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Their First Quarrel



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# THEIR FIRST QUARREL

A COMEDY

BY

CHARLES NEVERS HOLMES



CHICAGO  
T. S. DENISON & COMPANY  
PUBLISHERS

PS 635  
29 H 76

# THEIR FIRST QUARREL

MR. JOHN BROWNE.....*A Husband*  
MRS. JOHN BROWNE.....*His Wife*

PLACE—*Anywhere.*

TIME—*Breakfast.*

TIME OF PLAYING—*About Fifteen Minutes.*

## COSTUMES.

MR. BROWNE—Breakfast attire.  
MRS. BROWNE—Morning gown, hat, gloves.

## PROPERTIES.

All listed in description of stage setting.

## STAGE DIRECTIONS.

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

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FEB 25 1916

20:1

# THEIR FIRST QUARREL

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SCENE: *Dining-room of the BROWNES, cosily furnished in dark; dining table in center, two chairs at opposite ends, table set with plates, knives, forks, spoons, glasses, coffee pot and cups at right end, with sugar and cream, two eggs and egg cup at left end, rolls, etc.; no water in glasses, a carafe of water at right end; no butter; sideboard with salt cellar and pepper box, dishes, napkins in drawer, in right corner; rug under table; modern hanging lamp over it; doors at R. and L.; window at back beside sideboard; telephone on small table in left corner; MR. BROWNE seated in breakfast attire in chair on left end of table; MRS. BROWNE on right, having reddish hair; as the curtain rises she is pouring coffee, very animated and happy, MR. BROWNE in same state of mind; a clock in hall behind door at right rings hour of eight; while clock is striking, MRS. BROWNE leaves her seat, goes to sideboard and returns with coffee spoons.*

MRS. B. (*pouring coffee*). Will you have two or three lumps, dearest?

MR. B. (*smilingly*). Three lumps, darling.

MRS. B. (*puts in three lumps, then adds another*). Well, I'll put in four—

MR. B. (*tenderly*). If you hadn't put in any, it would have been sweet enough, dearest.

MRS. B. Will you have some cream, lovey?

MR. B. (*more tenderly*). Yes, my darling.

MRS. B. (*carrying coffee to him, kissing him*). Oh, isn't it beautiful to love and—be loved!

MR. B. (*gazing affectionately up at her*). And some people say that marriage is a failure.

MRS. B. (*softly*). They're just envious. (*She returns to her seat.*)

MR. B. Do you think it possible we could ever quarrel?

MRS. B. (*quickly*). Why, lovey, what an awful idea!

MR. B. Still they do say—

MRS. B. (*positively*). Well, of course some folks might quarrel—some that are not *really* in' love—but we—*never!*

MR. B. (*beginning to open his eggs*). No; it would not be possible—whew, this egg is hot!—for us to quarrel. (*He drops the egg on the tablecloth.*) There, see, dear, what a mess I have made.

MRS. B. (*rather quickly*). It's a brand new tablecloth, too. No matter, darling; it can't be helped. No, I can't even imagine *our* quarreling—can you, sweetheart?

MR. B. (*carefully opening the other egg*). Impossible, my dearest one!

MRS. B. (*suddenly*). Oh, if I haven't forgotten the salt.

MR. B. (*gently*). And my napkin, dear.

MRS. B. (*rising hastily from seat, going to sideboard*). One thing at a time, darling, please. (*Returning with the salt and napkin, which she places near him, kissing him again.*) Oh, isn't it beau-tiful to love and—be loved!

MR. B. (*tenderly*). It certainly is, my darling. But where is the pepper?

MRS. B. (*rather quickly*). If you will give me a chance I'll get you the pepper, dear. (*She hustles back to sideboard and brings him the pepper. Returns to her seat.*)

MR. B. (*energetically pounding on the top of the salt cellar*). Confound!—excuse me, darling, but this salt cellar is “n. g.”

MRS. B. (*quietly*). You should not be so impatient, John.

MR. B. (*dropping the salt cellar and using the pepper box*). Well! this is out of order, too.

MRS. B. (*still more quietly*). You needn't be so peevish about it, John.

MR. B. (*removing the cover from the pepper box*). Just as I thought—no pepper in it!

MRS. B. (*quietly*). You shouldn't be so easily disturbed over trifles. I'm sure I never am.

MR. B. (*removing the cover from the salt cellar*). Just as I thought—there's no salt in this salt cellar!

MRS. B. (*with some dignity*). I don't see where I'm to

blame. You promised to bring both salt and pepper when you came home last night and you forgot all about them.

MR. B. (*calmly*). But I didn't forget to put butter on the breakfast table this morning, my dear.

MRS. B. (*with more dignity*). As I remember, you also promised to bring home some butter, John. I don't see why you are so forgetful. Mrs. Smith's husband *never* forgets when she tells him to bring something home.

MR. B. (*with some positiveness*). I do not recollect, Edith, that you asked me to bring any butter.

MRS. B. (*somewhat sharply*). I *certainly* did! And I repeated it, too, just as you were leaving the house.

MR. B. (*calmly*). Well, if you say so, I shall not dispute your word, although, of course, you may be mistaken.

MRS. B. (*still more sharply*). I am not mistaken, Mr. Browne. You know that you are in the wrong and that I am in the right, and you won't admit it. (*Telephone rings and MR. BROWNE answers it*).

MR. B. (*crossly*). What's that? Is Mrs. Smith in? Say, you've got the wrong number! (*He abruptly hangs up the receiver*.) Don't see why people can't use their eyes when they look up a number! (*He picks up his glass and finds it contains no water. Politely*.) If it is not too much trouble, I should like some water. I certainly did not forget to bring home water!

MRS. B. (*rising with carafe, coming around to him and filling his glass*). Now, John, you are trying to make a quarrel. You know I am not at all quick tempered; but, of course, there are limits even to my patience.

MR. B. (*reluctingly*). Well, dear, perhaps I have been a little hasty; but it would be impossible for us to quarrel—quite impossible!

MRS. B. (*softly*). No, we could never really quarrel—never!

MR. B. (*positively*). It is unthinkable, my love. (*He glances at his watch*.) Well, it's time for me to go. If I don't catch the next train I shall miss a very important engagement. (*Reaches for the glass to drink, somehow he overturns it upon the table*.)

MRS. B. (*a little sharply*). Dear, that's very stupid of you! Between that egg and the water what a mess you have made!

MR. B. (*excusingly*). But, darling, you put the glass on the wrong side—

MRS. B. (*quickly*). If you had not been so—clumsy it wouldn't have happened.

MR. B. (*nervously grasping the seat of the chair toward the curtain*). You could as easily have placed it on the right side as on the wrong side, my love.

MRS. B. (*more quickly*). If you hadn't been so careless it would not have tipped over. Mrs. Smith says her husband never spills anything upon the table.

MR. B. (*less nervously, still grasping the seat of the chair*). Well, my sister never—

MRS. B. (*sharply*). I don't care to hear about what your sister does, Mr. Browne.

MR. B. (*with a look of great disgust, suddenly withdrawing his hand from under the seat of his chair*). There's some gum stuck under this chair. You know I don't like you to chew gum, and here is some under my chair.

MRS. B. (*still more sharply*). I shall chew what I choose, Mr. Browne! I want you to understand *that!* And let me tell you your sister put that gum there when she was calling yesterday.

MR. B. (*a little awed, protestingly*). Now, Edith, that is not so. Jane rarely ever chews gum and certainly she never deposits it under chairs—she had a better bringing up than that.

MRS. B. (*very sharply*). Do you mean that you do not believe what I tell you?

MR. B. (*nervously*). No, my dear—but Jane never put it there.

MRS. B. (*very sharply*). She did, too! She was chewing gum all the afternoon. I thought she would stay forever.

MR. B. (*less nervously*). And weren't you chewing gum, also?



MRS. B. (*suddenly calm*). I was—some that she gave me.

MR. B. (*quietly*). But because she was, as you say, chewing gum somewhere in the house is no proof that she placed that gum under this particular chair.

MRS. B. (*positively*). We were in this very room and she sat in that very chair.

MR. B. (*doubtfully*). Are you *sure*, dear.

MRS. B. (*rising from her seat slowly*). How dare you doubt my word!

MR. B. (*producing a cigar, rising from his seat, going to sideboard for match*). I don't—only—(*he lights match*).

MRS. B. (*very quietly*). *Well?*

MR. B. (*lighting the cigar*). You—might—be—mistaken.

MRS. B. (*very positively*). I am not mistaken. She sat in *that* chair!

MR. B. (*resignedly*). Yes, I suppose so. (*Briskly, looking at his watch.*) Gracious! Only three minutes to catch the local. (*Starts energetically toward the door on right.*)

MRS. B. (*firmly standing between MR. BROWNE and the door*). Before you go, Mr. Browne, I want you to answer this—do you or do you not doubt my word that your sister sat in that chair?

MR. B. (*restlessly*). Yes, I guess she did.

MRS. B. (*very sharply*). Guess! There's no guess about it! And now, do you or do you not doubt my word that I didn't put that gum under the chair?

MR. B. (*more restlessly*). I didn't say that *you* put it there. What I did say was that I found some gum under the chair and I didn't like you to chew gum.

MRS. B. (*obstinately*). Well, that amounts to the same thing. You don't answer me—do you or don't you say that I placed the gum there?

MR. B. (*evasively*). But some one put it there.

MRS. B. (*firmly*). That isn't what I asked—*answer me!*

MR. B. (*just as firmly*). I shall not. (*Looking at his watch.*) Jiminy! Only two minutes to catch that train. (*He starts as though he were going to rush from room.*)

MRS. B. (*still standing between MR. BROWNE and the door*). You *shall!* Did or did I not put the gum there?

THEIR FIRST QUARREL.

MR. B. (*quietly*). Edith, you are losing your temper.

MRS. B. (*angrily*). I'm not! I never was calmer in all my life.

MR. B. (*more quietly*). You're getting into a tantrum.

MRS. B. (*more angrily*). I am not! Don't you say that again!

MR. B. (*very firmly*). Yes, you are—a tantrum—a common, vulgar tantrum. My sister—

MRS. B. (*furiously*). Don't you mention that disagreeable old hen to me!

MR. B. (*sternly*). Edith, I forbid you to speak of my sister in that way.

MRS. B. (*just as furiously*). I'll say just what I please!

MR. B. (*very firmly and sternly*). You will *not*! Remember you are my wife and that this is *my* house.

MRS. B. (*utterly beside herself*). You—brute!

MR. B. (*quietly*). And you know that you promised to obey me. (MRS. B. goes into violent hysterics. She gives a scream, grabs the water carafe and dashes it to floor in full view of audience.)

MRS. B. (*wildly*). You—human fiend! I'm done with you. I'm going home to mother! (She rushes past MR. BROWNE, upsetting the chair on L. and exits furiously by door on L. MR. BROWNE stands a moment as though stumped. Then he walks slowly toward the door on left. Mechanically he picks up the fallen chair, then he turns it over to take a look at the gum which is stuck under the seat. Suddenly he starts, gasps for breath and rubs his fingers over the seat's bottom. Then he gasps again.)

MR. B. (*putting the chair down and sitting down weakly in it*). Great Scott!

MRS. B. enters from door on L.; hat put on hastily, one glove on hand, a suitcase in other hand.

MRS. B. (*tragically*). Mr. Browne, I shall now leave your bed and board—forever. Farewell. (She starts toward door at R.)

MR. B. (*frantically leaping to his feet and getting between her and the door on R.*). Now, Edith, darling—

MRS. B. (*coldly*). It is too late—stand out of my way, sir.

MR. B. (*beseechingly*). Dearest, won't you forgive me? I have made an awful mistake.

MRS. B. (*putting down her suitcase*). Yes, indeed, a terrible mistake.

MR. B. (*suddenly going to the left and returning with the chair from which he had just arisen*). Darling, see here. (*He turns the chair upside down and points to the bottom of its seat.*) See the dreadful mistake I made. There is no gum there at *all!* It is only a tiny piece of wood glued on under the seat.

MRS. B. (*after examining the chair's seat, scornfully*). You're a—ninny, John Browne!

MR. B. (*humbly*). Yes, dear.

MRS. B. (*tearfully, sitting down at the table in chair on right*). How *could* you say the cruel things to me that you did?

MR. B. (*still more humbly*). I shall never forgive myself, darling. (*He takes the chair back to the other end of the table and sits down.*)

MRS. B. (*with hat still on, drawing off her one glove, beginning to pour out a cup of coffee*). You surely do need a guardian. Will you have two or three lumps, John?

MR. B. (*softly*). Three lumps, darling.

MRS. B. (*putting in three lumps, adding another*). Well, I'll put in four.

MR. B. (*tenderly*). If you hadn't put in any it would have been sweet enough, dearest.

MRS. B. (*softly*). Will you have some cream, dearie?

MR. B. (*more tenderly*). Yes, my darling.

MRS. B. (*carrying coffee to him, kissing him*). Oh, isn't it beautiful to love and—be loved!

MR. B. (*gazing affectionately up at her*). And some people say that marriage is a failure.

MRS. B. (*kissing him again*). They are just envious.

CURTAIN.

# The Deacon Entangled

By HARRY OSBORNE.

Price, 25 Cents

Comedy in 3 acts; 6 males, 4 females. Time, 2 hours. Scene: 1 interior. **Characters:** Deacon Penrose, a member in good standing. Calvin, his nephew. Rev. Sopher, a supporter of foreign missions. Harry Baxter, a sporting writer. Rafferty, a policeman. A Plain Clothes Man. Mrs. Penrose. Ruth, her daughter. George, Rev. Sopher's daughter. Katy, a maid.

## SYNOPSIS.

Act I.—In which the Deacon finds himself in a tight corner. Dr. Sopher, who can coax money out of a wooden Indian. A thousand dollars for the new pipe organ. Cal arrives. A clean-up-clouter instead of a ministerial prospect. "Did I forget my necktie and button my collar in the back?" The Deacon spends a night out. "We won't go home until morning."

Act II.—The raid on the gambling joint. "Why didn't you jump when I told you." On bail. "A thousand dollars to the Doc or you lose your job as Deacon; a thousand to the judge or six months." A sporting chance. Ready for the game. A donation to Foreign Missions and a double barreled courtship. The elopement. The arrest. "Come on Cal, I'll see you through."

Act III.—The big game. Tied in the Tenth. Cal goes to the box. A Pinch Hitter. "Over the scoreboard." On the Deacon's trail—the Horse pistol—pay the fine or go to jail. A hair line finish. "Hold on, Copper." "Here's your thousand and here's your girl. Look happy and have your picture taken." A new son-in-law. "Bother Boarding School." The Deacon smiles.

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# A Trial of Hearts

By LINDSEY BARBEE.

Price, 25 Cents

College comedy in 4 acts; 6 males, 18 females. Time, 2¼ hours. **Scenes:** 3 interiors, 1 exterior. **Characters:** Dudley Van Antwerp, a wealthy college man. Philip, his best friend. Roger, Teddy, Jack and Jerry, fraternity men. Mrs. Van Antwerp, of great importance. Honor, Dudley's wife. Fourteen lively sorority girls. A chaperone and a maid.

## SYNOPSIS.

Act I.—Gretchen and Jerry play Romeo and Juliet. Ted pleads the cause of Kappa Psi. Jack argues for Delta Chi. Dudley introduces Honor to his mother. Virginia learns of Dudley's marriage. "I want to go home—oh, I want to go home!"

Act II.—The football enthusiasts bring news of Barbara. Gretchen and Jerry study Latin and argue fraternity. Honor finds it all a little strange. Dudley tells Virginia his love story. "Oh, Dudley, you hurt me!" "There's nothing left for me but to go away!"

Act III.—"I wonder if people ever get too busy to care!" Mrs. Van Antwerp opens fire and Honor stands her ground. "I mean to stay!" "I wish I had no heart—it aches so!" "Dear little girl, it is good-bye." Honor hears Dudley declare his love for Virginia. "Oh, Dad-Dad—your little girl is coming home!"

Act IV.—Gretchen and Jerry "grow up." The Seniors toast the past, the present and the future. Mrs. Van Antwerp reproaches herself. "Here comes the bride." The Kappa Psis and the Delta Chi holds reunions. "Honor, is it really you?" "If you want me, I am here."

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T. S. DENISON & COMPANY, Publishers  
154 W. Randolph Street, CHICAGO

# The Thread of Destiny

By LINDSEY BARBEE.

Price, 25 Cents

Comedy-drama of the Civil War in 3 acts; 9 males, 16 females. Time, 2½ hours. Scenes: 1 interior, 2 exteriors. Characters: Peyton Bailey, of the U. S. army. Beverly Montgomery, a confederate scout. Colonel Montgomery, a gentleman of the old school. Tom Randolph, a Southern gallant. John Morton, of the North. Ralph, who did not go to war. George and Uncle Billy, slaves. A Union Scout. Virginia, the toast of the country. Betty, the "Little Colonel." Edith, a northern cousin. Louise, a spy. Eight charming southern girls. Mrs. Montgomery. Miss Melissy, of inquisitive nature. Fanny and Mammy, slaves.

## SYNOPSIS.

Act I.—Betty breaks a looking glass. Edith calms her fears and tells her "the signs of the times." "Virginia has seceded." Beverly enlists. "A Virginia woman does not even recognize an acquaintance among the enemies of Virginia."

Act II.—"I don' wan' no tarnished silber linin' to my cloud." "There are some things more precious than money, than jewels." "Death cannot conquer love—nor eternity." "Some day there will be no North, no South, but the Union." The Union scout falls a prey to Edith's fascinations and her cleverness wins the coveted dispatch. Virginia opens the door—to Peyton. Beverly is discovered. Friendship proves stronger than duty.

Act III.—Three years work a great change. Peyton pleads in vain. George and Fanny "take de road to de lan' of happiness." "In our little circle the stars and bars are floating high." Virginia gives Peyton another rose and together they trace against the background of blue and gray "the golden thread of destiny."

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# Shadows

By MARY MONCURE PARKER.

Price, 15 Cents

Play of the South today and a dream of the past in 1 act; an interior scene; 3 males, 4 females. Time, 35 minutes. Characters: Prologue and the Awakening: Robert Ashton, Virginia's sweetheart. Aunt Geranium, an old colored mammy. Virginia Lee, a southern maid. The Dream: Gordon Sanford, a soldier in love with Alice. Harold Hale, the successful rival. Mrs. Horace Fairfax, a stern mother of long ago. Alice Fairfax, her dutiful daughter.

## STORY OF THE PLAY.

Virginia Lee's mother insists upon her marriage with a rich suitor, who has agreed to restore their impoverished estate. Virginia has a sweetheart of her childhood days and hesitates in making a choice, but finally decides upon wealth instead of love. An old colored mammy, who has spent her life in the Lee household, understands the situation and tells Virginia of a similar episode in the life of Virginia's grandmother. Virginia in pondering over the incident and grieving over her own troubles, falls asleep. She dreams of the story just told and the dream folks appear and play their parts. Virginia awakens, the shadows flee and she comes to her senses and her lover.

The old colored mammy says: "Dis heah ole worl's jes' full of shadders. Fokes comes an' dey goes, ripens and drops like the fruit on de tree. Ole Mars is gone, old Mistis gone. De substance melts and fades away. Ain't nothing left but shadders."

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T. S. DENISON & COMPANY, Publishers  
154 W. Randolph Street, CHICAGO

# By Way of the Secret Passage

By LINDSEY BARBEE.

Price 25 Cents

Comedy-drama in 3 acts; 1 male, 11 females. The character of John Harvey can easily be assumed by a girl if it is not desirable to have a man in the cast. Time, 1¾ hours. Scene: 1 interior. Characters: Mrs. Sherman, the hostess. Betty Drew, her niece. Ruth, Alice and Rita, guests. Hannah, a maid. Madame Drew, of revolutionary days. Annette, Caroline and Elizabeth, her daughters. Wenonah, an Indian maid. John Harvey, of the Patriot army.

## SYNOPSIS.

Act I.—Betty's engagement dance on Christmas night. The portrait of Mrs. Elizabeth Drew. Betty's great-great-grandmother. The story of Mistress Elizabeth's romantic career. Ghosts of the happy pair haunt the room each Christmas night. Rita falls asleep in a chair and dreams a dream.

Act II.—Scene I—The dream of long ago. John Harvey gains an interview with his lady love. The secret mission is made known to Mistress Elizabeth and the marked chart is put into her hands. Shots, pursuit and the secret passage. Scene II—Where is Elizabeth? The mysterious tapping. Elizabeth makes a dramatic entrance and brings astounding news.

Act III.—Rita awakes. Betty's puzzling absence is discussed. Another mysterious tapping. "He's waiting for me—at the end of the secret passage, the same as in the long, long ago!"

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# Abbu San of Old Japan

By WALTER BEN HARE.

Price 25 Cents

Comedy-drama in 2 acts; 15 females. Time, about 2 hours. Scene: A simple interior. Characters: Abbu San, daughter of his majesty. Duchess Fuji-no. Lady Yu-giri, Mist of the Evening. O Matsuka San and O Kiku San, maids of honor. Ohano, wife of the bandit chief. Natsu-no, hostess of the inn "Million Welcomes." Okuku, sister of the Ox, a porter at the inn. Umi, Sada and Yasa, peasant maids. Henrietta Dash, an American newswriter. Aunt Paradise, a black mammy. Madam Masago, manager of the players. Ono, her maid of all work.

An absolute novelty in play construction, bristling with incidents and sparkling with comedy. The play is presented after the fashion of "The Yellow Jacket," the stage hands changing scenery in full view of the audience and the manager explaining the action and introducing the different characters from her seat at the side. The star part is particularly suited to the temperament of a pretty little ingenue, the characters of Fuji-no and Mist of the Evening call for heavy and effective dramatic work and old Aunt Paradise who longs for "ole Virginny" is a comedy creation of especial note. Dances and song numbers from Mikado are called for by the text but these may be given or not at the pleasure of the manager. A picturesque and very effective dramatic entertainment with a distinct plot that will interest and amuse any audience. Suitable for schools, colleges, clubs or churches.

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