

GONE WITH THE MEN

A Melodrama

By

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CAST: Harlot – Genteel southern belle
Redd – Rugged northern husband of Harlot
Mammyetta – Negro slave girl
Toby – Negro slave buck

TIME: The evening of November 1864.

SETTING: Suggestion of what remains of a once beautiful mansion. A table, sofa & writing desk can be seen. A bucket sits in the far corner.

*(Voices and movement can be heard off stage.
Lights FADE UP as Harlot and Redd who is
carrying suitcases enters)*

HARLOT

But Redd... Wait! Just where are you going?

(Redd gives her a look)

No Redd, not there. Anywhere but not there!

REDD

Yes Harlot, I'm going up North.

HARLOT

Why you low down...

*(Looks around and picks up a picture frame from
off the table and throws it at REDD who is going
through papers at the writing desk)*

Why Redd, you're nothing but a traitor.

REDD

Call me what you like Harlot but I tell you my mind is made up.

HARLOT

Redd... Redd wait. Why north?

REDD

Because my sweet, the times they are a changing... Something much bigger than you or I is taking place in this country Harlot and I plan on being a part of it. With or without you..! Can't you get it through your pretty little head that the south is finished? The north is the place to be now. For the last time, won't you come with me?

HARLOT

Never! I'd rather die first...

REDD

So you just might... Harlot, the time has come for new people and new ideas.

HARLOT

(Interrupting REDD)

You mean colored ideas.

REDD

No Harlot, I mean new ideas. White and or colored ideas. People working together... For once, people working towards the same goals. The very ideas we seem too have forgotten... The one's that this very country are founded upon. The fact that all men are created equal... Harlot can't you understand that..? This slavery business is over I tell you. That's why I'm taking Toby and Mammyetta with me.

HARLOT

Redd don't say such a thing. How will I ever get on? How will the south ever get on without our darkies?

REDD

Just fine I would imagine. Don't you see that having these slaves around has only served to stifle you Harlot? Don't you know you can do anything you set your mind too? You don't need them. Try standing up on your own for once.

HARLOT

Oh God, whatever shall I to do?

REDD

Well I suggest you start by helping yourself instead of looking to others for a change.

(Calling off stage)

Toby? Mammyetta? I'm almost ready!

(Turning back to HARLOT)

For far too many years we've looked to them for whence our help would come. Why Harlot, you should be happy that Lincoln has finally set them free.

HARLOT

Happy! Don't make me laugh! I tell you I despise that man for what he's done to me and my family. To the south... Mark my words he'll get his and soon enough... Redd I beg of you, please don't leave me.

(REDD putting some of the papers from the desk into his bags exits)

MAMMYETTA

(Heard OFF STAGE as she enters)

I's comin' Mr. Redd!

HARLOT

Mammyetta! Mammyetta please, you can't go. I need you. Father needs you...

(Devastated, HARLOT begins to cry crocodile tears)

Oh Mammyetta, who will wash my clothes? Who will do the ironing and the cooking? Who on earth will wash the dishes or run the bath water? Mammyetta who? Not to mention cleaning and dusting 'Terror'... Mammyetta who on earth will make the beds? Oh Mammyetta, I'm begging you, please don't leave me. Not now. Not like this... What will ever become of me or father?

MAMMYETTA

Yo clothes? Yo bath? Huh..! Them days are over! Yes Lord and praises God, dem days are over in more ways than one Miss Harlot.

HARLOT

But Redd... *(Pauses)* Mammyetta I'm telling you Redd is leading you into the hands of those damned Yankees. Can't you see that? Have you forgotten what they did to this place. Can you look me in the eyes and tell me that you of all people have forgotten the splendor that was once 'Terror' Why Mammyetta this was our home.

MAMMYETTA

No, no Miss Harlot, I ain't forgotten. It's you dat done done da forgettin...' 'Terror' was never my home.

(Pointing to the bucket in the corner)

Day after day, night after night I had to carry dat dare heavy bucket up and down deem dare stairs to draw yo' bath water. Some nights I's be so tired havin' cleaned and cooked all day till I could barely see straight. But do ya thing dat matter's though? No sir, still had to carry dat dare bucket day n' n day out. ...An in all dat time I's neb'er know'd you ta as' me once as' to how I was doin'! How I feels 'bout it... No sir Miss Harot, I ain't forgotten. Dat's you I reckon... See, I's got a feelin' dat I's gonna get 'long jus fine wit dem dare Yankees.

HARLOT

(Having not been listening)

Mammyetta, in a time like this what on earth are you mumbling about? What on God's green earth will happen to me?

MAMMYETTA

Chile you serious ain't you?

HARLOT

Of course I'm serious you imbecile!

MAMMYETTA

To tell you da truth Miss Harlot, I really don't give a damn!

HARLOT

(Picks up a riding crop and angrily approaches MAMMYETTA as if to strike her)

Why you ungrateful little wench...

MAMMYETTA

(Calmly with her hands on her hips)

Chile, If I were you I wouldn't even think about it.

(Slowly picks up her bags and exits but not before giving HARLOT a stern look)

HARLOT

(Throws the riding crop down and runs over to the sofa throwing herself upon it sobbing more crocodile tears. TOBY enters as HARLOT slowly gets up. Straightening her dress her manner takes on a seductive quality)

HARLOT

Oh Toby!

(Rushes over to TOBY and caresses his cheek with the back of her hand)

My dear sweet Toby, I knew you wouldn't think of leaving your sweet little Harlot here all alone. Who will take care of me? Oh my dear sweet boy... Come Toby, take me to my bed chamber. Make me feel alive again...

TOBY

Now Miss Harlot, you knows I's only did dem dare thangs causin' you was my mistress an all... An I know'd if'n I hadna you'd a had me beatin' or worse. Like Mr. Redd say, "Times are a changin' Miss Harlot. I's free now an 'sides, you knows I's neb'er like no fish Miss Harlot. No ma'am, I sho' nuff crave me some nice pork roast an Lord know massa Redd got a nice plump one dat won't quit. Why Miss Harlot, by da time we gets up north he won't 'member a thang 'bout you... Yes sir, I reckon we be getting' along just fine me and Massa Redd, if'in ya as' me!

HARLOT

Why you little faggot! I know I couldn't trust you...

(Tries to slap TOBY but he grabs her hand)

TOBY

Girl, don't make me cut you. Besides, you know what dey say Miss Harlot, "Da blacker da berry da sweeter the joice..."

(TOBY lets out a loud laugh as HARLOT pulling away falling to the floor as REDD's voice is once again heard calling from OFFSTAGE)

REDD

Toby? Toby?

TOBY

Coming Massa. Redd!

(Seductively)

Yes, Lord! I's comin'... Massa Redd I's comin'!

(Toby exits)

HARLOT

Oh Redd! Redd stay here with me. I'll change I promise...

REDD

(OFF STAGE)

Giddy up and move on.

(The sound of the horse and carriage pulling off can be heard)

HARLOT

Redd! Come back! Come back..!

(Pauses)

Oh, what am I to do? Go off to the north? Never! No... He'll be back because I'll get him back. I will I tell you. After all, I can do anything I set my mind to. I am invincible. I am woman. I am a southern genteel woman. That's right! I'm the ultimate woman.

(Looking around)

They'll all be back including those ungrateful darkies and when they do.

(Grabs hold of the riding crop)

They'll be sorry they ever spoke to me in that tone of voice... Yes, That's why I've got to stay here. Because they will all be back. ...And as God is my witness, 'Terror' will return to her splendor and Redd will come begging for me to take him back... Back into the folds of my beloved and beauty old south.

(The sweeping sound of TARA's Theme from Gone With The Wind is heard as the lights FADE on a triumphant weeping HARLOT)

THE END