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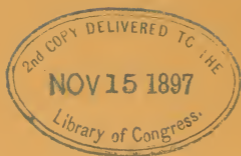
THE DARKEY & COMIC DRAMA

**JACK SHEPPARD AND
JOE BLUESKIN**



Chicago.

THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY.



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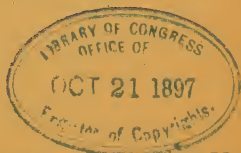
AMATEUR ROAD AGENTS

Melo-Dramatic Burlesque in One Act

BY
FRANK DUMONT

AUTHOR OF "THE CAKE WALK," "FALSE COLORS," ETC.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

JACK SHEPPARD.....	<i>Hughey Dougherty.</i>
JOE BLUESKIN.....	<i>Matt Wheeler.</i>
JONATHAN WILD.....	<i>Frank Dumont.</i>
OWEN WOOD.	
MRS. SUSAN WOOD.	
ROBERT CASH.	

Police, Neighbors, etc.

Plays twenty minutes

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PROPERTIES.

Old carpet bag. Baby. Large dummy dog. Tin dish of food. Slices of bread. Tray. Pistol for Wild. Cane for Jack. Tomato can and ragged handkerchief for Cash. Document for Wild. Large cigar for Joe.

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JACK SHEPPARD AND JOE BLUESKIN.

[SCENE.—*Landscape at back, 3 E. Cottage L. 2 E. Table and chairs C. Susan discovered with crying baby.*]

Susan. I can't keep this young one quiet. I've sung myself hoarse. Given it paregoric and pap; but it's no use—it won't keep quiet. It annoys the entire neighborhood. I'll take it back in the kitchen and put it in the cupboard and shut the door—then it can scream or go to sleep if it wants to. [*Baby squalls. Ex. into cottage. Enter Jack, followed by Joe R. 2 E.*]

Jack. Come along—you're the worst highwayman I ever saw. You're too skeered—why don't you brace up? Steal something, kill somebody—have some style about you. Read dime novels and be a hero.

Joe. [*With carpet-bag.*] I don't care about any style. You're always stealing something that ain't no use at all. Why don't you steal something to eat? That's business. I can't live on old iron and spoons. I want food—that's what I live for!

Jack. All the time growling about something to eat. I never saw such a feller, you'd ruin anybody the way you eat. I can't find food for you all the time. Why don't you work or earn some grub? You haven't stolen enough to keep you in pea-nuts. You're the worst robber I ever saw.

Joe. Well, people lock up all de valuables so I can't find them. They hide bread and meat and all such things. I don't know where to look for them. I want to go home—I'm tired of being a road agent.

Jack. You'll have Jonathan Wild after us the first thing you know. If he once puts his claws on you, off to jail you go.

Joe. I wish I was in jail, I'd get something to eat.

Jack. I'm not going to feed you any more until you do something. I've had to murder and rob everybody. You've got to find your own living after this. I'm tired of supporting you—do you hear?

Joe. Oh, I wish I had cheek—I know what I'd do. I'd run into a bake shop and steal a loaf of bread. Oh, wouldn't I eat it!

Jack. [*Goes to table.*] Landlord! Landlord! [*Knocks with stick or dagger.*]

Joe. Landlord! Landlord! [*Pounds with carpet-sack.*]

Jack hits him over knuckles.]

Jack. Shut up. You're making as much noise as if you were a first-class highwayman.

Joe. [*Rubbing knuckles.*] I'm going to stop reading dime novels, and trying to be a highwayman—I'm going to be honest.

Jack. Ha! ha! You're the sickest pal I ever saw. You're afraid of your own shadow. Why don't you read about the robbers and learn something? I thought you said you was going to imitate Blueskin and help me "Jack Sheppard"? Instead of that you're eating me out of everything I steal. I'll have to shake you. [*Knocks.*] Landlord! Landlord! [*Bus.*]

Joe. [*Both sit at table.*] Landlord. Landlord. [*Enter Owen Wood from cottage.*]

Wood. Ah! two travellers. I hope, gentlemen, you have not waited very long. I did not hear you at first.

Joe. Is dinner ready?

Jack. [*Hits table.*] Silence, sir!

Joe. Ain't you going to let me speak to the man?

Jack. [*To Wood.*] You will please bring me some bread and some smear kase.

Joe. And a little piece of cheese.

Jack. [*Hits table.*] Cheese it—no, sir, you can't have any cheese. It's bad for your teeth.

Wood. I'll bring you some bread and smear kase in a few moments. [*Ex. into cottage.*]

Jack. Now, sir, I want you to keep quiet. I haven't got a cent, and if you go on talking about eating, the landlord will "smell a mice" and refuse to give us anything. [*Enter Wood with plate of bread and tin dish of smear kase. He places it on table. Joe rubs his hands and in great glee prepares to eat.*]

Jack. I'll settle for this, sir, before leaving.

Wood. Well, I don't know about this.

Joe. Here's security. [*Holds up bag.*]

Wood. Never mind. You, sir. [*To Jack.*] I know you look like an honest man. I wish I could say as much for your companion. [*Ex. cottage.*]

Jack. See that, the landlord has dropped on you—he'd drive

you away if it wasn't for me. You're so frightened that everybody suspects you. Throw away that darned old carpet-bag.

Joe. No, I won't. I found it this morning and I'm going to keep it. It belongs to me now. Let's tackle this food before it gets stale. [*Gets ready to eat.*]

Jack. [*Pulls dishes away.*] No, sir, you don't get any of this.

Joe. [*Drawls astonished.*] 'W-w-what! What!

Jack. I say you don't get any of this; if you want anything to eat go and earn it. Go and steal something. Only gentlemen eat bread and smear kase.

Joe. Don't I get a whiff?

Jack. [*Eats.*] No, sir, not a smell. [*Gives Joe a crumb.*] There, that's enough for you.

Joe. I'm going to do something. [*Takes tin plates and spoons, puts them in carpet-bag.*] Now I've stolen something.

Wood. [*Entering.*] Gentlemen, have you finished your lunch?

Joe. He ate up his. I didn't care about any. I'll go in with you and eat something.

Jack. Stop! Don't mind that lunatic, sir—he's gone crazy on the subject of eating—he's a regular glutton. I have to watch him day and night and diet him, or he'd eat himself to death.

Joe. [*Bus. with clothes.*] Does that look as if I was eating myself to death?

Wood. [*To Jack.*] Now, sir, I'll receive my pay for that lunch.

Jack. Certainly. Certainly.

Joe. Now he's stuck. He ain't got a cent. I'm glad I didn't eat. I'll slip in the house to see if I can't find some potato skins or something. [*Ex. in house.*]

Jack. [*Searching in pockets.*] Really, I can't find any small change. I must see my friend. Where is he? Ah! gone to change a hundred dollar bill no doubt. He will return in a few moments.

Wood. Where are the plates and spoons I left on the table?

Jack. Confound that fool! Ah yes—the servant—I mean your wife—came out and took them in.

Wood. I'm glad she did. I'd hate to lose them. [*Enter Jonathan Wild L.*]

Wild. Ah! landlord, a bottle of wine. Quick! I have no time to lose.

Wood. Yes, sir—right away. [*Exits.*]

Wild. [*Aside.*] That looks like the very fellow I'm after. Yet my papers say there were two. Where is the other? [*Enter Wood with bottle and glass, which he sets on table.*]

Wood. There, sir, is your wine.

Wild. [*Fills glass and drinks.*] That's good wine. [*Enter Joe, smoking a cigar.*]

Jack. Where did you get that cigar? Give it to me.

Joe. Go and earn your cigars. Steal 'em, same as I do. Only "gentlemen" smoke dollar cigars. [*Struts and smokes.*]

Jack. [*Sees Wild.*] Ah! there's Jonathan Wild. If he recognizes us we are in the soup; we'd better git out of this. [*Joe struts up to the table and takes the bottle, pours out wine and drinks. Smacks his lips.*]

Joe. [*To Jack.*] I say—my—friend—Jack—have a glass of wine? You won't? Well, I won't urge you. Here's luck. [*Drinks again. Jack trying to catch his eye to call him away.*]

Wild. Well, that's cool.

Joe. It would be a little "cooler" if you'd put ice in it. [*Struts over to L., smoking. Jack R., trying to catch his eye.*]

Joe. He wants to beat me out of this cigar. [*Smokes.*]

Wild. [*Shows papers.*] Landlord, I'm after two thieves. Two desperate highwaymen. If you see any parties prowling about here, you will notify the police at once. I believe their names are "Jack Sheppard" and "Joe Blueskin," and I'm after them. [*Draws pistol.*]

Joe. [*Drops cigar and trembles.*] Oh! I'm a goner!

Jack. [*Motioning.*] Keep quiet—they'll suspect you.

Wild. A reward of fifty dollars is offered for their capture—dead or alive. One of them has a carpet sack which he always carries about with him.

Joe. Oh, Lord! [*Throws bag over to Jack.*] 'Tain't mine. It don't belong to me.

Jack. I don't want it. [*Kicks it back.*]

Joe. It don't belong to me. [*Kicks it.*]

Jack. [*Kicks it.*] Keep that bag over there. [*Bus ad lib.*]

Wild. You will remember, sir, to keep on the lookout for these men; arrest them and I'll give you half of the reward. [*Looks at Jack and Joe. Joe points to Jack. Jack points to Joe. Wild exits R. after replacing pistol in belt.*]

Wood. Well, gentlemen, it is growing late and we must soon retire.

Joe. Do you have supper before retiring?

Wood. No, sir, I've had supper.

Joe. Shook again. Oh, will I ever eat? [*Enter Robert Cash, L., with tin can; goes to Wood.*]

Cash. Mr. Wood! Here is the rent of the house, that I owe you. I'm sorry I couldn't pay you before.

Wood. Never mind—better late than never. [*Takes can.*] Is the money in this can?

Cash. Yes, sir. Five dollars in pennies.

Jack and Joe. Five dollars in pennies! Oh!

Joe. Is there so much money in de world?

Wood. Much obliged, Mr. Cash—I'll put this in the safe! [*Turns.*]

Cash. [*Takes out handkerchief.*] All right, sir. [*Going.*]

Joe. Say, how late is it?

Cash. [*Going,*] I have no watch, sir, I don't know. [*Joe goes behind him and steals the handkerchief as Cash replaces it in his coat-tail pocket. It is all ragged. Cash exits R.*]

Joe. [*Unfolds handkerchief.*] He blows an awful bugle. [*Hides handkerchief.*]

Wood. Well, gentlemen, I must retire.

Jack. And so must I. Have you a room to spare?

Wood. No, sir—I have a cot that will hold one.

Jack. I'll take it.

Joe. Well, where do I repose?

Jack. You? You sleep in the barn. That's good enough for you.

Wood. Very well, sir, you will find your bed in the attic. Retire as soon as you can. Good-night. I must give this can to my wife. Good-night. [*Exits house.*]

Jack. Good-night. Say, Joe, did you see that can full of money? We must get that.

Joe. Oh, I don't care about that—I know where there's a ham. A whole ham. I saw the old woman put it in the pantry while I was in the house. I'm agoing for that ham—you can get the money—I want to eat.

Jack. Very well. Ah! the lights go out! They're going to bed. Now's our time. [*Stage dark.*] Be cautious and make no noise. [*Bus. Gets lantern from wing. Music, Pizz.*] Step light! [*Joe tumbles over chairs and tables—Jack very mad. They finally exit in cottage. Enter Jonathan Wild at back.*]

Wild. I knew they were the two fellows I was after. Now I've got them in a tight place. I'll get the big bloodhound and they will not escape me. Before morning I'll have them both in jail. Perhaps they are at their bloody work now. I'll keep my

eyes open. I'll have the police ready and get the dog so he can track them to their hiding place. [*Exit L. Enter Joe from cottage with baby, groping in dark.*]

Joe. How dark it is—but I've got the ham. It was laying in the cupboard wrapt in cloth, but I found it. I've got it. [*Trips over chair—drops baby.*] There goes my ham. [*Baby wakes and commences to squall.*] What the deuce is this? This ain't a ham! I've got a hold of something alive. Hush! hush! [*Bus.*] Shut your mouth. [*Tries to quiet child; shoves it in carpet bag as Mrs. Wood with lighted candle enters in nightgown.*]

Mrs. Wood. Who is making all this noise?

Joe. Scat there! Darn those cats! [*Sits on carpet-bag to hide it and keep baby quiet.*]

Mrs. Wood. Don't make so much noise, go to sleep. [*Turns to enter cottage. Joe comes behind and blows out candle, trips up Mrs. Wood and shoves her in cottage. She cries, "Help, murder, thieves," etc. Joe catches up carpet-bag to run off; baby squalling. Jack enters with tin can.*]

Jack. What the deuce are you doing, waking up the whole house? Come, I've got the money. Let's skip out of this.

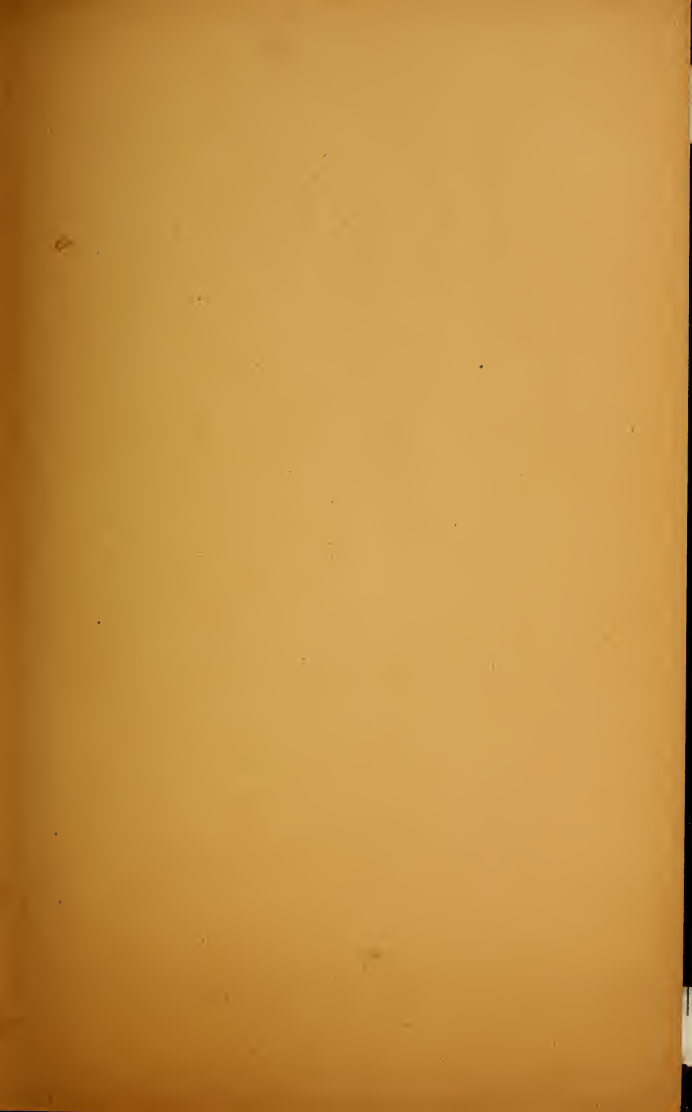
Joe. No—I want to get that ham.

Jack. Come on, I tell you. [*Noise inside. Mr. and Mrs. Wood run out. Joe throws carpet-bag at Mrs. Wood and knocks her down. Jack stabs Wood. He falls. Loud barking of dogs heard. As Jack and Joe run to L. to escape, Jonathan Wild enters with levelled pistol.*]

Wild. Surrender, or I'll shoot you both.

Jack. Never—I'll die game. [*Wild fires, Jack falls—dies. Barking heard. Shouts, "This way," "Follow," etc. Music. Joe rushes to escape, L. and returns with big stuffed dog tied to coat tails or holding him by hind legs or neck. All characters and police enter R. and L. All shout "Seek him, Tiger," "Shake him up," etc. Dog and Joe struggle. Burlesque death of Joe Blueskin.*]

CURTAIN.





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