



# ONE-ACT PLAY "Little Paradise"

By  
I. BROOK

*This is the last play to be published in the joint "Radio Record" and "Dairy Exporter" play competition. Among those specially commended by Mr. Victor Lloyd was this dainty little fantasy by a young country authoress, Miss I. Brook, Motu, Gisborne.*

## CHARACTERS:

OLD FATHER TIME (a woman with a deep voice), dressed in a long cloak and carrying a scythe.

SPRING, in flowing, pale green, carrying a bunch of violets.

SUMMER, in pink, carrying pink roses.

AUTUMN, in rich brown, wearing trails of crimson and yellow leaves.

WINTER, in white.

A WOMAN of about forty, in drab, serviceable dress. Her hair is done up at the back in a tight bun.

## SCENE:

*A farm kitchen, with table in centre, chair left, and door right. A calendar or small picture hangs on the wall. The woman is scrubbing the floor, and suddenly lifts and moves the bucket with impatience, letting the handle fall with a clatter (a zinc bucket does admirably). She flings the scrubbing brush and the cloth on to the floor and strikes a tragic attitude.*

WOMAN:

"I'm sick of this—the same thing every day,

And no one ever gives me thanks for it!

I've not a joy or happiness to boast—

I don't go out, and no one visits me;

I scrub, and clean, and cook, and wash, and sew,

Yet I am treated like a useful piece

Of furniture!—I won't be treated thus!

I'll hang myself, and they shall find my corpse,

All white and stretched, and dangling down. Then they  
Shall have their sorrow!"

*(Sinks into chair, continues hysterically.)*

Hung like a thief—it's just a wicked shame!"

*(Folds arms on table, drops her head on to them, and weeps violently.)*

*(A knock at the door.)*

WOMAN *(looking up)*:

"Now, who is that? And just when I am in  
This pickle, too!" *(Quickly dries her eyes, and hastens to open the door. Enter Old Father Time, who takes her right hand.)*

OLD F.T.: My dear, I've come at last!

I waited till your patience had eloped,

Your mind rebellious waxed, your eyes were filled

With angry tears. Now hearken, child, to me—

My hair is hoary, and my sight is dim,

My days in number as the very stars

That shine in Heaven; my wisdom, too, can count

Its days from the beginning of the world.

So hear my words! I gave you youth and grace

Which won for you the purest joys in Life!

I gave you love, and you were sweeter then

Than e'er before! Your home was Paradise;

Your garden was a place of loveliness,

And Life was full of pleasantness and peace.

But now your fairest dreams are skeletons—

The stars are cold; your garden waits in vain  
For fragrant scents, and colours richly blent,  
And moths at night, when moonbeams flicker low!  
The children's laughter is no longer sweet,  
And 'tis a task to tend your Paradise.

*(Woman sits, and leans head on hand.)*

Child, I have pity, and I shall restore  
Your old delight in every lovely thing.

Maids of the Year, come in!"

*(Enter Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. Spring places her violets in woman's lap.)*

SPRING:

"My lady fair,

Sweets to the sweet! But do I see the girl,

Laughing and gay, who loved in olden days

My golden hair and changing eyes of blue,

My tiny buds, in wisps of frailest green?

Where are the hands that used to wave to me

Far o'er the hills, where blew my 'witching breath?

Scrubbing the floor? 'Twere better left undone,

And you with me were shouting on the hills!

Playmate, a smile! And let us make a tryst—

Down by the trees, where grew these violets!"

*(Woman smiles, and Summer comes forward and gives her the roses.)*

SUMMER:

"They're lovely, dear; but not so live and sweet

As once your blushes on a summer eve!

Those golden hours!—when gracious fragrances,

Mingled with peace, made meditation sweet;

Sunny my days, and gay my meadows are;

Crimson my poppies, pure my sapphire skies;

Lark on a dewy morn sings ecstasy!

Come back with me, to feel my Æolian breath.

To dream your dreams, and hear the minstrelry

Born of the birds. Come, hie away with me

To find your olden loves!"

*(Woman laughs.)*

WOMAN:

"Oh, but, I can't!"

*(Autumn gives her a trail of leaves.)*

AUTUMN:

"Then I am sure that you will come with me!

My treasures are the richest of the year—

I've stores of gold, and rubies flaming red,

Flashing in ev'ry place where leaves are blown

Lightly and far, from trees that wish to sleep!

Mellow and rich my sun, and gay my hair,

Crispy my nights, and pure my evening star—

Lover of flying oak leaves, spiced and brown,

Come, come with me, and share my glorious wealth!"

*(Concluded on page 8.)*