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# DENISON'S SPECIALTIES

Cornelia Pickle,  
Plaintiff

Price, 25 Cents

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PUBLISHERS CHICAGO

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| Jayville Junction, 1½ hrs. (25c)                         | 4  | 17 |
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| Kingdom of Heart's Content, 3 acts, 2¼ hrs. .... (25c)   | 6  | 12 |
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|  | M. | F. |
|--|----|----|
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| School Ma'am, 4 acts, 1¾ hrs. ....                 | 6  | 5  |
| Scrap of Paper, 3 acts, 2 hrs. ....                | 6  | 6  |
| Seth Greenback, 4 acts, 1¼ hrs. ....               | 7  | 3  |
| Soldier of Fortune, 5 acts, 2½ h. ....             | 8  | 3  |
| Solon Shingle, 2 acts, 1½ hrs. ....                | 7  | 2  |
| Sweethearts, 2 acts, 35 min. ....                  | 2  | 2  |
| Ten Nights in a Barroom, 5 acts, 2 hrs. ....       | 7  | 4  |
| Third Degree, 40 min. .... (25c)                   | 12 |    |
| Those Dreadful Twins, 3 acts, 2 hrs. .... (25c)    | 6  | 4  |
| Ticket-of-Leave Man, 4 acts, 2¾ hrs. ....          | 8  | 3  |
| Tony, The Convict, 5 acts, 2½ hrs. .... (25c)      | 7  | 4  |
| Topp's Twins, 4 acts, 2 h. .... (25c)              | 6  | 4  |
| Trip to Storyland, 1¼ hrs. (25c)                   | 17 | 23 |
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| Under the Laurels, 5 acts, 2 hrs. ....             | 6  | 4  |
| Under the Spell, 4 acts, 2½ hrs. .... (25c)        | 7  | 3  |
| Yankee Detective, 3 acts, 2 hrs. ....              | 8  | 3  |

## FARCES, COMEDIETTAS, Etc.

|   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
| April Fools, 30 min. ....                   | 3  |   |
| Assessor, The, 10 min. ....                 | 3  | 2 |
| Aunt Matilda's Birthday Party, 35 min. .... | 1  |   |
| Baby Show at Pineville, 20 min. ....        | 19 |   |
| Bad Job, 30 min. ....                       | 3  | 2 |
| Betsy Baker, 45 min. ....                   | 2  | 2 |
| Billy's Chorus Girl, 25 min. ....           | 2  | 3 |
| Billy's Mishap, 20 min. ....                | 2  | 3 |
| Borrowed Luncheon, 20 min. ....             | 5  |   |
| Borrowing Trouble, 20 min. ....             | 3  | 5 |
| Box and Cox, 35 min. ....                   | 2  | 1 |
| Cabman No. 93, 40 min. ....                 | 2  | 2 |
| Case Against Casey, 40 min. ....            | 23 |   |
| Convention of Papas, 25 min. ....           | 7  |   |
| Country Justice, 15 min. ....               | 8  |   |
| Cow that Kicked Chicago, 20 m. ....         | 2  |   |

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

# CORNELIA PICKLE, PLAINTIFF

A BURLESQUE TRIAL FOR LADIES

BY

MAYME RIDDLE BITNEY

AUTHOR OF

*"Humorous Monologues," "Monologues for Young Folks,"*  
*"Fun on the Podunk Limited," "The Third Degree,"*  
*"The Light Brigade" and "Monologues,*  
*Grave and Gay."*



CHICAGO  
T. S. DENISON & COMPANY  
PUBLISHERS

PS 635  
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# CORNELIA PICKLE, PLAINTIFF

## CHARACTERS.

MRS. LUCRETIA BOSSEM.....*The Judge*  
 MRS. SAMANTHA SHARP.....*Lawyer for the Plaintiff*  
 MISS MARY TALKER.....*Lawyer for the Defendant*  
 ELIZABETH SCRIBE.....*Clerk of the Court*  
 MISS CORNELIA PICKLE.....*Plaintiff*  
 MRS. HELEN DASHING.....*Defendant*  
 KATIE O'BRIEN.... } .....*Witnesses for the Plaintiff*  
 MRS SELLEM..... }  
 MRS. HOUSEMAN.....*Witness for the Defendant*  
 MRS. OLDSTYLE.. }  
 MISS NERVY.... } .....*Jurors*  
 MRS. SLOW..... }  
 MISS AILING.... }  
 MRS. FLASHY... }  
 MRS. HOMEBODY. }

TIME OF PLAYING—*Forty Minutes.*

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TMP92-008650

## REMARKS.

The mock trial for women here presented is very easily staged, and as none of the parts are long it can be given with very little labor on the part of the actors. Things should move briskly and the lines be given with snap. Do not allow any dragging. The various parts should be well carried out, the judge being stern and dictative in manner, the lawyers giving their lines with soaring eloquence and many gestures. All remarks by the jury should be brought in quickly and in a very decisive manner. Mrs. Slow should go to sleep occasionally. Mrs. Flashy can have a bag of peanuts which part of the jury eat. If desired the judge can have a box of candy on her desk and eat it frequently. There must be a lot of spirit and excitement infused into the closing and things end with a whirl.

## COSTUMES.

MRS. BOSSEM AND MRS. SHARP—Hair quite plain, glasses, white tailored waists, high white collar, black tie, plain dark skirts, mannish black jacket.

MISS TALKER—Hair much fussed up in latest style, dress of showy color and stylishly made, jewelry, fancy hand bag, etc.

ELIZABETH SCRIBE—Plain dark gown, white collar, glasses.

MISS CORNELIA PICKLE—Hair done up stylishly with corkscrew curls in front, a much-trimmed dress of bright colors, made old-style. Carry a fancy fan and a bottle of smelling salts.

MRS. DASHING—A large black hat much trimmed with lavender flowers, a fancy black dress gaily trimmed with lavender. Has a dashing manner.

KATIE O'BRIEN—Fancy colored dress with quite an attempt at style.

MRS. SELLEM—Richly dressed in dark colors.

MRS. HOUSEMAN—Quite an attempt at style of showy effect.

MRS. OLDSTYLE—Old-fashioned bonnet and shawl, large, plain hand bag.

MISS NERVY—Bright, showy gown and large hat.

MRS. SLOW—Quite fat and dressed to look odd and out-of-place.

MISS AILING—Black dress and black hat, face powdered to look very pale. Carry hand bag with various medicines.

MRS. FLASHY—Very showy gown of a color that will clash with that worn by Miss Nervy, large, much-trimmed hat.

MRS. HOMEBOY—Well dressed in quite style and colors.

### ACCESSORIES.

Each woman furnishes a sofa pillow, aiming to have a variety as to size and colors. These are to be secluded behind the scenes until called for.

### STAGE DIRECTIONS.

*R.* means right of stage; *C.*, center; *L.*, left, etc. The actor is supposed to be facing the audience.



## CORNELIA PICKLE, PLAINTIFF

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SCENE: *At C. of back of stage is a desk and chair for the JUDGE. Along the L. of the stage are chairs for the jury, and at the L. of the JUDGE, are chairs for the witnesses. At the C., rather near front of stage, is a small table for the two attorneys and the clerk. At the R. and L. corners of front are chairs for the plaintiff and defendant, MISS PICKLE sitting near MRS. SHARP, and MRS. DASHING near MISS TALKER. At the R. of the stage is a low box on which witnesses stand while giving testimony. Doors R. and L.*

*As the curtain rises the JUDGE, MISS TALKER, the DEFENDANT and PLAINTIFF, the WITNESSES, and CLERK, stand in groups about the stage, talking excitedly, and most of them at once. JUDGE takes place at desk.*

JUDGE (*rapping with gavel*). Order! Silence! Let's begin work immediately so we can get through early.

MARY TALKER (*to MRS. DASHING*). Oh, dear, is my hair all right? I washed it last night and I can't do a thing with it today.

MRS. DASHING. It's all right—it looks fine. (*All take places.*)

*Enter MRS. SHARP, hurriedly from R.*

MRS. SHARP. Oh, mercy! I rushed so to be here on time that I'm all out of breath. We had unexpected company for dinner and I had to help my husband with the meal, so I thought I'd never get here. (*Sinks into chair.*)

JUDGE (*rapping*). Order! (*To CLERK, crossly.*) There! You've forgotten the soft pillows again! Haven't I told you we don't enjoy these hard chairs without cushions? Bring them in.

CLERK (*rising*). Yes, your honoress. (*Exit L.*)

MISS PICKLE. I'll have to have a cushion. I'm troubled dreadfully with that all-gone feeling.

*Enter* CLERK *L. with as many pillows as she can carry.*

JUDGE. Give them out quickly. (*CLERK hurries around and gives each one a cushion. If she can't carry them all at once she hurries out and brings in the rest.*)

MARY TALKER. Oh, I love cushions! (*Each woman fixes her cushion to suit her, having quite a time to get it settled just right. CLERK puts cushion on each chair for the jury and resumes her seat.*)

JUDGE (*rapping*). Order! We will proceed to take up the next case.

CLERK (*rising*). The case of Miss Cornelia Pickle versus Mrs. Helen Dashing, suit for damages. (*Sits.*)

JUDGE. Miss Cornelia Pickle, are you the plaintiff in this case?

MISS PICKLE. I am, your honoress.

JUDGE. Are you present?

MISS PICKLE. Of course, I'm pleasant. I'm always pleasant—though goodness knows the sorrow I've been through the past month is enough to sour my disposition.

JUDGE. I said are you *present*?

MISS PICKLE. What a foolish question! Can't you see I'm present?

JUDGE. Don't you make fun of the law, Cornelia Pickle, or you'll get into a pickle. Mrs. Dashing, are you the defendant?

MRS. DASHING. Indeed, I am! When any one seeks to malign me and to make trouble for me they'll find me ready to—

JUDGE (*rapping*). Well, if the plaintiff and defendant are here we will begin. Are the attorneys ready?

MARY TALKER (*rising*). I am ready, your honoress. (*Sits.*)

MRS. SHARP (*rising*). Ready and anxious for battle, your honoress. (*Sits.*)



JUDGE. The clerk may bring in the jury in the case of Pickle and Dashing. (CLERK goes out L.)

Enter CLERK L. with the JURORS, whom she conducts to their seats.

MISS NERVY (*who came next to Mrs. FLASHY*). I don't want this seat. (To MRS. SLOW). You change with me, please.

MRS. SLOW. Eh? What?

MISS NERVY. Change seats with me, please.

MRS. SLOW. I haven't any cheese.

JUDGE (*rapping*). What's the matter?

MISS NERVY. Well, I'm not going to sit beside Mrs. Flashy. The color of her dress makes mine look just awful.

JUDGE. Oh, that doesn't matter! Sit down.

MISS NERVY. Well, I guess I just had this dress made new to wear here and I'm not going to have the effect spoiled by sitting next to this brilliant color of Mrs. Flashy's. So, there!

CLERK. I'll fix them, your honoress. (*She goes over and gets MRS. SLOW to change seats with MISS NERVY and all get settled.*)

MRS. SHARP (*rising*). Your honoress, I shall not waste time and beat about the bush by indulging in useless, high-flown and soul-stirring eloquence, but I shall proceed immediately and in a straight-forward, logical way to lay before you the case of my client, Cornelia Pickle, who sits here pale and emaciated, wan, worn and lacerated with anguish—the fair glow of health sapped by the gnawing canker at her heart. (MISS PICKLE *sighs deeply and wipes her eyes.*)

MRS. SLOW. What is she talking about? I caught cold in my head yesterday and I can't hear very well.

MRS. FLASHY. She said somebody's got cancer of the heart, but I don't know who it is.

MRS. SLOW. Cancer of the heart? Oh, that's awful! My mother-in-law's sister had a cancer and—

JUDGE (*rapping*). Silence in the court!

MRS. SHARP. My grief-stricken client looks as if she stood upon the brink of the grave, but the defendant looks as rosy and happy, as well and care-free as—

MRS. DASHING (*angrily*). If I look well and happy it is because I have no sins on my conscience. No wonder Cornelia Pickle looks bad when—

MRS. SHARP. I object, your honoress.

JUDGE. Well, I object to all this useless talk. I want to get down to business because I'm invited out to supper to-night and I've got to get home early to fix up.

MRS. SHARP (*coldly*). I told you I was going to omit all preliminary eloquence and state my case without superfluous remarks. To be brief, my client is seized and possessed in fee simple of an organ—

MISS PICKLE (*in surprise*). Why, no, I haven't an organ. It's a piano.

MRS. SHARP. I mean an organ of the body—a heart! This aforesaid heart, that the aforesaid Cornelia Pickle is seized and possessed of, and holds in fee simple—

MRS. SLOW (*hand to ear*). What is she talking about?

MRS. OLDSTYLE. It's something about being seized and held for a fee, but I don't know what. I don't see how we can tell who is guilty when—

JUDGE (*rapping loudly*). Silence! You *must not* talk in court.

MRS. SHARP. Ladies of the jury, I will begin once more and—

MISS NERVY. Leave out the beginning and get down to facts.

MRS. SHARP (*points to CORNELIA*). Cornelia Pickle has a heart (*lays hand dramatically over heart*) and that heart is—broken! Ladies, a broken rib or a broken limb is bad enough, but think of the torture of a broken heart. This is not a mere crack, but a serious break that is allowing the joy of life to ebb away.

MRS. OLDSTYLE. Poor thing!

MISS AILING. Where is my camphor? It makes me faint to think of such a break. (*Hunts in bag and finds camphor, which she sniffs*).

MRS. HOMEBODY. Can't the doctor do anything for her?

JUDGE. Order! (*Pounds desk*).

MRS. SHARP. No doctor can mend a broken heart. No medicine can relieve its assiduous pain. A broken heart has brought many a person to an untimely grave. (*Miss PICKLE sniffles and wipes eyes*).

MRS. SLOW. Whose grave is she talking about?

MISS AILING. Where's my tonic? It upsets me to think of graves. (*Hunts in bag and finds tonic and takes a drink from bottle*.)

JUDGE. Silence!

MRS. SHARP. The cause of a broken heart is soon told. A few weeks ago Cornelia Pickle was a happy, rosy-cheeked person, possessing what every woman delights in—a lover, that is, a man who was fast becoming a lover. My happy, blushing client reciprocated and capitulated to his suit and—

MRS. OLDSTYLE. Maybe it's all right, but that sounds like awful scand'lous things for a Christian woman to do.

MRS. SHARP. With all the strength and vigor of her womanly heart she returned his affection, but just as she was enjoying the bliss of love's young dream her castle is dashed to pieces (*pounds table with fist*) and her lover is stolen from her. Yes (*frantically*), her lover is dashed to pieces—I mean her heart is dashed to pieces—and she lies stricken upon the rocks of sorrow.

MRS. OLDSTYLE. Poor thing!

MRS. SLOW. What was dashed to pieces?

MISS NERVY. Ain't that just too fierce for anything?

MISS AILING. Where's my dyspepsia tablets? It makes me sick at my stomach to hear such sad things. (*Hunts in bag for tablets and takes one*.)

MRS. FLASHY. She ought to get another man. There's plenty of 'em.

JUDGE. Order! Silence!

MRS. SHARP. Ladies of the jury, I am glad to see you are properly moved by the sorrow of—

MARY TALKER (*jumping up*). Your honoress, I object.

JUDGE. What is your objection?

MARY TALKER. I object to my ranting opponent trying to work the jury by—

MRS. FLASHY. She can't work me. I didn't come here to work.

JUDGE. Your objection is sustained.

MRS. SHARP. Just as my trusting client, enraptured with the bliss of her first love—

MISS PICKLE. Oh, no! (*Indignantly.*) I'd had a lot of lovers before that. Several—a lot of men have wanted me.

MRS. SHARP (*aside*). Keep still. Don't spoil my case. (*Aloud.*) Just as she was looking forward to the rapture of matrimony her lover was taken from her—enticed away from her by—

MRS. DASHING. I never enticed him in the world, Samantha Sharp, and I will—

JUDGE. If you don't keep still I'll fine you, Helen Dashing.

MRS. SHARP. Therefore, ladies of the jury, we have the case of Cornelia Pickle, who is bringing suit against Helen Dashing for alienating the affections of her lover, Josiah Judkins.

JUDGE. Attorney Sharp, you have said enough. I told you I wanted to get home early. Does the defense wish to make any preliminary remarks?

MARY TALKER (*rising*). Only this, your honoress, that because my client is an attractive, fine looking woman to whom men are naturally drawn through no machinations of hers, she cannot be held guilty for homage that is voluntarily cast at her feet. A lamp cannot be blamed because the moths fly into the blaze. (*Looks triumphantly around with a satisfied smile and sits down.*)

JUDGE. Counsel for the plaintiff, call your witnesses.

MRS. SHARP. Katie O'Brien. (*KATIE comes forward.*)

CLERK. Hold up you right hand. I solemnly swear—

KATIE. Oh, my, oh, my! Have I got to?

CLERK. Certainly you must. No getting out of it.

KATIE. Well, if I must swear, dum it all to gee whiz, and it's not another swear I'll say to please you.

CLERK. All right, but you must repeat after me these

words: "I solemnly swear to tell the truth (*KATIE repeats*), the whole truth and nothing but the truth in this case." (*She repeats rapidly.*)

MRS. SHARP. Miss O'Brien, do you know the plaintiff in this case pending?

KATIE. Indade I do, ma'am, an' I must say that though there's them as is handsomer and more attractive, they ain't got sech kind ways and gentle hearts as hers be. As I says to Tim Maloney, him as comes to me considerable nights, there ain't no better lady to work for than Miss Pickle. And I've worked for her now six weeks, so I ought to know.

MRS. SHARP. Will you tell us what you know about the affair of Mr. Josiah Judkins and Miss Pickle?

KATIE. Well, ma'am, from what I could see I should say that he was real well gone on her but was too bashful to spake up and say the fatal words. Shure and he's not like Tim Maloney, who proposes to me ivery night he comes to see me—though I always refuse him.

MRS. SHARP. Do you think Mr. Judkins cared for Miss Pickle?

KATIE. Oh, yis, ma'am. He niver come to see her that he didn't bring her some peppermint drops, and he would set, ma'am, and look at her like as he was so charmed he couldn't spake, talkin' all the time about his hins and his peratie patch and sich.

MRS. SHARP. Do you think he was really fond of her?

KATIE. Indade he was, ma'am. Shure one night whin me and Tim Maloney come home from walkin' by moonlight they were settin' in the parlor, and his chair was rale clost to hers and he was sorter leanin' towards her, and Tim says, says he, "Shure, I'll bet me hat that he'll be a holdin' of her hand in half an hour more.

MRS. SHARP. Did Miss Pickle ever say she was engaged to Mr. Judkins?

KATIE. Not exactly that, ma'm, but she said as how he said he ought to settle down in a home, and that he thought her cookin' was foine—which same you can see for yourself sounds rale serious. And Tim Maloney said, says Tim,

ma'am, "The way he looks I wouldn't be surprised at his poppin' any time."

MRS. SHARP. Poppin'?

KATIE. Yes, poppin' the question, ma'am, to ax if she'd have him.

MRS. SHARP. What do you know about his breaking off with Miss Pickle?

KATIE. Shure, I knew nothing of it for a while, ma'am. I noticed Miss Pickle looked sort of pinin' and sad, then she began to fall off in her eatin', but I wasn't suspectin' nothing, thinkin' it was likely her liver as she sometimes has spells with. I noticed Mr. Judkins hadn't been to see her for a spell, but I thinks nothing of it till one night Tim Maloney says, says he, ma'am, "Ain't that the divil of a foine lookin' widdy to be takin' Miss Cornely's beau from her?" And says I, speakin' excited, "The saints presarve us, what do you be meanin'?" And then he tells me, ma'am, that he'd saw Mr. Judkins out walkin' with this Mrs. Dashing, and you could a knocked me down with a toothpick, ma'am, I was that beat. So the next morning I says, to sort of see what she'd say, says I, "Shant I swape the parlor today, ma'am, for fear Mr. Judkins should be comin' tonight?" And say she, "No, not today, Katie." Then she sighs and says she, "'Tis men are quare creatures, and deceitful beyond all expectin'," and she goes out cryin'.

MISS AILING. Oh, where's my camphor? This is so sad it makes me feel sick. (*Hunts in bag for camphor and sniffs bottle.*)

MRS. SLOW. Poor thing! Poor thing!

KATIE. And from that time he has not come to see Miss Pickle, and Tim Maloney said as how he often saw him with this Mrs. Dashing. And that is all I know excipt that poor Miss Cornely Pickle has growed thinner and sadder and more pinin' ivery day, ma'am.

MRS. SHARP. That is all I wish, Miss O'Brien. You have proved that there was surely a serious affair between the plaintiff and Mr. Judkins, which should have resulted in marriage.



MARY TALKER (*takes witness*). How old are you, Miss O'Brien?

KATIE. Shure, ma'am, I was borned the same year as the daughter of old Squire Eagan, bliss his soul, and folks did often call us the twins. Sich a foine girl as she was!

MARY TALKER. Please omit superfluous remarks and answer my question. How old are you?

KATIE. Well, ma'am, it's quare now, but I niver can ramimber if I was borned the year before the big fire in Cork or the year after it, though it was shure one or the other, ma'am.

MARY TALKER. How *old* are you?

MISS NERVY. I should say she is about twenty-five.

KATIE (*scornfully*). Twinty-five, is it? Shure it's no old maid I be. I'm jést turned twenty-two, though Tim Maloney says—

MARY TALKER. Never mind what Tim Maloney says. What reason have you to believe Mr. Judkins gave Miss Pickle any reason to think he intended to marry her?

KATIE. Have yez ever had a beau, ma'am?

MARY TALKER. Why—I—(*crossly*) that has nothing to do with the case. Answer my questions.

KATIE. I was jist going to say, ma'am, that them as has had a lot of beaux and got to know the ways of men can tell all right whin a man is gone on a woman. And while Mr. Judkins maybe wasn't crazy like Tim Maloney is over me, yit he was gone on Miss Pickle, all right.

MARY TALKER. But you have no proof that—

KATIE. Shure, ma'am, if you'd had some beaux—

MARY TALKER. Never mind about my beaux. I want to know—(*a loud rapping is heard at R. door. CLERK answers.*)

CLERK. Your honoress, a messenger is here who says that Attorney Sharp's husband has sent word that he wants some ginger bread for supper and he can't find the soda any place and he wants to know if she knows where it is.

MRS. SHARP (*thinking*). Why—why—I—let me think—oh, I know. I had the soda upstairs to put some on a mosquito bite and I left it on the dresser—or on the commode—or perhaps it's on the floor.

CLERK. I will tell him. (*Goes to R. door and whispers, then resumes seat.*)

JUDGE. This case is dragging too much. Attorney Talker, please get through with the witness.

MARY TALKER (*sulkily*). I don't want any more of her. (*KATIE takes seat.*)

MRS. SHARP. Mrs. Sellem. (*She comes forward to stand, is sworn by CLERK as before.*) Mrs. Sellem, my client is bringing suit against Mrs. Helen Dashing for alienating the affections of her lover, Josiah Judkins. What do you know about Mrs. Dashing's part in this sad affair?

MRS. SELLEM. Well, it's just like this. You know I run a store and I've been doing fine the past year, too; business has been real good. Mrs. Dashing often came in to look at things, though she wasn't much of a hand to buy. I told Nancy Joslyn that I didn't believe Helen Dashing had as much money as she tries to make out or she'd spend more.

MARY TALKER. Your honoress, I object to this useless explanation about my client.

MRS. DASHING (*angrily*). So do I object, your honoress. I guess that—

JUDGE. Silence! Objection is sustained.

MRS. SELLEM. Well, one day about three weeks ago Mrs. Dashing came in and she looked at a lot of things. There was some pink silk stockings she liked awful well, but I guess she couldn't afford to buy—

MARY TALKER. Your honoress, I object. Irrelevant testimony.

JUDGE. Objection sustained. (*To WITNESS.*) Didn't I tell you not to tell those things?

MRS. SELLEM. All right. Well, she looked at several things and pretty soon in came Mr. Judkins to buy some handkerchiefs for himself. Well, while he was looking at them Mrs. Dashing came over and began to talk to him and she stood there and talked an awful long time. She just laughed and talked and joked, and as I said to Susan Lovering after they'd gone she seemed dreadful happy for a woman that had lost her husband. Well, she made eyes at him—you needn't glare at me, Helen Dashing. I've sworn

to tell the whole truth and I'm going to no matter how mad you get. Well, as I said, she made eyes at him, and when he went out of the store she went with him.

MRS. DASHING. That's not so. He went out with me.

JUDGE. Order. (*Raps.*) Silence!

MRS. SELLEM. And I said that very day that I bet Helen Dashing would set her cap for him because—

MARY TALKER. Your honoress, I object.

MRS. DASHING. So do I. I can get better men than Josiah Judkins.

JUDGE. Order! Objection sustained.

MRS. SELLEM. Well, it was only a few days before I saw Helen Dashing out walking with Mr. Judkins and she was making eyes at him and laughing, and I said—

MARY TALKER. Your honoress, I object. Who cares what she said?

JUDGE. Objection sustained.

MRS. SELLEM. Well, it wasn't any time before folks was saying that Mrs. Dashing had cut out poor Cornelia Pickle, one of the best souls that ever lived, and she buys a lot at my store, too. And I know that Helen Dashing just roped him in.

MRS. DASHING. Roped him nothing! He was crazy to go with me.

MRS. SHARP. Have you reason to think Mr. Judkins cared for Miss Pickle before Mrs. Dashing's siren wiles were thrown about him?

MRS. SELLEM. Well, he was in the store one day when she was there and he watched her just like—a—mouse does a cat—I mean a—well, as if he couldn't keep his eyes off her, and I said I bet that would make a match.

MRS. SHARP. That is all.

MARY TALKER. What reason have you to think Mr. Judkins cared for Miss Pickle just because he looked at her? Men don't love all the women they look at.

MRS. SELLEM. Well, I've had lots of gentlemen company when I was young and had two husbands, and I guess I can tell when a man is serious about a woman. If you had had a lot of men in love with you, Mary Talker—

MARY TALKER (*hastily*). That will do. You may be seated. (*She sits.*) I will ask Mrs. Houseman to take the stand. (*She comes forward and is sworn by the CLERK.*) Mrs. Houseman, do you know the defendant, Helen Dashing?

MRS. HOUSEMAN. Yes, indeed, I know her. She is a *very* nice woman. I keep a boarding house and she has lived with me for six months, so I know she is very, *very* nice. She always keeps her board paid—which is the best thing I can say of a person—and she is a good woman and *very* nice.

MARY TALKER. Is she a woman who tries to attract the attention and admiration of men?

MRS. HOUSEMAN. Oh, no! She is very, *very* nice! Why, one of my boarders, a Mr. Hinson, tried to be attentive to her and she would have nothing to do with him. And one day a man came and asked her to go for a ride but she would not go. Then Timothy Patterson, who lives near me, was real smitten on her, but she wouldn't have anything to do with him. She is very, *very* nice.

MARY TALKER. Did Mr. Josiah Judkins ever come to your house to see her?

MRS. HOUSEMAN. No, he did not. He walked home from down town with her once or twice, but he did not come to see her. I think he was quite taken with her, and who could blame him, when she is so nice and bright looking, and attractive, and pleasant, and so very, *very* nice? But I am sure she did not care about him or try to get him away from that Cornelia Pickle. She doesn't care about the men, I am sure, because she told me that it would be years and years before she could forget her dead husband. She is very, *very* nice—and prompt to pay her board.

MARY TALKER. And you think she did not lead Mr. Judkins on?

MRS. HOUSEMAN. Oh, no, indeed. She might have been pleasant to him because she is so jolly and so very, *very* nice, but I sure she did not care about catching him because she—well; she—

MARY TALKER. What is it? Tell us why?

MRS. HOUSEMAN (*hesitating*). Well, because from something she said I think there is a man over to Barneyville she has her eye on.

MARY TALKER. Thank you, Mrs. Houseman. I hope the ladies of the jury have been impressed with your important testimony because it proves Mrs. Dashing has not tried to capture Mr. Judkins.

MRS. SHARP. I wish to ask you, Mrs. Houseman, why Mrs. Dashing refused the attentions of the men you referred to.

MRS. HOUSEMAN (*hesitating*). Well, I—that is—she—

MRS. SHARP. I demand an answer to my question.

MARY TALKER (*jumping up*). Your honoress, I object to the question.

MRS. SHARP (*jumping up*). Your honoress, I want that question answered.

JUDGE. Objection overruled. (*To WITNESS.*) Answer the question.

MRS. HOUSEMAN. Well, she—she said they didn't have money enough to suit her and the next time she married she was going to get some dough. But she is very, *very* nice.

MRS. SHARP. Did she say why she would not forget her husband for years and years?

MRS. HOUSEMAN (*hesitating*). Ye-es.

MRS. SHARP. Why was it?

MARY TALKER (*jumping up*). Your honoress, I object to the question.

MRS. SHARP (*jumping up*). Your honoress, I want that question answered.

MISS NERVY. Make her answer it.

MRS. FLASHLY. Yes, make her answer. I want to know why it is.

MISS AILING. Where is my heart medicine? This is so exciting I am sure I'll have a heart spell. (*Hunts in bag, finds bottle and takes a drink*)

JUDGE (*rapping*). Order! Silence! Objection overruled. Question must be answered. Maybe it has no bearing on

the case, but I want to know why she won't forget her husband—most women do.

MRS. DASHING. This is simply insulting. Don't you dare tell, Mrs. Houseman.

A NUMBER OF WOMEN. Tell! Tell!

MRS. SHARP. Answer the question.

MRS. HOUSEMAN. Well, she said—said—that—that—she wouldn't forget him because he was so mean and stingy. (*Cries of "The Idea."*)

MRS. SHARP. That will do. You have given us some *fine* information. (MRS. HOUSEMAN *takes seat. A commotion is heard outside. CLERK goes to R. and talks in whisper.*)

CLERK. Your honoress, a messenger has just arrived saying that Mrs. Homebody's baby has swallowed the knob off the top of the coffee pot and they want her to come home right away.

MRS. HOMEBODY (*jumping up*). Oh, my dear baby! It will kill her. Let me out.

JUDGE (*rapping*). Here, you can't go, Mrs. Homebody. When a person is on jury duty she can't run off. They can get a nurse.

MRS. HOMEBODY. I guess I will go. Do you think I'm going to let my baby die?

JUDGE. You sit down and wait until court closes. I'll fine you for contempt. Your baby will be all right.

MRS. HOMEBODY. Lucretia Bossem, I've known you ever since you was a girl and you needn't put on airs with me. If you think I'm going to act on any old jury when my sweet baby is in danger you are mistaken, and you are a bad, bad woman to want me to stay.

MISS AILING. Where is my tonic? It makes me sick to think of that poor baby. She may be dead by this time. (*Gets bottle from bag and drinks.*)

MRS. SLOW. Lucretia Bossem, you let her go home to her child.

JUDGE (*stubbornly*). It's the law.

MISS NERVY. Oh, go on, Mrs. Homebody. I guess we five can settle the case all right.



MRS. HOMEBODY. Oh, dear, my darling baby! (*Hurries out at R. weeping.*)

JUDGE. This is a nice way to run a court. We ought to respect the law.

MISS NERVY. Oh, who cares for the law? I guess women are smart enough to change the law to suit us.

JUDGE. Well, go on with business. Where were we at?

MRS. SHARP. I will ask the plaintiff, Miss Pickle, to take the stand. (*CORNELIA comes forward and is sworn.*) Tell us about this sad case, Miss Pickle.

MISS PICKLE. There is very little to tell. Mr. Judkins had been attentive to me—such a nice man he is and so kind and gentle—and had been coming to see me—though he is rather bashful and retiring he is very entertaining—and he had been coming to see me for several months—though he has been sort of casting eyes at me for nearly two years—and he was getting very attentive—he is very quiet you know, and sort of bashful or I am sure he would have asked me—to—to—marry him. We had very delightful times—he came to see me every week and I am sure he had made up his mind to marry me though he had not really said so in words—but a woman can tell, you know, when a man admires her—and he liked my cooking *very* much. He was so attentive to me that—I—had started to—embroider some—my—some clothes, because I thought that when he once had proposed he would be in a hurry for the wedding. All my friends noticed how he admired me and—

KATIE. Shure that's so. Tim Maloney said that—

JUDGE. Silence! Order!

MISS PICKLE. Then all of a sudden he stopped coming to see me and I heard he was going with Mrs. Dashing. She is to blame for it all. She has taken him away from me (*weeps*) and—bro—bro—ken my heart. (*Sits.*)

MRS. OLDSTYLE. The poor thing.

MRS. SLOW. The poor dear!

MISS AILING. Oh, this is *so* sad! I am just overcome with sympathy. (*Opens bag and takes one dose after another from various bottles.*)

MRS. DASHING. I never took him away from her at all. I don't care anything about him; so there.

MISS NERVY. I've always heard that widows were terrible hands to attract men. I know how I'll vote.

MISS AILING. So do I. Poor Miss Pickle.

JUDGE (*rapping*). Order! Silence!

MARY TALKER. I will ask the defendant to take the stand. (*There is a noise outside and the CLERK goes to R. door and whispers. Returns and hands a telegram to Mrs. DASHING.*)

CLERK. It was a message for Mrs. Dashing, you honor-ess. (*Mrs. DASHING opens telegram and reads and then begins to whisper excitedly with MARY TALKER. MARY TALKER tries to detain her but she hastens from the room.*)

JUDGE. Here, where is the defendant going? Come back. Stop her! She can't go yet. (*Mrs. DASHING is out of the room through door R. before CLERK starts to stop her.*)

MARY TALKER (*rising*). Your honoress, I will explain. I tried to get the defendant to wait until she had been shown justice, but she has just received a telegram from that gentleman over at Barneyville that he is coming to see her this evening and she has gone home to get fixed up and ready for him. She thinks he is going to propose tonight.

MRS. HOUSEMAN. Then I'll have to hurry home and do some extra baking for supper. (*Hastens from room through door R.*)

MISS PICKLE (*brightening up*). Wouldn't it be nice if she married him?

JUDGE. Order! Silence! Let us go on with the case. I've got to go home. What comes next?

MRS. SHARP. Your honoress, I believe we are ready to let the jury act upon this important case. They surely can see who is guilty and who should be reimbursed for her sad, broken heart. As counsel for the plaintiff I am willing to rest the case with the noble, high-minded women of the jury who will be anxious to deal justly with one of their worn, sorrowing sex.

MARY TALKER (*jumping up*). Your honoress, I am not

willing that my client be misused, dishonored, insulted and deprived of her just rights. She is a fine, noble woman, and just because she has gone home on important business is no reason why we shall not have fair play. I want to say that—(*loud knock at door R. CLERK hurries over.*)

CLERK. Your honoress, there is a note for Miss Pickle that requires an answer. (*Gives note to Miss PICKLE.*)

MISS PICKLE. Oh, it is Josiah—Mr. Judkins' writing! (*Opens note and reads.*) Oh, oh, he wants to know if he can come over this evening to see me. He has something to ask me.

MISS NERVY. I'll bet he's going to propose—won't that be fine?

MISS AILING. Oh, how sentimental! Where's my camphor? (*Finds it and takes a smell.*)

KATIE. Oh, ma'am, I'll run home and fix up the parlor (*Hurries from room through door R.*)

MISS PICKLE. I wish I could go home, too—I'm so—excited.

MARY TALKER. I want this case decided. I want my client placed right and cleared of the slanderous charges made against her.

JUDGE. Well, I charge the jury—

MRS. FLASHY. Charge us? Why, I thought we got pay for coming here. You needn't charge me anything—I won't pay a cent.

MRS. OLDSTYLE. Well, I can't wait any longer. My husband always wants a hot supper and I must go home and get it started right away.

JUDGE. Well, I've got to go home and get ready for the tea party.

MRS. SELLEM. Well, the jury ought to decide to give Cornelia Pickle that hundred dollars she sued for because of her broken heart.

MISS PICKLE. But my heart is all right now. I don't want the hundred dollars and I'm willing to help pay the costs.

MISS NERVY. What a noble woman!

JUDGE (*looking at watch*). Gracious! I didn't know it was so late. We will have to close court. I'll send word around to you how I decide to settle things when I've had time to think about it.

MRS. SHARP. But the jury ought to—

JUDGE. Don't get smart now, Samantha Sharp. I guess I can settle this business up all right. Court is closed. (*Loud rap.*)

MARY TALKER. If this isn't the limit! (*As the curtain goes down most of the women stand about MISS PICKLE shaking hands with her and she beams happily upon them all. The JUDGE hurries from room R. door and MARY TALKER and MRS. SHARP stand at one side having a fierce discussion, gesturing as if very angry.*)

CURTAIN.

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