

The story is set in the 1880's, with its prologue taking place about twenty years earlier. A story about the rich and the poor, about the good in us, and the evil; it is, in short, a very basic nineteenth century melodrama.

In the PROLOGUE we first meet Gideon Bloodgood alone in his Wall Street bank. The country is in a financial panic (which was common in those days) and Bloodgood has locked the doors against the angry mob trying to withdraw their money from his bank. He plans to steal all their money and run away to a tropic isle taking with him his infant daughter, Alida, who is asleep in her bassinette.

While Bloodgood is stuffing suitcases with cash, his clerk, Badger, enters and sees all. He confronts Bloodgood and demands money in exchange for his silence. Bloodgood sees no way out but to bribe him.

To their amazement, a seafaring man enters carrying a large canvas bag. His name is Captain Fairweather, who found his way in through an unlocked rear door. He announces he wishes to deposit his life savings, \$100,000, to be kept safely in Bloodgood's bank until the captain dies. Then the money is to go to his infant daughter, Lucy. Bloodgood and Badger cannot believe how naive the captain is, but they play the game, take his money and Bloodgood issues him a receipt. Just then, three porters arrive to carry Bloodgood's bags to the pier; the noise of the crowd pounding on the door and shouting increases and Captain Fairweather finally realizes that is going on. But before he can get his money back from Bloodgood, he has a heart attack and dies.

Bloodgood tells Badger to get rid of the body. Badger agrees, but says he'll be right back to join Bloodgood in escaping. He now considers them partners. Bloodgood cleverly tells Badger they must not be seen together right now and to meet him in California in a month. Badger believes it and exits dragging the body. The scene ends with Bloodgood singing to Alida, his "motherless child", that they are now free to flee and all their troubles are over.

Act one begins twenty years later. The scene is Wall Street in front of the House of Bloodgood, Gideon's bigger and better bank; he has obviously become richer and nastier than ever. A group of visitors are commenting on New York: **TOURIST MADRIGAL**; Bloodgood enters and spies Mr. Puffy who is selling chestnuts from a cart. Bloodgood tells him in front of all those people that he is behind in his payment on a loan and, if Puffy does not pay, he will take his house and throw him out in the street. A messenger enters with a note from Alida, Bloodgood's now grown-up daughter, telling Bloodgood that death is preferable to a life in which she is denied acceptance by the rich old New York families. Bloodgood, who worships only two things in life, money and Alida, rushes off to comfort her.

Alida, who is not only beautiful, but obviously as conniving and shrewd as her father, sings of how she intends to find a blueblood bachelor who has, perhaps, fallen upon hard times: **HE'L COME TO ME, CRAWLING**.

After her father has arrived and tried to calm her down, the butler announces that Mark Livingstone (of the famous New York Livingstones) is at the door. Mark has really come to see Bloodgood to beg for more time to pay off a loan, a loan which was necessitated because he had invested unwisely and lost the family fortune. Unfortunately, he did the same thing with the money he borrowed from Bloodgood. As Bloodgood throws him out, Alida tells Mark not to despair. She realizes she has just met a possible answer to her needs.

In Mme. Victorine's Dress Shop, one of the seamstresses is Lucy Fairweather, Captain Fairweather's daughter; about the same age as Alida Bloodgood, just as pretty and much nicer. Lucy knows only that her father died when she was a baby and his body was found in the street. Lucy had had a beau, Mark Livingstone, and she adored him. But she hadn't seen him in a year and didn't know why. The other young seamstresses spot Mark on the other side of the street hesitating to come into the shop. They teased Lucy about him and she sings **IF I MAY**.

Mark timidly enters the store. Lucy wants to know why he stopped seeing her. He cannot bring himself to tell her that the reason was that he had lost his fortune and was ashamed. Mark asked to be invited to visit but Lucy says her Mother would forbid it. But if Mark just happens to be passing 219 Division Street when Lucy and her mother are living with Mr. and Mrs. Puffy, and if Mark just happens to remember knowing the Puffy's and decides to drop in, well then her mother couldn't complain now, could she?

Just then Alida enters the store. She has purchased a gown there has come for a fitting. Lucy, although she has never met Alida, has been working on the gown. There is an awkward scene between Mark, Alida and Lucy and then Mark leaves. Alida, alone with Lucy, tries to bribe Lucy into leaving the country. She does this without revealing her true purpose. But Lucy is too proud to accept charity. Alida then changes tactics. She examines the gown and declares the work Lucy has done is shoddy and that she will have Lucy fired. She leaves Lucy in tears.

As planned, Mark is about to drop in accidentally at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Puffy. Mark enters and Mrs. Fairweather faints. Mrs. Puffy opens a window to revive her, but she remains unconscious. Nobody seems to mind.

Lucy asks Mark if you would like to see her stereopticon views. They sit very close together so that both of them can hold the viewer. **AREN'T YOU WARM?** Mrs. Fairweather rouses herself during the second chorus and, true to her cantankerous nature, sings **ISN'T IT COLD?**

Mark tries to renew his friendship with Mrs. Fairweather but cannot bring himself to tell her of his current poverty and indebtedness to Bloodgood. He finally says he will do anything within his power to help her and Lucy should the need arise and Mrs Fairweather says "We'll see." Puffy, not knowing Marks predicament, wants them to celebrate the getting together of old friends, rich and poor: **WHERE CAN THE RICH AND POOR BE FRIENDS?** During this, Bloodgood enters with a couple of toughs and tells them they are all evicted because Puffy did not make his payment on time. Mrs. Fairweather turns to Mark Livingstone and says "Now! Advance your hand to save us all!" Mark rises and says "I can't!" and rushes out of the house. Bloodgood and his toughs start moving everything out of the house, taking inventory in a gleeful, sardonic counterpoint to a reprise of **WHERE CAN THE RICH AND POOR BE FRIENDS?**

A little later the same afternoon we are in Bloodgood's drawing room with Alida and Bloodgood. It turns out that Alida had orchestrated the eviction of the Puffy's and Fairweather's. She is sure that Mark will come crawling to her as planned.

Suddenly there is a great commotion and four men dressed as Mexicans enter pushing Edwards, the butler, before them. Three of the men are indeed Mexican, but their leader is not; it is Badger. Bloodgood tries to bluff his way out of the situation, but Badger, with the assistance of his colleagues, relates the whole sordid tale of the death and robbery of Captain Fairweather and reveals that Badger stole the receipt from the body of the Captain, thereby incriminating Bloodgood: **CALIFORNIA.** Bloodgood realizes that, without the heirs, Badger's power over him is weak. Badger does not know their whereabouts; whereupon Lucy Fairweather is announced. Instantly Badger knows who she is; Bloodgood does not. When Bloodgood does figure it out, he and Badger and the Mexicans exit leaving Lucy and Alida alone. Alida again offers help to Lucy if she leaves the country; she refuses. Mark Livingstone enters and there is a bitter confrontation between Lucy and Mark which Alida manipulates. Lucy leaves, planning never to speak to Mark again. Alida comforts Mark and mentally seduces him. They are both spurned lovers; they should comfort each other.

This leads to a sexless yet passionate commitment to help and comfort each other. Mark leaves and Alida is exultant. She has won. She begins the Finale of Act I with a song, **ALL MY SENSE ARE ALIVE.** Soon Bloodgood enters looking for Lucy. He is convinced that Badger will expose him and ruin him. Alida tells him to have Badger arrested. Bloodgood realizes this is a good idea because he can claim Badger has stolen the receipt from him: **ALL MY SENSES ARE ALIVE.** Alida, still thinking of her triumph, sings a counterpart, not really hearing him. Badger enters and is promptly arrested by the police and charged by Bloodgood with having "purloined" Captain Fairweather's receipt. Badger counters with the fact that he "left it well hid" and is willing to go to jail for the moment. He feels he is winning if not that he has won: **ALL MY SENSES ARE ALIVE,** while both Alida and Bloodgood sing counterpoint indicating they don't hear Badger or each other; but that each has won. So ends Act One.

Act Two opens in front of Delmonico's Restaurant; it is the Christmas Season. All the poor are there including the Puffy's, but not Lucy or her mother: **CHRISTMAS CAROL,** a piece which runs throughout the scene. A cab pulls up and out steps Mark Livingstone, dressed to the nines. Puffy greets him. Mark is embarrassed because inside Delmonico's is a big party celebrating his engagement to Alida. With great difficulty Mark asks about Lucy. Puffy won't

tell him where she is. Mark gives him his card asking Puffy to give it to her so she may reach him if she needs him. Mark asks Puffy to give it to her within the hour. He enters Delmonico's.

We learn from Mrs. Puffy the Fairweathers have taken shelter in a fearful place, Nineteen-and-a-half Cross Street, Five Points, front.

Badger enters and runs into Bloodgood, who has just arrived for the celebration. Badger tells him he is just out of jail and will go to the District Attorney in the morning to reveal all. Bloodgood pleads with him not to do it and agrees to meet Badger at his lodgings in an hour at Nineteen-and-a-half Cross Street, Five Points, rear.

Inside Delmonico's, while the party rages, Mark tells Alida that he has an opportunity to find Lucy if he follows Mr. Puffy within the hour. Bloodgood tells Alida he, too, must leave because he must do some business within the hour. Both leave separately. Alida is furious being deserted at her engagement party by both her betrothed and her father. To cover her anger in public she sings with guests: **LAUGH AFTER LAUGH.**

Meanwhile on Cross Street, Five Points, a very poor part of the city, Lucy enters looking very shabby and weary; no work was to be found. She and her mother are penniless. A well-dressed gentleman appears. Lucy decides to beg, but cannot do it. The gentleman moves on. She is forlorn: **ARMS FOR THE LOVE OF ME.**

Shortly after, at Nineteen-and-a-half Cross Street, two adjoining tenement rooms are occupied by Badger and the other by Mrs. Fairweather and Lucy. Badger is drinking cheap wine and the Fairweathers are both contemplating suicide without telling the other. Lucy, in order to get her mother out of the house, lies about a friend who might help them, but Lucy is afraid to go alone. They both leave together.

Meanwhile Bloodgood enters the building and finds Badger. He tries to deceive him, but when that doesn't work he pulls a pistol and threatens to shoot. Badger fakes acquiescence and pulls a brace of pistols from under his pillow and tells Bloodgood to return with \$50,000 this same night or face prosecution. Bloodgood leaves.

Lucy, having tricked her mother, returns to the tenement room and lights a charcoal fire with the intent of dying from the fumes. Her mother, who had the same thought, returns. After much soul-searching they agree to die together: **CLOSE YOUR EYES.**

The fumes penetrate the flimsy wall between their flat and that of Badger who begins to cough and choke. Aware that he may die, he begs forgiveness and pleads for one more change: **THERE MUST BE A BETTER WAY;** the Fairweathers reprise **CLOSE YOUR EYES.** They all pass out. Meanwhile Bloodgood returns. But Mark and Puffy also show up. They all enter the smoke-filled building, unaware of each other. Mark and Puffy break down the Fairweather's door. Bloodgood cannot find the receipt and, although tempted, fails to kill Badger because of the commotion next door. Mark rescues Badger, too. Badger babbles about the receipt saying it's safe; he has hidden it. Bloodgood overhears this but can do nothing for the moment. Mark offers to take them all to his cottage in Brooklyn Heights where they can recover and be safe, including Badger. They accept.

The following month, Mark confides to Alida his concerns about Lucy's health and seeks guidance. Alida tries to get him to think instead about their wedding which is only one week away.

Meanwhile, Bloodgood ponders what to do. He knows Badger has hidden the receipt in the building on Cross Street, but where? He has bought the building but still the receipt cannot be found. Finally, he decides to burn down the building on his daughter's wedding day. Whom would suspect him?

In Lucy's bedroom, in the cottage in Brooklyn Heights, Lucy has recovered from the charcoal poisoning but seems to have no will to live. When people speak to her she does not hear. Badger has become a true friend to both the Fairweathers and the Puffys, but this does not help Lucy. Badger has the old Captain's spy glass and keeps watch on Nineteen-and-a-half Cross Street across the river.

Although it is the morning of his wedding day, Mark comes to see Lucy. He talks to her and, even though she has responded to no one else, she responds to him. As they talk, she realizes he never loved Alida; she gradually regains her strength. When she realizes that Alida has lied to her time and again, she gets really strong! Mark admits the truth; that he was

financially ruined and in debt to Alida's father, afraid to admit his love for Lucy. Miraculously cured, Lucy joins Mark in singing **LOVE WINS AGAIN**.

Badger is so moved by their honesty and love that he tells them of the circumstances of Captain Fairweather's death and his own involvement in it. But he also tells them he has the proof of Bloodgood's theft.

Meanwhile, Puffy who has been using the telescope, spots a fire in lower Manhattan: it's the building at Nineteen-and-a-half Cross Street, Five Points, where Badger has hidden the receipts. Badger shouts "I'll save it or die in the flames!" They all rush after Badger, who, against all odds, pries up the floor board where he has hidden the receipt, dodges burning timbers and escapes with the valuable document.

At Bloodgood's mansion, immediately following, the wedding begins. Bloodgood arrives expressing his exasperation with the lateness of the groom, who soon enters, accompanied by Lucy, Mrs. Fairweather and the Puffys. Mark and Mrs. Fairweather reveal all to everyone present. Not to be outdone, Bloodgood calls for the police. Enter Badger together with his Mexican friends and the police. A fight ensues, mostly vocal, between Badger and Bloodgood which Badger wins. Bloodgood, beaten, sinks in despair on a couch. Alida is shaken by all that has been revealed; Mrs. Fairweather relents and asks only for restitution of her husband's fortune; Mark Livingstone asks Lucy for her hand in marriage. One more time love has triumphed: **LOVE WINS AGAIN**.