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"THE EYE OF THE GOVERNMENT"

A DRAMA OF THE SECRET SERVICE

194.
836

IN

FOUR ACTS

BY

MIRON LEFFINGWELL

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BY

ALEX BYERS

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THE CHICAGO MANUSCRIPT CO.,

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PS3523
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1911

THE EYE OF THE GOVERNMENT

A Comedy drama in four acts. Characters.

Jack Rodney-----U.S. Secret Service.

Nicholas Bunyan-----The Druggist, who has mixed in other things.

Richard Langdon-----A candidate for the Down and Out Club.

R.U. Dunn-----Who keeps the hotel.

Harry Vane-----The Banker's Clerk.

Marion Langdon-----The Bread winner.

Blanche Doe-----The Banker's daughter.

Venus Dunn Brown-----An unwilling widow.

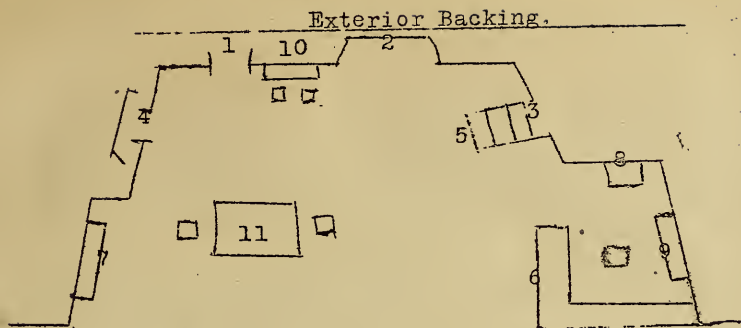
Act 1st:-
Office of Hotel Dunn.

Act 2nd:-
Garden and grounds of the Die Mansion.

Act 3rd:-
Interior of the bank.

Act 4th:-
Nicholas Bunyan's laboratory.

Office of the Hotel Dunn.



A plainly decorated interior - typical of office of a small town hotel.

1. Wide door R. of C. supposed to open on porch exterior backing
2. Large bay window L. of C. Exterior backing.
3. Door L.U.E. at head of steps with platform leading off L.
Sign on this - Ladies' Parlor.
4. Door R.U .E. marked Bar and Billiards.
5. Steps leading up to door. 3 L.U.E.
6. "L" shaped counter L.
8. Fire place down R.
8. Sofa
9. Key rack. Chairs in window, chairs in front of fire-place,
on counter there is hotel register, and cigar case, pens,
ink and paper.
10. Writing table with chairs, up back between window and door.
Election notices on walls. Theatrical Lithos, Marked - The
Great Hick Busted" Co. A liberal amount of cuspidors.
11. Table and chairs down R.C.

(At rise Venus Dunn Brown is discovered behind counter on L. She is seated on high stool, and has a music book open before her)

Venus

(Singing) (Runs the scale, ascending and descending) Do - re - mi - fa - sol - la - si - Do - Do - si - la - sol - fa - mi - re Do. (Repeats this) (Richard Langdon enters door R. at back he is poorly, but neatly dressed, his face is pale and unshaven, his eyes are red - he is nervous in manner, but not to an exaggerated extent. As Venus finishes scale second time)

Langdon

(Coughs to attract her attention) Ahem! (Venus looks up) Good afternoon Mrs. Brown!

Venus

Good afternoon Mr. Langdon, is your daughter with you?

Langdon

Why no -

Venus

This is her day - I hope she won't forget my lesson. I put off an important engagement for her sake, I was going to the matinee to see the "No money to spend" company - Claude Explair the leading man - is going to give a pink tea after the show and the matinee girls has been invited to meet him and his mother who plays the "Onjaynues" Claude is just lovely, but I think his mother is a cat. It will be a big disappointment if your daughter don't come and give me my lesson.

Langdon

Marion is very prompt about everything Mrs. Brown, she'll be here on time. Is - is - your brother anywhere about the house?

Venus

Who! "R.U."? No - R.U."has went" to the bank. (Venus looks at Music book again sings) Do - Re - Mi - Fa - Fa - Fa -

Langdon

(Gives a little shudder and shambles off door R. marked "Bar" exit, Venus continues her practice, ending on high note which she holds R.U. Dunn enters regards Venus with horror)

Dunn

Take care Venus or you'll bust your bilge! (Dunn is sleek and prosperous looking)

Venus

(Stops) Those as has no music in their souls shouldn't make nasty remarks about them - as has - I want to be a "song bird"

Dunn

But a bird who can't sing and will sing should have it's neck wrung.

Venus

I guess - I'm as good as the others who are going to appear at the entertainment.

Dunn

I'm glad you're no worse - that rehearsal you yanked me to - the other night reminded me of a "Zguinea Hen Convention". Say did I see old Souse Langdon come in here -

Venus

Yes - he just went into the bar.

Voice

(Outside R. in bar) I can't do it - I tell you - You'll have to see the boss.

Langdon
 (Nervously) Oh - all right! All right! (Re-enter R.) (Sees
 Dunn) Oh - Mr. Dunn -

Dunn
 (Curtly) Hello!

Langdon
 I - I wanted to - (Hesitates)

Dunn
 (Turns) What is it? What do you want?

Langdon
 Er---er---nothing - nothing - It's a fine day - isn't it?
 Dunn?

Dunn
 Yes - fine - for walking - why don't you take a long walk -
 it will do you good. (Walks around behind counter, gets
 cigar out of case, lights it)

Venus
 (Observes action, commences to cough) Ahem! R.U. If you
 starton that "odorous" smoking here, I'll have ~~ix~~ to get out.
 Tobacco and my vocal chords ain't no affinities. (Starts up
 steps)

Dunn
 (Looks at register) Venus! We're full - ain't we?
 Venus

If you are speaking of the hotel - yes - there's nothin'
 left but the parlor. (Exit L.)

Dunn
 Humph! That might on a pinch - hold six - when a boom ~~ix~~
 hits a town - it keeps hotel men guessing! (Comes out from
 behind counter) What's the matter with you to-day Langdon?
 Lord but you look bad!

Langdon
 (Trembling) I'm a little bit nervous - that's all.

Dunn
 I reckon you think you need a drink.

Langdon
 Yes - I know - I need one - but your barkeeper just shut me
 off. Said my "Tab" was "Canned" as he put it.

Dunn
 What - you ain't got no money - and you want a drink? Don't
 you know that "booze" is deadly poison to them as is broke.
 How would I feel if my barkeeper gave you a drink of my best
 whiskey and you went and died on my front stoop - I'm only
 speaking for your good - Langdon - Take a bruce to yourself.
 Earn some money - and then you can come here and spend your
 "it" like a gentleman - and drink all you can hold.

Langdon
 Yes - I know - but-

Dunn
 The way - you're going - you ain't doing yourself no credit -
 and you certainly ain't doing me no good. Mood'in around -
 and getting the reputation of bein' a "Bar-fly". For the sake
 of that lovely daughter of yours - you oughtn't to do that.

Langdon
 (With some dignity) Mr. Dunn - I wish you wouldn't bring her
 name into this discussion.

Dunn
 I'm only doing it for your good - Langdon - If you only had a
 picture of yourself when you get a "snoot ful" you'd go and
 jump in the river and the "airs" you put on. Why, the last
 time I saw you with real money - you had a "Ramese's fizz", a
 "Sazerac cock-tail", a "paresis high-ball" an "Absinthe
 drip" some "Old man's tonic" - and I'll be derned if you didn't
 come out then to our cooler there and "knock" our water - now
 that ain't right.

Langdon

I don't remember.

Dunn

Of course you don't remember - a man who gets loaded as quickly as you do - can't remember. (Pause) Well, I suppose I'll have to tell the barkeeper to let you have just one. I don't like to see you - so "Shaky" (Goes to door R.L. calls) Jim - Oh Jim! Give Langdon a drink. The black bottle with a tarantula pasted on it - yes - Go on Langdon the next time you come around - bring some money with you - I'm telling you this for your good. Good day! Goodday! (Pushes Langdon off R.)

Venus

(Sings outside, strikes "bum" note)

Dunn

Holy Mackerel! I wish Venus would take something for that. If she don't let up on her music soon, she'll scare good money away from my hotel. (Bunyan enters at back) (Bunyan presents a rather clerical appearance and manner)

Bunyan

Good afternoon, Mr. Dunn!

Dunn

Hello Bunyan, how are you?

Bunyan

Quite well, I thank you - I have gathered quite a batch of names for your petition your nomination ismpractically assured.

Dunn

Well - that's good news all around - ain't it. The Nominatio means the elction. We'll hold control of the town for a couple of years anyway.

Bunyan

Indeed I hope you will be elected Mr. Dunn - you know "now is the time when all good men and true - etc"---

Dunn

Why of course, if there's anything in sight - we want it for ourselves the old inhabitants of Boobville - and not for them crooks and sharks that the boom has brought here. We should be the ones to profit - and not them other fellers. Say - (Looking over petition) I don't see Banker Doe's name here.

Bunyan

No.

Dunn

Say - you are pretty close to him - couldn't you get him to sign?

Bunyan

To tell you the truth - I could not.

Dunn

What was his obkection?

Bunyan

He thought you were not qualified for the office.

Dunn

Oh - he didn't - well - I guess - I'm as well qualified as he would be. Let me tell you - it takes a good man to run a hotel - just as good as it does to run a bank.

Bunyan

I appreciate that fact - Mr. Dunn! But - Mr. Doe---

Dunn

Well - I'm tellin' you facts! Blast his eyes! I'd like to know where he gets off. I'm sorry - I ain't got no account in his bank. I'd draw it out at once just to show him what I think of him.

Bunyan

Oh well - Mr. Dunn - you don't need his vote.

Dunn

I ain't thinking of his vote - but his "infloence". How's trade with you?

Bunyan

Promising - Mr. Dunn - promising!

Dunn

Your patent medicines selling?

Bunyan

Fairly well -

Dunn

My sister Venus - takes all your preparations - they don't hurt her a bit.

Bunyan

I'm glad to hear it.

Dunn

Oh yes - that's a great cut of "yours" on your "liver accelerator" where you are standing like this - (Assumes Dr. Munyon' attitude) saying "Take courage -infected! There is yet hope."

Bunyan

(Coughs) Ahem! That word is "afflicted" not "infected"

Dunn

What's the "diff"? Bunyan, I like you - I like you because you are the only druggist in Boobville - who don't sell "booze" on the sly. The others are all in competition with my hotel - and it ain't fair. If it wasn't for them - I'd have a monapely of the liquor business.

Bunyan

I don't keep liquor even for medicinal purpose.

Dunn

I suppose one reason is on account of old Langdon who works for you. He'd mix up some great medicine - wouldn't he - if he got four or five "Slugs" in him - by the way - he's here.

Bunyan

Here!

Dunn

(Points R.) In there.

Bunyan

(Irritated) Drinking again? (Starts R.)

Dunn

(Catches him arm) Don't blame me Bunyan - I refused him - but he got down on his knees and begged me with tears in his ~~eye~~ eyes for a drink. I am very tender hearted, but he had no money - and I still refused - He finally threatened to throw himself in the river - and ~~the~~ shock that would be to his daughter and you - to have a damp unpleasant corpse ~~xxxxxxdaughter~~ brought home so - I yielded - The drink was fifteen cents - will you settle for it.

Bunyan

Here (Hands him a quarter)

Dunn

Thanks! We will let the change ~~xxxxxxxxxxx~~ go for a seegar.

Bunyan

I don't smoke.

Dunn

I do though - (Goes to cigar case, takes out cigar, holds it up in air) My regards! (Puts it in vest pocket, Bunyan exits R. into bar) (Dunn re moves cigar from pocket, puts it back in case.)

Bunyan

A cigar "unburned" is ten cents earned. (Marion enters L.U.E.)
Ah, Miss Marion!

Marion

Mr. Dunn!

Dunn

How do you think you feel - as well as you look - I suppose you want to see my sister -

Marion

Yes - This is the time for Mrs. Brown's music lesson.

Dunn

Music! Say look here - Miss Marion - I know you're not a grafter - but for the love of Mike - why do you encourage Venus to make those noises that she claims is singing?

Marion

I am trying in my humble way to give Mrs. Brown piano lessons. Mr. Dunn - vocal culture is far beyond my ability. (Venus enter, stands on steps, listens)

Dunn

But one leads to the other - she's wasting time and money - money that she might invest in my business - it would help me "some considerable" - She'll never sing if she tries from now until she's a hundred - she's getting on to fifty now. That's no age to start in trying to be a "Mary Garding". Go on, Miss Marion! Be a good sport! Tell her, she's got no more voice than a crew" - put her wise - put the old gal wise Get her "hep" to herself.

Venus

(In rage on steps) Mind your business - R.U.Dunn! Mind your business - and stop sticking your stingy nose into mine. My times my own - and my money too - Then as don't likes my singin' know what they can do - Come up in here - Marion! and we'll practice - and if that hypocritical hyena tries to interfere - I'll brain him with a piano stool.

Dunn

(Comes from behind counter) Oh very well - very well! Go as far as you like - I'll stand out of the porch - and tell people who pass by - that there's nobody bein' murdered. It's only you singin', that will square me with the neighbors and stop them from calling out the police and fire department. (Exit L.U.E.)

Venus

Come on Marion - come on! That discouraging demon has depressed me so, that I feel every note in me is flat. (Venus and Marion exeunt up steps) (Re-enter Bunyan with Langdon R. Bunyan has his arm - locked in Langdon's. Langdon trying to shake him loose.)

Bunyan

I tell you Langdon - you've got to quit this---

Langdon

And I tell you - Nick Bunyan - to let me alone -- Damn you - let go of my arm - (Frees himself).

Bunyan

And this is your gratitude when I try to stop you making a fool of yourself.

Langdon

All you have a right to expect from me is the delivery of the goods. I deliver them, don't I? For the rest I am a free agent - and I shall exercise my privilege as a free man to make a fool of myself if I choose. I can afford it. I have no asset at stake - I have no money - no position - no character, no friends, but one soul in the world - I care for - and thank God - she is self supporting.



Bunyan

I begin to think that what they say of you in Washington, is true.

Langdon

That I am insane - what does it matter what they say or what you think - now. There's no more deadly or cruel weapon than that charge as to a man's sanity - many brilliant and capable men have been destroyed or maimed in their careers because of it. It got me out of the bureau of engraving and printing - it denied me a chance to earn an honest live-li-hood~~xxxxxx~~ It brought me down to the mire of your level. Nick Bunyan - to become a swindler and a thief -

Bunyan

Hush - do you want to provoke me to murder you?

Langdon

Oh I don't fear that in the least - I haven't finished the plates for the issue of the new tens yet - besides you might not make a good job of the murdering business and I might get in my ante-mortem statement - of how your Drug establish-ment and patent medicine business masked the most dangerous counterfeiting plant in America.

Bunyan

Be quiet - I tell you - be quiet!

Langdon

Then don't make any of your bluffs - Do you know - there's one thing that comforts me - when they say I'm looney, and that is - that I have still a sense of humor left me.

Bunyan

(Resumes sanctified air) Ah - you poor wretch! (Sympatheti-cally) You poor unfortunate wretch!

Langdon

There' you go! (Laughs) That's what gets me when you exude respectability and oily piety! How your fine friends here - Banker Doe, Deacon Dubey and the rest will stare - if ever you are found out/

Bunyan

You're a hopeless conumdrum - Langdon -

Langdon

Then why don't you give me up and let me alone.

Bunyan

Because your drunkenness is a constant menace to the success of our undertaking - yes - even to our liberty - You speak of "delivering the goods" - as if your engraving talents were all that you were required to put into our enterprise. There's something else Langdon - necessary in a law breaking scheme of this kind and that is obedience to your master.

Langdon

Master!

Bunyan

That's what I said - Master. Neither I - nor are my partners willing to test the hospitality of Uncle Sam in a federal prison because you are a degenerate drunkard - therefore as you won't regulate your conduct - I must regulate it for you.

Langdon

You? (Sneeringly) Really! I'd like to know - how?

Bunyan

(Slowly and quietly) Through Marion -

Langdon

(Starts) My - my daughter.

Bunyan

Of course - she must be brought into the scheme - she must realize the responsibilities you have incurred.

Langdon

You mean you would tell her that her father is a criminal?

Bunyan

Yes - and that he is in constant danger of being arrested and sent away for a term - that at his age would mean a life sentence.

Langdon

And you would burthen my innocent child with the knowledge of my guilt? You would make her an accomplice in our crime you would degrade her - you who professed to love her -

Bunyan

Oh, that love business is a thing of the past - my ambition

looks higher than the daughter of a - a - well - what you have proven yourself to be. Blanche Doe fills my dreams now Marion to me is but a pawn in our game of chess - I'll use her to achieve my purpose - now you know my position - you can govern yourself accordingly - Good-day! (Starts to go)

Langdon

Wait - you've stated your position - but you haven't heard mine. If you attempt to come between me and the love my child - if you try to blacken me with her - if you succeed in drawing a tear from her eye or compromising her in any way with your damnable schemes - if I don't manage to kill you Nick Bunyan, I'll denounce you to the secret service - and you and I in a Federal prison, will share that hell together.

Bunyan

You ungrateful old wold - you're showing your teeth, eh?

Langdon

Yes - and now that "you know my position - you can govern "yourself" accordingly - Good-day! (Goes to door marked Bar)

Bunyan

Now understand me - Langdon - if you -

Langdon

Go to your banker's daughter - go! Go! and let me alone - Damn you - let me alone. (Marion re-enters down steps L.)

Marion

Why Daddy - what are you doing here?

Langdon

(Stammers) Marion - I -

Bunyan

(Resumes sanctimonious manner, points to bar) He's governing on the brink of danger Marion - He won't be advised by me. Try what you can do my child to have him put the demon drink behind him. (Exit R.U.E.)

Langdon

Wouldn't that make you sick.

Marion

Daddy - have you been quarreling with him again?

Langdon

I'm afraid I have - littlemother.

Marion

Don't do it - Daddy - don't, for my sake - if you are uncomfortable in his employ leave him - one who knows as many things as you, can't fail to get something to work at in this place - where everything is booming as they put it - and even if you don't. I'll take some more pupils and we'll get along some how.

Langdon

(Troubled) You ask me not to quarrel for your sake - Marion - Are you really fond of this man?

Marion

Now Daddy -

Langdon

Tell me---

Marion

No - Daddy - He urged his love on me - and claimed he had your sanction and - say Daddy - Don't let him come near me again - I -

Langdon

And you don't care for him -

Marion

Care for him - I know of no one in this world - who is as repulsive to me as he is. The mask of hypocrisy he carries is to me as transparent as glass. He fawns to the powerful and bullies the weak and needy - I don't like him - Daddy - and I fear as much as I distrust him -

Langdon

(Nervously) Then if he should come to you and say things against your Daddy - you - you wouldn't ~~the more~~ believe him, would you?

Marion

Believe him - no - and I'd hate him worse than ever:

Venus

(Outside up steps L.) Marion - did you git that pen and ink yet -

Marion

(Calls back) Not yet - but I'll get it now - Mrs. Brown - you see - Daddy talking to you - I've forgotten about my pupil - I have to transpose some music for her to a lower key. (Reenter R.U. Dunn R.U.E.) Oh Mr. Dunn! I'd like to have a pen and ink bottle for your sister.

Dunn

Certainlt - is her spasm over? (Goes behind counter.)

Marion

Spasm? (Puzzled)

Dunn

Has she "did" her "singing" - yet?

Marion

Not yet - I don't think she'll sing to-day.

Dunn

Thank God for that! Here's your pen and ink! (Hands them out over counter)

Marion

Thank you, Mr. Dunn. You'll be home to tea - won't you - Daddy?

Langdon

Yes dear!

Dunn

Oh I'll start him on his way home pretty soon - you leave that to me. (Marion pauses for an instant - then exits up-steps L.)

Dunn

I tell you Langdon - if I was in your place - I'd be ashamed of myself having a nice gal like that for a daughter - and a kind hearted generous boss like Bunyan - There's nothin' in this world disgusts me more than ingratitude - and when a fellow gets down and out and blows his last cent over my bar - I ain't got no use for him at all. Bunyan and me has been a talkin' about you just now - and you want to keep sober or he'll "can" you.

Langdon

Bunyan had better be careful or I'll "Can" him -

Dunn

(Amazed) What!

Langdon

And I don't want to hear any more insolence out of you - or I'll take my custom elsewhere.

Dunn

Your custom elsewhere! Say old man are you aware - you're making asound like money.

Langdon

Money! (Laughs bitterly) Ha! Ha! Ha! - Money! How I despise the name .

Dunn

Yours for the "brain storm shack" I knew it - I knew it.

Langdon

Money - why I handle money enough every week to buy you body and soul you poor sordid sycophantic worm.

Dunn

That's what they all say before they go "bug-house" - but I don't want none of your bluffs about here - or out you go.

Langdon

Bluffs! Bluffs! (Pulls out express envelope pulls out bills lengthwise - all fives? Do you see them? You idolatorr! Down on your knees and worship you vetary of Mammon for I'm in possession of your God!

Dunn

Why Mr. Langdon - I had ne idea that - say - you musen't mind me "Jollying" a bit - say, have a drink on~~me~~ me.

Langdon

No - I'll drink by myself -

Dunn

Allow me - (Crosses over to door marked bar, calls) Jim, give Mr. Langdon anything he wants.

Voice

(Outside) The "Tarantula" brand?

Dunn

Certainly not - give him - Deacon Dubey's private bottle. (Golds door, bows obsequiously as Langdon exits R.)

Dunn

Where did he get it? Where did he get it? And to think that all sponge was under cover and I never "knewed" it. (Reflectively) Them was some awful names, he called me. (Turns to door R.U.E.) Hello! Hello! I wonder who's the "guy" that Blanche Roe has with her. He's a stranger in town why they're coming in here - well - the -Hotel Dunn is the place for strangers - we always take them in. (Goes behind counter, enter Blanche Roe, followed by Jack Rodney - he carries a couple of suit-cases)

Blanche

Here you are sir, atthe hotel Dunn and this gentleman is the proprietor.

Jack

I am more than indebted to you for your kindness Miss - Miss (Coughs) Ahem!

Blanche

I wish I could do more - considering that I stabbed you in the back - Mr - Mr - I - I didn't quite catch your name.

Jack

True - we haven't met yet - that is - of course we've met - I shall never forget it - our - our -

Blanche

Our "painful" meeting - you mean we have not been introduced "formally" -

Jack

Formally or latterly or - kind sir! (To Dunn)

Dunn

(Has been staring from m one to the other mystified) Eh?

Jack
Would you mind introducing me to this young lady?

Dunn

What are you giving me?

Jack

Whatever is usual -

Dunn

What's your name?

Jack

Jack Rodney.

Dunn

Rotteny?

Jack

Rod - ney! (Spells it) R O D N E Y

Dunn

But what will her "Pa" say? Her Pa is one of our leading "Boobvillians"

Jack

"Boobvillians"? I don't care what kind of a "villian" he is. He could be "Desperate Desmond himself" - still I want to meet his daughter.

Blanche

Hurry up Mr. Dunn -

Dunn

Ahem! Miss Blanche - I mean - Miss "Doe" this gent here as says his name is Jake R) R) R) ODNEY wants to meet yer.

Blanche

(Extends hand, Jack takes it) Delighted to meet you - Mr Rodney - How's your poor neck - where I jabbed you with my hat-pin? Pardon me - Mr. Dunn- but Mr. Rodney and I chanced upon each other in a most extraordinary manner - I had been visiting my aunt who lives in Salem - and left her this afternoon - and took a chair in the parlor car just behind Mr. Rodney - he was dozing in his seat - just like this (Illustrating) dead to the world.

Dunn

And I suppose - he was a "snoring" away to beat the band.

Jack

I don't snore - sir.

Dunn

That's what they all say - but if you'd seen as many "Jags" as I have - a settin around on my office chairs - excuse me, go on MissBlanche.

Blanche

I had some fifty miles of Journey before me and I removed my hat and started to pin it on the back of Mr. Rodney's chair, just then - at this - this -

Jack

Psychological moment -

Blanche

Thank you Mr. Rodney at this psychological moment the engineer put on thebrakes; The train halted with a jerk - and I was thrown forward. The hat pin passed through the sushioned chair into Mr. Rodney's neck.

Dunn

Did it hurt much?

Jack

No - only about two inches and a half -

Blanche

Iwas paralyzed with horror - and fainted away - Mr. Rodney revived me -

Jack

That reminds me - while I was doing the revivalist act, I fear I robbed you of something - I found it entangled on my coat sleeve button - I herewith return it. (Hands her false hair puff)

Blanche

(Claps her hand to side of head) That is not mine sir -

Jack

It must be -

Blanche

It is false!

Jack

Yes - I see that, but I don't remember reviving any other lady to-day - however - (Puts it in his pocket)

Dunn

(Behind counter) Will you register? (Extending pen to Jack, Jack registers) Humph! What line are you in?

Jack

Line?

Dunn

Yes! What's your business?

Jack

Promoter of Amateur Theatricals! I am ever chasing the latent histrionic germ - which may develop into an embryo "Bernhardt", "Eddie Foy" or "Eva Tanguay" and when I discover a promising microbe - I nourish it until it sprouts into a bewildering ex-florescence of dazzling Thespianic pulchritude I hope I make myself clear.

Dunn

Oh yes! Oh yes! I'm only puzzled as to where I shall room you. You see only the parlor is left!

Jack

The parlor will do -

Dunn

But "then" germs - and microbes you talk of - won't they muss up the carpet?

Jack

No - not if they are real. It's only with the imitations I muss the carpet - But I'll promise to be careful.

Dunn

Remember I'll charge for any damage done to the furniture - My sister is up there now with her music teacher - Miss Langdon - takin' her lesson - but I'll go up and throw them out.

Blanche

What is Marion here - I'll run up and see her. (About to exit L. when Langdon's voice checks her)

Langdon

(Outside) No - Mr. Vane - I let no man pay for my liquor - (Enters R. shaking off Harry Vane) What sort of a place do you run here Dunn - when you haven't got change for a five dollar bill? (Flourishing the bill)

Vane

Now Mr. Langdon - (Endeavoring to soothe him)

Langdon

Let me alone!

Dunn

I'll change it - Langdon - I'll (Feels in pocket) no I ain't got the change but I'll send out for it - you got any change Mr. Rodney?

Jack

I think I have!

(Jack pulls out bills, at sound of Jack's voice Vane starts Jack hands over change - to Dunn - who takes the five from Langdon and gives him the change, Dunn then hands the five to Jack who examines it and puts it in his pocket)

Langdon

Thank you sir! Now gentlemen - you can all take a drink on me.

Jack

It's a little early for me - old man -

Vane

Excuse me! Mr. Langdon -

Dunn

Tell the barkeeper to take out for a cigar for me! (Business at cigar case, Langdon hesitates an instant)

Langdon

Humph! (Exits R.)

Blanche

Well - Mr. Harry Vane - can't you say - "How de do" to a person - I haven't seen you since yesterday.

Vane

pardon I ought to welcome you back again Miss Blanche -

Blanche

I suppose you are wondering what I'm doing here instead of hurrying home to Pa - but I've had a adventure - By the way - meet Mr. Rodney - Mr. Vane - (The gentlemen bow and shake hands, but evince no signs of recognition)

Dunn

(Puts cigar back in case) Another ten cents to the good, I'll tote "Them grips of yourn" up - and fire my sister and her music teacher out of the parlor. (Grabs up suit cases, starts up stairs)

Blanche

Harry "Marion" is here - if you like you can walk home with both of us. (Follows Dunn up stairs, they exeunt L.) (Jack and Harry watch them off) (They shake hands again)

Harry

Jack! What are you doing here?

Jack

Forming dramatic clubs for amateur Theatricals -

Harry

Oh piffle! I mean - what are you really doing here - The Bureau sent you of course.

Jack

Of course - I've been sent th "Jack" you up - Hatty - what's the matter? The "Old man" is worried about you. You don't seem to get action!

Harry

If that's the case - I had better resign at once.

Jack

Now - that's no way to talk - I haven't been sent here to supercede you - but to work with you - to help you - The Bureau fears that the position you have taken in Doe's Bank - doesn't probably give you the opportunities - you ought to have - now you've been here several months - and W've only been here half an hour and I'll bet you a new gang of criminals than you are. Have you had any of these presented at your bank?(Pulls out the five dollar bill he has changed for Langdon)

Harry

(Examining it) Why that's the counter-feit!

Jack

Exactly!

Harry
And you got it here in town?

Jack
Exactly!

Harry
Where?

Jack
From the old man - you called Langdon - I just changed it for him -

Harry
Why where did he get it?

Jack
I am going to put him through the third degree and find out.

Harry
You shan't do any such thing. He's an unfortunate man cursed with an appetite for drink - but he is the soul of honor - why to bring such a suspicion on him would break his daughter's heart.

Jack
Oh he has a daughter - eh?

Harry
Yes - the sweetheart girl in the world.

Jack
Um - I see - Say Harry - old pal - that Blanche - the banker's daughter - she's some on sweetness - herself - isn't she?

Harry
Oh she's very well - but nothing like Marion .

Jack
Marion? Oh I suppose that's the name of the "Old souse's" daughter.

Harry
(Flaring up) Mr. Langdon's daughter.

Jack
You like her pretty well, don't you?

Harry
So well - that I hope to make her my wife - her father wishes her to marry his employer but -

Jack
Who's his employer?

Harry
A druggist here named Bunyan - A low minded hypocritical fraud.

Jack
I guess they're a pretty gang altogether -

Harry
Stop Jack! You shan't say a word against Marion or her father - if you do it will mean an end of our friendship.

Jack
That's pretty hard - Harry - I might remind you that our friendship dates back more than a few weeks - I might also say that you saved my life once - and in a measure you are responsible for me - and can't throw me off - so sudden like -

Harry
(Repentant) Forgive me - Jack - but - but - you don't understand.

Jack
Oh yes I do. Harry - old chap! We have both taken an oath to the government to do it's work.

Harry

(Solemnly) It's degrading and dirty work at times.

Jack

Perhaps! "Spying" is not the most elevating occupation in life - but we owe the government our duty. Harry - you've been sent here to act as its eye - and I have been sent here to act as another eye. - If necessary - the Federal authorities will send others - you know Uncle Sam is Argus eyed - and in the end - you and I - if we don't do our duty - will be discredited and we'll have to look for other jobs. Now this Marion Langdon maybe----(Marion enters down steps L. followed by Dunn, Wenus and Blanche)

Harry

Hush - she is here - (Bunyan and Langdon heard in angry altercation from bar R.)

Bunyan

Give me that money - you got! Give it to me - I say -

Langdon

No - I won't - let go of my arm - (Pause) (Bunyan enters R. holding roll of bills, Langdon staggers on after him)

Bunyan

Dunn - I'm surprised at you - selling this man liquor! He takes money from my tile and squanders it in drink -

Langdon

(Very drunk) A fine chance - anyone hast to - Hic! (Staggers into chair by table L. falls asleep)

Bunyan

Send for a constable and have this rum soaked ruffian put in the lockup to sleep off his drunken stew.

Dunn

Yes - Mr. Bunyan -

Jack

Wait! Send for a cab, Landlord - and have this inebriated gentleman taken to his home where he may recover from his indisposition.

Bunyan

Dunn - do as I say -

Jack

Oblige me - Dunn by calling the cab - at once. (Dunn bewildered turns from one to the other)

Harry

I'll call it - (Goes to telephone behind desk, rings up) Hello Central! Give me Dubey's livery stable.

Bunyan

Dunn, will you tell this fresh person who I am?

Dunn

(To Jack) This gent's name sir is Bunyan.

Jack

"Bunyan" eh? Tell him to put a plaster on it.

Harry

(Through phone) Hello! Deacon Dubey - is this you? It's Harry Vane talking - send a rig over to Dunn's hotel at once Thank you! (Hangs up receiver)

Dunn

(To Bunyan) You see - the matter's "did" now - I can't do nothin..

Bunyan

(Pushes him aside) (to Jack) I'll have you understand that this old drunkard works for me.

Jack

Works for you? I don't wonder he drinks

Bunyan

You are very offensive - sir - and considering you are a stranger here -

Jack

I shan't be a stranger long - I have been meeting some delightful people - up to the time - you butted in - (To Blanche) My dear Miss Doe - I suppose - I also may look at the picture?

Blanche

You will be most welcome Venus you haven't met Mr. Rodney yet? - Mr. Rodney I will present you to Mrs. Brown - Mr. Dunn's sister -

Jack

I am charmed. (Business of Blanche, Jack and Venus looking at picture - Venus flirting with Jack)

Harry

(To Marion) The cat will arrive at any moment - I had better get your father out on the porch shaking Langdon's shoulder (Langdon revives - stares stupidly at Harry - staggers to feet)

Marion

Come father! (She and Harry lead Langdon up to door at back, the three exeunt slowly)

Bunyan

How much money did he spend here -

Dunn

I don't know - but it wasn't very much - He changed a five dollar bill.

Bunyan

Damn him! Give me the bill - I'll redeem it - I want to put it with the others he took - I have a reason - I want to punish him - (Noise of carriage, wheels, horses hoofs, etc)

Dunn

You'll have to use another bill - I ain't got that one.

Bunyan

Who the devil has? Have you paid it out.

Dunn

He's got it - (Points to Jack) I didn't have the change and he broke it for Langdon. (Goes out door upper. Bunyan following)

Blanche

Well - good evening - Mr. Rodney - It will give me great pleasure to have you call - good-bye Venus!

Venus

I'm going with you to the gate. (They exeunt upper door)

Jack

Now that's what I call some girl - and to think she tempted me to crime (Sits L. of table R.C.) (Produces one of the photos that he has abstracted from the snap shots - Blanche has been showing) I stole her picture - Um - (lays down photo on table, reaches in pocket, produces bill) This evidence came into my hand through luck - never had to exercise my brains at all. That poor girl and her father - and my pal Harry loves her - (Looks at bill) Well - my counterfeit friend. I'll win without your help or I won't win at all. (Strikes match sets fire to bill - gets out cigar, lights it by burning bill)

Bunyan

(As bill is burned up re-enters) (To Jack) I want a word with you young man!

Jack

Go as far as you like - old man.

Bunyan

You're a man of sense - and I think you can take what Heaven gives you and keep silence. I am here to do you a service.

Jack

Really? But say - you don't register yourself from Heaven - do you?

Bunyan

That five dollar bill you had from my clerk - Langdon . Let me have it - and I'll give a twenty for it.

Jack

Nothing doing - I discovered it was a counterfeit and I just lighted my cigar with it.

Bunyan

(Starts) A counterfeit! How do you know?

Jack

I've had them before - of the same make. (He and Bunyan look steadily at each other for an instant)

Bunyan

Humph! Well! I guess I'll go back to the store.

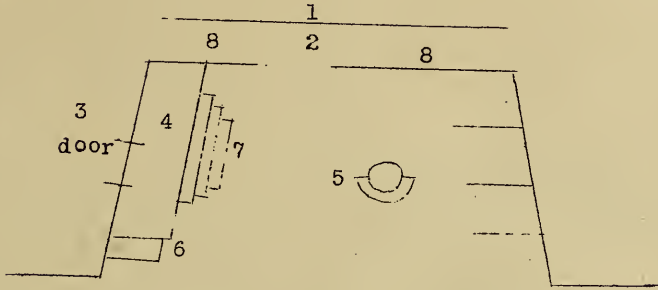
Jack

(Carelessly) You can go to Hell - for all I care. (Turns back picks up Blanche's photo - murmurs softly) What an awful pretty girl - Blanche is.

C U R T A I N

Act Second.

SCENE:-- Garden and grounds of the Doe Mansion.



E X P L A N A T I O N

- 1- Garden drop for backing.
- 2- Gate.
- 3- Handsome set house.
- 4- Veranda and platform.
- 5- Set tree L. of C. Seat surrounding same.
- 6- Garden seat down R. against return of house and facing audience
- 7- Steps.
- 8- Low stone wall with gate R. of C.

Woodwings, foliage, borders. All the decorative garden pieces possible.

---ooc0000000ooc---

ACT II

AT RISE:---Enter Marion -Bunyan and Langdon L. U. E.
Marion is carrying roll of music.

Bunyan

You had better take my advice--Marion.

Marion

Your advice is unsought--Mr. Bunyan and I deny your right to meddle in what concerns me alone.

Bunyan

I had the right once--Marion--

Marion.

I deny--even that--there was some suggestion of an engagement between us--but that engagement was broken by your own act. And now for you to attempt to dictate to me the choice of my friends--savors of impertinent interference to say the least--and I will not permit it.

Bunyan

You apparently forget your father is my employee.

Marion.

No I don't--that unpleasant memory is always with me--and I shall welcome the day when not only your business relations will be at an end, but all acquaintance shall cease between yourself and me--and mine--(exits into house R)

Langdon.

Why don't you let her alone--Bunyan? Her friendship with young Vane doesn't hurt you. He's a harmless good natured young fellow--and--

Bunyan

I only wanted to find out if she really cares for him. It's common talk that he's dead gone on her.

Langdon.

Well--what if he is--you needn't care--

Bunyan

No--I propose to turn their infatuation to our benefit though--

Langdon.

Our benefit--

Bunyan

Yes--decidedly. If I can contrive to make Vane harmless-- I shall have achieved a point--

Langdon

(sighs) Ah--you talk in riddles.

Bunyan

What is Vane?

Langdon

Banker Boes clerk of course.

Bunyan

Do you know who got him--his position?

Langdon.

Who?

Bunyan

Uncle Sam's Bureau of investigation. He came here recommended by Lignumhead of Washington--who is an old friend of Banker Doe.

Langdon

Lignumhead? Why, I knew him when I worked in the Bureau of Engraving and printing--

Bunyan

Exactly. Harry Vane is one of his spies, sent here to find out all he can about our enterprise. Marion must make use of his infatuation, and tell us all he knows--so we can foil his little game.

Langdon.

There you are again trying to draw Marion into your damnable schemes. She won't mix in them, she shan't.

Bunyan

Not even to save her poor old father?

Langdon

No--not even for that. Bunyan, I warn you--be careful don't attempt to drive me to the limit, don't for your own sake.

Bunyan

Now don't get excited, and don't get nervous. You know your nerves are what drive you always back to the red eye, and you must keep your wits about you now.

Langdon.

Who told you this stuff about Vane?

Bunyan

Banker Doe of course. We are getting very chummy of late.

Dunn.

(enters L U E) Good evenin' Gents. Good evenin' I 'spose you all are goin' to the party just the same as me.

Bunyan

I am making a personal call on Banker Doe. The old gentleman is still confined to his room with the gout.

Dunn.

And think of the money he's got. Some folks has got everything and others nothing. He can shut himself up with the gout, and he needn't worry about anything except his disease, that's what I call luxury. Did tou come to the party--Mr. Langdon?

Langdon.

I escorted my daughter--Mr. Dunn.

Dunn.

And I escorted my sister, that is, I was supposed to--but she was took off my hands. You see Venus is slated to do some stunts "Hustling Joe" "Curfew won't ring till to-morrow night" and "Casey on a Bat" and she's getting that "Rodney feller" to give her tips on 'em--as they come along.

Bunyan

That man--Rodney--back in town again?

Dunn

Oh yes, he "arriv" this evening. I'm glad to have him back. He's good pay, I'd like to have a house full of fellers just like him?

Bunyan

Take care--Dunn--take care--you may be harboring a suspicious character.

Dunn.

Supicious? Why he ain't a bit suspicious. He takes everything as is handed him without a murmur. Most of my guests git insultin' about the butter, other's have their doubts about the cold storage eggs, he never says nothing. I over-charged him a dollr seventy when he went away, and he never kicked. It was like taking money from a baby. I hope to sell him Deacon Dubey's dog before he quits town. The Deacon clubbed the dog away from his stable, because he became a sworn brother of the rats, and he has sort of since, became a lounge around my hotel kitchen.

Him and the Rodney feller is friends. Suspicious-- say if he was suspicious, do you suppose he would lay himself open to a strangle hold from my sister "Venus" Well, I guess not.

Venus

(outside.) Oh Mr. Rodney, if you could only hold my hand while I am reciting, it would give me so much more confidence. (enters L. U. E. with Jack) In that Curfew shall not ring to-night, I know I am going all to pieces that "damp old ladder" verse. Let me see (recites)

"It was e'er the bell ceased swaying
And the Maidenstepped once more,
Firmly on the damp old ladder (hesitates)
The damp old ladder--the damp--

(Looks at book.) I can't go on.

Dunn

Why don't you cut the "damned old ladder" out then. Jump it. Jump it.

Venus

R. U. Dunn, mind your own business.

Dunn.

It ain't proper anyway to swear. What will "Deacon Dubey" say when he hears you a cussin'!

Venus

R. U.--you don't want to get me nervous and spoil my evening if you know what's good for you.

Blanche

(enters from house.) What a gathering on the lawn. Why don't you come inside you folks. (sees Jack who turns at sound of her voice, exclaims.) Jack! (half in confusion) Mr. Mr. Rodney, so you've really come back.

Jack.

Oh--yes.

Blanche

Already?

Jack.

Eh? Already! I hope it is not too soon.

Blanche

(sighs.) Into the house all of you, Venus, you must help me receive. Mr. Langdon, Marion is waiting for you. Mr. Bunyan--(Venus and Langdon exit into house)

Bunyan

I must forego the mirth and joy of your party, Miss Blanche. My visit this evening is to your sick father. I hope his gout is better. (exits into house)

Dunn

Yes, how is the old man's burned leg? (Blanche has turned to Jack) Eh,--Humph. (aside.) She didn't hear me? (aloud) I was about to say (Blanche and Jack both stare at him coldly.) about to say---that--that--I'll see you later. (exits into house) (as he goes off, Blanche turns back to Jack who takes her in his arms and kisses her)

Blanche

Oh Jack--are you really YOU?

Jack

Yes, at present, sometimes, I'm somebody else. (draws her to seat besides him)

Blanche

Eh?



Jack.

Wait a minute--let me put this on your finger. (produces ring and places it on her finger, kisses her again)

Blanche

And we are really engaged. While you were away I'm been trying to think it all over, and I've been worrying, oh worrying such an awful lot. Suppose we hadn't met on the train, suppose I hadn't jabbed you with my hat pin, suppose you had been on a different train, suppose I didn't belong here in Boobville at all, suppose I had been born in Muscatine.

Jack,

Nonsense--what difference would it have made?

Blanche

Oh, you haven't any imagination. We'd never have met, that's the difference it would make?

Jack

You mustn't be foolish, darling--you weren't born in Muscatine, so you've nothing to worry about?

Blanche

That isn't the point--tell me jack, if I had lived there, do you think we would have met. I could never have loved anyone but you, and you couldn't have cared for anyone but me, could you. Oh--do you think you would have thought you were in love with another, if--

Jack

Blanche! Blanche! I can't see what you are drivin' at?

Blanche

You are evading the point. You can't honestly say "No" to my question, and you are trying to distract me. It's perfectly awful to be engaged and then find out that your fiancee doesn't truly care for you, though I suppose if I had any sense, I'd have known it in the first place--only women are such sillies, they believe everything that's told them. I don't see how I am to blame for having trusted you--for you have certainly acted as though you l-l-l-l-loved me--and--bursts into tears)

Jack,

Stop it! Stop it! Stop it! What the dev--Ahem? What's the trouble anyhow. Push Muscatine off the map, and let's have peace and sunshine again, Did I say "Sunshine"--I forgot it was night. When I say sunshine, I mean "Moonshine" I'm going to speak to your father to-night?

Blanche

You'd better not. He don't like your chin.

Jack

My "chin" why I never said more than five words, to the old gentlemen in my life.

Blanche

I am speaking of your anatomical "chin." I don't use slang Mr. Rodney, and wouldn't think of applying the word "chin" to the "hot air" you're always handing out. Father said, a man with a chin like yours, always wrecks a girl's life, but I believe in you, I never thought you were the sort of man who could fall in love with a different girl in every town you visited--

Jack

(Indignantly,) I'm not that sort of a man. I don't know what you are talking about Blanche?

Blanche

But if I lived in Muscatine, how could you have helped liking someone else. You wouldn't have seen me you know. It would have been just the same as though I had never ~~existed~~ existed.

Jack.

Well, I wouldn't have existed either. You wouldn't have caredna Muscatine button about Jack Rodney. You would have been quite happy worshiping some man in your confounded Muscatine---

Blanche

(Rises.) Do you mean to say, you have such a poor idea of my affection, for you as that. Oh this is the last straw? To have you doubt me? It is worse than discovering how little you really care for me. My heart is broken! As though anyone could have made the slightest impression on my affections except you. I never thought you--you--could be--so--so--brutal. (sobbing)

Jack

Now Blanche. (trying to soothe her)

Blanche

Take back your ring--

Jack

I'll do nothing of the kind. I seem to pick out all the wrong things to say. I want to comfort you, and you call me names, and talk of Muscatine and other unpleasant topics although, what it has to do with you and me is more than I can discuss.

Blanche

That's because you are a man. Men never do understand things that mean as much to a woman. They are perfectly dense. Tell me, are you sure, that you care more for me, than you could for anyone else?

Jack

(almost screams.) Don't I want to marry you? Of course I do-- I love you madly, devotedly, intensely--distractedly--insanely. "Bug-housely" twenty nine hours a day.

Blanche

Well, why didn't you say so at once. Don't you know a girl likes to hear it. It isn't enough to love her, you must tell her so every five minutes. Jack, I'm sorry I spoke about your chin?

Jack.

Has your father got anything else against me besides my chin?

Blanche

I don't know --that horrible Bunyan is trying to prejudice him in many ways?

Jack

Bunyan--eh? Well Bunyan will get all that's coming to him--and soon--

Blanche

Do you know that he has actually dared to make love to me during your absence?

Jack

The beast!

Blanche

Isn't he? And everyone thought he was going to marry Marion when they first came here, Marion, better off, though. She and Harry Vane are so fond of each other. Won't it be nice, if we can all be married the same day, a double wedding. (Vane enters L U E)

Jack.

Ahem, I don't think that is likely, that is, I don't think Harry Vane and Marion Langdon will ever become man and wife--

Vane

(Comes down.) And why not--Mr. Rodney?

Jack

(startled) Harry-

Vane

Answer nt question, if you please. Why do you speak so confidently of matters that only concern Marion and myself.

Jack

(pause) Blanche--you had better go into the house
--Mr. Vane and I have a little matter to discuss--
(leading her to house)

Vane

Miss Does is welcome to remain--In fact under the circumstances she shall remain. You were making a confidant of her when I--

Jack

When you "buted In" Yes, that's all right Harry, you needn't apologize. Go into the house, Blanche, go in.

Blanche

Oh Jack, you're not going to quarrel?

Jack

I hope not. If I am in danger, I willscream for help--and you can come and save me.

Vane

Stop this comedy, and answer my question, and answer it at once or--(advancing)

Jack

Blanche! (Points to house, Blanche goes into the house. after looking wonderingly from one to the other)
(quietly.) Harry, I'm going to give you a bit of advice. Never air your private affairs in public. If you think well of a woman, never make her the cause of a brawl, you only put a dint in her reputation. Harry, I'm just back from Washington. When I spoke to Blanche just now and doubted that Marion Langdon would ever be your wife. I had the result of my trip in mind.

Harry

You are still chasing the old "will of the wisp" eh? Your suspicions of Mr. Langdon.

Jack

(Marion appears on porch)

Those suspicions are confirmed. Langdon bore a different name when he was in the employ of the government. The most expert engraver in the Bureau in Washington. He lost his position through his unfortunate vice, but his work still lives. There is nothing perfect however--and the very faults--the tricks of the tool, the ~~Master~~ Manuverisms, the touch, are all present in the counterfeit five dollar silver certificate now circulating broadcast through the country. The vignette of the Indian's head for instance--(Langdon appears on porch Marion motions him to silence)

Harry

Oh stop. Stop. Stop. You sicken me with your scientific details, and even if it is true--Marion--is--Oh God--
(His face in hands)

Jack

Marion! Harry are you mad? Can you marry the daughter of a thief, a woman who must be cognizant of her father's crime--and therefore as guilty as he. (Marion and Langdon steal behing house listening)

Harry

Stop! I warn you--stop. I implore you by our old friendship.

Jack

I am standing between you and your life's ruin. I am standing between you and your dishonor. You have taken an oath to the government to perform its work. I call upon you to do your duty. If you fall down, I'll see this matter through myself alone, but by God, I'll blot you from my list of friends, were you doubly dear as you have always been to me

Harry

Then I'm to regard you as an enemy, because I forbid you to defame the woman I love.

Jack

The woman you love. You're letting your infatuation for a pretty face blight your career, and make you false to your word, and a traitor to your manhood.

Harry

Manhood. What sort of manhood are you showing when you war on women?

Jack

Crime has no sex?

Harry

I'll have no more. Go on with your damnable sneaking work--but understand--anyone who strikes at Marion Langdon, strikes at me, for I'm on her side and will fight her quarrel against you and the whole infernal secret service besides, I'll wire my resignation to Lignumhead at once.

Jack

Before you send that message, read the results of my labors in Washington. Here! (hands him large envelope which he takes from breast pocket)

Harry

Damn your labors and damn Washington.
(throwing envelope on stage)

Jack

I want to put you on equal terms with me before we go gunning for one another.

Harry

Oh let me alone, you talk like a child (Throws himself on seat)

Jack

You mean--I'm talking to a child. Before you send your telegram--read, and if you don't agree with me that the federal prison at Leavenworth is the proper home for this band of crooks "Johnny will get his gun" and let you have first shot. (exits into house)

Harry

(pause, in agitation picks up envelope from stage where he has flung it, pauses in indecision then suddenly)

No--no--no--I will not read it. I will not so insult the woman I love by such a suspicion. I would rather deny my immortal soul, than doubt her truth. (flings envelope to L of him)

Marion

(appears R U E sobbing.) Harry! Harry!

Harry

Marion my darling. (rushes to her and clasps her in his arms.) Why, why, are you crying dear. Ah--you--you heard what has just passed?

Marion

I--I--heard everything. Harry--and I--your friend is wrong, we--we--are not dishonest. (He draws her down the stage to seat in front of house)

Harry

There. There. There. (soothing her.) Don't think of it. I'll make Rodney pay dearly for every tear drop he has made you shed. (As Harry draws Marion down stage Langdon emerges from shadow of the house R. U. E. He steals over towards envelope which lies on ground
Marion.

I am not a thief--my father is not a thief.
(Langdon picks up envelope pockets it, steals back to house, exits)

Harry

I know there is no deceit in you or yours, Marion. I wish I could say the same of myself. I have been living here under false colors--ostensibly a bank clerk. I have been doing detective work as an employee of the government.

Marion.

And now Mr. Rodney is in the service also?

Harry

Yes--

Marion

(Bitterly.) I am sorry that he has selected my poor old father and myself as fit subjects for his investigation.

Harry

The man is insane?

Marion

On what does he base his suspicions?

Harry

On something little more than theory, that our superiors in office have framed--that a dangerous counterfeiting plant is in operation here in Boobville? None of the notes put into circulation here--but are distributed to distant points. Jack Rodney has become a monomaniac on this particular case, and was sent here to track down the criminal and--

Marion

He said the results were in that envelope that he endeavored to have you read--

Harry

Yes--(looks around L) Why where is that envelope, I dropped it when I heard your voice--strange--(goes over L searches for envelopes, lighting matches to assist him in search) (enter Bunyan and Langdon from house)

Harry

The package was weighty--the wind could not have blown it away?

Bunyan

Ahem. (coughs.) Have you lost something Mr. Vane?

Harry

(Looks up answers shortly.) Yes, I have.

Bunyan

(coughs) Ahem! Was it of value?

Harry

(continues searching.) Not much to me, the owner might think that it was worth something?

Bunyan

Ahem! Who is the owner?

Harry

If you are particularly interested, I would say that the owner is the party who entrusted it to me.

10-S

Bunyan

Ahem! I have just been with Banker Doe He asked me to tell you that in case you arrived, that he wishes you to come to his study immediately.

Harry

(Interrogatively) Yes. All right. Marion search for that package will you, while I find out what Mr. Doe wants?
(exits into house R)

Marion

Father--have you any matches? Help me won'tyou?

Bunyan

Don't trouble yourself Marion. The package you seek is safe?

Marion

Safe?

Bunyan

Yes, safe in my possession. Your father picked it up and very wisely turned it over to me. I shall seize the first opportunity and find out exactly what these spies of the secret service know about our enterprise--

Marion

Our enterprise? Then you are--oh no--no--no--impossible! It can't be. Father tell this man he lies-- You are silent. Then you whom I have toiled for, you, whom I have tended and loved, you whom I have always honored with a daughter's reverence, you, whom I defended and extolled but five minutes ago, you are after all a thief, and may God pity us both--YOU ARE MY FATHER.

Langdon.

Speak to me Bunyan. I cannot, I have no defense to offer. I--I am helpless. It is ~~fate~~ fate--fate that I have feared so long. Fate now stretches out her avenging hand and lays me among the ruins of all that was precious to me.

Bunyan

Marion listen to me. If that old fool had taken my advice this surprise would not have come on you so suddenly. I wanted to make you a confidante in our operations. You're a clever girl you could have shared in our prospective profits--

Marion

Shared in the wages of your crime?

Bunyan

Tut! Tut! We will call out business in the manufacture of silver certificates--a competitive speculation. However we haven't time to go into the ethics of our operations. We are menaced my dear Marion--our liberty and pursuit of happiness are seriously threatened. It behooves us all to get together and devise a plan by which we can draw the teeth of these government wolves, who are closing in on us. You can help materially--

Marion

I--I--help!

Bunyan

Yes, you. I understand that these two gentlemanly sleuths, are quarreling over you. It will be easy to bring matters to a climax between them. Vane is hopt tempered and impulsive-- Your woman's wit can devise a plan by which the Rodney fellow can be brought to put a slight--an insult upon you, which Vane will speedily wash out in his heart's blood. These secret service fellows always go armed. It would be capital if they would both be killed in the battle--but in any event, Rodney must be disposed of and speedily. Now my idea is--

Marion

Are you the arch fiand himself--or but one of his servants to whom I am listening. With your fiendish cunning you have emmeshed my father in your schemes of theft, and now in your blasphemy of an all righteous God. You would enlist me his daughter--to help you weave your web of murder--

Bunyan

Would you see your father perish in a felon's cell?

Marion

Yes--rather than face his eternal judge with the guilt of blood upon his soul. Oh father, let us flee at once from this devil. We will change our names. There must be some place of refuge, where we can hide in safety, some place where you can mourn your sin and repent. Listen no more to that man--avoid him as you would a pestilence--courage! Father! Courage-- It is your marion who speaks. You have yet some energy left---but even if you are helpless I am not--I will work for both.

Langdon

Where can we go--my child. The eye of the Government will track us wherever we may hide. No--no--you shall not wreck your life's happiness, more than you have- already, and for such an unworthy father. I will meet my punishment, whatever it is, but you shall not be sacrificed. The young man who cares so much for you, he will not blame you when he knows how innocent you are. You will love and be loved-- and in my prison--I will be content.

Bunyan

A very nice arrangement, but what becomes of me? No, we sink or swim together. Marion shall do my bidding?

Langdon

She shall not?

Bunyan

What do you mean?

Langdon

She shall act as her own heart dictates?

Bunyan

Oh you defy me, eh? You old dotard. I will show you who is the master. Follow me upon this instant--

Marion

My father goes with me?

Bunyan

We'll see about that. (he swings Langdon around L as Marion attempts to interefere he pushes Langdon violently down R. Langdon comes back at Bunyan who strikes him a left hander knocking the old man down Left. Jack enters from house)

Marion

You coward! You low-lived coward.

Bunyan

Shut up, or I'll give you some of the same medicine?

Jack

Nay--Doctor--nay. Herein the physician must take his own dose. (Hits Bunyan toppling him over.) How do you like the prescription? If you don't think it will do you any good, I will try some of my own remedies--

Marion

(crosses to Langdon who has regained his feet.) Father, ~~what~~ dear father come home?

I2-S

Langdon

Will--will--the gentleman permit it?

Jack

He's not a gentleman, Mr. Langdon, but I don't think that he will bother you again?

Langdon.

When I said "gentleman" I never meant Bunyan sir, but you. You have no objection to our going home?

Jack

Why no (pause) I will walk that way with you?

Marion

(aside.) We are lots--we are lost. (Bursts into an uncontrôllable fit of sobbing)

Jack

There, there, there Miss Langdon, don't take on so. Things can't be so bad, but they might be worse. Come! come, be brave little woman, be brave. Take her other arm sir. (jack puts his arm around Marion who is almost in a state of collapse) (Business and they exuent slowly L 3 E) (Bunyan watches them draws murderous looking knife looking at it)

Bunyan

I'm not usually s--slow to think. Why didn't I bury five inches of steel in him, when I had the chance?

Harry

(enters from house)

Bunyan

(hiding knife.) Oh Mr. Vane, I wish that you had been here. That Rodney fellow has been acting outrageously. He knocked Langdon down, handled his daughter most brutally, and when I strove to protect them, he assaulted me. It's a cowardly thing to abuse a woman the way he is doing-- Look! Look! He has hold of her now.

Harry

What! (drawing revolver) Damn him! (exits L 3 E pause, confused, murmur of voices. Harry and Jack both speaking)

Jack

(outside) Let go of that gun?

Harry

(outside) I will not?

Marion

(screaming) Help. Help. (enter going to house)

Langdon.

Gentlemen. Gentlemen.

(Harry and Jack enter struggling over pistol, as they get in front of tree, the pistol goes off, Jack retains possession of the pistol throwing Harry down R. Bunyan from behind tree stabs Jack under right arm he staggers and falls on bench stretched out. Langdon enters L 3 E goes down L) Blanche, Dunn and Venus, entering from house)

Omn es

What is the matter?

Bunyan

Murder! Arrest that man. He has just shot Mr. Rodney.

Blanche

(coming over to tree. kneels by Rodney.) Jack. Jack. Speak to me--speak.

Dunn

You hear the charge Vane? What have you to say?

Bunyan

He can't deny it. I saw the crime--

Dunn

Can't you--speak--Vane?

Jack

(Half reviving) If he can't, I can. That--that fellow Bunyan is an awful liar. Dunn! Harry and I were just skylarking over the gun--and--and it went off, but the bullet never touched me--never--touched me. Excuse me Blanche for not rising--but--(swoons on bench)

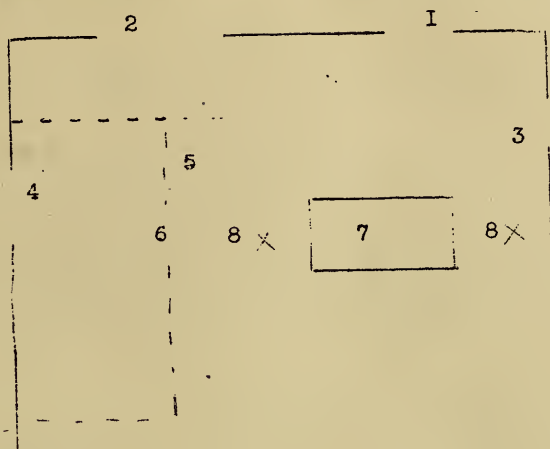
C U R T A I N E
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ACT III

Interior of the Bank.
Same Night as Act II.

EXTERIOR BACKING

EXTERIOR BACKING



- (1) Is a door at back L. U. E. Interior backing
 - (2) Is a window at back R. U. E. Exterior backing
 - (3) Is a window side L.
 - (4) A safe door at least six feet high. Door is padded to present solid appearance and has several metal plates on it--that the electric drill effect may be worked.
 - (5) Is a wire cage for teller--cashier--etc.
 - (6) Opening to Cage,
- Window 2 and 3 are barred, bars break away on window R. U. E.
Smashing glass effect worked on window L.
Electrifiers on walls--a socket for plug by safe. Table and chairs L of C) Spring roller shades on both windows.

---ooOIIIIIIIOoo---

AT RISE:---Curtain goes up on dark scene. Noise of file on bars of window R. U. E. Bunyan from behind window works spring rolling shade, it rises, revealing Bunyan and Langdon. Langdon carries pocket lamp. Bunyan climbs through window R U E He carries a bag, supposed to contain burglar tools.

Bunyan

Come on Daddy. Come on and don't take all night about it? (Langdon climbs through window follows Bunyan down stage. Bunyan after placing bag on table crosses over R by safe door)

Langdon

Speak Bunyan? Why have you brought me here and what new devilry is your fertile brain hatching?

Bunyan

Would you call the assurance of our safety, devilry? I want to make certain that neither of us goes to a Federal prison. Behind the doors of that vault--(pointing to door of safe,) is the only tangible evidence against us?

Langdon

The only evidence?

Bunyan

Yes, the plates engraved by you and every printed note we have not already put into circulation.

Langdon.

How did they get here in Doe's Bank?

Bunyan

I placed them in a tin cash box, which I locked and sealed and left here this afternoon.

Langdon.

That was madness. I can't see what--

Bunyan

Langdon, you can't see a great many things. You are not the only scientist who is an idiot when common sense is required?

Langdon.

Is it common sense to put your head in the lion's jaws. With the net of the secret service being drawn closer and tighter around us every hour, instead of destroying those damning proofs, you place them here--where--

Bunyan

Where no one would ever think of searching for them. You wouldn't look for counterfeit money in a bank, would you?

Langdon.

But, why have we forced our way in here?

Bunyan

Because conditions have changed since this afternoon. Rodney lies wounded in the Bankers house, and is being nursed by Blanche Mr. Does has learned by this--that you and I are under suspicion? I wouldn't sleep early to-night thinking that they might take it into their heads to examine that tin box-- in the morning--

Langdon

And you propose now--

Bunyan

To remove the box with it's dangerous contents from Banker Doe's safety vault.

Langdon

Burglarly--eh?

Bunyan

You have hit it. So get busy. This bag contains all the necessary "junk" to blow the safe. (They busy themselves over electric drill which is attached to wire and plug)

Bunyan

(examining wall with lantern.) There ought to be a socket here. Ah yes--here it is. (unscrews incandescent globe attaches plug in it's place)

Now my chemical friend you had better prepare the explosives while I drill the holes. (places the drill against the metal plates on door of vault. The electric sparks fly)

Langdon.

One moment.

Bunyan

Eh? What is it. (continues using the drill)

Langdon.

Grant that we get access to the interior of the vault--do we take any of the contents besides the tin box the evidence of our crime?

Bunyan

My Dear Langdon. I am declined to take anything that is of value?

Langdon.

Then I will have nothing to do with the job?

Bunyan

Eh--what's this--Rebellion?

Langdon.

I want to have a thorough understanding before we go further.

Bunyan

Have you grown squeamish already.

Langdon.

Yes.

Bunyan

You're willing to steal one thing and not another. What's the difference?

Langdon.

I am helping you to gain possession of the box in order that it be destroyed, and that we may save ourselves from prison. but that is as far as I will go. I will go no deeper into the pit of hell?

Bunyan

Old man. You can go as far as you like. Allow me the same privilege.

Langdon.

No

Bunyan

What's that. (ceases working drill)

Langdon.

I say, NO. Before you take another step in this burglarly --I want your solemn oath, that you will leave the contents of that safe inviolate, save for what we can call our own.

Bunyan

(pause, then carelessly.) Oh very well (resumes business with drill, the sparks fly again)

Langdon.

Your oath--I said--

Bunyan

You have it. Why--how suspicious you are.

Don't you know that whatever my faults may be, truth is my strong point?

Langdon.

And furthermore--those plates and every counterfeit note in that box are to be destroyed at once.

Bunyan

Anything more?

Langdon.

That you will not interfere with my daughter, and myself leaving you immediately. I am sickened with the atmosphere of crime. I wish to pass my few remaining days in honest work and in peace. (pause.) Do you agree to my terms?

Bunyan

Of course. Only get a move on you and prepare the blast.

Langdon.

(Busying himself with vials etc which he takes from bag) (Looks at Bunyan who has been busy with electric drill all the time.) Why are you crilling those holes by the hinges, it would be better to blow off the combination. (Bunyan unscrews plug)

Bunyan

You are the doctor, but this wire isn't long enough--we'll use the other socket.

Dunn

(Outside.) You'd better let me try my hand at it, Miss Blanche, I'm the candy kid when it comes to locks.

Langdon

(whispers) There's someone at the front door.

Bunyan

Yes, they're trying to get in.

Quick! (signs to Langdon who gathers up package placing them in bag)

Dunn.

(outside) Gosh ding it, I've dropped the key. Got a match Venus?

Bunyan

Here! (To Langdon and handing him drill and wire) Now we'd better chase.

Langdon.

How? Where?

Bunyan

Where we got in, Idiot, (steps on chair jumps out window R U E. Bunyan follows with bag but loses his cap pulls down shade) (pause enter Dunn, Blanche and Venus)

Dunn

I'd like to know what we all are doing in your Pa's bank at this time of the night, Miss Blanche?

I feel very much in the dark.

Blanche

Well, I'll throw a little light on the subject if I can find the switch. Ah. (she gropes along wallmat back finds switch The lights go up) Ah! That's better.

Venus

I should say it was, I'm always in the dark.

Dunn

Why--what are you scared of?

Venus

I'm always afraid of some wicked man grabbing hold of me?

Dunn

You ought to carry a pocket lamp and flash it on him, then he'd drop dead.

Venus

R. U. Dunn. What do you mean by that?

Dunn

Nothing. Say Miss Blanche, whay are we here?

Blanche

Papa wants the combination changed on the safe. He is too ill to come over himself and sent me--

Dunn

And can you change it?

Blanche

Of course. I know all about this safe. It was installed when I was a little girl, and I watched the workman--every move they made. (Blanche sets to work at combination)

Venus

I suppose Blanche regarded her father's bank as a play ground, and the safe was a sort of toy. You male creatures don't understand these things, which means so much. Ah the memories of my girlish pranks, are always lingering with me. (Blanche consults numbers on card while working at safe)

Dunn

Why, all children are alike. You and me was just as foolish. You know Miss Blanche. Our father was an undertaker and me and Venus used to play "Hide and Seek" among the Coffins.

Venus

R. U. you are a heartless brute?

Dunn

I'd like to know--why?

Venus

You are always reminding me of my three husbands who are lying side by side on the hill-side yonder. (sobs violehtly) Silent--silent--

Dunn

Now Venus cut out them weeps, and think how much better off they are. Why, if they could talk they'd all congratulate one another. Don't blame me for gettin' started on this cryin' spell. You know you're only sore because you didn't get no chance to-night to do your stunts. All the excitement we've had and Mr. Rodney gettin' hurt.

Venus

Poor Jack! Poor Jack! He must come to the hotel just as soon as possible--so I can nurse him.

Blanche

He will be better off where he is Venus. I'll attend to the nursing. (Opens safe)

Venus

Pardin me Miss Blanche Doe, but I might remind you that the Hotel Dunn is Mr. Rodney's regular domicile. He has always stopped with us since he came to town.

Blanche

And I might remind you Mrs Venus Dunn, Brown, that I was the one who brought him to your hotel.

Venus

And I have regarded him as one of the family.

Blanche

I regard him something like that myself.

Venus

I don't know why you should.

Blanche

Blanche

(flares up.) Why shouldn't I? I've known him longer than you have or anyone else has in town. I met him on his way here and we became friends from the moment I jabbed him with my hat pin?

Venus

I also might remind you that I am experienced as a nurse. I nursed my three husbands in their last illnesses ---

Blanche

Yes--and they all died in you. I'm not going to have my jack take any chances.

Venus

R. U! R. U! (to Dunn) If you expect to have the use of my money in your hotel another day. You will take me home at once. I don't intend to remain here another minute in the bank of the father of this person, and be insulted?

Dunn

Oh "Dill Pickles"--Venus, we've got to see Miss Blanche back to her house first?

Blanche

Don't worry about me Mr Dunn. (consulting card) (reads) Three--two--one--four--seven nine. Eight--six five. (Busies herself with new combination.) Three --two--one--

Venus

Are you coming?

Blanche

(still twisting knob.) Go on Mr. Dunn, I'm not afraid to go home in the dark, even if I haven't had three husbands.

Venus

That's a slur at me. Well, let me tell you that I'm young enough to have three more.

Blanche

YOUNG enough? Humph?

Venus

Yes--how old do you think I am?

Blanche

Forty--seven--nine (reading off card business with knobs)

Venus

What!

Blanche

Four--seven--nine Don't bother me, I'm busy?

Venus

(Grabs Dunn.) Come on. (dragging him to door L U E)

Dunn

(struggling with her.) Venus--be good.

Harry

(enters with loaded revolver) Throw up your hands everybody?

Dunn

Holy Mackerel! What's this? Don't shoot. Don't shoot. (gets behind Venus)

Harry

How did you get in here and what are you doing?

Blanche

They came with me, Mr. Vane. I am here by my father's directions?

Harry

Oh--I--I--I--beg pardon, Miss Doe, but you can understand my anxiety. I was passing with Miss Langdon, and saw a light through the curtains heard voices and was curious?

Dunn

You thought we was burglars?

Harry

Naturally?

Venus

"Burglars." That's another insult, R. U. If you don't come along at once, I'll shut-up the hotel to-morrow.
(exits L U E)

Dunn

Now Venus (following.) Excuse me Miss Blanche, I suppose Mr. Vane will look after you now. (exits L U E)

Blanche

(at combination) Eight--six--five. Eight--six--five. Eight--six (pause.) five. (closes safe door.) There it's done.
(rises from knees puts card in bag snaps it and faces Harry)

Harry

You will pardon my curiosity Miss Blanche, but what does this mean?

Blanche

I came here by my father's instructions to change the combination?

Harry

Oh, I see. Your father then has evidently lost confidence in me?

Blanche

In a measure--yes. The dreadful affair to-night where poor Jack (checks herself) When poor Mr. Rodney was hurt, do doubt had something to do with Papa's action. I told him all I knew about the affair. I don't think he believes you are dishonest, no more do I Mr Vane--but- he thinks you are being made the tool of a band of criminals. (Marion appears in door L U E) Some proofs against whom are at present in that safe. Papa knew you had the old combination, and feared that in a moment of weakness --you might--

Harry

That I might be false to my trust. I suppose Mr. Rodney has--

Blanche

Jack never said a word against you--Mr. Vane?

Harry

Ah, but he has lied about others. He has lied about Marion who is one of God's Angels--and I'll hate him for it to my dying day.

Marion

Harry--for my sake--take back those words--

Harry

Marion--

Marion

You are more cruelly unjust to Mr. Rodney, than he has seemed to be to me. Blanche, be generous, and don't repeat what you have just heard. Mr. Rodney and Harry have been life long friends, and God forbid that I should be the one to break their friendship?

Blanche

Marion--I have faith in you. Your father and his employer are both under strong suspicion, but I am sure you have no knowledge of their crimes, and whether their innocence or guilt is established, you can count on me as your friend

Marion

I bless you for your confidence, Blanche, but I am my father's daughter, and whether he is innocent or guilty--I will not forsake him?

Blanche

(pause) My mission here is accomplished and I will return home--

Harry

One moment--will you step here Miss Blanche. (seats himself at table L)

Blanche

(crosses over.) Certainly! What is it, Mrs Vane?
(as Blanche crosses L Marion goes over to Right)

Harry

I want to write a few lines to your father, my resignation-- which I will ask you to deliver to him--also my keys-- (Marion picks up Langdon's hat examines it, recognizes it and starts)

Blanche

(pause, watching Harry at table writing.) One minute Mrs Vane. I had rather not accept the commission. What's the matter with stepping over and seeing "Pap" and talking over matters with him yourself.

Marion

(has concealed hat under wrap, is at window upper R pulls on spring blind, it flies up and discloses Langdon perring in window. Ah! (giving startled cry hastily pulls down blind again. (Blanche and Harry turn on cry)

Harry

Marion

Blanche

Why--what's the matter?

Marion

(stammers.) Nothing? The excitement--this suspense, this-- I--I will go to my home--

Harry

I will see you there Marion?

Marion

No--no--no--you--Harry--you do as Blanche asks you. go see her father, I advise it. I beg you will do it--it is best. Don't worry about me, I will be all right.

Harry

But why this sudden agitation

Marion.

Can you wonder at it. I have held up so long, my nerves are giving way--you--you go with Blanche--and let me go home.

Blanche

Do as she asks--Mr. Vane. I believe myself it will be best. (pause, Harry nods assent.)

(Boanche passes her arm around Marion's waist. They exuent L U E Blanche soothing Marion who is sobbing softly.

Harry turns switch the lights on stage go out)

(Pause) The spring curtain in window R. U. E. rises, disclosing Langdon and Bunyan)

Bunyan.

Put the explosive in the holes I have drilled already don't drill new ones around the combination. Make all ready to blow the safe, but delay the explosion until I return.

Langdon

Return! Why, where are you going?

Bunyan

I am going to to try and get hold of the new combination.
 (Disappears to L. exits. Langdon climbs in window carrying bag, prepares funnel, blows powder in hole of safe, take time to all the details--finally getting fuse and attaching it. While he is at work, Marion appears at window R U E)
 (climbs in by means of chair, comes silently down touches Langdon on shoulder)

Langdon.

(starts and turns.) Marion!!

Marion

So this is what your oath is worth? Your solemn oath? Sworn to me, but a few hours ago, that you would never again do a dishonest act. And, here I discover you in the act.

Langdon.

Marion---let me explain?

Marion.

You can explain nothing. You can't make me forget that in my veins flows the blood of a thief--for you are my father.

Langdon.

And YOU call me THIEF?

Marion.

What are you but a thief--a secret--prejuded--and midnight thief. What else can your presence mean, here in the bank at this hour?

Langdon.

Marion, I intended to take nothing that isn't mine. There in the vault are the damning proofs that can send me to a felon's cell. If they are destroyed, I am safe. I am trying to get possession of them--only them! I will take nothing else, not a penny--so help me GOD.

Marion.

Is Bunyan in this affair with you?

Langdon.

Yes--but he has sworn to take nothing else.

Marion.

And you believe his oath?

Langdon.

He dare not go back on it.

Marion.

Does his oath mean more to him than your oath to you. They are both valueless. You will stop this work at once and go with me?

Langdon.

I cannot! I cannot!

Marion.

If you do not--I will forget that I have ever called you father. I will raise the alarm. I will denounce you to the law for what you are?

Langdon.

Mercy--Marion--Mercy. Keep silent. Bunyan will soon return --you will see, it is all for the best. It's the price of my freedom, Marion--my freedom my child. Don't you understand?

Marion.

Do you realize you are trying to make me your accomplice. Farewell, farewell--forever. (going up)

Langdon.

What would you do?

Marion.

I woke the force of the law, now that my tears--my prayers have failed.

Bunyan

(enters L U E he carries Blanche's bag.) Not so fast my dear Marion--I have something to say about your movements. I thought you had gone home already like a good little girl, but as you haven't, why you'll just wait a while.

Marion.

I tell you, I will not permit this safe blowing to take place.

Bunyan

Why this isn't going to be any safe blowing, my dear Marion. Has that old fossil told you that we were going to commit a mere vulgar burglarly? How peevish he's growing. No--no--we are going to work the combination.

Marion.

Combination!

Bunyan

Yes, I asked Blanche for it, and she very kindly gave them to me. (opens bag produces card reads.) Yes, here it is. Three--two--one! four seven Nine!--eight--six--five. We'll try it?

Marion .

You shall not. You shall not?

Bunyan

Langdon! You keep her quiet if you know what's good for both of you. (Langdon seizes hold of Marion half begging and half threatening, draws her over to L, while Bunyan works at safe R)

Bunyan

Three--two--one. (working knob.) Four seven nine. I hope this is all right Langdon. I had to fight to get it. Luckily I was masked, and even if young Vane ever survives, the blow I gave him with the black Jack--I feel I am safe. Eight! Six! Five! and open she comes. (swings door of safe open)

Marion.

(struggling with Langdon) He--he stuck Vane. He struck Vane, he said, and this is the man who is your master. Let me go. Let me o. (Breaks away)

Langdon.

What would you do.

Marion.

Put both of you behind the bars where you belong.

Langdon.

No--no--Marion. See. See. He has the box, it contains the proof of my crime, once destroyed. I am free--free--from all fear. I will lead a upright life henceforth. I swear it. Marion, I swear it, by my love for you. Give me the box Bunyan Quick! Give it to me? Give it to me?

Bunyan

(Has removed tin box from safe lays it on the floor, and as Langdon comes towards him he puts his foot on it) Give it to you? For what?

Langdon.

In order that we may destroy it?

Bunyan

I'll attend to that little business if I find it necessary?

Langdon.

But you swore to me?

Bunyan

Don't bother me! I want to find out what else is worth taking here?

Langdon.

You shan't take anything else. (screaming.) You shan't. You shan't. (seizes Bunyan who turns on him and strikes him knocking him down)

Marion.

You coward! You miserable coward, but you shall be punished. I'll have you in the felon's dock, ~~xxx~~ for this night's work as sure as there is an avenging God. (works spring roller blind of window on left, it flies up she picks up chair, and smashes window screaming) Help. Help. Help. (at window moonlight streams in lights up the room)

Bunyan

(spring for her and seizing her.) You She devil. You force me to make an end of you--do you? Come here. Come away from that window, I say. (Marion continues screaming Bunyan drags her over right by safe)

Bunyan

Keep quiet. Keep quiet. You won't? Then die. Damnyou--die? (pushes her through door of safe, slams door shut, works knob of combination.) Die a lingering death by suffocation. For there is enough air in there to keep you alive a quarter of an hour.

Langdon.

(staggering to feet he is half stunned by blow)

Bunyan--what have you done. Open the door, open it for God's sake. Mercy! Open it. Save Marion and I will be your slave?

Bunyan

It's too late. I've forgotten the combination?

Langdon.

(half crazed hysterically.) You fiend! You fiend! (seizes Bunyan by the throat)

Bunyan

I've had enough of you. (draws black Jack and beats Langdon down Langdone falls over L.)

Jack.

(outside.) The screams were from the bank?

Harry

Let's enter--I have my key?

(Bunyan picks up box quickly exits through window R U E pause)

Harry

(outside.) I tell you the man was masked, he struck me with a black Jack--grabbed Blanche's bag and fled. (Harry and Jack enter door L U E. Harry turns on switch the lights go up Harry has his head tied up, Jack is in his shirt sleeves, and carries pistol)

Jack

Let's see what we have here. (falls over bag.) Burglar's tools. Exhibit No. 1. What's this? (picks up Blanche's wrist bag)

Harry

Why, that belongs to Blanche?

Jack.

Exhibit, No. 2. Your hold up friend's been here. (Langdon groans)

Jack.

(Jumps to him--raises his head.) Langdon--I'm sorry-- Exhibit No. 3.

Harry

Mr. Langdon! See, he's wounded. Mr. Langdon--who has done this.

Langdon.

(half reviving.) Save Marion. Save me child.

Harry.

Marion!

Langdon.

Yes--in safe--locked--in--quick .
Quick. (half surviving)

Jack.

He means his daughter is in the vault. Harry, open it at once?

Harry

I can't--Blanche has changed the combination. What's to be done--what's to be done?

Jack.

No time to reach Blanche. We have the tools at hand. I'll turn burglar?

Langdon.

Safe already--drilled--charge planted--fuse--light fuse. (faints dead away)

Jack.

(Jumps for safe.) He's right by thunder. Here is the fuse. (strikes match--lights fuse.) Look out for the fire-works. (They draw back--loud explosion door of safe is forced partially off hinges, jack and Harry jump for door and by united strength manage to pull it away.)

Harry exits into safe) (enter Bunyan--Dunn Blanche and police)

Bunyan

Aha! Caught in the act. Officer secure your prisoner?

Jack.

(Holds back police with pistol.) Not so fast, old chaps. You've got the wrong man, and I can prove it?

Omnes

How? How?

Marion.

(enters with Harry.) By me!

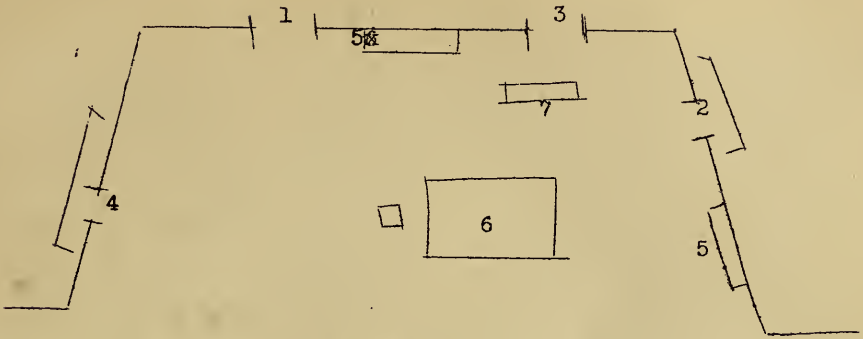
Omnes

Marion Langdon?

Marion.

Yes, and who here before you all charges that man with attempted murder. (Points at Bunyan.) I told you I would have you behind the bars--Nick Bunyan, and you'll see, I'll keep my word.

Next morning. Nicholas Bunyan's Laboratory. A plain interior.



1. Door R. of C. up stage with lock and key.
2. Door L.U.E. with lock and key - this door to break away.
3. Window curtained - practicable -
4. Door R. Supposed to lead to drug store.
- 5/ Shelves with colored jars of chemicals.
6. Table. (Large) with retorts, mortar and pestle. Pitcher of water and goblet on table.
7. Bench

(At rise, Marion, Blanche and Jack discovered)

Jack

Then Marion, you are determined to tell me absolutely nothing.

Marion

I have said all, I can say Mr. Rodney. Father is restless. I must go to him. (Exit L. door)

Blanche

Why do you worry the life and soul out of the poor girl.

Jack

That is a detail of the business.

Blanche

Then if I were you - I'd get into some other business.

Jack

Confound it - Blanche - you don't understand you've meddled

in this affair and turned everything into sixes and sevens, you are queering me, and this promised to be one of the prettiest cases that I have ever handled.

Blanche

Hear the man? He's actually proud of his degraded calling - and in what way sir, have I queered you - as you so elegantly express it.

Jack

Have you given bonds for the appearance of Langdon and his daughter.

Blanche

That is my right sir - a right guaranteed to me under the constitution of this state - A woman married or unmarried has the privilege of controlling her own money without any interference from her husband or husband who is to be. What would you have? Marion and her poor old father remain in jail?

Jack

It would be better for the case.

Blanche

Brute!

Jack

Well they'll have to talk before the grand jury - yes and you too.

Blanche

Oh indeed!

Jack

Yes - indeed. Don't you want to help the cause of justice?

Blanche

If justice is what I think is justice certainly - but if justice is opposed to my own particular notions of what is right - certainly not.

Jack

Don't you want to see Bynyan punished?

Blanche

The slimy - sneaking vampire - yes - if I had my way - I'd boil him in oil. (Enter Harry)

Jack

Well unless Marion and her father turn states evidence against the scoundrel - (Enter Harry L.)

Harry

Which they will never do-

Jack

Harry!

3-B

Harry

I am acting as counsel for Marion and her father and have advised them to stand pat.

Blanche

Good for you - Harry - I don't exactly know what "standing pat" means, but standing suggests "up right" - and Pat sounds Irish - and the combination "Upright and Irish" looks good to me.

Harry

I wired my resignation to Lignum Lead - and have gone back to practice law again - Jack! and my first work in the interests of Marion and her father. They shall say nothing to incriminate themselves.

Blanche

Bully for you - Harry!

Jack

They will have to answer for their presence in the bank and their knowledge guilty or otherwise of the burglary---

Blanche

Mr. Rodney - that is "My Pa's" bank - and if my Pa don't choose to prosecute them - what then? My Pa has a right to do any old thing he chooses with his bank - hasn't he! and I have a right to make him do anything I choose - Haven't I - and there you are!

Jack

Humph! We seem to be in a tangle here. (Pause, then reflectively) I've searched this house from cellar to roof - and I can find no evidence against Bunyan in the counterfeiting scheme. He must have placed everything in that tin box - which was the only thing taken from the bank last night. But is he going to escape! No - Damn it all - he isn't! I'm not going to give it up. I'm not going to have my labor of months wasted. I'm not going back to my superiors in Washington - and tell them I'm a failure - I'm not going to be beaten by a vulgar hypocritical thief and suffer him to still carry on his damnable schemes - and you can all put that in your pipes and smoke it.

Harry

I'm sorry - Jack - but---

Jack

Sorry - you? (In contempt) You make me sick -

Harry

See here - I've always been your friend.

Jack

I don't want your friendship any more - Henceforth I regard you as fighting on the other side - you've been false to your trust - false to yourself. Yes - even false to the girl you pretend to love you know and I know that Bunyan attempted her life---last night by putting her in the vault - that only Providence guided us there in time to save her. You know it was Bunyan who struck you to the earth and robbed Blanche here. You are insensible to your own wrongs - you are callous to the fact that this poisonous monster is to be set loose to again infect society.

Harry

You don't understand you are incapable of understanding my position - my feelings.

Blanche

Oh no he isn't - I'm sure if my father were in the danger that threatens Mr. Langdon - and that I stood in Marion's place - Jack would do the same as you are doing. Wouldn't you - Jack?

Jack

Not by a damned sight.

Blanche
What! Then you don't love me?

Jack
Oh yes, - I do -- but not enough to become an accomplice of crooks for your sake.

Harry
Wack Rodney - you take that back.

Jack
No - I won't take it back - and let me warn you that if you start anything again with me, I'll give you all that's coming to you. I'm sorry for old man Langdon, but my sympathy can't blind the law - and should be punished. As for you---

Harry
Yes.

Jack
You say you have left the secret service - well - the secret service is better for having men as weak as you - out of it's ranks. Good-bye.

Blanche
And let me say something to you Jack Rodney. If you were not connected with the secret service - you would be a better man. I don't love you any more - and you will please consider our engagement at an end. (Business, she takes off the engagement ring, he has given her in Act 2nd, and hands it to him. Jack takes the ring) You will return my letters and anything else you have of mine.

Jack
The letters are in my trunk at the hotel Dunn - I have nothing else - but - but - (Pulls out small package from inside pocket) This - I have carried it next to my heart since the day we first met. Take it - (Puts it in her hand) Farewell -
{Exits}

Blanche
What is it - he has carried next his heart? (Examining package) (Business she opens it) A false hair puff! Wretch! and I assured him it wasn't mine. (Pause) And he's gone away. He's actually gone - never made the slightest effort to make up with me. (Turns savagely on Harry Vane) You! You are the cause of this - I hate you.

Harry
(Recoiling as she advances on him, reproaching him) Why - Miss Blanche - what have I to do with it - didn't you yourself tell him your engagement was at an end?

Blanche
Yes, but he had no right to take it as coolly.

Harry
Didn't you give him back his ring?

Blanche
Certainly, but I never expected he would take it. What's to be done - what's to be done? If I could only do something to win him back again - Don't look at me that way! (Stamps her foot at Harry) You may think me a fool - but I'm not -

Bunyan
(outside) Come into the laboratory - Mr. Dunn - and I'll hear all you have to say.

Blanche
Oh Lord, the Beast! How did he get out? (Enter Bunyan, and Dunn, Dunn is carrying suit-case)

Bunyan

(Seeing Harry and Blanche) What is the meaning of this intrusion? What are you people doing here in my laboratory?

Harry

We have been visiting Mr. Langdon and his daughter.

Bunyan

That old thief has had the assurance to return to his quarter has he? Well, I'll see that he gets out and soon. In the meantime - confine your visits to his domicile and don't come prying about my establishment.

Harry

(About to make angry retort checks himself) Come Miss Blanche.

Blanche

No excuse me. Harry - make my apologies to Marion, I find I have something very important on hand - I'll go out this way.

Bunyan

Yes, go out that way - but see that you don't come in that way again - Now get out! Go to your father - "The banker"

Blanche

Get out yourself and go to your father - the devil. (Exit R door at back, Harry exit door L. Bunyan goes after him, locks door L. then turns to Dunn)

Bunyan

Now talk quickly - what is it.

Dunn

I have a message from Deacon Dubey! He signed your bonds as you asked.

Bunyan

I knew he would.

Dunn

And he returns you this - which you hid in his stable last night and he begs for the love of Mike you'll get rid of it at once. (Opens suit case produces tin box of Act 3rd) Phew! I'd as lief myself handle so much dynamite.

Bunyan

Do you know what that box contains?

Dunn

No - but I can guess. I've heard the rumors and the talk - just at present - I don't want to know nothin'.

Bunyan

You are wise - but nevertheless an idiot.

Dunn

You bet I'm wise - Thank Heaven - I've never been sharp enough to be mixed up in anything like you and the deacon - The deacon has been praying all night and is threatened with nervous "prostration" this morning - I guess I'll go. (Knock on door L.)

Bunyan

Eh? What is it?

Harry

Unlock this door - I want to leave here.

Bunyan

You'll wait till I get ready.

Harry

You'll unlock it now - or I'll break it down. (Bunyan ~~takes~~ takes off coat quickly, throws it over tin box on table.)

Bunyan

(To Dunn, speaking rapidly) Not a word to him about this.

Dunn

What do you take me for? (Bunyan unlocks door L. Harry re-enters)

Harry

I am going to arrange for the immediate removal of Mr. Langdon and his daughter from this house.

Bunyan

The sooner the better - are you going Dunn? Let me see you gentlemen out. (Ushers them out door R.U.E. at back, they exit Bunyan following as he exits. Blanche climbs through window at back L. flings Bunyan's coat off box, hesitates is about to try and climb through window, when Bunyan re-enters, he sees her with box.)

Bunyan

Aha! (Turns and locks door R.U.E. as he does so, Blanche flings box through door L.)

Blanche

(Screams) Marion! Marion! (Closing door L. and locking it as Bunyan rushes over, they struggle for the key, Blanche has possession of it and throws it out the window upper L.)

Bunyan

Your little devil! Do you want me to murder you?

Blanche

Oh I'm not afraid of you - you big coward - although you're clever in fighting women.

Bunyan

Why have you done this thing?

Blanche

To square myself with the man I love.

Bunyan

Jack Rodney - eh.

Blanche

Yes - we just had a quarrel and broke off with each other. I thought he was cruel to Marion and her father - and he thought I was insympathy with the crooks and we had a row.

Bunyan

Oh you had a row - eh.

Blanche

And I wanted to show Jack I was willing to help him in his war against vermin like you - and I took the box - and there you are -

Bunyan

Yes - and can you tell what's going to happen to you now?

Blanche

No - but I know what will happen to you if you lay a finger on Redfield Doe's daughter.

Bunyan

Rodney loves you for your pretty face - Beauty is precious to every woman - I'm going to spoil your beauty, my lady. Do you know what is in this jar? (Takes down jar from shelf) The oil of white Vitriol otherwise- Sulphuric Acid, Have you ever seen a face burned with sulphuric acid - Blanche. The hideous and hellish scars it leaves would turn venus xinti a gargoyle. (Pouring out acid in glass)

Blanche

And youx would attempt this outrage on me? (Other side of table)

Bunyan

Attempt with me - means to succeed.

Blanche

(Screams) Marion! Marion! Help me! Help me!

Bunyan

She can't - you've locked her in. Now take your last look at pretty blanche in that mirror (Raises goblet) (Knock on door)

Blanche

Ah! (Knock repeated louder, Bunyan lays down goblet on table with threatening gesture to Blanche who is about to speak, lays his finger on his lips to command silence, knock again)

Jack

(Outside) It's no use Bunyan to play possum - I know you are there - and I'm coming in. (Bunyan goes up to shelf, looks for and picks up knife, as he turns back, Blanche quickly empties Goblet and quickly refills it from water-pitcher on table. Bunyan goes over to door R.U.E. hesitates - returns to Blanche)

Bunyan

(Whispers) You speak when he knocks again! (Menacing her with knife)

Jack

(Outside) Are you going to keep me here all day?

Blanche

(Terrified by knife) Is that you Jack?

Jack

(outside) Hello Blanche - you here yet?

Blanche

Yes.

Jack

(Outside) Is bunyan there?

Blanche

(Paused) N--no--no.

Jack

(Outside) He's somewhere about the building - let me in! There's no escape for him. Deacon Dubey has been chattering and I've got Bunyan this time with the goods.

Bunyan

(Suppressed) Ah!

Jack

(Outside) Open the door - Blanche - quickly!

Bunyan

(Prompts Blanche menacing her with knife) In a minute.

Blanche

(Stammers) In a minute.

Bunyan

(Quickly picks up goblet from table, whispers) Unlock the door!

Blanche

What are you going to do?

Bunyan

Do as I tell you. (Blanche unlocks the door) (Jack enters) (Bunyan throws the goblet of liquid full in Jack's face. Jack utters a cry, claps hands to eyes)

Jack

Ah! What are you trying to do, blind me?

Bunyan

Your sweetheart did it. You are blinded forever. (Laughs) Ha! Ha! Ha! Take your hands away! Take them away! I want to see the acid do it's work. (Advances on Jack, who suddenly straightens up as Bunyan gets within reaching distance and knocks Bunyan down)

Bunyan

(On ground) What! You can see?

Jack

Yes - Nick Bunyan - I can see.

Bunyan

But the acid.

Blanche

I threw that out - you beast and put water in it's place. Jack he was going to burn me with it.

8-B

Jack
What? (Bunyan rises, retreats down L.)

Blanche
Hit him again O Jack! Hit him again. (Enter Dunn and Harry R.U.E.)

Jack
Bunyan your course is run. Produce that box, Dubey sent you by Dunn.

Blanche
He can't do it jack. I threw it into Marion's room and locked the door.

Jack
Dunn break open that door while I make sure of this fellow. (Dunn and Harry burst open door L. exeunt, as Jack seizes Bunyan from behind as Bunyan tries to exit R.U.E.)

Bunyan
Dunn you - this is where I get you! (Turns on Jack with knife) I misses you last night, but now - (They struggle, jack gets Bunyan down on knees in front of him and forces the knife into Bunyan's breast, Bunyan utters a groan - falls dead R.C.) (Marion, Harry, Dunn enter L.)

Jack
Quick the box.

Marion
I have destroyed it's contents beyond recognition - Mr. Rodney, I had to save my father.

Jack
Humph! So the Eye of the Government has failed, and I've wasted my time here.

Blanche
Don't say "wasted" Jack! Say - please give me back that ring, won't you? (He takes her to his breast)

CURTAIN

Jack
Blanche
Dunn Marion
Bunyan Harry

[Handwritten signature]

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