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THE TURNIPVILLE STATION AGENT

A VAUDEVILLE SKETCH

BY

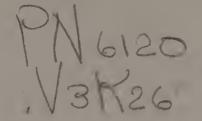
ARTHUR LEROY KASER

AUTHOR OF

"The Black Vamp," "The Filming of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin," "Hiram Blows In," "I'm a Nut," "Levi's Troubles," "The Mysterious Suitcase," "Stage Struck," "Vait a Minute," "What Can You Do?" etc.



CHICAGO T. S. DENISON & COMPANY PUBLISHERS



THE TURNIPVILLE STATION AGENT

CHARACTERS.

Рете	 		•			•	• •							•			•	•	•	•	•	•		. <i>A</i>	Statio	n	Agen	nt
LUCILLE.	 •	•	•	•	•	•	• •	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	• •		, ,			 . •		4	Tra	aveling	1	Actre.	ss

PLACE—A Country Railroad Station.

TIME—Almost Train Time.

TIME OF PLAYING—About Fifteen Minutes.

TYPES AND COSTUMES.

PETE—Typical stage rube, with bald wig and short chin whiskers; overalls; cowhide boots; station agent's cap; nose glasses.

LUCILLE—Pretty and dashing, with the latest style in attire; changes to Spanish costume during PETE's specialty.

PROPERTIES.

For PETE, large hammer, spike, hand-axe, long railroad ticket, small package, trunk, broom, wooden box, baggage hand-truck, spy-glass. For LUCILLE, two traveling bags, paper money, second costume for quick change (optional).

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

Up stage means away from footlights; down stage, near footlights. In the use of right and left, the actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

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THE TURNIPVILLE STATION AGENT

SCENE. The interior of a country railroad station. Any plain interior setting may be used, or the sketch can be presented on any platform without special scenery, if necessary. There is one door, supposed to lead to the platform outside, and it should be located preferably at center, with country landscape backing outside; but the door can be at one side of the stage if necessary. A ticket window or ordinary counter is up right. On it are hand-axe, spike, long strip of green paper to represent a ticket. Bench up left. Blackboard bulletin on rear wall, marked, "Train due—" Old style telephone on side wall. A hand truck near ticket counter. Small wrapped package, empty wooden box and several scraps of paper and bits of wood on floor.

Lively music to raise the curtain.

.30

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At rise PETE is sweeping the floor, and whistling. He sweeps the scraps into a pile and then sets the empty box over it, to conceal it from view. Telephone rings. PETE crosses to telephone.

PETE (answering). Commence. * * Who? * * Oh, Hank? * * Your hoss sick? * * Wall, Jehosephat, Hank, why in tarnation didn't ye give it turpentine like I did mine? * * You did? * * What? * * He died? * * Wall, so did mine. * * Hey! Be you still there? (Waits a moment, looks into mouthpiece, then hangs up receiver.) Now, what do you reckon got him all riled up? (Turns to go, and stumbles over the small package on the floor. Gets hand truck, carefully places package on truck, hauls truck about four feet and carefully unloads package. Puts truck back against wall.) Durned if this station ain't too all-fired small when we got a lot of freight to handle. LUCILLE enters. She is dressed in latest fashion, and she carries two large traveling bags.

PETE (whistles surprise). Wall, dog-gone! Who be you? LUCILLE (pertly). Besides yourself, who wants to know? PETE (innocently). There ain't nobody besides me wants to know.

LUCILLE. I suppose your inquiry was made entirely through curiosity?

PETE. Guess maybe perhaps that's the right word.

LUCILLE. Curiosity once killed a dog.

PETE. In course I ain't to understand that you class me with a dog?

LUCILLE. Of course not. I've got too much respect for a dog.

PETE. Wall, dog-gone! You think you're smart, now, don't you? Where you goin'?

LUCILLE. I've been where I'm going. I'm just getting back. When is the next train west?

PETE. 'Most any time.

LUCILLE. That's definite. What time is "'most any time"? PETE. 'Bout now.

LUCILLE. Is it on time?

PETE. That all depends.

LUCILLE. Depends on what?

PETE. On whether it's on time or not. Wait a minute. (He takes down 'phone receiver and turns 'phone crank for a long time, then speaks into 'phone.) Hey! * * I said, "Hey!" * * Is that you, Slim? * * Say, Slim, hez the train come past your place yet? * * 'Tain't? * * All right. (Hangs up receiver. To LUCILLE.) Slim says as how the train ain't come past his place yet, but he's anticipatin' it 'most any time, 'cuz he seed the engineer's dog comin' down the track. Better tell me whar you're goin', so's I kin fix up your ticket.

LUCILLE. I'm going to Chicago. PETE. Whar?

4

LUCILLE. To Chicago; Chicago! Didn't you ever hear of Chicago?

PETE. 'Pears as how I've heerd tell of it. Is it much of a place?

LUCILLE. Well, for the love of Mike! It's one of the largest cities in the world.

PETE. Do tell! Then it must be purty big. Who runs the ho-tel thar?

LUCILLE. Who runs the hotel? There are hundreds of hotels there.

PETE. Gosh git the skunk-oil! You don't mean it! Any railroads?

LUCILLE. Say, Whiskers, do you realize that there are about three million people in Chicago? Get that? Three million people!

PETE. Dog-gone! What in tarnation do they all do?

LUCILLE. Everybody does everybody. But shake a leg and make out my ticket.

PETE. What's shakin' my leg got to do with your ticket? LUCILLE. In other words, would you condescend to prepare my ticket as soon as possible?

(PETE gets a very long strip ticket and lays it on the counter. He adjusts his glasses on his nose and inspects the ticket in near-sighted fashion. Gets large hammer and spike and makes several holes in ticket, then chops it to a threefoot length with hand-axe. Hands ticket to LUCILLE.)

PETE. Nine dollars and twenty-two cents. (She hands him a bill, which she takes from her stocking while he endeavors to see where she is getting it. He looks at bill a moment.) Gosh all fish-hooks! I can't change this ten-dollar bill. Fust one I seed in seven years. Le'see. Here. (Chops off another foot of ticket and hands it to her.) This'll make up the rest of the bill. D'ye know, somehow or 'nother you don't look like the other gals 'round here. Gosh, they ain't none of them got dresses like that.

LUCILLE. I suppose not. I'm an actress.

PETE. An actor. You mean one of them 'ere hifulutin' gals what sings and dances and raises Cain?

LUCILLE. If that is your conception of an actress, that is what I am.

PETE. Gosh all hemlock. If you're one of them, what in thunderation be you a-doin' around here? We ain't even got a opry house.

LUCILLE. The fact is, I'm here accidentally. I hired a machine to take me through to Dover, but the auto went out of commission about ten miles from here. I had to ride over with a man named Stubbins who happened to be coming this way. And, believe me, it was some ride. I really think he has the balkiest mule in the country. It stopped about every mile to rest.

PETE (*laughs*). I know that 'ere mule. He ain't balky. He's jest simply so durned afeard somebody'll say "Whoa," and he won't hear it, that he stops to listen. (LUCILLE *laughs heartily*.) Skinny, too, ain't he?

LUCILLE. He's the thinnest mule I ever saw.

PETE. You oughter of seed that mule when Stubbins fust bought him. But he had a lot of fine points. Fact is, you could hang your hat on any of the points. Stubbins called him Napoleon 'cuz he had so many bony parts. He was so durned skinny Stubbins had to tie a knot in his tail to keep him from slippin' through the collar. Wall, dog-gone if it ain't purty nigh time for that train to show up. (*Picks up spy glass and starts toward door.*)

LUCILLE. Perhaps the train crew got intoxicated.

PETE (stops and turns). Inwhatsicated? You can't git anything to drink around these parts.

LUCILLE. Dry place?

PETE. Lady, this place is so all-fired dry we got bullfrogs five years old that don't know how to swim yet. And when the fish swim up the creek they leave a cloud of dust behind them. (Steps outside door and looks down track through spy glass. Re-enters and comes down.) Don't see hide nor hair of it anywhere. (Telephone rings and he answers it.) I'm here; commence. * * Wall, dog-gone! * * Much oblige, Slim. (Hangs up receiver and addresses LUCILLE.) Slim says as how the brakeman seed a rabbit and got to chasin' it and ain't got back yet, and seein' as how he ain't got back yet the rest of the boys went over to the barber shop and started a game of pinocle, and says as how it's gettin' so late now they decided not to run the train any futher till tomorrow. (Writes on bulletin near door: "Train due tomorrow sometime.")

LUCILLE (excitedly). No train until tomorrow?

PETE. Nope; accordin' to the latest report the skedool has been deeranged.

LUCILLE. Is there a hotel in this burg?

PETE. Not any more. Ezra Tuttle did start a *ho*tel, but he only had it two weeks when it caught on fire and burnt his bed up. He never bought another one.

LUCILLE. But listen, I've got to stay somewhere. I can't hang around here until those boobs get through playing pinocle and chasing rabbits.

PETE (scratching his head). Wall, lemme see.

LUCILLE. I hope you hurry up and see.

PETE. Tell you what we'll do. I'll git ma to fix things up for you. (*Telephone rings and he answers it.*) Yeah? * * Wall, dog-gone if I didn't go and fergit that consarned social all holler. * * You bet! (*Hangs up receiver. Addresses* LUCILLE.) By-gosh, there's a social over to the schoolhouse to-night and I fergot all about it. (*Scratches his head.*) Say, goshdurn it, anyhow!

LUCILLE. What's the trouble?

PETE. I got a bright idea.

LUCILLE. That's about the only bright thing around here. What is it?

PETE. You're a actor, ain't you?

LUCILLE. I'm supposed to be.

PETE. Wall, by gum, if that ain't goin' to make everything hunkydory! They're goin' to give a social to the schoolhouse to-night, and some of the boys and gals is goin' to entertain. I was thinkin' maybe perhaps you could sing some songs or somethin', to help out. LUCILLE. Maybe perhaps I can. But, believe me, Whiskers, it'll be a new experience for yours truly to sing in a country schoolhouse. Who will accompany me?

PETE. I will. I'll take you there and bring you back in the flivver.

LUCILLE. I mean, will they have any music?

PETE. There's goin' to be a gal there from Dover what can play the melodeon purty durn good. I'm goin' to sing a song myself.

LUCILLE. Well, if you can get by with it I think I can. My music is in my traveling bag. (*Exit.*)

PETE (looks after her, scratches his head, kicks the floor, and winks at audience.) Dog-gone! Ain't she a pippin? Dang it! I'd give a dollar and a half if I was young again. When I was a young feller I thought the gals around here was slickers. But hang it, she makes them look like a pile of kindlin' wood. Wonder if all the gals in the city look like her? Gosh, if they do it sure must be Heaven. 'Tween you and me and the gate post, I'm beginnin' to feel young again.

(Specialty by PETE; a good rube comedy song, such as "Oshkosh, B'Gosh!")

After specialty LUCILLE enters, wearing a Spanish costume.

LUCILLE. Say, Whiskers, an oyster out there wants to know if you'll give him a hand on a traveling boudoir?

PETE. Listen, lady. Back up Nell and plough that furrow over again.

LUCILLE. I said, a man outside wants you to help him lift a trunk. Get that?

PETE (going toward door). Reckon as how that's more understandable. (Exit. LUCILLE laughs heartily.)

(Specialty by LUCILLE; a good lively Spanish song, such as "Carmen, She Was Absolutely Charmin'.")

After first chorus, PETE enters, wearing comic toreador costume. This can be either a combination of red bandana around head, curtain rings in ears, knickerbockers, white

8

stockings, etc., or a straw hat with bright red sash around it, and overalls rolled up disclosing white socks and red garters. He carries an axe. While LUCILLE repeats the song chorus, he does a comic bull fight dance.

LUCILLE (at finish of song, laughing). Say, Whiskers-PETE. Don't call me "Whiskers." Call me "Pete."

LUCILLE. All right, Pete. But what are you supposed to be?

PETE. Me? I'm a bull fighter.

LUCILLE (laughing). You certainly look it.

PETE. Yep; learnt to throw the bull when I was a cowboy.

LUCILLE. Oh, so you were a cowboy? Where? PETE. Back on the farm herdin' hogs. Let's go!

(Dance specialty by LUCILLE and PETE, LUCILLE doing a Spanish dance and PETE burlesquing her dance. Music of above song may be used, or any Spanish dance number will be suitable. Or, the act may close with a fast double song instead of the dance. Or, the act may close at finish of "Carmen" and bull fight specialty.)

CURTAIN.

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