

PRICE TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

A HURRICANE WOOING

A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

BY

Wm. AND JOSEPHINE GILES

DICK & FITZGERALD

PUBLISHERS

18 Ann Street, New York

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CASE OF HERR BAR ROOMSKI. Mock Trial; 2 hours....	28
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RIDING THE GOAT. Burlesque Initiation; 1 Scene; 1½ hours.....	24

DICK & FITZGERALD, Publishers, 18 Ann Street, N. Y.

A HURRICANE WOOING

A Comedy in Three Acts

By WILLIAM AND JOSEPHINE GILES

Authors of UNCLE SI'S PREDICAMENT, HOOSIER SCHOOL, BILL JONES
BACHELOR'S ELOPEMENT, RUBE'S FAMILY, ADVICE WANTED, etc.

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no. 1

A HURRICANE WOOING.

CHARACTERS.

JACK VERNON.....	<i>The artist</i>
SILAS B. SKINNER.....	<i>The cousin</i>
MR. JOHNSON.....	<i>The lawyer</i>
FREDDY	<i>The janitor</i>
MRS. ROSE DEAN.....	<i>The widow</i>
MAE SMITH.....	<i>The society girl</i>
INEZ GRAY.....	<i>The stenographer</i>

TIME.—*The present.*

LOCALITY.—*Any Small City.*

TIME OF PLAYING.—*One and one-half hours.*

SYNOPSIS.

JACK in want of funds. The lawyer arrives. Uncle's will is found. JACK to receive the fortune, providing he is married previous to reaching his twenty-eighth birthday anniversary, which occurs within fourteen hours. JACK wild, but determined to win, if possible. Ways and means discussed with INEZ. JACK makes two marriage proposals. Time is asked for. The rivals meet, discuss JACK'S action and agree to refuse him, but upon learning of the fortune, secretly determine to accept him. JACK'S third proposal. INEZ takes a hand, turns back the clock and finally satisfactorily solves all difficulties.

COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS.

JACK VERNON.—Age, twenty-eight. ACTS I and II, business suit. ACT III, evening clothes.

SILAS SKINNER.—Age, forty-five. ACTS I and II, traveling suit. ACT III, evening clothes, carries cane.

A Hurricane Wooing.

MR. JOHNSON.—Age, forty. ACTS I and II, business suit; also wears glasses. ACT III, evening clothes.

FREDDY.—Age, twenty. ACTS I and II, working clothes. ACT III, butler's uniform.

MRS. DEAN.—Age, thirty. ACTS I and II, street costume. ACT III, evening dress.

MAE SMITH.—Age, twenty. ACTS I and II, stylish street costume. ACT III, evening dress.

INEZ.—Age, twenty. ACTS I and II, neat business dress. ACT III, light evening dress.

INCIDENTAL PROPERTIES.

Cigarettes, watch and two ladies' rings for JACK. Handkerchief, long envelope containing documents, and watch for JOHNSON. Gentleman's watch for INEZ. Decorations, newspaper and marriage license for FREDDY. Photos, letters, etc., on typewriter stand.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

As seen by a performer on the stage facing the audience, R. means right hand; L., left hand; C., center of stage; C. D., door at center of rear flat; R. D., door at right; L. D., door at left. UP means toward back of stage; DOWN, toward footlights.

A HURRICANE WOOING.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*A studio. Morning, May 3rd. Doors R. and L., and c. of rear flat. Desk UP R. Stand with typewriter R. Stand with photos DOWN L. Cameras UP L. Mirror R. of C. D. Phone on desk. Chairs at desk and typewriter stand. Settee DOWN L. Screen UP L. Letters on typewriter stand. Room decorated with photos. Hat and coat for INEZ on coat rack or nail. DISCOVERED INEZ working at typewriter.*

ENTER JACK C. D.

JACK. Say, Inez, make out some bills and send them out for collection at once.

INEZ. A lot of good that will do. (*Takes letters from stand and goes toward c. d.*)

JACK. Anything on for this afternoon?

INEZ. No, but you have to develop and paint; you know there's lots of work for you in the dark room, and then we're to get ready for that old party.

JACK. The party! Good Lord, is that to-night?

INEZ. Yes, you know it is! The idea!

JACK (*scratching his head*). Heavens, I'd forgotten all about it.

INEZ. Of course you have, but I haven't; I've attended to everything. I don't see how you can afford it, Mr. Vernon, really I don't! It'll cost an awful lot.

JACK. It's business, Inez, keep the women curious. Makes them talk! Oh well, we'll get along somehow, run along now. I suppose I'll have to get ready. Good Lord! how I dread it! Inez, I honestly believe a photographer knows more of the actual truth about women than a doctor or a priest!

INEZ. Mr. Vernon, I want to tell you something, a man has to be more than all three of those things together to understand women. He's got to be—well—he's got to be a woman.

[EXIT C. D.

JACK (*goes to c. d., looks after her*). Clever girl, Inez. (*Goes DOWN R.*) If it wasn't for her I don't know what would become of me.

ENTER INEZ C. D.

INEZ. There's a desperate old flirt out there to see you, Mr. Vernon, his name is Mr. Johnson.

JACK. Mr. Johnson? (*Scratching his head*) By Jove! Uncle John's lawyer!

INEZ. Oh, oh, the will!

JACK. By Jove, I'll bet they found it!

INEZ. Oh, I hope you get a million, Mr. Vernon, won't it be just screeching?

JACK. For heaven's sake, Inez, don't expect anything, it's more likely that I'm disinherited.

INEZ. Oh, it can't be. You're going to have a diamond automobile and eat solid gold oysters from now on. I know it! I know it! I know it!

JACK (*shakes his head*). You never saw Uncle John! Why, Inez, he wore side whiskers! Well, let's have him in. (EXIT INEZ C. D. JACK *lights a cigarette, sits, gets up again, clenches his hands, adjusts tie, throws cigarette away, stands awaiting JOHNSON*)

ENTER INEZ and JOHNSON C. D. JOHNSON *smiling at INEZ.*

JACK (*advances to meet JOHNSON*). How do you do, Mr. Johnson? (*Shakes hands*) I hope you are well.

[EXIT INEZ C. D.

JOHNSON. Oh yes, quite well, Mr. Vernon, thank you.

JACK (*places a chair for JOHNSON*). Be seated. Is there anything I can do for you?

JOHNSON. No, thank you, I have some news for you, Mr. Vernon. Unluckily I could not get you on the 'phone.

JACK (*impatently*). No, I suppose I wasn't up.

JOHNSON (*removes his glasses and cleans them on his handkerchief*). Fine day, isn't it?

JACK. Oh yes, I suppose so, I haven't looked out yet. But by the way, you say you have some news for me?

JOHNSON. Yes. (*Looking around*) Rather an attractive young lady you have here! (*Jerking his thumb backwards towards C. D.*)

JACK. Oh, she's all right. I suppose you came about uncle's will?

JOHNSON. Yes, Mr. Vernon, just a moment, please— (*Searching pockets, takes out long envelope*) You see the will has been found; it was discovered this morning at eight-thirty; you see, I've been prompt.

JACK. Well—what—er—er, where did you find it?

JOHNSON. Ah, most curious. It was found in your uncle's library, in fact between the leaves of his own book—I mean, the one he wrote himself— "Race suicide and how to prevent it" I believe he called it, I have not yet had the pleasure of reading it. (*Clearing his throat*)

JACK. Nor anyone else, I fancy.

JOHNSON. It's a curious document. I think I shall ask you to prepare yourself for a shock.

JACK. Oh, I'm disinherited.

JOHNSON. No, not quite. I understand you will be twenty-eight the fourth of May, am I correct?

JACK. Yes, to-morrow, why?

JOHNSON. I'm very sorry to hear it.

JACK. I'm sorry myself, I hate to grow old; but I don't see why—you don't mean—

JOHNSON (*holds up hand to him*). Wait; let me read this clause: (*INEZ appears at C. D. Listens as JOHNSON reads will*)

"The residue of my estate I leave to my nephew, Jack Vernon, on condition that he is married before he reaches the age of twenty-eight years. If at the beginning of his twenty-eighth birthday he is still unmarried, this residue shall become the property of my cousin, Silas B. Skinner, as a testimony to our youthful friendship."

JACK (*grabs the paper*). How much will the old fool get?

JOHNSON. Four million, possibly four and a half.

JACK. And I lose all that just because I'm a single man?

JOHNSON. Your uncle held strong views, he firmly believed in marriage.

JACK. Yes, the old fraud. Why the devil didn't he get married himself?

JOHNSON. An unfortunate love affair, I understand. I think had you known his peculiar theories—

JACK. Acted accordingly? Married on the chance of becoming his heir? Bright idea. But it's too late now.

JOHNSON. It is as you say, too late; but legally, I must remind you that the time has not yet expired. You have until midnight.

JACK (*looks at his watch*). Yes, I have fourteen hours to find a wife. Pretty quick work, eh? No, I'm out of it.

JOHNSON. Much has been done in fourteen hours.

JACK. You can't put a thing like marriage through on a time schedule, can you?

JOHNSON (*rising*). I confess I don't know, it has never occurred to me to contemplate marriage. (*Laying papers on stand*) I will leave this paper for you to inspect at your leisure. [EXIT INEZ C. D.] You may not be aware that I'm Justice of the Peace. I would be quite willing to accommodate you should you find a bride. (*Goes to c. d., turns to JACK*) I could perform a ceremony at half price!

JACK. Oh, no use. (*Rising*) But I say, Mr. Johnson, why not come around to-night and we'll have a wake over my lost inheritance. I'm giving a small party, you know.

JOHNSON. Well, well! It might remind me of old times. (*Takes JACK's hand*) Thank you, Mr. Vernon, I shall come; but don't forget that I'm a Justice of the Peace. (*Pokes JACK in ribs. EXIT C. D. JACK throws himself on settee*)

ENTER INEZ R. D.

JACK. Well, Inez, it's all up; it's back to the farm for mine. Isn't that my luck?

INEZ. I couldn't quite hear, what was it?

JACK. Four and a half million gone to the devil.

INEZ. You don't mean that you are going to let that old Silas B. Skinner get the money?

JACK. How can I help it, confound him! Four millions, Inez, think of it! Yes, it's all up with me now. Fill up the plate holder, Inez, little more light on the forehead—now look pleasant, wink all you please. Yes, Ma'am, fifty dollars a dozen. God! (*INEZ stares at him*) Well, what's the matter? can't you speak?

INEZ. Why don't you go ahead and get the money, Mr. Vernon?

JACK. Get the money, how?

INEZ. Get married!

JACK. Get married! What, in fourteen hours?

INEZ. Yes, I don't see why not.

JACK. Who in the world would have me?

INEZ. Oh, I'm sure there's some nice girl who'd be proud to marry you.

JACK. Where, for heaven's sake?

INEZ. Oh, there must be some one, I'm sure there is.

JACK. Well, I don't know how I'm to find her, and I've got darn little time to look. Do you realize that I only have till midnight, and do you imagine that any woman would want to be married in that way?

INEZ. Oh, when you're in love, it doesn't matter how soon—

JACK. A hurricane wooing, eh? By Jove, I wonder—say, do you think I could get away with it?

INEZ. Oh, you could get away with anything, Mr. Vernon. I'm certain you could.

JACK. Do you know of any woman who would have me that quickly?

INEZ (*starts to speak, hesitates*). I—I—think—so—

JACK. I'll try it. Who is she?

INEZ (*almost breaking down*). Why—why, you know, Mr. Vernon, don't you? Why, you must know! It's some one—some one you see every day—she—

JACK (*pats INEZ on the shoulder*). Why, how the deuce did you know, Inez? It's Mrs. Dean.

INEZ (*staggars back*). Why—why—

JACK (*crosses stage. Takes out watch*). Ten o'clock, Mrs. Dean will be here at any minute. (*Laughs*) Oh, this is too outrageous. (*Laughs loudly*)

INEZ (*starts*). Why, what's the matter, Mr. Vernon?

JACK (*shouting*). I've got it!

INEZ. Got what?

JACK. We'll have the wedding to-night. The guests are invited, how's that?

INEZ. Oh, but will she be willing to do it in a hurry like that?

JACK. Confound it, wasn't it your own idea?

INEZ (*goes to him*). Oh, Mr. Vernon, I'll just have to tell you, I can't bear it—oh, you aren't going to propose to her, don't, please don't.

JACK. Well, what's the matter now, I thought you wanted me to.

INEZ. Oh, but I don't now.

JACK. Don't you want me to get the money, four million real money?

INEZ. Oh, Mr. Vernon, you'll be very unhappy.

JACK. With four million, Inez, with a private yacht—a country house—automobiles, I guess not.

INEZ. But she paints, Mr. Vernon, she paints her face like a clown.

JACK (*laughs*). Well, I'll reform her after we are married.

INEZ. Oh, Mr. Vernon, why—why—

JACK. What is it, want to be bridesmaid, or what?

INEZ. Oh—oh—(*Crosses R.*) nothing. (*Door bell rings*) Here she is now. (*MRS. DEAN appears in C. D. INEZ gives JACK a beseeching look and EXITS R. D.*)

ENTER MRS. DEAN C. D.

MRS. DEAN (*going toward JACK*). Good morning, Jack!

JACK (*shakes hands*). Why, good morning, Mrs. Dean; fine morning.

MRS. DEAN. You seem a bit blue, Mr. Vernon, what's the matter?

JACK (*bus., puts camera into position*). Oh, nothing.

MRS. DEAN. Why, you're not a bit like yourself. What in the world have you on your mind, you wonderful man? What is worrying you? I know what ought to be the trouble—neglecting me for so long—

JACK (*aside*). Ouch!

MRS. DEAN. But I don't suppose you have thought of me once since you saw me last.

JACK. Nonsense, it's just you that I am worrying about.

MRS. DEAN (*delighted*). About me, never! Oh, I suppose you tell that to every woman you know. You know altogether too many women to bother about poor me.

JACK (*takes her hand*). You must know what I've been thinking, you must have seen it in my eyes.

MRS. DEAN. Why, your eyes look all right, Jack.

JACK. I wish I could see some of it in your eyes, Rose.

MRS. DEAN. What in the world—see what?

JACK. Rose, I can't stand it. I want you! Surely you know what I mean, I can't get you out of my mind—I—I—love you!

MRS. DEAN. Mr. Vernon! (*Goes closer to JACK*)

JACK. Then you like me a little?

MRS. DEAN. You poor boy, of course you know I like you, but I never had any idea of getting married again.

JACK (*takes her hand*). Then you will say yes—and make me the happiest man in the world—the richest man in the—

MRS. DEAN (*starts*). Richest?

JACK. Richest—yes, I mean in having your love.

MRS. DEAN. Do you really love me so much?

JACK. Love you? I simply can't wait—I want to marry you at once, to-day.

MRS. DEAN. Oh, that's impossible, I must have time.

JACK (*drops in chair*). Time?

MRS. DEAN. Yes, silly, give me a week.

JACK. Good Lord, a week? I can't wait, I swear I'll blow my brains out.

MRS. DEAN. Oh, mercy, Jack!

JACK (*takes her hand*). See here, Rose, let me know to-night, you are coming to my party?

MRS. DEAN. Yes, I am.

JACK. Will you give me your answer then?

MRS. DEAN. Well then, all right, to-night. (JACK *attempts to kiss her*)

ENTER INEZ R. D., *upsetting chair*. JACK and MRS. DEAN *jump*.

INEZ. Oh, I beg your pardon, I didn't know any one was in here. [EXIT R. D.]

JACK. Then you promise to-night?

MRS. DEAN (*smiling*). Yes, I promise. (EXIT C. D. JACK *stands with hands in pockets staring after her*)

ENTER INEZ R. D.

INEZ. What did she say? (JACK *still staring after MRS. DEAN*) What did she say, Mr. Vernon?

JACK (*turns slowly and gazes at INEZ*). Time.

INEZ. Is that all?

JACK. Yes, the only thing I haven't got! Lord, I feel as if I'd done a week's washing! Say, Inez, it takes nerve to propose, did you know that, and still she might refuse.

INEZ. Oh! Then you think she may refuse?

JACK. There's a good even chance of it. Just think of it being in that woman's power to cost me four and a half millions.

INEZ. Don't let her, surely there's some way—a better way—

JACK. A better way?

INEZ. Oh, you ought to have some one who really cares for you—who really loves you. Mrs. Dean is too old for you. Oh, Mr. Vernon— (*MAE appears in c. d., smiling*)

MAE. May I come in?

JACK (*starts towards c. d.*). Oh—Miss Smith! Good morning! Would you mind waiting just a minute?

MAE. Surely.

[EXIT c. d.]

JACK (*taking INEZ's hands*). Yes, Inez, you are right. I don't believe I want Mrs. Dean. Damn it all, I want a young woman, don't I? Oh, Inez, I can see it all now, why—why—

INEZ. Oh, Mr. Vernon—you don't mean—

JACK. Yes, Inez. (*Points to c. d.*) There's the girl I want, right in there!

INEZ (*staggers towards d. r.*). Oh, oh, no!

JACK. Why not?

INEZ. Why—why—what if Mrs. Dean should say yes?

[EXIT R. D.]

JACK (*drops into a chair with a hopeless look*). I never thought of that.

ENTER MAE C. D.

MAE. Hello, Jack! Got those proofs ready, old man, darn you, if you haven't.

JACK. I'm awfully sorry, Mae, but I haven't had quite time.

MAE. Jack Vernon, if you didn't happen to be the best photographer in town, I'd never have anything more to do with you.

JACK. Oh, come now, Mae! They'll be ready this afternoon, you see I haven't been at all myself.

MAE. Why, Jack, what's the matter? you do look pale.

JACK. Well, you see I've been worried—that is, I mean—well you know, Mae, I'm very fond of you, and—

MAE. Really?

JACK. Yes, I'd hardly dare tell you how much.

MAE. Oh do, I'm feeling awfully stodgy this morning; it might wake me up.

JACK (*goes to her*). How would you like it if you thought I had remained awake all last night thinking about you—yes, and the night before, and all last week?

MAE. Fine! I feel better already. Did you though?

JACK. Yes, I'm in a bad way about you, Mae.

MAE (*crosses L., whistling*). Jack, you really ought to get something for yourself.

JACK. All right, Mae, you know the cause, you ought to know the cure.

MAE. Well, if that's the case I think I'd better be going.

JACK (*takes her hand*). No, sir! not till I settle this thing. Mae, it's true I want you.

MAE. Am I to understand that you are proposing to me?

JACK. Yes, Mae. Do you think it's a joke?

MAE. Well, Jack, it strikes me you must be pretty sure of me to do it in a two-step, like this. Why, usually they crawl all over the carpet. But do you really mean it, honey?

JACK. Of course I mean it, and I want you so badly, really I do. I want you something fierce! I want you like a little kid wants ice-cream—the way a girl wants a new Easter hat—

MAE (*laughing*). Oh, Jack, you are too ridiculous!

JACK. Oh, I'm the clown with the dying baby, I laugh and joke while my heart is breaking. Lord! I'm as merry as a man with a broken leg. Can't you understand? I want you so badly that I'm making a fool of myself. Why the deuce don't you laugh?

MAE (*lays her hand on his shoulder*). Say, Jack, you are all right! Heavens, I never thought you could do it like that and get away with it.

JACK. Say, Mae, will you marry me?

MAE. No, Jack, I won't.

JACK. Mae, I say I won't take no for an answer, I've got to have you. Don't you care for me at all?

MAE (*smoothing down his hair*). Yes, oh, yes, but you can't rush a thing like this; why I should think I was being knocked down at auction. "Going, going, gone!" Why, Jack, you ought to dangle for months.

JACK. I'll be darned if I'll dangle!

MAE. Well, if you won't dangle, of course I can't make you.

JACK. See here, Mae, I must know at once.

MAE. Trying to take me by storm, eh, old chap? See here, Jack, don't be silly, give me a little time.

JACK. Time! How much time do you want?

MAE. How much do I get?

JACK. Ten minutes, but I will give you till to-night. You are coming to my party?

MAE. I suppose I'll have to, to bring my answer.

JACK. Oh, Mae, I'll be another person. We'll have a glorious time, we'll travel and we'll go——

MAE (*laying her hand on his arm*). See here, Jack, I haven't any money, you know.

JACK. Good Lord, do you think I would marry *for money*? *Never!* Why, if everything goes well, I have splendid prospects, and then I can work, you know.

MAE. You certainly are attractive this morning, Jack. I almost believe I'll say yes after all. But I must think it over, good-bye, I'll go now, Jack. I shall give my answer to-night! Fare-thee-well! (EXIT C. D., *smiling back at JACK*. JACK *gazes after MAE*)

ENTER INEZ R. D., *running*.

INEZ. Well?

JACK (*with hands in pocket, gazing after MAE. Turns to INEZ*). Time! She's going to give me her answer to-night.

INEZ (*horrified, drops into a chair and stares at him*). Well, Mr. Vernon, I've heard of men who went out looking for trouble, but you are the first one I ever knew to actually go and order it delivered at the house!

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*The same as ACT I. Afternoon of same day. DISCOVERED INEZ at desk. SILAS SKINNER appears at c. d.*

SILAS. Mr. Vernon in?

INEZ (*looking him over*). No.

ENTER SILAS C. D.

SILAS (*sits down, crosses legs*). Ain't in, eh? Who be you, his wife?

INEZ. No.

SILAS. Ain't going to marry him, eh?

INEZ. Is that any business of yours?

SILAS. Yes, considerable, as it happens. Maybe I better tell you who I be. Skinner is my name, Silas B. Skinner. Ain't never heard of me, be yeh?

INEZ. Not Mr. Vernon's cousin Silas?

SILAS (*nods*). First cousin, once removed.

INEZ (*aside*). What! The man who will get Mr. Vernon's uncle's money if Jack doesn't marry.

SILAS. What's botherin' ye, eh?

INEZ (*walks towards c. d.*). If you'll excuse me, Mr. Skinner, I've some pictures to paint.

SILAS (*beckoning her with his finger*). Hold on a minute, Miss, I want to talk to ye.

INEZ. I'm awfully busy.

SILAS. Well, so be I. This is important, I didn't come all the way from Sproutville and miss prayer meeting night, just for the fun of it. See here, is Jack Vernon married or not, that's what I want to know?

INEZ (*starts to leave*). I don't care to talk about Mr. Vernon's private affairs.

SILAS (*motions her back with his finger*). Sit down; ye needn't be afraid, I ain't goin' to hurt ye. I've got a good right to know his plans on the subject of matrimony, and I expect you know why, now don't you?

INEZ. No.

SILAS. You know more than ye are willin' to let on. Oh, I wa'n't born yesterday. Now see here—you don't want Jack Vernon to get married no more than I do. Ain't that so? And I'd give a good deal if he wouldn't be married before midnight.

INEZ. Yes, so would I!

SILAS. You bein' a woman, don't want him to marry anybody else. Well, neither do I.

INEZ. Because you'd lose a fortune, well, I don't see what we can do, he's made up his mind to marry to-night, and he's already proposed to two women.

SILAS (*springs to his feet*). Two? Jumping Jehosaphat! Not all to once?

ENTER FREDDY C. D. *Business decorating.*

INEZ. Yes, so as to be sure of at least one of them.

SILAS. Looks like we've got to get to work in a hurry. Say, I'll give you five hundred dollars if you keep him from marrying either of those two women by midnight.

INEZ. I'll take you up on that.

SILAS. Hurrah! I see Jack's finish now, by heck! I'll get out and give ye a chance. Good-bye, kiddo, ye little scamp.

[EXIT C. D., *kicking up foot.*

FREDDY. Where in the devil did that Jack-in-the-box come from?

INEZ. Did you hear what Mr. Skinner said, Freddy?

FREDDY. Yes, I heard what the old fool said, and if you want me to help you get that five hundred, I'm Freddy on the spot, why I'd do anything for you, Miss Inez, but will I go ahead and fix up the studio now?

INEZ. No, Freddy, those ladies will be here about three o'clock and it's most that time now, so we'll leave the studio till they have gone. You may go now.

FREDDY. All right, Miss Gray. [EXIT C. D.]

INEZ. Now, if those women would only come. Oh, I hear some one coming now.

ENTER MAE SMITH C. D.

MAE. Hello, Miss Gray, Jack here?

INEZ. No, Mr. Vernon has just left, won't you wait?

MAE. Those pictures of mine developed?

INEZ. No, Mr. Vernon had to work on some of his customers. I'm sorry.

MAE. Well, I should think he might finish mine first.

INEZ. Well, he has to attend to business part of the time, you know, Miss Smith.

MAE. Oh, indeed. I don't see why he bothers about his old business so much. He can well afford to take it easy.

INEZ. Oh, can he?

MAE. Well, he told me so——

INEZ. Oh, you mustn't believe everything he says, Miss Smith. You know he has to keep up appearances. It's part of the game.

ENTER MRS. DEAN C. D.

MRS. DEAN. Why, hello, Mae, you here again, why, I didn't expect to see you.

MAE (*laughs*). Nor I you.

MRS. DEAN. Oh, I've only dropped in for my proofs; Miss Gray telephoned me they were ready.

MAE. Well, that's what I came for, too.

INEZ. Yes—— (*Telephone bell rings*) Excuse me. (*Takes down the receiver*) Hello—yes, this is Inez, why, what's the matter—Oh, certainly—well, personally I hate them—Yes, that's what I prefer myself every time— Yes, a big diamond is so funny, somehow. What's that— Oh Mr. Vernon, it's awful to pawn that! Why, it was your father's, wasn't it? Well, yes I know—well, I might send it by Freddy. Yes, it's such a pretty watch. Oh, all right then, I suppose that would be safer—when will you be here?—all right, good bye! [EXIT L. D.]

MRS. DEAN. Well, Mae, I suppose I'll have to tell you, now. It is most unfortunate that Miss Gray wasn't more discreet in her conversation. But so long as she has let the cat out of the bag, I might as well inform you that the ring she was talking about to Jack is for this finger. (*Holds up her left hand, her thumb pointing to her third finger. MAE laughs*) I don't know what there is to laugh at. I don't see anything amusing in the fact that I'm going to marry Jack Vernon.

MAE (*still laughing*). Oh, don't you? Why, it's a scream. Who's next?

MRS. DEAN. Who's next?

MAE (*goes to MRS. DEAN*). Listen here, Jack Vernon proposed to me this morning, when did he propose to you?

MRS. DEAN (*stares at MAE*). Mae!

MAE. That's right.

MRS. DEAN. Well, I know what I'm going to do. I intend to tell him just what I think of him, and send him packing.

MAE. There! Now you're talking, Rose. Let's get down to business, and decide what to do. We're both in the same fix and we must hold together.

MRS. DEAN. Yes, we ought to take a stand.

MAE. And Jack ought to take a tumble. (*Smiling*) Why, he might just as well have counted us out, like playing "tag" to see who's it. (*She points to each one in turn, the last one to* MRS. DEAN) My—mother—told—me—to—take—this—one!

MRS. DEAN. No, thanks, I don't want to be it. I don't see how Jack Vernon is in any position to support a wife anyhow.

MAE. And least of all two. We'll form the Society of the Survivors of Jack Vernon's Proposals. Are we to agree to reject him to-night?

MRS. DEAN. Yes! (*Both hold up their right hands*)

ENTER JACK C. D.

MRS. DEAN. }
MAE. } Oh!

JACK (*smiling, shakes hands with both*). Why, this is an unexpected pleasure, but, ladies, is Miss Gray treating you all right?

MAE. Oh, yes.

MRS. DEAN. Oh, Mr. Vernon, do you know that you look very stunning with that tie and suit, doesn't he, Mae?

MAE. Mr. Vernon has style, all right. Lord, he could wear pink and yellow and get away with it.

JACK. Oh, for heaven's sake, ladies, spare my blushes.

MRS. DEAN. Oh, Mr. Vernon, I wish you could manage to take some photographs of yourself, couldn't you?

JACK. Oh, I don't know—perhaps with a mirror, I might.

MAE. Yes! There, just the way you are now, it would be just lovely.

MRS. DEAN. I'm afraid, Mr. Vernon, would have to print a good many. Every woman would want one.

MAE. Well, I want one all for myself. A special pose, you know, something that brings out your whole character, your—well, versatility. Rose, look at his jaw and chin, now, that's what I mean, see?

JACK. Oh, girls, wait till I get my watch— (*Goes toward L. D.*)

ENTER INEZ L. D., JACK *stops*.

INEZ. Oh, Mr. Vernon, are you back already? I didn't hear you.

JACK. Yes, I forgot my watch, you know, it needs repairing. I'll get it now—

INEZ. Oh, I was just bringing it out to have it ready, I knew you would come in a hurry for it. (*Hands him watch, then turns to the women*) Oh, by the way, ladies, I have your proofs ready now for your inspection; they are in the stock room. (*Motions L.*)

MAE. Oh come, Rose, I am just crazy to see them. (*Goes toward L. D.*)

MRS. DEAN. I know mine are good. Jack always makes good pictures of me. (*Smiles at JACK, who follows them to L. D.*) [EXIT MAE and MRS. DEAN L. D.]

JACK. There are two mighty nice girls, did you know it?

INEZ. H'm!

JACK. They're so sweet—I hardly know which one I like best, they're charming; don't you think so?

INEZ. I don't know, I guess so.

JACK. It makes me feel like a beast, somehow. I suppose I was crazy to speak to both of them, it'll be rather tough having to throw one of them down, won't it?

INEZ. Well, you can't marry them both, can you?

JACK. No, that's the deuce of it. I almost wish I could.

INEZ. Mr. Vernon!

JACK. Well, then, I have to jilt one of them. I wonder which one will be the lucky girl! I rather hope it'll be Mae. Why, what's the matter, Inez, you look funny?

INEZ. Oh, Mr. Vernon, do you think Mae really loves you?

JACK. She acted as if she did, anyway, but say, Inez, it gave me some shock when I came in and found the two here together.

INEZ. Well, I should think it would. It's not often a man is confronted by two contemporary sweethearts. I was pretty nervous myself.

JACK. Nervous, why?

INEZ. Oh, well, perhaps it'll come out all right. Only—well, I never trust women.

JACK. Inez, if they should happen to swap confidences there might be something doing, hey?

INEZ. Yes, if they did.

JACK. But nice girls don't go about telling their love affairs, do they?

INEZ. No, no! Nice girls never become as intimate as that, Mr. Vernon, women are invariably as silent as the grave.

JACK (*goes to L. D.*). But, Inez, I'm worried. This is getting on my nerves. Lord, if they should find out. See here, what were they talking about, while they were in here waiting?

INEZ. Oh, I was in the other room. They were alone.

JACK. Well, I wish you had listened, Inez. I can't stand this, I feel as if I were smoking a pipe on top of a barrel of gunpowder. I'll go into my room now, and you call me when they have gone, will you?

INEZ. All right!

JACK. And, if anything breaks, you give me the tip and I'll beat it out the back way! [EXIT R. D.]

INEZ. Well, so far my scheme has worked perfectly.

ENTER C. D. FREDDY, *with newspaper.*

FREDDY. I beg your pardon, Miss Gray, but did you know what they have in the paper about Mr. Vernon?

INEZ. About Mr. Vernon! No! What is it?

FREDDY (*looking over the paper*). Why, it says here—where is it now? Why, it says—wait till I find it—it was at the bottom of the paper, somewhere.

INEZ. For heaven's sake, hurry up!

FREDDY. Oh, here it is—no! That ain't it. "Girl pulls burglar from under bed by foot"—it was right along there. "Eighty-one years old and never kissed"—I remember that, too. Confound it, funny how you can never find anything in a paper when you want it.

INEZ (*snatches paper from his hands, looks over it*). I'll find it myself—what was it about, anyway?

ENTER MAE and MRS. DEAN L. D.

FREDDY. Why, it said how Mr. Vernon had inherited—

INEZ. Oh, never mind, Freddy, that's a lie anyway.

MAE. What is it? Is there something about Mr. Vernon in the paper?

FREDDY (*bows*). Yes, Miss, he's come into a lot of money it seems.

INEZ. Freddy, you go down stairs and see if those ice-cream freezers came yet.

FREDDY. Yes'm! (*Then turns to MAE*) You see, Miss, it was on condition he—

INEZ (*motions FREDDY off*). Oh, it's nothing but a silly story, there's nothing to it.

MAE (*takes FREDDY by the arm, pulls him back*). What was it? how much?

FREDDY. Why, it was a lot—four millions, I think! On condition—

MAE. Four millions!

INEZ (*pushes FREDDY towards c. d.*). Hurry, Freddy!

MRS. DEAN. On condition of what?

FREDDY. Why, that he gets married!

INEZ. Oh, Freddy! (*Pushes him off c. d.*)

MAE. For heaven's sake, let's see the paper, Miss Gray!

INEZ (*holds the paper behind her*). Oh, I think he's got it mixed up with some one else, Miss Smith!

MAE. Four millions. And he has to get married to get it, why, that's strange. (*INEZ drops paper, MAE picks it up and looks it over*) Oh, here it is.

MRS. DEAN. Oh, read it out loud.

MAE. Well, keep quiet and I will! (*Reads*) "Jack Vernon of 565 Fifth Avenue will have to do his wooing in a hurry if he wishes to capture the legacy left him by a rich uncle, the late John B. Vernon, of Central Park West. Jack Vernon, the nephew is promised something over four million dollars, on condition of his being married on or before his twenty-eighth birthday. As this occurs to-morrow, Mr. Vernon has forty-eight hours in which to make good—"

MRS. DEAN (*grabs the paper*). Let me see it! Why, that means to-night by midnight!

MAE. No wonder he was in a hurry, four millions. And that's why he *proposed* to us. But remember your promise, Rose.

MRS. DEAN. Yes, and remember yours.

ENTER JACK R. D., *unseen by MAE and MRS. DEAN*. INEZ *motions him off*. JACK *sees them, makes a dash for R. D. and EXITS*.

MAE. Well, I have to leave now. Mercy, it's awfully late. Mrs. Dean, you have your car here, haven't you?

MRS. DEAN. Yes, Mae, come.

MAE. Good-bye, Miss Gray. [EXIT MAE and MRS. DEAN C. D.
INEZ (*with a sigh*). Thank goodness they have gone. (JACK
sticks head in at R. D.)

JACK. Have they gone, Inez?

INEZ. Yes, you can come in now.

ENTER JACK R. D.

JACK. Lord, I've been worrying myself sick! What in the world were they up to anyway?

INEZ. Oh, they seemed to be talking about a club, or something that they were interested in.

JACK. Club, eh? Well, Inez, I've been standing with my hand on the back door-knob for two hours, but say, I'll miss you like the devil, after I'm married. (*Takes her hands*) I've gotten kind of used to you, it'll seem funny not to have you around, to talk, to laugh at. What's the matter? you don't mind my laughing at you occasionally, do you?

INEZ. Oh, no, I love it, Mr. Vernon.

JACK. Funny thing, too, when you come to think of it, isn't it?

INEZ. Why?

JACK. Oh, I don't know—here all day alone, working together, and we never fell in love or anything. (*Walks towards C. D. stops, turns to her*) Inez!

INEZ (*springs to her feet*). Mr. Vernon!

JACK (*goes to her*). I've got it!

INEZ. What, another woman?

JACK. Yes, and it's the settlement of the whole thing! Inez, I'm going to marry you! (*INEZ staggers and falls back onto the settee*) Why, see here, Inez, it's all as simple as daylight. Why in the world didn't I think of it before? Here we are bully good friends, why you are the only one that does care enough for me to make me work and keep me up to my best. I believe you could actually make something of me. Won't we have a time with all that money, Inez, I'm going to kiss you! For the first time, too! (*JACK attempts to kiss her*)

INEZ (*turns away*). Oh no, Mr. Vernon! Don't! You proposed to two women to-day.

JACK. Oh, that's all right, I can fix that. Why, if I did take one of them, I'd have to throw the other one down, so I might as

well be hung for a sheep as a lamb, and jilt both of them. I'm glad they did put me off. It's the luckiest thing in the world! It gives me a good chance to take you. Why, I was so rattled, Inez, it never occurred to me that I could marry you.

INEZ. Oh, didn't it? Well, Mr. Vernon, there are several other things that didn't occur to you. Do you think you can treat me this way and expect me to stand for it?

JACK. What way? Lord, haven't I asked you to marry me, Inez?

INEZ. No, you haven't asked me! You've insulted me, all you've done is coolly to announce that you had decided to marry me.

JACK. Oh, come now, I thought you understood, Inez. Of course I'll ask you, if you want me to. Will you marry me?

INEZ. No! Marry you, after you've seen me here day in and day out for over a year? Marry you, after your boasting of the fact that there had never been any "nonsense" between us, that we had only been good bully friends, and you would laugh at me, and all that sort of things. What do you think I am, anyway? Do you imagine I'll run to you the minute you decide to marry me?

JACK. But, Inez, why, hang it all, I had no idea you felt like this, I suppose I've been too used to you.

INEZ. Yes, I know. Exactly! I've worked for you and slaved for you, for pay and without it! I've jollied your customers and lied for you when you missed your appointments, and got you up in the morning and waited on you and trained you, and saved your reputation and your business twenty times a day for a year. I've kept you at work, and I've made you go ahead till you are the best photographer in town. I've darned your socks and sewed on buttons, and cooked eggs for you! I've been nothing but a servant, and you are so used to me that when you do want to get married you propose to two other women before you even think of me. Do you think I'm the kind of a girl to marry a man like that?

JACK (*takes her hands*). But, Inez—dear! I want you!

INEZ. Oh, yes, I know you want me—and why? So that you can win four millions of dollars, that's all you want. When I marry a man, Mr. Vernon, it'll be because he loves me, remember that; and not just to help him catch a fortune.

JACK. Well, (*Goes to her*) Isn't there any chance for me? Don't you love me enough to forgive me, dear? Don't say no, Inez.

INEZ. Jack Vernon, I will not marry you. There! (*Turns away*)

JACK (*turns, walks towards R. D., then turns to her, shakes his fist at her*). Inez Gray, you shall marry me! [EXIT R. D.]

INEZ (*runs to C. D., calls*). Oh, Freddy—Freddy!

ENTER FREDDY C. D.

FREDDY. Yes, Miss Gray.

INEZ. Freddy, you said you would do something for me, didn't you?

FREDDY. Yes, Miss Gray, that's what I did!

INEZ. Then, come on and hurry! (*Takes her hat and jacket*)

FREDDY. Yes, Miss Gray, but what is it you want me to do?

INEZ. Freddy, I want you to go down to the Court House with me, we are going to get a marriage license! (*INEZ at C. D.*)

CURTAIN.



ACT III.

SCENE.—*Same as ACT I. Decorated for the party. Evening of same day. Doors as in ACT I but with curtains. Ball-room off R. Clothes rack, stand DOWN R. Chairs about the room. Vase with flowers on stand. DISCOVERED INEZ and JACK arranging the decorations.*

JACK. Confound it, I'm all up a tree without my watch! I never thought to borrow one. I must keep track of the time to-night, I want to know how long I have. By the way, Inez, you haven't asked to see the ring.

INEZ (*cooly*). No, and I don't want to.

JACK (*takes ring from his pocket*). See if it fits, Inez.

INEZ. Fits who?

JACK. Why, the girl I'm going to marry.

INEZ. I can't tell. Mae and Mrs. Dean's hands are rather—well, they're not exactly small, are they?

JACK. Darn it! You'll be wearing this ring before midnight, Miss Gray! (EXIT JACK L. D. INEZ CROSSES stage smiling. FREDDY draws the curtains aside at C. D. and announces SKINNER)

ENTER FREDDY C. D.

FREDDY. Mr. Silas B. Skinner. [EXIT FREDDY C. D.]

ENTER SILAS C. D., *cane on arm and hat in hand, hands them to FREDDY and goes DOWN C., smiling.*

SILAS (*bows and offers his hand to INEZ*). Good evening, Miss.

INEZ (*offers her hand*). Mr. Skinner!

SILAS. Well, how are ye gettin' along, anything happened?

INEZ. Well, I should say. I got those two women together, and— (*Bursting out laughing*)

SILAS (*chuckles*). Some hair pullin', eh?

INEZ. No, they became the very best of friends! (*Laughing*)

SILAS. Gosh, that's too bad.

INEZ. Wait, do you know those women have promised to refuse Jack to-night.

SILAS (*grabs her hand, shakes it*). By heck, is that so? Say, Miss, you are a little wonder.

INEZ. It was nice of me, wasn't it? Well, you see I need that five hundred, but wouldn't you like to go into the ball room and meet some of the ladies?

SILAS. Sure thing, by heck.

INEZ. Then come. [EXIT *with* SILAS R. D.]

ENTER JACK L. D.

JACK (*calling*). Inez—why I wonder where she is, I want to see her. (*Starts towards C. D. FREDDY draws the curtains aside and announces MAE SMITH*)

FREDDY. Miss Mae Smith. [EXIT C. D.]

JACK (*starts back*). The devil!

ENTER MAE C. D.

MAE (*offers her hand*). Hello, Jack, I've made up my mind.

JACK (*takes her hand*). Why, what do you mean?

MAE. Look pleasant, Jack, it's yes, I've decided to accept you.

JACK (*staggers*). Fine, but you don't mean to tell me that you are in love with me?

MAE. Not at all. I see no need of lying about it, whatever. But you certainly do amuse.

JACK. Well, I should say it was hardly enough to accept a man simply because he amused you.

MAE. Well, no, on the contrary, I'm quite sure that I shall want to be amused all my life—especially when I'm married.

JACK (*starts*). Married! Well, you're not married yet?

MAE. No, but that usually comes next on the program after an engagement, doesn't it?

JACK. Heavens! Do you consider that we are engaged?

MAE. Just nine o'clock to-morrow morning you are going to call on me and we'll toddle down to a Justice of the Peace, we'll just cut out the white veil and downcast eyes and everything. All you'll have to do is put a gold band on my finger, and my share will be to say "I will" and become Mrs. Jack Vernon—

ENTER SILAS R. D.

JACK (*takes his hand*). Why, good evening, Silas! (*Leads him to MAE*) Miss Smith, this is my cousin, Mr. Silas B. Skinner.

SILAS (*grabs her hand*). Why, how do you do, Miss? I'm powerful glad to meet you.

MAE (*smiling*). Thank you, Mr. Skinner, I hope you are enjoying yourself.

SILAS. By Jimminy Christmas, I never had a better time, won't you dance with me this time?

MAE. I certainly will. You will excuse me for just a little while, won't you, Jack.

JACK. Certainly. (*MAE and SILAS EXIT together R. D., arm in arm. SILAS smiling, looks back at JACK, who drops into a chair*) Lord! This is too much for one man. (*ENTER INEZ R. D. JACK springs to his feet to meet her*) Inez, Inez, I can't stand it any longer. I must have you! You've got to marry me! Don't keep it up any longer, dear. Say "yes" can't you?

INEZ. I gave you my answer this afternoon, Mr. Vernon, didn't you understand me?

JACK. Inez, I can't take no for an answer. I love you too much! (*Offers her a ring*) Here take this ring, Inez, wear it, won't you? And, as soon as I can get Mr. Johnson I'll put another one on your finger that'll make us man and wife!

INEZ (*takes the ring and tosses it across the stage*). No, take one of those women you have proposed to—they'll help you out. You have only to say the word. Good luck! [EXIT C. D.]

JACK. Inez, Inez— (*Starts towards C. D. after INEZ with his arms extended towards her*)

ENTER C. D. MRS. DEAN *and runs into JACK's arms.*

MRS. DEAN (*lays her head against his shoulder*). Oh, Jack, I didn't know you saw me coming.

JACK (*tries to free himself*). Well, I'll be damned.

MRS. DEAN. Oh, Jack, I know you are simply dying to hear my answer. Forgive me, Jack, dear, I didn't mean to torture you so; you must have suffered terribly.

JACK. Suffered! Oh, no, I'm all right.

MRS. DEAN. Of course you know what my answer is to be, Jack. You have seen it in my eyes, haven't you?

JACK. I've been too busy to see anything.

MRS. DEAN. Some women might keep you waiting, but I'm going to put you out of your misery right away, Jack, dear—

JACK. Well, it's all over, then. All right, Mrs. Dean, I didn't expect you to accept me. Well, I guess I can stand it.

MRS. DEAN (*embraces him*). Jack, I love you, kiss me, dear! and then we'll forget all about it.

JACK (*staggers*). What!

MRS. DEAN. Jack, don't you think I'm prettier than usual to-night? After we are married, dear, you can choose all my dresses.

JACK. See here, Mrs. Dean—

MRS. DEAN (*starts*). Mrs. Dean! Why, Jack, you always call me Rose, you know you do, the idea—when we're engaged too!

JACK. Engaged? Are we engaged?

MRS. DEAN. Oh course we are! Didn't you understand my answer, Jack? Why, I said yes. How stupid you are. Why, I'm crazy about you. Really I am.

JACK. Well, I ought to be crazy by this time.

MRS. DEAN. Why, Jack, what in the world are you talking about? But I'll tell you one thing that I won't do—I wouldn't give you up for all the money in the world!

JACK (*aside*). Well, can you beat that!

MRS. DEAN. Oh, Jack, when I once consent, I go fast. Really, I'd like to be married to you this very night, if you only had a marriage license.

JACK (*starts*). A what? (ENTER R. D. MAE *and* SILAS

waltzing across the stage, SILAS in a comical manner, smiling at JACK, and EXIT L. D.)

MRS. DEAN (*turns to JACK*). Why, Jack, a marriage license, you know. Of course that's always necessary before—

JACK. Well, I'll be darned! A marriage license. Now what do you think of that? Not once had it occurred to me. The whole comedy has been played out in vain. The four millions—Silas B. Skinner has won after all! (EXIT C. D. MRS. DEAN *looks after him, then turns, sees ring INEZ had thrown away, picks it up and places it on her finger, smiling*)

ENTER MAE R. D.

MAE. Well, did you see Jack?

MRS. DEAN. Yes, poor Jack, he was all broken up.

MAE. What did you say to him? Did you refuse him?

MRS. DEAN (*smiling*). No, I accepted him.

MAE (*starts*). You accepted him? Do you mean to say you went back on your promise? (*Catches her by the arm*) Are you fooling, or what do you mean? You promised—

MRS. DEAN. Oh, pshaw! What's a promise? He never cared a snap for you. So Jack Vernon and I are formally engaged, now, and we're going to be married—

MAE. That's all you know about it. Jack Vernon is engaged to me.

MRS. DEAN (*starts*). To you! Why, Mae Smith, you told me you refused him!

MAE. Oh, I know I told you that, Rose, but you see, well, we had decided to keep our marriage a secret for awhile.

MRS. DEAN. Then you lied to me. (*Holds up her finger*) But I'd like to know what you think of that.

MAE. What is it?

MRS. DEAN. It's an engagement ring!

ENTER C. D. JACK, *unseen by MAE or MRS. DEAN, sees them, turns and darts off C. D.*

MAE. Mrs. Dean, you have lied to me! (*Laughing*) Well, then we are both engaged to him. We'll have to draw lots for him.

MRS. DEAN. Well, there's one thing, I don't intend to release him!

MAE. Neither do I! And I don't mind a fight when it's a question of four million.

MRS. DEAN. Hush, here comes somebody!

ENTER L. D. SILAS *and* JOHNSON *talking*. MAE *and* MRS. DEAN
UP C.

JOHNSON (*points R.*). My word, Skinner, look at that! It's after twelve o'clock already, (*Takes his hand*) permit me to congratulate you, sir, upon your accession to the Vernon's fortune! It is my practice, as you know, never to take side. So long, however, as fate has decided in your favor I take pleasure in knowing that you are now the possessor of four million dollars.

MRS. DEAN (*to MAE*). What's he talking about?

SILAS (*to JOHNSON*). Of course it is hard for Jack if I get the money—but then he's only a boy, why, he would throw it away on some darned woman. That Miss Smith or that widow Dean, that he's been trying to spark. I'll put the money to some good use. (*MAE and MRS. DEAN look at each other*)

MAE (*to MRS. DEAN*). And did you hear that?

MRS. DEAN (*goes DOWN to them*). Oh, I beg your pardon, I just came in, but I heard something about Jack Vernon losing money—his uncle's will, you know—that was a mistake, wasn't it?

JOHNSON. How a mistake, Mrs. Dean? Not at all. The phrase is, his twenty-eighth birthday! One's birthday begins at midnight. Mr. Vernon's chances for inheriting therefore, end at twelve o'clock. (*Points R.*) See, it's after twelve now. (*All turn and look R., MAE and MRS. DEAN start*)

MAE. It's now, ten minutes past, doesn't that beat anything you ever heard in your life?

MRS. DEAN. Good night, I'm going home, are you, Mae?

MAE. I should say not, not till I give Jack a piece of my mind! Come, Rose, let's find him. [EXIT *with* MRS. DEAN R. D.]

JOHNSON (*laughing*). Well, Skinner, come let's have a drink on your good fortune.

SILAS. Yes, Johnson, by heck it's my treat. (*Leads JOHNSON off R. D.*)

ENTER JACK C. D.

JACK. I wonder if I can find that ring. (*Kneels down. Business of looking for ring*)

ENTER MAE and MRS. DEAN R. D. *See JACK.*

MAE. Oh, there you are! We've got a little surprise for you!

JACK (*gets up with an embarrassed grin, bowing, backs up against L. D.*). What—what is it?

MAE. What is it. See here, Jack Vernon, have you any explanation to make for the way you have treated us?

MRS. DEAN. Oh, Jack, Jack, you've broken my heart.

MAE. Hush up, Rose, let me at him, I'd like to hear just what this particular sort of cur can find to say for himself.

JACK (*holds up both hands*). Guilty.

MAE. Have you got the face to stand there and acknowledge you deceived us!

JACK. Just exactly as you deceived each other!

MAE. Aha, little Jack—the Lady-Killer, are you? Two at a shot, eh? You are a cad! I'm glad, glad, glad you lost that four million, it's good enough for you.

MRS. DEAN. Yes, and you're a liar and a cheat. And so am I glad you lost that four million.

JACK. So that is why you're all so shocked and enraged, because I didn't marry one of you and hand over the four million, eh!

MAE. Oh, come, Rose, it's no use trying to talk to a Jack-ass, let's get our wraps and go home. (EXIT C. D. MAE and MRS. DEAN, MRS. DEAN *crying*)

JACK (*drops into a chair*). What next?

ENTER INEZ L. D.

INEZ. Oh, are you here, Mr. Vernon?

JACK. I guess so, Inez. (INEZ *looks off R. at clock*) Yes, it's all over, Inez, the money has gone to the devil. (INEZ, *smiling, puts her arm around his neck. JACK starts*) Why, Inez!

INEZ. Have you forgiven me?

JACK. You! For what?

INEZ. For pretending that I didn't care.

JACK (*catches her in his arms*). Oh, do you care, Inez, even after all this but I'm going to marry you at once before I lose you again?

INEZ. Oh, you'll never lose me, Jack, never, never, and I'm awfully sorry now I threw that ring away.

JACK (*takes ring from pocket, and places it on her finger*).

See here, Inez, is another one. Let's get married to-night! What do you say?

INEZ. Oh, Jack, let's right away.

JACK (*grabs her, kisses her*). It's a go, we will! (*Starts*) Oh, Lord!

INEZ. What, Jack?

JACK. No use, Inez, we can't do it!

INEZ. Why not, Jack? Can't Mr. Johnson marry us? He's a Justice of the Peace. Didn't he say he'd marry you if you wished?

JACK. Oh, it isn't that—darn it all, I'm such a fool I forgot all about the license.

INEZ. Wait a minute. (*Runs to c. d., calls*) Freddy, Freddy.

ENTER FREDDY C. D. INEZ leads him down to JACK.

INEZ. Give Mr. Vernon the papers, Freddy. (*FREDDY gives JACK the papers*)

JACK (*grabs and looks at them*). What's this! Why, a marriage license! How did you ever come to do it?

INEZ. Well, of course we did have to lie a little, that is Freddy did—about your mother and father, you know. I didn't know what their names were, so we had to call them John and Mary, you don't mind, do you?

JACK. Sure not. (*Starts towards R. D.*) Where's Johnson? (*Calls off R.*) Hay, Mr. Johnson! Johnson!

JOHNSON (*off stage*). Yes.

JACK. Come here, quick.

INEZ (*to FREDDY*). Freddy, run, bring the ladies in, quick! (*FREDDY runs off C. D.*)

ENTER JOHNSON R. D.

JACK (*grabs him by the arm, leads him DOWN C.*). Say, Johnson, how long will it take to perform a ceremony?

JOHNSON. Two minutes.

JACK. Then get busy!

ENTER SILAS R. D.

SILAS. Why, what's coming off here, ain't no use to get married now, you know that! Don't be foolish, Jack!

INEZ (*looks off R.*). Hurry, Mr. Johnson, hurry!

SILAS (*points to R.*). Look, see it's past twelve.

INEZ. Come here, Jack, and stand by me, hurry, Johnson!
(*She pulls JACK up beside her*) Go on, Mr. Johnson!

ENTER C. D. FREDDY, *with* MAE *and* MRS. DEAN. *The women start, as they see JACK and INEZ.*

FREDDY. Let her go, Johnson!

MAE. Why, what's doing?

SILAS. Why, they are goin' to try and get married.

JOHNSON. Jack Vernon, do you take this woman, Miss Inez Gray, to be your wedded wife?

JACK. I do!

MRS. DEAN. Oh, Jack, is it that I'm going to lose you?

SILAS. I object.

JOHNSON. Miss Inez Gray, do you take this man, Mr. Jack Vernon, to be your lawful wedded husband?

INEZ. I do!

SILAS. Wait a minute. It's a fraud.

JOHNSON. Put on the ring. (*JACK puts ring on INEZ's finger*)

SILAS. See here, I've got something to say about this, why, look at the clock. (*Points off R.*) It's past twelve, the money is mine.

JOHNSON. I pronounce you man and wife. (*JACK grabs INEZ in his arms, kisses her*)

SILAS. Say, look at the clock, it's half past twelve, you are too late, I tell ye the money is mine.

INEZ. We've won. Eleven fifty-nine! Look at your watch, Mr. Skinner.

JACK. Why, Inez, how's that? (*Looks at clock off R.*)

INEZ. I turned the clock on a half hour! (*Throws her arms around JACK's neck*)

JOHNSON (*looks at his watch*). Eleven fifty-nine is right, Mr. Skinner. (*SILAS starts to leave, FREDDY pulls him back*)

FREDDY. How about that five hundred you promised Miss Gray, if she kept Jack from marrying either of these ladies?

SILAS (*shakes his fist at INEZ*). Oh, you little fraud.

JOHNSON. Mr. Vernon, you are your uncle's sole heir. (*Offers JACK his hand*) Allow me to congratulate you.

JACK. Wait a minute, I'm busy! (*Business kissing INEZ*)

CURTAIN.

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