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BAKER, 5 Hamilton Place, Boston, Mass.

The Original Two Bits

A Farce in Two Acts

By

HAZEL M. ROBINSON

*Written for and presented by The Invaders Club of the
United Baptist Church, of Lewiston, Maine*

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BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.

1920

PS 635
Z9R 66625

The Original Two Bits

CHARACTERS

ANNICE DARCY }
 EDNA ENDERBY } *four chums in camp.*
 CAROLINE LAWSON }
 ALEXA HYLAND }
 BRIDGET O'HARA, "*chief cook and bottle washer.*"
 ABIGAIL DUNTON, *aunt of Annice Darcy.*
 LUCRETIA MAUDE HOYT, *suffragette and friend of Aunt Abigail.*

COSTUMES

For girls, middies and dark skirts, or bloomers.
 For BRIDGET, wrapper or big tire. Adds a great deal to the part if the hair is done in a comical way.
 For AUNT ABIGAIL—a lady of fashion—summer dress, furs, fan, bag, big hat, etc.
 For LUCRETIA MAUDE, mannish blouse, necktie, tailored skirt, sailor hat and eye-glasses.



TMP96-006767

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AUG 16 1920 © CLD 55285

The Original Two Bits

ACT I

SCENE.—*An easy interior, living-room of a camp. Furniture very plain and usual camp decorations on walls. Scene is set on the last day in camp—forenoon.*

(As curtain rises, ANNICE is seated on one side of the center table with her sewing and ALEXA on the opposite side with a magazine opened in her hand as though she had just finished a story.)

ANNICE. I do wish you would read something serious for a change. All that drivel doesn't amuse me any—it's too foolish and improbable.

ALEXA (*yawning*). If you can find me anything of the nature you suggest in these magazines, I'll read it for you. (*Tosses magazine on table, scornfully points to them all.*) These were printed before the flood, that's why there's nothing that isn't dry in 'em.

ANNICE (*picks up one magazine, turns pages, hands magazine opened to ALEXA*). There, this sounds more interesting. (*ALEXA proceeds to read a short article of great seriousness; ANNICE sniffs occasionally during reading. ANNICE, as ALEXA finishes.*) Very good indeed. (*Sniffs.*) Would you mind asking Bridget what that is burning. (*Sniff, sniff.*) I know she isn't planning to get any lunch for we're going in town in time to have dinner with the boys to celebrate our return to civilization. (*Sniff, sniff.*) Something is burning, surely. (*Exit ALEXA, door on R.*) I do wonder if anything can have happened to Ed and Caro. (*Looks anxiously out*

of the window and then at watch.) They have never stayed out so long before. I believe I'll see if I can see them from the porch. (*Takes field glasses from the table and exits door L. Enters again almost immediately; calls excitedly.*) Alexa! Alexa! Where are you? There is company coming!

(Begins to pile up the magazines on table.)

Enter ALEXA, much flustered, smoothing hair and blouse.

ALEXA. Who is it, oh, who is it?

ANNICE. Only my Aunt Abigail and a strange lady, so don't be alarmed. It's too early for the boys yet, anyway. (*A knock is heard and ANNICE goes to door L. while ALEXA finishes straightening the piles of magazines and pulls the chairs about.*) My dear Aunt Abigail, what a pleasant surprise. Do come right in!

Enter AUNT A. and LUCRETIA MAUDE; AUNT A. puffing, drops in the nearest chair to get breath, puffing and fanning self.

AUNT A. My dear niece (*puff, puff*), I am spending the day with dear Lucretia Maude (*puff, puff*). Let me make you acquainted. (*Places hand affectionately on L. MAUDE'S knee, as she is seated beside her.*) Miss Hoyt, my favorite niece, Annice Darcy. (*ANNICE and L. MAUDE acknowledge introduction as AUNT A. fires ahead.*) As I was saying (*puff, puff; sigh*), I was talking with your dear mama only yesterday. I told her I was planning a visit with dear Lucretia Maude (*smiles at L. MAUDE*) for a day or two. She surprised me by saying you were here for a few days also. When dear Lucretia Maude (*smiles at L. MAUDE again*) told me how near your cottage was, I just couldn't resist the temptation to call on you, my dear. But such a *heathenish* way to get into the place, my dear. But for dear Lucretia Maude (*smiles again at L. MAUDE*), I'm quite sure I should have fallen in the water of that awful lake! Really, I'm quite overcome with my walk and the shock I received at your door. (*Fans self very excitedly.*) Oh! My! Oh! My! By the by (*sitting*

erect and looking anxiously about), where are your companions, my dear? Surely, your dear mama has never in this world consented to let you spend a few days in these wilds all alone! Well! Why don't you answer me, pray tell?

ANNICE (*laughing*). Why, of course, Auntie dear. I am not alone at all. I have three girls and Bridget with me. (*Rising and drawing ALEXA forward.*) Surely you remember meeting Alexa Hyland before, Auntie dear? Miss Hyland, Miss Hoyt.

(L. MAUDE and ALEXA acknowledge the introduction.)

AUNT A. I believe I have met Miss Hyland before, yes, now you speak of it, I am quite sure I have. But where are the rest, my dear? (*Looking around room again.*)

ANNICE. Oh, Edna and Caroline are out fishing, at least—(*looking out the window*) I hope they are not doing anything more adventurous than that.

AUNT A. (*rising and looking out window*). Surely, my dear, they are not alone on that awful lake? (*Points out of window.*) Oh, how could you let them go? (*Falls back in chair.*) Go call to them at once, my dear. (*Fans herself excitedly.*) I am so glad we are here with you, for I fear the worst.

ALEXA (*interrupting hastily*). Oh, I assure you, Madame Dunton, they are in no danger. The lake is very calm and both girls can swim like the fishes they are after. (*Loud laughter and calls of "Annice, Allie, Annice, Allie" are heard outside. Enter EDNA and CAROLINE at R., still laughing; stop abashed at seeing strangers.*) Here they are now, and surely they are all right.

ANNICE. Girls, my aunt, Mrs. Dunton and Miss Hoyt. My chums, Caroline Lawson and Edna Enderby. Well, girls, what luck?

(*Both girls bow in acknowledging introductions, but before they can reply to ANNICE'S question, AUNT A. rises and points in consternation to their feet.*)

AUNT A. My dear young ladies, I am sure your feet are soaking wet! Go change them at once, if you value

your health and my peace of mind! (*Drops back in chair as girls leave the room still laughing, stage R., and begins fanning herself.*) Oh! My! Oh! My! Time doesn't seem to be improving the younger generation, I must say. I never should have thought of staying out so long with my feet as wet as that. But then one never can tell what the younger generation *will* do next, can one, dear Lucretia Maude? (*Turns and smiles at L. MAUDE, who shakes her head and starts to speak—AUNT A. again interrupts, turning quickly to ANNICE.*) My dear, I am famished! Simply famished! This air and so much excitement, I suppose. Could I beg just a bite to eat? I really feel in need of nourishment, though I eat a very little, really, a very little.

ANNICE (*glancing at watch*). It is nearly time for lunch anyway, Auntie. I'm sure you will find the porch very pleasant while you are waiting. Alexa will entertain you while I interview Bridget with a view to appeasing our appetites. (*Exit ALEXA, AUNT A. and L. MAUDE door stage L., taking chairs with them. ANNICE follows them to door, turns quickly after they are out and whispers loudly.*) Bridget! Bridget! Come here! Oh, where are you?

Enter BRIDGET, door stage R., smiling and wiping arms on apron.

BRIDGET. Shure, ma'am, did ye call me?

ANNICE. Bridget, what have we in the house to eat?

BRIDGET. To eat, is it? (*Arms akimbo.*) Shure, darlin', there's nothin' at all, at all!

(Emphasizing each word with one arm.)

ANNICE. But Bridget, my aunt and a friend of hers are here and are hungry. What shall we do?

(About in despair.)

BRIDGET. Shure, darlin', Miss Edna and Miss Caroline came out just a wee bit ago, laughing fit to kill theirselves, sayin' as how there do be company here. I sez to meself, sez I, most probably they'll be wanting

something to eat. So what did I do, but begin to take stock of me larder. Darlin', there's two wee bits of ham (*pointing off on three fingers*), neither of them as big as three of me fingers. And that's all!

ANNICE. Can't you make a hash of them?

BRIDGET. I maybe could, but divil a bit of potatoes, bread or anything else to make a hash of is there in this heathenish hole!

ANNICE. An omelet, then, with the ham chopped up for a filling? (*Seeming to gain hope.*)

BRIDGET. An omelet, is it? Shure, darlin' (*patting ANNICE on the arm*), I do hate to disappoint ye, but there's not an egg in the house. The hens of the neighborhood do be following the example of civilization entirely and do be on a strike. (*Emphasizing each word as she continues.*) There's nothing at all, at all, in the house but those two wee bits of ham. Shure, ye rimimber as how ye told me the gintlemin were a-goin' to take yese to dinner at the Pinecroft come this evenin' and yese were a-goin' with appetites! (*Winks broadly and smiles.*)

ANNICE. Yes, Bridget, I know, but that doesn't help us any now. We've got to do something. Can't you go to the neighbors and see if we can buy something? There, why didn't I think of that in the first place? Here, take this bill (*takes bill from middy pocket and hands it to BRIDGET, who promptly puts it down her stocking leg*), and spend it all if you have to, but get us something to eat. I'll set the table while you're gone, if you'll just help me move it out.

(*Table is moved out. Exit BRIDGET, and ANNICE starts to clear off magazines, as*)

CURTAIN FALLS.

ACT II

SCENE.—*Same as ACT I, except that table is set c. ANNICE is folding napkins. Enter BRIDGET with plates of salad and cold meat.*

ANNICE (*patting BRIDGET on back and smiling happily*). Good, Bridget! I knew you'd help us out of this tight hole. (*Hugging BRIDGET.*) But tell me, where did you get the stuff?

BRIDGET (*smiling broadly*). Shure, darlin', I had to go half way around the lake before I found anyone at home at all, at all. (*Arms akimbo, nodding head.*) Then a kippy little Frinch maid answered me knock and laughed when I told her who was here for lunch, and for all I know she might have been swearing at me with her jibbering. I'm not the least wee bit interested in her business, but the bold cratchur wint on to tell me all about her love affairs, I'll be blessed. She told me as how she was ze delight of ze certain man, that shameless hussy! Would you believe it, darlin'?

ANNICE (*laughing, patting BRIDGET's arm*). Oh! She only meant that she was certainly delighted to accommodate you. That's very nice of her, Bridget.

BRIDGET (*in evident relief*). Shure, I'm glad to hear it, for she's a right smart miss. She gave me their own dinner, anyway. But (*nodding emphatically*), ye've got to go 'asy. Shure there's got to be enough of this (*waving right hand over table*) sint back fer two of 'em fer to-night's meal. Remimber, go 'asy. [*Exit, R.*]

ANNICE (*stands looking at table, sighs, shakes her head. Suddenly she smiles, and claps her hands together*). I have it! The old sign—F. H. B. Surely then we will have enough to send back and we girls will still have our appetites for to-night.

(Places napkins at plates as EDNA and CAROLINE enter, door at R., talking and laughing at each other. They seem surprised to see the table set and looking from the food on the table to ANNICE.)

BOTH *(together)*. I thought we weren't going to eat this noon!

ANNICE. But Aunt Abigail and Lucretia Maude got hungry. We had nothing but two bits of ham in the house. Bridget canvassed the neighborhood until she found some food for us. *(GIRLS are looking at the food with very evident delight and pointing first at one dish and then at another.)* Now, girls *(GIRLS turn and look seriously at ANNICE)*, no matter how good it looks, go light on everything when I say F. H. B. *(GIRLS' countenances fall and they look disgusted.)* Now, go out and send Alexa in here for instructions. Remember, F. H. B.

(Exit EDNA and CAROLINE, repeating in disgust "F. H. B.! F. H. B.! F. H. B.!" Enter ALEXA looking anxiously over her shoulder.)

ALEXA. What ails the girls with their F. H. B., F. H. B.?

ANNICE *(turning as ALEXA speaks, facing stage L., waves her hand over the table. ALEXA takes a step forward and smiles in delight at the dainty things on table)*. Go light on all the food this noon when I say F. H. B., which means Family Hold Back, you know. This good food is merely borrowed, and a goodly percentage of it has got to be returned and we will pay for the rest. Remember now, F. H. B. *(Walks toward the door stage R., calling.)* Come, Aunt Abigail, Miss Hoyt, girls, lunch is ready. . . . Bring your chairs with you, please.

Enter all from door stage R. and ANNICE points out the places for them at the table. BRIDGET enters with bread and cake which she places on the table as they are seated.

AUNT A. My dear niece, how very inviting this looks *(looking closely at plate of bread)*, and the bread is still warm, I do believe.

BRIDGET (*aside*). Shure me thinks the hot sun did almost toast it while I was a-comin' with it.

ANNICE. Do try some of this salad, Miss Hoyt. I'm sure you'll like it.

(*Passes salad dish to L. MAUDE, who generously helps herself, looks closely at the plate, passes it on to AUNT A., who in turn helps herself most generously.*)

L. MAUDE. That salad dish looks oddly familiar, my dear Miss Darcy. Have you any other dishes of the set?

ANNICE (*in confusion*). Oh, yes, er—no—er—(*looking at BRIDGET who winks*) that is, you see, Bridget looks after the cupboard and I hardly know what dishes we have in it.

(*Looks at BRIDGET who smiles broadly and nods head: salad is passed to girls, ANNICE whispers loudly "F. H. B., F. H. B." Girls nod and take only a tiny bit of salad.*)

AUNT A. Did you speak, my dear? Your voice is so husky I did not hear distinctly. Will you not repeat it?

ANNICE (*clearing her throat*). I beg your pardon, Auntie, dear. I merely forgot myself and started a game we girls play a lot (*looking at girls, who nod and smile as though understanding all about it*), giving just the first letter of the word for the others to guess the rest. I started to say—er—Funny How Bad the weather can be of a sudden, it is quite cloudy now!

(*GIRLS and BRIDGET look out of the window then look their question at ANNICE. AUNT A. glances out window also, then turns to ANNICE.*)

AUNT A. My dear niece, you must be looking into a shady place—the sun is quite brilliant on the water—yes, indeed, quite brilliant. (*BRIDGET passes the meat to cover the embarrassing situation. L. MAUDE and AUNT A. again generously help themselves, girls whisper and smile, glancing at the plates of their guests, but as the meat is passed to them, ANNICE whispers, "F. H. B." and*

again they take small pieces.) And what does that mean, my dear?

ANNICE (*in some confusion*). Fine hot bread, isn't it, Aunt Abigail?

(EDNA is seated next to AUNT A., snatches up plate from table and passes bread to AUNT A. who takes a large roll and passes the plate to L. MAUDE.)

AUNT A. It is indeed. (*Looks at L. MAUDE, who nods, starts to speak but is again interrupted by AUNT A.*) Bridget is a treasure, certainly.

(BRIDGET smiles and bows to AUNT A., then turning, winks and makes a face at ANNICE.)

EDNA. I'm thinking this is almost as good as the fish we caught this morning.

(*Four girls laugh heartily; BRIDGET looks in surprise at ANNICE who shakes her head; then BRIDGET laughs.*)

ALEXA. Almost as good as the fish you've caught every day this week.

(*Again all laugh, including BRIDGET.*)

ANNICE (*to AUNT A. and L. MAUDE*). Those girls claim to be great catchers of fish, but we've had *meat* every meal so far this week.

CAROLINE. Don't you worry, there'll be suckers enough to-night!

(*GIRLS laugh; AUNT A. looks shocked.*)

AUNT A. (*glancing from one plate to another of the four*). You are eating hardly enough for a bird, my dears. Surely you are not ill?

ANNICE. Of course not, Auntie, but—well,—you see—we are going home this afternoon and the boys have arranged a supper party for us.

ALEXA. We want to do justice to that supper.

(AUNT A. *nods understandingly and smiles at L. MAUDE.*)

EDNA (*leaning her elbow on the table and staring pensively at the girls*). They haven't spent a cent on us all the week. Just think of it!

CAROLINE. Well, that's where the suckers come in for supper.

(*To cover this shock to AUNT A.'s nerves, BRIDGET passes cake, and AUNT A. and L. MAUDE help themselves most generously, accept coffee, but the girls refuse both, when ANNICE whispers "F. H. B."*)

AUNT A. My dear, I must ask you once more what that means?

ALEXA. I think she meant to say—(*glancing at ANNICE*) funny how—how—oh, yes, Funny How Beastly homesick one can get away from home for a while.

(*GIRLS all nod and smile, ANNICE and BRIDGET pat her on back in approbation. Lunch is over, chairs are pushed back a way and BRIDGET begins to clear off the table.*)

AUNT A. Annice, my dear, I believe Miss Hyland told me while we were on the veranda that you were to leave camp this afternoon? (*ANNICE nods and looks at the girls who all nod emphatically.*) Well, you have been to quite a bit of bother to prepare this food, it seems almost a crime to let it be wasted. What do you propose doing with it? (*BRIDGET stands staring at ANNICE, ANNICE looks from BRIDGET to the girls and then at the food on the table.*) I'm sure I should enjoy finishing the salad at some other time and that cake was delicious. Bridget is a fine cook. (*BRIDGET courtesies and smiles, but turns a shocked face toward ANNICE.*) I'll buy this food of you and take it to dear Lucretia Maude's for our supper.

(*ANNICE looks in confusion from one to the other of those present; AUNT A. is noticeably eager; L. MAUDE is frankly smiling; BRIDGET is horrified; girls are as embarrassed as ANNICE. BRIDGET slips around table and whispers in ANNICE'S ear and she rises.*)

ANNICE. I might as well confess, my dear Aunt Abigail, that the good food was merely borrowed and we've got to return what wasn't eaten. We had nothing in the house but two tiny bits of ham, and Bridget found a cottage half way down the lake where the maid gave us this food. We were to return enough for two for supper and pay for the rest. F. H. B. meant for the girls to eat little of everything—Family Hold Back, you know. I don't know who the food belongs to and (*hanging her head*) I am so ashamed.

(BRIDGET and GIRLS group around ANNICE to comfort her.)

AUNT A. (*rising indignantly*). My dear niece, I am shocked. I am indeed. Come, my dear Lucretia Maude, we will be going.

(*Starts to pick up fan and gloves and bag from table near.*)

L. MAUDE (*smiling*). Don't feel so bad about it, Miss Darcy. It might have been much worse. I have heard of people being invited out for dinner and having to settle the bills, but this is the first time I have eaten food prepared for my own table in any one else's home. I suspected as much when I saw the salad, but my suspicions were confirmed when I saw the platter. There is not another dish like it anywhere, for it is imported. (*GIRLS are almost weeping; L. MAUDE begins to laugh.*) You are quite welcome to what we have had, my dears, and I will take the rest home for Abigail's supper, if you don't mind. (*GIRLS begin to feel better, lift heads and smile again. BRIDGET begins to scrape food from meat dish onto the platter with the salad, covers rolls with a napkin and the cake with another.*) Also, you might include the two bits of ham for Marie!

BRIDGET (*raises right hand, looks at ANNICE, smiles and winks*). I am ze delight of ze certain man!

CURTAIN FALLS.

LUCINDA SPEAKS

A Comedy in Two Acts

By Gladys Ruth Bridgham

Eight women. Scene, an interior; costumes, modern. Plays an hour and a quarter. Isabel Jewett has dropped her homely middle name, Lucinda, and with it many sterling traits of character, and is not a very good mother to the daughter of her husband over in France. But circumstances bring "Lucinda" to life again with wonderful results. A pretty and dramatic contrast that is very effective. Well recommended.

Price, 27 cents

CHARACTERS

ISABEL JEWETT, *aged 27.*

MIRIAM, *her daughter, aged 7.*

MRS. MCBIERNEY, *aged 50.*

TESSIE FLANDERS, *aged 18.*

MRS. DOUGLAS JEWETT, *aged 45.*

HELEN, *her daughter, aged 20.*

MRS. FOGG, *aged 35.*

FLORENCE LINDSEY, *aged 25.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—Dining-room in Isabel Jewett's tenement, Roxbury, October, 1918.

ACT II.—The same—three months later.

WRONG NUMBERS

A Triologue Without a Moral

By Essex Dane

Three women. Scene, an interior; unimportant. Costumes, modern. Plays twenty minutes. Royalty, \$5.00. An intensely dramatic episode between two shop-lifters in a department store, in which "diamond cuts diamond" in a vividly exciting and absorbingly interesting battle of wits. A great success in the author's hands in War Camp work, and recommended in the strongest terms. A really powerful little play.

Price, 27 cents

FLEURETTE & CO.

A Duologue in One Act

By Essex Dane

Two women. Scene, an interior; costumes, modern. Plays twenty minutes. Royalty, \$5.00. Mrs. Paynter, a society lady who does not pay her bills, by a mischance puts it into the power of a struggling dress-maker, professionally known as "Fleurette & Co.," to teach her a valuable lesson and, incidentally, to collect her bill. A strikingly ingenious and entertaining little piece of strong dramatic interest, strongly recommended.

Price, 27 cents

LINE BUSY

A Comedy in Two Acts

By Gladys Ruth Bridgham

Five male, nineteen female characters, mostly very young people. Scene, an easy interior; costumes, modern. Plays an hour and a half. Written for high school performance and admirably suited for this purpose. Lorraine Fenwick is conducting a school for girls under the terms of an uncle's will to demonstrate her right to a big legacy left her under conditions. Well, just as some burglars are looting a near-by house, some of her girls, seeing the place open, enter and get mixed up in the trouble. A "jay" detective thoroughly mixes up the beans thus spilled, and an exciting maze of circumstances follows that is full of surprises and fun. A capital piece, well recommended.

Price, 27 cents

CHARACTERS

JANICE REECE, <i>an instructor.</i>	MAGNOLIA, <i>her daughter.</i>
SNOWBALL, <i>the maid.</i>	ROSCOE LINDEN.
JEREMIAH STOKES, <i>the constable.</i>	PARKER HAMILTON.
LORRAINE FENWICK.	JACK HUNTLEY.
MRS. OLIVE GLEASON-HAMILTON	RICHARD FENWICK.
MARION	TRIXIE TREE, <i>an actress.</i>
ADA	JEAN MORRIS
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STELLA	HELEN BURNS
AGNES	MURIEL COLLINS
PHYLLIS	FRANCES ROSE
MARIE	GLADYS SYMONS

the juniors.

the seniors.

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A Romance in One Act

For Male Characters Only

By Belford Forrest

Five male characters. Scenery, a dark stage; unimportant. Costumes, modern. Plays twenty minutes. "The Kid" of a trio of hobos encounters the turning point in his life in the person of a young woman and parts with his mates in a scene of great dramatic interest. A high class play for male characters uniting much humor with genuine sentiment. Strongly recommended.

Price, 27 cents

THE HAPPY DAY

A Farce in One Act

By Octavia Roberts

Seven female characters. Scene, an interior; costumes, modern. Plays half an hour. Sybil Marlowe, a bride, worried to death by the burden of preparation for a fashionable wedding and on the eve of a quarrel with her fiancé over the strenuous entertainments of her friends, cuts the knot when an impossible country cousin turns up with a demand to serve as bridesmaid, and gets married on the quiet. Very bright and lively and strongly recommended.

Price, 16 cents

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