

Samuel French Acting Edition

We Were Dancing

A Comedy in Two Scenes from
Tonight at 8:30

by Noël Coward

|| SAMUEL FRENCH ||

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WE WERE DANCING

Produced by John C. Wilson at the National Theatre in New York City on November 27, 1936, as one of a series of nine one-act plays by Noel Coward, under the title of "TO-NIGHT AT EIGHT-THIRTY." The play was directed by the author and the cast was as follows:

KARL SANDYS	<i>Noel Coward.</i>
LOUISE CHARTERIS	<i>Gertrude Lawrence.</i>
IPPAGA	<i>Kenneth Carten.</i>
GEORGE DAVIES	<i>Edward Underdown.</i>
EVA BLAKE	<i>Moya Nugent.</i>
CLARA BETHEL	<i>Joyce Carey.</i>
HUBERT CHARTERIS	<i>Alan Webb.</i>
MAJOR BLAKE	<i>Anthony Pelissier.</i>

Two or three unnamed members of the Country Club.

SCENE I.—Verandah of the Country Club at Samolo. Evening.

SCENE II.—The same. Early morning.

TIME.—The Present.

WE WERE DANCING

Produced at the Phoenix Theatre, Charing Cross Road, London,
W.C.2, in January, 1936, with the following cast of Characters :

CHARACTERS

LOUISE CHARTERIS	.	.	.	.	<i>Gertrude Lawrence.</i>
HUBERT CHARTERIS	.	.	.	.	<i>Alan Webb.</i>
KARL SANDYS	.	.	.	.	<i>Noel Coward.</i>
CLARA BETHEL	.	.	.	.	<i>Alison Leggatt.</i>
GEORGE DAVIES	.	.	.	.	<i>Edward Underdown.</i>
EVA BLAKE	.	.	.	.	<i>Moya Nugent.</i>
MAJOR BLAKE	.	.	.	.	<i>Anthony Pelissier.</i>
IFFAGA	.	.	.	.	<i>Kenneth Carten.</i>

Two or three unnamed members of the Country Club.

SCENE I.—Verandah of the Country Club at Samolo. Evening.

SCENE II.—The same. Early morning.

TIME.—The Present.

WE WERE DANCING

The SCENE is the verandah of the Country Club at Samolo. On the R. is a room in which dances are held every Saturday night. For these occasions a dance band flies up from Pendarla by the new Imperial Inter-State Airways. The band arrives in the afternoon, plays all night and departs early on Sunday for Abbachi, where it repeats the same procedure for the inhabitants there, returning wearily on Mondays to the Grand Hotel, Pendarla, where, during the week, it plays for the Tourists.

When the CURTAIN rises the verandah is deserted. A full moon is shining over the sea and, far away, above the chatter and music of the dance room, there can occasionally be heard the wailing of native music rising up from the crowded streets by the harbour.

IPPAGA, a Samolan boy, crosses the verandah from L. to R. carrying a tray of drinks. He is yellowish brown in colour and, like most Samolans, comparatively tall. He wears a scarlet fez, a green, purple and mustard-coloured sarong, black patent leather shoes, silver earrings and three wooden bracelets. As he goes off on the R. the dance music stops and there is the sound of applause.

GEORGE DAVIES and EVA BLAKE come out of the dance room. GEORGE DAVIES is a hearty, nondescript young man dressed in the usual white mess jacket, black evening trousers and cummerbund. EVA, equally nondescript, is wearing a pink taffeta bunchy little dress, pink ribbon in her hair, and pink shoes and stockings which do not quite match. She carries a diamond evening bag and a blue chiffon handkerchief round her wrist. She also wears a necklace of seed pearls and a pendant.

The dance music starts again. EVA looks furtively over her shoulder.

GEORGE enters first and walks up to the balcony, then calls :

GEORGE. Eva ! Eva !

EVA (*entering*). It's all right, they're playing an encore.

GEORGE. Come on, then.

EVA. Where's the car ?

GEORGE. I parked it at the end of the garden, where the road turns off. My boy's looking after it.

EVA. He won't say anything, will he ?

GEORGE. Of course not. He's been with me for years.

EVA. Oh, George !

GEORGE (*impatiently*). It's all right—come on——

EVA. Where are we going ?

GEORGE. Mahica beach, nobody ever comes near it.

EVA. Oh, George !

GEORGE (*taking her hand*). Come on——

(*They go off up R. IPPAGA crosses from R. to L. with a tray on which are two empty glasses.*

The band is playing a waltz and the stage is empty for a moment. LOUISE CHARTERIS and KARL SANDYS come dancing in from the R. They are both in the thirties, soignée and well-dressed, and they dance together as though they had never been apart. They waltz three times round the stage, finishing in the centre with a prolonged kiss. The music ends, there is the sound of applause. Two WOMEN and a MAN come in. They stop short on observing LOUISE and KARL. They whisper together for a moment and then go back into the dance room. LOUISE and KARL remain clasped in each other's arms oblivious of everything.

The music starts again.

HUBERT CHARTERIS and CLARA BETHEL come out of the dance room. CLARA is a nice-looking grey-haired woman in the forties. HUBERT, her brother, is about the same age. He has dignity and reserve and looks