

# **CHRISTMAS AT THOMPSON HALL**

Adapted from a story by Anthony Trollope By Frank J. Morlock



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# CHRISTMAS AT THOMPSON HALL

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Etext by Dagny

#### CHARACTERS

Mrs. Brown

Mr. Brown

Mr. Jones

Bellboy

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**SCENE I**

**An English Hotel Room in the middle of the 19th century.**

**MR. BROWN:** If I can't get something to relieve me, I know I shall never make my way on.

**MRS. BROWN:** But my dear, what can I do? What can I do, my dearie? You know I would do anything if I could. Get into bed, my pet, and be warm, and then tomorrow morning you will be all right.

**MR. BROWN:** I'll tell you what you can do. Go down to the desk and get me a jar of (whispers bashfully). But I am afraid it will be very disagreeable for you to go down all alone at this time of night.

**MRS. BROWN:** Of course, I'll go. I don't mind going in the least. I won't be two minutes, my darling.

**BLACKOUT**

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SCENE II

The Hotel Room some time later that night.

**MRS. BROWN** (opening the door hesitantly and seeing her husband still up, comes in) Oh, my dear, why are you not in bed? Why did you get up? I left you warm and comfortable.

**MR. BROWN**: Where have you been all night?

**MRS. BROWN**: I've been looking for the (whispers with embarrassment).

**MR. BROWN**: Have you been looking all night and haven't found it? Where have you been?

**MRS. BROWN**: I got badly lost in the corridors.

**MR. BROWN**: Surely there must have been someone about the hotel? You can't possibly have been lost all these hours?

**MRS. BROWN**: Only about one hour, my dear. I got the porter to help me.

**MR. BROWN**: Why didn't you tell him what you wanted..

**MRS. BROWN**: (aghast) My dear?

**MR. BROWN**: Why not? Nothing to be ashamed of.

**MRS. BROWN**: At one o'clock in the morning! I couldn't do it. To tell the truth, he wasn't very civil. I thought he was a little tipsy. Now, my dear, go to bed.

**MR. BROWN**: Why didn't you get the (whispers)?

**MRS. BROWN**: There wasn't any. I searched everywhere. That's what took me so long. Now, my dear, go to sleep, because we positively must leave in the morning.

**MR. BROWN**: That is impossible.

**MRS. BROWN**: We must go, my dear. I say that we must go. We must leave this hotel in the morning.

**MR. BROWN**: Bother.

**MRS. BROWN**: It's all very well for you to say that. But I say we must go tomorrow and we will.

**MR. BROWN**: I do believe you want to kill me.

**MRS. BROWN**: That is very cruel and most unjust. Nothing could be so bad for you as this wretched place where nobody can get warm either day or night. Only think how much more comfortable you will be at home. If we don't go, Uncle John will disown us.

**MR. BROWN**: I don't believe a word of it.

BLACKOUT

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SCENE III

**THE SAME.** It is now morning and the Browns are preparing to leave. There is a knock on the door.

**MRS. BROWN:** (opening the door) Yes?

**BELLBOY:** Is this Madame's handkerchief?

**MRS. BROWN:** Yes, it is mine. Here, take it Charles and come on.

**MR. BROWN:** (very suspicious) What does this all mean?

**BELLBOY:** A gentleman has been— Ah, er, something has been done to a gentleman.

**MR. BROWN:** Something done to a gentleman?

**BELLBOY:** Something very bad indeed.

**MRS. BROWN:** (eager to stop this) Charles! We shall miss the train.

**MR. BROWN:** What the mischief does it all mean?

**MRS. BROWN:** What is the matter with you?

**MR. BROWN:** What does it all mean? Did you go into somebody's room?

**MRS. BROWN:** I did. Give me my handkerchief.

**BELLBOY:** No.

**MRS. BROWN:** Charles, we cannot allow ourselves to be delayed. Tonight is Christmas Eve and we shall not be at Thompson Hall. Think of my sister.

**MR. BROWN:** But why did you go into some man's bedroom, my dear?

**BELLBOY:** Yes, why?

**MRS. BROWN:** It was a mistake, Charles. There is not a moment to lose. I will explain it all to you on the way.

**BELLBOY:** But what is to be said to the gentleman?

**MRS. BROWN:** You are not angry with me because I was in a man's room? What harm has been done, Charles? The man won't die because he's had a mustard plaster on his throat. (Jones enters) This has been a very disagreeable accident, Mr. Jones.

**MR. JONES:** Accident! I don't know how it could have been an accident. This is a monstrous invasion of my privacy and personal comfort.

**MR. BROWN:** Er, quite so, Mr. Jones. But on the part of the lady who is my wife—

**MR. JONES:** So I understand. But the fact is she did do it!

**MR. BROWN:** She thought it was me!

**MR. JONES:** What!

**MR. BROWN:** My word as a gentleman. I have a bad sore throat, as you may perceive. And I asked my wife to get one for me. Just what she put on you.

**MR. JONES:** I wish you had it!

**MR. BROWN:** I wish so, too. I don't know when she will get over the shock.

**MR. JONES:** I don't know when I shall! Why did she come into my room at all?

**MR. BROWN:** She mistook the number.

**MR. JONES:** She found out her mistake at least.

**MR. BROWN:** Oh, yes.

**MR. JONES:** Why didn't she wake me and take the damn thing off again?

**MRS. BROWN:** Ah!

**MR. JONES:** She can't have any human compassion in her heart.

**MR. BROWN:** Ah! There was the difficulty.

**MR. JONES:** Difficulty! Who was it had done it? To make a mistake like that and then leave it there and say nothing. It seems to me like a practical joke.

**MR. BROWN:** No, Mr. Jones.

**MR. JONES:** That's the way I look at it.

**MR. BROWN:** There isn't a woman in all England less likely to play such a joke. If you're married



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yourself—

**MR. JONES:** My wife would have wakened the man afterward. I'm sure she would. Why she could have sent you if she was afraid to come herself. The whole thing is impossible.

**CURTAIN**