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*Gettin'
Acquainted*

by
Georgia Earle

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T. S. Denison & Company, Publishers

154 West Randolph Street

CHICAGO

GETTIN' ACQUAINTED



GETTIN' ACQUAINTED

A Small Town Comedy

BY

GEORGIA EARLE

AUTHOR OF

*"The Lie That Jack Built," "The Rented Lady," "The
Porch-Climber," "The Lovejoy Twins," "The
Villain," "Hitchin' Up Amos"*

AND CO-AUTHOR

"The Mark of the Beast," (Produced at the Princess, New York)



CHICAGO

T. S. DENISON & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

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meat

GETTIN' ACQUAINTED

CHARACTERS.

JANE STEWART.....*A Spinster*
 PRISCILLA STEWART.....*Her Sister, also a Spinster*
 JOHN PURDY.....*A Wooer for Fifteen Years*

TIME—*The Present.*

PLACE—*The sitting-room of the old Stewart home-
 stead in a small Vermont town.*

TIME OF PLAYING—*Twenty-five Minutes.*

*Produced Eighty-first Street Theatre, New York City,
 May 6, 1915.*

By the following players:

JANE STEWART.....*Georgia Earle*
 PRISCILLA STEWART.....*Nellie Callahan*
 JOHN PURDY.....*James O'Neill*

As played for three years over the Orpheum and Keith Circuits.

JANE STEWART.....*Georgia Earle*
 PRISCILLA STEWART.....*Virginia Russell*
 JOHN PURDY.....*Emmet Whitney*

COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS.

JANE STEWART—Crisp and snappy in her manner, a young woman of decision and initiative. She is used to running things, and while likeable and whole-hearted, means to get her own way. She wears a trim white shirtwaist and white skirt, with her hair becomingly but simply arranged.

PRISCILLA STEWART—The clinging-vine, adoring type, always trying to smooth things over. Just a little bit of a doormat. She has none of Jane's crispness of speech, but is much more gentle. She is very feminine in her clothes, a pretty, old-fashioned dimity or organdy, that looks "country" and yet is pretty and attractive, is suitable. Her hair is arranged more softly than Jane's. Her keynote is sweetness and womanliness.

JOHN PURDY—Is the honest, slow-thinking, yet withal determined type, when he once gets started. He doesn't show how masterful he is until Jane's teasing finally wakes him up, and then he dominates the situation. His clothes are the "best" clothes of the small town, middle-aged man who makes no pretense of being a dude. There is no caricature in John's clothes, it is rather John himself who is uncomfortable and awkward in them, the stiff collar particularly causing him inconvenience. He is clumsy and bashful, all "Yankee" but not a "Rube."

PROPERTY PLOT.

Old-fashioned horse-hair furniture, settee or sofa, straight-back chairs, arm chair, large old-fashioned rocking-chair with rung across the front, small rocker.

Marble-top table, small old-fashioned table or "stand."

What-not, with old-fashioned ornaments on it.

Organ and stool. (The organ does not have to be played.)

Hymn books and vases of flowers on organ.

Large Bible on marble-top table.

Old-fashioned ornaments on mantel, candlesticks, vases of flowers.

Andirons at fireplace.

Grandfather's clock or old-fashioned mantel clock.

Hat rack.

Rag carpet.

Old-fashioned pictures on wall.

Lace or chintz curtains at window.

Tidies on chairs.

Footstool or hassock.

Sofa pillows (2).

Match safe and matches.

Stone mug.

Doorbell (jingle bell if possible).

NOTE.—The effect desired is that of an old-fashioned room in a New England home, as unlike the usual stage setting as possible.

LIGHT PLOT.

Lights full up all through.

Bunch lights at doors and window.

CURTAIN CUES.

FIRST CURTAIN—WARNING—JANE: "Oh, yes, I have!
There's Priscilla!"

CURTAIN—JOHN: "Over t' the parson's with your
witness, to git acquainted!"

SECOND CURTAIN—WARNING—JOHN: "You git out
now! I got somethin' private to say to Priscilla!"

CURTAIN—JOHN: "Ain't agoin' to say nuthin'! Go-
in' to kiss you!"

SCENE PLOT.

Plain Chamber.

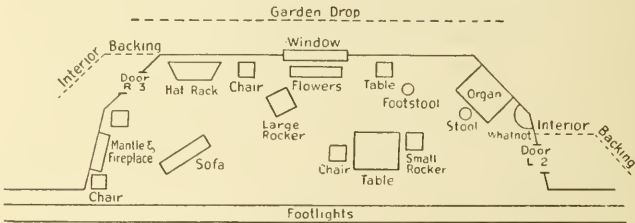
Doors R. 3 and L. 2.

Interior backing for both doors.

Window C.

Garden backing for window.

Fireplace and mantel R. 2.



STAGE DIRECTIONS.

R. means right of stage; *C.*, center; *R. C.*, right center; *L.*, left; *1 E.*, first entrance; *U. E.*, upper entrance; *R. 3 E.*, right entrance, up stage, etc.; up stage, away from footlights; down stage, near footlights. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

GETTIN' ACQUAINTED

The scene is the old-fashioned sitting-room of the Stewart homestead at Medfield, Vermont. There is a window at back C. hung with lace or cretonne curtains, and a stand of flowers in front of it. There is a door R. 3 leading into the entry from which opens the outside door. There is another door L. 2 leading into the rest of the house. There is a mantel below door at R and a fireplace with andirons, etc. There are old-fashioned ornaments on the mantel, brass candlesticks, sea-shells, etc. Old-fashioned pictures and worked mottoes hang on the wall. Up near the window is a small old-fashioned stand or table on which is a vase of flowers, and a match safe with matches. Near it is a hassock or footstool. About L. 3 is a small organ or melodeon on which are hymn-books, a vase of flowers, and possibly brass candlesticks and candles. Stool in front of organ. Left of C. farther down stage is a marble-top table with a large family Bible on it, PRISCILLA'S work-basket and a lamp. To the left of it is a small rocking-chair without arms, to the right a straight-back horse-hair chair. Over R. is a horse-hair sofa with two sofa pillows on it. Up near window C. is a large old-fashioned rocking-chair with rungs across the front. There is a hat rack near door R. 3. There are other horse-hair chairs set primly against the wall. There is a rag carpet on the floor. There are tidies on the backs of the chairs.

At risc, PRISCILLA is discovered sitting in the small

rocking-chair at L. of marble-top table, down stage, sewing.

Enter JANE, excitedly.

JANE.

(Coming down C.)

Priscilla! Priscilla!! I've something to tell you! Guess, you never can!

PRISCILLA.

(Rising, startled.)

Goodness gracious, what's the matter?

JANE.

(Triumphantly.)

I'm engaged to be married!

PRISCILLA.

(Her hands going to her heart.)

Then *John* has proposed to *you*!

JANE.

(Emphatically.)

No, John ain't! (PRISCILLA is visibly relieved. JANE crosses to couch and flings her jacket on it.)

Land sakes, John ain't the only man in this world, thank goodness, or we'd both die old maids!

PRISCILLA.

(Still rather tremulous.)

Not John? Why—who—there ain't anyone else!

JANE.

(Crossing to her. She is very brisk in her movements and crisp in her speech.)

Oh, Sister, you never think of anyone but John, do you? Here we've been for the last fifteen years with one beau between us, one hope—John Purdy!

PRISCILLA.

(*Her manner is gentle and she is less sharp in her speech.*)

But he's the only one who ever came a-sparkin', ain't he?

JANE.

(*Hanging her hat on the rack and going down to the sofa and getting her jacket.*)

I know, but what c'n you expect in a one-horse town with fifty girls to every single man? (*She crosses down to PRISCILLA again, jacket in hand.*) Now you are really fond of John. I ain't!

PRISCILLA.

How you do talk! (*She sits and goes back to her sewing.*)

JANE.

And John is fond of you! You were born for each other.

PRISCILLA.

(*Pleased.*)

Oh, Jane, do you think so?

JANE.

I do! You were his first love, you should have married him years ago—*before he began to think it over!* (*She goes up and hangs up the jacket.*)

PRISCILLA.

(*Sewing.*)

I'm not like you, Jane, and how sh'd I know he wanted me if he never asked me—and he never did!

JANE.

(*Coming down to the back of the chair R. of table—
emphatically.*)

Well, I wanted Billy, and *he* got the necessary encouragement, believe me! Result—engaged! (*She turns away to C.*)

PRISCILLA.

Billy! Billy *who?*

JANE.

(*Turning toward her, still C.*)

And I ain't known him three months!

PRISCILLA.

(*Rising scandalized.*)

Oh, Jane! What will folks say? (*Crossing to her.*)
And who're you talkin' about? (*They both clip their "g's" but sound their "n's" very distinctly—"go-in," "talk-in." An idea strikes her—pleased.*) You don't mean Mr. Martin, do you—the Superintendent at the Fac'try?

JANE.

(*Nodding.*)

Eh-us! (*Or A-yus, New England for "Yes"*).
Why d'ye s'pose I studied typewritin' and stenography? I made up my mind if this sleepy old town could wake up and start a big factory, I'd wake up too, and get somewheres! (*She crosses to couch.*)

PRISCILLA.

Why, Jane, you never talked this way before, and you never even mentioned Mr. Martin in *that* way!

JANE.

(*Sitting on the arm of the sofa.*)

Well, there's no use countin' your chickens before they're hatched! But today Billy told me I was the best Secretary he'd ever had. An' then he said: "Will you marry me?" An' I said: "You bet I will!" (*Very slight pause. Rising and sitting on sofa.*) So I'm a-goin' to be married!

PRISCILLA.

(*Disconsolately, turning back to her chair.*)

And I'll be left all alone!



JANE.

Nonsense! Now John will be able to make up his mind, and you'll be Mrs. John, as you should have been years ago!

PRISCILLA.

(Shaking her head mournfully.)

No, he always liked you better. *(She sits.)*

JANE.

Fiddlesticks! He likes *you!* I rile him! Then he runs to you for sympathy, an' the trouble is, he always gets it! You ought to surprise him once in awhile! Surprise him an'—*(she breaks off suddenly as an idea strikes her. Excitedly, clasping her hands and rising.)* I've got it!

PRISCILLA.

(Also rising.)

What's the matter?

JANE.

(Alight with her inspiration, crossing to PRISCILLA.)

I'm a'goin' to give him one last surprise and get square at the same time! *(Warningly.)* Don't you tell him I'm a-goin' to marry Bill Martin!

PRISCILLA.

Why not?

JANE.

Never you mind! *(Indignantly.)* Wastin' our time all these years, never givin' either of us a chance to say "Yes" or "No"—waitin', till he'd made up *his* mind! Selfish critter! *(She crosses to back of sofa and rearranges pillows—she fixes them so that they will be behind her later when she sits down and they are needed in "the business.")*

PRISCILLA.

(*Loyally.*)

Oh, Jane! John *ain't* selfish!

JANE.

Ain't he? Well, you wait till I get through with him!

PRISCILLA.

(*Going to her, imploringly and anxiously.*)

Now, Jane, what you goin' to do?

JANE.

Get square!

PRISCILLA.

(*In great distress.*)

Oh, Jane, please don't! Dear me suz! An' it's time he was here an' you ain't fixed yourself up yet!

JANE.

No, an' I ain't a-goin' to fix up, either! Guess if I look good enough for Bill Martin t' ask me t' marry him, I look good enough to see John Purdy for the seven-thousand-six-hundred an' ninety-fifth time!

PRISCILLA.

(*Much worried.*)

I *wish* you'd tell me what you're goin' to do? You frighten me!

(*Doorbell rings.*)

PRISCILLA.

Ooo-oo-oo! There he is now!

JANE.

All right, you go t' the door!

PRISCILLA.

No, no, Jane, I can't! Now promise me to be careful not to hurt his feelin's! (*Bell rings again.*)

JANE.

(*Calmly.*)

You goin' t' the door?

PRISCILLA.

(*Frightened.*)

Oh, no!

JANE.

Then I sh'll have to! (*She exits door R. 3.*)

PRISCILLA.

(*After fluttering helplessly for a minute.*)

Oh, dear! Oh, dear! (*She runs over to the door L.*)

JANE.

(*Off stage.*)

'Evenin', John!

JOHN.

(*Off stage.*)

'Evenin', Jane!

PRISCILLA.

Oh, dear!! (*Runs off stage door L.*)

JANE entering.

JANE.

Come on in an' hang up your hat!

(*She crosses to chair R. of table L. and sits, taking up crochet or knitting work.*)

JOHN follows her on, looks around inquiringly, hangs up his hat, and comes down C. Placid and complacent, looks around.

JOHN.

(*Inquiringly.*)

Where's Priscilla?

JANE.

She'll be in in a minute! (*Looks up from her work to where he is still helplessly standing. Rather sharply.*) Well, set down!

(JOHN goes up stage, drags down the big rocking-chair to a position between JANE's chair and the sofa, and arranges himself comfortably and deliberately. He is deliberate both in speech and action. He has a trick common with many New Englanders of winding his feet in uncomfortable or awkward positions around the legs of his chair and around each other, these signs becoming more marked as his discomfort increases. But at the beginning of the scene he is quite serene.)

JOHN.

Pretty fair day.

JANE.

(Crisply.)

Fair t' middlin'.

JOHN.

Eh-us. Feels like a weather breeder, don't it?

JANE.

Do tell!

JOHN.

Speaks of rain.

JANE.

I want to know! (Slight pause, while JOHN tries to make up his mind whether JANE's brief, perfunctory idioms indicate that she is "cranky," and he hunts up a new subject of conversation.)

JOHN.

(Finally, expansively.)

Jackson asked me to-day would I run for Sheriff!

JANE.

Did he?

JOHN.

Eh-us!

JANE.

Well, I shouldn't think you'd run f'r anythin'!

JOHN.

(Bridling.)

Why not?

JANE.

(Turning toward him.)

You're so slow!

JOHN.

*(Disgusted.)*Humph! *(Pause.)* Humph! *(Further pause as it sinks deeper in.)* He seems t' think I'd be 'lected!

JANE.

Humph!

JOHN.

(Trying again.)

How's Priscilla?

JANE.

Right smart.

JOHN.

How're you?

JANE.

(Tartly.)

Same's usual!

JOHN.

What's the matter? Got a chip on your shoulder?

JANE.

No, I ain't, but I was just wonderin'!

JOHN.

Wonderin' what?

JANE.

(Pointedly.)

Why you came this evenin'?

JOHN.

*(Astounded.)*Why I came? Why, don't I *allus* come Tuesday nights?

JANE.

Goodness knows you do, and you've been doin' it long enough, too! What I'm a-tryin' to find out is *why* you come?

JOHN.

(Flabbergasted.)

Why—why—why, to visit with you and Priscila, of course!

JANE.

But *why* do you want to visit with us? Got any notion in your mind? Or has it just got to be a habit? Why do you come?

JOHN.

Why—why—*(bewildered he struggles for an idea and finally produces one triumphantly.)* To git acquainted!

JANE.

For the land sakes!

JOHN.

(Getting sensitive and wrathful.)

Oh, of course, if I ain't wanted, I'll be goin'! *(He gets up and goes to the hat rack for his hat.)*

JANE.

(Commandingly.)

John Purdy, you come right straight back here and set down! *(After a moment's hesitation he comes back in front of his chair but does not sit.)* Set down! *(She speaks sharply and he obeys as suddenly as though her tone had pushed him into the chair. She rises and goes up to the back of his chair.)* Now, see here, I want to know your intentions!

JOHN.

(Rising and edging round his chair, his eyes on her all the time, till he gets on the opposite side with the chair between them, then—)

M—mmy—my—intentions?

JANE.

(*Firmly.*)

Yes, your intentions! You began to come here fifteen years ago. There was no one then to ask you what you meant, but now I'm old enough to do my own askin', an' I want to know! Do you intend to marry either of us?

JOHN.

(*Not knowing which way to look, overcome with embarrassment.*)

Why—I—this is so sudden!

JANE.

Well, *do* you?

JOHN.

I—I—

PRISCILLA *enters from L. shy and anxious.* JOHN *sees her and with great relief crosses over to her. They meet in front of marble-top table. JANE crosses in front of couch.*

JOHN.

(*Shaking PRISCILLA's hand effusively.*)

Why, Priscilla, mighty glad to see you. Where've you been this long while? Was askin' Jane about you. You look fust rate!

PRISCILLA.

Thank you, John, same to you. (*She looks down at her hand which he is still shaking and then up at him in surprise.*)

JANE.

That'll do, John. (*They look at her inquiringly.*) Priscilla's hand must be thoroughly shook by this time. (*They look down at their hands and then drop them self-consciously and quickly.*) An' you ain't a-goin' to wriggle out of answerin' my question that way!

JOHN.

(Crossing toward her until he is in front of his own chair. Argumentatively.)

Who's a-wrigglin'?

JANE.

So you might jest as well set down again! (JOHN and PRISCILLA look at each other.) Set down! *(All three sit down simultaneously. Pause.)*

PRISCILLA.

(Anxious.)

Why—what question, Jane?

JANE.

(Fixing the pillows behind her back.)

John knows. (JOHN wriggles, and finally sits tipped on the edge of his chair, looking very uncomfortable.)

PRISCILLA.

(In dismay, clasping her hands.)

Oh, what is it? You don't look comfortable in that chair, John, let me get you the sofy piller. *(She goes over to the sofa and yanks the soft pillow suddenly from behind JANE'S back. JANE drops back unexpectedly against the back of the sofa with a little exclamation. PRISCILLA goes over and puts cushion behind JOHN'S head carefully. He looks self-conscious but pleased.)* There! That's better! *(Pleased with herself, she goes back and sits in chair L. of table. JOHN looks combatively at JANE as if to see what she has to say about it.)*

JANE.

(Sarcastically.)

Yes, get him a sofy piller, but I sh'd think his conscience'd need it more'n his back! *That must be*



very uncomfortable, indeed! (JOHN looks both indignant and uncomfortable.)

PRISCILLA.

His conscience? Why, what has John *done*?

JANE.

We're talkin' about what he *ain't* done, just now, my dear!

PRISCILLA.

(Looking inquiringly from one to the other.)

Ain't done?

JOHN.

(Aggrieved.)

I don't understand you, Jane, I dunno what's come over you! You never talked this way before!

JANE.

(Knitting.)

No, I *have* wasted a lot of time, haven't I?

JOHN.

'Tain't womanly!

JANE.

(Very peppery.)

Oh, ain't it? Well, it ain't manly to shilly shally, either!

JOHN.

(Rising.)

Shilly shally? *Who*?

JANE.

(Also rising, as they face each other angrily.)

You!

PRISCILLA.

(In consternation, running between them.)

Oh, John! Oh, Jane! Mercy sakes alive! (Turning to JOHN, soothingly.) Set down, John! Set down—(she gently pushes him back in his chair)—and—and—smoke awhile! (She motions JANE to sit, which

JANE *docs ungraciously.* To JOHN.) I'll get you the matches. (*She runs up to the match safe on the small table up stage and brings it down to L. of JOHN, where she stands lighting the match. In the meantime JOHN takes out his package of "3 for 5" Virginia cheroots and selects one. PRISCILLA hands him the lighted match.*) Light your cigar! (*He takes the match and lights cheroot. PRISCILLA catches JANE'S disapproving eye and turns her head independently away. JOHN puffs till he gets the cheroot thoroughly alight, then throws match on the floor. PRISCILLA picks it up, a little shocked at his carelessness, puts it in the match tray on the lower table. Goes over to small rocker L. of table, turns and surveys JOHN, who is puffing cigar with short angry puffs. As she sits in rocker.*) Now you'll feel better!

JOHN.

(*Heatedly.*)

I have *not* shilly-shallied!

JANE.

Have too! You've been fifteen years makin' up your mind, and you'd be fifteen more if I'd let you!

JOHN.

(*Rising.*)

That ain't so. That ain't it!

JANE.

Ain't it? Do you mean to say you ain't had any intentions right along?

JOHN.

N—n—no—o—

JANE.

(*Quickly.*)

Oh! you ain't?

JOHN.

(Much flustered.)

Well—no—you see—why, I mean—you're both like my sisters!

JANE.

Priscilla, did you hear that? He'll be a brother to us!

JOHN.

Great Tophet, Jane, how you do twist everything! *(He sits down wrathfully in great disgust.)*

PRISCILLA.

(Earnestly.)

Don't mind her, John! How you do talk, Jane! We're always glad to see you, John! *(JANE makes a wry face.)* And I'm sure we never thought of anything else—*(JANE turns accusingly toward her, she catches JANE'S eye and turns away from her in confusion. Pause. She looks at JOHN. He is sitting in a most uncomfortable position with a very injured expression on his face.)* John! Please, please don't look that way! *(He changes to an even more uncomfortable position. Unhappily.)* You don't look comfortable yet, John! *(He is sitting on the edge of his chair with one foot on top of the other.)* Let me get you the footstool! *(She runs up stage for it.)*

JOHN.

(Turning to JANE, meets her eye, sees she is amused. Hastily.)

No, oh no!

PRISCILLA.

Oh, yes! *(She puts the footstool at his feet and watches him put first one foot gingerly on it with a look at JANE, then the other. Much pleased with her efforts.)* There! Now I'm sure you'll feel better! *(She sits R. of table.)*

(JOHN'S next "business" has been done two ways: 1. By sitting on the edge of the chair with his feet on the rather high stool, looking foolish and uncomfortable. 2. By beginning to rock in his chair until interrupted by JANE'S "Go back to the main question," when he stops abruptly.)

JANE.

(After the footstool has been placed and PRISCILLA is seated. Brief pause. Ominously polite.) If you're quite comfortable now, John, we'll go back to the main question! (JOHN collapses in his chair.) You've been keepin' company with us for years, and we figgered you intended to marry one of us. Which one, we didn't know. Naturally, only one of us could win the prize. (She sizes him up and he looks most unhappy.) But bein' sisters, either was willin' to step aside! But now (rising) you must choose between us! You say to one of us: "Will you marry me"—

PRISCILLA.

(Rising, horrified, all her New England breeding aghast.)

Oh—O—h—h—Oh!!! (Over to JOHN.) John, John! Don't listen to her! She's only jokin'! She don't mean it! She don't want to marry you—

JANE.

(Quickly.)

Speak for yourself, Priscilla!

PRISCILLA.

(Desperately.)

I don't want to marry you! (She realizes in consternation what she has said. JOHN, in extreme surprise, gets to his feet, his mouth open.) Indeed I don't, John! I never thought of such a thing!

You're just our good friend, our brother, as you said. We neither of us want to marry you! Please, please, forget everything she said! She loves to torment, you know she does! (*JOHN has looked more and more dejected during this speech. He droops unmistakably at the end.*) Don't look like that, John! Please! Please!! (*She turns away, wringing her hands.*) Oh dear me suz! (*She goes over in front of rocking-chair. Hopefully.*) Let's talk about something else! (*Slight pause.*) Set down! (*All three sit simultaneously. There is an awful pause. Desperately.*) What time is it, John?

JOHN.

(*Taking out his watch. Lugubriously.*)

Eight o'clock! (*Another pause. Nobody helps out.*)

PRISCILLA.

(*Earnestly.*)

Isn't there something I can do for you, John? (*JOHN looks slowly around and meets JANE'S eye. He shakes his head and sinks back in his chair.*) I know! (*She rises and goes up to door L. 2 E.*) I'll get you a glass of root beer! (*At the door.*) It's so refreshing!

JANE.

(*Dryly.*)

Yes, John, you do look as if you needed something refreshing!

PRISCILLA.

Oh, Jane! (*She exits door L. 2 E. JANE looks at the door to see that she has really gone; JOHN as though he would like to follow her.*)

JANE.

(*Briskly.*)

Well, as Priscilla don't want you, it only remains

for you to decide whether you want me. If not, I'll look somewhere's else!

JOHN.

(Rising in surprise.)

Somewhere's else? JANE.

(Calmly.)

Eh-us. Maybe you thought you was the only single man in Medfield.

JOHN.

(Immediately curious.)

Who is he?

JANE.

(Airily.)

I dunno why I sh'd tell you!

JOHN.

(With sudden suspicion.)

I know! It's that pesky dude up t' the factory—Bill Martin!

JANE.

(Flaring up.)

He ain't a dude! *(She puts her knitting down and rises.)* Just because he wears good clothes! *(She goes down stage.)*

JOHN.

(Decidedly.)

Well, I won't have it!

JANE.

You won't have it! Humph!

JOHN.

(Crossing over to her.)

Why he ain't known you three months!

JANE.

How long do you expect him to know me—fifteen years?

JOHN.

Quit now! There's such a thing as undue haste!

JANE.

Well, nobody ever accused you of any undue haste.

JOHN.

(Nettled—turning away from her.)

Well, I won't have it! Understand?

JANE.

Like to know what right you have to dictate to me!

JOHN.

I'll make it my right!

JANE.

(Pinning him down—firmly.)

Are you prepared to marry me?

JOHN.

(Hesitates a second, then his anger gets the better of him, he comes over to her, bringing his fist down into his other hand.)

Yes, by Juniper!

(JANE is absolutely astounded by this unexpected answer, and is rather at a loss for a moment. JOHN, seeing her surprise, realizes what he has done, and turns away. He looks longingly at the door where PRISCILLA disappeared.)

JANE.

(Faltering.)

Why, John, this—this is a surprise—I—I—*(She looks perplexed. Finally she makes up her mind what to do, laughs. Goes over to JOHN in a brisk, businesslike way. Crisply.)* Well, we're engaged now, ain't we? *(He turns in surprise.)* Well? Ain't you goin' to kiss me? Or put your arm around me? *(He looks much embarrassed, so she puts his right arm around her and lays her head on his shoulder. He looks over at door L., terribly unhappy.)*

Well, I never expected this happiness! (*She looks up at him and sighs sentimentally. He looks at her, then away again.*) I always thought you preferred Priscilla, but it seems it's me! (*Anxiously.*) You're sure it's me, John? You ain't a-bein' *rushed* into this, by any chance, are you? (*JOHN wipes the perspiration from his face with a large handkerchief.*) Everythin's settled now. I'll marry you, John, and Priscilla will marry Bill Martin—

JOHN.

(*Pulling away from her, thoroughly startled.*)
Priscilla? Not Priscilla?

JANE.

(*Calmly.*)

Well, why not Priscilla? You're engaged to me, ain't you?

JOHN.

(*Sputtering in his wrath.*)

Engaged to you! Engaged nothin'!! You—you—*you forced* me to pop to you!

JANE.

(*Trying not to laugh.*)

Why, John, the idea!

JOHN.

Hush up now and hear me talk sense!

JANE.

I'd love to hear you talk sense, John!

JOHN.

Smart, ain't you, gettin' me to pop to you when I don't want you! You talk too much and that kind of a woman ain't no good for any man's comfort!

JANE.

(*Bubbling over.*)

Why, John! John, you sound almost alive!

JOHN.

(Turning wrathfully.)

Alive! I'll show you whether I'm alive or not! *(He kicks the footstool out of the way and shoves the big rocker up stage. Comes down to JANE.)* I'm a-goin' to take Priscilla away from that stuck-up Bill Martin!

JANE.

(Jeering.)

Yes, you are!

JOHN.

Yes, I be! Because I've been waitin' for Priscilla to grow up and git acquainted with me, you think I'm slow!

JANE.

Not slow, John, just careful!

JOHN.

Yah! I'll show you! *(Over to door L. Calls.)* Priscilla! Priscilla!!

PRISCILLA *entering with mug of root beer.*

PRISCILLA.

Here's your root beer, John!

JOHN.

Root beer, shucks! That ain't half strong enough for me, the way I feel! When I get through here, I'm a-goin' down to Ed's and get some reg'lar beer!

JANE.

John, you're improvin'!

JOHN.

(Turning to her.)

You shut up! *(To PRISCILLA.)* You set that beer down, Priscilla, and listen to me! *(She sets the mug she carries down on the table hastily.)* You ain't a-goin' to marry that dude, Bill Martin—

PRISCILLA.

Why, John, Jane's goin' to—(JANE *makes frantic signals to her to keep quiet.* JOHN *interrupts.*)

JOHN.

You're goin' to marry me! You hear?

PRISCILLA.

Oh, John, this is so sudden!

JOHN.

'Tain't neither sudden! It's been comin' on for fifteen years!

PRISCILLA.

(*Still trying to explain.*)

But, John, Jane's going to—(JANE *again makes signals.*)

JOHN.

(*Interrupting.*)

Jane, nuthin'! She's too all-fired smart to suit me! I want a woman that'll do as she's told, and make me comfortable same as Ma made Pa, and you're that kind!

JANE.

But John, you ain't asked her yet!

JOHN.

(*Turning to JANE.*)

Don't have to ask her! I'm *a-tellin'* her! The Book says, "Wives, obey your husbands!" (To PRISCILLA.) You a-goin' to obey me, Priscilla?

PRISCILLA.

(*Starting with a little rush toward him, then halting, demurely.*)

Y—yes, John!

JANE.

See here, John! You can't marry Priscilla; you're engaged to me!

JOHN.

Engaged to you? I ain't neither! You just got me all kerflummuxed!

JANE.

John Purdy, ain't you goin' to marry me?

JOHN.

No, I ain't.

PRISCILLA.

Why—cee, Jane!

JANE.

(With an air of finality.)

Then I'll sue you for breach of promise!

JOHN.

Breach o' promise? You can't! You ain't got no witness!

JANE.

Oh, yes, I have! There's Priscilla!

JOHN.

Priscilla? I'll fix that! The law says a wife can't testify 'gainst her husband! *(Grabs her up in his arms and runs over to door R.)*

JANE.

John, John, where are you going?

JOHN.

Over t' the parson's with your witness, to git acquainted! *(JANE laughs and claps her hands.)*

CURTAIN.

(Or this ending may be used if desired. It begins with the speech of PRISCILLA—"Y—yes, John!"—twelve speeches before curtain. Use second warning and curtain cues for this.)

PRISCILLA.

(Starting with a little rush toward him, and then halting demurely.)

Y—yes, John.

JANE.

Don't be rash, Priscilla. Better wait and think it over!

JOHN.

(Turning to JANE.)

Huh! You know a lot, don't you! You git out now! I've got something private to say to Priscilla!

JANE.

(Going up to door R. 3 E.)

That's right, John! Get acquainted! *(She makes a quick laughing exit, R. 3 E.)*

PRISCILLA.

(Going over to JOHN, shyly.)

What you goin' to say, John?

JOHN.

Ain't a-goin' to say nuthin'! Goin' to kiss you! *(He takes PRISCILLA in his arms in a bear hug and kisses her.)*

CURTAIN.

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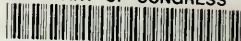
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