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BRIDE AND GROOM

A FARCE IN THREE ACTS

BY

WALTER BEN HARE

DICK & FITZGERALD

PUBLISHERS

18 Ann Street, New York

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PICKLES AND TICKLES. 1 Act; 20 minutes.....	6
HARVEST STORM. 1 Act; 40 minutes.....	10
CASE OF HERR BAR ROOMSKI. Mock Trial; 2 hours ...	28
DARKEY BREACH OF PROMISE CASE. Mock Trial.	22
GREAT LIBEL CASE. Mock Trial; 1 Scene; 2 hours.....	21
RIDING THE GOAT. Burlesque Initiation; 1 Scene; 1½ hours	24

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BRIDE AND GROOM

A Farce in Three Acts

By WALTER BEN HARE

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BRIDE AND GROOM.

CHARACTERS.

DR. RAY BANCROFT.....*The groom, a young M.D.*
JUDGE ANDY DUSENBERRY.....*A jolly old bachelor*
JERRY CRONIN.....*A young Irish butler*
SAD-EYED WALLACE.....*Wanted by the police*
OFFICER HENN.....*Laying for Wallace*
CHLOE TOLLERTON.....*The bride, with a mind of her own*
MISS EUDORA DODGE.....*A wealthy maiden lady*
KATHLEEN CRONIN.....*A young wife*
EMMALINE DIGGS.....*Aged 10, full of mischief*
MAGGIE.....*The doctor's hired girl*

TIME.—*The present.*

LOCALITY. *Springfield, Mo.*

TIME OF PLAYING.—*A full evening.*

SYNOPSIS.

ACT. I.—Reception-room adjoining RAY BANCROFT'S office. A morning in May. Patients cured while they wait. MAGGIE finds the skeleton in the closet. JERRY, hunting for a job, is made a patient in spite of himself. MAGGIE'S disappointment. "I was hopin' you'd get a chance to cut him up!" AUNT EUDORA and one of her thirty-seven pugs. The jolly old bachelor. "I hope the cat chews him to sausage-meat, then there'll be only thirty-six." Little EMMALINE DIGGS, aged 10, tries to get even with her sister's beau. Officer HENN is laying for a bad man from Joplin. CHLOE insists on seeing the patients. "Hire him enough patients to start an asylum." A bunch of wonderful cures. Off for the wedding!

played as broadly as desired. It has been very successfully done as a "Sis Hopkins" soubrette with striped stockings, wired pigtails, etc.

EMMALINE.—Kid soubrette. Aged 10. May be played by young miss or by small lady in short skirts. Play loudly and confidently. Ordinary street clothes of a child of 10, suitable to the month of May. Tam hat or sunbonnet. Imitate a child's voice and a child's nervous giggle. Very lively, jumping from one foot to another, chewing gum, etc.

INCIDENTAL PROPERTIES.

ACT. I.—Hand-brush, dust-pan, feather-duster, doctor's thermometer, long butcher's knife, large umbrella and carpet bag (or old-fashioned grip) for MAGGIE. Parasol, and large bouquet of long-stemmed roses for CHOLE. Policeman's helmet, club and dark lantern for HENN. Suitcase full of shirts, socks, etc., for JERRY. Fancy basket containing pug dog (live or imitation). Train whistle off stage at R. Crutches and skeleton in c. cupboard.

(NOTE.—If a genuine skeleton is not obtainable, one can be readily imitated by painting the outlines in white on black muslin or some similar material. As the audience obtains but a momentary view of the skeleton, if neither of the above arrangements can be carried out, the skeleton may be entirely omitted if the cupboard is placed in either R. or L. up corner of stage so that the door opening towards the audience, the interior is consequently visible to MAGGIE only).

ACT II.—Towel and work basket for MAGGIE. Several pots of flowering plants for JERRY. Red socks and knitting needles for AUNT EUDORA. Necklace in leather case, and glass of water for ANDY. The baby (a doll in long dresses). Imitator for baby's crying. Writing material on table. Tablet and pencil.

ACT. III.—Flash-lights for JERRY, the DOCTOR and WALLACE. Revolver and handcuffs for HENN. Flash-light and stuffed pillow for ANDY. Dinner bell for MAGGIE.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

As seen by a performer on the stage facing the audience, R. means right-hand; L., left-hand; c., center of stage; D. L., door at left; D. R., door at right. UP means toward back of stage; DOWN, toward footlights.

BRIDE AND GROOM.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*Reception-room of RAY BANCROFT. Neat interior scene, with door R., leading to street and door L., leading to the office. Large window at back C., extending nearly to floor. This window must be arranged for characters to climb in and out easily. Curtains at window. Large cupboard or wardrobe C. near the window. A similar cupboard down R. Neat carpet down on stage and pictures on the walls. One picture, on wall L. must be easily accessible as it must be taken down by WALLACE. This picture is simply a paper lithograph in a wooden frame and is also used by AUNT EUDORA to be broken over ANDY'S head. Easy chair L. C. Large table C. Sofa R. Seven other chairs around stage. Fire-place, desk, clock, palms, book-case and other non-essential furniture used to dress the stage, but see that stage is not crowded.*

Curtain rises to bright music played forte. DISCOVERED MAGGIE C. kneeling and sweeping, with a hand-brush, small pieces of paper in a dust-pan. Is singing loudly, but very much out of tune. MAGGIE (singing).

“Call me up some rainy afternoon,
Call me up some rainy afternoon,
Come around to-morrow night,
We can then turn down the light——”

[Rises, places brush and pan on table C. Takes duster from table. Dusts furniture, etc., as she sings. Goes to wardrobe C. rear, dusts it. Opens door displaying skeleton hanging against black background. (See NOTE under incidental properties, page 6. She gives a loud shriek and throws apron over her head)

MAGGIE. Oh, Doctor, Doctor! Help, murder, help! Police, fire, murder!

ENTER D. L. DOCTOR RAY BANCROFT. *Wears smoking-jacket.*

DOCTOR BANCROFT. For goodness' sake, Maggie, what's happened?

MAGGIE (*seated R., apron over head, rocking body back and forth and moaning*). Oh, doctor, doctor, to think it's come to this. Why did I ever leave my home in—(*Insert name of small town*) to come to the city to work for a doctor. Oh, take it away, take it away!

DOCTOR. Take what away? What's the matter with you, Maggie?

MAGGIE. The dead man. The corpse that's in the cupboard, sir. Oh, take it away.

DOCTOR. Corpse in the cupboard? Why, that's only a skeleton. Tom Brice sent it to me this morning.

MAGGIE. Oh, take it away. Take it back and bury it decently.

DOCTOR. Nonsense. See, it can't harm you. (*Exposes it*) It's only bones. Surely you're not afraid of a skeleton, are you?

MAGGIE (*peeking from apron*). Is that all it is, sir, just a skellington?

DOCTOR. Certainly. You're not afraid of a little thing like that, are you.

MAGGIE (*approaching him timidly*). Oh, no, doctor, I ain't afraid of no bones. Are you sure it's only a skellington, doctor?

DOCTOR. Of course. See for yourself. Don't you know what a skeleton is?

MAGGIE. Yes, sir. It's some bones with the people all scraped off. I ain't afraid of it, but it makes me nervous like. Put it away, and lock the door.

DOCTOR. Very well. Now hurry and clean up. I wouldn't want a patient to come in and find the room like this.

[EXIT D. L.]

MAGGIE. I'm going to hunt me another place. I can stand toads and things in pickle jars, but I ain't going to put up with no skellington. It ain't healthy. I ain't a goin' to have that thing a kickin' around in that cupboard as long as I'm in the house. (*DOWN L. Loud knock heard D. R.*) Heavens and earth, what's that! (*Throws apron over head*) Take it away, take it away. It's trying to git out off the cupboard. Oh!

DOCTOR (*inside L.*). Maggie, answer the door.

MAGGIE. Yes, sir. (*Goes to D. R. Just as she is about to open it, there is another loud knock. MAGGIE is very frightened. Opens the door a little and peeks out through the crevice*) What do you want?

JERRY (*outside R.*). I want to see the doctor.

MAGGIE. The doctor?

JERRY. Yes, mum; is he in?

MAGGIE. I'll see if he's in or not. Jest wait a minute.

DOCTOR (*appears D. L.*). What 's it, Maggie?

MAGGIE (*c.*). There's a man out there.

DOCTOR. What does he want?

MAGGIE. Wants to see you

DOCTOR. What kind of a looking man is he?

MAGGIE. Oh, jest a plain ordinary man, with arms and feet and everything.

DOCTOR. A patient! Wait till I get my operating coat on. Don't let him get away. Show him in and tell him to sit down. Tell him I'm busy with seven or eight other patients.

[EXIT D. L.]

MAGGIE (*opening D. R.*). The doctor says for you to come in and set.

ENTER D. R. JERRY CRONIN. *Cap in hands.*

JERRY. Thank you kindly, mum. (*Stands up c. bashfully twisting cap*)

MAGGIE (*hands him a chair*). He's busy with nineteen or twenty other patients just now. So you can set.

JERRY (*sits on edge of chair*). I can wait, mum.

MAGGIE (*making "eyes" at him*). Are you ailin' very bad?

JERRY. Am I what?

MAGGIE. Ailin'. You know—with the scarlet fever or hydrophobia or cramps, or some miseries like them. (*Smiles at him*)

JERRY. No, I'm all right.

MAGGIE. DG'll be here in a minute. He ain't got as many patients as he sets on. Fact is, he ain't got nary a patient. You'll be the first one we've had in over two weeks. I hope you got something real interesting that's the matter with you. The doc. kin cut off ~~sets~~ just lovely.

ENTER D. L. DOCTOR. *Wears a white jacket, and comes c.*

DOCTOR. Ah, good morning. (*JERRY meets him c.*) Pleasant

morning, isn't it? (*Shakes hands with him*). Your hands are hot. You must have a fever. Maggie!

MAGGIE. Yes, sir.

DOCTOR. Bring my medical thermometer.

MAGGIE. Your whatometer, sir?

DOCTOR. The little glass tube out of my case. Hurry up. This is very important.

JERRY. But, sor, I—

DOCTOR. Hurry, girl! Do you want the man to die on my hands?

MAGGIE. Oh, laws, no sir! I'm hurrying. [EXIT D. L. *running*.

DOCTOR. Now let me feel your pulse. (*Takes his wrist, looks at watch*)

JERRY. Me pulse, is it?

DOCTOR (*counting seconds*). 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Normal. Your pulse is quite normal.

JERRY. Is it catching, doctor? I didn't know I had it.

ENTER D. L. MAGGIE, *running, carrying thermometer*.

MAGGIE (*waving thermometer*). Is this the thing you want, doc?

DOCTOR (*retaining hold of JERRY*). Yes, that's it. Don't be nervous, sir.

JERRY. But, doctor—

DOCTOR. Put it in your mouth.

JERRY. In me mouth, is it?

MAGGIE (*bending over and watching them breathlessly*). And be sure y' don't bite it off. (*With the bulb of the thermometer in his mouth, JERRY looks helplessly around. DOCTOR stands with watch in hands counting seconds*)

DOCTOR. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. (*Looks at bulb*) Normal. Quite normal. But you are somewhat excited. How's your appendix?

JERRY. Me pen-dix. Sure, I didn't know I had a pendix.

DOCTOR (*bending over and listening at his heart*). I hear it beat. It's not quite regular. (*Stands back and looks at him*) Man, man, you're in an awful way. I suspected it from the first. You are in the last stages of appendicitis. I'll have to operate.

JERRY. Oh, my; oh, my!

MAGGIE. Is it ketchin', sir?

DOCTOR. Hurry, Maggie, and get the operating table ready. The knives are all sharp. I can run this job through in a hurry.

JERRY. Oh me, oh my, it's a dead man I am.

MAGGIE. Is he took bad, doctor?

DOCTOR (*impatiently*). Don't stand there jabbering. Run, I tell you. Or I'll have a dead man on my hands.

MAGGIE. Yes, sir. (*Runs out with funny steps, D. L.*)

DOCTOR (*forcing JERRY into easy chair, L. C.*). Now you just sit down and keep cool. Don't lose your nerve. And above all things, don't get excited.

JERRY (*struggling*). Let me out of this. Oh, sure I'm a dead man, and me poor wife'll be a widow, so she will.

DOCTOR (*forcing him to keep still*). Quiet, now, quiet. Everything depends on your being quiet.

JERRY (*throws him off*). I'll not be quiet. (*Rises*) You're making a big mistake, doctor. I'm not a sick man.

DOCTOR. There, there, don't be afraid, don't be afraid. It won't hurt you very much. I'll use chloroform.

JERRY. You'll use nothing at all, at all. It's all a mistake, doctor. I'm not sick. I came to see you on another matter entirely.

DOCTOR (*astounded*). Not sick?

JERRY. Niver a bit. I'm as strong as a Kilkenny cat on a back fence.

DOCTOR. Aren't you a patient? Don't you need medical attention?

JERRY. No, sor. Not at all, sor. That's not what I came to see you about at all.

DOCTOR. And you don't want an operation?

JERRY (*emphatically*). I do not, sor.

DOCTOR. Then what *can* I do you for? I mean, what can I do for you?

ENTER D. L. MAGGIE, *with long knife.*

MAGGIE. Table's all ready, doc. And I brung the butcher knife.

DOCTOR. Never mind, Maggie. Put it away again. This gentleman did not call for professional treatment.

MAGGIE. Ain't he a patient, sir?

DOCTOR. No. That will do, Maggie.

MAGGIE (*goes to D. L.*). And I was hoping you'd get a chance to cut him up. I'm awfully disappointed. [EXIT D. L.]

JERRY (*R.*). I'm after hunting for a job, sor.

DOCTOR. Hunting for a job. I'm sorry, my good man, but I have nothing for you.

JERRY (*pleadingly*). I'd work faithful, sor. I've been widout a job fer ten wakes now, sor. I walked all the way from Joplin. I had to lave the wife and baby there, sor. I thought I'd be after gettin' something to do here in Springfield. I could tind the office for you, sor. And I'm a good chauffeur.

DOCTOR (*c.*). To tell the truth, I *would* like to have a good office man. It would lend dignity to the place. But I haven't been here very long, and haven't a very large practice. I've only been a doctor for six months and, to speak frankly, I've only had *one* patient in that time, my aunt Eudora.

JERRY (*hopefully*). Maybe I could be a patient, sor. I'd be willing to try, and I'd work faithful.

DOCTOR (*laughing*). I can't afford to hire patients, and I'm afraid I can't afford to hire an office man. But, I'd like to help you—

JERRY. Yis, sor. Thank ye kindly. (*Turns away*) Maybe I'll be after getting a job at the shops.

ENTER D. R. AUNT EUDORA, *carrying basket containing pug.*

AUNT E. (*not seeing JERRY, coming c. and speaking to DOCTOR who is now L. c.*). Good morning, Raymond. I brought little Theodore over for you to look at. (*Exhibits pug*) He hasn't been quite himself for the past few days. (*Sees JERRY*) Oh, I beg your pardon. I didn't know you were busy.

DOCTOR (*L.*). That's all right, Aunt Eudora. This young man is looking for employment.

AUNT E. For employment? (*To JERRY*) Can you take care of a garden? (*DOCTOR goes UP, then crosses to R.*)

JERRY (*coming to R. c.*). Yis, mum. I used to garden in the old country.

AUNT E. And have you any references?

JERRY. Oh, yis mum. I'm a good worker, mum. But I just got laid off. I've had experience as a gardner and a chauffeur.

AUNT E. Oh, I've always wanted to have a nice chauffeur. Are you sure you're a good chauffeur.

JERRY. Yis, mum. I've chauffed for three years, in all the best families. I can buttle, too.

AUNT E. Buttle? (*DOCTOR comes down R.*)

JERRY. Yis, mum. Wait on the table, I mane. And serve the meat and wine.

AUNT E. Oh, I've always wanted to have a butler.

DOCTOR. I think he'd make you a good man, Auntie.

AUNT E. (L.). Are you fond of pugs?

JERRY (C.). Pugs? I niver ate any.

AUNT E. Pug dogs. Darling little snub-nosed fellows with crinkly tails. I have thirty-four. You'd have to take care of them, and give each one a bath every day. And they have to have an airing in the grove each afternoon.

JERRY. Not me! Not me!

AUNT E. What!

DOCTOR (R.). He says he's awfully fond of pugs. He simply adores them. Don't you. (*Kicks him, not seen by AUNT EUDORA*)

JERRY. Ouch! Oh, yes indade, sor. Indade I do.

AUNT E. What is your name?

JERRY. Jerry, mum, Jerry Cronin, at yer service, mum.

AUNT E. Do you drink, Jerry?

JERRY (*raises left hand and speaks piously, rolling eyes*). Oh, niver, mum.

AUNT E. Use tobacco?

JERRY. Niver, mum.

AUNT E. Swear?

JERRY. Niver, mum.

AUNT E. Go to church?

JERRY. Niver, mum.

DOCTOR (*catches him, pushes him to R. and comes to C.*). Oh, yes, he does, Auntie. Indeed, he does. He goes to church every night and four times on Sunday. And he's the vice-president of the Epworth League. Ain't you, Jerry? (*Winks at him*)

JERRY. Yis, sor; and I sing in the choir, too.

AUNT E. I think I'll engage you.

JERRY. Thank you, mum.

AUNT E. You may start to work at once.

JERRY. Thank ye, mum. The saints be praised. I'll be writin' to me family this afternoon. It's crazy they'll be.

AUNT E. Your family? You're not a married man, are you, Jerry?

DOCTOR. Of course he isn't. He means his father and mother. Why, he's a mere boy.

JERRY. But, sor—

DOCTOR. Why, he never even thought of getting married, did you, Jerry?

JERRY (*rattled*). Yes, mum. I mean, sor. I mean, no sor.

AUNT E. (*relieved*). Well, I'm glad of that. I never could tolerate a married man. If there's any bossing to be done, I can do it myself. Raymond, where is Maggie?

DOCTOR. I think she's making her toilette in the kitchen.

AUNT E. Jerry, I think I'll let you take little Theodore to her.

JERRY (*looking around*). Little Theodore, mum?

AUNT E. Certainly.

JERRY. And where is little Theodore, mum?

AUNT E. (*handing him the basket which he takes gingerly*). Right here. (*Speaks to dog*) Does mummsy's 'ittle darling snookums have to come and see nass'y old doctor?

JERRY. Begorra, it's a dog.

AUNT E. (*complacently*). Take him in to Maggie. Tell her to treat him tenderly, put him to bed, and then broil him a nice little pork-chop for his lunch.

JERRY. Yis, mum. (*Crosses to D. L. muttering*) Sure, I know I'm going to fall in love with this job. (*Turns to her*) Does he bite, mum?

AUNT E. Oh, no; he's far too languid to bite. You won't have any trouble at all. He's the dearest little thing. Treat him tenderly.

JERRY (D. L.). Yis, mum; I'll treat him tinderly. (*Makes grimace at audience*) I'll treat him tinderly. [EXIT D. L.]

DOCTOR. I think you've got a good man, Aunt Eudora.

AUNT E. And isn't he handsome? He has the cutest nose. I've always wanted to have a handsome butler, and now I've got him.

DOCTOR. I wonder if you wouldn't lend him to me, once in a while?

AUNT E. Why, of course, I will. He can attend to the office for you. I'm so glad he is fond of Theodore, and that he isn't married. I simply would not tolerate a married man.

ENTER D. L. ANDY DUSENBERRY.

ANDY. Hello, Ray, my boy. And Miss Eudora, this is an unexpected pleasure. And you're looking so well, too. I declare you get younger and prettier every day, Eudora.

AUNT E. (*pleased*). Oh, Mr. Dusenberry.

ANDY. How are the dogs?

AUNT E. Very well, thank you. All but Theodore. He's

a little indisposed. And Solomon was scratched by a horrid cat yesterday.

ANDY. Too bad. Poor little Solomon. Let me see—he's the one that tried to eat a hole in the leg of my trousers last Sunday, ain't he?

AUNT E. Yes, he's the one. Little Solomon is so playful.

ANDY (*turns to DOCTOR R.*). Well, boy, I've got some good news for you. A little surprise. You'll never guess who's coming down to spend the day with her old uncle.

DOCTOR (*delighted*). Not Chloe?

ANDY. I thought that would make you sit up and take notice.

DOCTOR. Chloe coming here to-day?

ANDY. You bet. I just got a telegram from her. She says she's simply dying to see her uncle Andy but (*To AUNT EUDORA*) we know who she's simply dying to see, don't we?

DOCTOR. Why, I just got a letter from her this morning. She never said a word about coming to-day.

ANDY. I suppose it just popped into her head and she decided to come. She wants to look over her future home. Oh, you young lovers! I know how it is myself.

DOCTOR. You?

AUNT E. Andy Dusenberry, I'm surprised at you. A man of your age!

ANDY. Merely by hearsay. That's how I know. Merely by hearsay.

DOCTOR. I'll have to get Maggie to straighten up the house, and I'll borrow Jerry to look after the grounds a little. Chloe coming to-day! Hurray! I haven't seen her since last Sunday. And she's coming here. What time'll she be in? I'll have to go over to the station to meet her. Excuse me, Auntie, I have to get ready to meet Chloe. [EXIT *quickly*, D. L.]

ANDY (*c., looking after him*). Well, what do you think of that?

AUNT E. He's just like every other man. The moment a pretty girl comes to town, he loses every bit of sense he ever had, if he ever had any at all. Men are all alike.

ANDY. Now, Miss Eudora, you musn't be too hard on us young fellows, you know. That's just the way I felt about you fifteen years ago.

AUNT E. Indeed? I don't see you getting very excited at the mention of my name nowadays.

ANDY. It's all your own fault. We'd have been married long ago, if we could ever agree about a single thing.

AUNT E. I always agree, Andy Dusenberry, but you don't. It's a man's nature to be stubborn, and men are men all the world over.

ANDY. There you go picking on the men. You won't let us fellows have any show at all.

AUNT E. Fellows? Fellows? At your age.

ANDY. Oh, I ain't so old. (*Struts to R., hands in arms of vest*) I'm still in the ring, I'm still in the ring.

AUNT E. (*impatently*). You're eight years older than me, Andy Dusenberry, and you know it.

ANDY. Yes, I know, but some people get older faster than other people.

AUNT E. (*ominously*). Meaning me, I suppose?

ANDY. You? How could you think so? You are just as young and charming as you were when you were seventeen. Do you remember your birthday party that night? The moonlight and us in the garden?

AUNT E. Moonlight fiddlesticks! It was raining pitchforks.

ANDY. Not at all. I remember it perfectly. You pinned a rose on my coat out in the garden.

AUNT E. The idea! I never was such a fool. You've got me mixed up with some other girl. I never had a seventeenth birthday, I mean I never had a party.

ANDY. Yes, you did, too. I know, because I was there.

AUNT E. Nothing of the sort. I guess I know whether I had a party or not.

ANDY. Well, don't let's argue about it.

AUNT E. I'm not arguing. I'm simply stating plain facts.

ANDY. Plain facts, humph! It's just like Uncle Jake Dobbins says, "women always want to have their own way."

AUNT E. (*impatently*). Don't talk to me about Uncle Jake Dobbins. He's so old he's childish. And what does he know about women anyway?

ANDY. He ought to know about them. He's been married three times and is going on ninety.

AUNT E. Going on ninety? He's not either. He can't be a day older than eighty-seven.

ANDY. He's my own uncle, Eudora Dodge, and I guess I know how old he is. He'll be ninety in March.

AUNT E. If he will that would make him older than Grandma Gibbons, and I know she's older than he is.

ANDY. There you go, there you go. (*Pause*) Looks like rain, don't it?

AUNT E. (*angrily*). I don't care what it looks like. I never saw such a contrary man in all my born days. If I said the sun was made out of purple calico, you'd say it wasn't so.

ANDY (*approaches her*). Now, Eudora—

AUNT E. Don't you Eudora me. I'm getting tired of having you make me out a falsifier all the time. You act as if I didn't know anything.

ANDY. No, I don't Eudora.

AUNT E. That's right, contradict me. You think that just because your niece Chloe Tollerton is going to marry my nephew, the doctor, that you can boss me. Now, once and for all, I won't be bossed.

ANDY. But I only said—

AUNT E. That'll do. I know what you said, and what you're going to say. You haven't a sympathetic nature. I can tell that just by the way you treat my thirty-seven little pets.

ANDY. Well, I can't help it if I don't like pugs, can I?

AUNT E. It just shows how hard-hearted you are.

ANDY (*concoilingly*). Now, don't let's quarrel.

AUNT E. Quarrel? Mr. Dusenberry, I never quarrel. Why, the very idea!

ENTER D. L. DOCTOR, *followed by* JERRY.

DOCTOR. I've just got time to make the train. Auntie, you'd better run. Your dog got away, and he's out in the back of the yard fighting with Thompson's cats. (*Barking and cat-cries heard off L.*)

AUNT E. Oh, my poor little Theodore! Andy, save him, save him! (*Clutches ANDY'S arm*)

ANDY. I wouldn't do it for anybody but you, Eudora. (*Noise continues*)

AUNT E. (*rushes to D. L.*). Oh, hear them! He'll be killed, and he's such a delicate little doggie. [EXIT D. L.]

ANDY (D. L.). I hope the cat chews him into sausage meat. Then there'd be only thirty-six. [EXIT L.]

ENTER JERRY D. C.

JERRY. Beg pardon, sor, but you made a mistake when you told the old lady that I wasn't married. I am married, sor, and I'm a happy father of a fine young lad who is six months old.

DOCTOR. Never breathe a word of it to Aunt Eudora. She doesn't believe in married men.

JERRY. But, sor—

DOCTOR. I've got to catch that train. [EXIT *running* D. R.]

ENTER D. L. AUNT EUDORA, *with dog and* ANDY.

AUNT E. Andy Dusenberry, you're a hero, so you are. I'm sorry I ever quarrelled with you. It's just my nasty disposition.

ANDY. No, it ain't, Eudora, it's all my fault.

AUNT E. Not at all. It's my fault. I'm so set in my ways.

ANDY. Why, no you ain't. You ain't at all.

AUNT E. I am. I am, too, I tell you. I know I am.

ANDY. Well, have it your own way.

AUNT E. But sometimes you do aggravate me so.

ANDY. It can't be helped, I guess.

AUNT E. Come, Andy, you carry Theodore and we'll walk down to the station and welcome Chloe to her future home.

ANDY. Yes, Eudora, I'm coming. [EXEUNT D. R.]

JERRY. Ho, ho, so that's the way the wind blows, is it? And the two of 'em old enough to be a grandpa and grandma this blessed minute.

ENTER D. L. MAGGIE.

MAGGIE. Say, are you going to work here?

JERRY. I'm going to work for the old lady. Is this her house?

MAGGIE. It uster was, but it hain't now. She give it to the doctor for a wedding present.

JERRY. And is he going to get married?

MAGGIE. Sure he is. He's going to marry Mr. Dusenberry's niece. Miss Chloe Tollerton from Joplin. My, she's a reg'lar lalla-paloosa, she is. She's jest got money to burn, and is an orphan and kin do jest as she pleases. It's her what's coming to visit us to-day.

JERRY (*seated L.*). And is the old lady rich?

MAGGIE (*R.*). You bet she is. But the doc. ain't got a cent. And we don't have a patient from Monday to Sunday. His aunt has to pay all the bills, but she's hoping to make him a real doctor in time. You see, folks don't trust these here new doctors.

ENTER D. R. EMMALINE DIGGS, *and comes 'down c.*

EMMALINE. Say, I want to see the doctor.

JERRY. The doctor, is it?

EMMA. Sure. Are you him?

MAGGIE. What you want to see him for? Who's sick?

EMMA. Ain't nobody sick yet. That's what I want to see him for. I want to make somebody sick. (*To JERRY*) Are you him.

JERRY. I'm a him all right, all right.

EMMA. But are you the doctor, the chief hink, the big bone-setter, the pill peddler?

JERRY (*laughs*). Sure, I'm the doctor. Ain't I, Maggie?

MAGGIE (*laughing*). Sure, you are.

JERRY. Then bring me me white coat.

MAGGIE. Yes, sir.

[EXIT *laughing* D. L.

EMMA. (*approaching* JERRY). Well, I want a nickle's worth of quinine?

JERRY. And what for do you want it?

EMMA. Promise you won't tell.

JERRY. Niver a word.

ENTER D. L. MAGGIE, *with white coat.*

MAGGIE. Here's your coat, doc. (*JERRY puts it on, and sits L.*)

EMMA. I want the quinine because I want to get even with my sister's beau. He's a tight-wad, and no tight-wad ever makes a home run with me. See?

MAGGIE. And how are you going to get even with him?

EMMA. I'm going to get some quinine, and I'm going to mix it with my sister's face powder. And when he kisses her, he'll see!

JERRY (*laughs*). Sure, it's a smart kid, you are.

MAGGIE. And what's your name?

EMMA. My name's Emmaline Diggs. Sister's name is Gertie, and her beau's name is Huggins. Ain't that a fierce name—Huggins? He was over to our house last night and stayed and stayed and stayed. He wouldn't even give me a nickel. Paw got mad and woke us all up by yelling at him. Paw yelled down stairs, "Do you all know what time it is?" And then I heard Huggins say (*Imitate lover's pleading*) "Just one, dear, just one!"

JERRY. And then what did you hear?

EMMA. (*laughs*). I heard the funniest sound, jest like our old cow a-drawing her foot out of soft mud. (*Imitates kiss*) Like that!

MAGGIE (*laughs*). You're the beatingest child I ever *did* see.

JERRY. I'm afraid we ain't got no quinine to-day. We're all out. I sold the last just this morning.

ENTER D. R. OFFICER HENN *and comes* C. R.

MAGGIE. Mercy on us, look what the cat brought in.

HENN (C.). I want to see the doctor.

EMMA. (L. C.). There he is. Take a good look. He's worth it.

JERRY (L. *rises*). And what can I do for you, sor?

HENN. Are you the doctor?

EMMA. Sure, he's the doctor. I'm one of his patients.

HENN. I'm looking for a tramp. He's somewhere in this neighborhood. I wondered if you'd seen anything of him.

JERRY (*nervously*). Have I seen him? Sure, I don't think I have at all, at all.

MAGGIE. What's he done?

HENN. He got mixed up in a deal over in Joplin.

JERRY *and* MAGGIE. Joplin!

HENN. Yes, Joplin. He cracked a man over the head, stole his watch and money, and the last heard of him, he was headed this way, walking toward Springfield.

MAGGIE. Oh, my. And all my good clothes laying right out in my room.

EMMA. I'm going over to the drug-store and get my quinine. (*Goes to D. R., turns*) Cop, cop, you surely are a sight,
Loaf all day and sleep at night. Ya, ya
ya! [EXIT *running* D. R.

HENN. My, would you listen to that. She's a fresh kid all right.

MAGGIE (L.). Say, is that tramp you're looking for an Irishman?

HENN. I don't know, but he's a bad man. He's wanted in Joplin for robbery and assault and battery, in Kansas City for bigamy, in St. Louis for felony and in St. Jo. for highway robbery.

MAGGIE. And you say he's in this neighborhood.

HENN. Yes, one of the men saw him early this morning. Let's see, this is the Dodge place, ain't it?

JERRY. It is, sor.

HENN. And the old lady is your aunt, isn't she?

JERRY. No, sor. I mane, yes, sor. She's me aunt on me mother's side.

HENN. How long have you been a doctor here?

JERRY. Since this morning.

HENN. This morning? Then you just moved in?

JERRY. No, sor. That was a mistake, sor. I've been here about six months, sor. But I just started to practice this mornin', sor.

HENN. Well, if you see anything of a tramp from Joplin you want to telephone to police headquarters. He's a dangerous man. (*Turns to MAGGIE*) He wouldn't stop at murder or nothin'. Good day. [EXIT D. R.]

JERRY. Sure, and he thought I was the doctor.

MAGGIE. Say, you came from Joplin, didn't you?

JERRY. Sure, I came from Joplin.

MAGGIE (*trembling*). And you w-w-walked?

JERRY. Yis, I walked.

MAGGIE. Oh, mister, please don't take my good clothes. And I ain't got a cent, nor neither has the doctor. If you want the furniture, take it, and take the skellington in the cupboard, but for goodness' sakes go away.

JERRY (*starts toward her*). But I ain't—

MAGGIE (*running around table, very frightened*). He said you wouldn't stop at murder. Help, help, fire, murder, police!

[EXIT *running* D. L.]

JERRY. Here, stop a bit. I ain't the man at all, at all.

[EXIT D. L.]

ENTER D. R. DOCTOR, *escorting* CHLOE TOLLERTON, *followed by* AUNT EUDORA *and* ANDY, *carrying dog*.

DOCTOR. Welcome, Chloe, welcome to your future home.

CHLOE. Oh, isn't it dear. (*Looks around*) What a lovely old place. Simply ideal for a doctor's office. And I suppose that passageway (*Points to L.*) leads to the house?

DOCTOR. That leads to my office and a porch runs from the office to the house.

CHLOE (*turns to AUNT EUDORA who is down L. c.*). Oh, Miss Dodge, how can I ever thank you for such a lovely home.

AUNT E. Don't thank me, honey. I'm a poor old maid with

more money than I can ever use myself, so I want to make you and my nephew happy. My house is right across the street.

CHLOE (*goes to her and kisses her*). I think you're a darling. Isn't she, Uncle Andy?

ANDY. My opinion exactly.

AUNT E. But come, dear, I want you to see the house. This is only the reception-room to the doctor's office. Come, I'll show you all through the house. There's seventeen rooms and three baths. Andy, I'll take little Theodore now. You must be tired carrying him.

ANDY. Oh, no. No, indeed.

AUNT E. Yes, you are. You don't like dogs and I know it. (*Takes dog and shows it to CHLOE*) See, isn't he a darling?

CHLOE (*shrinking back*). 'Oh, it's a dog.

AUNT E. And don't you like dogs? This is Theodore. Isn't he a dear?

CHLOE. Yes, he's very pretty.

AUNT E. Do you want to carry him?

CHLOE. Oh, no. I'm afraid. I only like dogs at a distance, and the greater the distance, the greater I like them.

AUNT E. Humph! You're just like your uncle in that respect. Come! [EXIT D. L.]

CHLOE. Oh, I'm afraid I've put my foot in it, but I simply detest the horrid little brutes. [EXIT D. L.]

ANDY. Ray, my boy, I envy you. If your aunt Eudora would only consent, I believe I'd propose to her, and we'd have a double wedding.

ENTER D. L. MAGGIE. *She wears funny hat and coat, and carries large umbrella and carpet-bag.*

MAGGIE. I'm going to hunt another job, doc.

DOCTOR. Going to leave?

MAGGIE. Yes, sir. It ain't healthy around here no more.

DOCTOR. But you musn't leave to-day. What will Chloe say?

ANDY. Yes, Maggie, you musn't leave until after the wedding.

MAGGIE. I've worked in this house goin' on nine years, sir; but never before have I seen such goings on. The policeman has been here, sir.

DOCTOR. Policeman?

MAGGIE. And he's wanted in Kansas City for bigamy and in St. Jo. for highway robbery. To say nothing about the

skellington in the cupboard. If them ain't enough reasons to make a lady leave her job, what is?

DOCTOR. I don't understand a word you're saying. Are you still afraid of that skeleton in the closet?

MAGGIE. As I said before, I ain't afraid, but I must confess it makes me nervous. To say nothing of the other. Why, the policeman said he wouldn't stop at murder, and he's wanted in St. Louis for felony and in Joplin for assault and batter.

DOCTOR. Who's wanted in Joplin for assault and batter?

ENTER D. L. AUNT EUDORA.

AUNT E. Chloe's out in the rose garden picking you a bouquet. She's perfectly delighted with the house.

MAGGIE. Please, mum, I want to get another situation.

AUNT E. Nonsense, Maggie. You can't go until after the wedding.

MAGGIE. But the police was here and they got the house surrounded. It might mean we're all to be murdered, mum, 'cause he's a desperate man and won't never be took alive. He'll stop at nothing.

DOCTOR. There, there, Maggie, there's been too much excitement for you to-day. That skeleton has upset your nerves. Here's a dollar for you.

ANDY. Yes, and here's another one. Now go back to work.

AUNT E. We'll raise your wages to six dollars a week, Maggie, but you simply cannot think of leaving until after the wedding.

MAGGIE. Well, I'll try it a while. But if there's any excitement comes, I'm going to lock my door and get under the bed. I ain't very strong, and I can't stand excitement. [EXIT D. L.]

AUNT E. Raymond, I can't say you're a very attentive lover. Why aren't you out in the rose garden with Chloe? Her train leaves in an hour.

DOCTOR. So it does. Much obliged for the hint. (*Runs to D. L.*)

ENTER D. L. CHLOE, *her arms full of long-stemmed roses.*

CHLOE (*meeting the doctor*). Hello, big man, where you going?

DOCTOR. Just started to find the dearest girl on earth.

AUNT E. (*to ANDY R.*). Come, Andy, this is no place for us.

ANDY. But I wanted to hear how they go about it. I just want to hear the start, that's all. I think I could make love all right, if I could ever get a good start.

AUNT E. Don't be a simpleton.

[EXIT D. R.]

ANDY. Wait a minute, Eudora, I'm coming. (*Follows her out D. R.*)

CHLOE. Ray, I have a secret to tell you. (*On sofa at R.*)

DOCTOR. A secret? (*Back of sofa*)

CHLOE. I've come to the conclusion that I don't want a big wedding at all.

DOCTOR. But you've always said—

CHLOE. I know. But I've changed my mind. I don't want a dozen maids and ushers and white chiffon and flowers. All I want is you. We'll simply get the license, run over to the preacher's, get married and be off on our honeymoon, without any fuss or feathers at all.

DOCTOR. Darling! (*On sofa*)

CHLOE. At last I know why I love you. Not only because you are you—

DOCTOR. No? For what other reason?

CHLOE. I have a confession to make. You know I wouldn't have consented to have the wedding—at least, not so soon—if you hadn't been such a brilliant doctor, with all those patients. Your success has dazzled me.

DOCTOR (*gasps*). All what patients?

CHLOE (*wags finger at him*). Now don't be modest. I know all about your wonderful success. Just think, you've only been a doctor for six months and already you have the largest practice in the whole town.

DOCTOR (*aghast*). I *have*? I have?

CHLOE (*joyously*). I am ambitious. I've always been ambitious. I want to be known as the wife of the wonderful Doctor Bancroft. You don't blame me for that little touch of pride, do you, dear?

DOCTOR (*swallows hard*). Do you mean that if I didn't have this wonderful practice you speak about that you wouldn't have consented to marry me?

CHLOE. Well, not so soon. As it is, we can be married at once. Otherwise, we would have to wait a year or maybe two or three.

DOCTOR. Oh, I see. And who told you all about this wonderful practice of mine.

CHLOE. Your aunt Eudora and uncle Andy, when they came

over home last month. Everybody is talking about it. And I think you are a wonder.

DOCTOR. Then let's get married right away. To-night.

CHLOE. Oh, Ray, that's entirely too sudden. But I'm afraid I'm keeping you from your work. I am so anxious to see you at work. Where are all your patients?

DOCTOR. Yes, where are they? I wonder.

CHLOE. I thought your reception-room would be full of people waiting for a touch of your magic hand to make them well again.

DOCTOR. Well, it is generally, but I had the servants turn them all out, as I was expecting you.

CHLOE. I am keeping you from your work. Maybe now, at this moment, you could be saving the lives of hundreds. Don't let me interfere. I am going home soon but before I go I want to see you at your wonderful work. (*Rises*) Oh, I'm awfully proud of you, Ray. I never thought you would win success in so short a time.

ENTER D. R. ANDY and AUNT EUDORA.

ANDY. Can we come in?

CHLOE. Certainly. I'm afraid I've been keeping Raymond from his work. That's entirely too selfish. Tell them to come in.

AUNT E. Tell who to come in?

CHLOE. All his patients. I want to see the wonderful cures he is performing. You said his office was always full of patients.

AUNT E. It is. Andy, go out and tell the patients to come in.

ANDY. Tell 'em to come in?

CHLOE. I'll be as quiet as a mouse. Come, Miss Eudora, we'll sit on the porch and count his patients. (*L.*)

AUNT E. Go on. I'll be there in a minute.

CHLOE. This is the proudest moment of my life. [EXIT D. L.]

DOCTOR. Now what am I going to do?

AUNT E. Andy Dusenberry, go out and hire everybody you meet to come in and be treated.

ANDY. Hire them?

AUNT E. Yes, hire them. Get everybody in town. (*Goes L.*)
Get him enough patients to start an asylum. [EXIT D. L.]

ANDY. What does she mean?

DOCTOR. It's a good idea. Go out and get me some patients.

ANDY. But——

DOCTOR. Never mind the buts. Hurry up. My whole future depends on it. (*Slaps hat on ANDY'S head and pushes him off r.*) Maggie!

ENTER D. L. MAGGIE.

DOCTOR. Get me my white coat. Then get on your bonnet and shawl and come in the front door to be treated. You've got to be a patient.

MAGGIE. Be what, sir?

DOCTOR (*grasps her arm*). No time for argument. Come on. (*Hurries her out d. l.*) [EXIT D. L.]

SAD-EYED WALLACE, *an old tramp, appears at window.*

WALLACE (*looking around*). Don't seem to be anybody here. This is an opportunity I can't afford to miss. (*Climbs in window*) They evidently wasn't expecting me. (*Takes several small articles and puts them in his pockets*) Well, this is better than Joplin. I wonder where they keep the silver.

ENTER D. L. AUNT EUDORA.

AUNT E. Here's one of them now. Just sit down over there, sir. The doctor is engaged for the present. Mr. Dusenberry sent you, didn't he?

WALLACE. Oh, yes, mum. Mr. Gooseberry sent me.

AUNT E. He told you what to do, didn't he? It's perfectly simple.

WALLACE. I know what to do all right. (*Comes toward her*)

AUNT E. Keep away. I wouldn't have you touch me for a dollar.

WALLACE. I was only going to touch you for a nickel.

AUNT E. You might pass as a patient, but I doubt it. You're so dirty.

WALLACE. Yes'm, I'm dirty. But according to the Scripture man is made of dust. And I guess mine is working out.

AUNT E. (*goes to cupboard r.*) The doctor has a pair of crutches here. (*Takes them*) Here they are. Now use them. The doctor is going to cure you. You never walked a step in your life.

WALLACE (*taps his forehead*). Poor old lady! Nobody home, nobody home!

AUNT E. Let me see if you can walk with the crutches.

WALLACE. How much'll you give me?

AUNT E. If you play your part well, I'll give you a dollar.

WALLACE (*hobbles around*). How's that?

AUNT E. Perfect. Now take your seat in the line.

WALLACE (*sits L.*). Yes, mum. Don't forget the dollar.

ENTER D. R. ANDY, *followed by EMMALINE and three or four supers (one a lady) made up as invalids.*

ANDY. Now all take seats. You know what you have to do.

AUNT E. There's been a perfect stream of people at the front door trying to see the doctor.

ANDY. What does Chloe say?

AUNT E. She's wonderfully impressed. She thinks Ray is the most marvelous man on earth.

ENTER D. R. HENN.

HENN. Say, they sent me over here to watch the neighborhood. I'm looking for a bad man from Joplin. (*WALLACE turns up his coat collar*). Who's that? (*Points to WALLACE*)

AUNT E. That's a poor charity patient. Doctor Bancroft is treating him.

HENN. Are you sure he ain't the man I'm looking for? Did you walk all the way from Joplin yesterday?

AUNT E. Walk? The poor man has never walked a step in his life. He's an incurable cripple. That is, he was until Doctor Bancroft took the case.

ANDY. Say, officer, do you want to make five dollars?

HENN. Does a duck swim? Ask me. Ask me.

ANDY. All you have to do is take a seat and let the doctor treat you.

HENN. Let him treat me? I'll let anybody treat me. I ain't particular.

ANDY. And you'll get five dollars.

ENTER D. R. JERRY and MAGGIE, *disguised as invalids.*

AUNT E. Sit down. The doctor will be here presently. (*They sit*)

ENTER D. L. DOCTOR and CHLOE.

CHLOE. Oh, Raymond, just see all these people waiting for you.

DOCTOR. Pooh, pooh! Why, this isn't anything like the usual number.

CHLOE. You are the most wonderful man in the world.

DOCTOR. Now, my good people, you must excuse me for about ten minutes. I have to take my fiancée over to the train.

JERRY. But, doctor, I nade attintion right away.

OTHERS. And so do we.

WALLACE. And I can't walk a step. You've got to help me.

DOCTOR. I'll be back presently. Just wait a few moments.

CHLOE. There isn't any need of your coming at all, Ray. You'd better stay here. Uncle Andy can take me over to the station.

DOCTOR. What! And we're to be married next week! And on your first visit, too. Nonsense. Come along.

AUNT E. (*kisses her*). Good-bye, dearie. The next time you come, you'll come for good.

CHLOE. Good-bye. I've had a perfectly wonderful visit. Oh, I'm so glad I came down to-day. Good-bye, Uncle Andy.

ANDY. Bye, bye! Now, you've seen what a wonderful man you're going to marry. Good-bye.

DOCTOR. We'll have to hurry.

[EXIT D. R. with CHLOE, who leaves her parasol.

ANDY (*very excited*). It was a success, a grand success, a howling success. He's won her. They're going to be married. Hurray! (*Jumps up and throws hat in air*)

EMMA. Hurray! (*Swings her sunbonnet*)

AUNT E. I'm just as excited! I could dance for joy.

ANDY. So could I. Swing your partners. (*Swings her*
and)

EMMA. Let me dance too. (*Grabs WALLACE and swings him*)

JERRY. Begorry, horoo! (*Swings MAGGIE, all swinging, jumping, dancing, etc.*)

ENTER D. R. DOCTOR and CHLOE, they stand amazed. Others hold tableau.

CHLOE (*taking her parasol*). My parasol—I forgot it.

DOCTOR. Yes, we forgot our parasol.

CHLOE. Doctor Bancroft, will you be good enough to explain the meaning of this most peculiar scene? (R.)

ANDY (*standing R. C. between DOCTOR and AUNT EUDORA*). Leave it to me. We're having a celebration. The doctor performed a wonderful operation just a few moments ago.

DOCTOR (*to* CHLOE). Yes, that's it. I just performed a wonderful operation.

AUNT E. And it was a miracle. We were dancing for joy.

ANDY (*pulls* WALLACE *forward*). This poor man hadn't walked a step for thirty-nine years. The doctor has just replaced his medulla oblongata and now he can hop as lively as a **China-**man, can't you?

WALLACE (*hops*). Sure, I kin. I never *could* walk. But *doc* replaced my what-do-you-call-it, and now look at me!

CHLOE. Marvelous! Raymond, you are simply wonderful. Your name will be in all the papers. You'll be the most noted doctor in Missouri. Oh, I'm awfully proud of you! I'll reconsider what I told you. You may go back to Joplin with me. We'll be married to-night!

DOCTOR. To-night?

CHLOE. To-night. We'll get there in time to get the license, and old Doctor Diller will perform the ceremony at once. I've made up my mind at last.

DOCTOR (*tries to take her in his arms*). Darling!

ANDY (*looking at watch*). You've got just seven minutes to catch the train. Hurry up.

DOCTOR. Jerry, pack my grip. Hurry! (*Lively music*)

JERRY. Yes, sor.

[EXIT D. L. *running*.

AUNT E. You go and help him, Maggie.

MAGGIE. Yes, mum.

[EXIT D. L. *running*.

ANDY. I hear the whistle of the train. Hurry, hurry!

DOCTOR (*yells*). Never mind the grip, Jerry!

ENTER D. L. JERRY *with grip full of shirts, socks, etc.*

JERRY. Here it is, sor. Good luck to you.

DOCTOR (*grabs grip*). Give me my hat.

ANDY (*slaps hat on his head*). There you are. Hurry!

DOCTOR (*grabs* CHLOE). Come on, darling; we're going to be married. (*The grip opens, shirts, etc., fall on stage. DOCTOR and CHLOE rush out R. Others all go to window*)

ALL. See 'em run. Hurry, hurry! (*Train whistle heard*)

ANDY (*quickly*). They're going to make it; they're going to make it. (*WALLACE is busy stealing shirts, etc.*)

ALL (*waving from window*). Hurray, hurray, hurray!

[EXIT WALLACE D. L.

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE as ACT I:—*Time, ten o'clock the next morning. Lights on full throughout the act. Music to take up the curtain, some familiar wedding march. DISCOVERED MAGGIE seated c, sewing on towel and singing the wedding march.*

AUNT E. (*off stage R.*). Maggie, where are you? Maggie!
MAGGIE (*yells*). Yes'm, here I am, Miss Dodge.

ENTER D. R. AUNT EUDORA, *carrying a half-finished sock and knitting needles.*

AUNT E. Well, is everything in readiness for the bridal pair?

MAGGIE (*sewing*). Yes'm, as fur as I knows of. The house is clean from top to toe, and there's coal in the box, ice in the 'frigerator, and vittels in the pantry. So, hail to the bride, as the sayin' is.

AUNT E. They'll be in on the 10:30 train. (*Looks at watch*)
It's after ten now. (*Sits*)

MAGGIE. I'm trying to get this towel stitched for a wedding present, but when folks get married on the spur of the minute, they got to take what they can get.

AUNT E. It's real pretty, Maggie. And I know they'll appreciate it.

MAGGIE. Are you making some socks for him?

AUNT E. Yes, for his birthday next month. I gave them this house for their wedding present.

MAGGIE. My, that certainly is some grand present, as the saying is. I'm going to invite you to my wedding, jest as soon as the critter proposes.

AUNT E. I told Jerry to bring over some plants to liven up the house a little. It seems very strange they didn't go on a honeymoon.

MAGGIE. Yes'm, I thinks so myself. There's two things I'm going to insist on for me, a white sating dress and a honeymoon. I've made up my mind on them.

AUNT E. Chloe insisted on a quick, quiet wedding. And

when Chloe makes up her mind, there's nothing on earth can budge her.

MAGGIE. I wonder what she'll say when she learns that doc. ain't got no patients, and them folks yesterday was all hired for the occasion.

AUNT E. She must never find it out. (*Rises*) I wonder what can be keeping Jerry. (*Looks out of window*)

MAGGIE (*following her*). Say, Miss Dodge!

AUNT E. What is it, Maggie?

MAGGIE. It's about that man, that Jerry. I'm kinder nervous about him. He don't look right to me. I think he's a crook in disguise, or a burglar, or something awful. He acts so mysterious.

AUNT E. Nonsense, you've been going to the moving picture shows too much, Maggie. Jerry is as honest as the days are long.

MAGGIE. Well, he makes me nervous anyhow. What with skellingtons hanging in the cupboard, and people's inward parts in all our pickle jars, I ain't hardly got a nerve left in my body, as the sayin' is.

AUNT E. (*at window*). There's Jerry now. Bring them in, Jerry.

ENTER D. R. JERRY, *carrying several pots of gay flowers.*

JERRY. Yis, mum.

AUNT E. (*giving directions, JERRY obeying*). Here, put that red one here. That's nice. Now carry those over there. Doesn't that make the room look more cheerful?

MAGGIE. Yes'm. I'm going to get a purple ribbon bow and tie it around the skellington's neck.

AUNT E. (*to JERRY*). Did you bring any more?

JERRY. I did, mum. I got a wheelbarrow full outside.

AUNT E. Take them around to the other entrance, and put them in the house. You go with him, Maggie, and show him how to arrange them.

MAGGIE (*trembling*). Me go? Oh, please, Miss Dodge—

AUNT E. Nonsense, don't be such a goose. You're not going to eat her, are you Jerry?

JERRY. Ate her, is it? I will not. Sure I think the girl's a little bit (*Taps forehead*), mice in the attic, you know.

[EXIT D. R.

MAGGIE (*leaves towel and work basket in chair c.*). Miss

Dodge, I don't like that man. Irish gentlemen never did appeal to me nohow, no time. [EXIT D. R. *tossing head.*]

AUNT E. (*at table, arranging flowers*). I hope she will like them. Ray is such a dear boy, and his bride must be a very, very happy girl. (*Sits L.*) His bride! They seem like a couple of children. (*Gives a long sigh, and then resumes knitting*)

ENTER D. R. ANDY.

ANDY (D. R.). Eudora, I want you to see my wedding present. (*She rises*) There, what do you think of that? (*Shows necklace in leather case*)

AUNT E. (*meeting him c., examining necklace*). I think it is beautiful, Andy. There's not another man in town has the taste you have.

ANDY (*puts it in pocket*). Pretty good for an old bach, ain't it? (*Looks around*) Well, you *have* got things fixed cosy. I knew you could do it. It takes a woman to put the finishing touches on a house. Without a woman's hand a house is only a house, but with the touch of her hand it becomes a home.

AUNT E. (*sitting L.*). Why, Andy, how lovely. You ought to write that in a book. Won't you sit down?

ANDY (*sits R.*). Don't care if I do. Do you know, Eudora, this wedding makes me feel like a regular old back number. To think of that boy getting ahead of me. Why, he's only a little past twenty, and a married man already, and just look at me!

AUNT E. Well, there isn't anything to prevent your getting married, if you want to.

ANDY (*sighs*). Yes, but it takes two to make a bargain.

AUNT E. (*knitting*). Let me see ; I can pick you out a real nice wife. There's Selina Brady.

ANDY. Can't stand Selina ; she's been trying to get married for twenty years.

AUNT E. How about Martha Mendill? She's awfully nice.

ANDY. Why, she ain't thirty yet. If I want a daughter, I'll adopt one ; I'm not marrying into the kindergarden.

AUNT E. I know. The Widow Pennypacker!

ANDY. No widows for mine. I draw the line at the whole tribe of 'em, both the grass and the sod.

AUNT E. You're awfully hard to please.

ANDY. That's the truth. There's only one woman on earth

that I would permit to call herself Mrs. Andy Dusenberry, Esq.
(*Rises and comes c.*)

AUNT E. Oh, Andy, I'm so nervous. What's her name?

ANDY. I've been an old bachelor for a good many years
(*Rattled*) in fact ever since I was born, and I'm going to come
to the point at once. (*Sits c. on MAGGIE'S sewing basket*) Ouch!
(*Jumps up with a loud yell*)

AUNT E. Why, Andy, what's the matter? (*Rises*)

ANDY (*rubs hip*). I dunno. Got a sudden pain in my head.
(*Goes R.*)

AUNT E. In your head?

ANDY. Yes, I guess it's earache.

AUNT E. Let me get you some peppermint or something.

ANDY. No, thank you. Say, Eudora, I'm in earnest about
this thing.

AUNT E. Andy Dusenberry, I believe you're in love? (*Re-
sumes seat L.*)

ANDY. Maybe I am. Anyhow I feel just like I'd been kicked
by a mule.

AUNT E. I certainly am surprised. I never dreamed of such
a thing.

ANDY (*coming c.*). I've made up my mind at last. Eudora,
I wanted to ask you—

AUNT E. (*softly*). What is it, Andy?

ANDY (*plays with chair c., very nervously*). I think—that is
—I was about to say—say, what were we talking about anyway?

AUNT E. You said you were about to come to the point.

ANDY. That's it. And now, to come to the point. (*Sits on
basket again*) Ow! (*Yells and jumps up*)

AUNT E. Why, Andy, you were sitting on Maggie's sewing
basket.

ANDY. I thought I was stung by a hornet. (*Rubs hip*)

AUNT E. Oh, I'm so sorry.

ANDY. Never mind. Let's see, how far had I got? I'm a
lonely, old bachelor, Eudora—

AUNT E. Yes, I know that, Andy. (*Sits on sofa R. and knits*)

ANDY (*comes to her*). May I sit here?

AUNT E. (*making room for him*). Why, certainly.

ANDY (*sits, looks at her, gives a long sigh*). Ah!

AUNT E. (*looks at him, gives long sigh*). Ah! (*Resumes
knitting furiously*)

ANDY. We were talking about getting married.

AUNT E. Yes, so we were.

ANDY. And I've decided to ask you—(Pause)—to ask you (She looks at him) To ask you if hot whiskey and bay-rum is good for a sore throat.

AUNT E. (jumps up). Hot whiskey and bay-rum? Andy Dusenberry, what ails you? If I didn't know you were on the vestry in the church, I'd think you'd had a drop too much. Bay-rum! Oh! (Crosses L., sits)

ANDY. Now, Eudora—

AUNT E. Don't Eudora me! I haven't any patience with you. Hot whiskey and bay-rum! (Knits rapidly. He rises with deliberation, crosses c., throws MAGGIE'S basket on floor, takes chair and crosses and sits close beside AUNT EUDORA L.)

ANDY. That isn't what I wanted to ask you at all.

AUNT E. (sighs, then—). What is it, Andy?

ANDY. You've known me for a long time, Eudora, a real long time. (Tries to take her hand, but does not look what he is doing)

AUNT E. Yes, Andy?

ANDY (fumbles around and takes the stocking she was knitting). And so I want to ask your advice. That's it, I want your advice. (Gets the red stocking on his hand) I'm kind of excited to-day, but I'm not going to put it off any longer. (Takes her hand) Now, Eudora—

ENTER D. R. EMMALINE, dancing in.

EMMA. (down R.). Oh, I saw you; I saw you. You were holding her hand.

ANDY. What! (Rises and goes up c., in confusion, the stocking still on his hand)

EMMA. You can't bluff me, I saw you.

AUNT E. (down L., nervously tapping foot). Well, don't your father ever hold your mother's hand?

EMMA. Yes he does, once in a while—when he's afraid she's going to hit him.

ANDY. Well, Mary, what do you want? (Comes down to her)

EMMA. How did you know my name was Mary?

ANDY. I guessed it.

EMMA. Then go on and guess what I want. (Pause) Oh, look at your hand. You got a stocking on it. That's a funny place to wear a stocking.

ANDY (goes to AUNT EUDORA). Here's your work, Miss Eudora. I was holding it for you.

AUNT E. (*comes c.*; ANDY L.; EMMALINE R.) Little girls shouldn't be rude. Come now, do you want to see the doctor?

EMMA. Yes, I was here yesterday to buy some quinine, and he didn't have none. Then that man gave me a dollar to pretend I was sick, and have the doctor treat me. I've come back for more treatment and another dollar.

ANDY. Nothing doing. We don't need to hire any more patients.

EMMA. Well, then I want a nickel's worth of sneeze powder.

AUNT E. Sneeze powder? What on earth is that?

EMMA. Oh, you just scatter it around like that (*Gesture*) and everybody starts to choo! (*Sneezes*) like that.

AUNT E. You must mean snuff.

EMMA. A kid in our school gave me some last month when my grandpa came to visit us. (*Giggles*) I scattered it in front of his place at the table. You oughta seen the fun. He sneezed so hard, he sneezed all his soup in ma's lap.

ANDY (*laughs*). He did, did he?

EMMA. Then he stopped a while, but he started again and sneezed his set of false teeth clear across the table and into pa's face. Pa's nose began to bleed. I'll bet those teeth bit him. (*Giggles*) Wasn't that funny?

AUNT E. You'd better run along home now. We haven't any sneeze powder here.

EMMA. If you did have, I'd scatter some of it right here, and watch the two of you sneeze. I'll bet he could sneeze better than my grandpa. Say, is he your beau?

AUNT E. (*confused*). Why, how you talk. Of course not.

EMMA. (*to ANDY*). Ain't you?

ANDY. No, I guess not.

EMMA. Well, if you hain't, why hain't you?

ANDY. That's just what I'd like to know myself. Here's a quarter for you. Now run along and let your grandpa sneeze himself sick.

EMMA. Oh, much obliged. (*At D. R.*) Say, if you two ever get married, I'll send you some sneeze powder for a wedding present. [EXIT D. R.]

AUNT E. I declare that's the worst child I ever saw. Oh, Andy, I've got to go and look over the house to see if it's all ready for the bride and groom; I wish you'd go over to my house and bring over little Septimus. I'm going to give him to Chloe for a pet.

ANDY. Where is little Septimus?

AUNT E. In my front hall, all ready in his little basket. Hurry, Andy. I declare I forgot all about the little dear.

ANDY. I'll get him for you. And when I return I have something very important to say to you, dear Eudora. (*Turns at R., waves hand and kicks foot, then struts out R.*)

AUNT E. Well, I hope he'll be able to get it out sometime. But I must see to the house. [*Crosses and EXIT D. L.*]

ENTER D. R. OFFICER HENN, followed by KATHLEEN CRONIN, carrying doll dressed as baby in long clothes.

HENN. Come in, ma'am. The doctor here is a friend of mine, and he's a good Irishman. He'll find your husband for you.

KATHLEEN. Thank you, sor. I'm afraid it's troublin' you I am.

HENN (C.). Not a bit, not a bit. (*Raps with club*) Hello, is anybody home?

KATH. (*seated R.*). Oh, sure, I'm that tired I could drop.

ENTER D. L. JERRY.

JERRY. What's wanted? (*Sees KATHLEEN*) Kathleen!

KATH. Jerry!

HENN. I see you know the doctor, mum. Well, he'll help you, I'm sure. Good day to you. [*EXIT D. R.*]

JERRY. And what are you doing here?

KATH. Sure, that's a fine greeting to give your wife and baby. I followed you all the way from Joplin, so I did.

JERRY. But you mustn't stay here.

KATH. (*coming to him*). I mustn't. I don't believe you love me any more at all, at all. And we married going on three years.

JERRY. Of course I love you, and I'm glad you're here in town. But darlin', I've got a good job here and in order to kape it, I've got to pretend I'm a single man.

KATH. Sure, I don't believe it a respectable job, then, Jerry Cronin.

JERRY. Indade and it is. I'm larnin' to be a doctor. Didn't you hear the cop call me the doctor.

KATH. But I don't understand at all, at all.

JERRY. All you have to do is to keep shady. I'll find you a nice little room, and no one will ever be any the wiser.

AUNT E. (*off stage L.*). Jerry, Jerry, where are you?

JERRY. I'm comin', mum. Now for the love of Mike get away and take the little darlin' wid you.

KATH. That was a woman's voice? Jerry Cronin, who is that woman?

JERRY. Oh, sure that's me master's wife. Now, run along and be quick wid ye.

AUNT E. (*outside, speaks impatiently*). Jerry!

JERRY. Yis, mum. Farewell, me darlin'. [EXIT D. L.

KATH. (*speaks to baby*). Darlin', your papa doesn't want us any longer, it's trying to get rid of us he is. Oh, I dunno what to do at all. Hush, baby, hush!

ENTER D. R. ANDY, *with dog in basket*.

ANDY. Hello, are you looking for the doctor?

KATH. I've just seen him, sor. And he'll have nothing to do with me. He don't love me any longer, nor the baby either. And me his lawful wife going on three years, sor.

ANDY. You married to the doctor?

KATH. Yis, sor. See, the little darlin', sor. He's the very image of his papa.

ANDY (*looks at baby*). Indeed I do see a striking resemblance. Oh, the young villain. Wait till I lay hands on him.

KATH. Oh, you won't injure him, sor? I've said too much. He told me not to say a word, and now I've got him in trouble, so I have. (*Wceps*)

ANDY. Now, my good woman, you'd best go over to the hotel. Wait there for me.

KATH. (*handing him the baby*). I've got the baby buggy in the yard. Will you carry him out for me? [EXIT D. L.

ENTER D. L. AUNT EUDORA.

AUNT E. Well, did you bring over little Septimus?

ANDY (*hiding baby behind him*). Oh, yes. Little Septimus is there on the table.

AUNT E. (*goes to dog*). Oh, pretty little Septimus. I've got to give you away, and then there'll be only thirty-six left. (*Baby cries*)

ANDY (*starts to sing and dance*). La, la, la! (*Baby cries louder*)

AUNT E. Why, what's that? Andy Dusenberry, what is that? (*Tableau, she extending finger at him; he cavorting*)

'ANDY. I'm just taking my morning's exercise, that's all, Eudora.

AUNT E. (*comes to him*). Why, it's a baby. (*Takes him*)

ANDY. Why, so it is. I wonder where that came from. Isn't he a beauty.

AUNT E. (*cuddling baby*). Whose baby is it?

ENTER D. R. KATHLEEN.

KATH. Where is me child? (*Takes him*) Thanks be to the saints, he's all right. (*Fondles him*)

AUNT E. (L.). Your child? What are you doing with it here?

KATH. I brung him to see his father.

AUNT E. (*aghast*). His father? Here? [EXIT ANDY D. R.]

KATH. Yes'm, he lives here. Oh, I've said too much. I didn't mane to tell. Please, mum, I didn't mane to tell.

AUNT E. (*ominously*). What is his father's name?

KATH. (*nervously*). Oh, sure, mum, I can't tell you that.

AUNT E. Can't tell me?

KATH. No, mum; he's forbidden me to spake, so he has.

AUNT E. So, he forbade you to disclose his identity, did he?

KATH. They'd niver forgive him for havin' the baby brought to this house. (*ANDY sticks his head in R.*) Oh, sor, I'd like to have a word with you, if you plaze.

ANDY (*running across stage*). Haven't got time; haven't got time. [EXIT D. L.]

KATH. But, it's important, sor. It's very important. (*Runs out D. L.*)

AUNT E. I see it all, I see it all! Thank heavens, I have learned the truth in time. Oh, the deceiver, the deep, dense, 'double-dyed deceiver. I'll tell my nephew, I'll tell the police, I'll have him arrested and sent to the penitentiary. Andy Dusenberry, you learn what it means to trifle with the feelings of an outraged woman. [EXIT D. L.]

ENTER D. R. DOCTOR and CHLOE.

DOCTOR. At last we are home. Welcome home, Chloe, welcome home.

CHLOE. Oh, Ray, I'm too happy for words. To think this great big house is mine!

DOCTOR. And this great big doctor is yours, too.

CHLOE. Oh, come. I want to take off my things. I want to explore every inch of my future home. [EXIT D. L.]

DOCTOR. I'll join you in a moment.

ENTER D. R. WALLACE.

WALLACE. Hello, doctor. I'm here again for some more treatment. I can walk a little better to-day.

DOCTOR. Oh, I see; you're that man who helped us out yesterday. But I guess you don't need any more treatment.

WALLACE. No, sir, I don't; but I *do* need another five dollars.

DOCTOR. Sorry I can't oblige you. I'm not a professional charity bureau.

WALLACE. Then suppose I goes to the young lady and tells her all about what happened yesterday.

DOCTOR. Say, do you want me to kick you out. See here, my man, I won't be blackmailed. I'll just telephone for the police.

WALLACE. Oh, don't do that, boss. I was only fooling. I thought maybe you wanted me to act like a cripple again.

DOCTOR. No, it isn't necessary; I'm married now.

WALLACE. I'm out of a job, boss, and I need money. Could you help a poor worthy man, sir?

DOCTOR. You got five dollars yesterday, didn't you? Well, that's enough. Get out.

WALLACE. Yes, I'm going. You dunno where I could get a job, do you? A kind of an easy job. I ain't used to real hard work.

DOCTOR. You'll get a job in the city lock-up if you don't clear out of here.

WALLACE. Yes, sir. Good day, sir. [EXIT D. R.]

DOCTOR. The nerve of the man. A professional tramp and moocher, I suppose.

ENTER D. L. ANDY.

ANDY. Boy, I'm glad to see you. I've just been cross-questioning the little Irish girl, and I find she's Jerry's wife.

DOCTOR. I don't know what you are talking about.

ANDY. Well, Jerry's wife and baby turned up about an hour ago, and she told me she was married to you.

DOCTOR. To me? What did she mean?

ANDY. She thinks Jerry is a doctor, and she said she was married to the doctor.

DOCTOR. I hope she don't tell Chloe that. Chloe might not understand, and then where would I be standing?

ANDY. You wouldn't be standing at all, you'd be running. I know Chloe.

DOCTOR (*sees pug on table*). What's this?

ANDY. That's little Septimus. I'm not sure but I think he is number twenty-four.

DOCTOR. What is he doing here?

ANDY. Miss Eudora's wedding present.

DOCTOR. From my aunt? Why, she gave us this house for a wedding present.

ANDY. And she threw in little Septimus for good measure.

DOCTOR. But Chloe doesn't like pugs. She's afraid of them.

ANDY. But Eudora will be real hurt if you don't accept it. She thinks each one of them is worth its weight in gold.

DOCTOR. I know it. I can't afford to offend Auntie, but Chloe—

ANDY. Say, you're not afraid of your wife, are you?

DOCTOR. Afraid of her? Of course not, a man is never afraid of his wife—that is, not exactly. But I know Chloe won't stand for a pug.

ANDY (*picks pug up*). It's a pretty little fellow. He's not as ugly as most of them are. I have it!

DOCTOR. Well, you can keep it. It'll make you a nice pet.

ANDY (*puts pug in basket*). I mean, I have an idea. Just put the little fellow in the cupboard and write Chloe a letter. Tell her you have a surprise for her in the cupboard. Leave the letter on the table, she'll get it, and then if there is an explosion, you won't be around when it happens.

DOCTOR. That's a good idea. I'll do it. (*Sits at table and writes*)

ANDY. I don't know what's come over your aunt, half an hour ago she was as sweet as sugar, but I just passed her on the porch and she wouldn't look at me. I don't know what I've done to offend her. And I thought we were getting on so well together.

DOCTOR (*finishing letter*). There, I guess that will answer. (*Leaves it on table*) Now, I'll just take Mr. Pug and put him in here. (*Places him in cupboard c.*)

ANDY. Now come on over to the house and look at your wedding presents. Chloe is tickled to death.

[EXIT D. R. with DOCTOR.]

ENTER D. L. JERRY, *followed by KATHLEEN with baby.*

JERRY. Now, Kathleen, be sensible. I'm working for the old lady, and I'd lose me job if she finds out I'm a married man.

KATH. Then lose your job. I don't care.

JERRY. After all me trouble in gettin' it. Sure you know what a hard time we had in Joplin, and work is scarce, so it is.

KATH. I know what ye want to do. Ye want to run off and lave me again.

JERRY. I do not. I'll never lave you. Maybe you can be gettin' a job down the strate in the laundry, and I'll rint a room for you, as we'll all be as happy as old Biddy Maloney's pigs.

KATH. And do ye still love me, Jerry?

JERRY. Av coorse, I do. Ain't ye me own little wife?

CHLOE (*outside*). Jerry, Jerry!

JERRY. Great Hivins, here comes the young lady. The bride. Run, run, hide the baby. I can tell her you're me swateheart, but how can I explain the baby?

KATH. Where'll I be hiding him? I dunno.

JERRY. Put him in the closet a minute. Just a second, then I'll come back and take him out.

CHLOE (*outside L.*). Jerry! Where are you?

JERRY. Be quick. (*KATHLEEN puts baby in cupboard R.*)
Now, run.

KATH. Sure, he's liable to smother in there.

JERRY. Niver a bit. Hurry. (*Runs her out D. R.*)

ENTER D. L. CHLOE.

CHLOE. Jerry, I want you to help Maggie unpack my trunk. She can't get it open.

JERRY (*R.*). Yis, mum. (*Does not move*)

CHLOE. She's over at the house.

JERRY (*standing in front of cupboard at R.*). Yis, mum. I'm going, mum.

CHLOE. Then you'd better go at once. All my clothes are in that trunk. (*Baby cries*) Why, what's that?

JERRY (*nervously*). Maybe it was the cat, mum, or the wind. There's a storm coming up.

CHLOE (*R. c.*). Very well. You may go.

JERRY (*hesitates*). Excuse me, mum. But, mum—(*KATHLEEN looks in*) The wind is blowing the door, mum. (*Pushes her out, shuts door*)

CHLOE. What is it, Jerry?

JERRY. Only the wind, mum. (*Sees letter on table*) I say, mum, here's a letter, mum.

CHLOE (*takes letter*). For me?

JERRY. I think it is.

CHLOE. Thank you. Now hurry and unlock the trunk for Maggie.

JERRY. But—

CHLOE (*impatently*). I said hurry. I can't wait all day.

JERRY. No, mum. Yes, mum. [EXIT D. R.]

CHLOE (*looks at letter*). It's Ray's writing. I wonder what he wants. (*Opens it*) "My darling wife: I have a surprise for you. A wedding present that you never suspected. Maybe you won't like it at first, but later on I'm sure you'll take the little stranger to your heart. Look in the cupboard. With love, Raymond." (JERRY *appears* R.) The little stranger? I wonder what he means? (*Looks at letter again*) "Look in the cupboard." (*Crosses to cupboard* R. *Baby cries*) Oh, I'm afraid, I'm afraid. (*Opens cupboard, sees baby*). Ahh! (*Loud piercing scream*. JERRY *comes to her*. *She totters to c. and sinks in chair*) Oh, am I awake, or is it some horrible nightmare? Jerry!

JERRY. Yis, mum. Here I am, mum.

CHLOE (*tragically points to cupboard*). Look at that!

JERRY. I see it, mum. It's a baby.

CHLOE. Who put it in there?

JERRY. Not me, mum. It was her. It's mother, mum. Don't blame me, mum, it ain't my fault.

CHLOE. When did it come?

JERRY. He's about six months old, mum.

CHLOE. I mean how long has it been in this house?

JERRY. Just this mornin', mum. It's mother brought it this morning.

CHLOE (*puts hands over face and moans*). Oh! It's mother!

JERRY. Sure, I'm awfully sorry, mum.

CHLOE. That will do, Jerry. You may go.

JERRY. Yis, mum. I'm gone.

[EXIT D. R.]

CHLOE. Maggie, Maggie!

ENTER D. L. MAGGIE.

MAGGIE. Yes, ma'am; I'm here, ma'am.

CHLOE. Do you know anything about the baby?

MAGGIE. What baby, ma'am?

CHLOE. That baby there in the cupboard.

MAGGIE (*takes baby from cupboard*). It's alive! (*Cuddles it*)

CHLOE. Of course it's alive.

MAGGIE. I thought maybe it was the skellington's baby, ma'am.

CHLOE. Take it away. Take it out of my sight.

MAGGIE. Where'll I take it?

CHLOE. Take it to the kitchen, and keep it there.

MAGGIE. Things is goin' from bad to worse, I wouldn't be at all surprised to open one of them cupboards and find a hippopotamus. All this is makin' me so nervous.

[EXIT D. L. *with baby*.

CHLOE (*rises*). Oh, what shall I do? What shall I do? I'll leave him, I'll leave this place forever. And he said I'd take the little stranger to my heart. Oh, the brute! Wait till I see him, that's all.

DOCTOR (*outside R.*). Hello, Chloe, where are you?

CHLOE (*dramatically*). His voice!

ENTER D. R. DOCTOR.

DOCTOR (*R. C.*). Oh, here you are.

CHLOE (*with subdued passion*). Yes, here I am.

DOCTOR (*gaily*). Well, did you get my little note?

CHLOE. Oh, yes; I got your little note.

DOCTOR. And you looked in the cupboard?

CHLOE. Yes, I looked in the cupboard.

DOCTOR. Surprised, weren't you?

CHLOE (*hands clenched, breast heaving*). You dare?

DOCTOR (*approaches her*). Now, Chloe, don't get excited. A little thing like that's not worth getting excited over.

CHLOE. A little thing? A little thing!

DOCTOR. Well, if you don't want him, I'll give him back to her, and that will be an end of it.

CHLOE. Don't speak to me; don't look at me. Don't ever dare to come near me again. This room is yours but beyond that door (*Points L.*) the house is mine. Never cross that threshold on peril of your life. Henceforth we are strangers.

[EXITS D. L. *slamming door*.

DOCTOR. Well, I'll be darned. Whoever would have thought that my Chloe would kick up such a row about a little pug dog? (*Takes pug out and places it on table*)

ENTER D. R. ANDY.

ANDY. Well, how did the scheme work?

DOCTOR. It didn't work at all. Chloe refuses to have anything to do with it. (CHLOE *appears* D. L. *listening*)

ANDY (*down* R.). That's too bad.

DOCTOR (*goes to him*). Of course, it is. It's unreasonable. She told me never to cross the threshold of that door. She never wants to look upon my face again. And we were only married this morning.

ANDY. Well, what'll we do with it?

DOCTOR. We'll have to send it away again.

ANDY. If you send it back to her, it will hurt her feelings. You know how sensitive she is.

DOCTOR. Yes. We won't do that in any event. I have it! We'll tell her that it has been lost.

ANDY. And in the meantime——

DOCTOR. In the meantime, what?

ANDY (*low, dramatic voice*). We'll get rid of it.

CHLOE. Oh! (*Staggers, and recovers herself with difficulty*)

DOCTOR. We'll drown it. Throw it in the lake.

ANDY. That's the best plan. Wait till midnight, then tie a heavy stone about its neck and toss it in the lake.

DOCTOR. That's the only way. It's good-bye little Septimus. And I thought Chloe would learn to love you in time. Put him in the cupboard and at midnight we'll get him and toss him in the lake. [EXIT D. R.]

ANDY. It's too bad, he's such a playful little rascal, too.

[EXIT D. L. CHLOE, *unseen* by ANDY.]

ANDY (*takes pug*). Well, you'll have lots of fun with the mermaids at the bottom of the lake. (*Puts basket containing pug in cupboard* R.) I wish the other thirty-six were going to keep you company. [EXIT D. L.]

ENTER D. L. CHLOE.

CHLOE. They've gone. Oh, the villains. The horrible murderers. And Uncle Andy is just as bad as Raymond. I must prevent it. I must save that innocent young life from a watery grave. (*Goes to telephone*) Hello!

ENTER AUNT EUDORA D. L.

AUNT E. Chloe, where have you been? (*Sees her*) Oh, excuse me.

CHLOE. Central, I want 547. It's very important. 547, quick.

AUNT E. Is anything the matter?

CHLOE. Hello, is this the police headquarters?

AUNT E. (L.). Police headquarters? Good heavens!

CHLOE. This is Mrs. Dr. Bancroft, 992 Elm Place. Send a couple of officers over here at once. At once, do you hear! To prevent a murder! (*Pause*) Yes, some men are going to murder a baby. They're going to tie a stone around its neck and drop it in the lake at midnight. (*Pause*) Yes, have them come at once. (*Hangs up receiver*)

AUNT E. Chloe, Chloe, what does this mean?

CHLOE. It means that Ray Bancroft and Andy Dusenberry are going to sacrifice a young life. It means that my heart is broken, it means that I will never look upon the face of my husband again. Oh, why did I ever get married. (*Sobs, supported by AUNT EUDORA*)

AUNT E. Come to your room and lie down. You're all excited. Surely there must be a mistake.

CHLOE. I made a mistake this morning when I got married. Oh, Aunt Eudora, my heart is breaking.

[EXIT D. L., supported by AUNT EUDORA.]

WALLACE (*looks and then climbs in at window*). Now's my chance. I'll get even with that doctor guy if it means the jug for me. (*Puts articles in bag*) The place seems deserted. I might as well make a clean sweep, while I'm about it. (*Climbs up on chair and removes picture from wall*)

ENTER D. L. MAGGIE.

MAGGIE (*secs WALLACE and screams loudly*). Ah! (*Faints in chair down L.*)

WALLACE. A skirt! (*Puts picture on table C, takes sack and jumps out of the window*)

ENTER D. L. AUNT EUDORA.

AUNT E. What is it? Maggie! What's happened?

MAGGIE. It's a burglar, mum. Oh, my nerves, my nerves. He's stole everything in sight.

AUNT E. Come, we'll lock ourselves in my room. Hurry.

MAGGIE. My nerves, my nerves!

[EXIT D. L., running with AUNT EUDORA.]

ENTER D. R. DOCTOR.

DOCTOR. Now to see Chloe and make my peace with her.
(*Goes c.*)

ENTER D. R. HENN.

HENN. The chief sent me over here to see what all the trouble is about.

DOCTOR. Trouble? There isn't any trouble.

HENN. Somebody telephoned him that a baby was going to be drowned in the lake.

DOCTOR. The chief had better mind his own business. I've got troubles enough of my own.

HENN. Oh, ho, you have, have you? And who are you, I'd like to know?

DOCTOR. I am the master of this house. I am the doctor.

HENN (*takes his arm*). Come along with me. You're under arrest.

DOCTOR (*shakes his hand off*). Arrest? On what grounds?

HENN. You're a suspicious character. You say you're the doctor, but I know darned well you ain't. The doctor is a young Irish gent, and he's a friend of mine.

DOCTOR. I tell you I *am* the doctor. Anybody in town can identify me.

HENN. That'll do now. Will you come peacefully, or will I use the handcuffs.

DOCTOR. You let me go! (*They struggle R.*)

ENTER D. L. CHLOE.

CHLOE. The police! (*Totters c.*) Take him away. He's going to tie a stone around its little neck and throw it in the lake.

DOCTOR. Here's my wife; she can identify me.

CHLOE. Take him away!

HENN. Is this your husband?

CHLOE. Henceforth we are strangers. (*Sinks in chair c.*)

HENN. She don't know you. I'll bet you're the crook from Joplin. Come on. (*Drags DOCTOR off L.*) *LIVELY MUSIC.*

CHLOE (*rising*). No, no! What have I done? (*Sinks in chair at c. and faints*)

ENTER D. R. ANDY.

ANDY. They've arrested the doctor. (*Sees CHLOE*) Chloe!

She's fainted. Water, water! (*Rushes out R., meets MAGGIE at door, throws her aside, and exits R.*)

MAGGIE (*staggering down L.*). It's the burglar. Help, help! (*Sinks in chair at L.*)

ENTER D. R. AUNT EUDORA.

AUNT E. Is everybody murdered? Oh, Chloe! (*Rushes to her*)

CHLOE (*recovering*). They've taken him away, and I'll never see him again. (*Rises and crosses to D. R.*) Oh, Raymond, Raymond.

AUNT E. (*sinks in chair vacated by CHLOE*). What's happened to Raymond?

CHLOE. He's arrested. And it's all my fault.

MAGGIE (*down L.*). Oh, my nerves, my nerves!

ENTER D. R. ANDY *with glass of water.*

ANDY (*rushes to AUNT EUDORA and dashes water in her face*). There! (*AUNT EUDORA screams*)

ENTER D. L. JERRY and KATHLEEN. *They go to cupboard R.*

JERRY. Hush up, Kathleen, your baby is here. (*Opens cupboard and reaches in, takes out pug without looking at it*)

KATH. Oh, me baby, me baby!

JERRY (*hands her the pug*). Here's your baby!

KATH. (*sees it*). Ah! (*Gives loud scream and faints in JERRY'S arms down R.*)

ANDY (*on knees to AUNT EUDORA C.*). Oh, forgive me; forgive me.

AUNT E. (*takes picture from table and slaps it over ANDY'S head*). There!

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE as ACT I. *Time, about 11 o'clock the same night. Lights half-down throughout act. Stage dark. Curtain rises to mysterious pizzicatti music and bare stage is DISCOVERED. A knock is heard at D. R. After a pause, the window is slowly opened and a dark lantern appears in window. JERRY and KATHLEEN climb in at window.*

JERRY. There don't seem to be any one about. The doctor is in the lock-up and all the women folks must be in bed.

KATH. Yes, but where's me baby? That's all I'm worryin' about, is me darlin' little Jerry. Whatever's become of him?

JERRY. Whist, woman, wait till I turn on the light.

KATH. (*grieving*). Oh, me child, me child, I'll niver see me little darlin' again, and him me first, too.

JERRY. Here's the switch. (*Lights on stage come on*)

KATH. Now see if you can find me darlin' for me. Oh, why did I ever trust him out of me sight. It's a fine father you are, to be losin' your only son and heir. Oh, maybe he's murdered wid a stone tied around his neck in the bottom of the lake. And it's all your fault, so it is. Oh, me baby, me baby! (*Weeps. Sits R.*)

JERRY. Hush your noise, Kathleen, darlin'. I'll find him for you; I'll find him if I have to dive down to the bottom of the sea.

KATH. Oh, it's drowned dead he is, and now see what you've done. Where did you leave him?

JERRY. The last I seen of him he was in that cupboard.

KATH. (*goes and looks in cupboard R.*). Niver a sign of him. Oh, Jerry, Jerry, me heart is breakin', so it is.

JERRY. Maybe it was the other cupboard.

KATH. I'll see. (*Opens door of cupboard c. screams*) Oh, Jerry!

JERRY (*runs to her*). Oh, what is it?

KATH. There's been murder done. Look in there. There's a dead man there, with niver a stitch of skin on him at all, at all. Oh, what kind of a place is this? And where's me child? Me little baby.

JERRY (*cautiously and tremblingly opens door of cupboard c.*).
Oh, ho! (*Runs to her*)

KATH. Did you see it, Jerry?

JERRY. I did. It's a skeleton. Pshaw, that's nothing at all. All doctor's have skeletons. I'm goin' to rouse the house.
(*Raps D. L.*)

KATH. Only get me my child, and we'll lave this place forever.

JERRY (*rapping and pounding D. L.*). Hello, there! Are you dead? It's me—Jerry! Open the door. It's Jerry.

KATH. (*after a pause*). Do you hear anything at all, at all?

JERRY. I hear someone walking around. Maybe the doctor has murdered all of them.

KATH. (*renewed groaning*). Murdered them? Oh, me child, me baby.

AUNT E. (*inside*). Who's that out there?

JERRY. It's me, mum. It's Jerry. Plase come out. Sure, I thought ye were all killed entirely.

ENTER D. L. AUNT EUDORA, *wearing dressing-gown.*

AUNT E. What's happened now, Jerry? Oh, what an awful night! I'll never forget this night if I live to be forty.

KATH. I'm after me child. Me little Jerry. Have you seen him?

AUNT E. Do you mean the baby?

JERRY. Yis, mum. The baby, mum. Me own little darling.

AUNT E. The baby is here all safe and sound. Maggie! Maggie!

KATH. The saints be praised. Me child is safe and sound.

AUNT E. Is this your wife, Jerry?

JERRY. Yis, mum, the cat's out of the bag now. I'm a married man, mun, this is me wife and the baby is me only child.

AUNT E. I see it all. Maggie!

MAGGIE (*outside*). Yes, ma'am. I hear you, but I'm skeered to come in.

AUNT E. Bring the baby here at once.

MAGGIE. Oh, my nerves, my nerves!

AUNT E. But why did you deceive me, Jerry? You told me you weren't married.

JERRY. I thought I wouldn't get the job if I was a married man, so I thought I'd be a single man for the time being, mum.

AUNT E. But think of all the worry you have caused me.

ENTER D. L. MAGGIE, *carrying baby, followed by* CHLOE.

KATH. Me child, me child! (*Grabs baby, and crosses R.*)

AUNT E. (C.). Chloe, what do you think? This is Jerry's wife—

JERRY (R. C.). And Jerry's little boy, mum.

CHLOE. Jerry's?

AUNT E. Yes, it seems he isn't a single man, after all.

CHLOE. Are you sure of this?

JERRY. Begorry, if she ain't, I am.

MAGGIE (L.). I always suspected him of being a villain, ma'am.

CHLOE (L. C.). But why all this mystery then?

AUNT E. Simply because Jerry was posing as a single man.

CHLOE. Oh, and poor Raymond is spending the night in the lock-up. What shall we do?

ENTER D. R. ANDY.

ANDY. No, he isn't. I got him out and he's over at the hotel.

CHLOE. But why did you want to murder the poor little thing?

ANDY (C.). Murder it? We didn't.

CHLOE. You did. I heard you and Raymond say you were going to tie a stone about its neck and drop it in the lake at midnight.

KATH. (L., *wails*). Oh, me baby, me baby!

ANDY. That wasn't the baby—that was the dog.

CHLOE. Dog, what dog?

ANDY. Miss Eudora's wedding present to you.

CHLOE. But I never saw any dog.

AUNT E. (*angrily to* ANDY). And were you going to drown poor little Septimus?

ANDY. Not me. Why, Eudora, you know I love every one of them. All thirty-seven.

CHLOE. Then it's all been a mistake? Oh, why doesn't Ray come and explain everything.

ANDY. It was just a little joke, that's all. Just a joke, just like his wonderful string of patients yesterday.

CHLOE. What do you mean? Weren't they really his patients?

AUNT E. We hired them for the occasion, dear. Raymond's only been a doctor for six months. He must have time to work up a practice.

CHLOE. Then he deceived me? He wilfully deceived me? Why, then he married me under false pretenses.

AUNT E. But, Chloe—

CHLOE. That's enough. You've all deceived me, but Raymond Bancroft was at the bottom of the whole business. Very well. To-morrow I return to my home in Joplin.

OTHERS. But, Chloe—

CHLOE. My mind is made up. Miss Eudora, come with me, and lock that door. (*Pointing L.*) Doctor Bancroft and I are strangers!

AUNT E. But—

CHLOE. I'm not a child, and I won't be treated as a child. I never want to look on his face again. (*Goes to D. L.*) See that this door is locked. [EXIT D. L.]

ANDY. Well, what do you think of that?

AUNT E. She'll change her mind to-morrow. It really was too bad for us to have deceived her so.

JERRY. Excuse me, mum, but I supposed I am discharged, is it?

AUNT E. You deceived me, Jerry.

ANDY. Now, Eudora, what difference does it make whether Jerry is married or not. He makes a splendid butler.

AUNT E. Well, you and your wife can come over to my house in the morning, and we'll talk it over.

CHLOE (*off L.*). Miss Eudora!

AUNT E. I'm coming. Good night, Andy. Pleasant dreams.

ANDY. I'll have something to say to you to-morrow, Eudora. Something very important. You understand, don't you?

AUNT E. I think I do. Good night. [EXIT D. L.]

JERRY. I don't think she's going to discharge me after all. You'll be after spakin' a good word for me, won't you, sir?

ANDY. Of course, I will.

JERRY. Thank ye, kindly, sir. Come, Kathleen!

KATH. I'm coming. Good night, sor. [EXIT R. *with* JERRY.]

ANDY. Maggie, I want a word with you.

MAGGIE. Oh, my nerves, my nerves. I'm going to give notice in the morning. Another day like this and I won't have a nerve left in my whole body, as the sayin' is. (*While MAGGIE is talking, ANDY pulls slouch hat over his face and ties black silk handkerchief over mouth*)

ANDY. How do I look?

MAGGIE (*looks at him*). Suffering seeds of punkin! Oh, my nerves, my nerves.

ANDY. Don't be foolish. You know me, don't you, Maggie? (*Removes hat and handkerchief*)

MAGGIE. I thought you was a burglar; though they ginerally don't let folks know when they're around.

ANDY. You wouldn't know me if I had on that hat and that handkerchief, now would you?

MAGGIE. Your own wife wouldn't know you like that, that is if you had a wife, which you ain't and maybe never will have none.

ANDY. Now, Maggie, here's a five dollar bill. I want you to do me a favor.

MAGGIE (*takes money*). What is it, Mr. Dusenberry.

ANDY. I'm going to bring about a reconciliation between the bride and groom.

MAGGIE. Goin' to' bring 'em what, sir?

ANDY. I'm going to make them make up their trouble. I want you to leave that window open to-night, and I want you to leave that door (*Points to D. L.*) unlocked.

MAGGIE. No, sir! Nothing doing, as the sayin' is. Suppose a burglar would git in.

ANDY. That's precisely what is going to happen, and I'm going to be the burglar.

MAGGIE. You, a burglar? At your time of life? And you always been such a respectable gent, too.

ANDY. Now listen to me, Maggie. The doctor is going to wait outside and his wife will get scared when she hears the burglar and she'll yell for help. The doctor will come in and save her, and it'll be all right. It's the only way. I know Chloe.

MAGGIE. Oh, my nerves, my nerves!

ANDY. You tell Chloe that if she hears anything wrong in the night to run to the west window and yell.

MAGGIE. What'll she hear, sir?

ANDY. She'll hear the burglar. I'm going to burgle.

MAGGIE. You'll get arrested, Mr. Dusenberry, and being a burglar ain't respectable. What'll all the folks say when they know you've turned into a desperado?

ANDY. I'm not going to be a real burglar; I'm only going to pretend. Be sure and tell Chloe to yell for help.

MAGGIE. Shall I tell her the doctor is out there ready to rescue her?

ANDY. Of course not. That would spoil everything.

MAGGIE. Oh, I'm just to tell her that it's you who is the burglar and not to be skeered.

ANDY. No, no; she must think I am a real burglar. Now, you understand, don't you? Leave the window open for me, and leave the door unlocked. To-morrow you'll get another five

dollars. Now, don't make any mistakes. (*Puts on hat and handkerchief*) I'll wait in the shade of the old barn.

[EXIT D. R. *melodramatically*.

MAGGIE. Oh, my nerves, my nerves. And to think of Mr. Andy Dusenberry who's always been a good man before a turnin' to a burglar at his age. Oh, I'm just about skeered to death.

ENTER D. L. CHLOE and AUNT EUDORA.

CHLOE. Maggie, whatever are you doing here all this time? It's getting late. Be sure and lock everything up good to-night. We three women are all alone in the house.

AUNT E. Yes, and I'm that frightened I know I'll die if I hear a mouse squeak.

MAGGIE. A mouse? Humph! It's more'n a mouse you'll hear this night. But you want to yell out of the west window, and yell loud, and I hope and pray the police will hear you and take the both of them to the station-house.

CHLOE. The both of them?

AUNT E. Maggie, what do you mean?

MAGGIE. I don't mean anything in particular, ma'am. It's only my nerves.

CHLOE. You talk as if you expected a burglar or two.

AUNT E. I'm sure nobody knows we're all alone in the house.

MAGGIE. There's some that knows, but I'll say no more. Only this, when you hear it you want open the west window and yell fer help as loud as you can.

CHLOE. When I hear what?

MAGGIE. I don't know jest what you will hear, but don't forget it's the *west* window you're to holler out of.

CHLOE. Oh, I'm beginning to be frightened already.

AUNT E. I think we'd better go over to my house.

CHLOE (*looks out of window*). But it's so dark outside, and the yard may be full of burglars.

MAGGIE. No'm, not full, only two of 'em, and them both inexperienced, as the sayin' is.

AUNT E. What do you mean? Did you see them, Maggie?

MAGGIE. I'll say no more, but go upstairs and hide under the bed. Good night and pleasant dreams to you, but remember it's the west window you're to holler out of. [EXIT D. L.

CHLOE. She's gone upstairs.

AUNT E. (*listening at L.*). She's locked her door.

CHLOE (*very frightened*). And we're all alone. Maggie doesn't care what might happen to us.

AUNT E. Why on earth did you order Raymond to stay away from the house?

CHLOE. Oh, I wish I hadn't. Suppose a burglar does come?

AUNT E. And we'll be murdered in our beds. Oh, Chloe! (*Clings to her*)

CHLOE. Maggie talked very suspiciously. I wonder if she can be a what-do-you-call-it?

AUNT E. An accomplice? I never thought of that.

CHLOE. She must be. That's why she told me to scream from the west window. She's in league with the burglars.

AUNT E. Oh, Chloe!

CHLOE. And they'll steal all my wedding presents. And the beautiful necklace Uncle Andy gave me, and my diamonds and everything. (*Weeps*)

AUNT E. Hark! (*Both listen tensely*) Did you hear anything?

CHLOE. I thought I did. (*Pause*) There it is again.

AUNT E. It's Maggie. She's snoring.

CHLOE. Oh, I'm so afraid. I wish I hadn't been such a s-s-silly goose about Raymond. If he were here I'm sure the burglars wouldn't dare come in.

AUNT E. I have an idea. You go and get Raymond's coat and hang it up in here. That will scare the burglars.

CHLOE. I'm afraid to go.

AUNT E. Come to the front room upstairs. We can lock the door and hide in the closet.

CHLOE. Maybe we'd better go into the kitchen. Burglars never go to the kitchen, and if they did we could hide in the flour barrels.

AUNT E. No, it's safer upstairs. Come.

CHLOE. Oh! (*Pause*) I thought I heard something.

AUNT E. It's your imagination. Come. (*They go out D. L. timidly. ANDY and DOCTOR appear at window with flash-lights*)

DOCTOR. Come on, it's all right. There's nobody here. (*They climb in*)

ANDY (*turns on the lights*). I guess they're all asleep.

DOCTOR (*tries D. L.*). The door isn't locked.

ANDY. No, I told Maggie to leave it open.

DOCTOR. I don't think your scheme will work at all. We'll both land in jail, and I've just gotten out. I tell you I've had

enough of that jail in three hours to last me the rest of my life.

ANDY. But you know how set in her ways Chloe is. Now this is going to be dead easy. See I'll pull my hat down like this, and slip on this handkerchief like this, then I'll slip in there. (*Points to L.*) I'll make a noise and that will frighten Chloe.

DOCTOR. But I don't want to frighten Chloe. She hates me enough now.

ANDY. Nonsense, she doesn't hate you. That's just her way. I'll frighten her. She'll think I'm a real burglar. She'll open the west window and scream for help—

DOCTOR. How do you know she will?

ANDY. I've got it all fixed with Maggie. She'll scream for help and you'll rush in and rescue her.

DOCTOR. Rescue who? Maggie?

ANDY. No—Chloe. She'll think you're a hero and receive you with open arms, and thus will bride and groom be reunited. See?

DOCTOR. No, I don't see. What good is it going to do to scare Chloe half to death by making her think you're a burglar?

ANDY. Well, as the matter stands now, she thinks she doesn't need a husband to protect her. She thinks she is able to take care of herself. We've got to show her that she's only a poor, weak, defenseless female, unable to protect herself from a burglar.

DOCTOR. Yes, but I don't see—

ANDY. Wait a minute and I'll explain. Now you go outside and hide in the garden while I go in and steal the silver.

DOCTOR. Steal the silver?

ANDY. Sure, I'll put it in a pillow case. We've got to make this thing realistic. She'll yell, you'll come in and we'll have a struggle.

DOCTOR. I'll bust your head. We've got to be realistic.

ANDY. No, no, we mustn't be *too* realistic. We'll just make a noise with a couple of chairs. Then I'll escape and she'll fall in your arms with her head on your shoulder. Now, let's get busy. Beat it.

DOCTOR (*at window*). Then I'm to wait till I hear her scream?

ANDY. Yes. Go around to the west side of the house. Maggie told her to scream out of the west window.

DOCTOR. All right. This is your scheme, remember. And if we get in any trouble about it, you've got to take the responsibility.

[EXIT *through window*.]

ANDY (*wearing handkerchief over face*). Ah, ha! Now for

the dirty work. First, I'll steal the silver. Then I'll come in here and turn over a chair. That will alarm Choe. It's working like a charm. Now for the silver!

[EXIT D. L. *melodramatically*. Pause. WALLACE *appears at window*.

WALLACE. This is a funny place. They always leave the window open and the lamp lit. The doc. is safe in jail and I guess the women are all alone. Wallace, me lad, here is your golden opportunity. (*He climbs in at the window*) First, I'll turn down the light. (*Stage lights $\frac{3}{4}$ down*) Now for me mask. (*Puts on handkerchief similar to ANDY'S*) I wonder where they keep the wedding presents. (*Flashes dark lantern around*) I've already got everything out of this room. (*Goes L.*) This is the door leading to the house. Now for a grand haul. (EXIT D. L. Pause. Then WALLACE and ANDY fall in from L. *struggling locked in embrace*) You will, will you. (*Forces ANDY to knees at L.*)

ANDY. Oh, it's all a mistake. It's all a mistake.

WALLACE (*taking sack from ANDY*). Got the silver, too. Have you? Take that and that! (*Hits him. ANDY falls L.*) This handkerchief will make a good gag. (*Gags ANDY*) This is about the easiest thing I ever struck. (*Up to window*) A cinch, a regular lead-pipe cinch. (*About to climb out of window. DOCTOR appears and holds him*)

DOCTOR. Hold on, I've caught you. (*DOCTOR gets in*)

WALLACE. Well, I'll be blown. (*They struggle, DOCTOR trips him and they both fall and roll over and over. Finally the table overturned. MAGGIE, AUNT EUDORA and CHLOE scream loudly off L.*)

DOCTOR. Have you got enough?

WALLACE (*underneath*). Yep, I've got enough. So help me Bob.

DOCTOR. Where's Chloe?

WALLACE. Where's who?

DOCTOR (*looks at him*). It isn't Uncle Andy! (*Gags WALLACE. Screams heard from L. HENN appears at window*)

HENN (*presenting revolver*). Hands up! I've got you.

ENTER D. L. MAGGIE, *in dressing-sack and ringing large dinner bell.*

MAGGIE. Help, murder, fire, police! (*Sinks in chair L.*) Oh, my nerves, my nerves.

HENN (*takes hold of DOCTOR*). And you've even got the silver, ain't you. We'd ought to have kept you in the jug when we had you.

MAGGIE. Take him away, and he used to be a respectable man before he took to burglerin'. And now the police has got him.

HENN (*to MAGGIE*). Turn up the light. (*She does so*)

MAGGIE. Oh, what a night. I ain't got a single nerve left in my constitution.

HENN. There's three of 'em. (*To doctor*) But, you're the chief. The girl don't give you a very good reputation, does she? (*Handcuffs DOCTOR to WALLACE*)

DOCTOR. You'll lose your job for this, my man. I tell you I am Doctor Bancroft.

HENN. And you dare say that to my face? When I caught you dead to rights with the silver and everything.

DOCTOR. This man (*Points to WALLACE*) robbed the house. It's my house. I caught him just as you climbed in at the window.

HENN (*goes to ANDY*). And who's this—another of the gang?

DOCTOR. That is my wife's uncle.

HENN (*to ANDY*). Come on. Get up. I want you too. You're arrested. (*ANDY gagged, makes inarticulate sounds*)

HENN (*removes his gag*). Now, come along with me. All of you.

MAGGIE. At his time of life, too. And the doctor who was just married this morning! He's leaving his bride a grass widder, as the sayin' is, and her just married. Well, I packs up my trunk and leaves this town to-morrow morning. I ain't goin' to work fer no burglars.

ENTER D. L. AUNT EUDORA and CHLOE.

AUNT E. Oh, what is it? What has happened?

CHLOE. Raymond! (*To AUNT EUDORA*) They've got him again.

HENN. You hear that, do you? (*To doctor*) You've been in trouble before, have you? I'll run the whole bunch of you in and hold this woman (*Points to MAGGIE*) as a witness.

MAGGIE. Run me in? *Me?* I ain't no burglar, if they are. I'm a lady what never yet has had nothing to do with the police. I wouldn't even get married to one when I had the chance,

and him me second cousin on me mother's side.

AUNT E. Andy, Andy, what does this mean?

ANDY. It's all a mistake. (*To HENN*) I guess you'll suffer for this. Don't you know me? I'm Judge Dusenberry, Judge Andy Dusenberry.

HENN. If you are, what are you doing here wearing a mask and with a couple of crooks?

ANDY. None of your business. This young woman is my niece. Can't I come to visit my niece if I want to? Is it any of your business?

MAGGIE. He came in through the window, sir. And I left it open by his orders. Oh, I'm sorry I listened to him, I am. To think that I should live to see this night!

HENN. Young woman, is this man your uncle?

CHLOE. Yes, sir. He is.

HENN. And is this one your husband?

CHLOE. Yes, sir.

HENN. What's the old one doing here, masked, at this time of night? Why did he come in through the window?

CHLOE. He was just making a friendly call. He always comes in through the window. He prefers to come in that way?

AUNT E. Officer, you're making a mistake. I am Miss Eudora Dodge and that man is my nephew, Doctor Bancroft.

HENN. But he was stealing the silverware.

CHLOE. He's got a perfect right to steal the silverware if he wants to. It's a wedding present and half of it belongs to him.

HENN. And who's this other one? (*To MAGGIE*) I suppose he is your husband come to make a friendly call?

MAGGIE. I never laid eyes on him before. And what's more I'm single and unattached to any husband.

DOCTOR. May I say a word?

HENN. Go ahead, but we'll hold it again you when the case comes up for trial.

DOCTOR. This man is evidently a professional burglar. My wife's uncle and myself simply laid a trap for him. We disguised ourselves as burglars in order to catch him. Now, do you understand?

WALLACE. It ain't so. This is my house. I came to call on my wife. I allers comes through the window. (*Points to AUNT EUDORA*) That lady is my wife.

AUNT E. I? Support me, Maggie, I'm going to faint.

HENN. Wait a minute. Don't faint yet. Is this man your husband?

AUNT E. He is not. He's a burglar. Take him away.

HENN. That settles it. (*Drags WALLACE to D. R., DOCTOR being handcuffed to him is also dragged R.*)

DOCTOR. Here, release me. I'm not a burglar.

HENN (*releases him*). And will you come down to the police station in the morning.

ANDY. Yes, we'll all come down. Surely you know me, Judge Andy Dusenberry.

HENN. Yes, I think your face looks familiar.

ANDY. Well, I'll vouch for this young man. He is Dr. Bancroft and *this* is his wife. That's all. Good night.

HENN. I dunno, but what I'm making a mistake.

DOCTOR. No, you've been making mistakes all day, but for once in your life you're doing the right thing.

HENN. Well, don't forget to report in the morning. Come on, you!

[EXIT D. R., *with* WALLACE.

CHLOE (*to DOCTOR at R.*). Ray, Ray, can you ever forgive me?

DOCTOR. Forgive you? Why, you're my wife. (*Embrace*).

AUNT E. Andy!

ANDY. Eudora, will you marry me?

AUNT E. Yes, Andy, I will. (*Embrace*)

MAGGIE. Oh, my nerves, my nerves! (L.)

QUICK CURTAIN.

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LODGERS TAKEN IN

A comedy in 3 acts, by Levin C. Tees. 6 male, 4 female characters, also 2 supernumeraries. 1 interior scene. Time, about 2½ hours. Costumes of to-day. A husband with a strong case of the "green-eyed monster" taking a trip abroad with his wife, places his home in charge of his ne'er-do-well nephew. By connivance the valet of the house and the nephew rent the rooms to a very mixed class of tenants, whose diversified characters present great opportunity for comedy acting. The dialogue is very bright, the action continuous and the situations most laughable. This is adapted from the same work upon which William Gillette's famous "All the Comforts of Home" is based, with all the comedy parts retained, but the remainder brought down for a smaller cast and shorter time.

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A rural farce comedy in 2 acts, by Robert Henry Diehl. 4 male, 3 female characters. 1 interior scene, very simple. Time, 1½ hours. Uncle Oliver, leading old man, and his wife are of the "Old Homestead" type of Yankee farmers. Jerusha the town gossip, the town constable and the selectman, contribute the many humorous episodes. The juvenile leads, male and female, are both very effective.

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A rural comedy in 3 acts, by Arolyn Caverly Cutting. 6 male, 9 female characters. 1 interior and 1 exterior scene. Time, 1½ hours. Costumes of to-day. Old man, Yankee farmer and three good character parts for the men. A negro maid, some spinsters and an excellent soubrette part for the ladies. Easily staged. A very superior play for amateurs.

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A farcical comedy in 4 acts, by Jos. H. Slater. 5 male, 3 female characters. Costumes of to-day. 2 interior scenes, both simple. Time, a full evening. Peter's troubles are caused largely by his desire to oblige his friends, and are of a social, financial and business character. He is employed in the law office of two typical unscrupulous pettifoggers, Grubbins & Bundy, who endeavor to appropriate Doris Chester's fortune, but in the end are foiled by Peter. Betsy, the comedy lead, shares with Peter in the fun making, as well as Adolphus Gudgeon, the English dude. Selwyn Kilby, a struggling artist, has the juvenile lead and has difficulty in escaping the wiles of the widow, Mrs. Barrington. Easily staged. Sure to please.

PRICE 25 CENTS

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An entertainment in 1 act, by Eleanor Maud Crane. 11 male, 12 female characters, and children. The number of characters may be decreased or increased to suit circumstances. One stage setting. Costumes varied. This entertainment is presented in a series of tableaux, simply or elaborately given. Any one or more tableaux may be omitted, or tableaux especially suiting specific occasions may be substituted. Music, vocal or instrumental, recitations, etc., may be introduced. Time, 1 hour, or more, according to number of tableaux used.

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ISABEL, THE PEARL OF CUBA. 4 Acts; 2 hours.....	9	3
LITTLE SAVAGE. 3 Acts; 2 hours; 1 Stage Setting.....	4	4
BY FORCE OF IMPULSE. (15 cents.) 5 Acts; 2½ hours	9	3
BETWEEN TWO FIRES. (15 cents.) 3 Acts; 2 hours	8	3

RURAL PLAYS

25 CENTS EACH

MAN FROM MAINE. 5 Acts; 2¼ hours.....	9	3
AMONG THE BERKSHIRES. 3 Acts; 2¼ hours.....	8	4
OAK FARM. 3 Acts; 2½ hours; 1 Stage Setting.....	7	4
GREAT WINTERSON MINE. 3 Acts; 2 hours.....	6	4
SQUIRE THOMPSON'S DAUGHTER. 5 Acts; 2½ hours	5	2
WHEN A MAN'S SINGLE. 3 Acts; 2 hours.....	4	4
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LETTER FROM HOME. (15 cents.) 1 Act; 25 minutes	1	1

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BACHELOR MAIDS' REUNION. 1 Scene.....	2	30
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JAPANESE WEDDING. 1 Scene; 1 hour.....	3	10
MATRIMONIAL EXCHANGE. 2 Acts; 2 hours.....	6	9
OLD PLANTATION NIGHT. 1 Scene; 1¼ hours.....	4	4
YE VILLAGE SKEWL OF LONG AGO. 1 Scene.	13	12
FAMILIAR FACES OF A FUNNY FAMILY.....	8	11
JOLLY BACHELORS. Motion Song or Recitation.....	11	
CHRISTMAS MEDLEY. 30 minutes.....	15	14
EASTER TIDINGS. 20 minutes.....	8	
BUNCH OF ROSES. (15 cents.) 1 Act; 1½ hours.....	1	13
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DEACON. 5 Acts; 2½ hours.	8	6
DELEGATES FROM DENVER. 2 Acts; 45 minutes....	3	10
DOCTOR BY COURTESY. 3 Acts; 2 hours.....	6	5
EASTSIDERS, The. 3 Acts; 2 hours; 1 Stage Setting.....	8	4
ESCAPED FROM THE LAW. 5 Acts; 2 hours.....	7	4
GIRL FROM PORTO RICO. 3 Acts; 2½ hours.....	5	3
GYPSY QUEEN. 4 Acts; 2½ hours.....	5	3
IN THE ABSENCE OF SUSAN. 3 Acts; 1½ hours.....	4	6
JAIL BIRD. 5 Acts; 2½ hours.....	6	3
JOSIAH'S COURTSHIP. 4 Acts; 2 hours.....	7	4
MY LADY DARRELL. 4 Acts; 2½ hours.....	9	6
MY UNCLE FROM INDIA. 4 Acts; 2½ hours.....	13	4
NEXT DOOR. 3 Acts; 2 hours.....	5	4
PHYLLIS'S INHERITANCE. 3 Acts; 2 hours.....	6	9
REGULAR FLIRT. 3 Acts; 2 hours.....	4	4
ROGUE'S LUCK. 3 Acts; 2 hours.....	5	3
SQUIRE'S STRATAGEM. 5 Acts; 2½ hours.....	6	4
STEEL KING. 4 Acts; 2½ hours.....	5	3
WHAT'S NEXT? 3 Acts; 2½ hours.....	7	4
WHITE LIE. 4 Acts; 2½ hours.....	4	3

WESTERN PLAYS

25 CENTS EACH

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RED ROSETTE. 3 Acts; 2 hours.....	6	3
MISS MOSHER OF COLORADO. 4 Acts; 2½ hours....	5	3
STUBBORN MOTOR CAR. 3 Acts; 2 hours; 1 Stage Setting	7	4
CRAWFORD'S CLAIM. (15 cents.) 3 Acts; 2¼ hours.	9	3

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