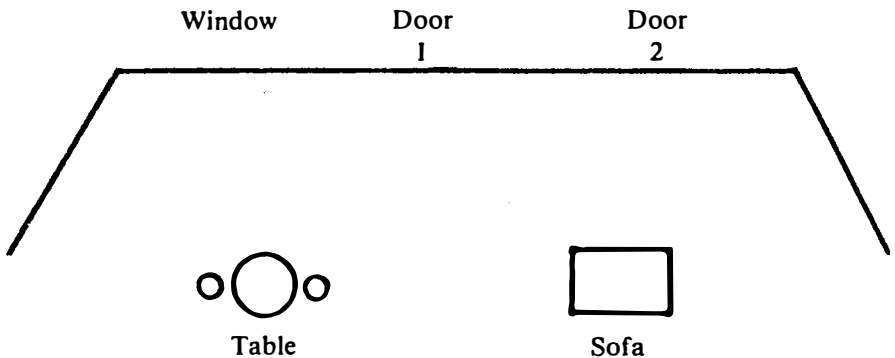
Deed (ESTELLE)

Paper Money (RUPERT)

Feathers (RUPERT)

Large Gold Nugget (NOBLE)

SET DESIGN



Act 1 Scene 1

Location: The entire action of the play takes place in the lavishly decorated sitting room of the Mann home in a mining town in Nevada.

The Time: A morning in Spring, 1856.

At Rise: WINIFRED and MADELINE are enjoying conversation and a cup of tea. Winifred wears a stylish dress of the period. Madeline is elegantly attired in modish outfit, with hat, handbag and gloves.

MADELINE: ...and now, tell me, Winifred, my dear, what is the latest word from your son?

WINIFRED: My darling Noble writes to me every day. Why, only yesterday I received his latest letter, posted just as he was about to board ship to return home to his loving Mamma.

MADELINE: Then he should be home any day now. Wasn't it terribly expensive sending Noble on the Grand Tour of Europe?

WINIFRED: A mere bagatelle to me. Besides, I am grooming him for an important position of authority in this town. And the European tour will give him just that little bit of polish he needs. Not that he isn't already perfect in every way.

MADELINE: Please don't misunderstand me, my dear, but I happen to know that your late, lamented husband made his money in a lucky strike at the Quicksilver Gold Mine. I always thought that Noble wished to follow in his father's footsteps.

WINIFRED: (*Archly*) That is all water under the bridge now. My Noble was meant for better things, and I am devoting my life to him, as I always have.

MADELINE: Quite a task you have set for yourself, my dear Winifred.

WINIFRED: Not so difficult. You forget I am a woman of great influence in this town, and I shall not rest until I see Noble in the seat of bank president, or perhaps mayor.

MADELINE: But what if Noble has no leanings in that direction? I seem to recall him saying that he could not bear to be cooped up in an office all day.

WINIFRED: Nonetheless, Noble realizes that I know what is best for him and he will do as I say, just as he has always done.

(POSTMAN'S WHISTLE - OFF)

WINIFRED: Oh, the postman. Excuse me, Madeline, my dear. *(Opens Door 1, returns with letter.)* It may be important. You don't mind? *(Reads letter to self)* Oh, how very annoying!

MADELINE: *(Hopefully)* What is it? Is it bad news?

WINIFRED: The sister of my late husband's equally late partner will be passing through town and asks me to give her my hospitality for a few days.

MADELINE: And what, pray, is so annoying about that? You have ever been a most gracious hostess.

WINIFRED: You don't understand - this girl has an identical twin sister who is a - a -

MADELINE: *(Eagerly)* A what, my dear?

WINIFRED: I can hardly bring myself, cultured as I am, to utter the unsavory words.

MADELINE: Oh, do try, Winifred, dear! You can trust me. I shan't breathe a word of it!

WINIFRED: She is a - a - saloon proprietress.

MADELINE: *(Quickly rises)* I must be on my way, Winifred, dear. I have just remembered an important engagement. *(Aside)* I can hardly wait to spread this juicy little tid-bit!

WINIFRED: Good day, Madeline, and remember - not a word!

MADELINE: As if I would! My lips are sealed. *(Quickly Exits Door 1)*

WINIFRED: *(Pacing)* My proud social position is in jeopardy. To think that the sister of a vulgar saloon owner will be staying in the home of the president of the Women's Temperance League. I do not see how I can permit this to happen. She is doubtless as common and degraded as her sister. I shall receive her briefly and hasten her on her way.

WINIFRED: "A Woman In My Position"

(KNOCK AT DOOR 1)

WINIFRED: *(Opens Door)* Yes?

ESTELLE: *(Enters. She wears an elegant traveling outfit, hat, handbag, and gloves; she carries a suitcase.)* May I come in? I am Estelle Darcy, the identical twin sister of your late husband's late partner. I trust you received my note?

WINIFRED: *(Perplexed at Estelle's obvious culture and breeding)* Why, yes, Won't you please come in. So, you are Estelle! Pray forgive me for staring, but you are very different from what I had expected.

ESTELLE: Do you mean because my identical twin sister ran a saloon you thought I, too, would look like a saloon-keeper?

WINIFRED: Why, yes, that is exactly it. But, did you say "ran"?

ESTELLE: Yes. Poor Belle is no more. She met her untimely demise recently. It was so sad. *(Her voice and expression belie her words.)*

WINIFRED: It was probably all for the best.

ESTELLE: I must confess to you, Mrs. Mann, that Belle was a constant source of embarrassment to me. I am attracted only to those things of highest culture and greatest refinement. While, alas, poor Belle. . . . *(Aside)* I can tell at a glance that this old bat is as much of a social climber as I am. I shall cultivate her friendship. She may be useful to me.

ALL THAT GLITTERS MAY BE GOLD

WINIFRED: *(Warmly)* Estelle, I am pleased to offer you respite from your journey in my lovely home. I am afraid my maid is away at present visiting her ailing mother, but let me prepare a cup of tea for you. *(Aside)* I must manage to detain this elegant creature until Noble returns home. I like her looks.

(ESTELLE AND WINIFRED EXIT DOOR 2)

(KNOCK AT DOOR 1)

HERO THEME

NOBLE: *(Enters. He wears suit, white shirt with cravat or string tie; beret. He carries a suitcase or two.)* Bon jour, Mamma!

CURTAIN

Act 1 Scene 2

Time: The next morning.

At Rise: WINIFRED and NOBLE are deep in conversation.

NOBLE: But, Mamma, I have no wish to be a bank president or mayor.

WINIFRED: Really, Noble, I simply cannot understand this change in you. You know I have always had only your best interests at heart. Don't you trust your Mamma?

NOBLE: Of course I do, Mamma. But, while I was away I learned to stand on my own two feet. I am a man, now!

WINIFRED: I made a vow to myself when you were just a tiny babe in your cradle that I would see you reach the very pinnacle of success. How can you go against me after all I have done for you?!

NOBLE: Mamma, I have no wish to appear ungrateful, but I was not born to sit behind a desk all day. There is that in me which tells me that my future lies in the Quicksilver Gold Mine.

WINIFRED: Oh, Noble, I am almost vexed with you! That mine is worked out. It is worthless. There is no gold left in it.

NOBLE: Nevertheless, Mamma, I intend to open it up again, and that is my intent. That is to say, my intent is my intention to work the mine. Do you understand, Mamma?

WINIFRED: Not exactly, Noble, but parents were ever destined to not understand their offspring. We will speak no more of this for the present, for I must see to our guest. Speaking of Estelle, I was somewhat dismayed at the lack of attention you paid to her yesterday. She is a charming, cultured, woman. *(Opens Door 2, calls)* Are you awake yet, my dear?

ESTELLE: *(Off)* Oh, yes. Please come up.

WINIFRED: *(Returns to Noble, patting his cheek fondly)* There now, I'm glad that's settled. I am certain when you have thought it out, you will see the wisdom of my words. Who could possibly know better than I what is best for my own little boy! *(Exits Door 2)*

NOBLE: *(D.S.C.)* What a perplexing dilemma.

“Why Do Mothers Do It?”

Much as I love and respect my dear Mamma, I must prove my worth as a Mann in my own way. Somehow I must find the way to convince her that I am at the very threshold of my life. I can almost hear destiny knocking at my door.

(KNOCK, DOOR 1)

NOBLE: *(Looks at Door, then straight out - then takes over to Door 1 and opens it.)*

HEROINE THEME

NOBLE: *(Registers pleasant surprise.)* Why, good day, Miss. Won't you come in.

VERITY: *(Enters. She wears simple traveling outfit, bonnet, hand-bag, gloves, locket, She carries suitcase.)* Thank you, sir. It is most presumptuous of me to come to this house where I am unknown. And when I tell you why you will think the inside of my head is disarranged.

NOBLE: That may be, Miss, but the outside of it is certainly not. *(Chuckles at witticism.)*

VERITY: I beg your pardon, sir!

NOBLE: *(Hastily apologetic)* Oh, please, Miss, forgive my being so forward. Won't you sit down. You see, I have just returned from the Continent, and the people there are very - continental. *(They sit Sofa.)* I sense that you are distressed. May I be of some assistance?