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No. 5 Hamilton Place, Boston, Massachusetts

A Couple of Million

An American Comedy in Four Acts

By

WALTER BEN HARE

*Author of "Professor Pepp," "Mrs. Tubbs of Shantytown,"
"The Heiress Hunters," "A College Town," "A Rustic
Romeo," "The Fascinators," "Teddy," "A Pageant of
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BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.

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A Couple of Million

THE PERSONS IN THE PLAY

BEMIS BENNINGTON.
HON. JEREMY WISE.
JAMES PATRICK BURNS, "*Stubby*."
PROFESSOR NOAH JABB.
BEVERLY LOMAN.
SQUIRE PIPER.
FAY FAIRBANKS.
MRS. CLARICE COURTENAY.
GENEVIEVE MCGULLY.
SAMMIE BELL PORTER.
PINK.

Several Hill-Billies.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—The law office of Hon. Jeremy Wise, New York City.
A morning in July.

ACT II.—The exterior of the court-house, Opaloopa, Alabama.
An afternoon in October.

ACT III.—Same as Act II. The next afternoon.

ACT IV.—Mrs. Courtenay's sitting-room, Opaloopa, Alabama.
A night in April.



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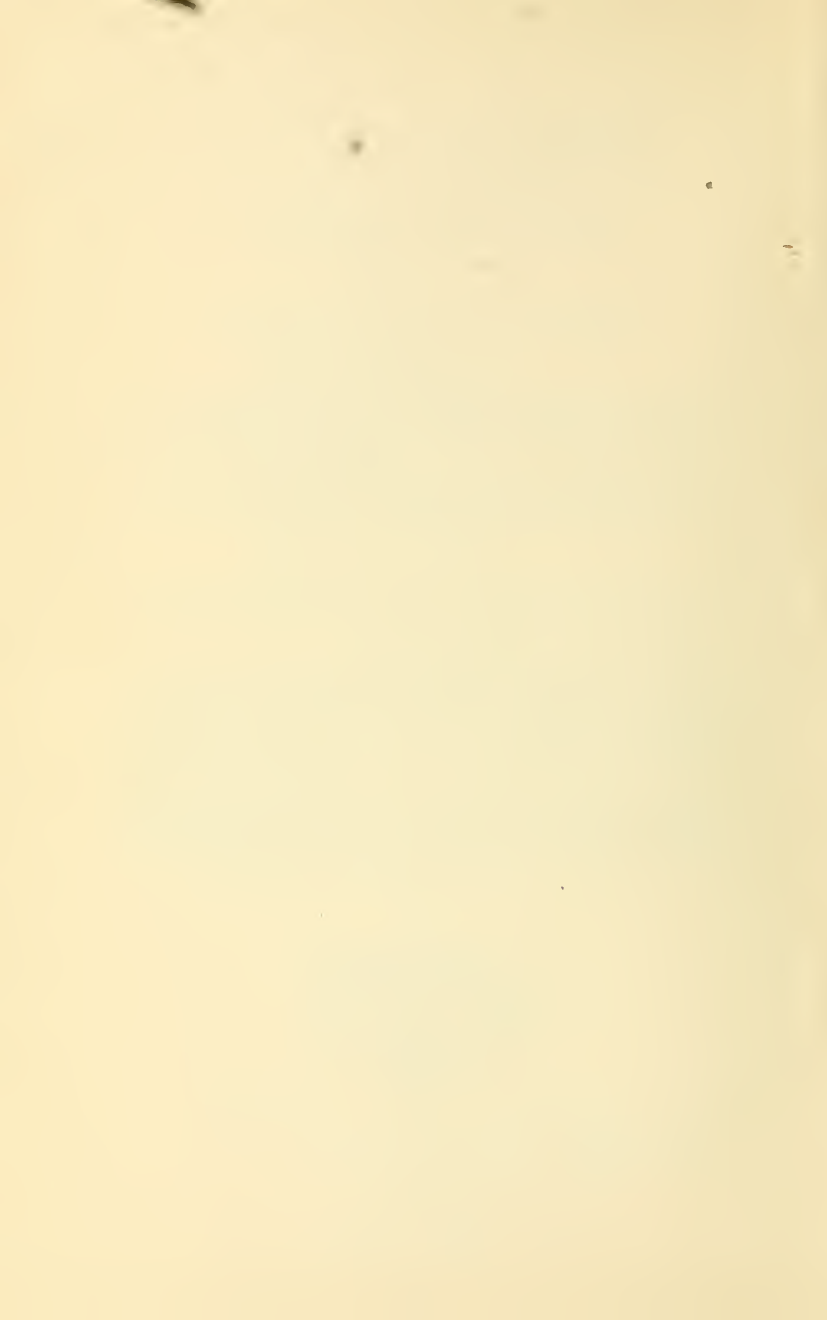
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A Couple of Million

ACT I

SCENE.—*The general waiting-room of the law offices of the HON. JEREMY WISE, on the sixteenth floor of the Cloudkisser Building, New York City. Plain, dark interior set with two entrances, one at L. to the elevator, and one at R. to the inner offices. Window at back, if desired, showing the upper stories of other tall office buildings in the distance. Neat office furniture. Large desk down R. with blotters, writing material, papers, documents, etc. Revolving chair at this desk. Small typewriter desk with machine and chair down L. Large dark rug on the floor. Leather couch up L. C. Visitors' chairs around stage. Clothes-rack with mirror at rear C. Large calendar, and a few neatly framed pictures on walls. Calendar shows the month of July. Other office furniture adds to the general effect, but is not essential. Waste basket and brass cuspidor near the larger desk down R. This desk faces the R. wall, so that a person seated thereat will present his left profile to the audience. The typewriter desk faces the audience. Lights on full throughout the act.*

(When the curtain rises there is no one on the stage. After a moment's pause the door at L. is heard being unlocked, then enter the HON. JEREMY WISE, mopping his brow with red silk handkerchief and fanning himself with a large palm-leaf fan. He takes plenty of time for his entrance before he speaks, and comes down C., puffing and blowing with the heat. He wears a white suit and a panama hat and is a short, stout man with a ruddy complexion.)

WISE *(after a pause)*. Nine-thirty and hot as blue and crimson blazes. *(Puts hat on rack and tucks handkerchief in*

collar.) Not a soul here. I wonder what my office boy and my stenographer think I'm paying them a salary for. I'll fire that boy. This is the seventeenth time he's been late this month, and it's only the twenty-first. Whew, it's hot! Any lawyer who stays in New York through the month of July is either a fool or a martyr to his profession. (*Removes coat and hangs it on the rack.*) I'll get rid of Bennington this morning, make short work of Professor Jabb, and then take a little recreation at the ball game this afternoon. (*Fans.*) Whew, but it's hot! [*Exits at R.*]

(*As soon as WISE leaves the stage, JAMES PATRICK BURNS, more familiarly known as STUBBY, is heard off L., whistling some popular air loudly. The whistling continues some little time, then enter STUB. from L., with the morning's mail, several letters, newspapers, official envelopes, etc.*)

STUB. Some hot, this, some hot. (*Comes to desk down R.*) There's the mail for his royal highness. (*Removes coat and cap, crosses up to rack and sees the coat and hat of WISE.*) Sufferin' seeds of pun'kins, the boss is here! I can see my finish now. Forty minutes late. Well, it wasn't my fault. The ferry was crippled, the subway lost its speed fer twenty minutes and the "el's" 'ell. (*Dusts desk and chair with feather duster.*) Whew, but it's hot! (*At L.*)

Enter WISE from R.

WISE (*at R.*). So you're here at last, are you? I thought maybe you weren't going to honor us with your company until this afternoon. Probably you'd like to have a half-holiday every morning.

STUB. (*crossing to c.*). Honest, Mr. Wise, the ferry —

WISE (*interrupting sarcastically*). The ferry was crippled, eh?

STUB. Yes, sir.

WISE. You forgot you told me that yesterday.

STUB. No, sir, I mean the subway —

WISE. Lost its power? It did that on Monday morning.

STUB. It was the "el" —

WISE. I suppose the elevated has suspended service. Where's the mail?

STUB. (*handing it to him*). Here it is.

WISE. Haven't seen anything of Miss McGully during your morning ramble, have you? (*Crosses to door R.*)

STUB. Gee, ain't that skirt here yet? She orter be fired. Honest, she gets worse and worse every week.

WISE. I think the entire force ought to be fired. Send her in as soon as she comes. [*Exit R.*]

STUB. (*seating himself at desk down R., opens newspaper and puts feet on the desk*). I just gotta get off for that game this afternoon. Teserau is goin' to pitch, and I'd ruther be canned from me job than miss that baby. He's some pitchin' kid with the spit-ball, some pitchin' kid.

(*Studies the sporting page.*)

Enter MISS GENEVIEVE MCGULLY from L. She minces in affectedly, hangs up her hat, arranges her hair in front of the mirror, powders her nose, etc. Take plenty of time for this business, fussing with hair, ribbons, etc.

GEN. (*turning and coming down stage affectedly to desk at L. She speaks with a pronounced drawl*). Good-morning, Stubby.

STUB. (*intent on the paper*). Mornin', skirt!

GEN. Say, Stubby, lemme have a peek at the front page, will y'?' I'm just crazy to see what they done to Blinky Huggs.

STUB. (*swinging around and facing her*). They tied the can on little Blinky all right, all right. The jury came in last night. See the head-lines! (*Shows her the paper.*) Guilty in the first degree. He goes to the chair in October.

(*Gives her the paper.*)

GEN. And him such a handsome guy, too. (*Looks at front page.*) Honest, James, how can a man with a nose like that be a wife murderer?

STUB. (*standing at c.*). Them's the very worstest ones. Say, Genevieve, there's some ball game this afternoon. Teserau is goin' to pitch. Goin'?

GEN. (*loftily*). Certainly not. (*Pronounced in genuine New Yorkese "Coitintly not."*) If I can get off, it's me fer the movies. (*Reads paper as STUB. returns to desk at R.*) The paper says Blinky Huggs never moved a muscle when the sentence was pronounced. Gee, it seems too bad to send such

a good-lookin' John to the chair, when there's so many old maids in New York. It's a crime, kid, it's a crime.

(*Reads intently.*)

STUB. Say, when you git through readin' all the particulars about the murder, Mr. Wise'd like to see you in his private office.

GEN. (*starting*). Heavings, is he here? (*Rises.*)

STUB. You'd better believe he is. You're an hour late.

GEN. It was the ferry. She had a breakdown.

STUB. Nix on the ferry, skirt. I tried to spring that meself.

GEN. What's he doing?

STUB. Workin' up the morning's mail. Say, Genevieve ——

GEN. (*interrupting loftily*). Miss McGully, if you please, James.

STUB. My gracious, who put *that* record on the Victrola?

GEN. I'm Genevieve only to them as knows me best.

STUB. Then you're Jen to me, 'cause there ain't no one in little old New York who's got a better line on you than me. Just take it down in shorthand, kid, and paste it on the front page.

GEN. Don't be impertinent, little boy. (*Sits at desk L.*)

STUB. Ring the bell, ring the bell; you've reached your station. Me name is James Patrick Burns, and I'm known to them as loves me best as Stubby. So jest tie a tin can on that "little boy" stuff. I'm goin' on seventeen and shave meself oncet every two weeks.

GEN. (*sarcastically*). Mercy, you'll soon be a man, won't you?

STUB. You'd better get busy and pick off some of them letters the boss gave you to do yesterday. Mr. Wise told me confidentially that I was the only one on the force who kep' me work up to date.

GEN. (*feeling under the typewriter desk*). James Patrick Burns, some one has stole my gum.

STUB. Not guilty. I don't use it. Ask the scrub lady.

GEN. (*petulantly*). Things is always disappearing around this office. I never saw such a place. I certainly will be happy when I can leave and get settled in my own little home.

STUB. Has that hick fell for you at last? Has he give you the ring and signed the document?

GEN. (*loftily*). Mr. Stebbins might not be a typical New Yorker, James Patrick Burns, but he is far from a hick, and

well you know it. He makes twenty-two a week and is buyin' a home on the installment plan.

STUB. He is, is he? Well, take a little tip from Stubby, skirt. You'll be a inmate on the ground floor of the Old Ladies' Home afore he kicks in enough to git anything in the real estate line.

GEN. I wish you would kindly refrain from buttin' into affairs that don't in no possible way concern you. Just because I am forced by the tidal wave of circumstance to work in the same office with you is no reason at all why you should dare to presume to address me as an equal in society.

STUB. Aw, tell it to the ice-man. You've been readin' Bertha M. Clay again. You'd better take your little book and do a fox-trot into the private office and explain to his nibs why you're over an hour late.

GEN. (*rising with note-book in hand*). You are beneath my notice. (*Crosses to door R.*) Did you get that? Most unequivocally beneath my notice. [*Exits R. loftily.*]

STUB. (*after a slight pause*). Gee, what a happy life we men 'ud have if only these here skirts 'ud leave us alone.

(*Spreads out the sporting page on the desk, leans on his two arms and is deeply absorbed in the paper.*)

Enter PROFESSOR NOAH JABB from L. He crosses to C., looks at STUB., coughs gently to attract his attention, faces front and poses. STUB. is seated with his back toward JABB.

JABB. Hem! (*Louder.*) Hem! Is Mr. Wise in this morning?

STUB. Gee whiz, look what the cat brought in! (*Rises.*) Sure he's in, but he's busy just now dictatin' to the stenog. Take a seat and have a look at the sporting page. (*Offers paper.*) Say, Boston is playing "some" ball!

JABB (*sitting at rear of stage*). Thank you, I don't care for sports.

STUB. No? I thought ye didn't when y' said, "hem, hem!" We ain't got no Needlework Magazine, but here's the front page of the morning dope. All about the sentence of Blinky Huggs.

JABB (*with a rising inflection*). Blinky Huggs?

STUB. Sure. You know Blinky, don't y'? He's the wife-murderer. Goes to the chair in October and him only twenty-one.

JABB. I am not interested in such a specimen of depravity. My dear young man, why don't you interest yourself in something on a higher plane?

STUB. Higher plane? What kind of a air-ship is a higher plane?

JABB. I mean you should read something that will develop your mentality. Something like "Sesame and Lilies," or Ralph Waldo Emerson. I am very, very fond of Ralph Waldo Emerson's work.

STUB. Say, you orter see Teserau's work. Believe me, he's some pitchin' baby with that spit-ball.

JABB. What time will Mr. Wise be at liberty?

STUB. At liberty? He's at liberty now. You didn't think he was doin' time, did y'?

JABB (L. C.). Then please tell him that Professor Noah Jabb of Opalooopa (*pronounce the first letter of Opalooopa with the short sound*), Alabama, would like to speak to him.

STUB. Come again, please.

JABB. I beg your pardon?

STUB. Oh, don't mention it. Only gimme the handle again.

JABB (*bewildered*). The handle? Give you the handle?

STUB. Sure. The James Henry. The moniker. The handle.

JABB (*puzzled*). Moniker? Handle?

STUB. The name. (*Spells.*) The n-a-m-e, name. Gimme the name.

JABB. Oh, you mean my appellation?

STUB. That's it. Gimme your apple. I didn't get it the first time.

JABB. I am Professor Noah Jabb of Opalooopa, Alabama.

STUB. No wonder you call it a apple.

JABB. Has Mr. Bennington been in this morning?

STUB. Not yet, but he generally drops in every morning.

JABB. At about what hour?

STUB. Whenever he gets up. Sometimes it's earlier and sometimes it's later; it's hardly ever just about.

JABB. He and Mr. Wise are very good friends, I take it?

STUB. The best in the world. The boss is his guardeen until he comes of age. Mr. Bennington's uncle cashes in last month and leaves him a bushel of money.

JABB. Yes, yes, I know all about that.

STUB. Pretty soft for Mr. Bennington, ain't it?

JABB (*puzzled*). Soft?

STUB. Sure. Easy money, you know. Gee, I wish't the old gent had 'a' been my uncle. And maybe Mr. Bennington ain't tickled? He's as happy as a sixty-year old chicken hunter at three P. M. on the sunny side of Broadway where the chicks are as thick as fleas. Mr. Bennington is some boy, he is!

JABB. A boy? I thought he was a young man. He will be twenty-one a week from to-morrow.

STUB. Oh, he's a man all right. "Some" man! And he's some boy, too.

JABB. His uncle was Mr. Silas P. Chizzleton. My dear old friend, Silas P. Chizzleton. (*Takes out handkerchief and wipes eyes.*) He was a good man, a wonderfully good man, and he died just a month ago to-day. (*Sniffs and wipes eyes.*)

STUB. (*to the audience*). Get onto the human water-wagon.

JABB. Poor old Mr. Chizzleton. He was a good man and it will be long before we see his like again. (*Shakes head mournfully.*) It's the way of the world. Here to-day and gone to-morrow. Poor old Mr. Chizzleton.

STUB. (*to audience*). Somebody go and turn off the faucet. The sink's leaking.

JABB. My emotions are so easily aroused. He was my friend, and I have a sympathetic nature. (*Wipes eyes.*)

Enter GEN. from R. She crosses to her desk at L. and works on her note-book.

GEN. Mr. Wise is at liberty now, James.

STUB. (*going up to JABB*). What'd y' say yer name was?

JABB. Professor Noah Jabb of Opaloopa, Alabama.

STUB. I got y'. (*Mumbles.*) 'Fessor Noah Blabb, Loop-de-loopa, Banana. [*Exits at R.*]

(*JABB resumes his seat up R. Enter BEMIS BENNINGTON from L. He enters jauntily and is whistling. He comes down C. and addresses GEN.*)

BEMIS. Good-morning, little bunch of violets. How doth my Lady Genevieve this bright and blithesome morning?

GEN. (*skittishly*). Aw, quit yer kiddin', Mr. Bennington. There's others present here beside ourselves. Ain't it hot this morning?

BEMIS (*airily*). Rather warm, rather warm. Boss down yet?

GEN. Yes, sir. Mr. Wise is in his private office. This gen'leman is waiting to see him. (*Smiles at BEMIS.*) Take a seat, Mr. Bennington; it don't cost no more.

BEMIS (*sitting at desk down R. facing GEN.*). Thanks, I believe I will.

Enter WISE from R. followed by STUB.

WISE (*meeting JABB up R. and shaking hands with him*). Good-morning, professor. I hope I haven't kept you waiting long.

JABB. Not at all, not at all.

WISE (*coming to BEMIS who rises*). Hello, Bemis (*pronounce the name with the short sound of the "e"*), my boy. Professor, this is Mr. Bennington. Bemis, this is Professor Jabb of Opoloopa, a very old friend of your uncle.

(Stands R. C. between BEMIS and JABB.)

JABB. Yes, indeed. Poor old Mr. Chizzleton. Just a month ago to-day. I can hardly realize it. (*Wipes eyes.*) You must excuse me, I am filled with emotion. Poor old Mr. Chizzleton.

BEMIS. Yes, awfully sad, wasn't it? I never saw my uncle in my life, but it was quite a blow just the same. Poor old uncle.

JABB. Poor old Mr. Chizzleton! You bear quite a strong resemblance to him, young man. He was a wonderful man, Mr. Bennington, a wonderful man. The estate is estimated at over two million, I believe.

STUB. (*at rear L. C., imitating the tone of JABB*). Poor old Mr. Chizzleton! (*Wipes his eyes.*)

WISE (*reprovingly*). James!

(Goes to him and talks in pantomime.)

JABB (*at C., wiping his eyes*). But he has gone to a better land. He has gone to a better land.

BEMIS (*mopping brow*). Hotter'n blazes, ain't it?

JABB. Sir?

BEMIS. The weather, I mean. Awful hot this morning.

JABB (*turning to WISE who comes down L. C.*). We are to learn the contents of the will this morning, I take it, Mr. Wise?

WISE. Yes. Stubby, go into the outer office and see that no one interrupts us.

STUB. Yes, sir, I'm on.

[Exits L.]

WISE. Miss McGully, you can finish your work in my private office.

GEN. Yes, sir.

[Exits R. with note-book.]

WISE (crossing to desk R., opens small drawer of desk and takes out a document). Here is the will.

JABB (crossing to desk at L., sits). Ah!

(Rubs hands together, smiles, cocks head on one side.)

BEMIS (drawing chair to c. and sitting). Shoot ahead. We're all ready.

JABB (L.). Yes, let us hear how dear old Mr. Chizzleton has disposed of his property.

WISE (seated at desk R., putting on spectacles). The will is very brief, but perfectly legal, gentlemen, perfectly legal. I drew it up myself. (Swings around in chair, facing L.) The estate amounts to over two million dollars.

JABB (eagerly). As much as that? (Wipes eyes.) Poor old Mr. Chizzleton!

WISE. I thought you might be interested, professor, so I asked you to call this morning. It was fortunate that you were in New York.

JABB. Indeed it was. I seldom leave Alabama, but since I've been working in the interest of our college, I have had to travel somewhat extensively. We are returning to Opalooa this afternoon.

WISE. We?

JABB. Yes. I am escorting two estimable ladies from my home town, sir. They are doing some summer shopping here in New York. I believe you have the honor of their acquaintance, Mr. Wise. Mistress Courtenay and Miss Fairbanks.

WISE. Yes, indeed. I had the pleasure of meeting them when I visited Mr. Chizzleton in Opalooa last winter. Charming ladies, sir, charming. I trust I shall have an opportunity of seeing them before they leave New York.

JABB. Yes, for they intend to stop for me here this morning.

WISE (putting on coat, arranging tie, etc., posing in front of the mirror, then coming down R.). Bemis, my boy, that will be a treat for you. A charming rosebud and a full blown rose, fresh from the sun and dew of old Alabama.

BEMIS (to audience). Me for the sun and dew of old Alabama.

JABB (impatiently). But the will, Mr. Wise, the will.

WISE (*resuming his seat at the desk*). Ah, yes, of course. A short time before his death Mr. Chizzleton disposed of all his houses, stocks and bonds and all other property, and converted everything into ready money.

JABB (*seated at L.*). Very sensible. Your late uncle was a very sensible man, Mr. Bennington. Ah, me! (*Wipes eyes.*) We're here to-day and gone to-morrow.

WISE. The money was placed in the Ninth National Bank and amounts to exactly (*looking at the will*) two million, three thousand, two hundred and ninety dollars.

JABB (*eagerly*). My, my! (*Rubs his hands together.*) Quite a tidy little fortune. Two million, three thousand, two hundred and ninety dollars. He was such a persevering gentleman. We shall not soon look upon his like again.

(*Wipes eyes.*)

WISE. According to this, his last will and testament, every cent goes to his dearly beloved nephew, Bemis Bennington.

JABB (*aghast*). What!

WISE. Every cent is left to Mr. Bennington.

JABB. Every cent to Mr. Bennington?

BEMIS. A couple of million dollars to me? *To me?*

WISE (*smiling*). To you.

BEMIS. Excuse me, I feel thirsty. (*Goes up to cooler and drinks three glasses of water in quick succession, the others looking at him.*) I feel better now. (*Resumes his seat.*) A couple of million? Gee, how'll I ever be able to spend that much?

WISE (*importantly*). Just a moment. There is a codicil to the will.

BEMIS } (*together*). A codicil?
JABB }

BEMIS (C.). What's a codicil?

WISE (*at R.*). A condition.

BEMIS (*comically*). Good-night! I knew there must be a condition. A couple of million seemed too good to be true.

JABB (*rubbing hands together and speaking rapidly*). Well, what is it? What is it? What is the codicil? Go on and let us know what the condition is. What is it? (L.)

WISE (*reading the will*). First you must move to a town of less than five thousand inhabitants and reside in said town for the period of one year.

BEMIS. That's easy. When can I get the first train out to ———? (*Insert name of some near-by town.*)

JABB. Is that all the condition? Go on and read the rest of the codicil.

WISE (*reading*). Secondly, you must marry within six months from the time this will is read.

JABB (*delightedly*). Ah, ha! That's not so easy.

BEMIS. Gimme my hat.

WISE. What for?

BEMIS. Going out to find a bride. That's dead easy. Especially here in ———. (*Insert name of town where play is held.*) The woods are full of 'em.

WISE (*seriously*). Thirdly ———

BEMIS (*at c., interrupting*). Oh, there's a thirdly, is there? These codicils get more interesting as they go along.

WISE (*reading*). Thirdly, during your stay in the town mentioned in Codicil Number One, you must by your own efforts accumulate five thousand dollars, without one cent of this fortune to start on.

JABB (*rubbing his hands delightedly*). Ah, ha! Accumulate five thousand dollars in one year in a town of less than five thousand inhabitants. It can't be done.

BEMIS. I'm afraid it can't. That's the codicil that scratches the race. It's the worst one of all. Are there any more, Mr. Wise? Would he like me to commit murder or become the president of the Standard Oil Company, or any little thing like that?

WISE. No, there are only three codicils attached to the document.

BEMIS. Thank Heaven, Uncle Silas passed peacefully away before he thought of anything else.

WISE (*reading*). In case these conditions are obeyed to the satisfaction of my executor, the Honorable Jeremy Wise, he will be instructed to turn over my entire fortune to the said Bemis Bennington.

JABB (*sarcastically*). You are indeed a fortunate young man, sir. A couple of million dollars are yours if you fulfil the conditions.

BEMIS. Yes, if I do.

JABB (*to WISE*). But where do I come in, Mr. Wise? Surely you have not asked me to come here to listen to the will and the codicils? Something seems to tell me that my dear old friend, Mr. Chizzleton, has not entirely forgotten me.

WISE. Here is where you come in. (*Reads.*) In case my nephew, the said Bemis Bennington, does not fulfil the above specified conditions to the satisfaction of said Jeremy Wise, my entire fortune is to revert to my old friend and associate, Professor Noah Jabb of Opalooa, Alabama. And it is understood that he is to use one million dollars of said estate in an effort to persuade young and susceptible men to attend his college and seminary at Opalooa.

JABB (*rubbing his hands gleefully*). How generous! How very, very generous. Dear old Mr. Chizzleton! My, my, what a lot of good I can accomplish with a couple of million. I'll build a vivisectioning laboratory, and I'll visit the harems of Turkey every other year. (*Hastily.*) In the interest of social advancement, gentlemen, in the interest of social advancement.

BEMIS. Hold on, professor; you are forgetting all about little Bemis. (*Pronounce the name with short "e."*)

JABB (*meeting BEMIS at L. C.*). To be quite frank with you, young man, I don't think you can ever fulfil the conditions of your uncle's will. He never expected you to do so. Earn five thousand dollars in one year in a town of less than five thousand inhabitants! Preposterous! That was just a little joke of your late uncle.

BEMIS (*seriously*). It may have been a little joke, Professor Jabb, but I'm something of a little joker myself. And in this case the last little joker is going to take the trick.

WISE (*shaking hands with BEMIS*). That's right, my boy, that shows the proper spirit. Remember a man is never out of the fight until the referee counts ten. Go in and win.

JABB (*taking small note-book from pocket*). Perhaps, my dear Mr. Wise, you'd like to make a small contribution to my seminary. You saw the work we were doing when you were in Alabama last winter?

WISE. Not me. It's too hot to make a contribution to-day.

JABB. Perhaps you would contribute a little something for our orphan asylum?

WISE. I might contribute a little boy or two. How would that do?

JABB. I must show you the prospectus of our seminary. And the catalogue. It contains views that will interest you, I'm sure. I have several copies at my hotel. I'll go over and get them. And then if you care to make a little contribution —

WISE. But it's too hot to make —

JABB. Oh, no trouble at all. I'll be back in ten minutes. The ladies are to meet me here. In case they come please tell them that I will return immediately. (*Gets hat from rack.*)

WISE. But really, professor, there isn't any use in——

JABB. It's a pleasure, I'm sure. I'll return in ten minutes. You simply must see our catalogue and prospectus. (*Crosses to door L.*) No trouble at all. No trouble at all. [*Exits L.*]

WISE. Well, what do you think of that?

BEMIS (C.). I'm too excited to think. Five minutes ago I thought I was a millionaire. But those codicils queered the whole business.

WISE. Maybe it won't be as difficult as you think. And what a reward! A couple of million. Just think of that.

BEMIS. And just think of those codicils.

WISE. First you must get married.

BEMIS. Oh, I'm not worrying about that at all.

WISE. Then you have some one in mind?

BEMIS. No one in particular.

WISE. Then you're not in love?

BEMIS. I don't think so. I still eat three meals every day and am able to look the full moon square in the face without a single sigh.

WISE. Have you ever been in love?

BEMIS. I forget. You see I've been at college for the past six years and college love is like a glass of water. Once you've tasted something stronger you forget such a thing ever existed. (*Enter GEN. from R. She crosses to her desk at L. BEMIS, C., to WISE.*) Do you know of any respectable town of less than five thousand inhabitants in this vicinity?

WISE. Oh, that part will be easy. The first thing to do is for you to find a wife.

GEN. (*involuntarily*). Good Heavings!

(*She collects herself and types rapidly.*)

WISE. Did you say something, Miss McGully?

GEN. No, sir. I was just reading my notes.

(*Types rapidly.*)

WISE (*coming to BEMIS*). Have you ever seen Miss Fairbanks, Bemis?

BEMIS. Don't recall the name.

(*GEN. listens.*)

WISE. She's the girl from Alabama who is here with Professor Jabb. Some girl, Bemis. They say she is the belle of the whole state. She's a blonde with eyes like deep blue violets.

BEMIS. Her address, please.

WISE. Didn't you hear him say that she would be here presently? Stick around a while. Maybe you can get married before she goes back to Alabama this afternoon.

BEMIS (*hopefully*). Maybe I can. Blonde, is she?

WISE. Perfect.

BEMIS. I'm partial to blondes. My favorite dessert.

WISE. I may not be a judge, but in my opinion she's about the prettiest little lady I've seen in a coon's age. I went down to visit your uncle last winter, and the whole town seemed to be crazy about Miss Fairbanks. And when I saw her, well —

(*Pauses.*)

BEMIS. Yes?

(*GEN. works on note-book through this scene.*)

WISE. I agreed with the town.

BEMIS. But how about earning that five thousand in a year?

WISE. Come into my private office and we'll talk it over.

[*Exits R.*

BEMIS (*crossing down to L. C.*). Say, Miss McGully, I want to ask you a question.

GEN. (*starting*). Heavings, how you started me. (*Pause.*)

Yes, Mr. Bennington? (*Looks up at him archly.*)

BEMIS. Do you believe in such a thing as love at first sight?

GEN. (*dramatically*). Do I? I do. I believe in the working of human destiny.

BEMIS. I saw a girl at the hotel to-day. I don't know who she is. She was a blonde. Do you think she could fall in love at first sight? (*Rattled.*) Do you think I could fall in love? Do you think that she—that I—I mean, that we—I mean—hanged if I know what I *do* mean.

GEN. I know what you mean, Mr. Bennington. It is as clear to me as is the little babbling brook. You are in love.

BEMIS. No, I don't think I am. Not that bad —

GEN. (*positively*). You are in love. I know its every symptom.

BEMIS. And do you think a girl could care for me? A

wonderful girl, I mean. A goddess. Would such a thing be possible?

GEN. If it's me you mean, I'm sorry to have to say that I am compelled by the workings of a cruel fate to blight your hopes at the very outset. I fain would not be cruel to you, Mr. Bennington (*BEMIS is slightly amused*), but another has won my maiden heart and affections. I would not wound you lightly, but alas I am engaged.

BEMIS. And did you fall in love at first sight? Did it come to you all of a sudden?

GEN. It did. He's a chauffeur. He run over my step-mother one night and brung her home. I admitted him. The next day we was engaged.

(*WISE appears at door R.*)

WISE. Bemis, come here. I've thought of a plan.

[*Exits R.*]

BEMIS. All right, I'm on. Excuse me, Genevieve.

[*Exits R.*]

GEN. (*gazing dreamily at the audience*). And him, too. Ain't it fierce? But such is the workings of a cruel fate. Now maybe he'll die of a broken heart, er just pine himself away. Ah, me! (*Poses.*)

Enter STUB. from L.

STUB. Say, there's a couple o' dames out here that say they're lookin' fer some guy named Jabb. I guess they mean the party from Loop-de-loopa, Banana. Shall I tell the boss?

GEN. Mr. Wise is engaged just now with Mr. Bennington.

STUB. (*at c.*). Say, I'm goin' to strike the boss for a raise in me pay this afternoon.

GEN. (*sarcastically*). And you'll get it. I don't think.

STUB. If I don't I'm goin' to tie a can on the job, that's what. I'm sick of this town anyway. I want to travel and see the country. There's a kid down on the thirteenth floor who's been all the way to New Joisey.

GEN. What 'ud your folks say?

STUB. Me folks? I ain't got no folks. I'm de head of my fambly and likewise the foot. I live in a boardin' house.

GEN. Well, take it from me, you'd better hold on to your job while the holdin' is good. There ain't nothin' to these other towns, kid. New York is the only place that's marked on my map, see!

STUB. What's the boss chinning with Mr. Bennington about?

GEN. (*importantly*). He's tryin' to find him a wife.

STUB. (*doubtingly*). Since when has he been whisperin' that in your receiver?

GEN. (*loftily*). He don't have to. I got a woman's keen intuition, and I can read the heart where love holds sway like a open book.

STUB. (*laughing*). Oh, mumma, pass the mush!

GEN. You sneer 'cause you ain't never felt the tender pash. Ain't there nothin' that ever stirs your inmost being?

STUB. Sure, they is. It gits stirred when I see —— (*naming baseball star*) get busy, when there's three on base.

Enter WISE from R.

WISE (*drinking at cooler*). Whew, it's hot!

STUB. (R.). There's a couple of dames in the outer office waitin' fer Mr. Jabb from Loop-de-loopa, Banana.

WISE (*very enthusiastically*). Ah, ha, she's here. I'll send Bemis out to look her over. She's pretty, isn't she, Stubby?

STUB. (*unmoved*). Pretty fair, pretty fair. Kind of a sawed-off little chicken though.

WISE. He doesn't know a good-looking girl when he sees one, does he, Miss McGully?

GEN. (*with great contempt*). Him? He ain't got out o' knee trousers yet!

WISE (*averting a storm*). Show the ladies in here, Stubby.

[*Exits R.*

STUB. (*crossing to door L., and speaking off stage*). The boss says for youse to come in here. Professor'll be back directly.

Enter MRS. CLARICE COURTENAY from L., followed by FAY

FAIRBANKS. MRS. C. comes down R. FAY stands up near door L. STUB. at rear C. GEN. down L. at desk.

MRS. C. Are we to wait in here, little boy?

STUB. (*looking all around stage to see whom she is addressing*). "Little boy"?

GEN. (*to STUB., guying him*). Little boy!

(*Laughs at him.*)

STUB. (*down L. C., to GEN.*). That rings their bell. Young

man, or boy, yes! But "little boy"! And right to me very face. And I shave oncet every two weeks.

MRS. C. Is Mr. Wise engaged? (*Smiles sweetly at STUB.*)

STUB. (*frowning and speaking majestically*). I know nothing whatsomever about his love affairs, madam.

MRS. C. I mean has he a business engagement?

STUB. Oh, yes. He's just full of them things.

MRS. C. (*sitting at desk at R.*). Fay, I think I'll buy that little silver vanity case I was admiring down in the lobby. Won't you get it for me? I'll wait here. That elevator fairly took my breath away.

FAY. Why, certainly, Aunt Clarice. Do you want the sterling silver kind?

MRS. C. Yes. The twelve dollar one.

FAY. Yes, auntie. I'll be right back. [*Exits L.*]

STUB. (*handing MRS. C. the sporting page*). Here, take a peep at the sporting page while you're waiting. The Giants is playing some ball. Or maybe you're fanning for the Hilltops.

MRS. C. Did you say that Mr. Wise was busy?

STUB. Yes; he's chinning with a guy in there.

MRS. C. (*annoyed*). Did you tell him that Mistress Clarice Courtenay of Opaloopa, Alabama, was here?

STUB. Yes, ma'am, every word. (*Points to paper.*) Say, that guy Tinker is some hot tamale, I guess yes.

GEN. (*crossing to MRS. C. as STUB. goes to rear c.*). Perhaps you don't care for sports. Here is the front page. All about poor Blinky Huggs. He's got to go to the chair. (*Bell rings off stage at R.*) Stubby, there's your bell. Mr. Wise wants you.

STUB. (*rising slowly from chair at rear*). Gee, nothin' to do but work. [*Exits R.*]

GEN. That boy gets lazier every day he lives. Honest, he's so lazy that he hates to draw his breath.

Enter STUB. from R.

STUB. (*grandly*). Miss McGully, the private office fer yours. Bring your note-book. [*Exits R.*]

GEN. (*loftily*). Oh, very well. [*Exits R. with note-book.*]

MRS. C. I wonder why Fay doesn't come back. I hope there hasn't been an accident in the elevator. (*Looks at watch.*) Eleven o'clock, and the professor not here yet. I sure hope we don't miss the train; I'm so anxious to get back to Opaloopa this week.

(Opens paper, full page, and reads.)

Enter BEMIS from R. He comes down C., arranging collar. He does not see MRS. C., as she holds the paper between them.

BEMIS. The belle of Alabama, eh? A perfect blonde with violet eyes! Bemis, my boy, here is your chance to fulfil one of uncle's codicils. *(Looks at MRS. C. but cannot see her face.)* Pretty neat, pretty neat. These Dixie girls are perfect dreams. *(Coughs slightly.)* Hem! I beg your pardon.

MRS. C. *(sweetly)*. I am waiting for Professor Jabb.

(Drops the paper.)

BEMIS *(looking at her, showing surprise in his face)*. Jumping Jupiter!

MRS. C. *(sweetly)*. Sir?

BEMIS *(rattled)*. I beg your pardon. I was expecting some one else. A lady from Opalooa, Alabama. Blonde, you know, with violet eyes. My mistake, I assure you.

MRS. C. *(rising and taking one step toward him)*. I am from Opalooa.

BEMIS *(astounded)*. You are! *(To audience.)* Mr. Wise must have been drinking too much city water. He needs to have his eyesight examined.

MRS. C. You have a message for me?

BEMIS. Yes. From Professor Jabb. He has gone over to the hotel for a catalogue of his college. He told me to tell you that he would return in ten minutes. That's all.

(Starts to exit, R.)

MRS. C. *(crossing to L. C. and speaking coyly)*. Are you in such a hurry?

BEMIS *(R. C.)*. Yes. In an awful hurry. Awfully important case, you know. Mr. Wise is trying to find me a victim. I'm a doomed man. He needs me for consultation. Good-morning. So glad I met you.

MRS. C. So you are a friend of Professor Jabb?

BEMIS. Well, not exactly, only an acquaintance. Good-morning. I hope you have a pleasant journey. You're leaving this afternoon, I believe?

MRS. C. Yes, and it's such a long, lonesome trip. We

all 'll certainly miss New York when we get back home. It's such a bustling city. It sure is.

BEMIS. Yes, so it is. But I think I hear Mr. Wise calling for me. Awfully important case, you know. Good-morning.

[*Exits at R.*

MRS. C. Good-morning. (*To audience.*) What a pleasant young man. These New Yorkers sure are delightful. So chivalrous and thoughtful. (*Looks at watch.*) I wonder what can be keeping the professor. And Fay has been gone long enough to purchase a dozen vanity cases. I reckon I'd better go down in the lobby and search for her. [*Exits L.*

Enter GEN. from R. She crosses to hat-rack and puts on her hat, powders her nose, etc. Makes faces in the glass as she primps and poses. Take plenty of time for this business. Enter STUB. from R. He stands at R. and watches her. She is at rear L.

STUB. (*after a pause*). Say, where d' y' think yer goin' ? Out to take lunch with J. Pierpont Astorbilt, er down to the Dairy where each one grabs fer himself at a nickel a grab ?

GEN. (*up L.*). I guess you got your raise in salary—(*pausing*) not !

STUB. That's how I got it, not ! Say, you wanter be back here in an hour, er the boss is liable to forget that you got any salary coming to you at all.

GEN. Humph ! (*Flounces to 'door at L., then turns.*) You may be sweet sixteen, little boy, but you ajn't cut your wisdom teeth yet and you still belong in the infant class. Get me ? The infant class ! [*Exits L.*

STUB. Gee, she's a fresh skirt. All 'a time slingin' it into me.

Enter WISE from R. followed by BEMIS.

WISE (*up R. C.*). Well, if you weren't captivated by her all I can say is that you don't know a pretty girl when you see one. (*Moves to hat-rack.*)

BEMIS (*down R. C.*). How old is this Alabama blossom, Mr. Wise ?

WISE. Not a day over nineteen, not a day.

BEMIS (*astounded*). Nineteen ! You mean forty-nine.

WISE. Nonsense. It affects your eyesight to get up in the morning. You don't see clearly until afternoon. But get your hat and we'll go to lunch.

BEMIS. Thank you, but I think I'll wait here. I want to study the railroad time-tables in the paper. I think I'll pull out to my little town of less than five thousand to-night. The early bird makes hay while the sun shines.

WISE (*putting on hat, etc.*). Well, good luck to you. Will you be here when I get back?

BEMIS. Sure. Don't hurry.

WISE. I won't. It's too hot to hurry. Be back at one.

[*Exits L.*

BEMIS (C.). Stubby, how would you like to leave New York?

STUB. (*down R., speaking eagerly*). Finest thing in the world. I was just tellin' the stenog that I was getting dead warped on this burg. I'd like to go out where they have mountains.

BEMIS. That's not a bad idea. I believe I would too. Some place out in Colorado where it's nice and cool.

STUB. Colorado? Is that in New Jersey?

BEMIS. No, it's a couple of miles west of New Jersey. Say, Stubby, if you want to go with me I'll stake you for a ticket.

STUB. You will? Honest?

BEMIS. You bet I will.

STUB. I got you. I'll pack me other shirt and be ready in six minutes.

BEMIS. Give me the morning paper. I'll go into the private office and map out a route. (*Takes newspaper and crosses to R.*) Don't let any one in, especially that dame from Alabama.

STUB. She's comin' back. What'll I tell her?

BEMIS. Tell her that Mr. Wise is busy. Tell her he's busy with a desperate criminal. Tell her he's talking to Blinky Huggs, the wife murderer. Tell her anything, only keep her away from me. From the way she acted I think she wants to kidnap me and take me back to Opaloopa.

STUB. All right, I'm wise. Nothing doing for the lady from Loop-de-loopa.

BEMIS. We'll hit out this afternoon. Then it's good-bye to little old New York and ho for the mountains of Colorado!

[*Exits R.*

STUB. (*looking after him*). How for the mountains? Hoe? Gee, I wonder if he wants me to be a farmer. Nothing doing in the hoe line. (L.)

Enter FAY from L. She comes down C.

FAY (*looking around*). Where is Mrs. Courtenay?

STUB. I think she has just stepped out.

FAY. Will Professor Jabb return soon?

STUB. He said in about ten minutes.

FAY. Tell Mr. Wise I want to speak to him. Miss Fairbanks from Opaloopa. We are old friends.

STUB. (*to audience*). The lady from Loop-de-loopa. I got to keep her out. (*To FAY.*) Mr. Wise has gone out to lunch.

FAY. Isn't there some one in his private office?

STUB. (*rattled*). No—er—yes, there's a guy in there.

FAY. Is it Professor Jabb?

STUB. Naw, it ain't the professor. It's a crook.

FAY. A crook? Do you mean a criminal?

STUB. Yep, that's what they call 'em in New Jersey.

FAY. But what is he doing here?

STUB. Well, you see, Mr. Wise is his lawyer.

FAY (*eagerly*). Sure enough? Oh, I wonder if I can see him. I've never seen a crook.

STUB. (*positively*). Nothing doing. This is a awful bad crook. I wouldn't darst to let you see him. It's Blinky Huggs, the wife murderer.

FAY (*greatly surprised*). Blinky Huggs?

STUB. (*positively*). Yes, ma'am, it's Blinky Huggs hisself.

FAY. Oh, I sure must see him. I've read all about his trial in the papers. I want to tell all the girls in Opaloopa that I've seen the notorious Blinky Huggs. His pictures are real good-looking, and to think he's to be executed in October. Just let me peep a moment. Please.

STUB. It can't be did. He's very particular about who sees him. The sheriff is waitin' outside fer him. He brought him over here to bid good-bye to Mr. Wise. You see Mr. Wise was his lawyer.

FAY. And still he was pronounced guilty. The poor young man! (*Sits at r.*)

Enter BEMIS from r. He comes to c., not seeing FAY.

BEMIS. Say, Stubby, go over to my hotel, the Atlantic, and tell my man to pack my steamer trunk at once and the two grips. Bring the grips back with you. We'll catch the Frisco limited at two ten.

STUB. All right, sir. Do you mean it, Mr. Bennington? Are you going to take me along? Honest?

BEMIS. You bet I am. Come, hurry up.

STUB. (*joyfully*). Yes, sir, I'm off like a sky rocket.

(*Grabs hat and runs out at L.*)

FAY (*who has been reading paper during preceding scene, now rises and meets BEMIS at C.*). I beg your pardon, sir. (*BEMIS turns and looks at her for the first time.*) But will you allow a total stranger to tell you how extremely sorry she is for you? (*Extends hand.*) You have my deepest sympathy.

BEMIS (*very much puzzled, takes her hand*). I have? Oh, thank you. Very kind, I'm sure.

FAY. I know all about your case.

BEMIS. You do? Some case, isn't it?

FAY. Your lawyer, Mr. Wise, is quite a friend of mine. I'm so sorry for you. I believe in you, sir. I am sure that you are more sinned against than sinning.

BEMIS (*puzzled*). Thank you. That's just what I think myself. It was all the fault of Uncle Silas. Those codicils just about finished me.

FAY (*perfectly serious*). No matter what others may say I believe in your innocence implicitly. (*Slight pause; he looks at her.*) You are innocent, aren't you?

BEMIS. Innocent? (*Slight pause, then speak with a pronounced drawl on the "oh."*) Oh, yes! Yes, indeed, I'm innocent. I'm awfully innocent.

FAY. And now it's too late. There is no hope. I suppose that Mr. Wise couldn't change it at all.

BEMIS. No, I'm afraid not. I'll have to take my medicine. Mr. Wise couldn't change the codicils. I'm in for it; I'm a doomed man.

FAY. How terrible! Then there is no hope? (*Shudders.*) Oh, I can't think about it. It's too dreadful. And you are so young and full of life. But you'll be brave, won't you? You'll meet your fate like a man—like a hero.

BEMIS (*bravely*). I will. Like a man, like a hero.

FAY (*coming closer to him and speaking in half whisper*). Why don't you try to escape?

BEMIS. Escape?

FAY (*excitedly*). Yes! Here! Now! That window.

BEMIS. This is the sixteenth floor.

FAY. True, I had forgotten. But couldn't you slip down the stairs and evade the police?

BEMIS. That wouldn't be honorable. You see it's all down in black and white. I guess it's up to me to do as the judge says.

FAY. The evidence all seemed against you, but I cannot look at you and believe that you are guilty of murder.

BEMIS (*rattled*). Murder? I —

FAY (*interrupting*). I am only a girl, and yet I seem to know intuitively that you are innocent. You did not kill your wife, did you?

BEMIS. Kill my wife? No, not yet. I mean, of course not. I didn't kill any one.

FAY (*triumphantly*). I knew it. I knew it. Oh, if I could only do something for you. Couldn't I take a message to some of your friends?

BEMIS. I'm afraid not.

FAY. Are there no interested persons who might make an appeal for you?

BEMIS. None.

FAY. No relatives? No one?

BEMIS (*seriously*). No one.

FAY. Not even a mother?

BEMIS. No.

FAY (*sadly*). Then there is no one to bid you a last farewell, no one to kiss you good-bye for the last time, no one to tell you that she believes in you, believes you are innocent, though all the world may deem you guilty.

BEMIS (*tearfully*). No one.

FAY (*taking his two hands*). Be brave. And when the time comes for your electrocution, think of me far away in Opaloopa. Think of me as one who believes in you, as one who is firmly convinced that a guiltless man is being unrighteously punished.

BEMIS (*holding her hands and speaking seriously*). I will. I will.

FAY. You may kiss me farewell. Just once. On the forehead.

BEMIS (*gravely kissing her. Slight pause*). I thank you.

FAY (*shaking his hand*). And now we must part. Take courage and be brave. See how brave I am. (*Tearfully.*) Why, I'm not even crying. Oh, it must be a dreadful thing to be electrocuted.

BEMIS. Yes, it must be.

FAY. Especially when you know that you are innocent.

Here, take this little ring. (*Draws ring from her finger.*) It was my mother's. I have always worn it. Take it, and remember that way off in Alabama there is a girl who believes that you are giving your life away for another's crime.

BEMIS. Oh, I can't take your ring.

FAY. You must. Just to remember this meeting.

(*He takes it.*)

BEMIS. I shall never forget this meeting. But mayn't I see you again?

FAY. No, I leave for Opalooa this evening.

BEMIS (*suddenly and loudly*). Say!

FAY. Yes?

BEMIS. Is Opalooa a town of less than five thousand?

FAY (*surprised*). Why, yes. It is less than two thousand.

BEMIS. Then it is possible that I'll see you again some time.

FAY (*seriously*). In heaven?

BEMIS. No, in Opalooa. I'm more liable to get *there*.

FAY. Oh, is there really any hope? I thought you said that you were a doomed man?

BEMIS (*slowly smiling*). I thought I was. But one can never tell what may happen.

FAY. Good-bye. (*Gives him her hand.*)

BEMIS (*holding her hand and speaking seriously*). Good-bye, and I shall always think of you and thank you, while I live.

Enter MRS. C. from L. She comes down R.

MRS. C. (R.). Fay, come at once. We have only twenty minutes to get to the station.

FAY (C.). Yes, Aunt Clarice, I'm coming. (*Turns to BEMIS.*) This is —

MRS. C. (*interrupting*). At once. Here is your grip.

Enter JABB from L.

JABB (*up C.*). Is she here? Come, we must leave at once. The taxi is at the door.

FAY (*to BEMIS, who is L. C.*). Good-bye, and be brave, for my sake! [*Exits L.*]

MRS. C. (*to JABB*). Take this grip. Oh, hurry, Noah. We mustn't be late. We mustn't miss that train.

[*Exits L., hurriedly, followed by JABB.*]

BEMIS (*who has stood motionless, looking after FAY*). An Alabama blossom. (*Slowly looks at ring in his hand.*) Her mother's ring. I'll have to go to Opaloopa to return the ring. (*Stands motionless.*)

SLOW CURTAIN

(*Second Curtain. Hold same tableau.*)

(*Third Curtain. Taken by the seven characters who appear in the act.*)

ACT II

SCENE.—*The yard of the court-house in Opaloopa, Alabama. The back drop should properly represent a country street of a small southern town, with rows of locust and magnolia trees and a few scattered shops and southern homes. If a special drop is not available a pretty landscape may be substituted. The entrance to the court-house is at L., the exterior of the building running from up C. to down L. If this part of the scene offers difficulty to amateurs, two large wooden pillars may simulate the entrance. A white-washed rail fence extends from down R. to up R. and across back from R. to L. A turn-stile or gate is in this fence at R., about half-way back. Wood wings at R. with natural boughs attached and overhanging the stage. Natural tree with autumnal foliage up R. in fence corner. Brown floor piece down. Old bench down L. with two dilapidated chairs near it. Another old bench is down R. Cotton plants outside fence. Time: Mid-afternoon in October. Lights on full throughout the act. Bunch lights, yellows, at all entrances.*

(SQUIRE PIPER is discovered seated down L. smoking a cob pipe and mending an old saddle. Two or three "extra men," made up as southern rural types, are sprawling in their chairs near him. PINK is asleep in bench down R. Curtain rises to song of darky cotton-pickers who enter from L. at rear, pass along outside the fence and exit one by one at R. I. They balance baskets of cotton on their heads and may repass several times. After song enter BEVERLY LOMAN from R. He lounges down C.)

BEV. Evening, boys.

OTHERS. Evening, sheriff.

BEV. (C.). Say, you-all ain't seen nothing of my big yaller houn' dog, have you? He's been missin' since last Tuesday and I'm beginnin' to git kinder pestered 'bout him. My favorite houn', and he shore is some dog.

PIPER. I ain't seen him sence las' week when we-all went coon-huntin'.

BEV. I'm kinder uneasy 'bout him. Some of them circus folks might 'a' stole him yesterday.

PIPER. Did you look in the pound? Maybe Nub Tolliver's done taken him up for taxes.

BEV. I done looked there, Squire. (*Crosses to R.*) I shore set a heap on that houn'. He had more huntin' sense than any dog I ever owned. I reckon he's tied up in some nigger's cabin by this time. If any o' you-all see him, jes' lemme know. I wouldn't take a hundred dollars for that houn'; no, sah, not a hundred. (*Sits on PINK.*)

PINK (*screaming*). Help! Help! Oh, lawdy, lawdy, I'se smashed. Dat man's done squeezed me to a frazzle, he shore has.

BEV. (*looking at her*). Well, I'll be dog-goned. Thought I'd set on a snake. What you doin' asleep out yere in the courtyard, Pink?

PINK (*trying to get her breath*). Nuffin', Mistah Sheriff, nuffin' a' tall. Lawdy, boss, you jes' 'bout busted me.

BEV. Here's a jit, Pink. (*Tosses her a nickel.*) Go over and buy out the grocery store.

PINK. Much obliged, boss. (*Looks at it and bites it.*) Lawdy, he done gimme five cents. (*Goes to him and speaks confidentially.*) Say, boss, you kin set down on me agin if you want to.

PIPER. Here you, Pink.

PINK (*crossing to him*). Yas, sah?

PIPER. Take that saddle over to my house and give it to Ras. Tell him it's all fitten fer use.

BEV. Say, Mistah Piper, kin I ride you-all's hoss some day? I won't hurt him none at all. I seen de lady in de circus yesterday ridin' 'round dat ring, standin' on one leg on de hoss's back. Jes' dataway. (*Imitates.*) I'd like to try dat on you-all's hoss.

PIPER. I don't reckon my wife would stand for no such doings. Pink, how come a good Methodist like you taken it in your head to go to the circus?

PINK. I is a Mefodist, Mistah Piper; a Mefodist born and a Mefodist bred, but dere hain't no nigger kin be a Mefodist on a circus day. No, sah, dat ain't to be 'spected. Kase when we hears de circus band, ummm! (*with closed lips*) we jes' naturally loses all our Mefodism right then.

BEV. (*seated R.*). Did you see the ring-tailed rhinoceros, Pink?

PINK. Yas, sah, I shore did. And de trained mules and de clown and dem red white and blue women and men flyin' 'round on de trapezes. I seen it all, and I neber dreamed dere war so many sights dis side ob Ribber Jerdan. But de bestest of all was dat hippo-peat-apotamus. Umm, umm! When he open his mouth dat thing like to scared de life right out'n my body.

PIPER (*laughing*). Hippo-peat-apotamus, Pink; what was that?

PINK. I dunno what it was, boss. I dunno how to 'scribe it 'ceptin' it looked for all de world like 'bout 'leben million pounds of liver.

PIPER. Well, hurry along with that saddle.

PINK. I'se goin', I'se goin', but I don't like to be hurried.

[*Exits R.*

BEV. Say, boys, I just rode over from Water Station this morning and what you think? (*Impressively.*) They got the street-car tracks laid clean down to Rickett's Mill. Jes' ten miles out'n town.

PIPER. This yere town is gittin' too dern cified. I taken a walk yesterday morning and run into a circus pee-rade and now we're goin' to have inter-ruban street cars.

BEV. I shore wisht I'd 'a' invested some in that comp'ny. I reckon we'll all be ridin' in the street cars come a Christmas. They shore are goin' to make a mint o' money. When they git the cars goin' right peart we kin ride from yere to Montgomery in three-four hours.

PIPER. And ye think it's goin' to be a good investment, do y', sheriff?

BEV. I reckon I do. That Bennington boy is shore some hustler. Lemme see. He ain't been yere more'n two months, has he?

PIPER. He come in July, and this is October.

BEV. He certainly has done a lot in three months.

PIPER. They tell me he's right hard pushed for money right now. Somebody dynamited part of his tracks and he's had some trouble with his men. They're goin' to have a meetin' of the board of di-rectors to-morrow evening and he's gotta raise thirty thousand dollars before that time.

BEV. I reckon he knows where he kin git it if he wants it.

PIPER (*nodding his head*). Mistress Courtenay shore has been a liberal invester in that company. She shore has.

BEV. Do you reckon he aims to marry the widdier?

PIPER. Ain't no tellin' what he does aim. I've heard tell —

BEV. (*looking off R.*). Sh! Here comes Mistress Courtenay now. (*Rises.*)

Enter Mrs. C. from R., escorted by JABB, who carries her parasol shading her face.

MRS. C. (*outside gate*). Evening, gentlemen.

ALL (*rising and bowing*). Evening, Mistress Courtenay.

MRS. C. (*coming down to BEV., shakes hands with him*). Why, Beverly Loman! I haven't seen you for a blue moon. How you come on these days?

BEV. (*down R.*). Porely, Mistress Courtenay, porely.

MRS. C. Seems right strange you don't come up our way any more. You used to be a right frequent visitor, too. (*PIPER and JABB converse at gate, the extra men down L.*) I hope we-all haven't done anything to offend you, Beverly.

BEV. No'm, 'tain't nothin' like that at all. I jes' naturally don't get no time. I'm a right tolerable busy man.

MRS. C. Maybe you can find time after this evening. I reckon you won't be so busy when somebody gets home.

BEV. Is Miss Fay comin' home this evening?

MRS. C. She sure is. I thought you'd be right glad to hear it. Beverly, we-all think a powerful sight of you and don't like to have you neglect us this-a-way.

BEV. I won't do so no more, ma'am. Nary a time. I'll come up to-morrow evening, if you-all'll let me. Why, I ain't seen Miss Fay fo' nearly four months. I ain't even heard from her.

MRS. C. I'm sure glad she's coming in on the evening train. I don't approve of these modern ways of young girls nohow. The idea of her going way down to New Orkins (*accent on first syllable*) all by herself, and staying three months with a cousin she'd never seen before. An Alabama girl wouldn't have thought of such a thing ten years ago.

BEV. How come her to go clean down to New Orkins?

MRS. C. It was one of her whims, I reckon. She made up her mind on our homeward trip from New York. She said she felt blue and depressed, and wanted to see more of the world. She had an invitation from Cousin Mary Lee Patton to come down to New Orkins and she decided to accept it. I was worn to a frazzle with my trip and I told her right plainly that I didn't intend to budge an inch further than Opalooa, so she went on without me.

BEV. I hope she ain't done got engaged or nothin' like that, Mistress Courtenay. These yere New Orkins men are powerful speedy lovers.

MRS. C. She's written to me every week, Beverly, and she's never mentioned the same man twice. I don't reckon you need worry about any New Orkins suitor, Beverly.

BEV. Sure enough, ma'am, do you think I got any chance with Miss Fay?

MRS. C. I don't see why you haven't, Beverly. Your family is one of the best in Alabama, and you've been elected sheriff of this county twice.

BEV. Yes'm, by the largest majority evah given a candidate since '82. I shore am glad to hear you say you think I've got a chance. Miss Fay don't never give me no encouragement.

MRS. C. Of course she don't. What do you expect? Who ever heard of a girl giving a young man encouragement until he had declared himself?

BEV. I certainly am powerfully obliged to you, Mistress Courtenay. I feel a heap sight easier than I did.

MRS. C. I surely wish you well, Beverly. I came over to the court-house to pay my winter taxes. Is Miss Sallie up in her office?

BEV. Yes'm, she's there.

MRS. C. Come, professor. (JABB *joins her at c.*) Good-evening, gentlemen.

ALL (*raising hats*). Evening, Mistress Courtenay.

(MRS. C. and JABB *cross to door of house.*)

MRS. C. (*turning at door*). Remember the old saying, Beverly, Faint heart never won fair lady. We-all'll be right glad to see you at any time. [*Exit with JABB at L.*]

PIPER (*resuming his seat at L.*). Mistress Courtenay certainly is a well preserved lady, she shore is. I reckon Mr. Bennington don't know that her and I are long about the same age.

BEV. (R.). Yes, and what he don't know ain't goin' to hurt him. He's from New York and a New Yorker is supposed to know everything.

Enter STUB. from R., whistling. He comes down c. briskly.

STUB. Afternoon, men!

ALL. Evening, boy.

STUB. How's the bright and shining lights of Opalooopa this evening?

PIPER. Purty tolerable, purty tolerable.

STUB. (C.). Say, have any of youse guys seen the boss to-day?

BEV. What boss?

STUB. My boss. Mr. Bennington.

BEV. He's over at Rickett's Mills, 'bout ten miles out o' town. Say, son, when is the street cars goin' to begin to run?

STUB. Give it up. Ask me an easy one.

PIPER. I reckon they'll begin to run when the cows begin to fly. (*Cackling laugh.*)

STUB. The cows'll begin to fly when anything runs in Opalooopa.

BEV. (*seated R.*). It's a wonder you stay in such a place, sonny. You seem to think that you are right rapid.

STUB. (C.). Where me boss stays, I stay.

(*Sits on old chair.*)

BEV. And what brought you down here, anyway?

STUB. (*extending both feet*). Them.

PIPER. Yes, but what we want to know is why did Mr. Bennington come here to Opalooopa?

STUB. He wanted to bury himself, and this is the best cemetery on earth.

PIPER. Folks say that he's in love with Mistress Courtenay.

STUB. What! The old lady with the long bank roll? Naw, take it from me, when me boss falls, he's going to fall for an April dawn, not for a November sunset.

Enter PINK from R., running. She runs down C.

PINK (*out of breath*). Oh, Mistah Sheriff, Mistah Piper, come quick, dere's a dog fight ovah on de public square. 'Bout seven million dogs all mixed up together.

ALL (*rising, excitedly*). A dog fight!

BEV. Where is it, Pink?

PINK. In front ob de pos'-office. Come on.

(*Runs out R., followed by others.*)

STUB. And that's what they call excitement in Opalooopa. They'd drop dead of heart disease if they'd ever see the crowd on Broadway and 42d Street. (*Sits on bench down L.*)

Enter SAMMIE BELL PORTER from R. She leans over the fence.

SAM. Good-evening, Mr. Burns. (STUB. *pauses, looks at her, grins, turns away bashfully twisting foot.*) I said good-evening.

STUB. Yes, I heard you. Come in, Miss Sammie Bell. Ain't nobody here but me.

SAM. (*coming down c.*). Did you get home from the circus all right?

STUB. Sure I did. What did y' think? Some one held me up and robbed me of my millions?

SAM. (*sitting beside him on bench, he looks at her apprehensively*). I certainly had a gorgeous time with you at the circus last night, Mr. Burns.

STUB. Don't mention it, don't mention it, Miss Porter.

SAM. (*bashfully*). You didn't call me that last night in the moonlight. (*Pause; she peers up at him.*) You called me Sammie Bell.

STUB. (*twisting himself bashfully*). Aw, now you go on!

SAM. That was the first circus I ever saw. Paw says we ain't had a circus in Opalooa before in eighteen years.

(*Moves closer to him; he edges away.*)

STUB. I tell you Opalooa is waking up.

SAM. Was it as good as the circuses you have in New York?

STUB. Better. It had the Hippodrome backed way off'n the sidewalk.

SAM. You generally say that New York has the best of everything. I reckon you think that we-all don't have nothing down here as good as in New York.

STUB. There's one thing you've got a whole lot better. In one thing you can give New York deuces wild and win the pot every time.

SAM. Oh, what is it?

STUB. Pretty girls.

SAM. Oh, Stubby! (*Slides to him on bench; he falls off.*) Oh, I didn't mean to call you by your maiden name, honest I didn't.

STUB. (*sitting on the other side of her*). Well, it's all right; don't lose no sleep about it.

SAM. And do you think the girls down here are sure-enough pretty?

STUB. You'd better believe I do. Ain't you glad?

SAM. Glad? Why?

STUB. 'Cause there's only two kind of women who like to be told they're good looking.

SAM. Only two kind?

STUB. Yes, the married ones and the single ones. But you can take it from me there ain't a dame in the Big Town who can hold a candle to some one I know.

SAM. Who is it? (*Innocently.*) Lily Maud Raymond?

STUB. (*imitating her voice.*) No, it ain't Lily Maud Raymond. Miss Lily Maud's all right, all right, but I know some one else who's got her scratched before the race begins.

SAM. Oh, who is it? (*Pause.*) Go on and tell me, Stubby.

STUB. (*twisting foot bashfully, looking at it.*) Oh, it's some one.

SAM. Is it some one I know?

STUB. (*looking down, speaking with closed lips, signifying assent.*) Um-umph!

SAM. (*pouting.*) I think you're right mean not to tell me.

STUB. (*looking up, makes an effort to speak, chokes, bashful business, then tries again.*) I ain't mean, I'm just bashful. Say, Miss Sammie Bell, are you going to the sociable to-morrow night?

SAM. I don't know. (*Peeps at him.*) I might if somebody asks me.

STUB. (*looking at her.*) Gosh! (*Turns away.*) Well, I'll let you know to-morrow.

SAM. Bud Sanders wants to take me. He done asked me this morning.

STUB. Bud Sanders?

SAM. (*with closed lips.*) Um-umph.

STUB. Well, that red-headed, freckle-faced ingrowing son of a hill-billy!

SAM. (*rising indignantly.*) Why, Stubby Burns, I'm actually astonished. Bud Sanders is the mayor's son and he's a real nice boy. Anyway, he's powerful good and he makes six dollars a week. And his hair ain't so very red neither.

STUB. Red? That boy's hair is so red that every time he has it cut it makes him look like he's bleeding to death.

SAM. His mother is real proud of him. And everybody is talking about what a fine business head he's got.

STUB. It 'ud be a good advertisement for crimson paint. And you jest wait till we get our 'lectric cars running, then I'll be making twenty dollars a week,

SAM. Bud was right pestered with me for goin' to the circus with you last night.

STUB. I'll bet I'll pester him when I get him.

SAM. He wanted me to promise that I should always go to the sociables with him.

STUB. (*looking at her, pauses*). And did you promise him?—
(SAM. *bows her head and does not answer. Pause.*) Did you?

SAM. (*with closed lips signifying negation*). Um-um!

(*Smiles at him.*)

STUB. (*looking at her, turning away bashfully*). Gosh!

SAM. All of the girls are powerful fond of Bud Sanders.

STUB. Are you?

SAM. Well, I've known him all my life and I've only known some folks for three months. (*Slowly.*) All the girls like Bud.

STUB. All the girls like pug-dogs, too.

SAM. Stubby Burns, Bud Sanders is *not* a pug-dog.

STUB. No, I'd hate to insult the dog.

SAM. (R. C.). You're just jealous—that's what you are—jealous!

STUB. (L. C.). Who's jellix?

SAM. You are.

STUB. I guess if I was goin' to be jellix, I wouldn't be jellix of no hill-billy. (*Comes closer to her.*) Say, Sammie Bell, you don't want to go with no hick like him; you want a man from the city like me.

SAM. We got a new boarder at our house. He's a city man, too. It's the fellow with the scar on his face that we saw at the circus last night. The one you thought you knew.

STUB. Blinky Huggs!

SAM. No, that isn't his name. He told maw his name was Anderson.

STUB. (*excitedly*). I wonder what he's doing here in Opalooa. Where is he now?

SAM. He's up in his room asleep. And he slept all morning. That's how come I know he's a city man.

STUB. You want to keep an eye on that guy.

SAM. What for?

STUB. I told you last night when I saw him at the circus he was a crook.

SAM. What do you mean by a crook?

STUB. He's crooked. Get me? Crooked!

SAM. He isn't either, he's just as straight as any one.

STUB. I don't mean hump-backed; I mean shady.

SAM. Shady? You mean he's a negro?

STUB. (*to audience*). Can you beat it? Naw, he ain't no negro, but he's a bad, bad man. He's an escaped convick and his name is Blinky Huggs.

SAM. (*frightened*). Oh, and he's in our house. And my cameo pin is on the bureau.

STUB. He was sent up for wife-murder.

SAM. My gracious goodness! A wife murderer in our house? Oh, I just gotta run and tell maw.

STUB. (*sarcastically*). And give him a chance to make a clean getaway. Now you jest keep cool and let me and my boss handle this case. We're used to crooks; we're from New York. Don't say a word. Don't whisper. Don't breathe. I'm going to catch this crook and send him back to Sing Sing.

SAM. (*taking his arm*). But, Stubby, he might hurt you.

STUB. Hurt me? Hurt me? I could make ten or twenty like him take the mat wit' me one hand tied behind me. Hurt me? Huh!

SAM. (*close to him, looking up in his face*). My, you sure are the bravest boy I ever saw. Ain't you ever scared of nothing?

STUB. (*bashfully*). Nothing but a girl.

SAM. (*taking his hands and swinging them, both down L.*). Pshaw, I don't see why you need be afraid of a girl.

Enter BEMIS from R. He comes to C.

BEMIS. Break away! What are you trying to do? Teach her the tango?

STUB. (*at L.*). No, sir. I was just—I was just—er—you know —

SAM. (*I. C.*). I got something in my eye and he was trying to get it out.

BEMIS. Yes, I know. I've done that myself. But, Stubby, I never suspected you of such duplicity. Why, back in New York he wouldn't look at a girl. Miss Sammie Bell, he used to be the most bashful kid that ever hid behind a fence whenever a girl went by.

SAM. (*laughing*). Is that the way he used to be, Mr. Bennington?

BEMIS (*laughing*). That's the way.

SAM. (*going to door of house at L.*). Well, I don't reckon he's changed much yet. He ain't what I'd call a real bold man now. (*Laughs and exits L.*)

STUB. I wonder what she meant by that.

BEMIS. Stubby, you've been flirting.

STUB. No, I ain't. Honest. What do y' mean flirting?

BEMIS. Don't you know what flirting is? Flirting is a thing that begins in nothing, you say something, you talk like anything, you mean nothing and it's all liable to end up in (*slight pause*) anything. Get me?

STUB. Right off the bat.

BEMIS. Is it a real hard case, Stubby? Are you in love?

STUB. I dunno what you call it, boss, but every time that girl looks at me I feel like a mule had caved in the left side of my chest. I guess I'm on the waiting list of the Nut Club all right, all right.

BEMIS. She's a nice little girl, too.

STUB. Nice? Is that the best you can do? Nice? Why, every time she snaps her finger I stand right up on me hind legs and beg. But, boss, I've been looking all over town for you.

BEMIS. I just rode in from Rickett's Mills. We've got the tracks that far, Stubby, and if everything goes all right we'll have the cars running by Christmas.

STUB. Yes, sir. But I want to see you awful bad.

BEMIS. What for? Want to borrow money to get a marriage license?

STUB. (*grinning*). Naw, it ain't nothin' like that. On the level, who do you think I saw at the circus last night?

BEMIS. Blinky Huggs! Did you see him, too?

STUB. Sure, I did. Did you see him?

BEMIS. I thought I did. It was quite a resemblance, but it must have been a mistake. Blinky goes to the chair next week.

STUB. That man is Blinky er I'm a Chinaman. Why, boss, I'd know that guy if I met him in heaven. I seen him twice in the court-room and 'bout 'leven thousand times in the papers. Why, he had the same old scar over his left eye.

BEMIS. I saw him on Main Street and tried to follow him, but I lost him in the circus crowd.

STUB. I'll bet he's working the old game following the circus and lifting leathers. He used to be a second-story man, but how'd he ever get out'n Sing Sing?

BEMIS. I don't know; maybe he's escaped. I sent a wire

to Mr. Wise last night asking full particulars. I wonder where he's hiding.

STUB. He ain't hiding. He's took a room at me lady friend's.

BEMIS. At Sammie Bell's, eh? I'll take a stroll over that way and see what he looks at close up.

STUB. I'd go with you, only I got me hands full with Mr. Bud Sanders.

BEMIS. I just saw him down by the post-office.

STUB. You did? I gotta hunch he's waitin' for me goil. Jes' lemme get a look at him, that's all. (*Crosses to gate R.*) I'll make him look like fifteen cents at a Coney Island picnic.

BEMIS. Be careful how you treat him, Stubby. His father is the mayor.

STUB. The mayor. Is that higher than the sheriff?

BEMIS. The mayor is the boss of the town. I thought you knew what a mayor was.

STUB. Sure, I do. Anybody knows what a mayor is. A mayor is a horse's wife. (*Laughs and exits R.*)

Enter JABB from court-house at L.

JABB. Good-evening, young man.

BEMIS (*distantly*). Yes, it's a lovely evening.

JABB. I hear you and your street-car company are having a little financial difficulty.

BEMIS. Is that what you hear?

JABB. Yes, it is commonly reported around town that if you do not succeed in raising thirty thousand dollars by two o'clock to-morrow afternoon, when the directors meet, that you will lose your position as construction manager.

BEMIS. You wouldn't like to invest forty or fifty thousand dollars, would you, professor?

JABB. Oh, dear, no! But I am very sorry for you, young man, extremely sorry.

BEMIS (*dryly*). Much obliged.

JABB. You have my deepest sympathy. It's pretty hard to see your uncle's two million slipping through your fingers, isn't it?

BEMIS (R. C.). Well, professor, it hasn't hit the ground yet.

JABB (L. C.). You have tried several methods to raise the stipulated five thousand, I believe.

BEMIS. You believe right.

JABB. First a dancing school. Dear me! That was a little too far advanced for Opalooa.

BEMIS. I believe you. They're still dancing the polka and quadrilles in Opalooa.

JABB. And then your theatre and your little mail-order business. Those little ventures didn't pan out very well, did they?

BEMIS. They weren't what one might call tremendous successes.

JABB. And now this street-car muddle. I believe the tracks are within ten miles of the town and now you are confronted with the Herculean task of selling thirty thousand dollars' worth of more stock. Dear me, how very, very unfortunate you have been, Mr. Bennington.

BEMIS. If I can raise the thirty thousand, I'll have the cars running in three months. I'll put Opalooa on the map.

JABB. Yes, if you can raise it. (*Crosses in front of BEMIS, goes to gate R., turns.*) If you can raise it.

[*Exits with a cackling laugh.*]

BEMIS. Every time I see that man it makes me feel like manslaughter in the first degree.

Enter MRS. C. from court-house. Parasol down.

MRS. C. Bemis! (*She advances to L. C.*)

BEMIS. Mrs. Courtenay. (*Meets her at C.*)

MRS. C. (*shaking hands with him*). I understand you have been inquiring for me this evening.

BEMIS (*looking at his hand which she retains*). Yes. To be brief with you, Mrs. Courtenay, the company needs more money.

MRS. C. Always money. Don't you ever think of anything else except money? (*Drops hand.*)

BEMIS. Well, I —

MRS. C. Have you been hearing the dreadful rumor all over town?

BEMIS. That's the only thing that is all over town in Opalooa.

MRS. C. They've been saying such dreadful things.

BEMIS. Concerning me?

MRS. C. Yes. Concerning (*slight pause*) you and (*longer pause; she plays with the tip of her parasol on stage, eyes down*) me!

BEMIS. I don't understand.

MRS. C. (*eyes still on tip of parasol*). They say that we are engaged to be married. I'm hearing it on all sides.

BEMIS. I don't think there's anything in it.

MRS. C. (*sighing, looks at him; sighs again, looks down*). It's so hard to be a widow. Folks are always saying such unpleasant things.

BEMIS. But about the money, Mrs. Courtenay? We need thirty thousand dollars by two o'clock to-morrow.

MRS. C. (*hesitating*). Well—er—I—I've already invested a heap of money in that company, Bemis. All my friends tell me it will never be a success here in Delta County.

BEMIS. Don't you believe it. If you stand by us we'll double your investments in a year or two.

MRS. C. And you would be earning the five thousand per year stipulated in your uncle's will.

BEMIS. Yes, that's why I'm so anxious to make a success of the street-car company. I'll work from morning till midnight, I'll help lay the tracks with my own hands, I'll work like a dog, Mrs. Courtenay, but I'm going to make good. I'm going to earn five thousand dollars in a year.

MRS. C. There was another codicil, wasn't there, Bemis? Something about marrying, I believe.

BEMIS. Yes. My uncle stipulated that I should marry in six months from the time the will was read.

MRS. C. And you've been here in Opalooa three months.

BEMIS. It seems like thirty years.

MRS. C. That only leaves ninety days to find a wife.

BEMIS. Oh, I'm not worried about that.

MRS. C. Then you have some one in mind? (*Pauses in assumed confusion.*) Oh, I beg your pardon, I shouldn't have asked that.

BEMIS. That's all right, Mrs. Courtenay. To be quite frank with you, I intend to follow out my uncle's instructions to the very letter. Before the time limit is up I mean to be a married man.

MRS. C. You have been frank with me, Mr. Bennington, now I'll be equally frank with you. You need thirty thousand dollars by two o'clock to-morrow evening. You have asked me to assume that much more stock. If I refuse it will be almost impossible for you to retain your position with the company. Am I right?

BEMIS. Yes, but——

MRS. C. (*interrupting*). Just a moment. Then if I refuse to advance you this thirty thousand dollars it will be impossible for you to earn the stipulated five thousand a year?

BEMIS. Yes.

MRS. C. In that case your uncle's millions will revert to my old friend, Professor Jabb.

BEMIS. Yes, but surely you realize what a great investment the street-car company offers you?

MRS. C. I said I would be frank with you. I don't care a rap for the investment. I have money enough, and the thirty thousand dollars really means but little to me.

BEMIS (*eagerly*). Then you will let me have it? You will be my angel of goodness? You will invest it in the company?

MRS. C. Upon certain conditions, yes. I am a frank woman, Mr. Bennington, a very frank woman, and I mean to speak my mind. You came here to Opalooa three months ago practically unknown. You tried several schemes to earn that five thousand dollars in a year's time. You opened a tango tea-room.

BEMIS. It lasted three days. I had two pupils and one of them had a wooden leg.

MRS. C. You tried to build an opera house.

BEMIS. Couldn't raise a hundred dollars.

MRS. C. Finally you decided to start a street-car company. You came to me. I listened to you.

BEMIS. You were my guiding star. You invested a hundred thousand dollars.

MRS. C. And why did I do it? (*Passionately.*) Do you imagine that I was interested in your street-car company? Do you think I cared whether the villagers of Delta County walked or rode? Do you reckon I intended to make a fortune by my investments, against the advice of my lawyer and all my friends? No, I gave the money simply because you asked me to do so. It was for you. All, all for you! I don't care for the money, Bemis, but oh — (*Breaks down, weeps.*) Oh, Bemis, don't you see? Can't you understand?

BEMIS (*seriously*). I think I do. I think I understand.

Enter JABB from R. He comes hastily down c. to MRS. C.

JABB. Mistress Courtenay, if you are ready I will escort you over to the station. I reckon Miss Fay's train will be in in about twenty minutes.

MRS. C. (*trying to collect herself*). Thank you, Noah. I was just—er—that is, we ——— Oh, I don't know what to say.

(*Wipes eyes.*)

JABB (C.). Are you in sorrow, Mistress Courtenay? If so you had better turn to your old friends and neighbors whom you have known since childhood. Turn to us; we will redress your wounds.

MRS. C. I haven't any wounds, Noah. It's just my sentimental nature. Sometimes I get so excited.

JABB. It seems too bad that you have been persuaded to invest so much money in this wild street-car system. Really, old friend, I sympathize with you. You have my deepest sympathy, but you should have consulted me in the beginning. Now you stand in a fair way to lose everything.

BEMIS. It isn't so. Our street-car system is all right, Professor Jabb. There seems to be some scoundrel here in town who is trying to get the best of me in this deal, some one who has not hesitated to bribe my men, to put dynamite on my tracks, some one who thinks he will profit by my failure. But I'm not going to fail. I've got enough of the Silas P. Chizzleton blood in me to fight, to fight against all odds and to the bitter end, to fight and to win! (*To her.*) Mrs. Courtenay, I must go to the county surveyor's office now but let me tell you that your money is safe, that this company is not going to fail. The last inch of that track will be in place next month if I have to lay it with my own hands. (*Cross to door L., turn.*) I'm in this game for keeps and I'm in this game to win.

JABB. But your uncle, what would my old friend Silas P. Chizzleton say to all this?

BEMIS (L.). My uncle was a hard worker and an honest man, and he hated hypocrisy worse than the devil. He wanted to see what kind of a man I was going to make of myself. He wanted me to try my mettle, Professor Jabb, so he pitted me against you, the shrewdest, oiliest, crookedest business man he knew. What would he say, you ask? I know what he'd say. He'd say, "Bemis, old scout, go in and win! Show 'em what's in you, whip your enemies, beat 'em to a frazzle and win that couple of million! That's what Silas P. Chizzleton would say, Professor Jabb, and believe me, that's just what I am going to do.

[*Exits L., slamming door.*

JABB (*crossing to L., shakes his cane after BEMIS*). Impertinent! The miserable young upstart. I'll show him, I'll show

him! Thinks he can earn five thousand dollars a year in Opa-loopa, does he? He can't do it. He can't do it. He don't know the kind of a man he's dealing with. I'll stick on his track like a hound. I won't sleep. I won't eat. My every thought shall be for revenge. I'll never give up until I send him back to New York alone, disgraced, without a penny, without a friend!

MRS. C. (R. C.). Why, professor, I don't hardly know you.

JABB (*coming to her and speaking fiercely*). The time has come to tear the mask from his grinning face. You shall know him as he really is. Surely you do not intend to allow him five thousand a year salary?

MRS. C. (*facing him fearlessly*). I do! That is our contract.

JABB. You mean it is the contract with the manager of the street-car company. He is the man to get the five thousand salary.

MRS. C. Yes, but Mr. Bennington is the manager.

JABB (*craftily*). For the present, yes. But you hold sixty shares of the company. You own the majority of the stock. You can discharge him at any time. His fate is in your hands.

MRS. C. But I won't discharge him! It wouldn't be just, it wouldn't be fair. (*Indignantly*.) Why, the whole idea was his. Just see what he has done already. Thirty-eight miles of track are down, the offices have been built, the stock has been sold.

JABB. But where do you come in? Why are you turning from your old friends to this adventurer whom no one knows? Why are you acting thus, Mistress Courtenay? He is nothing to you and (*slowly and impressively, leaning toward her*) you—~~are~~—nothing—to him!

MRS. C. (*her breast heaving with passion*). You go too far!

JABB. Have patience. Listen to me. He is playing with you. You have become a plaything in his hands! If you consent to his plan and turn over thirty thousand dollars to him to-day, what have you to show for it? Why, he'll be laughing at you to-morrow.

MRS. C. (*in agony*). It isn't true, it isn't true!

JABB. It is true and you know it. You are not his fiancée. He is not even treating you honorably. There is another girl—in New York.

MRS. C. (*facing him bravely*). Noah Jabb, I don't believe you!

JABB. I am speaking for your own good. You are alone, unprotected from this unknown adventurer. What assurance have you that he intends to treat you honorably?

MRS. C. Assurance? I don't need any assurance. I can look in the face of Bemis Bennington and read nothing but truth and honesty. He is a gentleman and I trust him!

JABB. But listen to me —

MRS. C. (*interrupting*). I'll not listen to you. If you desire to traduce him, do it to his face. When I want your advice, I'll ask you for it.

JABB. But my dear Mistress —

MRS. C. Enough. Let us end this interview. Your insinuations are an insult, sir, an insult to him and an insult to me.

(*Cross to gate.*)

JABB (C.). Where are you going?

MRS. C. (R.). I am going to the station to meet my niece.

JABB (*advancing toward her*). Let me escort you.

MRS. C. Thank you, I prefer to be alone. [*Exits R.*

JABB (*looking after her a moment, then explosively*). Damn! (*Starts R. Enter STUB. from R., meeting JABB at gate.*) Out of my way, you young popinjay! [*Exits R.*

STUB. (*to audience*). Well, what do you know about that? He called me some kind of a jay. Called me a jay! *Him!*

Enter BEMIS from house L., letter in hand.

BEMIS. Well, Stubby, our days of drudgery are over. From now on it's us for the lobster palaces and the great white way.

STUB. (R. C.). Gee, are we goin' back to Broadway?

BEMIS (L. C.). Next year. In the meantime we're going to earn that couple of million.

STUB. But them codicils, or what-y'-call-'ems. How can you earn five thousand a year in Opalooa?

BEMIS. I'm going to marry it.

STUB. But the will said you had to earn it.

BEMIS. If I'm not earning it, my festive friend, there's no such word in the dictionary.

STUB. You must 'a' landed a prize or struck a bonanza.

BEMIS. I did. A forty-eight year old bonanza. I've got to start the street-car system before I can earn the five thousand, and I've got to earn that before I can land the couple of million. Get me?

STUB. (*with a careless gesture*). Well, start the system, earn your five thou, and there you are! Just like that!

BEMIS. Yes, that's what I thought myself at first. Just like that! (*Imitates gesture.*) But before I can hold my job with the company I've got to raise thirty thousand from Mrs. Courtenay. Just like that! (*Same gesture.*) And before she gives up the thirty thou, I've got to promise to love, honor and obey her for the rest of my natural life. Just like that!

(*Repeats gesture.*)

STUB. Gee! You're goin' to marry the widdler. Say, boss, you ain't goin' to tie up with no 1866 relic like her, are you?

BEMIS. It's the only way. It means a couple of million for us.

STUB. Yes, but it means a life sentence for youse. And what about the other one?

BEMIS. The other one? What other one?

STUB. The little blonde peacherino who thought you was Blinky Huggs.

BEMIS. Oh, she's forgotten all about me by this time. I've never seen her since that day in the office in New York.

STUB. Don't she live here?

BEMIS. Yes, but she's visiting way down in New Orleans and time is flying, Stubby. The will said that I must be a married man inside of six months. That only leaves me ninety days grace. I've got to get busy.

STUB. You'd better wait a while. Maybe the little blonde will come home.

BEMIS. She was a darling, Stubby, but I'll probably never see her again. No, it's me for the fair and festive widow and her thirty thousand. (*Waves letter.*) And here is the fatal little letter that's going to do the deed.

STUB. How do you know she wants to get married?

BEMIS. She's a widow, isn't she?

STUB. Sure.

BEMIS. That's the answer.

STUB. But honest, boss, she's old enough to be your mother.

BEMIS. I know it. In a couple of years she'll have one foot in the grave. Just like that! (*A careless gesture.*)

STUB. Then I'll push the other one in and we'll spend the millions. Just like that! (*Same gesture.*)

BEMIS. Stubby, I want you to carry the billet-doux.

STUB. Come again!

BEMIS. I want you to be the purveyor of the epistolary proposal.

STUB. Huh?

BEMIS. I want you to act as Cupid and carry the message of love.

STUB. Act as Cupid? Me? Boss, you've got to get another Cupid. My wings ain't sprouted. Gimme the letter.

BEMIS. You'll find her down-town.

STUB. Honest, boss, ain't there no other way?

BEMIS. I'm afraid not. I've come to the end of my rope. It's sink or swim, live or die, survive or perish, lose a couple of million or marry the widow. Hurry along, Stub, before I change my mind.

STUB. I'll do it, boss, but it certainly goes agin the grain.

[Exit R. with the letter.]

Enter PIPER from L.

PIPER. Say, Mr. Bennington, the county surveyor wants you to come up to his office on official business.

BEMIS. What does he want, squire?

PIPER. He says he reckons he kin beat you at a game of checkers.

BEMIS. You go up and take my place, squire. I'm going over to the country club and play golf.

PIPER. Golf? That's that new game you started here, ain't it?

BEMIS. Yes, I had the honor of introducing golf to the Opalooopians.

PIPER. Is it a kind of a billiards, er do you use poker chips?

BEMIS. Neither one, squire. It's a kind of a ball game. You see it starts with a golf ball and ends with a high-ball. Get me?

PIPER. What's a high-ball? One way up in the air?

BEMIS. Yes, squire, after you've caught three or four you're so far up in the air you don't care if you never come down.

PIPER. Too much up and down fer me. (*Crosses to L.*) I reckon I'll stick to checkers.

Enter PINK from R. She runs down C.

PINK. Miss Fay's done come home. Miss Fay's done

come home! She's comin' up yere now. Golly, I'se glad! I'll bet she brung me a pretty ——

FAY (*speaking outside at R.*). Oh, Mr. Loman, I certainly am glad to be home again.

BEMIS (*down L.*). That voice!

PINK (*up R.*). Yere she comes, yere she comes. Looking jes' as fresh as a daisy.

Enter BEV. from R., escorting FAY, closely followed by MRS. C. JABB and the extra men enter a little later.

FAY (*coming down C. with BEV.*). After all, there's no place like dear old Opalooa.

BEMIS (*astonished*). The Alabama blossom!

FAY. Blinky Huggs! (*Pause; all hold picture.*)

BEV. What did you say, Miss Fay?

FAY (*recovering*). This gentleman! (*Goes to BEMIS and extends hand.*) We've met before. An old acquaintance.

(*BEV. turns and speaks to MRS. C.*)

BEMIS. Really, Miss Fairbanks ——

FAY (*interrupting in a low tense voice*). You have escaped? You got my letter and have come here to Opalooa. Oh, I'm so glad, so glad. I've thought of you every moment for three months. I seemed to see the dreadful chair, to see the noose about your neck! And now you've escaped! My prayers are answered! My prayers are answered!

MRS. C. (*approaching FAY and BEMIS*). Fay?

FAY. Yes, Aunt Clarice?

MRS. C. Beverly is waiting for you. He will escort you home.

BEV. Are you quite ready, Miss Fay?

FAY (*taking his arm*). Yes, thank you, Mr. Loman. (*Crosses to gate.*) I feel a little tired after my journey.

(*Turns, exchanges a look with BEMIS and exits R., escorted by BEV. and followed by JABB, PINK, and the extra men.*)

PIPER *exits at L.*)

MRS. C. Why, we're all alone.

BEMIS. We are. But don't blame me.

MRS. C. I've been thinking about that proposition you made me, Bemis.

BEMIS. Good Heavens! I'm too late. She's seen Stubby. She's got my letter.

MRS. C. I stopped in at my lawyer's and drew up this check for you. It's for thirty thousand dollars. That's right, isn't it?

BEMIS. Quite correct. Then you haven't seen Stubby?

MRS. C. Stubby? What is a stubby?

BEMIS. My boy, I mean. He had a letter ——

MRS. C. A letter for me?

BEMIS. Yes, I wrote you a note. But it wasn't anything of importance. I've changed my mind.

Enter STUB. from R., waving note. He goes to MRS. C.

STUB. Gee, I've been lookin' all over town for you. Here!

(Tries to hand her the note.)

BEMIS. Just a moment. *(Grabs the note.)*

MRS. C. Mr. Bennington!

BEMIS. Just a little mistake of Stubby's. That's all.

(Tears up the note.)

STUB. *(to audience)*. Well, what do you know about that?

BEMIS. That's all, Stubby. You'd better beat it.

STUB. I got you. It's beat. *[Exits R.]*

MRS. C. Here is the check, Bemis. *(Shows it.)*

BEMIS *(waving his fingers as though anxious to get check)*. Yes, I see it.

MRS. C. Bemis, you are making it so difficult for me. I mean—er—you know! Why don't you say something? I am so timid sometimes.

BEMIS. So am I. And this is one of the times.

MRS. C. I have removed all obstacles from your path to success. When you receive this check it will put your company on its feet again; you will be earning five thousand dollars a year and can easily fulfil all the requirements of your uncle's will. Then you will be a millionaire and we can enjoy his fortune together.

BEMIS. We?

MRS. C. Are you proposing to me, Bemis?

BEMIS. I'd hardly call it proposing, Mrs. Courtenay. Why, I never thought of such a thing. I'm too young to be married. And then, you see, an old friend has just returned. Miss Fairbanks ——

MRS. C. I don't see what she has to do with it.

BEMIS. Now, Mrs. Courtenay —

MRS. C. Call me Clarice.

BEMIS. I can't call you Clarice. In fact, I can never call you Clarice.

MRS. C. I don't understand. Aren't you willing to accept the check for thirty thousand?

BEMIS. Oh, yes; yes, indeed. Don't let that worry you. I'm quite willing to accept it.

MRS. C. Then why all this mystery?

BEMIS. I'll tell you a secret, Mrs. Courtenay. I am in love!

MRS. C. (*delighted*). Silly boy. I'll tell you another. So am I.

BEMIS. I expect to declare my intentions this evening.

MRS. C. Then why don't you?

BEMIS. Well—er—you see it's Miss Fairbanks.

MRS. C. Miss Fairbanks?

BEMIS. Yes—she's the girl. She's the only girl in all the world for me.

MRS. C. Miss Fairbanks!

(*Pronounced pause. He turns away as she tries to recover herself. She looks at him and then slowly tears up the check and drops it. Puts hand to head, closes eyes a moment. Then slowly exits at R.*)

BEMIS. Good-night to uncle's millions. There goes my five thousand dollar job. (*Brightens up.*) But I should worry! Bemis, my boy, brace up and be a man, not a fortune hunter. Get a job in the city, marry the Alabama blossom and start all over again. I'll do it. I never did want to be a millionaire anyhow. It's too much excitement. Good-bye, old Opalooopa; I'm going back to New York and make a man of myself. Then I'm coming back and marry the Alabama blossom. And I'll use her mother's ring for the ceremony.

(*He has taken ring from pocket and kisses it as curtain slowly falls.*)

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE.—*The same as Act II. Time: The next afternoon. The stage is arranged exactly as in Act II. Lights on full throughout the act.*

(PIPER is discovered seated down L., smoking a cob pipe and reading the paper. Enter JABB from R. He comes through the gate and comes down C.)

JABB. Evening, squire!

PIPER. Evening, professor. (*Rises.*) I want to congratulate you, sah. I hear you've done been elected manager of the new street-car company.

JABB. Thank you, squire. Yes, it is true. The board of directors had a meeting this afternoon and I am now the new manager of the company.

PIPER. What happened to Mr. Bennington?

JABB. They let him out.

PIPER. They did? And he's the feller who started the whole business.

JABB. He was entirely too young and inexperienced to hold such an important position.

PIPER. What's he goin' to do now?

JABB. I'm sure I don't know. He will probably return to New York.

PIPER. Kind o' hard on the boy, professor. He certainly worked like a trooper for that company.

JABB. He was well paid for what he has done, but he is a stranger here and the majority of the stockholders thought that he was rather out of place as the manager of the company. It's an Opaloopa concern, squire, and we want Opaloopa men for officers.

PIPER. I'm certainly sorry for him.

JABB. We wanted a representative son of Opaloopa as manager, a man whose integrity and honesty were well known in the community.

PIPER. So they chose you?

JABB. So they chose me.

PIPER (*folding up his paper and putting it in hip pocket*). Well, professor, I sure wish you well, but my own personal sympathy certainly goes out to that young man. Why, if they'd have given him a chance, he'd 'a' put Opaloopa on the map, sah. (*Crosses to door L.*) Evening, professor.

[*Exits L.*]

Enter STUB. from R. He comes down R.

JABB (*smiling*). Good-evening, young man.

STUB. (*snapping his fingers*). Aw, that for you!

JABB. I suppose you've heard the news?

STUB. I heard that me boss has been let out'n the company, and I heard that they put you in. All I gotta say is, "God help the company!"

JABB (*starting toward him with uplifted cane*). You young tramp, I'll —

STUB. (*sparring at him, jumping back and forth*). Come on and do it, come on and do it. I jest want me chance. That's all. I jest want me chance.

Enter BEMIS from R. He comes down between them.

BEMIS. Stubby!

STUB. (R.). I was just going to teach this giraffe how to take a joke, that's all.

JABB (L. C.). Mr. Bennington, I think it would be best for the general welfare of the community if you and your young friend here would take the next train to New York, and say good-bye to Opaloopa for the present. (*Suavely.*) There is a north-bound train at five o'clock. (*Looks at watch.*) You have just about twenty-five minutes.

BEMIS (*pleasantly*). Indeed.

JABB. Yes. If you need any money to assist you in your exodus, I'm sure I would only be too glad —

BEMIS. Oh, I couldn't trouble you, professor. In fact, I don't think I'll leave Opaloopa. At any rate, not just now. There is such a charming air of peace and quiet down here.

STUB. That's right. They got more peace and quiet here to the square mile than any place on earth.

JABB (*angrily*). You mean that you intend to stay here?

BEMIS. That's precisely what I mean.

JABB. I suppose you still have a wild idea that you can satisfy the conditions of your uncle's will.

BEMIS (*going to him and speaking pleasantly*). Professor Jabb, in the little American game of poker it is always considered bad form to show your hand until you are called. Now, I haven't been called.

JABB. The keys of your office have been turned over to me, sir. I am going over the accounts and contracts to-night.

BEMIS. Go as far as you like.

JABB. Of course I don't suspect that anything is wrong with the accounts —

BEMIS. Please don't make me nervous, professor. Every time I get nervous my right arm gets a little fractious and it might swing your way.

JABB. My dear young man, I have no hard feelings toward you at all. It is true that I am a conqueror, but I am a magnanimous conqueror. (*Extends his hand.*) Good-evening, sir.

BEMIS (*ignoring his hand*). Yes, I think it is.

JABB. Oh, very well. (*Crosses to gate at R.*) I can scarcely blame you for feeling disgruntled, for in losing your position I feel quite certain that you have lost your last lone chance to qualify yourself for your uncle's millions. Good-evening. [*Exits R.*]

STUB. Say, boss, lemme go after him and hit him jest once. Please. Jest once. In the solar plexus.

BEMIS (*holding him*). Just a moment, Stubby. You're not in Chicago, you know, you're in Opaloopa.

(*STUB. pauses, shakes fist toward R. Then gives a long sigh.*)

STUB. (*slowly coming to BEMIS, pauses*). Say, boss, is it true?

BEMIS. Yes, Stubby.

STUB. Lost yer job?

BEMIS. Yes.

STUB. Lost yer five thousand a year?

BEMIS. It looks like it.

STUB. Lost yer uncle's couple of million?

BEMIS. I'm afraid so.

(*Pause. STUB. goes to him. Looks at him. Pause. STUB. extends his hand.*)

STUB. You still got me.

BEMIS (*wringing his hand*). Stub!

STUB. Gee, I feel better now. Well, I guess I'd better go and pack up me shirt.

BEMIS. What for?

STUB. Ain't it all over? Ain't you goin' to quit?

BEMIS. Quit? Do I look like a quitter? No, Stub, I'm not going to quit, I've just begun. I'm going to fight. That's what I'm going to do, fight!

STUB. (*excitedly*). That a boy! Go to it!

BEMIS. It's going to be some fight before I get through. It will make an Indian massacre look like an old maid's quilting party.

STUB. But you can't get no job here in this tank town that'll pay you five thou a year.

BEMIS. Maybe not. Maybe I won't ever win my uncle's fortune, but I'm going to give 'em a run for their money. I'm not licked yet!

STUB. (*sparrring*). No, ner me either. Not by a durned sight.

BEMIS. Run down to the telegraph office and see if there's anything for me from Mr. Wise.

STUB. I got y'. (*Runs to gate R.*)

Enter PINK from R. She comes to gate. STUB. whirls her around and rushes out R.

PINK (*falling down R.*). Yere, man, yere! Don't get so rambuncious. (*Comes to BEMIS.*) Mr. Beemington, I'se been looking for you.

BEMIS (*L. C.*). I feel a draught in my pocket.

PINK. Mr. McCloskey, de telegraph man, done tole me to bring dis yere telegraph over to you.

BEMIS. A telegram for me? At last! (*Takes it.*)

PINK. Mr. McCloskey he 'low you'd gib me two bits for dat telegraph.

BEMIS. Sure. (*Tosses her a quarter.*)

PINK (*with closed lips*). Um-um! I gwine over to de Boston Store and buy me a pair ob di'mond side-combs and three strings ob pink and yaller beads. [*Exits R.*]

BEMIS (*has opened the telegram*). "Blinky Huggs escaped from Sing Sing three weeks ago. Letters found in his cell from Miss Fay Fairbanks of Opalooa. Get him if you can. Five thousand reward dead or alive. Jeremy Wise." (*Speaks.*) Reward of five thousand. It's mine. Fortune is smiling at last. Business is picking up.

Enter BEV. from L.

BEV. Evening, Mr. Bennington. I certainly am sorry to hear about the shabby way they-all done treated you.

BEMIS (*looking up from telegram*). Eh? Oh, yes! Thank you, sheriff.

BEV. It looked to me like a mighty houn'-dog trick, sah. I don't understand it at all.

BEMIS. Say, sheriff, have you got a revolver that isn't working?

BEV. (*taking out a revolver*). I reckon I have.

BEMIS. Let me have it for an hour or two.

BEV. You hain't goin' to do nothin' serious, are you, Mr. Bennington?

BEMIS. No, not very. I'm going to arrest a man, that's all.

BEV. But it's agin the law to carry concealed weapons.

BEMIS. Couldn't you make me a deputy sheriff, or something?

BEV. I reckon I could. But what you goin' to do?

BEMIS. I'm going to increase the population of your county jail, that's all.

BEV. Come up to my office and I'll swear you in. Is it a desperate case?

BEMIS. Desperate? It's notorious. I'm going to give you a prisoner that will put your name in every paper in the country. Hurry up and make me a deputy sheriff. [*Exits L.*]

BEV. I dunno what he wants to do, but he's all right. I'll put my money on that boy every time. [*Exits L.*]

Enter STUB. and SAM. from R. arm in arm. They enter slowly, each looking in the other's eyes and smiling. They come down to bench and sit slowly, eyeing each other. Pause. Both sigh.

STUB. (*after a pause*). Well, I lost me job.

SAM. (*sympathetically*). Yes, I heard all about it.

STUB. Me and me boss has both been let out.

SAM. I know. Everybody in Opaloopa is talking about it. I certainly am sorry, Mr. Burns.

STUB. Stubby!

SAM. Stubby!

STUB. Ain't no tellin' when I can get married now.

SAM. Were you thinking about getting married?

STUB. Sure. Wasn't you?

SAM. Nobody ever asked me yet.

STUB. What 'ud you say if they *did* ask you?

SAM. I reckon it 'ud depend on who it was.

STUB. Suppose it was —

(Pauses and twists foot bashfully.)

SAM. *(after a pronounced pause)*. Yes, Stubby?

STUB. Suppose it was — *(Repeat business.)*

SAM. Well, who, Stubby?

STUB. Suppose it was Bud Sanders.

SAM. *(looking at him scornfully, pauses, drops eyes)*. Bud's an awful cute boy.

STUB. Cute? Just like a crawfish.

SAM. And his father is the mayor.

STUB. Got a head like a danger signal.

SAM. I never did like red hair, Stubby.

STUB. *(gathering courage)*. Well, suppose it was—it was — *(Pauses.)*

SAM. Yes, you said that before.

STUB. Suppose it was me, Sammie?

(Gives a long sigh of relief.)

SAM. Oh, Stubby, I can't suppose such a thing. You're too bashful.

STUB. I ain't bashful, I'm only careful.

SAM. *(rising indignantly)*. Well, I like that!

STUB. Sit down. Sit down. Wait till you hear the second chapter.

SAM. *(sitting)*. Now, Mr. Burns —

STUB. Stubby!

SAM. I mean, Stubby.

STUB. How 'ud you like to live in New York?

SAM. Oh, that would be heavenly.

(They start to embrace. PINK runs in from R. and down C.)

PINK. Dey's got him. Dey's got him.

SAM. *(rising in confusion)*. Got who?

PINK. De prisoner. Mr. Bennington and de sheriff's done taken him up de back way, and dey's got him safe in de jail.

SAM. What prisoner, Pink?

PINK. De man dat was boardin' at you-all's house.

STUB. Blinky Huggs! Where is he?

PINK. Up in there. (*Points to jail at L.*) And dey had a fight and Mr. Bennington had a gun, and he frowed him down in de road and poked de gun in his face. And dey rolled over and over. And I seen him. And de sheriff come and he putten de han'-cuffs on de man and dey's got him in de jail. Come on! I shore wants to see de 'citement. (*Runs out L.*)

STUB. I gotta go and see my boss.

SAM. But I'm afraid.

Enter FAY from R. She comes down C.

FAY. Sammie Bell!

SAM. Yes'm?

FAY. I just heard that a man had been arrested. Who is he?

SAM. One of our boarders.

STUB. They got him in the cooler. It's Blinky Huggs.

FAY (*staggering slightly and moaning*). Oh!

SAM. Miss Fairbanks, let me introduce my gentleman friend, Mr. Burns.

FAY (*going to STUB. and grasping his arm*). How did they find him? Who arrested him? How did they know he was here?

STUB. My boss, Mr. Bennington, turned the trick. Say, he's some little detective is me boss.

SAM. Stubby!

STUB. She's jellix.

FAY. Please find the sheriff for me. It's very important. Won't you tell Beverly Loman to come here?

STUB. Sure. (*Starts to L.*)

SAM. Wait a minute, I'll go with you.

[*Exits L., with STUB.*]

FAY. He escaped and came here to me for protection, and now it's too late.

Enter BEV. from L. He comes down C. to FAY.

BEV. Miss Fay, I shore am glad to see you home again.

FAY. Thank you, Beverly. I hear you've just made an important arrest.

BEV. Well, I assisted at it. Me and Mr. Bennington done took up a man jes' now.

FAY. Mr. Bennington?

BEV. Yes'm. Haven't you met him yet? He's a right nice boy.

FAY. He is old Mr. Chizzleton's nephew, isn't he?

BEV. Yes'm. He's been here 'bout three months, I reckon. He's the man who started the street-car company.

FAY. But this man who was arrested, Beverly. Do you know his name?

BEV. No'm, I don't. Mr. Bennington said to charge him with being a suspicious character. That's all I know. I reckon he's one of the short-change men who came with the circus day 'fore yesterday.

FAY. Then there is no real charge against him?

BEV. No'm, not what you might call a serious charge.

FAY. How long are you going to keep him penned up in there?

BEV. Mr. Bennington's done sent a telegram to New York. He says he's a right suspicious character.

FAY. I think there must be a mistake. I know the man you arrested.

BEV. You know him, Miss Fay?

FAY. I met him at the law office of Mr. Wise in New York. You remember Mr. Wise, don't you, Beverly? He visited Mr. Chizzleton last year.

BEV. Yes'm, I remember him. They say he's a right smart lawyer.

FAY. This man, your prisoner, I mean, is a friend of Mr. Wise. You must release him at once. He isn't suspicious at all. You've made a mistake.

BEV. Sure enough, Miss Fay, do you know him?

FAY. I'm positive. I was speaking with him yesterday here at the court-house. He is my friend. You'll let him go, won't you, Beverly? It is some horrible mistake. Think how awful it is for him to be here alone, a stranger in a strange land. You say Mr. Bennington had him arrested on suspicion. I don't reckon he'd ever seen him before. Isn't my word as good as Mr. Bennington's? Wouldn't you do as much for me as you would for Mr. Bennington?

BEV. Wouldn't I? Miss Fay, there ain't nothin' on God's green earth I wouldn't do for you.

FAY. Then let him go. The six-o'clock train leaves for the north in three minutes. Let him catch that train.

BEV. Hadn't we better wait till morning? Then I could explain to Mr. Bennington that he was a friend of yours —

FAY (*interrupting*). I care nothing for Mr. Bennington. He knows nothing about this man. You have put him in jail on a mere suspicion.

(BEMIS *appears at window or door L.*)

BEV. There he is now.

FAY. Yes, I see him. (BEMIS *disappears.*) Oh, Beverly, let him catch that train. Let him go.

BEV. Well (*hesitating*), I reckon —

FAY. Have you a warrant for his arrest? You have not. What has he done? I tell you I know him, Beverly. Mr. Bennington is a perfect stranger in Opaloopa. Maybe he's a suspicious character himself. (*Train whistle heard in the distance.*) There's the whistle of the train. Beverly, for my sake, for my sake! Why do you hesitate?

BEV. You're right, Miss Fay. (*Crosses to door L.*) I'll let this man go. I reckon your word is jes' as good as Mr. Bemis Bennington's, and a dern sight better. I'm a-goin' to let him go.

FAY (*grasping his hands*). Oh, thank you, Beverly, thank you! (*Weeps.*)

BEV. There, there, Miss Fay, don't you take on so.

FAY. Hurry, Beverly. The train is coming around the loop. Help him to catch that train. Save him! Save him, Beverly, and I'll be grateful to you all the rest of my life.

BEV. (*looking at her a moment, straightening up with determination*). Miss Fay, he's done saved. [*Exits L.*]

Enter PINK from R.

PINK. Miss Fay, Mis' Courtenay done sent for you. She say night's coming on and dis ain' no fitten place fo' you all alone. She's over at the drug-store.

FAY. Thank you, Pink. Tell her I'll be right over.

PINK. Yas'm, I'll tell her. (*Runs out R.*)

Enter BEMIS from L. He meets FAY at C.

BEMIS. Miss Fairbanks!

FAY. Oh, you are free. He let you escape. Don't stop to speak to me but run, run for your very life. The north-bound train is in. You have just time to make it. Go, and Heaven protect you.

Enter BEV. from L. He comes down L.

BEV. He's done gone, Miss Fay. I let him out the back way and he's caught the train.

BEMIS. Let him out? Let who out?

BEV. The prisoner. Miss Fay done vouched for him. She said he was a friend of hers.

(Sound of train heard in the distance.)

BEMIS (C.). Don't let him escape. Head him off. We must stop him.

BEV. (*pointing revolver at him*). Stand right where you are, sir. I'm sheriff of this county and I'll back Miss Fairbanks' word agin a million.

FAY. But it's all a mistake.

BEMIS. I should say it is. You idiot, that man was Blinky Huggs!

BEV. Too late, now, there goes the train.

BEMIS (*in despair*). And there goes my five thousand dollars.

FAY. What have I done? Beverly, who is this gentleman? (R. C.)

BEV. (L.). Excuse me. Miss Fay, this yere man is Mr. Bemis Bennington.

BEMIS. I just dropped in to return your ring.

(Hands her the ring.)

CURTAIN

ACT IV

SCENE.—MRS. COURTENAY'S sitting-room. *A pleasant, well-furnished room. Large double window at rear c., concealed by curtains. Entrances, L. 2 to dining-room and R. 3; the latter entrance is large and steps leading up and off are visible from the audience. Large fireplace at R. 1 with fire burning in it. Mantel ornaments, etc., over this fireplace. Several pots of blooming plants decorate the stage. There is plenty of comfortable furniture about the room. Lights are half down, but a strong red glare comes from the fireplace. Candles are burning in different parts of the room. Large standing lamp with red shade at rear L.*

(At rise of the curtain, PINK is discovered peeking through the door at L. 2, looking into the dining-room. Conversation and laughter are heard off L.)

PINK *(with closed lips)*. Umm, umm! Ain't dat scrumptious? Two kin's ob ice-cream, plum pudding and six kin's ob cake. Mighty salubrious, mighty salubrious. *(Comes down L.)* Wish't I was in dere. *(Speaks in a gruff voice.)* "Kin I help you to a li'l more ice-cream, Miss Pink?" *(Bows and smiles.)* Yas, sah; don't keer if I do. Oh, not so much. I ain't got no sech appetite as dat. Well, if you insists, all right, kase it shore am delicious. And pass de cake! Yas, sah, I reckon I'll take a li'l bit ob each kin'. I certain'y am powerful fond ob cake. Ain' dis yere weather been warm fo' dis season ob de year? Pass me some more ice-cream. Yas, I reckon I'll take a li'l cup ob coffee, too. Dese certain'y am small cups. Lawd, don' I wish't I was settin' in dere at de quality table. I shore would make dem eatables look sick; I shore would.

(BEMIS appears at window. He peers in. Only his face is visible.)

BEMIS *(trying to attract PINK'S attention)*. Ss! Ss!

PINK *(frightened)*. What dat?

BEMIS. Pink, come here!

PINK. It's burglums. I gwi' to 'larm de house.

BEMIS. Pink!

PINK (*apron over her head*). G'wan away, man. G'wan away, I tell you.

BEMIS. I'm not a burglar.

PINK. Den who is you?

BEMIS. I'm Mr. Bennington.

PINK. Is you, shore enough? (*Peeks at him.*) Lawd, lawd, man, I shore did think you was a burglar.

BEMIS. Where's Fay?

PINK. She's in de dining-room. We's habin' a dinner party for Mr. Wise, de lawyer man from New York.

BEMIS. Yes, I know. Could you slip in and tell Fay that I want to see her?

PINK. No, sah. I'd lose my job sure. Mis' Courtenay's done gib strict orders not to let you in.

BEMIS. But I'm not in.

PINK. Well, you's almost in.

BEMIS. Here's a dollar for you, Pink. (*Hands it to her.*)

PINK. De Lord look down! Is dere dat much money in de world?

BEMIS. Now I want you to give these flowers to Miss Fay. But of course Mrs. Courtenay mustn't know anything about it.

PINK (*taking flowers*). I'll do it, boss. But, honest, you'd better go, kase if they'd ketch you here I'd hab de palpitation ob de heart, I shore would.

(*Runs to door L. and peeks in dining-room.*)

BEMIS. Tell Miss Fay that I'll be waiting in the rose arbor.

PINK. Duck, man, duck; dey's comin'! (*Hides the flowers.*)

(*BEMIS disappears. Enter MRS. C., SAM. and FAY from L.*)

MRS. C. *sits at R., FAY at L., SAM. at C., PINK up L.*)

FAY. I'm sure, Aunt Clarice, that I saw Mr. Wise in the rose gardens last night. He was walking in the moonlight and sighing.

MRS. C. How do you know he was sighing?

FAY. Why—er—men always sigh when they walk in the moonlight.

SAM. And he told Stubby that you were the queen of the rosebud garden of girls. I think that was beautiful, Miss Clarice.

MRS. C. But Mr. Wise is so old, and he's from the North. He must be fifty if he's a day.

FAY. I don't see any objection to that.

SAM. And Stubby says he's got just oodles of money. Stubby used to work in his offices in New York.

MRS. C. It's been the dream of my life to live in New York.

SAM. And he's such a progressive man. He's only been in Opalooa a month and the street-cars have been running for two weeks.

FAY. And he's so attentive to you, auntie.

MRS. C. Then why doesn't he show it? Are New Yorkers always so reserved?

FAY. Bemis isn't reserved.

SAM. And neither is Stubby.

MRS. C. Fay, don't mention the name of Bemis Bennington in this house.

SAM. (*hastily*). I never met a nicer gentleman than Mr. Wise. Stubby is perfectly devoted to him.

MRS. C. He is a gentleman, I am sure, but I don't trust him. I don't trust any man. Bemis Bennington and Noah Jabb each deceived me and Jeremy Wise —

FAY. Oh, Mr. Wise wouldn't deceive you for the world. It isn't his nature. You certainly must have some confidence in him or you would never have made him the president of the street-car company.

MRS. C. I have confidence in his business ability, my dear, but I have no confidence in his attentions. In the words of the old song, Men are deceivers ever.

SAM. I don't think Mr. Wise would deceive a kitten.

FAY. And I never saw a man so desperately in love.

MRS. C. But he's old enough to be my father.

SAM. Well, of course, he isn't as young as my Stubby.

MRS. C. Well, I should hope not.

FAY (*rising and going to window, gives a long sigh*). Ah!

MRS. C. (*to SAM., who has crossed to her*). Now she's thinking about Mr. Bennington.

SAM. Yes. Isn't it sad?

MRS. C. Sad? That I refuse to allow her to associate with such a man? It's the best thing in the world for her. I'm not going to have Fay treated as I was treated. Sammie Bell, have you heard anything about his prospects?

SAM. No'm. Stubby says he hasn't got a job yet.

MRS. C. He has already forfeited his right to his uncle's millions. The will stipulated that he should marry in six months. I don't see why Noah Jabb doesn't claim the fortune.

SAM. After the way Noah Jabb treated your interests in the company I wouldn't think he'd have the nerve to claim anything. Stubby says that he got away with thirty thousand dollars of the company's money.

MRS. C. It's true. He has proved himself a common defaulter and I reckon he's in Rio Janiero now spending my money. I'll never trust a man again as long as I live.

SAM. Who is to be the new manager of the street-car company?

MRS. C. I don't know. Mr. Wise is looking for some one. But I draw the line at Bemis Bennington. I positively will not have him in my employ again.

SAM. Poor Mr. Bennington! I'm sure Fay cares for him.

MRS. C. Then the sooner she forgets him, the better for her welfare.

SAM. I saw him down on the square this evening, Miss Clarice, and he certainly did look pindly. That man's wearing out his soul for Fay.

MRS. C. Then I'll take her up North with me.

SAM. Are you going up North?

MRS. C. I've been thinking about spending the spring in New York. Fay!

FAY (*coming down*). Yes, Aunt Clarice?

MRS. C. Come away from the window. The night air is too cool. Pink, close the window. There is probably some one lurking in the grounds.

FAY. I didn't see any one.

MRS. C. Probably not, but if any one is lurking out there I'll take good heed they don't get in the house.

FAY. But, auntie —

MRS. C. Now don't start to argue, Fay. As far as you and Bemis Bennington are concerned my mind is made up. (*Goes to R.*) I never want to see his face again. [*Exits R.*

(FAY *sits L. and buries her face in her hands.*)

SAM. (*crossing to her*). There, there, Miss Fay, don't you worry. Leave everything to Stubby and me. We'll fix it just fine. All we have to do is to make Mr. Wise propose to Miss Clarice, and then she'll do anything he asks. That's why Mr. Bennington had him come all the way down from New York.

FAY. Yes, but will he ever propose to her?

SAM. I'll have Stubby talk to him.

PINK (*coming down L.*). Miss Fay!

(*Makes mysterious signs.*)

FAY. What is it, Pink?

PINK. I'se got somepin fer you.

FAY. What is it?

PINK. He's done been yere.

FAY. When, Pink?

PINK. Jes' 'fore you-all come in. He gimme dis yere bo-kay to gib you. (*Holds it up.*) Ain't dat scrumptious?

FAY. Oh! (*Reads note that she finds among the flowers.*)

PINK. He told me to say he's waitin' out in de rose garden. (*Crosses to door L.*) Jest like dat man Mr. Romeo in de movin' pictures. [*Exits L.*]

FAY. I'm not going to submit to this dictation any longer, Sammie Bell. She hasn't any right to treat us like children. I'm going to rebel. I won't stand it. I reckon I'm of age, ain't I?

SAM. Now, Miss Fay, you'd better leave it all to me and Stubby. We've got it all fixed. Mr. Bennington's going to get his five thousand dollar job and a wife in the bargain. All we've got to do now is to pacify Miss Clarice.

FAY. I won't pacify her. She's cruelly unjust to Bemis. (*Rises.*) I'm going out in the rose garden.

SAM. Miss Fay! Sh!

FAY. I don't care what she says.

Enter MRS. C. from R.

MRS. C. I thought the gentlemen had come in.

SAM. I can't imagine what they are doing.

MRS. C. (*seeing the flowers*). Oh, what a lovely bouquet!

SAM. (*taking it*). It's for you, Miss Clarice, with the compliments of Mr. Wise.

MRS. C. Really! How very kind he is. (*Crosses to R.*) When he comes in tell him I'm waiting for him in the rose garden.

FAY (*alarmed*). The rose garden?

MRS. C. Certainly.

FAY. But it's awfully damp in the rose garden, auntie.

MRS. C. I know it is, but the moon is shining, Fay, and I'll wear my big white shawl. [*Exits R.*]

SAM. Do you reckon she'll meet Mr. Bennington?

FAY. I don't know. Oh, Sammie Bell, if this keeps up much longer I'm going to elope.

Enter STUB. and WISE from L.

WISE. Hello, where's Mrs. Courtenay?

SAM. She's out in the rose garden, Mr. Wise. Now's your chance.

WISE. My chance? What d' y' mean chance?

FAY. You've made a wonderful impression on my aunt, Mr. Wise.

WISE (*strutting around*). Likes me, does she?

FAY. Didn't she make you the president of the Opaloopa Street-Car Company?

WISE. Yes, after Professor Jabb had absconded with the funds.

FAY. That shows her confidence in you.

WISE. She won't be so confident when she learns whom I've appointed as general manager.

SAM. That's just it. You must bring her to the point before you tell her.

WISE. Bring her to the point? What d' y' mean point?

STUB. Haven't you heard her say she'd rather live in New York than any place on earth? What do you want her to do, kidnap you?

WISE. But I'm a confirmed old bachelor, Stubby.

FAY (*close to him at R.*). It's never too late to mend, Mr. Wise.

STUB. (L.). And it's never too late to get a widow to mend for you.

WISE. Mrs. Courtenay is a wonderfully fine woman, Stubby. And being a bachelor is a mighty lonesome business.

SAM. Then go out in the rose garden, Mr. Wise, and look at the moon. We have a wonderful moon in Opaloopa.

WISE. At any rate I can tell her about the new manager.

STUB. Let's get it all fixed up and go back to New York. Gee, I'd give a million dollars to ride in the Subway.

SAM. (*down L. with STUB.*). I thought you liked Opaloopa, Stubby.

STUB. There's only two things in Opaloopa, Mr. Wise. Yep, just two things; life and death. If a man wears a white collar on any day but Sunday they call out the fire department to disperse the crowd.

WISE. Oh, then they have crowds in Opalooa?

STUB. Sure, they have. A crowd here means three people and a dog. One of the trolley cars ran into Main Street last week and moved it three blocks west. The first time I saw the depot, good-night! I said to one of the human lamp-posts, "When can I get a train out of here?" He said, "Just wait a minute till I run to the depot and see what day this is. If it's Sunday, there's a train to-morrer, but if it's Monday, there won't be no train till the last of the week." (*Laughs.*)

SAM. Stubby!

STUB. But I'll back the girls of Opalooa against any on earth. And the widows, too, Mr. Wise; especially the widows.

WISE. Wouldn't my old friends be surprised if I brought a wife back to New York?

FAY. And wouldn't the people of Opalooa be surprised if anything like that would happen?

STUB. The people of Opalooa would be surprised if anything ever happened.

SAM. Come on, Mr. Wise, Stubby and I will show you the way to the rose garden.

WISE. Yes, but I don't know —

SAM. (*taking his arm*). Of course you don't know now. But you'll know in the morning, all right. (*Leads him to R.*)

WISE. But do you think there's any chance for me?

STUB. (*taking his other arm*). Chance? Boss, there's every chance in the world. Gee, I'd just love to see that fresh skirt Genevieve McGully when Mrs. Courtenay sweeps into the office and says she's the new wife of the boss.

WISE. Well, you seem to have everything settled. I'm game. No one can ever say that Jeremy Wise didn't know a good thing when he saw it. Forward, march! Lead me to the rose garden. [*Exeunt WISE, SAM. and STUB., R.*]

FAY (*down L.*). I won't stand it any longer.

(*Takes out note and reads it silently. BEMIS sticks his right arm through the curtains at rear.*)

BEMIS (*concealed*). Hs! Ss!

FAY (*alarmed, rising*). Oh! (*Sees the arm.*) Oh! (*Re-assured.*) Oh! (*Goes to curtains and takes BEMIS' hand; sighs contentedly.*) Oh!

BEMIS (*looking in at the window*). Is the coast clear?

FAY. Bemis!

(*He leaps in.*)

BEMIS (*extending arms*). At last!

Enter PINK from L.

PINK. 'Scuse me, 'scuse me, Miss Fay. I'se got a man ob my own. [*Exits L.*]

FAY. Aunt Clarice is out in the rose garden.

BEMIS. I know it. She was sitting in the pergola and I thought it was you. I kissed her!

FAY. Bemis!

BEMIS. I don't think she recognized me. In fact she acted as if she expected some one to kiss her. So I folded my tent like the Arab and silently stole away.

FAY. What did she do?

BEMIS. She started after me. But just then Mr. Wise came strolling along and she gave up the hunt.

FAY. Oh, I'm not going to stand this persecution any longer. She has no right to treat me like a child. I know what we'll do. We'll elope.

BEMIS. But I've just received my appointment as manager of the street-car company.

FAY. She will never give her consent.

BEMIS. I think she will. From the latest reports from the rose arbor she'll do anything Mr. Wise asks her to.

SAM. (*outside R.*). Miss Fay! Miss Fay!

FAY. Quick! Some one is coming. The window.

(*He hides behind the curtains.*)

Enter SAM. and STUB. from R. FAY crosses down L.

SAM. It's all over but the shouting. We've stormed the rose arbor and the enemy is ours.

STUB. I'd never 'a' thought it of Mr. Wise—never. He was down on his knees like a hero in a picture show.

FAY. Did you congratulate them?

STUB. Aw, no, they hadn't got that far yet.

Enter WISE and MRS. C. from R.

MRS. C. Fay, come and kiss me.

FAY. Auntie!

MRS. C. I've decided to live in New York.

STUB. (*to WISE*). Slip her there, governor, you're all right.

WISE. I've just been telling Clarice that I have appointed Bemis the new manager of the company.

MRS. C. I think Mr. Bennington will make a good manager, Jeremy. I'll allow you to attend to all my business interests. (*To FAY*.) But I'll never give my consent to his marrying you.

FAY. Oh, that won't be necessary, Aunt Clarice.

MRS. C. You mean you will marry him in spite of me?

WISE. Now, my dear Mrs. Courtenay, I should say, my dear Clarice —

MRS. C. He will never inherit a penny of his uncle's millions, even though he has a five thousand dollar position. The will required him to marry by the first of January.

BEMIS (*appearing c.*). Oh, don't worry about that, Aunt Clarice.

MRS. C. (*haughtily*). Sir!

BEMIS. Mr. Wise, I offer my congratulations; Mrs. Courtenay, accept my very best wishes and give us your own in return. (*Goes to FAY at L. C.*)

MRS. C. (*R. C. with WISE*). What do you mean, sir?

BEMIS. Your niece and I were married on Christmas day.

MRS. C. Married? Fay, is this true?

FAY. Yes, auntie.

MRS. C. Then I've done with you. I —

WISE. Just a moment, Clarice. The ceremony was performed at my instigation. You see it was this way. I knew Jabb was a defaulter. I knew he had absconded with your money and I felt sure that you wouldn't want Mr. Chizzleton's millions to go to such a man. So I decided we'd keep the money in the family. Wasn't that right, dear?

MRS. C. I don't know. I hardly know what to say.

WISE. Then allow me to tell you. Simply say, "God bless you both and may your future life be as happy as mine!" That's all.

MRS. C. (*holding out her arms to FAY*). Fay!

FAY (*rushing to her*). Auntie!

BEMIS (*shaking hands with WISE*). And I owe it all to you. There's nothing like diplomacy.

STUB. Say, if youse will excuse me and Sammie Bell I think it's our turn to go out in the rose garden and look at the moon.

SAM. (*bashfully*). Oh, Stubby!

STUB. (*taking her hand*). Come on, Kid, I don't care what happens to me now. (*Runs out R. with SAM.*)

WISE. Bemis, my boy, I knew you'd do it.

FAY. Do what?

WISE. Win the Chizzleton millions.

Enter PINK with four glasses of wine on tray.

MRS. C. Pink, you're just in time. A toast.

(All hold glasses on high.)

To the high god Health,
And the high god Wealth,
And Fate all gods above,
We will drink a toast,
But we'll drink the most
To the wee little god of Love!

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Seven females. Costumes, modern; scenery, one interior. Plays two hours. Nan Wellington throws up a good job in the city when her mother dies, and comes back to the old homestead to save it to the family. Her plucky fight as a "farmerette" against inexperience, nature, and human villainy and greed provides a play of unusual interest for all girls. Recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

JANE WELLINGTON, *sixteen and still "unkissed."*

JOCELYN WELLINGTON, *fourteen or fifteen years old, the little Bugologist*

ELNORA WELLINGTON, *a girl of nineteen or twenty; a born homemaker.*

MRS. BECKWITH, *a woman of sixty or seventy; an unfriendly neighbor.*

NAN WELLINGTON, *a dainty blonde of twenty-two; the Farmerette.*

MINNETTE WELLINGTON LAWSON, *older than Nan and in good contrast; an admirer of soulful eyes.*

GRACIOUS ANN BEAN, *a stout, middle-aged colored "pusson"; a believer in "Calicothenics."*

SIX TIMES NINE

A Comedy in Two Acts

By Gladys Ruth Bridgham

Eleven females. Costumes, modern; scenery, an interior and an exterior. Plays one and a half hours. A party of American girls and their chaperon traveling abroad encounter the Princess Vara of Wollenholde in her summer home without recognizing her, and in her company bear themselves with credit in some warlike incidents of her reign. Very exciting and full of charm. Well recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

PRINCESS VARA OF WOLLENHOLDE.

COUNTESS ALEXIS, *her aunt.*

COUNTESS YVONNE, *her cousin.*

FREDA, *her maid.*

LURINE RAJE.

MRS. AVERY HAMILTON HAPGOOD, *of Concord, Mass., U. S. A.*

WINIFRED TUFTON

LUCY SIMPSON

MOLLY ANDREWS

AMELIA LEE

DELIA, *Mrs. Hapgood's maid.*

Pupils in Mrs. Hapgood's Seminary.

PEER GYNT

A Play in Five Acts in Verse

By Henrik Ibsen

An acting version of this notable play by a distinguished author, arranged for the stage by the late Richard Mansfield and acted for several seasons by him and later by Louis James. Mr. Mansfield's skill and success in condensing this spacious poetic drama were scarcely surpassed by his triumphant performance of the leading rôle, and will serve as a strong crutch for all who may adventure the piece as a necessary detail of any large illustration of Ibsen, the dramatist.

Price, paper covers, 25 cents

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The Lady From the Sea. A Drama in Five Acts. 5 males, 3 females.
The Master Builder. A Play in Three Acts. 4 males, 3 females.
Pillars of Society. A Play in Four Acts. 10 males, 9 females.
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The Wild Duck. A Drama in Five Acts. 12 males, 3 females.
The Young Men's League. A Play in Five Acts. 12 males, 6 females.

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This series is offered to meet a growing demand for the plays of this well-abused and hotly-discussed writer, whose influence over the contemporary drama is enormous even if his vogue in the American theatre be still regrettably small. These plays are intended for the reading public, but are recommended for the use of literary societies and reading clubs, and somewhat diffidently suggested to dramatic clubs, as providing unconventional but vigorously actable material. As a dramatist Ibsen is absolutely "actor-tight," and has written more successful parts and inspired more "hits" than any of his more popular contemporaries. This edition is printed in large, clear type, well suited for the use of reading clubs.

TEAM-WORK

A College Comedy in Three Acts

By *H. Q. Gallupe and Charles Gott*

Prize winner, Pen, Paint and Pretzel Contest, Tufts College, November, 1910

Ten males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays two hours and a quarter. The college course of Bob, the mainstay of the football team, is threatened by his father's ruin, due to the scheming of the uncle and patron of Humphrey, a classmate. Humphrey places his own standing in jeopardy to save his chum and finally saves the situation. This is the backbone of a strong play with very strong and various incidental interests and lots of first class comedy. Good atmosphere, lots of humor, strong characters; can be highly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

STEWART ALMY, "*Toot*," a member of "*Paint and Powder*," a dramatic club.

WILLIAM JEFFERSON JORDAN, "*Shine*," the playwright, member of "*Paint and Powder*."

BOB RICHARDS, captain of the football team, host at Forest Lodge.

H. GARDNER HUMPHREY, football manager.

FRANK BELL, electrician for "*Paint and Powder*."

BILL BLACK,

JACK BROWN,

TOM WHITE,

SAM GREEN,

MESSENGER BOY.

DOROTHY SPRAGUE,

EDITH RICHARDS, *Bob's sister*,

RUTH SARGENT,

MRS. HODGKINS, *Bob's aunt, the chaperon.*

AMY SINCLAIR GRANDBY, a *Radcliffe student, Edith's friend.*

} *stage hands for "Paint and Powder."*

} *Students at Jackson College.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Dining-room at Forest Lodge, morning.

ACT II.—Same as Act I. Evening of the following day.

ACT III.—Stage of the college gymnasium, on the afternoon preceding the performance of the *Paint and Powder* play.

THE CRIBBER

A College Comedy in Three Acts

By *W. P. McIntosh*

Six males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, three easy interiors. Plays an hour and a half. A student finds an examination paper that a professor has mislaid and hides it for temporary safety in another student's desk, where it is found in a search for a lady's letter by a jealous rival. The case looks black against a very popular man for a while, but is finally cleared up. Co-educational piece, with good atmosphere and lots of incidental fun.

Price, 15 cents

PROFESSOR PEPP

A Farcical Comedy with a College Flavor in Three Acts

By Walter Ben Hare

Nine males, seven females. Costumes, modern; scene, an easy exterior, the same for all three acts. Plays two hours and twenty minutes. Professor Pepp, on a vacation trip to Russia, is initiated by Boris Ardoff, a Russian humorist and former pupil of the Professor's, into a Nihilist Society "The Redeemers," and is so unlucky as to draw the red ball which obliges him to murder the Princess Katchakoffsky. In terror he at once flies from Russia, but Boris, to prolong the joke, writes ahead of him to a friend on the faculty, telling the story and revealing the password—"Bumski." With this weapon everybody in turn has his own way with the terrified Professor, who sees a Nihilist in every bush. A side-splitter with more good parts than any piece of its kind for years. Strongly recommended for school or college performance. *Price, 25 cents*

CHARACTERS

PROFESSOR PETERKIN PEPP, *a nervous wreck.*
MR. C. B. BUTTONBUSTER, *a giddy butterfly of forty-eight.*
HOWARD GREEN, *his son, who had the court change his name.*
SIM BATTY, *the police force of a college town.*
PEDDLER BENSON, *working his way through school.*
NOISY FLEMING, *just out of high school.*
PINK HATCHER, *an athletic sophomore.*
BUSTER BROWN, *a vociferous junior.*
BETTY GARDNER, *the professor's ward.*
AUNT MINERVA BOULDER, *his housekeeper, from Skowhegan, Maine.*
PETUNIA MUGGINS, *the hired girl.*
OLGA STOPSKI, *the new teacher of folk-dancing.*
KITTY CLOVER, *a collector of souvenirs.*
VIVIAN DREW, *a college belle.*
IRENE VAN HILT, *a social leader.*
CAROLINE KAY, *the happy little freshman.*
Students, Co-eds, etc.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I. Professor Pepp's residence on the college campus.

ACT II. Same scene. Surrounded by the nihilists.

ACT III. Same scene. A double wedding.

NOT ON THE PROGRAMME

A Comedy in One Act

By Gladys Ruth Bridgham

Three males, three females. Costumes, modern; scenery, a single interior. Plays forty minutes. Mrs. Whitney, rehearsing for amateur theatricals with Vincent Fielding, a dramatic coach, in her own home, is misunderstood by Ophelia Johnson (colored), her maid, who summons the police to straighten out what seems to her a very criminal state of things. Rastus Brown, a plumber and admirer of Ophelia, helps Officer Hogan to muddle matters into a very laughable state of confusion. Easy and strongly recommended. *Price, 15 cents*

COLLEGE DAYS

A College Comedy in Three Acts

By George M. Rosener

Ten males, four females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors and an exterior. Plays two hours. Quincy Jordan, the son of a tyrannical farmer, wins a scholarship offered by a prominent newspaper and throws off the paternal yoke. At Westward College, which he has chosen because the girl he loves is there, he is at first disadvantaged by his circumstances, but he soon makes good both with head and fists and not only defeats the plot for his downfall that his rivals lay for him, but comes out a victor in college, wins the girl he loves, and carries all before him. A fine piece with many fine parts; strongly recommended. Lots of comedy. Professional rights reserved.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

QUINCY JORDAN, *a farmer.*
QUINCY, JR., *his son.*
SQUIRE DRAKE, *a rich farmer.*
JEROME, *his son.*
UNCLE HEZ, *a town character.*
POOR HOUSE ONNIE, *another.*
PAUL PRYE, *the bully.*
PROFESSOR REX, *a teacher.*
HAL DEXTER, *a student.*
HARRY C. GRAHAM, *a politician.*
JIM BRADY, *a reporter.*
JERSEY, *Quincy Jordan's wife.*
VIOLET, *Squire Drake's daughter.*
AUNT SALLY, *a town character.*

Any number of students.

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Exterior of Quincy Jordan's farm, near the summer school of Westward College.

ACT II.—Exterior of Westward College. The home of Professor Rex.

ACT III.—Quincy, Jr.'s, law office out West four years later.

THE COLLEGE POLITICIAN

A College Farce Comedy in Three Acts

By H. W. Weis and D. T. Howard

Sixteen males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, three interiors. Plays two hours. Ted Kingsley, an outsider, applies the political methods of the outside world to the problem of winning the election for football manager in his college and, after an exciting campaign in which he shows great ability in this line and sets the college on end, he wins the office and the sister of his rival at one blow. An exciting play, with the true college atmosphere. Lots of good parts; not difficult; well recommended.

Price, 15 cents

THE BOY SCOUTS

A Play for Boys in Three Acts

By Walter Ben Hare

Twenty males. Scenery, unimportant; costumes, scout and modern. Plays two hours. Worth refuses to vote for Tony as a new scout because the latter is poor, but Tony shows in the end that he is a true scout and wins his election. This simple motive underlies lots of characteristic fun and stunts, and offers as a whole a very vigorous and sympathetic picture of the Boy Scout practices, motives, and ideals. Strongly recommended.

Price, 25 cents

CHARACTERS

STEWART NIPPER, *known as Nip.*

FRED TUCK, *known as Tuck.*

DICK RANDOLPH, *the patrol leader.*

WORTHINGTON LEONARD, *a rich boy.*

TONY ARDIS, *a poor boy.*

JAKIE STEIN, *with business instincts.*

CHUBBY CHILDS, *who don't care if he is fat.*

WATERMELON JACKSON, *a lazy coon.*

MRS. WATERMELON JACKSON, *and her seven little coons. (May be omitted.)*

LIPPY SCUDDER, *who thinks he's a hero.*

BUB WALDRON, *going on seven.*

JACK HALL, *assistant patrol leader.*

PLUPY HIGGINS, *who likes to study.*

LEE WALDRON, *some athlete.*

TOM REDWAY, *who plays the piano.*

SHORTY, HARRY, CHARLEY, WILL and FRANK, *other Boy Scouts.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—The meeting of the Boy Scouts of America. Nip and Tuck.

ACT II.—A rehearsal in the gym. The stunts of the Scouts.

ACT III.—Same as Act I. Swearing in the new tenderfoot.

AUNT ABIGAIL AND THE BOYS

A Farce in One Act

By Lillie Fuller Merriam

Nine males, two females. Scene, an interior; costumes, modern. Plays one hour. Aunt Abigail, who hates boys, visits Gerald in college and finding him dressed in female costume for theatricals takes him for his sister Geraldine. Things are badly mixed up when his friends turn up and see the situation, but in the end Aunty is wholly cured of her dislike for the "boys." Lively and amusing; recommended for schools.

Price, 15 cents

H. W. Pinero's Plays

Price, 50 Cents Each

MID-CHANNEL Play in Four Acts. Six males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, three interiors. Plays two and a half hours.

THE NOTORIOUS MRS. EBBSMITH Drama in Four Acts. Eight males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, all interiors. Plays a full evening.

THE PROFLIGATE Play in Four Acts. Seven males, five females. Scenery, three interiors, rather elaborate; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE SCHOOLMISTRESS Farce in Three Acts. Nine males, seven females. Costumes, modern; scenery, three interiors. Plays a full evening.

THE SECOND MRS. TANQUERAY Play in Four Acts. Eight males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, three interiors. Plays a full evening.

SWEET LAVENDER Comedy in Three Acts. Seven males, four females. Scene, a single interior, costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE THUNDERBOLT Comedy in Four Acts. Ten males, nine females. Scenery, three interiors; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE TIMES Comedy in Four Acts. Six males, seven females. Scene, a single interior; costumes, modern. Plays a full evening.

THE WEAKER SEX Comedy in Three Acts. Eight males, eight females. Costumes, modern; scenery, two interiors. Plays a full evening.

A WIFE WITHOUT A SMILE Comedy in Three Acts. Five males, four females. Costumes, modern; scene, a single interior. Plays a full evening.

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AS YOU LIKE IT Comedy in Five Acts. Thirteen males, four females. Costumes, picturesque; scenery, varied. Plays a full evening.

CAMILLE Drama in Five Acts. Nine males, five females. Costumes, modern; scenery, varied. Plays a full evening.

INGOMAR Play in Five Acts. Thirteen males, three females. Scenery varied; costumes, Greek. Plays a full evening.

MARY STUART Tragedy in Five Acts. Thirteen males, four females, and supernumeraries. Costumes, of the period; scenery, varied and elaborate. Plays a full evening.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE Comedy in Five Acts. Seventeen males, three females. Costumes, picturesque; scenery varied. Plays a full evening.

RICHELIEU Play in Five Acts. Fifteen males, two females. Scenery elaborate; costumes of the period. Plays a full evening.

THE RIVALS Comedy in Five Acts. Nine males, five females. Scenery varied; costumes of the period. Plays a full evening.

SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER Comedy in Five Acts. Fifteen males, four females. Scenery varied; costumes of the period. Plays a full evening.

TWELFTH NIGHT; OR, WHAT YOU WILL Comedy in Five Acts. Ten males, three females. Costumes, picturesque; scenery, varied. Plays a full evening.

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