

“He Ain’t Done Right, By George”

A Melodrama in Four Acts

by

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Author's Statement (for inclusion in the program if appropriate):

The names of some of the characters in this play are taken from history. Maurice Van Bever, Dick Tyler, and Alphonse Citro, for example, actually were involved in white slavery – coercing or tricking young women into lives of prostitution – around the turn of the century. Edward McCann and Edwin Sims are also historic characters, active in the fight against this crime. They fought a wider fight, too: to overcome the attitude of their society that the victims of forced prostitution were just as guilty as its perpetrators. Their National Vigilance Association was active in both struggles.

The play pokes gentle fun at all its characters – heroes and villains alike. Nonetheless, Capt. McCann, Mr. Sims, and their friends in those days deserve our sincerest respect. It is sometimes hard today to understand how it was, that young women really *were* lured into “the life” and kept there, by force if necessary. Laugh with us tonight, by all means; but also keep in mind beneath the fun that this kind of situation is not totally fiction – and know, too, that this crime against women is still going on, both in this country and abroad, supported by men who care nothing for the women they use in this way.

Cast of Characters

(In Order of Appearance)

George Armbruster	A man of about 25; he is the “hero” of the play. He is, however, thin and almost prettily feminine, and by no means cast in the heroic mold.
Mrs. Armbruster	A woman of about 70, George's mother; she is feeble in body, but still very sharp of mind.
Daisy Lovelace	A beautiful young woman of about 20; the heroine - and not just as the hero's foil. She is smart and independent, and completely in charge of herself.
Maurice Van Bever	A man of about 40; a white slaver (in historical fact). He is a completely vile and despicable character – the “villain”.
Dick Tyler	A man of about 35; he is also a historical white slaver. Although by no means good, he is still not the complete villain that Van Bever is.
Alphonse Citro	A dark foreigner of about 45; he runs an ice cream shop that is used as a lure for the white slavers. He, also a character from history, is just in it for the money.
Capt. Edward McCann	A noble, but not altogether bright, police officer of about 40. He is another of our historical characters, an active opponent of white slavery.
Maggie S.	A pretty, but naive, girl of about 18, lost in the city. She is one of the thousands (really) who got lured into prostitution unawares.
Dora Douglas	A woman who has been a white slave for several years. Although only 35, she looks 50 because of the nature of her life.
Edwin W. Sims	A noble, virtuous, and rather pompous man of about 50. He was in history a founder of the National Vigilance Association, one of the societies to aid girls caught in white slavery.
Judge Potter	An old and rich, but somewhat vulgar man of about 55. He is a criminal court judge, and gay (but in the closet).
Officer Duffy	A policeman of about 25; there is nothing special about him.

Settings

The living room of the Armbruster home. A 1900s living room, modestly furnished, but in good taste. A framed “Home Sweet Home” stitchery piece is hung on the wall. The overall effect should be of sweetness and light, more feminine than masculine in its details. There are two doors, one on each side wall, opening to the outside and to the kitchen. There is a window by the door to the outside. The furniture includes a sofa, an overstuffed chair, a wooden rocking chair, and a coffee table.

Alphonse Citro’s ice cream parlor. This is from the same era, with at least three small tables with (if possible) wire chairs around them. There is a soda fountain bar at the back, with a mirror and implements for making ice cream delights on the wall behind it. A door to the outside is on one wall, with a window next to it (it can be painted onto the set) with “Alphonse Citro’s Ice Cream Parlor” lettered onto it – seen in reverse from the stage, of course. The door on the other wall leads to the ice cream parlor’s back room.

The office of Maurice Van Bever’s house of ill repute. It is thoroughly functional, as though it were the headquarters of a far less flamboyant business. It has two doors (the same two openings as the other scenes), one to the other rooms in the house, and one (indirectly) to outside. There is a fairly substantial desk with a chair, and a couple of visitors’ chairs in front of the desk; there is also a sofa to one side (consider, after all, where we are).

The office of the National Vigilance Association. There is a smallish desk with its chair, and also several metal folding chairs scattered about. This is a place where money is spent on getting a job done, not on appearances. There could be posters on some of the walls about the white slavery problem. There is a door to one side leading to the street, and a door on the other leading into an inner room where women are given temporary shelter.

All that having been said, of course, a more minimalist set would also work – provided that the necessary atmosphere and furnishings are provided for each setting.