PS 3521 -A86 W45 1912



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NO PLAYS EXCHANGED

When The **Worm Turned**

PUBLISHERS

DENISON & COMPANY **CHICAGO**

DENISON'S ACTING PLAYS

A Partial List of Successful and Popular Plays. Large Catalogue Free. Price 15 Cents Each, Postpaid, Unless Different Price is Given.

	M. F.
DRAMAS. COMEDIES. ENTER-	Tours the Pauper 5 acts 2 h 0 4
TAINMENTS, Etc.	Louva, the Pauper, 5 acts, 2 h 9 4 Man from Borneo, 3 acts, 2 hrs.
M. F.	Man from Borneo, 3 acts, 2 nrs.
After the Come 2 note 11/	(25c) 5 2
hre (25c) 1 9	Man from Nevada, 4 acts, 2½
	Man from Nevada, 4 acts, 2½ hrs(25c) 9 5
All a Mistake, 3 acts, 2 hrs. (25c) 4 4	Mirandy's Minstrels(25c) Optnl.
All That Glitters Is Not Gold.	Minality's Ministres(250) Optim.
2 acts, 2 hrs	New Woman, 3 acts, 1 hr3 6 Not Such a Fool as He Looks, 3 acts, 2 hrs
Altar of Riches, 4 acts, 2½ hrs.	Not Such a Fool as He Looks,
Aftar of Riches, 4 acts, 272 lifs.	3 acts. 2 hrs 5 3
(25c) 5 5 American Hustler, 4 acts, 2½ hrs (25c) 7 4	Odds with the Enemy, 4 acts,
American Hustler, 4 acts, 2½	12/ has 7 A
hrs(25c) 7 4	134 hrs
Arabian Nights, 3 acts, 2 hrs. (25c) 7 4 Bank Cashier, 4 acts, 2 hrs. (25c) 8 4 Black Heifer, 3 acts, 2 hrs. (25c) 9 3 Bonnybell, 1 hr (25c). Optnl.	Old Maid's Club, 1½ hrs. (25c) 2 16
Alabian Nights, 5 acts, 2 mis 4 5	Old School at Hick'ry Holler,
Bank Cashier, 4 acts, 2 hrs. (25c) 8 4	1 1/4 hrs
Black Heifer, 3 acts, 2 hrs. (25c) 9 3	1¼ hrs(25c)12 9 Only Daughter, 3 acts, 1¼ hrs. 5 2
Bonnybell, 1 hr(25c).Optnl.	Only Daughter, 5 acts, 174 ms. 5 2
Brookdale Farm, 4 acts, 21/4 hrs.	On the Little Big Horn, 4 acts,
	2½ hrs (25c) 10 4 Our Boys, 3 acts, 2 hrs 6 4
(25c)	Our Boys 3 acts 2 hrs 6 4
Brother Josiah, 3 acts, 2 h. (25c) 7 4	Out in the Streets, 3 acts, 1 hr. 6 4
Busy Liar, 3 acts, 21/4 hrs. (25c) 7 4	
Caste 3 acts 21/2 hrs 5 3	Pet of Parson's Ranch, 5 acts, 2 h. 9 2
Busy Liar, 3 acts, 2½ hrs. (25c) 7 4 Caste, 3 acts, 2½ hrs 5 3 Corner Drug Store, 1 hr. (25c) 17 14	School Ma'am, 4 acts, 13/4 hrs 6 5
Corner Drug Store, 1 nr. (25c) 17 14	Scrap of Paper, 3 acts, 2 hrs 6 6
Cricket on the Hearth, 3 acts,	Seth Greenback, 4 acts, 1½ hrs. 7 3
13/4 hrs 7 8	Callian of Taken Carta Of to 0
Danger Signal, 2 acts, 2 hrs7 4	Soldier of Fortune, 5 acts, 2½ h. 8 3
Dauger Digital, 2 acts, 2 mis	Solon Shingle, 2 acts, 1½ hrs 7 2
Daughter of the Desert, 4 acts,	Sweethearts, 2 acts, 35 min 2 2
2½ hrs(25c) 6 4	Solon Shingle, 2 acts, 1½ hrs 7 2 Sweethearts, 2 acts, 35 min 2 2 Ten Nights in a Barroom, 5
Down in Dixie, 4 acts, 2½ hrs.	Tell rights in a Darroom, 5
3 (25c) 8 4	acts, 2 hrs 7 4
	Third Degree, 40 min(25c) 12
East Lynne, 5 acts, 2½ hrs8 7 Editor-in-Chief, 1 hr(25c)10	Those Dreadful Twins, 3 acts,
Editor-in-Chief, 1 hr(25c)10	2 hrs
Elma, 134 hrs(25c) Optnl. Enchanted Wood, 134 h.(35c) Optnl.	Ticket-of-Leave Man, 4 acts, 23/4
Enchanted Wood, 134 h. (35c) Optnl.	here
Eulalia, 1½ hrs(25c) Optnl.	m mi C
Face at the Window, 3 acts, 2	hrs 8 3 Tony, The Convict, 5 acts, 2½
race at the Window, 5 acts, 2	hrs
hrs(25c) 4 4	Topp's Twins, 4 acts, 2 h. (25c) 6 4
From Sumter to Appointation, 4	Trip to Storyland, 11/4 hrs (25c) 17 23
acts, 2½ hrs(25c) 6 2 Fun on the Podunk Limited,	Uncle Tech 4 acts 21/ hrs (25c) 8 3
Fun on the Podunk Limited.	Uncle Josh, 4 acts, 21/4 hrs. (25c) 8 3 Under the Laurels, 5 acts, 2 hrs. 6 4
11/2 hrs (25c) 9 14	Under the Laureis, 5 acts, 2 hrs. 6 4
1½ hrs (25c) 9 14 Handy Andy (Irish), 2 acts, 1½ h. 8 2	Under the Spell, 4 acts, 2½ hrs(25c) 7 3
Liandy Andy (111811), 2 acts, 172 II. 6 2	hrs
Heiress of Hoetown, 3 acts, 2	Yankee Detective, 3 acts, 2 hrs. 8 3
Heiress of Hoetown, 3 acts, 2 hrs(25c) 8 4	Tankee Detective, o acts, b ms. o
High School Freshman, 3 acts.	MADORE COMPRIRMAGE
2 h(25c) 12 Home, 3 acts, 2 hrs	FARCES, COMEDIETTAS, Etc.
Home, 3 acts, 2 hrs 4 3	April Fools, 30 min
Honor of a Cowboy, 4 acts, 2½ hrs	
Honor of a Cowboy, 4 acts, 272	Assessor, The, 10 min 3 2
hrs(25c) 13 4	Aunt Matilda's Birthday Party,
Iron Hand, 4 acts, 2 hrs (25c) 5 4	35 min 11
It's All in the Pay Streak, 3	Baby Show at Pineville, 20 min. 19
note 13/2 hrs (25c) 4 3	Rad Joh 30 min 3 2
T- 11 T- 11/ 1- (25-) 14 17	Date Dalan 45 min
acts, 134 hrs(25c) 4 3 Jayville Junction, 1½ hrs.(25c) 14 17	Bad Job, 30 min
Jedediah Judkins, J. P., 4 acts,	Billy's Chorus Girl, 25 min 2 3
2½ hrs(25c):7 5	Billy's Mishap, 20 min 2 3
2½ hrs	Borrowed Luncheon, 20 min. 5
note 21/2 hrs (250) 6.12	Borrowed Luncheon, 20 min 5 Borrowing Trouble, 20 min 3 5
acts, 21/4 hrs(25c) 6 12	Dollowing Trouble, 20 min 3 3
Light Brigade, 40 min(25c) 10 Little Buckshot, 3 acts, 214 hrs.	Box and Cox, 35 min
Little Buckshot, 3 acts, 2½ hrs.	Cabman No. 93, 40 min 2 2
(25c) 7 4	Case Against Casey, 40 min23
Lodge of Kye Tyes, 1 hr. (25c)13	Convention of Papas, 25 min 7
Louge of Kye Tyes, 1 III. (230)13	
Lonelyville Social Club, 3 acts,	Country Justice, 15 min 8
$1\frac{1}{2}$ hrs(25c) 10	Cow that Kicked Chicago, 20 m. 3 2

WHEN THE WORM TURNED

A COMEDY

BY

KATHARINE KAVANAUGH

AUTHOR OF

"Who's a Coward," "Countess Kate," "A Minister Pro Tem," "The Queen of Diamonds," "Under Blue Skies," Etc.



CHICAGO

T. S. DENISON & COMPANY

Publishers

19120

PS3521 A86 W45

WHEN THE WORM TURNED

CHARACTERS.

PLACE—A Large City.

TIME—Last Night.

TIME OF PLAYING—Twenty-five Minutes.

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STORY OF THE PLAY.

'The Peck and Jenkins families live in adjoining homes on a short street, where the houses are exactly alike. Hence at night it is not strange that a late comer should become confused and attempt to enter the wrong home. The plot of this playlet hinges on such an incident, which brings Jenkins into the Peck domicile at midnight. He has been at the club, where he has imbibed too freely and is slightly under the weather. Jenkins is a jolly, convivial chap, while Peck is of the strictly straight-laced variety. They are not well enough acquainted to be on speaking terms, but from observation Peck disapproves of Jenkins' actions and late hours. Recently Peck has been working very late at his office, and his wife, who is unreasonable and of a suspicious nature, begins to fear that office work is but an excuse to cover other indiscretions. On this particular night Mrs. Peck is impatiently waiting for her husband's return. Jenkins enters and in his muddled condition gives little heed to the arrangement of the furniture. His wife has a habit of continually changing things about and he does not question being elsewhere than in his own house. He is annoyed, however, that the electric light button is not in its accustomed place. At this critical moment Mrs. Peck appears, turns on the light and both are greatly surprised at the other's presence. She realizes his condition and tells him that he is in the wrong house, but he will not be convinced and concludes that his wife has been having a late party and that Mrs. Peck is under the influence of wine. To humor him she agrees to go into his wife's room and sleep off the effects, while he stretches out on the couch and falls asleep. Peck, tired and ill-natured, arrives and the sight of Jenkins fills him with suspicions of his wife. He awakens him and after a hot argument convinces Jenkins of his mistake and the two men become friendly. Peck admits he is henpecked and Jenkins claims that he can cure Mrs. Peck of her domineering ways. Peck agrees to the scheme, gets a gun and pretends he is going to shoot Jenkins, who loudly calls for help. Mrs. Peck rushes in, tells her husband that it is all a mistake and pleads with him

not to kill Jenkins, but with little avail. At last, however, he agrees to let Jenkins go if she will never question him again or object to his staying out late. She is filled with admiration for her husband's determination, bravery and courage and readily accedes to his demands. At this instant the gun goes off. Peck, faint from fright, falls limply into his wife's arms. Jenkins drops tremblingly to his knees with a cry of "Holy mustard! It was loaded!" and the curtain descends.

CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES.

JAMES JENKINS—Would be funnier played by a big man, but this is not essential. He may wear the conventional evening dress and high hat or a fashionable dark suit and derby hat. He should look the "man about town."

HENRY PECK—Would be more ludicrous if played by a small man, but this is not absolutely necessary. He is of the "hen-peck type," neatly and quietly dressed in a business

suit.

Mrs. Peck—Can be played by a woman of any age. She wears a pretty indoor costume.

PROPERTIES.

A family album, an old large revolver, a box from which revolver is taken. Revolver loaded with blank cartridges to be fired off stage.

STAGE SETTING.



STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of the stage; C., center; R. C., right center; L., left; 1 E., first entrance; U. E., upper entrance, ets.; D. F., door in flat or back of stage; 1 G., first groove, etc. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

WHEN THE WORM TURNED

Scene: A comfortably furnished room. Doors at C. and L. U. E. There is a sideboard up stage, R of C. door, with partly filled decanter and glasses. A Morris chair down stage about L. center. A couch down stage, L. A hat rack L. of C. door. A table down stage, R., on which there is a family album. Chair at table. See Scene Plot for stage setting

For curtain music play very softly "We Won't Go Home Until Morning." As curtain rises a clock is striking the hour of twelve. On the sixth or seventh stroke start the curtain.

Discovered, Mrs. Peck, seated dozing in the Morris chair. On the stroke of twelve she stretches, yawns and sits up.

MRS. PECK. Mercy, that must be twelve o'clock striking and Henry not home yet. (She gets out of chair.) This is the third time this week, and he has the nerve to tell me that he is kept at the office straightening his accounts. He is either an incompetent bookkeeper or an accomplished fibber. Now, if he was honest about it, like the man next door, who admits that he stays out to have a good time, it wouldn't be so bad; but to have him lie to me the way he does is unbearable.

JENKINS rattles the key outside the C. door.

MRS. PECK. There he is now—trying to find the keyhole. (The noise continues.) What a racket he is making—he usually comes in like a mouse. Well, he shan't have the satisfaction of knowing that I sat up for him. (She

apparently turns an electric button on the wall near L. U. E., the lights go down and she exits, L. U. E.)

JENKINS enters C. His high hat is tilted over one eye, his tie is mussed, and his general appearance is that of a man slightly intoxicated. He carries a key ring in his hand with a number of keys. He holds one key out and speaks to it

JENKINS. What in—shay, what's matter with you tonight, eh? You've opened that door 365 days in the year without any fuss or feathers, and tonight, just because I got a little more than usual aboard, you go on a strike and refuse to work. (He puts key ring in pocket, takes off his hat and tries two or three times to hang it on the sideboard before he sees his mistake.) Where's that hatrack? (He looks around and discovers it left of C. door.) Moved again by thunder. (Hangs his hat.) I wish my wife would leave things in their accustomed places two days in susches -such-succession. (He turns and stumbles over Morris chair. Speaks in rage as he grabs his ankle.) A chair in the middle of the room! Can you beat that! (He begins to search on right wall for electric button.) Where's that button! Hang it! She's even moved that. (Going slowly along the wall, searching.) Button, button, who's got the button?

MRS. PECK enters, L. U. E., and watches him for an instant.

Mrs. Peck. What are you doing—playing a game? JENKINS. I'm looking for that confounded electric button.

Mrs. Peck (quickly turns the button on left wall, the lights go up. Aside). Good heavens! That's not my husband!

JENKINS (aside). Good Lord! That's not my wife!

Mrs. Peck (aside). The man next door. Jenkins (aside). My next door neighbor. My wife must be having a party. (Bowing to Mrs. Peck.) This is Mrs. Peck, I believe?

MRS. PECK. Oh, you know where you are, then? JENKINS. Madam, I always know where I are. I have

a little difficulty sometimes remembering the last placebut I never forget where I are. Just now I have the 'steemed pleasure of wel-clum-ling-of wel-kum-ing you to our house. Make yourself perfectly at home—and—have a drink. (He goes up stage and runs into hatrack.) Something else gone from its accustomed place. If my wife ever gets to heaven, she'll move the throne and dust the harps every Friday. (Turns to Mrs. Peck.) I beg your pardon, but do you see anything that looks like a sideboard around here?

MRS. PECK (crosses to R. and sits at table). It is on the other side of the room.

JENKINS (sees sideboard right of C. door). Eh! Where the hatrack used to be. (Gets decanter and glasses and brings them down to table.) Now you must have a little drink

Mrs. Peck (indignantly). I don't drink, sir.

JENKINS. Oh, just to celebrate our acquaintance. Being next door neighbors, we ought to be better friends; but you were always such an old stick-

Mrs. Peck. Sir!

JENKINS. Such a stickler for ceremony that we never made any advances. (He has poured a glass of wine.) Come, now. I insist. Be a good fellow. (He puts glass in her hand, which she places on table. He holds his own glass.) To our future fenship—to our fenture fruit—well, whatever it is. (He drinks the wine, then coughs and makes a face.) Elderberry! Now, who the—who put that stuff there?

Mrs. Peck. That is the only wine we use in our house.

(She gets up and crosses to L.)

JENKINS. That's all right—but how the deuce did it get into my house?

Mrs. Peck. Your house?

JENKINS. Sure! Ain't this my house?

Mrs. Peck. Oh—is it?

JENKINS. Oh, is it! Well, what do you know about that! Don't you know where you are?

Mrs. Peck. I thought I was in my own house.

JENKINS. You poor woman—you've been drinking. My wife ought to know better than to give you liquor. Now, don't worry—you're among friends, and we'll see you safely home. Where are the other guests?

Mrs. Peck. I don't know.

JENKINS (playfully shakes his finger at her). Ill bet you sneaked away from the party, didn't you? I don't blame you. Where's your husband?

Mrs. Peck. I don't know.

JENKINS. Don't know that, either? My, my, you're in a terrible condition. Now, you just hold tight—I'm going to mix you a dose of bromo seltzer.

Mrs. Peck. I don't want a dose of bromo seltzer.

JENKINS. Oh, but you must have it. Any woman who doesn't know where her husband is—it's terrible—must have a dose of bromo seltzer.

Mrs. Peck. I know where he says he is.

JENKIN. Where's that?

Mrs. Peck. At the office attending to his books.

JENKINS. And don't you believe him?

Mrs. Peck. No, I do not.

JENKINS. My, my, that's awful. Woman doesn't believe her husband. Now, my wife's different. When I come home like this I say, "Eliza, I've been drinking"—and she believes me right away. (Looking on sideboard.) Where's that bromo seltzer?

Mrs. Peck. There's none there. Jenkins. How do you know?

Mrs. Peck. I took the last of it this evening.

JENKINS. Oh, ho! You've been tryin' to sober up, eh? Good! Now, the next thing to do is to lie down and keep quiet, see! No, not here. My wife's room is right at the top of the stairs. Sneak up quietly—see—and sleep it off. That's the idea. (He takes her arm and starts her toward L. U. E.)

Mrs. Peck (beginning to be amused). What are you

going to do?

JENKINS. I'm goin' to roost here on the couch. If they find me I don't care a huckleberry.

MRS. PECK (at L. U: E.). But suppose Henry comes? JENKINS. Henry?

Mrs. Peck. My husband.

JENKINS. Oh, is he coming here tonight?

Mrs. Peck. Well, he better had.

JENKINS. That's all right. I'll explain to Henry.

Mrs. Peck. Don't you think you'd better go home before he comes?

JENKINS. Go home! Madame, you amaze me. How anyone could get so pifflicated on the stuff my wife serves her guests—it's astonishing. Go lie down—like a good old sport—and sleep it off. When Henry comes my wife will call you.

MRS. PECK (aside). I may as well humor him. (Laughs softly.) I wonder what Henry will say. (Exits, L. U. E.)

JENKINS (taking off his collar and tie and shoes, sitting on couch). Gosh I thought she'd never go. Ain't it remarkable how a woman will stick. Wonder what kind of a fellow that husband of hers is. Name's Henry—Henry Peck—by gosh, he looks it. (He turns off the light, stretches on couch with a sigh.) Ah! Be it ever so lonesome, there's no place like home. (He goes to sleep.)

C. door quietly opens and Henry enters. He is very tired and perfectly sober. Takes out watch and looks closely at it in the dim light.

Henry. Way after twelve. Oh, but I'm tired. That last row of figures nearly killed me. I can't keep this up. It's getting on my nerves. And the worst of it is, Maria won't believe me. She thinks I'm a rake, a night owl. If she only knew—if she only knew. (Jenkins snores.) What's that? (Jenkins snores again.) That doesn't sound like Maria. (Jenkins snores louder.) Good heavens! It's a man—in my house—at this hour! Can it be a burglar? No! A burglar wouldn't go to sleep on the job. (Henry turns on light and looks at Jenkins, who remains asleep.) Good Lord! It's the man next door. Jenkins, the sport, whom she has always held up to me as a horrible example. And I find him asleep in my house. Oh, woman, woman!

Fool that I have been to be taken in so easily. She accuses me of wrongdoing so that I will close my eyes to hers. (Jenkins snores again.) I'll waken this villain—this despoiler of homes—and see what he has to say for himself. (Goes angrily to couch, then pauses.) Mercy, what a big man he is. She always admired big men. I wonder if he's dangerous. But I must be brave—he can't do more than kill me. (Shakes Jenkins.) Here! Get up—get up, I say.

JENKINS (rousing himself). Who in th—(looks up at

Henry, smiles sleepily.) Oh, is that you, Henry?

HENRY. Henry!

JENKINS. Now, don't get peevish, Hen. We're next door neighbors, ain't we? The wife and I understand each other.

HENRY. Where is my wife, sir? I demand to know—

where is my wife?

JENKINS. Well, to tell the truth, she had a little more than usual aboard, so I sent her upstairs to sleep it off.

HENRY. What!

Jenkins. Say, don't holler like that. You got what I said. She's been drinking.

HENRY. My wife drinking!

JENKINS. Sure. What's the harm? Been drinkin' myself.

HENRY. Presumably, sir.

JENKINS. Now, don't fly off the handle like that. You don't want the other guests to think there's a fight goin' on, do you, Henry?

HENRY. The other guests! What guests? JENKINS. Why, there's a party here tonight.

HENRY. A party—in my house!

JENKINS. No, sir. In my house. My wife has a few friends.

HENRY. Your wife!

JENKINS. Sure she's my wife. You got any doubts about it?

HENRY. You mean my wife, sir.

JENKINS. Your—say, what's matter? You drunk, too?

HENRY. No, sir. I am perfectly sober.

JENKINS. Then I'd like to see you when you're loaded. HENRY. I won't be spoken to like that in my own house, sir.

JENKINS. Well, did you get that? Your house! Your wife! In a minute you'll be claiming me as a long-lost brother. Anything else here that belongs to you?

HENRY. Yes, sir. Everything—since my money paid

for it.

JENKINS. Your money paid for it. I like your impudence, you little whipper-snapper. My money runs this establishment, and don't you forget it.

Henry (excitedly). Do you mean to say the lady of this house takes money from you?

JENKINS. Every Saturday night. HENRY. You lie, sir.

TENKINS. What! (He makes an angry movement toward

HENRY.)

Henry (jumps into Morris chair for protection. Speaks in an apologetical tone over the back of chair.) I mean to say that you are mistaken, because I also hand over every Saturday night—

JENKINS (in surprise). To my wife?

HENRY. No, sir; to my wife.

JENKINS. Aw, who's talkin' about your wife?
HENRY. Who's talking about your wife?
JENKINS. You are. You said you gave money to my wife to run my house.

HENRY. No, sir; to my wife to run my house. JENKINS. Say, whose house is this, anyway?

HENRY (comes out of chair). Mine.

JENKINS. What! (HENRY jumps back into chair again.) HENRY. It's mine, I assure you. (Gets off chair and opens album on table.) See, here's the family album. If you don't know your own house or your own furniture, perhaps you'll admit that these are not your friends and relatives.

Jenkins (takes one disgusted glance at open album). No, thank heaven, they're not. I thought the furniture looked

different, but my wife has such a habit of moving things about I didn't pay much attention. How did I get in here, I wonder.

HENRY. Your key must fit this lock.

JENKINS. I remember now—I had some trouble.

HENRY. The houses in this block do resemble each other.

JENKINS. Resemble. Why, they're twins and triplets. My house is fifth from the corner.

HENRY. This is sixth.

JENKINS. Well, there's nothing for me to do but 'pologize and beat it. My wife'll raise the dickens.

HENRY. So will mine.

JENKINS. What for? You haven't been drinking, have you?

HENRY. No, sir. I've been at the office working, but she

won't believe me.

JENKINS. That's because you tell her the truth. Tell her a good big whopper and she'll fall for it.

Henry (shocked). Lie to my wife!

Jenkins. Oh, it has been done. See here, I've often thought what a dunce you were.

HENRY. Sir!

JENKINS. Don't apologize. You don't belong to any clubs, do you?

HENRY. My wife won't let me.

JENKINS. You never go out with the boys for a good time, do you?

HENRY (sadly). Never.

JENKINS. You're continually tied to your wife's apron strings, aren't you?

HENRY. Figuratively speaking, yes.

JENKINS. Well, here's where you want to draw up a declaration of independence, sign, seal and deliver it.

HENRY. To whom?

JENKINS. To the madam, of course. HENRY. I wouldn't know how to do it. (HENRY sits on couch.)

JENKINS. Wait. I've got an idea. You come home after

midnight, tired and worn out after a hard day's work. What do you find? A stranger, slightly intoxicated, asleep on your best piece of furniture, your wife upstairs sleeping off the effects of her dissipation.

HENRY (rises). My wife never dissipates, sir.

JENKINS (pushes Henry back on couch). Sit down. You've got to pretend that she does. What do you do? You start right in and begin shooting things up.

HENRY (rises). I can't shoot.

JENKINS (pushes him). Sit down. Have you got a gun? HENRY. I'm afraid not.

JENKINS. Nothing at all that looks like one?

Henry (rises). Let me think—there may be such a thing. I remember an old firearm my grandfather owned. It's in the cupboard in the other room. (Starts toward L. U. E.)

JENKINS. Get it out—she won't know the difference. (HENRY exits, L. U. E.) I'll make a man of this fellow

before I get through with him.

Henry enters L. U. E., with box containing a few odd things. He puts it on table, throws back the lid.

HENRY. I'm almost sure it is in this box. (Takes out a

large sized old revolver.) Here it is.

JENKINS (hándling the gun). See—I bet that hasn't been used since the Civil War. (Henry puts box under the table out of the way.) Take off your coat. (Henry does so.) Now take this in your hand and point it at me. Take it—it can't shoot.

HENRY (gingerly holding the gun). What are you going

to do?

JENKINS. I'm going to get down on my knees and holler like hallelujah. (Quickly musses his hair, drops on his knees, R. center, and begins to call madly for help. Henry stands C., pointing gun at JENKINS in a wobbly manner. JENKINS looks at him in disgust.) For heaven's sake, brace up and look like a human being. I can't call for help when you're looking at me like a scared sardine. (Henry assumes a threatening attitude.) Now—say something.

HENRY. You—you—

JENKINS. That's good. Go ahead. Help!

HENRY. You robber.

JENKINS. Make it stronger. Help! Oh, help!

HENRY. You horse thief!

JENKINS. You're off the track, Wife stealer. Help!

HENRY. You wife stealer. You despoiler of homes.

JENKINS. Fine. Keep it up. Help! Oh, help!

HENRY. You fiend in human form.
JENKINS. Keep it up. Help! Help!
HENRY. You black-hearted scoundrel.
JENKINS. Now you've got it. Help!

HENRY (getting warmed up). I'll have your heart's blood.

Mrs. Peck enters, L. U. E. Pauses amazed. The men know she is there and begin to put more ginger into their work. The dialogue should be given with snap to the end of the play.

HENRY. You enter my home like a thief in the night and rob me of my wife's affections. You'll never live to rob another—for tonight you die! (Flourishes gun.)

JENKINS (to Mrs. Peck). Oh, save me! Save me!

Mrs. Peck (comes down L. of Henry). Henry, are you

mad? This is the man next door.

Henry. Don't tell me who he is, madam. I know him. (Henry flourishes gun occasionally and speaks in an extremely melodramatic manner.)

MRS. PECK. Henry, darling, what does this mean?

HENRY. It means that I have found you out. You thought to deceive me forever, did you? But, woman, that can't be done.

Mrs. Peck. Oh, Henry, what have I done?

Henry (turns toward her, forgetting Jenkins). You have betrayed me—destroyed the sanctity of our home. (Jenkins, seeing his chance, makes a move to get up. Henry quickly turns and aims gun at him.) Stay where you are! (Jenkins falls back on his knees, but is giving evidence of being tired of his position.)

JENKINS. Oh, Mrs. Peck, call off this half-peck. Call him off—he's insane.

Mrs. Peck (very much worked up, falls on her knees, implores HENRY). Henry, dear, listen to me, won't you? I am innocent. I swear it.

HENRY. I don't believe it. MRS. PECK (cries). Henry!

HENRY. Why should I? Have you ever believed me? When I told you with tears in my eyes that I worked night after night, so that you might live in ease and comfort-did you believe me? No! You said I lied—but I tell you it is the woman who lies and lies and lies! (Flourishes gun.)

JENKINS (on his knees but getting weak). And then

some. (He makes a slight move to get up.)

HENRY (aims gun at him). Stay where you are. Mrs. Peck (on her knees). Oh, Henry!

HENRY. The worm has turned! This man has ruined my home. He dies!

Mrs. Peck. Oh, Henry, they'll hang you.

JENKINS. They'll let him off—it's a brain storm. MRS. PECK. Oh, that I should live to see this day.

HENRY. You won't live. I'll kill you next.

JENKINS. Oh, Mrs. Peck.

Mrs. Peck (wringing her hands). Oh, Henry! Henry. Oh, Maria, Maria!

Mrs. Peck (rising). Do not commit a crime, my husband. They will take you from me, and that would break my heart.

HENRY (sniffling). You drove me to it.

Mrs. Peck. I ask your forgiveness. Don't you see I love you?

HENRY (sniffling). Do you, Maria?

MRS. PECK. Only let me prove it. Spare this man's life. He is nothing to me, dear. How could you accuse me of loving such a homely beast. (Jenkins, who has apparently been weeping, looks up indignantly.)

HENRY (looking at JENKINS). He is ugly, Maria.

Mrs. Peck (speaks with contempt). And see what a coward he is. A woman doesn't love a man like that, dear. It's the strong, brave and handsome that her heart goes out to. (She puts her arm on Henry's shoulder.) Let the miserable thing go, darling. He is not worthy the notice of a man like you.

JENKINS. Well, I'll be—

Henry (points gun at him). Don't swear in the presence of a lady. (To Mrs. Peck.) If I forgive you, Maria, will you promise to be a good wife in the future?

Mrs. Peck. Yes—oh, yes.

HENRY. Will you have confidence and believe everything I tell you?

MRS. PECK. Everything!

Henry. Will you let me join a club and go out occasionally?

Mrs. Peck. Yes—oh, yes.

HENRY. Then I will spare this man's life. (To Jenkins.) Rise. You are free to go.

JENKINS (getting up). Thanks, kind sir.

HENRY. But if you ever darken my doors again—

JENKINS (holding up his hand). Never again! (JENKINS gathers his shoes, coat, hat, tie, etc.)

HENRY. Do you love me, Maria? (Opens his arms, still

holding the gun.)

MRS. PECK (going to Henry). Oh, Henry. I never realized what a man you were—so brave, so strong, so courageous—(Henry still holding the gun puts his arm around MRS. PECK. He faces Jenkins, who is now up stage near door. Jenkins has put on his high hat rakishly, his collar and tie are undone, and he carries his shoes in his hand and is stealing off quietly, winking to Henry. When unexpectedly, at the word "courageous," the gun goes off with a loud report. The effect will be the same if some one off stage discharges a gun. Jenkins drops his shoes, falls on his knees, trembling with fear. Mrs. Peck screams, and Henry, frightened badly, turns completely around and falls backward into Mrs. Peck's arms. He is limp with fright.)

JENKINS (yells). Holy mustard! It was loaded!

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min	
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min	
min	
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Stage Struck Darky, 10 min 2	1
Sunny Son of Italy, 15 min I	4
	1
Troubled by Ghosts, 10 min., 4	1
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Umbrella Mender, 15 min 2	
Uncle Bill at the Vaudeville, 15	
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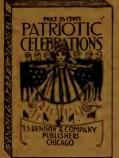
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