

ACT IV. SCENE 1

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haven't the slightest interest? They've quarrelled about me, but is that a reason why I should undress myself? Let me say again, I've no desire whatever to prove that I am Ilam Carve.

ALCAR. But surely to oblige us immensely, Mr. X, you will consent to give just one extra performance of an operation which, in fact, you accomplish three hundred and sixty-five times every year without any disastrous results.

CARVE. I don't look at it like that. Already my fellow-citizens, expressing their conviction that I was a great artist, have buried me in Westminster Abbey — not *because* I was a great artist, but because I left a couple of hundred thousand pounds for a public object. And now my fellow-citizens, here assembled, want me to convince them that I am a great artist by taking my collar off. I won't do it. I simply will not do it. It's too English. If any person wishes to be convinced that I'm an artist and not a mountebank, let him look at my work (*pointing vaguely to a picture*), because that's all the proof that I mean to offer. If he is blind or shortsighted I regret it, but my neck isn't going to help him.

TEXEL. Brilliant! Then we shall have the trial after all.