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Up Against It

A Farce in One Act

By

INNIS GARDNER OSBORN

Author of "An Easy Mark," etc.

BOSTON

WALTER H. BAKER & CO.

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Up Against It

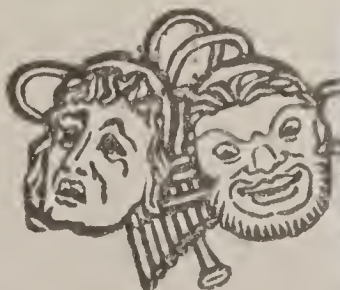
CHARACTERS

- MR. RICHARD FELLOWES, *very much to be married.*
MR. ROBERT FELLOWES, *of the floor below.*
HON. HENRY FELLOWES, *Richard's uncle.*
ALGERNON FITZGIBBONS, *an ex-prize-fighter.*
RASTUS, *Richard Fellowes' man.*
MISS MADELENE HARRINGTON, *in love with Richard Fellowes.*
MISS MARJORIE HARRINGTON, *to marry Robert Fellowes.*
MISS PATIENCE DEMPSTER, *a decided spinster in search of a husband. (Can be played best by a man.)*

Special effort should be made to have the make-up of both Fitzgibbons and Patience as absurd as possible. The latter should wear corkscrew curls, old-fashioned dress and carry in addition to hand-bag and boxes a bird cage with a Teddy Bear or the like in it. Both rôles might be taken by the same person.

SCENE.—Den in the apartments of Richard Fellowes, New York.

TIME.—The present.



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Up Against It

SCENE.—*An ordinary box set with wide door and curtains in C., rear, showing hallway. Entrances on each side, opposite each other. The one on R. of stage leads to a conservatory, and the opposite one to MR. RICHARD FELLOWES' bedroom. Tormentors may be used at the front on each side to make two more doors. Chairs on each side of the rear door. Piano below rear door on R. of stage. Opposite, on L. of stage, a bookcase filled with books. On top of this a telephone. To the front of stage slightly to the left of C., a small table and two chairs.*

(*RASTUS peers in door at rise and then comes down stage to chair beside table, where he seats himself. Has glass of lemonade in his hand, and is sucking through a straw.*)

RAS. This am certainly what ah choose to circumspect as solid comfort. Ah feels jess like leanin' forward an' sayin', "Boy-boy, bring me up the evenin' paper, an' when yo' comes in blow the outside air off yo' pusson so as not to dilute it with this yere inward warmth." (*Feet on table.*) Dat's de sort of life ah leads in this yere place. Yas ah does. Dese clothes of some base menial don't mean nothin' 'bout mah true character. Lordy, no. Ah is de boss shadder of this yere dream story. When ah wants to smoke ah reaches forward like this. (*Takes cigar.*) My, but they certainly have fallen off in taste. Some people says to me, "Why don't yo' join a union?" No, siree; no union for this dark and fearsome angel. An' the master? Why, he jess the slave to my slightest wish. Oh, yas, he is. He's going to be married, an' he ain't been home in fo' days. My, but I'se goin' to be harsh with him. This yere telegraphical says that the lady of his busom is to be here, and his uncle jess called up on that rigamarmus saying he will be up to supper, an' he ain't been here to get the news. Mah

word, but he am de most carelessness man I ever did see. 'Tain't no use talkin'. This being the only color in de rainbow am certainly salubrious. Why, I'se de only little raindrop in de whole storm. (*Steps off stage.*) I'se got a feelin' dat he am a-comin'. Where I gwine put this seegar? Lordy, Lordy! (*Puts it on bookcase.*) There he is safe. Duster, duster, where is you?

(*Picks up duster and begins work, singing, "I'se a busy man from night till morn."*)

Enter RICH., laughing.

RICH. Busy, aren't you? My hat, my coat. Rastus, some one has been smoking in here.

RAS. (*sniffing*). That's perzactly what ah thot, sah, but ah cain't find no signs of it, sah.

RICH. Might be just as well then if you took that cigar off of the bookcase before it catches fire.

RAS. (*removing cigar*). Now, I wonder how that ever came there, sah?

RICH. (*coming down stage*). Rastus, were you ever forced to marry a woman against your will?

RAS. Lordy, I was never nowise.

RICH. Then don't do it. There is absolutely nothing in it.

RAS. He's raving.

RICH. Well, any one or anything for me?

RAS. De same collectors, sah, as ——

RICH. Oh, Rastus, I mean any one of any importance?

RAS. (*taking telegram*). Nothin' but this piece of yaller paper, sah. The boy said that it was a hurry message, so I took ——

RICH. The liberty of opening it and reading it to see if it was a proper thing for me to see, I suppose. (*Crosses to table.*) Rastus, I have often thought that I would consult you with regard to my wines before I served them to my guests. You ought to be quite a connoisseur by this time—at least in my wines. Well, what did it say?

RAS. The lady of yo' heart done get here this afternoon, sah.

RICH. (*sinking into chair*). What?

RAS. She wrote it, sah; I didn't. Lord knows the writtin was bad enuf.

RICH. (*pacing floor*). Rastus, are you sure that you have read it correctly? Are you positive there is no error?

RAS. Didn't say nothin' about no error, sah.

RICH. I suppose that you are right. Any news from my uncle?

RAS. Oh, yas, sah. Good news, sah. He jess called up that he would be up to take supper with you.

RICH. Worse and worse. Rastus, the news is bad enough, but there is a funereal darkness about your face that—get out of here.

RAS. Yas, sah, but ——

RICH. Get out of here, you piece of black ebony.

RAS. Ah may be ebony, sah, but don't yo' scratch this yere ebony the wrong way, or I ——

RICH. Beat it.

RAS. I'se a flyin', sah. [*Exit, rear door.*]

RICH. (*sitting on piano stool*). Up against it at last. This marriage by arrangement. Two fond parents fix the whole thing up about the time that you are chewing the varnish off the front stairs, and it is marry the girl or you don't get the money. Never saw the girl—no one ever has, as far as I can make out. Don't even know her first name. She's never seen me, and I suppose that she is cursing the day that I was born. And you (*taking photo from piano*), my dear Madelene, the best little girl in the world, you won't marry me because you wish me to do as my parents desired. You would step aside and let another girl take your place. Oh, it's funny. It's too funny. It's just like the story in a comic paper, except that the joke is on me.

Enter RAS., with clothes, from rear door.

RAS. Yo' wedding garments, sah. They certainly am beauties. [*Exit into door L. C.*]

RICH. My wedding garments! Oh, Lord! Rastus, Rastus! (*Enter RAS.*) By the way, Rastus, I think I will wear those clothes first this time.

RAS. All right, sah. Anyway, you done got the sleeves jess a little bit too long this time, sah.

RICH. I did, eh? Well, I am awfully sorry. Is that all?

RAS. No, dat ain't all. Dere's a lady waitin' down-stairs, sah.

RICH. (*jumping up*). A lady? Rastus, are you sure it is a lady?

RAS. Well, she certainly looked very much to de fluffy ruffles, sah.

RICH. (*bus.*). Think hard.

RAS. I'se a-thinkin', sah.

RICH. Use what little intellect you have.

RAS. I'se a-intellectin', sah.

RICH. She doesn't look—like a woman—a woman who would try to kidnap a man, does she?

RAS. Kidnipper? Well, ah cain't perzactly say, sah, but if she am a kidnipper dis yere coon am tied hand and foot, an' too weak to resistance her.

RICH. Admit the lady.

RAS. Shall be admitted.

[*Exit rear door.*

RICH. (*following him to door*). It's all over. (*Comes down stage.*) Farewell to hope, farewell, oh happiness. Oh, I'm so happy, I feel like a man slipping over a precipice and listening to his friend's comments on the lovely obituary he will get after his pieces have been collected at the bottom.

Enter RAS, rear door.

RAS. De kidnipper, sah.

Enter MISS MADELENE HARRINGTON, same door.

RICH. Madelene!

RAS. Another time ah played on the black and lost. I guess dere ain't gwine be no kidnippin' to-day.

[*Exit, rear door.*

RICH. (*both down stage*). Madelene, what does this mean?

MAD. It means that I can't let you go after all, Dickie. It means that I love you altogether too much to give you up to that other woman, whether it is right or wrong. She can't have you even if your father did arrange it. You belong to me.

RICH. Madelene, you have made me just the happiest man in the world. I'll jump to the window and hail a cab, and ——

MAD. But, Dickie, dear, I have no bridesmaids.

RICH. Oh, never mind that, dear. I tell you what we can do. We will rig up Rastus in a lace curtain and let him play the double rôle of best man and maid of honor. It will be mighty funny. Well, are you ready?

MAD. If you wish it.

RICH. If I wish it? (*Kisses her.*) I will jump to the window (*going to window*), hail a cab, and ——

(*Staggers back.*)

MAD. Why, Dickie—Dickie, dear, what is the matter?

RICH. Uncle is down there in his car, and he is coming up here.

MAD. But he mustn't find me here.

RICH. You bet he mustn't find you here. But where can you go? (MAD. *starts for door rear.*) No, you can't go out there; you would meet him. (She *starts for door L.*) You can't go into my room. Oh, if we only had an air-ship.

RAS. (*off stage*). Look out for them stairs, sah. This way, sah.

(RICH. and MAD. *against rear wall, hand in hand.*)

HON. HENRY FELLOWES (*off stage*). Phew! what a climb!

RICH. Madge, we are cornered. He will be here in a minute, and we have got to meet him face to face.

MAD. But, Dickie, dear——

RICH. I have an idea. (*Goes to rear door.*) It is the only way out of this fix. Do it, and you will save both our skins. You have got to be the girl he wants me to marry. Uncle has never seen her, and it will be all right if—— (*Enter HEN. RICH. seizes his hat.*) Uncle, I am so glad you have come.

HEN. My hat, you young idiot. Do you want to ruin it?

RICH. Yes—that is, no, uncle.

HEN. Phew! but that was a climb.

RICH. Elevator's off. Everything's off to-day.

HEN. Yes? Well, never mind. (*Goes to window.*) The view is worth it when you get up here.

RICH. (*following him*). Yes, it is; and the higher you go the better it is. Now, up on the roof——

HEN. Not so fast, my boy, not so fast. I may be a high-flier, but I am not on a trip to the moon this particular time. Besides, these wings of mine (*bus. with his ears*) are not working. Hullo! So the fair maiden has arrived, has she? (*Bus. behind his back.*) Egad, boy, she is a thoroughbred. You don't deserve her. But come—come, am I such an old fogie that you can't introduce me?

RICH. (*laughing*). Old fogie! Such a joke, uncle. (*Aside.*) I wonder what the devil her name is. (*Aloud.*) My darling—uncle, dearest—oh, this is my very dear uncle. (*Aside.*) Thank God, that is over.

HEN. (*to MAD.*). And so you are the girl that my brother picked out for the lad, eh? Well, I shall kiss you for ——

RICH. Don't you think, uncle, that we might ——

HEN. Never mind what I think. Just watch what I do. (*Kisses her.*) And there is another one for myself. (*Kisses her.*) Not jealous, are you, you young idiot? By George, boy, but she is a thoroughbred. Well, come, take me to my room where I can get some of the mud off of my clothes. (*RICH. crosses to door on L., rear.*) If you (*to MAD.*) will pardon me, my dear.

RICH. Oh, yes, Madelene.

HEN. Madelene?

RICH. Certainly—Madelene.

HEN. But who the devil, sir, is Madelene?

RICH. Why, she is; didn't you know it?

HEN. I know, sir, that she is Patience.

MAD. Yes, Patience Madelene, uncle dear.

HEN. Oh, I see. Well, come along, my boy.

[*Exeunt RICH. and HEN., L., rear.*]

MAD. Now this is a lovely state of affairs. I don't know who I am from the man in the moon, where I come from or what I have ever done in my life. (*Telephone rings. She goes to telephone.*) Yes—hullo.....Oh, yes, Mr. Fellowes lives here.....No, the seventh floor.....No, Mr. Richard Fellowes, not Mr. Robert Fellowes, lives—hullo—hullo—— (*Hangs up telephone.*) Now who can that be? (*Telephone rings; she goes to it.*) Hullo.....Yes?.....Oh, yes, Dick—that is, Mr. Richard Fellowes lives here.....What is that?.....You—are—waiting—at—the—station?.....I—dear me—I do hope that you are a good waiter.....Yes, Dick is on his way down to meet you. Wait until he comes, won't you? Don't move an inch, will you, please? (*Hangs up telephone.*) The girl Dick is to marry.

RICH. (*entering talking*). Anything you can't find, uncle, just ——

MAD. Dick, if you love me, tell me who I am.

RICH. (*coming down stage with her*). Why, you are just the best ——

MAD. No—no. What is my new name?

RICH. Oh, yes, that's so. I've got it. You are Patience Dempster.

MAD. Who?

RICH. Patience Dempster.

MAD. Then I have just called up to let you know that I am waiting at the station.

RICH. The devil! I beg your pardon, my dear. She must be stopped; she must be headed off before she can get here. Rastus! Rastus!

Enter RAS., rear door.

RAS. I'se a-comin', sah, I'se flyin', sah.

RICH. Rastus, get me a cab. Make one if you have to, but get it and get it in a hurry.

RAS. Yes, sah, I'll be a regular dusty tornado at gettin' it, sah. (*Exit, rear door.*) One cab, man's size, an' in a hurry, even if you have to build it an' draw it wif speerit horses.

RICH. I am on my way, my dear. I will tell her that the place has blown up, burned down, subway has caved in and swallowed up the whole plant. Then I will steer her off to some hotel until you and I can be married. Keep up your nerve, little girl, and tell uncle—oh, any old thing.

[*Exit, rear door, on the run.*]

MAD. (*following to the door*). But, Dick, how will you know her ——

Enter HEN., from door L., rear.

HEN. Ah, this is a great deal better. Hullo, where is the young dog?

MAD. Oh, uncle dear, Dick has had—he has been called away suddenly. It was a lawsuit—and she said—he said—oh, he said that I was to tell you any old thing.

(*Bus. at door.*)

HEN. And you are all upset because he has left you.

(*Sits at table.*)

MAD. (*aside*). He doesn't know how true that is.

HEN. (*picking up paper*). Confound the boy! Hang his business! Can't he forget it for a moment? But there, we won't worry. (*She comes down and sits at opposite side of table.*) I am afraid, my dear, that you will have to take the boy in hand a bit. You see, for two years I have been out of the country. Had I been here it might have been different. I am sorry to say he has been in the habit of making his world

these rooms and his life a lot of leather-bound books. Study, study, study. That is all the boy has thought of.

MAD. (*aside*). And we have been to the theatre at least every other night.

HEN. But, my dear, you can put new life into him.

MAD. I certainly will after to-day.

HEN. Quite right, my dear. But there is one thing that worries me a bit. They tell me that in spite of his work he has had time to meet some girl or other and ——

MAD. (*aside*). I wonder what he knows about me.

HEN. Yes, some beastly disgusting creature with feet like (*MAD. jumps up*) trams (*she sits down*), and hands like (*bus.*) Kipling's 'ousemaid, I suppose. Probably ran across her in the course of his studies, and she, realizing what it would mean to marry into our family, has tried to land him. But she is playing for big game.

MAD. (*aside*). Oh, is she? (*Aloud.*) But has he never mentioned her?

HEN. Well, hardly, my dear. Ashamed of her, I suppose.

MAD. (*aside*). The old hypocrite.

HEN. But then we won't worry about the baggage any ——

MAD. (*jumping up*). Mr. Fellowes, I won't stand for this.

HEN. Then pray be seated, my dear. (*MAD. sits.*) Now why the deuce do you have to go off in such a hullabaloo over this person whom you have never seen?

MAD. Why, you see, uncle, she is a woman.

HEN. Egad, and so are you from the top of your head to the tips of your toes. Now if we only had ——

MAD. A cold bottle and a bird, eh, uncle?

HEN. (*aside*). Wonderfully well advanced for a New Rochelle girl. (*Aloud.*) Ah, 'well, we will see to that later. But here? Why I would as soon expect to find a race-horse in Dick's bath as to see a bottle of wine about the place. (*MAD. laughs.*) Why, what was that?

MAD. Merely a frog in my throat.

(HEN. goes to bookcase.)

HEN. To continue, I suppose the only thing that he has in his place are a lot of leather-bound law books.

MAD. Yes; oh, I know he often wrote for money to buy ——

HEN. Now, how the deuce did you know that?

MAD. Why, they all do, don't they? My brother ——

HEN. But you have no brother.

MAD. No? (*Aside.*) I might have known I had no brother. (*Aloud.*) Oh, yes, that's so, uncle. But aren't you a bit tired sitting here?

HEN. In the presence of so charming a young woman I should never tire. (*Telephone rings.*) The telephone. Pardon me. (*Goes to telephone.*)

MAD. (*aside.*) That woman. (*Aloud.*) Let me answer it, uncle.

HEN. Not while I am here to do it for you.

MAD. But, uncle, I love to telephone. (*Bus.*)

HEN. You shall have one in your home, then, and I shall call you up all the time. But in this case I must insist. Hullo! Hullo!

MAD. (*sinking into chair.*) Help, help, oh, heelp!

HEN. I say—what the devil is going to happen? No—no, I didn't say go to the devil. Patience, please don't faint yet; there is some one on the 'phone. No, I am not talking to you.

MAD. Water—water.

HEN. Oh, the deuce! this is a very unfortunate thing. I will be right back. Hold on a minute.

MAD. I shall faint. (*Faints.*)

HEN. She has fainted. I'll go and get some water.

[*Exit L., rear.*]

MAD. (*going to 'phone.*) I don't know who you are, but he isn't here, he never was here; the directory is wrong; his telephone has been taken out for non-payment. Good-bye. (*Goes back to chair. Enter HEN., L., rear, glass of water in his hand.*) I am feeling so much better now.

HEN. Ah, that is good. (*At 'phone.*) Hullo.....What's that you are saying?Hang up my receiver!.....Mind my own damn business? (*Hangs up 'phone.*) There was some one on the wire. (*Sits down.*)

MAD. So I judged.

HEN. Confound them, if they want me they can call again.

MAD. Was it a call, uncle?

HEN. For a moment I thought there was going to be a case of trouble on the line. (*Faces her.*) But it is all over. Now to business. The minute you and Dick are married I am going to hand the boy a check for one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

MAD. You promise that, uncle?

HEN. My word on it.

MAD. Then we will have a big house in ——— (*Crash off stage.*) The woman!

Enter RAS., rear door.

RAS. A most singular pusson to see you, sah.

HEN. To see me?

RAS. Enter singular.

Enter ALGERNON FITZGIBBONS, rear door, brushing RAS. aside.

ALG. Out of me way dere, youse wid de pajamma suit an' de face like a mud storm. Out of me way. Say, can't youse dope out a swell gent when you sees one unless he hands you de little gilt card wid de union mark on it? Dust your blinkers. (*To MAD.*) Hully gee, pipe de skirt. Beg pardon, calico, for the steam I jess ——— (*To HEN.*) Hey, dere, wing eye, where's de sport dat holds de combination to dis safe?

HEN. Confound your impudence, fellow. Rastus, show this person out.

ALG. Naw Rastus ain't goin' to show no poisern out.

RAS. Oh, yas, he am. Rastus goin' show hissself out.

[*Exit, rear door.*]

ALG. Say, a few more of dem lovely thoughts from youse, old rain in de face, an' I bites me professional card in your eyeballs. See? I'm Algernon Fitzgibbons, I am, an' me muscles is jess aching fer de chanct ter mop de floor wid yer, so low bridge. (*Pushes HEN. back.*) Aw, yer slippin' ———

HEN. Confound you, sir ———

ALG. Want me ter twist off yer nose? Now, dat's better. Let off some of your steam. De choo-choo is in de station. Get wise. Say, where is de domino dat runs dis ranch?

HEN. If you mean my nephew, I am ———

ALG. Oh, I know wot youse is, me strangled bunch of easter lilies. Never mind all dat presidential message gag, an' cut out de glad faced butler act. What I wants ———

HEN. Confound it — —

ALG. Pull in yere sheet; de wind's died down. Now come along side. Don't scrape off der paint. What, do I look like a children's sewin' circle? Ain't got him tucked behind

a curtain or in de odder dump, has yer? I'm wise, I am. I'm jess dat wise dat de owls has formed a union to boycott me. See.

HEN. On my word, sir —

ALG. Whoa. De race is off. Say, what I wants is me money for a case of laugh water—dat's champagne, you know—dat I brought up here for de lily dat blooms in dis pond.

HEN. For my nephew?

MAD. Oh, this is too funny.

ALG. Givin' me de ha ha. Say, rag, I'm on de level.

MAD. You come with me; I know what you want.

ALG. Me for de musty trail an' de pattern. So long, lilacs. (*Walks to rear door.*) Aw, don't get mussy.

[*Exeunt MAD. and ALG., rear door.*]

HEN. Don't get mussy—lilacs—musty trail. Rastus, Rastus!

Enter RAS., door R., rear.

RAS. Here I is, sah.

HEN. Have you ever seen that person before?

RAS. Oh, yas, sah. (*Enter MAD.*) No, sah, I never see him before in all my days, sah.

MAD. Isn't that funny? He wanted the Mr. Fellowes on the floor below.

RAS. Oh, lordy! [*Exit, rear door.*]

HEN. Then, by George, I shall —

MAD. Go out in the conservatory for a few moments with me, uncle. [*Exeunt, door R., rear.*]

Enter RAS. and MISS MARJORIE HARRINGTON, rear door.

RAS. Lady, yo' certainly am in de wrong flat.

MAR. Oh, indeed, person, is that so? Now possibly this isn't the seventh floor.

RAS. Oh, yas'm, it am, but —

MAR. And perhaps Mr. Fellowes doesn't live here.

RAS. He lives here all right, but —

MAR. Well, those were the instructions given me over the telephone by some female person.

RAS. Possibly, miss, but you see —

MAR. Never mind what I see. You go and tell your master that Miss Harrington, the girl he is to marry, is here.

RAS. Yas'm. (*Aside.*) Lordy, master cain't marry many more. [*Exit, rear.*]

MAR. Well, this is a nice reception from a man whom I haven't seen in ten years and whom I am to marry! Oh, Mr. Bob Fellowes, you will catch it from me, that is if I know you, and I don't believe that I shall. But he might have had the decency to be curious enough to have been at home.

Enter HEN., door R., rear.

HEN. Now, where —— (*Aside.*) A woman!

MAR. I beg pardon, old chap, but is this Mr. Fellowes' apartment?

HEN. Why, yes, it is; but I ——

MAR. Well, then, you may as well know that he and I are engaged to be married, and it wouldn't bother me in the least if I were to see him.

HEN. (*aside*). The girl of Dick's that I heard about. Oh, what a minx to come up here this way. (*Walks over so that each are at opposite sides of the table; aloud.*) Yes, my dear, I am his uncle.

MAR. Oh, uncle, darling!

(Embraces him over the table; picture.)

HEN. (*aside*). I have got to get this out of here before Patience sees her. (*Aloud.*) Won't you step into this room here and wait until I can find my nephew? (*Exeunt both, door L., rear. Enter HEN. Walks across to door R., front.*) Oh, there is going to be trouble here. [*Exit door R., front.*]

Enter MR. ROBERT FELLOWES, rear door, on the run.

ROB. Hullo! Oh, I say, hullo! By Jove, but this is queer. That man of Fellowes' told me that she came up here. She is the girl that I am to marry. Now I wonder what the deuce she looks like after all these years. Hullo!

Enter MAD., door R., rear.

MAD. Did some one call? (*Aside.*) A strange man.

ROB. (*aside*). There she is now. (*Aloud.*) Yes. Is Miss Harrington here?

MAD. I am Miss Harrington.

ROB. The deuce you say. Well, you are all to the goodski.

MAD. I don't exactly understand ——

ROB. Well, never mind that. You will in time. My, but

I'm glad that you have come. I've been all fired lonely lately. Come now, be a good sport and kiss your husband to be.

(*Crosses to her.*)

MAD. What do you mean ——

ROB. Well, if you are a bit bashful (*RAS. sticks head around rear door*), I will kiss you. (*Kisses her.*)

RAS. Great Moses! it's a regular haramer. [*Exit.*

ROB. Come, now, don't be angry. I'll just run downstairs and get my things, and we will beat it to the parson's. Wait. [*Exit, rear.*

MAD. 'The brute! He kissed me. Dear me, where can every one be? (*Goes to door L., rear.*) There's a strange woman in Dick's room. It's the girl he is to marry. (*Enter RICH.*) Oh, dear!

RICH. It's all off. She wasn't there.

MAD. Oh, I know it, sir; she is in there.

RICH. What? (*Crosses to door L., rear.*) I can explain.

MAD. Good-day, sir. [*Exit, rear door.*

RICH. My dear Madelene ——

Enter HEN., door R., front.

HEN. Oh, you gay young deceiver. By George, you shall dance a merry dance before I am through with you. You shall explain all of this to Patience and myself later, sir.

[*Exit, door L., front.*

RICH. The devil! He has found out who Madelene really is.

Enter MAR., door L., rear. Slams it after her.

MAR. I won't stay in there.

RICH. (*aside*). There it is.

MAR. (*aside*). I wonder if that is Bob. (*Aloud.*) Are you Mr. Fellowes?

RICH. Guilty in the first degree. Are you the girl I am to marry?

MAR. To be sure I am. Take a good look at me. Stand without hitching and all that sort of thing. I have heard that you are a good judge of women. Do I come up to the mark?

RICH. My poor head!

MAR. Come on, now. We have been in the same room

with each other for at least thirty seconds now, and you haven't kissed me yet.

RICH. Really—you—see—I'm not used to this sort of thing.

MAR. Kiss me.

(As he does MAD. comes into doorway at rear.)

MAD. The villain! [Exit.

MAR. Who was that person?

RICH. *(aside)*. It was Madelene. *(Aloud.)* A few words of explanation —

MAR. Plenty of time for that later, old chap. I'm off to find the fair maiden who appeared on the scene.

[Exit, rear door.

RICH. Good Lord! She mustn't see Madelene.

[Exit, same door.

Enter HEN., door L., front.

HEN. *(pacing the room)*. Patience—Patience—Patience. Oh, I am all out of Patience. This is a lovely state of affairs. This is a pretty state of affairs.

Enter ROB., rear door.

ROB. Hullo there, old chap.

HEN. Confound you, sir. Now who the devil are you, sir?

ROB. Not a whole lot of your business, but then I am not ashamed of my name. I happen to be a Mr. Fellowes who is to marry —

HEN. By George, you confounded impostor, you are going to do no such thing. How dare you come in here?

ROB. Say, look here, old skeesicks, don't get too busy, or I will have to throw you out of the place.

HEN. Oh, this is too much. *(Fumes.)* I will see about this later, sir. [Exit in a rage door R., front.

ROB. Rummy old cove that. *(Enter MAD., rear door.)* Ah, there you are, and as pretty as a peach. Well, are you ready?

MAD. *(aside)*. I'll teach Dick to kiss other girls right before my face. *(Aloud.)* I will be. Have you seen that other woman?

ROB. *(aside)*. I wonder what she knows about me? *(Aloud.)* Oh, we won't worry about the other woman. You are the only woman there is for me. *(They cross.)*

Enter RICH., rear door, as they cross.

MAD. I am so glad that I can trust you.

RICH. Stop.

MAD. Come, we will go out on the balcony.

[Exit, door R., rear.

RICH. Oh, you home breaker. Great heavens! What can all of this mean? I've got it. Madelene saw me kiss that other woman, and now she has gone off with that man.

Enter HEN., door L., rear, with champagne bottle.

HEN. Ah, there you are, you unprincipled young Mormon, you. What are you going to do with this lovely thing, sir? What is it, sir?

RICH. Bottle.

HEN. A bottle. A bottle, is it? And what is a bottle of this kind doing in your apartment, sir?

RICH. Got it to feed my pet canary.

HEN. What? Well, how about your friend Algernon, who has been here to collect for a case of champagne.

RICH. Case of champagne? Algernon? *(Crosses to HEN.)* It is all very simple. I can explain it all. *(Points to bookcase.)* Simply was champagne wood, same thing as mission wood, you know, simply a case made of champagne wood. Some one just called me. *[Exit, rear door.*

HEN. Oh, you guileless young prevaricator, you smooth and oily tongued young Ananias. *(Enter MAR., door R., rear.)* That woman again.

MAR. Oh, there you are, you old darling.

HEN. Yes, and here I go. *[Exit, door L., rear.*

MAR. Queer family that I am going to marry into. *(Enter ROB., by door R., front.)* Hullo, here is another. Who are you?

ROB. *(aside)*. Another woman. Has he got them all around the place? *(Aloud.)* Well, you see I am Mr. Fellowes, and I —

MAR. Now, my bonnie, blue-eyed sir, you are nothing of the kind, for I have just been with Mr. Fellowes. Is this your apartment?

ROB. Why, no, but —

MAR. Then don't try to butt in. I shall take great pleasure, Mr. what so ever your name is *(RICH. appears at rear door)*, in going out here with you.

[Exeunt MAR. and ROB., door L., rear.

RICH. Now he is with her. Oh, if Salt Lake City were moved on here how business would flourish.

Enter MAD., door L., rear.

MAD. Oh, there you are. Pray tell me why that handsome young thing is not here in your arms?

RICH. My dear Madelene.

MAD. Don't call me Madelene, sir. From now on I am simply Miss Harrington to you.

RICH. I can explain the entire ——

MAD. Explain? Oh, dear me!

RICH. Well, possibly you will then ——

Enter ROB., door L., rear, followed by MAR.

ROB. Hullo. Now what's this ——

RICH. So you have come back, have you? Want to laugh at what you have done, I suppose.

ROB. Say, what do you mean by being alone in this room with her?

RICH. What do I mean by being alone—in this room—with her? Oh!

Enter RAS., rear door.

RAS. There's—oh, Lordy, there's another lady to see Mr. Fellowes.

RICH. (*in despair*). Another?

ROB. (*aside*). I wonder if it is that other woman?

RAS. An' she says, sir, as how she reckons——

ROB. Don't let her in.

RAS. But she insists, sah.

RICH. Don't let her in.

RAS. Dat's mo' easy said than done, ah thinks.

[*Exit, rear door.*]

MAD. (*to MAR.*). You leave this place at once.

MAR. (*to MAD.*). See here, old girl ——

ROB. (*to both*). Now look here, girls ——

RICH. (*to ROB.*). You have made enough trouble here already.

Enter RAS., rear door.

RAS. She says that she is here to marry Mr. Fellowes,

MAR. (*to RICH.*). Another?

MAD. Oh, what a Mormon Dick is.

ROB. (*aside*). That means me.

RICH. Rastus, choke her. Don't let her in, for heaven's sake.

RAS. Yas, sah. (*Aside.*) Must think I'm a pressing system to keep her under mah thumb. [*Exit, rear door.*]

MAD. You Mormon! [*Exit, rear door.*]

MAR. You deceiver! [*Exit, same.*]

ROB. The devil! [*Exit, same.*]

RICH. I wonder what storm has blown in now.

Enter HEN., by door L., rear.

HEN. (*crossing stage*). There, my gentle nephew, I suppose that you have heard that there is another woman to see you?

RICH. I know all about it.

HEN. You do, do you? Well, what the deuce do you intend to do about it, you sallow-faced, woman-deceiving shrimp, you?

RICH. Start a harem.

HEN. Start a ——— And I thought that you were a quiet, studious young man. Leave this place before I kill you. Not one cent ———

RICH. (*crossing to HEN.*). I can explain.

HEN. That's all you have done. Get out of here.

RICH. All right. [*Exit, door R., rear.*]

HEN. Explain—oh, the three-faced villain. In my day I was known to go some, but ——— (*Enter MAD., rear door.*) My child. (*Embraces her.*)

Enter MAR., door L., rear, as he does.

MAR. Now his old nibs is at it. Naughty uncle.

HEN. The devil! Come, Patience.

[*Exeunt, door L., rear.*]

MAR. You will answer to Bob for this, sir.

[*Exit, door R., rear.*]

Enter RICH. and ROB. by rear door.

RICH. But why the deuce didn't you tell me in the first place?

ROB. Why, I was as badly confused as you were.

RICH. Then the best thing that I can do is to call them all

back and explain. Uncle! Girls! (*Enter HEN., MAD. and MAR.*) It has all been a horrible mistake.

ALL. What do you mean?

HEN. Oh, dash your excuses.

ROB. Fact is, Miss Marjorie Harrington was to meet me.

MAR. Are you Bob Fellowes?

ROB. The same.

HEN. The devil!

MAD. And it wasn't your fault, a bit of it, all of this, Dickie?

RICH. Not a bit of it, my dear.

HEN. Good Lord, what next?

Enter RAS., rear door.

RAS. All the wild animals done break loose. Look out fo' de storm, Mr. Richard. She's a-comin', an' I cain't stop her.

RICH. It's all over, it's all over.

Enter MISS PATIENCE DEMPSTER, rear door. Comes to c.

HEN. Madam, what do you wish? Is it not a bit indiscreet ——

PAT. Indiscreet, is it? Not more so than to be wrestling on the first floor with an insolent nigger.

RAS. Yas, and she can wrastle some, too.

PAT. I am out looking for trouble now, I am—and a man. Is there a Mr. Fellowes here?

RICH. { (*pointing to ROB.*). } He is.

ROB. { (*pointing to RICH.*). }

PAT. There seems to be some sort of a misunderstanding, and the Lord knows, I can't marry both of you, so please settle it.

MAD. (*pointing to ROB.*). You marry him.

MAR. (*pointing to RICH.*). No, you marry him.

HEN. As Mr. Fellowes ——

RICH. Shut up.

PAT. Well, well.

HEN. What the ——

PAT. Don't you swear at me or, my conscience, I'll make you eat them words.

RAS. Yas, an' she can do it, sah.

PAT. Which of you is Mr. Fellowes?

MAD. It's not Dick.

MAR. It's not Bob.

PAT. Well, then, who is it?

ALL (*pointing to HEN.*). It's him.

HEN. But who are you?

PAT. (*throwing her arms about him*). I am the one that you have waited all these years for.

HEN. Widow, hey?

PAT. No. Not hay—grass.

HEN. But I haven't waited ——

PAT. Oh, yes, you have. I am Patience Dempster.

HEN. You are? (*To MAD.*) And you?

MAD. The girl with hands like Kipling's housemaid.

HEN. Oh, Rastus.

RAS. Yas, sah.

HEN. Take this out and spill it down the elevator shaft.

RAS. Yas, sah. (*To PAT.*) Come, honey, be spilled.
(*Exeunt RAS. and PAT. through rear door, the latter with a frightened look on her face. Crashes off stage. Enter RAS. with his hands up, laughing.*) She's spilled:

CURTAIN

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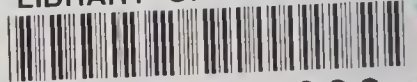
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