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A Watch, A Wallet  
and a Jack of Spades



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**T. S. DENISON & COMPANY, Publishers, 154 W. Randolph St., Chicago**

# A WATCH, A WALLET AND A JACK OF SPADES

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT  
FOR THREE MEN AND SIX WOMEN

BY

LINDSEY BARBEE

AUTHOR OF

*"After the Game," "At the End of the Rainbow," "The Call of  
Wohelo," "The Dream That Came True," "The Fifteenth of  
January," "Then Greek Met Greek," "Her First Scoop," "The  
Kingdom of Heart's Content," "The Promise of Tomor-  
row," "Sing a Song of Seniors," "The Spell of the  
Image," "The Thread of Destiny," "Tomorrow  
at Ten," "A Trial of Hearts," "When the  
Clock Strikes Twelve," "The Whole  
Truth," "In the College Days," "Let's  
Pretend—A Book of Children's  
Plays," Etc.*



CHICAGO  
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# A WATCH, A WALLET AND A JACK OF SPADES

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## CHARACTERS.

MRS. RIDGWAY ..... *A Widow*  
ANNE RIDGWAY ..... *A Playwright*  
JANE RIDGWAY ..... *Her Sister*  
CELESTE ..... *A Maid*  
BRIDGET ..... *A Laundress*  
MELINDA ..... *A Cook*  
LOCKHER SHOLMES }  
BAFFLES ..... } ..... *Detectives*  
KEG CRENNEDY... }

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PLACE—*Living Room of the Ridgway Home.*

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TIME—*The Present.*

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TIME OF PLAYING—*About Forty Minutes.*

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no. 1.

## STORY OF THE PLAY.

Anne Ridgway, a playwright, summons three detectives—Sholmes, Baffles and Crennedy—to unravel a mystery surrounding the disappearance of a lodger in her home. Numerous clues are discovered; many complications arise; each detective advances his own theory, and a dramatic crisis is the result. At this point Miss Ridgway confesses that the lodger is her own creation; that he has existed only in her imagination, and that she has invented this particular situation in order to obtain a plot or basis for a mystery play which she has been asked to write. She laughingly invites the detectives to a consolatory dinner; they forget their resentment and the experiment ends happily.

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## CHARACTERS AND COSTUMES.

MRS. RIDGWAY, ANNE and JANE wear pretty dinner gowns. MRS. RIDGWAY is nervous and hysterical. ANNE is dignified, self-poised and gracious. JANE is assertive and independent.

CELESTE—Pert and Frenchy. Wears conventional maid's costume of black, with sheer white apron, collar, cuffs and cap.

BRIDGET—Free and easy. Wears gingham dress and apron.

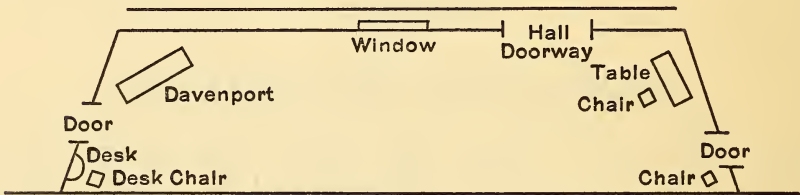
MELINDA—Sulky. Wears gingham dress and apron with red bandanna around her head.

SHOLMES and CRENNEDY wear plain business suits. BAF-  
FLES is in full evening attire. SHOLMES is quiet and impres-  
sive in manner and a trifle dictatorial. BAFFLES is smooth  
and gallant. CRENNEDY is matter-of-fact and straight to  
the point.

## PROPERTIES.

Rugs; large portrait; portieres; window curtains. Large davenport; desk and desk chair; two large chairs; table with lamp, flowers, books, etc. Bell button. Watch, glove and wallet for table drawer. Jack of Spades for wallet. Mechanical instrument with mirror and mechanical instrument with long cord for Crennedy. Small package with scarab for Celeste. Card for Baffles. Handkerchief and half scarab for Sholmes.

## SCENE PLOT.



## STAGE DIRECTIONS.

*R.* means right of the stage; *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *U. E.*, upper entrance; *D. F.*, door in flat or scene running across the back of the stage; up stage, away from footlights; down stage, near footlights, etc. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

## A WATCH, A WALLET AND A JACK OF SPADES

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SCENE: *Living room in the Ridgway home. Large hall door with portieres L. of C. in F., revealing wainscot drop. Curtained window R. of C. in F. Practical doors down R. and at L. 2 E. Davenport at R. U. E. Desk and desk chair at R. 2 E. Portrait above desk. Large chair L. 2 E. Table with lamp, books, flowers, etc., at L. U. E. Large chair R. of table. Articles for table drawer. Bell button L. of door to hall. Pictures, rugs, etc.*

*At rise, stage is well illuminated. Discovered, MRS. RIDGWAY, seated at L. 2 E.; JANE in desk chair; ANNE, standing by desk and BRIDGET and MELINDA at C.*

ANNE. Now, Melinda, are you sure that you understand?

MELINDA. Lan' sakes, Miss Anne, ah ain't sure of nuffin', but ah reckon ah've got gumption enough to do what you've done tole me.

ANNE. How about *you*, Bridget?

BRIDGET. Faith, and I'm not sayin' what I think.

ANNE. I'm not asking you what you think.

BRIDGET. But I'm a-thinkin' of what ye ask—and, be-gorry, Miss Anne, it's the first time ye've iver been a-tellin' of me to lie.

ANNE. But I explained—*why*.

BRIDGET. Sure, and I'm intendin' to do it for ye. (*Crosses herself.*) Howly Saint Pathrick, save me soul!

ANNE. Then—that will do. (*BRIDGET and MELINDA start toward R.*) And remember my instructions. (*Exeunt BRIDGET and MELINDA at R.*)

MRS. RIDGWAY (*wringing hands*). Oh, this is terrible, terrible! I never thought that such a disgrace would come upon me! (*Pleadingly.*) Don't go any further, Anne—

ANNE. I've gone too far to back out, mother dear.

JANE. And even the prospect of a sojourn in the city jail seems alluring, when compared with the monotony of our present existence.

MRS. RIDGWAY. *Jane!* Don't! I can't bear it. Never before has the Ridgway name been associated with—  
(*hesitates*)

JANE. Crime! Say it out—and get accustomed to it. From this time on it will be the most prominent word in our vocabulary.

ANNE (*crossing to MRS. RIDGWAY and placing arm about her shoulder*). Now—now—mother, don't mind Jane and don't worry. It will come out just as I've planned—and—

*Enter CELESTE at hall door.*

CELESTE. Ze trois messieurs—zey are vaiting.

ANNE. Then show them in, Celeste. (*Exit CELESTE.*)  
Now let me do all the talking—you understand?

JANE. Perfectly. And it's your affair, my dear sister, your affair.

ANNE *crosses to L. of hall door as CELESTE appears, followed by SHOLMES, BAFFLES and CRENNEDY, who stand behind her.*

CELESTE. M'sieur Sholmes! (*Enter SHOLMES.*)

ANNE (*extending hand*). Mr. Sholmes, I am Miss Ridgway.

CELESTE. M'sieur Baffles! (*Enter BAFFLES.*)

ANNE (*extending hand*). Mr. Baffles.

CELESTE. M'sieur Crennedy! (*Enter CRENNEDY. Exit CELESTE.*)

ANNE (*extending hand*). Mr. Crennedy. (*Motions to MRS. RIDGWAY and JANE, who acknowledge the introduction.*) My mother and sister, gentlemen. (*Points to davenport.*) Won't you be seated? (*The three men sit on davenport and ANNE seats herself R. of table.*) You are doubtless wondering what has occasioned this imperative summons.

SHOLMES. In our profession, Miss Ridgway, we cease to wonder.



CRENNEDY. And we regard an imperative summons as our own particular inheritance.

BAFFLES. Especially when the summons is from a lady!

ANNE (*graciously*).—How very obliging you are! It makes it three times as easy to tell my story.

CRENNEDY. And three times easier to solve the mystery, I hope.

ANNE (*sweetly*). Are all great men as friendly and as generous as you three? Someway, I imagined that every genius is a little bit jealous of every other genius.

SHOLMES. Perhaps we three are the exception.

ANNE (*leaning forward*). And you don't mind combining forces on a case?

BAFFLES. Depends on the case.

ANNE. Then I'd better be stating my own so that you may pass judgment. (*Pauses.*) Three months ago, gentlemen, my mother, my sister and myself, who, with two maids are quite alone in this large house, decided to rent one of the rooms on the second floor—in fact, the one above us. A quiet, middle-aged man, by name, Amos Rollins, fell to our lot, and a model lodger he proved to be. Three days ago he mysteriously disappeared.

SHOLMES. Mysteriously?

ANNE. Mysteriously. For he gave us no intimation of his departure.

CRENNEDY. There has been no word of him?

ANNE (*after a moment*). Yes, there has been word. (*Opens table drawer.*) Yesterday morning—*this*—(*taking watch from drawer*) came to us by mail. I presume I might label it Exhibit A.

(*The three men rise hastily and cross to her, standing in half circle, BAFFLES in advance. He stands back of chair with SHOLMES at his right and CRENNEDY at SHOLMES' right, and takes watch from her.*)

BAFFLES (*examining it*). An old-fashioned watch, with A. R. on the case.

ANNE. His watch. I have often seen it. Again, this

morning, in the same way, we received his wallet and a single glove. (*Takes articles from drawer.*)

(BAFFLES passes the watch to SHOLMES, who also takes the glove from ANNE, while CRENNEDY examines the wallet.)

SHOLMES (*as he and BAFFLES bend over the glove*). Mr. Rollins must be a tall, soldierly man with the third finger of his left hand gone.

ANNE (*in astonishment*). Why—why—yes. But how could you know?

SHOLMES. The watch bears the unmistakable dent of a bullet; the glove is the size which belongs to a man of height, and the third finger is smooth and uncreased—quite a contrast to the others.

ANNE. Wonderful!

CRENNEDY (*who has been looking at the wallet through the mirror of a mechanical instrument which he has taken from his pocket*). There is a small blood stain on the wallet—quite inconspicuous to the inexperienced eye.

BAFFLES. How do you know it's a blood stain, my dear fellow?

CRENNEDY. This is a little instrument which registers not only the particular kind of stain but pictures the weapon with which it is made. This spot is the direct result of a stab with a hat-pin. (*Passes it to SHOLMES, who in turn gives him watch and glove.*)

SHOLMES (*running his finger over the wallet*). Ah! This portion of the leather is a trifle more worn than the rest—that must mean something. (*With evident pride as he discovers the inner pocket.*) A cleverly placed secret pocket! (*Draws out Jack of Spades.*) And this!

ANNE (*rising*). What—what does it mean?

SHOLMES. Probably a threat. You say that these articles came to you by post?

ANNE. Yes—without a word of explanation.

(CRENNEDY lays glove on table and, unperceived, slips watch into pocket.)

SHOLMES. Then where is the paper which came around them?

ANNE. I destroyed it.

SHOLMES (*excitedly*). Destroyed it? My dear madam, it would probably have given us a clue. It would—

BAFFLES (*calmly takes wallet from SHOLMES and returning it to table, at the same time, unperceived, slipping Jack of Spades into his own pocket*). Remember, Sholmes, that Miss Ridgway has not yet finished her story. (*To ANNE.*) Won't you go on?

ANNE (*reseating herself as men return to davenport*). There is so little to tell. Mr. Rollins usually left the house about ten in the morning and returned shortly after our evening meal. If he had business, we never knew of it; if he had friends, they never came to his room. He received no mail; he shunned companionship; he was invariably distant in his manner, and our acquaintance with him was only of a business nature.

CRENNEDY. Will you describe him to us?

ANNE. Mr. Sholmes has already done that in a surprisingly accurate way. Tall, soldierly, with the third finger of his left hand gone. His clothes were expensive, though old-fashioned in cut; his tastes were invariably quiet—(*hesitates*) save in one respect.

BAFFLES (*leaning forward*). And that?

ANNE. He wore—conspicuously—on his vest a large Egyptian scarab. He was never without it.

SHOLMES. When was he last seen?

ANNE. Presumably—Monday morning. Our laundress met him as she came to work.

SHOLMES. And he did not come again to the house?

ANNE. So far as we know he did not. We were out in the evening and returned late. Next morning there came a telephone message for him—something which had never before happened—and I sent Celeste, my maid, to call him. (*Pauses.*)

BAFFLES (*eagerly*). Well?

ANNE. He was not there—and the bed had not been

occupied. We were naturally puzzled, but did not think seriously of his disappearance until the first anonymous package came.

CRENNEDY. And just what significance have you attached to the anonymous packages?

ANNE. They are either a signal for help or a ghastly method of announcing his death.

CELESTE *enters from hall.*

ANNE. What is it, Celeste?

CELESTE (*holding out small package*). A package, mademoiselle, lef' on ze doorstep.

ANNE (*taking it*). You will pardon me, gentlemen, if I open it. It may bear upon the case. (CELESTE *turns to leave.*)

SHOLMES (*rising*). Celeste! (*She turns.*)

CELESTE. M'sieur?

SHOLMES (*crossing to R. of hall door*). You were the first to discover that Mr. Rollins was not in his room Monday morning?

CELESTE. Oui, m'sieur.

SHOLMES. Did you notice anything strange in the appearance of the room?

ANNE (*quickly turning*). Celeste is not in the habit of straightening the room. She would notice no disarrangement.

SHOLMES. I see. (*Pauses.*) You have seen Mr. Rollins, of course?

CELESTE. Oui, m'sieur. In ze morning when I dust ze hall he come down ze stairway.

SHOLMES. Pretty tall, isn't he?

CELESTE (*hesitating and glancing at ANNE, who nods almost imperceptibly*). Oui, m'sieur. Vairy tall.

SHOLMES. Friendly?

CELESTE. Oui, m'sieur—vairy friendly. He joke—he laugh—he smile.

SHOLMES. That will do, Celeste. (*Exit CELESTE at hall.*) You spoke of Mr. Rollins as invariably distant in his

manner, did you not, Miss Ridgway? (*Stands at ANNE'S right.*)

ANNE. I did, Mr. Sholmes. (*Unties package.*)

SHOLMES. Evidently with servants he chooses to assume another pose.

ANNE (*coldly*). As to that, of course, I cannot say. (*Tears off paper and looks in package.*) The scarab! (*Holds up scarab. BAFFLES and CRENNEDY rise hastily and stand back of ANNE.*)

MRS. RIDGWAY (*rising*). The scarab! (*At a warning look from ANNE she sinks into chair again.*)

ANNE (*examining it closely*). Part of the scarab—for it has been broken squarely in two. Gentlemen, I feel as if we now hold the key to the mystery.

BAFFLES. You mean—

ANNE (*rising*). That when we find the other half of the scarab our task is ended. (*Motions to door.*) Doubtless you wish to examine the room above?

CRENNEDY (*crossing to C.*). Just a moment! May I question your laundress who—I believe—was the last one of your household to see Mr. Rollins?

ANNE. Certainly. Will you ring, Mr. Baffles?

BAFFLES *pushes bell button and CELESTE enters from hall.*

ANNE. Celeste, ask Bridget to come here. (*Exit CELESTE at R.*) I asked her to be present tonight, thinking you might wish to question her.

CRENNEDY. If I remember correctly, you mentioned two maids.

ANNE. Yes.

CRENNEDY. Does this include the laundress?

ANNE. No. Bridget comes only two days in each week. I referred to the cook, Melinda, and my own maid, Celeste.

*Enter BRIDGET at R.*

ANNE. Bridget, this gentleman (*motioning to CRENNEDY*) wishes to ask you some questions. Answer carefully and correctly.

BRIDGET (*standing by door at R.*). Yes, Miss Anne. (*To CRENNEDY*). And what would ye be a-knowin'?

CRENNEDY (*at BRIDGET's left*). Miss Ridgway tells me that you saw Mr. Rollins on Monday morning.

BRIDGET (*defiantly*). And what of it?

CRENNEDY. Nothing—perhaps. What time do you usually reach the house?

BRIDGET. Eight o'clock.

CRENNEDY. And Mr. Rollins was leaving just as you arrived?

BRIDGET. Faith and is there anything strange about that?

CRENNEDY. Only the fact that Mr. Rollins always left the house at ten o'clock.

ANNE. Generally—not always, Mr. Crennedy.

CRENNEDY. He spoke pleasantly, of course.

BRIDGET. Spoke pleasantly? Loike a tombstone, he did.

CRENNEDY. But he was in the habit of joking with Celeste.

BRIDGET. Sure and it's different with Miss Celeste.

CRENNEDY (*quickly*). Miss Celeste?

BRIDGET. Faith and was I a-callin' that stuck-up little whippersnapper, *Miss*?

ANNE (*reprovingly*). Bridget!

BRIDGET. And she's a-makin' eyes at ivery man that passes! Sure and if that Rollins person had been a-takin' liberties with *me*, I'd a-picked him up and stuffed him in my pocket.

CRENNEDY. Is he as small as all that?

BRIDGET. Begorry and there ain't nothin' much smaller.

ANNE (*warningly*). Bridget!

CRENNEDY. And is his disfigurement very noticeable?

BRIDGET. Faith and I'm wonderin' what ye mean by disfigurement.

CRENNEDY. Is the whole member gone or is it partly mutilated?

(BRIDGET glances in bewilderment at ANNE, who covertly makes a motion as if cutting off finger.)

BRIDGET (*misunderstanding ANNE's motion*). Sure and it's the whole hand that's missin' if that's what ye're askin'.

CRENNEDY. That will do, Bridget. (*Exit BRIDGET at R.*) Mr. Rollins' appearance seems to be a bit deceptive.

ANNE. The word of a servant against mine, Mr. Crennedy. (*Haughtily.*) Shall we go upstairs?

(*Exeunt ANNE, SHOLMES and BAFFLES at hall door. CRENNEDY follows slowly and stands outside, visible to audience but unseen by JANE and MRS. RIDGWAY. As soon as they are alone, JANE and MRS. RIDGWAY visibly relax.*)

MRS. RIDGWAY. I just can't go on with it, Jane—I just can't.

JANE (*rising*). How can you help yourself, mother? I'm enjoying myself immensely—and if Anne would only let me talk—

MRS. RIDGWAY (*weeping*). Talk! There's too much talking as it is. What we have needed from the first is silence.

ANNE (*calling from off stage*). Jane!

JANE. I'm coming. (*Pats MRS. RIDGWAY on shoulder.*) Sit still, mother—be calm—hold your peace—and let us turn the trick. (*Exit at hall. CRENNEDY hiding behind portiere as she passes.*)

*Enter CRENNEDY.*

CRENNEDY. Mrs. Ridgway! (*She looks around nervously.*) I beg your pardon for startling you, but there are a few questions I wish to ask you in the absence of the others.

MRS. RIDGWAY (*nervously*). But I don't care to answer questions. My daughters can supply you with any needed information.

CRENNEDY (*sternly*). It is not wise to oppose the law, Mrs. Ridgway.

MRS. RIDGWAY. I'm not opposing the law—I'm keeping out of it.

CRENNEDY. Then I'm obliged to try a little experiment. (*Takes mechanical instrument with long cord from pocket.*) Will you hold this for a moment? (*Offers cord.*)

MRS. RIDGWAY (*shrinking*). Oh, no—no!

CRENNEDY. 'Tis quite harmless and gives no electrical shock. (*She refuses.*) I insist, Mrs. Ridgway. (*She takes*

*the end of the cord reluctantly.*) Now, you will look steadily at me as I repeat a few words—as follows—(*speaks slowly and impressively*) Rollins! Watch! Picture! (*Takes cord from her.*) That will do—and, thank you. (*Examines instrument carefully.*)

MRS. RIDGWAY (*rising*). What is the meaning of all this?

CRENNEDY. Just an experiment. I have here a little instrument whose purpose it is to record emotions which are inspired by the mention of certain words. Fear is registered in one way; grief in another, and guilt in still another. (*Looks more closely at instrument.*) I find that at the sound of the three words—Rollins, watch and picture—there was great mental disturbance, with the element of fear predominant.

MRS. RIDGWAY (*crossing to R.*). What nonsense! I never spoke to the man.

CRENNEDY (*nodding toward portrait*). Your portrait, I suppose?

MRS. RIDGWAY. Yes. What has that to do with the matter in hand?

CRENNEDY. Everything. For if you never spoke to Mr. Rollins and had no interest in him, it is exceedingly strange that an exact copy of this portrait—which you say is of you—should be placed in the back of the watch. (*Takes watch from pocket.*) Here—see for yourself. (*Holds out watch.*)

MRS. RIDGWAY (*distractedly*). I don't understand.

CRENNEDY. Nor do I.

MRS. RIDGWAY. And I can make no explanation.

CRENNEDY. Suppose you try. (*Voices off stage are heard.*) Someone is coming. (*Glances around.*) In here! (*Points to L. 2 E. Hurries her, reluctant, to L. 2 E. Exeunt.*)

*Enter JANE and BAFFLES from hall.*

JANE (*looking around*). There is no one here. Perhaps you will explain now why you wish to see me alone. (*Crosses to C.*)



BAFFLES (*standing back of her*). Miss Ridgway, why did you give Mr. Rollins the Jack of Spades?

JANE (*carelessly*). Are you quite crazy, Mr. Baffles?

BAFFLES. Only inquisitive. Unfortunately, it's a characteristic of my profession.

JANE. Is rudeness also a characteristic?

BAFFLES. When it becomes necessary to use it. (*Pauses.*) I repeat—why did you give Mr. Rollins the Jack of Spades?

JANE. And I reply—that if you were not in the employment of my sister, I should ask you to leave the house.

BAFFLES. My question does not necessarily infer that you are involved in the particular mystery which we are attempting to unravel. It is given in the hope that you may furnish us a clue.

JANE (*turning*). My curiosity gets the better of me. Why do you single me out as the one associated with the fatal card?

BAFFLES. Because—in a search of your room—a pack of cards was discovered—with the Jack of Spades missing.

JANE (*shrugging shoulders*). Poor evidence, I'm thinking.

BAFFLES. Not when the fatal card, as you call it, matches those in your particular pack. (*Takes Jack of Spades from pocket, also another card.*) Compare them yourself. (*Pauses.*) Well?

JANE (*sarcastically*). Well—what?

BAFFLES. I'm waiting for your explanation.

JANE (*suddenly*). Very well—hear it. That Jack of Spades *was* taken from my pack of cards. I admit it. But it was taken by Mr. Rollins himself.

BAFFLES (*in surprise*). Mr. Rollins!

JANE. Yes, Mr. Rollins. I was playing solitaire last Saturday, and as I went upstairs I threw my pack of cards carelessly on the hall table. As I reached the top of the stairs the door opened and Mr. Rollins entered. He spied the cards, hesitated, quickly extracted one, placed it in his pocket and went to his room. He did not see me and I did not mention the matter to my sister.

BAFFLES. Why not?

JANE. Because I did not think it necessary.

BAFFLES. And even when the card was found in the wallet you were silent?

JANE. Naturally I did not care for suspicion to fall upon me.

BAFFLES (*after a moment*). Your story does not ring true, Miss Ridgway.

JANE (*ironically*). Oh, doesn't it? What do you intend to do about it?

*Enter SHOLMES hurriedly from hall.*

SHOLMES. Who is in the habit of attending to Mr. Rollins' room? (*Crosses to JANE's right.*)

JANE. Why—Melinda, the cook.

SHOLMES. Will you call her? (*JANE, followed by BAFFLES, crosses to bell and touches it.*)

*Enter CELESTE from hall.*

JANE. Celeste, ask Melinda to step here. (*Exit Celeste at R.*) Have you found a clue, Mr. Sholmes?

SHOLMES (*holding out handkerchief*). A lady's handkerchief.

*Enter MELINDA at R.*

JANE. Melinda, the detective has asked to interview you.

MELINDA. Land sakes, chile, ah don't know nuffin' 'bout this here murder.

SHOLMES (*sharply*). What makes you call it murder?

MELINDA (*very ill at ease*). Ain't it a murder?

SHOLMES (*quickly*). Do you know that it is?

MELINDA (*sulkily*). Don't know nuffin'.

SHOLMES. Do you know Mr. Rollins?

MELINDA. Ain't never seed him.

SHOLMES. But I thought you attended to his room.

MELINDA. Ain't 'tending it when he's thar, is ah?

SHOLMES. What inference concerning his personal habits did you form?

MELINDA (*puzzled*). Lawsy, Miss Jane, what's he talkin' 'bout?

JANE. How did he leave his room? That's what he means.

MELINDA. Neat as a pin, Massa 'tective; neat as a pin. Nuffin' ever out of place—nuffin' ever thrown 'round.

SHOLMES (*waving handkerchief*). Do you recognize the scent on this handkerchief?

MELINDA (*sniffing*). Yas suh. Dat are Miss Celeste's perfumery.

JANE (*warningly*). Melinda!

SHOLMES. Why do you call her *Miss Celeste*?

MELINDA (*still more sulkily*). Ah call her dat kase Ah want to. It ain't nobody's business what ah call her.

SHOLMES (*turning to JANE*). Will you ring for Celeste?

JANE obeys. *Enter CELESTE from hall.*

JANE. Mr. Sholmes has more questions to ask you, Celeste.

CELESTE (*crossing to C.*). Oui, m'sieur.

SHOLMES (*holding out handkerchief*). Is this your handkerchief, Celeste?

CELESTE (*shaking head*). No, no, m'sieur.

SHOLMES. Is this the perfume you use?

CELESTE. No, no, m'sieur.

SHOLMES. But Melinda says it *is*.

CELESTE (*saucily*). Zen—Melinda—she make ze mistake.

MELINDA. Ah ain't said nuffin'.

SHOLMES. You may go, Melinda. (*Exit MELINDA at R.*) Do you see the stain on this handkerchief, Celeste? (*Holds handkerchief close to her.*)

CELESTE (*airily*). Oui, m'sieur—eet ees red ink, n'est-ce-pas?

SHOLMES (*impressively*). It is—blood. (*Sternly.*) Hold up your right hand, Celeste.

CELESTE (*saucily*). Pourquoi, m'sieur?

SHOLMES. Because it has a little wound on one finger—caused by the prick of the hat-pin as you hastily jammed it through your hat.

JANE. Nonsense, Mr. Sholmes. In that case the left

hand would have been pricked. As a rule, a woman uses the right hand to manipulate a hat-pin.

SHOLMES. But Celeste is left-handed. I noticed *that*—when she opened the door to me. Hold up your hand, Celeste. (*She obeys reluctantly.*) Just as I thought. The wound is here. (*She snatches her hand away.*)

JANE (*impatiently*). Still, what has all this to do with the subject in hand?

SHOLMES. Only this. When she pricked her finger, Celeste stanchied the blood with this handkerchief—but not sufficiently. For as she tore the wallet from Mr. Rollins' pocket it left a stain. (*To CELESTE.*) Whether you originated the plan or were only an accomplice, I haven't decided, but the articles were sent by you to Miss Ridgway.

CRENNEDY *and* MRS. RIDGWAY *appear at L. 2 E.*

BAFFLES (*coming forward as CELESTE moves from C. to desk chair, where she stands facing audience*). Hold on, Sholmes, and let me have an inning. Miss Jane Ridgway confesses that the Jack of Spades found in the wallet was taken from her pack of cards by Rollins himself. How's that for a bit of evidence?

SHOLMES (*complacently rubbing his hands together*). Just as I thought. We'll have one discovery dove-tailing into another until the picture puzzle is complete.

CRENNEDY (*coming forward as MRS. RIDGWAY sinks in chair at L. 2 E.*). Don't leave me out, for I've made something of a scoop myself. (*The three detectives stand together at C.*)

JANE. Mother! (*Rushes to MRS. RIDGWAY.*)

MRS. RIDGWAY (*weeping*). I didn't say a word, Jane—I didn't say a word.

CRENNEDY. Nor did she. It wasn't necessary—for actions speak more clearly than words. (*To BAFFLES and SHOLMES.*) In the mysterious gentleman's watch is a picture of Mrs. Ridgway herself—a copy of the portrait which adorns the wall. (*Points to it.*) And yet she has had no acquaintance with him—no interest in him—in fact, has never spoken to him!

JANE. Mother! (*Stands back of chair.*)

MRS. RIDGWAY. I haven't said a word, Jane—I haven't said a word!

JANE. Where is Anne?

SHOLMES. Hunting for something, I fancy.

JANE. Hunting for what?

SHOLMES. Another piece of the picture puzzle, I shall call it.

JANE (*angrily*). Please explain yourself.

SHOLMES. Rather let her make the explanation. (*Crosses to hall door and calls.*) Miss Ridgway! Come down—for it's no use to look further. I happened upon the object of your search a few minutes ago. (*Crosses to davenport.*)

*Enter ANNE from hall.*

ANNE (*looking around*). Why, what is the matter? (*Gazes sternly at SHOLMES.*) And will you explain your very unintelligible remark, Mr. Sholmes? (*BAFFLES and CRENNEDY join SHOLMES at R. U. E.*)

SHOLMES. One question at a time, Miss Ridgway—one question at a time. You ask the meaning of—all this? (*Gestures.*) Well, we've each found a portion of the picture puzzle—that's all. And as to my remark—I think you understand without my explanation.

ANNE. Pardon me, Mr. Sholmes, if I presume to disagree. (*Sits in chair R. of table. BAFFLES and CRENNEDY sit on davenport.*)

SHOLMES. Then I shall explain. (*Crosses to back of her chair.*) Do you remember making a statement something like this: "When we find the other half of the scarab our task is ended"?

ANNE (*coldly*). I remember perfectly.

SHOLMES (*taking scarab from pocket*). Well, here is the other half of the scarab. I found it, Miss Ridgway, in the secret drawer of your desk.

ANNE (*clasping hands*). Oh!

SHOLMES. You were hunting for it a moment ago, were you not?

ANNE (*after a pause*). I was hunting for it. (*Gazes*

*defiantly at the three men.*) Well, what are you going to do about it?

SHOLMES (*crossing to C.*). One moment! Let me give my solution of the affair before my colleagues have the floor. With the aid of Celeste, Miss Ridgway, for reasons which I must yet fathom, has in some way effected the disappearance—I do not say death—of Amos Rollins. Further endeavors will bring further disclosures. (*Returns to davenport and seats himself.*) Mr. Baffles!

BAFFLES (*rising*). My solution of the matter is different. Miss Ridgway cleverly contrived this plot as a sudden ending to the violent attachment which Mr. Rollins entertained for her sister. Miss Jane returned his affection and despite her sister's opposition determined to leave with him. As a pledge of her promise she sent him a Jack of Spades.

JANE (*cooly*). How stupid of me! Queen of Hearts would have been so much more fitting.

SHOLMES. But the scarab—

BAFFLES. Merely a part of the scheme to deport the unwelcome suitor and to present the matter to the family as a mysterious disappearance.

ANNE (*despairingly*). Dear me. There seems to be no escape for me!

BAFFLES (*turning to CRENNEDY*). And now, Crennedy, what is your opinion? (*Sits.*)

CRENNEDY (*rising*). Amos Rollins was really Amos Ridgway—the master of the house and the husband of this lady. (*Points to MRS. RIDGWAY.*) Where they have sent him or what they have done to him or what was their object must be ferreted out.

JANE (*in a burst of laughter*). Isn't it delicious? Absolutely delicious? Oh, Anne, I can't thank you enough for this evening of unalloyed pleasure!

ANNE (*excitedly*). Didn't I tell you it would work? And hasn't it been fun?

MRS. RIDGWAY. Speak only for yourselves. I have never had a more wretched experience. It was thoughtless of you to impose it upon me. (*Weeps.*)

SHOLMES (*rising*). Pardon me, my dear young ladies, if I remark that this is no laughing matter.

ANNE (*rising and facing the three*). Oh, but it is. Listen—all of you! I did do away with Mr. Rollins, but I created him as well—and there's no such creature! Didn't the inaccuracies of my maids tell you that? (*Pauses.*)

BAFFLES (*rising*). Miss Ridgway!

ANNE. I am a dramatist, gentlemen, and I've been asked to write a mystery play. I longed for experience—in fact, I had to have it—so I planned this little event, much against the wishes of my mother. Mr. Rollins was created from the airy nothings of imagination; he was invested with my father's watch—which explains the picture and the initials—my father's wallet—over which Celeste obligingly pricked her finger—the glove of an accommodating friend, who, by the way, has all his fingers—and a scarab which is my own property. Our scheme was doubtless illogical—in many respects crude—but it has given me the basis of a ripping drama, and I am duly grateful to you three gentlemen! (*Bows.*)

SHOLMES (*angrily*). Do you mean to say that you have summoned us three busy men on a ridiculous, foolish and fruitless pretext?

ANNE (*pointing to desk*). It need not be a fruitless evening, gentlemen, for my check book is at hand and it is my pleasure to compensate you for the time and energy spent in my behalf.

CELESTE (*demurely*). May I be introduced?

ANNE. My sister, gentlemen, my youngest sister. (*CELESTE curtseys.*) Which explains the puzzling *Miss* which the maids let fall so often.

BAFFLES. This is rather a blow to our reputations. I'm thinking.

ANNE. Hardly. Rather let us call it a positive triumph. (*Takes SHOLMES' arm.*) Come, Mr. Sholmes. (*Beckons JANE, who crosses and takes BAFFLES' arm.*) Come, Mr. Baffles! (*Beckons MRS. RIDGWAY, who crosses reluctantly and takes CRENNEDY'S arm.*) Come, Mr. Crennedy! Please

forgive me and help us partake of the feast which Melinda has prepared as a penance for her lack of veracity. Shall we all drink a health to Amos Rollins?

SHOLMES. And also to a Watch, a Wallet and a Jack of Spades?

*(As CELESTE holds open the door at R., they all pass slowly out, with ANNE and SHOLMES in the lead.)*

CURTAIN.



# Then Greek Met Greek

By LINDSEY BARBEE

Price, 25 Cents

Comedy in one act; 12 females. (In the original production, all parts were taken by women. However, the characters of Poseidon, Hermes and Apollo may be assumed by men and those of Eros and Hebe by children or by those of small stature.) Time, 1 hour. **Scene:** Hera's living room in the Olympus apartment house. **Characters:** Hera, possessor of a shield. Hestia, of conservative tendencies. Demeter, adorned with poppies. Athene, holding the key to a higher life. Poseidon, wielding a trident. Hermes, a messenger boy. Barbara, a mortal. Apollo, a ladies' man. Artemis, goddess of the Crescent Moon. Aphrodite, with an anchor. Eros, armed with an arrow. Hebe, youngest of Olympians. **Plot:** A parody upon the "rushing season" of college sororities and at the same time a plea for a better Panhellenic spirit. The symbols of well known Greek letter societies distinguish the various characters and the flattering attentions heaped upon the little "barbarian" will remind college women of similar occasions when "a choice of Greeks" was deemed the most important step of any freshman. This comedy is especially appropriate for the Panhellenic Associations which are being so rapidly organized and will promote an enthusiasm of friendliness and good fellowship among the rivals of other days.

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## The Laughing Cure

By EDITH F. A. U. PAINTON

Price, 25 Cents

Comedy in 2 acts; 4 males, 5 females. Time, 1¾ hours. **Scene:** 1 interior. A woman without a sense of humor is the cause of much distress to herself and those about her. Her mental attitude leads to chronic dispepsia and her old physician places the case with his nephew, a young M. D. just out of college, who prescribes one laugh regularly, every thirty minutes. Full of fun and action. An old lady of the Auntie Doleful type, in direct contrast to the cheerful spirit of the play, supplies excellent comedy. The young doctor is brimful of philosophy—"Laughing is the best beauty dope on the market. It will relieve every wrinkle from both brow and brain."

### SYNOPSIS

Act I.—The Hansons are discouraged over the condition of Mrs. Hanson's health. Mrs. Perry comes to cheer Mrs. Hanson and prepare her for the end. The doctor prescribes his novel remedy. "But, doctor, I never laugh." The first dose is administered, and the doctor performs for the amusement of his patient with discouraging effect. "You're funny, aren't you?" Jimmie and Gay join in the "best joke of the season."

Act II.—Mr. Hanson is shocked by his wife's peculiar conduct. "Is she intoxicated or delirious?" Mrs. Perry is worried over the matter. The doctor explains the situation. The gentle art of laughing. The talk of the town. Treatment concludes in triumph. Mrs. Perry is "converted" to the laughing gospel, even against her will. "He who laughs most, laughs best."

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# The Call of Wohelo

By LINDSEY BARBEE.

Price, 25 Cents

A comedy drama in 3 acts; 10 females. Time, 1¾ hours.  
**Scene:** 1 exterior. **Characters:** Ellen Ferris, Guardian of the Camp. Mrs. Vale, Camp mother. Blue Bird (Owaissa—Blue Bird), her young daughter. Wah-wah-taysee (Firefly), an Indian girl. Sylvia (Wayaka—See Beauty), a Camp "Misfit." Amy (Kee-wee—Rainbow Maid), a Torch Bearer. Marian (Disyadi—Moon Maid), A Fire Maker. Emily (Minnehaha—Laughing Water), a Wood Gatherer. Constance (Gaoh—Spirit of the Wind), a Wood Gatherer. Dorothy (To-he-ha—Humming Bird), a Wood Gatherer.

## SYNOPSIS.

Act I.—Blue Bird runs errands for the busy Camp Fire girls, among whom Sylvia alone is idle. Sylvia is declared a Camp "misfit," and Miss Ferris decides to make one last effort to-interest her in Camp Fire life. A visitor, Miss Marshall, a noted Camp Fire worker, is promised and Amy tells a ghost story in which she herself is heroine. Wah-wah-taysee chants magic words and Sylvia promises to seek "the treasure."

Act II.—Under Wah-wah-taysee's tutelage, Sylvia becomes a very different girl, but the intimacy with the Indian girl brings criticism from her Camp Fire friends. The mention of Amy's ghost produces peals of laughter, for constant watching has failed to detect "The Lady in White." Miss Ferris announces that Miss Marshall will be present at the Council Fire. Amy persuades Marian and Sylvia to keep a last vigil for the ghost and they consent. Constance's money disappears and suspicion turns to the Indian. Wah-wah-taysee sends a message. The ghost proves something of a sensation.

Act III.—The Council Fire. Miss Marshall and the Indian are discovered to be the same. Wah-wah-taysee tells her story and Sylvia is admitted to the rank of Wood Gatherer.

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