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PRICE TWENTY-FIVE CENTS



# Wiggins of Pop-Over Farm

COMEDY DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS

BY

HOWARD P. TAYLOR

Fitzgerald Publishing Corporation  
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★**COMMODORE, THE.** 25 cents. A comedy in 3 acts, by ERASTUS OSGOOD. 6 males, 4 females. 2 interiors. Time, 2 hours. A very novel plot, worked out in an original manner involving the transfer of a large block of mining stock in which transaction the commodore assumes the role of a protecting genius. The dialogue is particularly bright, flows naturally and leads up to an unexpected climax, the suspense being sustained until final curtain. Amateur performances free. Professional acting rights upon application.

★**MORE MONEY THAN BRAINS.** 25 cents. A comedy in 2 acts, by PERCIVAL P. HALL. 7 male, 2 female characters. 1 interior. Time, about 50 minutes. *Pierre*, a struggling artist, short in money but "long" in debts is induced by his friend *Harry* to have his wealthy but "close" uncle informed of his sudden death; *Harry* hoping by this ruse to extract some funds from uncle. The funds were found but not where *Harry* expected. Introduces a typical street urchin; an Irish boarding-house landlady, a second hand clothier of the Hebrew type, etc.

★**POOR DEAR UNCLE JAMES.** 25 cents. A farce-comedy in 3 acts, by BRULAH KING. 3 male, 6 female characters. 1 interior. Time, 1¼ hours. An exceedingly bright and breezy comedy showing what influence passed-away *Poor Dear Uncle James* had upon the marital fortunes of *Frances* and *Brice*. Introduces, among others, a girl of 15 and a youngster of 12. The dialogue is very bright and the action continuous. Highly recommended.

★**BAD BEGINNING, A.** 25 cents. A comedy in 1 act, by ERNEST GRANT WHITE. 4 male, 2 female characters. 1 interior. Time, 1 hour. *Stephen*, a Nevada ranchman, comes to New York expecting to marry a society girl, but is "turned down cold." While preparing to return West immediately, his suite is entered by *Ann*; he assumes her to be a thief and engages her in conversation while deciding what disposition to make of her, and becoming interested loses his heart on the rebound. How it results shows that frequently at least "A Bad Beginning makes a good ending." A particularly effective sketch, and not "over the heads of beginners," is highly recommended to amateurs of some experience.

★**DR. UMPS.** 25 cents. A farcical prescription in 1 dose by ERASTUS OSGOOD. 2 male, 2 female characters. 1 interior. Time, about 40 minutes. *John* has become a fault-finding and irritable husband. In order to reform him, *Marjory*, his wife, by means of suggestion makes him believe he is near a nervous breakdown, Under the assumed name of *Dr. Umps*, she calls in her school pal, *Mrs. Small*. The routine through which *Dr. Umps* puts *John* is screamingly funny, and is so successful in its results that *Marjory* is absolutely satisfied with her attempted reformation.

★**PHARAOH'S KNOB.** 25 cents. A comedy in 1 act, by EDITH J. CRAINE. 1 male, 12 females. Time 1 hour. *Lieut. Kingston*, in love with *Elizabeth Jones*, is repulsed by her mother, who does not approve of penniless soldiers. The *Lieutenant* finds an iridescent knob and is seen by a credulous bell-hop, and for fun he tells her a fake story as to its value. This story travels rapidly among the hotel guests and as soon as it reaches *Mrs. Jones'* ears, her antipathy to the officer disappears. Eventually it becomes known that the knob belongs to an antique cabinet, but before this discovery is made, the *Lieutenant* and *Elizabeth* have been married; so *Mrs. Jones* has to approve. Introduces a clever girl bell-hop and hotel clerk, a female *Sherlock Holmes* and her admirer, besides other hotel guests.

★**WHOSE WIDOW?** 25 cents. A comedy in 1 act, by HELEN C. CLIFFORD. 5 males, 4 females. 1 interior. Plays about 50 minutes. *Marcella*, a young Western girl, arrives at her aunt's wearing a widow's gown, much to everyone's surprise; this she did to gain more freedom. She assumes the name of *Mrs. Loney* and to her horror is soon made acquainted with persons of that name, presumably relatives of her alleged husband. The husband appears in the shape of an impostor and demands blackmail, but his plan is foiled, and after many comical incidents *Marcella* finds her match. The dialogue flows naturally and brightly, and the action is continuous. Recommended for schools.

★**ALICE'S BLIGHTED PROFESSION.** 25 cents. A sketch in 1 act, by HELEN C. CLIFFORD, for 6 or 8 girls. 1 interior. Time, about 50 minutes. *Alice*, a clientless young lawyer, seeking a stenographer, has several applicants, but none gives satisfaction. It eventually develops that all the applicants were disguised school friends of *Alice's* and adopted this method to induce her to give up the profession, which she does. Recommended for schools.

★**HER VICTORY.** 25 cents. A sketch in 1 act, by E. M. CRANE, for 17 female characters. Scene, interior of an artist's studio appropriately furnished, and arranged with such properties as are readily available. The number of characters may be cut; or several may double. Specialties, local hits, etc., may be introduced. An episode of a girl's colony in far-famed Greenwich Village of New York City, showing a bit of the trials and tribulations of a hard-working class of girls. Introduces an illustrator, a "Movie Queen," a darky mammy, a daughter of *Eria*, etc. Gives great scope for character portrayal.

# WIGGINS OF POP-OVER FARM

A COMEDY-DRAMA IN FOUR ACTS

By  
HOWARD P. TAYLOR

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Fitzgerald Publishing Corporation



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## Wiggins of Pop-Over Farm

### CHARACTERS

UNCLE ZEB WIGGINS, <i>a farmer</i> .....	Character lead
SIM WIGGINS, <i>his son</i> .....	Juvenile
TOM MASON, <i>a merchant</i> .....	Juvenile
URIAH SPEED, <i>an old farmer</i> .....	Character
FREDDY FITZMAURICE, <i>an English fop</i> .....	Character
OFFICER CASEY, <i>Irish</i> .....	Character
BEN SKINNER, <i>a country booby</i> .....	Character
JIM NELSON, <i>tramp and a detective</i> .....	Character
LETTER CARRIER.....	Straight Bit
MR. THURSTON.....	Straight Bit
A TRAMP.....	Silent Part
SPECK, <i>a flower girl</i> .....	Ingenué Lead
AMANDA WIGGINS, <i>Zeb's sister</i> .....	Character
AMY CROCKER.....	Juvenile
GRACE SANDERS.....	Straight Bit

NOTE.—If necessary, URIAH can double with Mr. THURSTON in tag end part of ACT IV, URIAH being on in first part of act, a quick change would be necessary. SIM might, in first scene of ACT I, slip on a LETTER CARRIER'S coat and cap, take off his moustache and assume that bit, as he is not on again till ACT II. The TRAMP and FREDDY can also double. These doubles and changes are simply suggestions of the author; the stage manager may improve upon them.

TIME.—The Present.

LOCALITY.—New York City and Booneboro, Vt.

TIME OF PLAYING.—About two hours.



## SYNOPSIS

ACT I.—A street in New York City. SPECK while selling “sweet violets” meets SIM who has lost his money at the race track—gets his promise to reform. Also meets FREDDY who thinks everything is “funny” and UNCLE ZEB who is in the wicked city looking for his son. ZEB accuses LETTER CARRIER of stealing his letter out of mail-box. OFFICER CASEY comes to the rescue. ZEB once more interferes as SPECK’S UNCLE JIM endeavors to abstract her earnings. Offers her and her invalid mother a home at Pop-Over Farm; her mother dies and she goes alone to the farm.

ACT II.—Parlor of TOM MASON’S home. Next evening. SIM calls on TOM for financial aid and there, while under the disguise of MR. LIVINGSTON, meets his father who is making a “serciety call.” ZEB meets AMY CROCKER who is also from “up home” and relates the fate of all the neighbors. Old-fashioned Virginia Reel. JIM looking for ZEB to get revenge.

ACT III.—Back to Pop-Over Farm. One year later. JIM overhears ZEB tell MANDY he drew \$2,000. Return of the Prodigal Son. JIM threatens to take SPECK back to the city unless she steals ZEB’S money, which she refuses to do. JIM about to escape with the money when he is tricked by SIM while SPECK snatches the money from JIM.

ACT IV.—Scene same as ACT III. Six months later. Bank has been robbed. SPECK and SIM interrupted in their love-making. JIM appears in the rôle of a Boston detective, but SPECK sees through his disguise and tricks him into getting his finger prints. Arrival of city folks. JIM accuses SIM of the robbery and handcuffs him just as an officer appears and arrests the real culprit.

## COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS

UNCLE ZEB, a typical Vermont farmer, about 55, dressed in country style; wears old-fashioned brass-rimmed spectacles, broad-brimmed straw hat, short

trousers and coat, red tie, etc. ACT II. New suit and new shoes. ACTS III and IV. In farmer's clothes, coat, straw hat, glasses, etc.

SIM WIGGINS, young man of about 21, sporty in appearance and seems light-hearted; wears moustache. Business suit, a little the worse for wear. ACT II. Same suit, unkempt in appearance; later, neat coat, vest and a clean collar. ACT III. Neat business suit. ACT IV. Business suit, different than that used in ACT III.

TOM MASON, young man about 23. Neat business suit. ACT II. Evening clothes. ACT IV. Traveling suit, carrying suit-case.

URIAH SPEED, a Vermont farmer, about 75 years. Speaks with half-piping voice, smooth face, very white hair, walks slowly and is somewhat stooped.

FREDDY FITZMAURICE, about 26, dressed as an English fop. Wears monocle. Appears in ACTS I and II only.

OFFICER CASEY, a typical police officer. Wears uniform. Uses Irish dialect. Appears in ACTS I and IV.

BEN SKINNER. He is the size of a man, but dresses as a country boy—a booby. ACTS III and IV only.

JIM NELSON, SPECK'S uncle, a man about 40, a typical tramp, dressed shabbily with short stubby beard. ACT II. Same make-up, arm in sling. ACT III. Dressed as a tramp. ACT IV. Poses as a detective; genteely dressed, entirely different facial make-up. Can wear gold eye-glasses, light fashioned overcoat, modern hat.

LETTER CARRIER, young man in postman's uniform. Appears in ACT I only.

MR. THURSTON, about 55, wearing Prince Albert suit. Appears in latter part of ACT IV only.

TRAMP, wears dirty linen duster, slouch hat well over eyes, does no talking. Appears in ACT III only.

SPECK BARTON, about 16 years, must be young and small, plainly dressed, a little shabbily, indicating poverty. ACT III. Dressed very neatly, pretty house-dress, hair up. ACT IV. Neat dress, darker than used in ACT III.

AMANDA WIGGINS, ZEB'S maiden sister, about 45.

Wears plain country dress, glasses, etc. Appears in ACTS III and IV only.

AMY CROCKER, young girl of about 20. Stylish walking suit. ACT II. Pretty evening dress. ACT IV. Traveling suit and carries a suit-case.

GRACE SANDERS, young girl of about 21. Stylish walking suit. ACT II. Pretty evening dress. Appears in ACTS I and II only.

### INCIDENTAL PROPERTIES

Tray of violets and pins, large tin milking pail, a pitcher, tray with five glasses of cider, and a jar of jam wrapped in white paper for SPECK. Money, suitcase, coat, vest, clean collar, watch and handkerchief for SIM. Monocle and coin for FREDDY. Bills and watch for TOM. Spectacles, handkerchief, letter, bills, horse-pistol, pocketbook supposed to contain \$2,000 in bills, and a rake for ZEB. Pistol, warrant of arrest, handcuffs for JIM. Sewing material for MANDY. Clarionette for BEN SKINNER. Any desired game to be played by AMY and GRACE.

### STAGE DIRECTIONS

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



# Wiggins of Pop-Over Farm

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## ACT I

SCENE.—*Street in New York City. Entrances R. and L. Mail box near L. E. SPECK heard off stage calling "Here you are, sweet violets."*

ENTER SPECK, R., carrying tray of violets.

SPECK. Sweet violets for old, young, lame, sick or rheumatic. Warranted to smell you up in two seconds, and sweeten sour tempers. (*Walks slowly and calls loudly*) Here you are! All fresh, sweet and just sprinkled. (ENTER OFFICER CASEY, L.) Hello, Mr. Casey, where are all the peeps this morning?

OFFICER (*with brogue*). Couldn't tell ye. The population's taken an early start for Coney, I'm thinkin'. (CROSSES to R.) Sold any flowers yet?

SPECK. Only two little bunches.

OFFICER. Well, ye'll have better luck before night.

[EXIT R.]

SPECK. I hope so. It's pretty dull now. (*Yells*) Violets—sweet violets!

ENTER SIM L.

SIM. Good morning, little girl. How's business?

SPECK. Rather dull. Have a violet? Make you look aristocratic. Only ten cents.

SIM (*feeling in his pockets*). Don't know whether I've got the price. Yes—there you are. (*Hands*

money) Last button. (SPECK is about to pin violet on his coat) No—you keep the flower. It won't go well with this suit.

SPECK. Oh, yes it will. (*He demurs*) I can't take your money then. (*Offers it back*)

SIM. Well, pin it on then.

SPECK. Did you say this was your last button?

SIM. Pretty near it.

SPECK. Then you had better keep it. I'll trust you till you are flusher.

SIM. Oh, I'm not altogether bankrupt, though my favorite pony went back on me yesterday. Pin it on.

SPECK (*while doing so*). Playing the races?

SIM. Yes—and I thought I had a lead-pipe cinch, but I slipped up.

SPECK. How much were you out?

SIM. A clean fifty-dollar bill. But I don't mind that. I'll make it up again.

SPECK. Never on the races.

SIM. Why not? What do you know about them?

SPECK. Not much. Only this—that you put down two and pick up one, but oftener nothing.

SIM (*laughing*). Why, you're right on to the game, aren't you?

SPECK. No—only what I hear from my customers, who come back broke. (*Laughs*) Better save your money, young man, or the rainy day may come upon you before you expect it.

SIM. Oh, I don't mind that. I'll borrow my friends' umbrellas, if it does. You've got to have sand to get along in this world, and the fellow that squeals always gets left.

SPECK. You're wrong. The man who squeals at the race-track is he who is a man, and not ashamed of honest toil. (*RUNS to L.*) Violets—sweet violets!

SIM (*aside*). Mighty cute girl that, and pretty near right.

SPECK (*returning*). I thought that gent was going to buy a flower the way he put his hand in his pocket.

SIM. Say, you don't know of a good job floating round that would suit a young gent like me, do you?  
(*Poses*)

SPECK. I sometimes hear of such. What kind of a job would you like?

SIM. Oh, one where I'd only have to work between twelve and one o'clock and have that hour for lunch.  
(*Smiles*)

SPECK. You want something real hard, don't you? You ought to be a vacation judge or a policeman.

SIM. Won't do. I want something with snap and dash to it.

SPECK. Well, you'd better go to Africa and shoot lions.  
(*Laughs*)

SIM (*surprised. Aside*). Well, I'm blowed.

SPECK. Say, where'd you come from, and who's your parents?

SIM. Never mind them. They're all right, but I'm the scapegrace of the family.

SPECK. Sorry to hear that. But there are lots of scapegraces that redeem themselves. Why don't you?

SIM. The old man would kick me out.

SPECK. Not if he saw you meant to reform. Think it over. (*Yells*) Violets—sweet violets! (*WALKS towards L.*)

SIM (*aside*). Heap of wisdom about that little girl. She may be right. Notion to give the old man a chance. (*To her*) I will think it over, little girl, your advice is of the clean-grooved order. (*GOES R.*)

SPECK. And say—(*He turns*)—don't play the races any more.

SIM. I'll shake 'em for good.

SPECK. And make a vow to the dear ones at home that you will forsake such a useless life.

SIM. I'll do it. Your advice is golden, and I thank you for it. Good morning. See you again. [*EXIT R.*]

SPECK. There's a lot of good in that young fellow, if the gamblers and toughs will let him alone. (*Yells*) Violets—sweet violets! (*GOES towards L.*)

ENTER L. TOM MASON and AMY CROCKER, followed by FREDDY FITZMAURICE and GRACE SANDERS. TOM and AMY CROSS to R., encountering SPECK.

TOM. Why, little Speck. (*To AMY*) The little flower girl I have told you about. (*To SPECK*) How's business?

SPECK. Poor this morning, Mr. Mason. Everybody's leaving town.

TOM. Can't blame them this hot weather. Well, I'll be one of your early customers.

SPECK. Oh, thank you, sir. You always are. (*Hands him flowers*)

AMY. And one for me, too.

SPECK. With pleasure, Miss. (*Hands her flowers*) And there are pins. (*Hands pins*)

FREDDY (*in drawling tone*). And don't forget us. (*Giggles*)

SPECK. Certainly not. (*RUNS towards L.*) This will set you off splendidly. (*Gives him flower*) And one for your lady. (*Hands flowers and pins to GRACE*)

GRACE. Thank you.

AMY (*to TOM*). Poor child of the street. What a life!

TOM. Yes, it's a sad one.

GRACE. How much do you make every day?

SPECK. Oh, sometimes a couple of dollars, but generally about half that.

FREDDY. Just think—generally a dollar. How funny. (*Giggles*)

TOM (*handing her a bill*). Well, there's a dollar, Speck, for your early sales. Never mind the change. But don't let that lazy uncle of yours see it.

SPECK. I won't. I'll stuff it in my stocking. (*About to do so, when the ladies exclaim "Oh!" and turn away—the gentlemen laughing*) No, I won't, either. I'll change my bank. (*Stuffs bill down her neck*)

FREDDY. Ain't she funny? (*Giggles*)

SPECK. Thank you, Mr. Mason. That will buy a lot of nice things for my poor sick mother. If uncle knew I had this, he would beat me until he got it to spend in the saloon.

TOM. That uncle ought to be doing time. Well, be careful. Good morning. [EXEUNT TOM and AMY R.]

FREDDY (as he and GRACE CROSS). And be vewy careful of that, too. (Puts coin in her hand)

SPECK. Thank you, sir.

FREDDY (as they are about to EXIT). Ain't she funny? (Giggles) [EXEUNT FREDDY and GRACE R.]

SPECK (imitates). Ain't she funny? (Giggles. Looks at coin) Ten cents! His mamma must have cut him down this morning. (Looks off R.) Hello! There's a gang over at the ferry. (Yells) Violets—sweet violets! [EXIT R.]

VOICES (off stage L., laughter with exclamations such as) Get on to de coat! How's your sister's cat's kittens? How's pumpkins down your way? (All ad. lib.)

ENTER UNCLE ZEB L., backing in.

ZEB (talking back at the crowd). None o' yer darned business, an' my sister hain't got no cat. (Crowd laughs outside) Say, you feller with the hare-lip, look out—yer crackin' yer face. (Turns and GOES DOWN) Never saw sech an ill-mannered set in my life. Guess them fellers was born in a bug factory. Wuss'n a passel o' Injins. (Takes off spectacles and wipes them with handkerchief) Wouldn't live in New York fer all the skyscrapers in it. (Laughter outside—ZEB turns) Well, jes' laugh away if it helps yer livers any.

VOICE (off stage). Take off yer hat and let the seed fall.

ZEB (indignantly). You go to thunder! Jes' you step here, an' I'll make yer look like a wart in a jar o' alcohol in two seconds. (Laughter outside) Passel o' cowards. It's the fust time I've been in this tarnal town in twenty years—an' I wouldn't be here now if it wa'n't fer Mandy. She's so worried 'bout that scalla-



wag son o' mine what run away from hum five year ago thet she's sobbin' herself inter fourteen kinds o' hys-terics. Told her I would cum jest to please her. Glad his mother wa'n't a-livin' when he run off. It would hev broken her heart. (*Feels in his pocket and takes out a letter*) I wrote to sister Mandy terday, an' I'll jes' run down to the Post-Orfice an' drop it in. (*STARTS to go as OFFICER ENTERS R.*) Say, constable, how far might the Post-Orfice be frum here?

OFFICER. What do ye want? Post a letter?

ZEB. Yer hit it right off.

OFFICER. Well, post it in the box there. (*POINTS L.*)

ZEB. What—in that thing? Is thet the Post-Orfice? It's a durn small one.

OFFICER (*aside*). Rather green. (*To ZEB.*) Certainly. All letters are mailed in them boxes.

ZEB. Yer don't say? Why, I've seen them things a-stickin' all round, but I thort they were pigeon boxes.

OFFICER (*smiling*). Just drop yer letter there, an' it will be all right.

ZEB. I'll do it, b'gosh. (*Drops letter in box, as OFFICER EXITS L.*) Thet's a big 'commerdashun. What won't they git up next? Reckon thet letter mus' be purty near down to the Post-Orfice now.

ENTER LETTER CARRIER L., *unlocks box, and takes out mail.*

ZEB. Here—what yer doin'? Robbin' the mail, an' thort nobody was a-lookin', eh? (*Catches CARRIER by the arm, and throws him around*)

CARRIER. Here—what do you mean?

ZEB. Ketched yer right in the act, didn't I?

CARRIER. Get out, you jay.

ENTER OFFICER L.

OFFICER. Here—what's the matter?

ZEB. He's a-robbin' the mail. I seed him, an' he stuck my letter in thet terbacker pouch, 'long with a lot o' others.

OFFICER. Where would he put them? In his shoes? He's the collector.

ZEB. Well, I don't owe him nothin'.

OFFICER. Don't ye see he collicts the mail from the boxes, an' takes thim to the post-office?

CARRIER. Aw, go back home and chew carrots.

[EXIT L.

ZEB. I don't raise no carrots. B'gosh, constable, thet's one on me. Yer see, I'm kinder strange in New York, an' hain't got the run o' things yet. I'll 'poler-gize to thet collector nex' time he cums round.

OFFICER. Well, be careful, old gintleman.

[EXIT R. *laughing*

ENTER JIM NELSON L.

JIM. Hello, my friend. Just blew in from the country, didn't you?

ZEB. Mebbe I did. What's it to you?

JIM. Nothin'—only better look out. Sharpers round here, just looking for such fish as you.

ZEB. Don't fret. I kin take keer o' myself. Jest mussed up a feller's features agin thet box, an' I guess I kin do it agin. Better pass on. Yer don't look wuth talkin' to.

JIM. Oh, yes I do. Say, you haven't got the price of a nip, have you?

ZEB. Yes—several on 'em—but not fer you. You look now as if yer couldn't git to yer front door without fallin' up the steps.

JIM. You're fresh, you are, and ought to be on ice. See? (*Gets close to him*)

ZEB. Say, jes' keep yer distance. (*Moves away from him*) Yer've got a breath that would shoo a man off a car-track.

JIM. Think so? Well, you'd better keep off the track. Say, how do you pass your time in the country?

ZEB. Photographin' babboons. Better cum out an' hev yer pictur took.

JIM. Smart, ain't you? Say, I like you. Come and have a beer.

ZEB. No soap-suds fer me. Say, yer look as interestin' as a cold cow, an' if yer don't let up on liquor, yer won't hev more'n a half pound of brains left by Christmas.

JIM. Think so? Say, you've got a real Sunday-school finish to your face, and you'd better take it in. Somebody will bite it.

ZEB. Well, they'll find it the real goods.

JIM. Aw, go home and rattle your chin at the cows.

[EXIT L. *laughing*]

ZEB. Thet feller looks as if he hed nothin' else ter do but set round in saloons an' raise pimples. (*Looks off R.*) Hello, there cums thet little flower gal I met yesterday.

ENTER SPECK R., *looking troubled*.

SPECK. Oh, good sir, is he gone?

ZEB. Who do yer mean?

SPECK. That man!

ZEB. Do yer mean thet feller with a Californy sunset under each eye?

SPECK. Yes—that is the man I told you about yesterday. (*Looks off L.*)

ZEB. Don't say. Yer uncle?

SPECK. Yes, sir—a wicked, cruel man.

ZEB. The feller what treats you an' yer mother so bad?

SPECK. Yes, sir.

ZEB. B'gosh! I wish I'd know'd it. I'd knocked him as flat as a fried egg.

SPECK. He watches me every day, and if he sees me taking money for my flowers, he makes me give it to him for liquor, and I have little to take home for mother.

ZEB. The darned cuss. Where do yer live?

SPECK. We have a room in Hudson street, but it is

only a hovel. You see, ever since father's death uncle has run things to suit himself. He won't work, but steals whatever he can get his hands on, and mother, when she was able, worked in other people's houses to support us; but she fell sick, and the burden is all on me now.

ZEB. How long hev yer been sellin' flowers?

SPECK. Ever since father died. I was young then, and the good people bought liberally—I suppose, because I was so little.

ZEB. How old are you now?

SPECK. Nearly sixteen.

ZEB. Yer don't look it, though yer seem ter know a lot. Go to school?

SPECK. Sometimes to night school, when mother can spare me, and every Sunday I go to both church and Sunday school.

ZEB. Well, yer a good little girl fer that, an' yer seem ter be purty well eddicated.

SPECK. I try so hard to learn; but it's difficult, when one has to tramp the streets all day.

ZEB. Well, yer won't hev to do it much longer if I kin help it.

SPECK. What do you mean, sir?

ZEB. Jes' this. How would yer like ter git out of this wicked city, an' go home with me?

SPECK. Oh, ever so much, sir, for you seem so good and kind. But mother—I couldn't leave her.

ZEB. Gosh ding it—we'll take her too.

SPECK. Ah, that is impossible. She may never rise from her bed again.

ZEB. Great ginger! So bad as that? Say, little one, I want you to take me to see yer mother.

SPECK (*joyfully*). Will you go, sir?

ZEB. Well, I will; an' if things is as yer say, 'twon't be long afore yer jine my family. Yer see, I've got a big farm, an' Mandy—that's my old maid sister—needs some one to help her in the house.

SPECK. Oh, I can do all kinds of housework.

ZEB. I'm glad ter know it—an' yer kin go ter school, too, if yer want to.

SPECK. Won't that be nice?

ENTER JIM L. *Hides behind letter-box.*

ZEB. An' here (*Taking a bill from his pocketbook*) here's five dollars. (*Hands money*) Go buy some proper food fer yer ma.

SPECK (*overcome*). How can I thank you, sir? (*Almost faints*)

ZEB. Here, little gal, don't keel over right here in the street. (*Holds her up*) Jes' brace up, an' meet me here to-night, an' I'll go 'long with yer to see how the kitten jumps.

SPECK. I'll be here, sir. (*About to go*)

JIM (GOING DOWN). Come back here, Speck.

SPECK. Ah! (*Shrinks from him in fright*)

JIM. Where's the money that old jay gave you? I want it.

ZEB (*stepping between them*). Well, yer won't get it, durn yer. (*Holds his hand behind him, wiggles his fingers, and SPECK, understanding, quickly places bill in his hand*)

JIM. She's my niece, and she's got to account to me for what she earns.

ZEB. Well, yer'll hev to excuse her this time.

JIM. Give me that money, or I'll — (*Raises his arm to strike her, when ZEB catches it*)

ZEB. Jes' keep yer paw off'n thet kid, or I'll make yer look like a giblet pie in two seconds. Run home, little gal. [EXIT SPECK R. *running quickly*

JIM. Oh, you will, will you? (*Makes a rush for ZEB, when ZEB quickly pulls a large horse pistol from his hip pocket, and points at him. JIM shrinks*) Ah ha! Carrying concealed weapons, eh? That's against the law!

ZEB. Law er no law, yer don't trouble thet gal while I'm around.



## ENTER OFFICER R.

OFFICER. Here! here! What's the row:

JIM. He's carrying concealed weapons, and tried to murder me.

OFFICER. Well, he ought to be hung for not completin' the job. Now, move on, Jim Nelson, or I'll run you in. Ye've given the force enough trouble lately. Now git! (JIM sneaks out L., shaking his fist at ZEB)

ZEB (*laughing*). Say, constable, he sneaked off like a skeered skunk, didn't he?

OFFICER. He's a howly terror. Say, old gintleman, don't ye know it's aginst the law to carry concealed weapons?

ZEB. Sartin—sure.

OFFICER. Well, let me have it, an' come along with me. Ye'll have to answer to the judge.

ZEB. What's he goin' to ask me?

OFFICER. Ye'll find out. Give me the pistol.

ZEB (*handing pistol*). There she is, constable.

OFFICER (*examines it, and bursts out laughing*). Where d'ye get it—from the Ark?

ZEB. Purty near it. My gran'father fit in the revolushun with it. Hain't been a charge in it fer eighty years. (*Laughs*)

OFFICER. Eighty years? Faith, it looks it. (*Laughs and hands it back*) But don't expose it on the street. It might get ye into trouble.

ZEB. I only wear it to keep the city skeeters off, an' skeer fresh ducks like thet one. Say, yer'd hev busted wide open ter see thet cuss tryin' ter dodge it. (*Laughs*)

OFFICER (*smiling*). Well, just kape it out of sight, an' be careful of yoursilf, or your bed may wake up widout ye in the mornin'.

ZEB. Don't worry 'bout me, constable. I got no kinks in my instep. (EXIT OFFICER *laughing*) I feel jes' brave enough to rush into a flock o' cows, an' could lick a dozen o' them fellers. Where be they? Fetch 'em along! (*Squares off at an imaginary opponent*)

ENTER TOM and FREDDY R., both laughing at ZEB.

FREDDY. What a queer man.

TOM. What's up, Uncle Zeb?

ZEB. Jes' showin' these city bums a thing or two.

TOM. Who's been ruffling you?

ZEB. A durned skunk what tried ter git the money I gave the little flower girl. But I made him feel like a cold storage ham afore I got through with him.

TOM (*laughing*). I'll warrant you did.

FREDDY. How funny. (*Giggles*)

ZEB. 'Twa'n't a bit funny. Say, Tom, yer heven't seen nothin' of Sim lately, hev yer?

TOM. No—not for some weeks, Uncle Zeb. I couldn't tell you where to look for him.

ZEB. Well, I've been trampin' 'round this town till I'm tuckered out. Thort I saw him onc't, but my glasses wa'n't on right. Do yer know Mandy's jes' crazy 'bout him?

TOM. No doubt she is. But Sim's twenty-one, and he'll take care of himself.

ZEB (*shaking his head*). Don't know 'bout thet. He was allers so unsettled at hum, an' kinder wild, yer know.

TOM. I know that, and he wanted to see the world. You mustn't blame him. He'll turn up all right. But come—don't you want to see some of the sights of the city?

ZEB. Hev seen a lot o' them already. An' there wa'n't nuthin' the matter with their health, nuther.

TOM (*laughing*). Well, some entertainments, such as Coney Island, the roof gardens, theaters, and so forth.

ZEB. Well, I'll go yer one on so forth, but yer know I don't go to theaters—an' yer old dad didn't nuther.

FREDDY. How funny. (*Giggles*)

TOM. Well, how would you like to call at my house to-morrow evening, and see the ladies?

ZEB. Fust-rate. Ladies is my forte. It takes me to

sling high-priced words at ladies with fee-ong-say (fiancé) ideas.

TOM (*laughing*). I know it does, Uncle Zeb.

FREDDY. Ain't he real funny? (*Giggles*)

TOM. Well, I shall expect you. I want you to feel at home while you are in the city, and in my charge. (*Smiles*)

ZEB. Much obliged. Yer jes' like yer old dad—wantin' to make things pleasant fer everybody.

TOM. Yes, dad was a good old soul. But just now, we'll go over to the Astor, and have a bit of lunch.

ZEB. Now yer talkin'. I'm jes' dyin' ter rub a squash pie agin my appetite.

TOM. Come along, then.

FREDDY. How funny. (*Giggles*)

[ALL EXEUNT L. or R.]

CURTAIN

## ACT II

SCENE.—*Parlor finely furnished in TOM MASON'S home. Next evening. Settings at discretion of stage manager. Lounges, easy chairs, etc., in various places. Small tables both sides of stage, books on tables, pictures on walls. Center stage clear. Handsome settee DOWN L. set diagonally. (This kind of setting where it can be had, otherwise an ordinary parlor setting.) Door or large opening with portières UP C. Doors at R. and L. If desired D. R. can be an opening with a few palms or other plants showing inside. Lights up. DISCOVERED AMY and GRACE sitting at table playing any desired game.*

AMY. That's enough, Grace. I'm tired of playing. (*Rises*)

GRACE. Why, it's early yet, and the gentlemen will not be here for half an hour.

AMY. Well, let's pass the time some other way.

GRACE. Oh, very well. (*Rises*)

AMY. I wish Tom would come.

GRACE. Still yearning! Oh, this love—this love. (*Laughs*) Glad I am still heart free.

AMY. Well, your time will come. How about Fweddy? (*Laughs*)

GRACE. Not on your tin-type, as slang has it. I want a man—not a monkey.

AMY. Don't let him hear you say that. He might giggle. Come—let's go on the back piazza and enjoy the moonlight for awhile. [EXEUNT *both* D. R.]

ENTER TOM C., *looks about*, GOES DOWN.

TOM. Hello—the ladies not here. Out on the piazza, I guess. (*Looks at watch*) Near time the old gentleman was here. Wonder how he will enjoy "serciety?" (*Laughs*) He'll get along, I guess, if his innocent assurance is in working order. (SIM ENTERS C. TOM *turning* C. *sees* him) Hello, Sim, what are you doing here?

SIM (GOING DOWN). I'm in a hole, Tom, and want you to help me out. (*Pulls out both pockets*) Not a cent.

TOM. I've helped you before, Sim, and you do not seem to improve. Suppose the old folks were to see you in this state? Why don't you go to work, and stick to it? You're a good accountant, and a valuable man in any mercantile house.

SIM. Oh, it's all very well for you to lecture. When you left home you had relatives here to put you into business. I didn't, and had to shift for myself.

TOM. You've had chances, but you prefer the idle and wayward life. I worked—that's just the difference. So you are again in distress?

SIM. You struck it—and you know nothing succeeds

like distress. (*Smiles*) I've tried to get away from this life, Tom, but something always pulled me back. Just try me again in your store, and I promise to reform, and as soon as I redeem myself, I'll go back to the old folks, and settle down on the farm.

TOM. You have promised that before.

SIM. But I swear it now, Tom.

TOM. You do?

SIM. Yes—honest. Remember, you and I were kids together, and I've helped you over some rough edges, and never taunted you about it. I know I've been a high stepper, and worried the old folks no little.

TOM. You certainly have.

SIM. And father, I'm afraid, will never forgive me.

TOM (*kindly*). But he will if you do right. Now, brace up, old chap, leave your evil associates, don't play the races, go to work, and I'll help you all I can.

SIM. You will? I'll do it, Tom, and return home with as clean a record as I can make by a year's amendment.

TOM. That's the way to talk it, my boy. (*Shakes his hand*) Be as good as your word. But you won't have to wait a year before seeing the old gentleman.

SIM (*in surprise*). Why, how's that?

TOM. Because he will be in this house to-night.

SIM. What are you giving me?

TOM. Fact. He's been in the city for over a week.

SIM. In the city? In Heaven's name, what for?

TOM. To find *you!* You see, the old gent has an idea that you are traveling the pace, and are afraid to return home. He has searched all over New York, and I have looked out for him during his stay.

SIM. Thanks, old boy.

TOM. Why have you never written home?

SIM. It was shame, Tom, and partly pride. Many times it was on the point of my pen to do so, but something told me my letters would be unwelcome. And you say he will be here to-night?

TOM. He will be.



SIM. He will? (*Pause*) Say, Tom, I must see him, but he must not know me—not yet—not yet.

TOM. You are right. I wouldn't want him to. I can introduce you as my guest—as Mr. Livingston, for instance.

SIM. What! In these rags?

TOM. Your trousers look all right. Here, step into my room, and slip on one of my coats and vest, and a clean collar. (*GOES to D. L.*)

SIM. But my face?

TOM. Wash it.

SIM. He would know me anyhow.

TOM. Don't think so. He hasn't seen you for five years, and you look ten years older. You've got a moustache now, you know. But go in, and get down to business. He's liable to drop in.

SIM. Thanks, Tom. I'll not forget your kindness.

[*EXIT D. L.*]

TOM. Never mind that. Poor boy—he means well enough—and I will help him again—if he will only stick.

SIM (*off L.*). Where's your soap, Tom?

TOM. In the soap-dish—not among my collars. See it?

SIM (*off L.*). Yes—all right.

TOM. Hope the old gent won't appear just yet. (*GOES to D. C., looks out—then GOES DOWN*) No sign of him, but that British bore is on hand, as usual.

ENTER FREDDY D. C., *stands, looks around through his monocle.*

FREDDY. Ah, how de do—how de do? (*GOES DOWN, hopping*)

TOM. Good evening, Fred. What's the news?

FREDDY. Not a thing—only beastly wainy outside.

TOM. Yes, it is rather damp.

SIM (*off L.*). Where's your comb and brush, Tom?

FREDDY (*surprised*). Comb and bwush?

TOM. A friend of mine arranging his toilet a little.

(To SIM) You'll find it on my dressing-case—not in the clothes closet.

FREDDY. How funny. (*Giggles*) Where are the ladies?

TOM. Feeding mosquitoes in the damp moonlight. Don't you want to join them?

FREDDY. Why yaas. (*Turns R.*) Have they been longing for me?

TOM. All the evening.

FREDDY. I will go and suppwise them.

[EXIT D. R., *hopping out*

TOM. Do so, Birdie. And yet he allows his mother to take in washing. (*Looks out c.*) Great Scott! The old man! (SIM *puts head in at D. L.*) He's coming! Quick! Go over there and sit down.

ENTER SIM D. L. *well dressed and groomed.*

SIM. How do I look—all right? (CROSSES R. *and sits, picking up book*)

TOM. No—he wouldn't know you from Adam.

ENTER ZEB D. C.

ZEB. Good evenin'. Thort I was late.

TOM. No—just in time.

ZEB. Thet starched-up chap at the front door wa'n't a-goin' ter let me in, but when I mentioned yer name he jack-knifed himself inter all sorts o' spasms, an' told me ter pass up. Fust off he grinned at me like a monkey with the mumps.

TOM (*laughs*). He is the general door-tender of these apartments, you know.

ZEB. Thort he owned 'em by his style.

SIM (*over his book—aside*). Dear old dad. How changed.

TOM. By the way, I want to introduce you to a friend. Ah, Archie. (*Motions to SIM, who gets up and GOES to them*) Shake hands with Mr. Wiggins.

ZEB. How be yer? (*They shake hands*)

SIM. Glad to meet any friend of Tom's. (*Aside*)  
He does not know me.

ZEB. So be I. Tom's a double-lined, mahogany-stock Vermounter, an' used ter make sand-pies with my boy when they was little tots. Be you a New Yorker?

SIM (*a little confused*). No—I am a cosmopolite.

ZEB (*puzzled—aside to TOM*). What be that?

TOM. He's a flitter. Here, there and everywhere.

ZEB (*to SIM*). Yer ain't seen nuthin' o' Sim anywhere, hev yer?

SIM. Sim? Who's Sim, and what kind of a looking man is he?

ZEB. He wa'n't no man—jest a plain leetle kid in jean pants an' straw hat.

SIM. Don't think I have met such a lad. How long has he been gone?

ZEB. A leetle over five years. Yer sec, he run away frum hum cos he didn't like ter work on the farm. His exaspirashuns was higher.

SIM. I see. Didn't know when he was well off. I suppose you have a huge cowhide waiting for him when he returns?

ZEB. Cowhide? No, sir—nuthin' but these arms. He's as welcome there now as the day he was born.

SIM. Thank Heaven for that.

ZEB (*significantly*). What made yer say thet? Mebbe yer've run across him somewhere, an' don't want ter tell me.

SIM (*troubled*). No, no, no.

TOM (*aside to SIM*). Be careful. You'll give yourself away.

SIM. I was but expressing my sympathy for both you and your boy. (*Turns away*)

ZEB. Say, Tom, yer friend acts kind o' queer. Hain't got hornets in his gallery, has he?

TOM (*laughing*). Sound as a dollar, but full of emotion for the misfortunes of others.

ZEB. Be thet so? Well, it's kind o' Christian like.

SIM (*aside*). How I would like to rush into his arms.  
(*Sits R.*)

ZEB. Say, Tom, do I look fit to meet the gals? This coat o' mine seems to have a kind o' spring halt in the back. (*Shrugs his shoulders*)

TOM. Does it? I wouldn't notice it. It will pass all right, and you look like a Broadway Johnny.

ZEB (*smiles*). Do I? New clothes make a feller feel mighty sassy, don't they? Fit all right? (*Turns around*)

TOM. Like the skin on a prune. Admirable.

ZEB. Well, fetch along yer gals. I'm jes' dyin' ter throw some Vermont language at 'em.

SIM (*aside—smiling*). Same old dad.

TOM. I'll go see where the ladies are. [EXIT D. R.]

ZEB. Thet's the ticket. (*To SIM*) You be an old friend o' Tom's, ain't yer?

SIM (*rising and closing book*). Oh yes. We've known each other since childhood.

ZEB. Since childhood? Why, Tom was brought up in my town. I never seed yer there.

SIM (*a little confused*). That is, I mean after he came to New York we met.

ZEB. Well, he was purty well grow'd up then.

SIM. Yes—that's true. I meant to say we were mere youths, when I left him here and went on my travels.

ZEB. Yer must know a heap now. Goin' ter stay in New York?

SIM. No. I have a few interests out West. Soon as I clear them up, I intend to return and settle down with the old folks. (*Aside*) I'm a splendid liar.

ZEB. I guess they'll be glad of it. If yer see my boy out West, will yer jes' tell him his dad an' Aunt Mandy is jes' dyin' fer him to cum back?

SIM. Certainly, sir. But how would I know him?

ZEB. Why, by a scar on his hand, which he got shootin' off Ffourth o' July fireworks.

SIM (*hastily conceals left hand*). I'll try to find your son for you.

ZEB. Much obliged. (*Shakes SIM's right hand*)

ENTER TOM, AMY, GRACE and FREDDY D. R.

TOM. Ah, ladies, permit me to introduce two old friends—Mr. Wiggins and Mr. Livingston. (*Winks at SIM*)

ZEB. Glad fer to know yer. (*Bows and scrapes awkwardly, while SIM bows*)

AMY. You are quite welcome, gentlemen. (*To ZEB*) Won't you be seated?

ZEB. Don't keer if I do. These 'ere new-fangled shoes kinder pinches. (*All appear surprised. ZEB and AMY sit on settee L., while the others sit R. Fussy business by ZEB, brushing dust from settee, and otherwise trying to be polite. Others laugh quietly to themselves*)

TOM (*to GRACE*). A little eccentric, but a good old soul. You must excuse his mistakes.

GRACE. Why certainly. I think I would enjoy them. He's from the country, is he not?

TOM. Yes. He lives in the town in which I was born.

SIM. And I also.

GRACE. What town was that?

TOM. Booneboro, Vermont.

GRACE. Why, that is Amy's birthplace.

SIM (*aside*). The devil!

TOM. So it was. You remember, Archie, the little girl who always dressed in red, and gave the teacher so much trouble?

SIM. Yes—she was a holy terror.

TOM. Well, that's the terror over there.

GRACE (*laughing*). And she's as full of frolic as ever. But come, gentlemen, let me show you Tom's new rockery. (*Rises*)

SIM. Should be delighted. (*Aside*) Anything to get out of sight of the terror. I'm between two fires here.



GRACE (to AMY). Amy, I'm going to show the gentlemen the rockery.

FREDDY. Yaas—let's go see the little fishes.

AMY. That's right. And I'll stay and entertain Mr. Wiggins. (*Smiling*) His shoe pinches.

GRACE. Very well. Come, gentlemen. (SIM escorts GRACE) [EXEUNT both D. R.]

TOM (to FREDDY, following GRACE and SIM). Don't you like to see the little fishes caper about?

FREDDY. Why yaas. Ain't they funny? (*Giggles*) [EXEUNT both D. R.]

ZEB (*seeing FREDDY's hopping movements*). Thet feller must hev a wasp in his sock. (*Both laugh*)

AMY. No—he's only a simpleton, and quite harmless.

ZEB. So I should jedge. Don't think he would amount to much in a Injin war.

AMY. I guess not. Tom tells me you are from Vermont.

ZEB. Thet's right. From Booneboro. A purty dead town, but we kin raise the biggest rats in the state.

AMY. Why, dear me—I was raised in Booneboro, and lived there till I was twelve years old.

ZEB. Go way—yer wa'n't. You ain't one o' the Crockers thet lived on the hill jest above the canal?

AMY. Yes I am—and I used to go to the same school with your son Sim.

ZEB. Yer did? Well, I'm powerful glad to meet yer. (*They shake hands*) You ain't thet leetle Crocker gal what poured ink down yer teacher's back one day?

AMY. I am—the same mischievous girl.

ZEB. Well, I swan. Why, I know'd yer whole family. I guess you must know a hull lot o' folks at Booneboro.

AMY. I remember very few, for I have been away so long.

ZEB. You 'member Elvira Spofford, don't yer?

AMY. Yes, I believe I do. She was a very tall woman, was she not?

ZEB. Yer hit it. So tall she had ter stoop to see her

feet. Well, Elvira run off an' married Tim Keefe, the one-eyed hack driver. 'Member old Sam Jones, what kept the grocery?

AMY. Very well.

ZEB. Dead too. Good thing. He was the meanest cuss thet ever looked out a winder. Why, Sam was so stingy thet he used ter scrape the sugar frum the fly's legs what happened to git in his barrel.

AMY (*laughs*). Well, he must have been saving.

ZEB. 'Member little Sophie Hill?

AMY. Oh yes. Sophie was in our school.

ZEB. Well, she ain't now. She's gone too.

AMY. Gone?

ZEB. Yes—to a land where all she needs is a change of heart and a palm leaf fan. (*AMY laughs heartily*)

AMY. Is old Mrs. Mooney still living?

ZEB. Livin'? Well, she is, an' is still in the same bus'ness—raisin' cats. Thet woman's had more kittens born to her than she's got hairs in her head. She skinned a lot o' them one day, an' went round town sellin' 'em fer squirrels.

AMY. My—what imposition.

ZEB. Wuss'n that. It was downright bigamy. They ketched her at it, an' she had to shoo off roaches fer six months in jail.

AMY. Possible? I suppose Booneboro is quite a large town now.

ZEB. Yes, it's grow'd right smart since you left. Jake Miller's built him a bran new chicken coop, an' the Perkinses has put in a new kitchen door. Some other buildin's has gone up, but they're in the nex' town. 'Member the punkin parties we used ter hev?

AMY. Guess I do—and enjoyed them too.

ZEB. Snap seeds at the boys?

AMY (*laughs*). Yes—wasn't it fun?

ZEB. An' when the boys ketched you, yer hed ter kiss 'em, or git all daubed up with taller?

AMY. Yes, yes. Those were pleasant days.

ZEB. Gosh ding it—I wish I'd fetched sum punkins

along. We could had some fun right here, couldn't we?

AMY. That we could. We haven't got any pumpkin seed—but why couldn't we get up a little country dance, just to remind us of old times?

ZEB. That's the ticket. I ain't no slouch when it comes to pintin' a toe. (*Gets up, GOES through a few steps, and sits down again*)

AMY (*applauding*). That's splendid. Why, you're as light as a feather on your feet.

ZEB. Took a prize onc't with them steps. Zeke Long 'lowed as how I could dance as chipper as them folks what clip it out on the stage. You 'member Zeke? He used ter keep a department store in a coal-bin next to the Post-Office.

AMY (*laughs*). I scarcely remember him.

ZEB. Well, he's no great shakes now. He's drinkin' himself right inter the graveyard. Say, Tom's been purrin' round you some time, hain't he?

AMY (*shyly*). I think he likes me very much. Why do you ask?

ZEB. Jest to say somethin'. An' I notice since I've been in town he's slacked off on his vittels.

AMY. Is that a sign? (*Laughs*)

ZEB. Sure an' sartin. Why, when I was a-settin' up to my wife, I only lived on the smell of her kitchen till we got hitched. But I want you an' Tom ter cum down to the old home an' stay a spell—an' try some of Mandy's pop-overs.

AMY. I would be delighted to go, if Tom is willing.

ZEB. Well, he'll cum fast enough if you say the word. Why, he jes' loves the groun' you walk on.

AMY. Think so? (*Anxiously*) He hasn't told me so yet.

ZEB. Wait till yer hear him talk in his sleep. Hello—here cum the folks back again. (*Both rise*)

ENTER C. GRACE and FREDDY. *He is very attentive to her, and giggling. TOM and SIM follow. If desired, two or three other ladies and gentlemen.*

AMY. Well, how did you like the new rockery, Mr. Fitzmaurice?

FREDDY. Lovely, don't you know—and the little gold fishes were so cunning.

GRACE. But he didn't get very close to them. Afraid they would bite.

AMY. No danger. They only bite at little insects that skim on the water.

ZEB (to FREDDY). Say, why didn't you jump in? (All laugh)

FREDDY. Yaas—I see. How funny. (Giggles) But I can't swim.

ZEB. Well, yer could o' made a bluff at it with thet wriggle o' yourn. (All laugh)

TOM. What do you all say to a little music?

GRACE. Or a song?

AMY. As you please. (Introduction of any specialty—song or quartette—by the characters if desired)

ZEB. Thet be mighty fine. (Omit if no specialty is introduced) What's the matter with a reg'lar old Virginy Reel?

AMY. That's it, Mr. Wiggins—a Virginia Reel. Take your partners. (Introduction of Virginia Reel, during which ZEB takes off first his coat, then his vest, and is about to take off his shoes, when the gentlemen stop him)

ENTER JIM NELSON suddenly at D. C., with left arm in a sling, dressed shabbily, and with an ugly look on his face. The ladies, frightened. Gentlemen separate, dressing stage. JIM glares at ZEB.

TOM. What do you want here?

JIM. That man there! (Points to ZEB)

ZEB. Didn't yer git enough o' me las' night, yer skunk?

JIM. Yes, I did; but it's my turn to-night. See this arm? You broke it. I've been hunting you all day, and traced you here to-night.

ZEB. What yer goin' ter do 'bout it?

JIM. Do? Just this. (*Pulls pistol from his pocket*) It's your life or mine! (*Raises pistol excitedly and points at ZEB, when his arm is struck by SIM, and they struggle. SIM wrenches pistol from him, and points it at him. JIM cowers, and falls to his knees, SIM having him by the collar. Excitement of all*)

### QUICK CURTAIN

NOTE.—For second curtain, characters change positions quickly. SIM and JIM are UP at D. C., SIM still pointing pistol at him. FREDDY DOWN R., frightened and trembling. Equal number of characters on each side of stage.



## ACT III

SCENE.—*Pop-Over Farm. One year later. Set country house L. part of side elevation with two or three steps leading up to front door. Short paling or fence running across back, with gate in center. A road beyond fence. Entrances R. and L. back of fence. Dairy at R. opposite house, showing a few milk cans inside. Clothes-line with linens hanging. Entrance DOWN R. Entrance DOWN L. leading to barn. If practical, a set well at back, but this is not necessary. Rocker DOWN R. Other things about stage to give it a rural atmosphere. Perspective country drop. Can be modified to suit conditions. DISCOVERED MANDY sitting in rocker, sewing.*

ENTER SPECK L., CROSSES to dairy. *She is singing and carries a tin milking pail. Before her entrance, if desired, a quartette can be sung outside, or lively orchestral music.*

MANDY (*as SPECK CROSSES to dairy*). Cows seem to be doin' purty well to-day?

SPECK. Yes, Aunt Mandy; this is the fourth pail of milk to-day and I thought the old white cow was never going to be drained. (*Laughs*)

MANDY. Thet's cos Zebediah's been keepin' her in the new pasture.

SPECK. I guess it is. (*Speaks from dairy*) And my, we'll have some rich cream, too.

MANDY. Yer mus' be purty tired, Speck. You was up afore daylight this mornin'.

SPECK. Oh, that's nothing. (*COMES from dairy*) I had a lot of extra things to do. No girl could get tired working for you and Uncle Zeb, and in such a peaceful home as you have given me.

MANDY. I'm glad yer 'preciate it—cos I didn't take

to you fust off, jes' cos yer cum frum thet big wicked city.

SPECK. Yes, it is wicked; but any girl can be good if she wants to, even in a big city. (*Kneels on one knee by MANDY'S side*) But when dear mamma died, and Uncle Zeb had her remains brought here to be buried in the little graveyard over there, and brought me to live with you, I saw the difference between the hard hearts of the city and the good souls Providence sent me amongst.

MANDY. Thet's cos yer know how ter behave yerself, an' don't gad about an' stick yer nose in everybody's business like them Spriggins girls up on the hill. Yer've made us all love yer, an' we can't help ourselves.

SPECK. And I shall study to deserve that love. (*Rises. Discordant sounds of clarionette heard faintly in distance, gradually becoming louder*)

MANDY. Thet's that Skinner boy, with his everlastin' toot-horn.

SPECK (*looking off L.*). So it is. Isn't he funny?

MANDY. Funny? 'Bout as funny as a hearse.

ENTER BEN SKINNER L. *through gate, blowing hard on clarionette. Gets to c. and stops.*

BEN. Ma wants ter know kin she borryer yer auger? (*Speaks loudly and in boy fashion*)

MANDY. What fer?

BEN. Wants to bore holes in doughnuts. (*Gives a loud "Haw! haw! haw!" blows his clarionette, and EXIT slowly through gate. SPECK laughs heartily*)

MANDY. He thinks thet mighty smart.

SPECK. He's only simple, aunty, but harmless. But just think—I haven't washed the dinner dishes yet.

[EXIT *into house*

MANDY. Dear child. Allers doin' somethin'. Well, she took a big load off'n my shoulders when she cum here a year ago—an' she says I am allers to be the lady

of the house, an' set in the parlor an' listen to what's cookin' fer dinner. All very fine, but 'tain't nateral.

ENTER URIAH SPEED L., *walks slowly and speaks with a half piping voice.*

URIAH. Afternoon, Mandy. Haven't seen nuthin' o' thet mule o' mine roun' here, hev yer?

ENTER UNCLE ZEB *through gate from L.*

MANDY. Fer land's sakes! Hes it 'got out agin'?

URIAH. Yes—afore daylight.

ZEB (GOING DOWN). Yer a bigger jackass then yer mule. Why don't yer pen it up while it's teethin'?

URIAH. You can't give me no advice, Zeb Wiggins. Yer lost two calves yerself las' year. Why didn't yer pen 'em up?

ZEB. Cos I went ter New York, an' yer promised to look out fer 'em fer me.

URIAH. Well, I hed my own stock ter look arter. 'Tain't no easy job ter run two farms to one't.

MANDY. Oh, quit yer talkin'. You two be allers quarrelin' 'bout nothin'.

ZEB. 'Tain't my fault, b'gosh. Uriah's got so mulish lately thet his disposition's all curled up inter knots.

URIAH. No 'tain't neether. I'm jes' as lively an' spry as you be, Zeb Wiggins. (WALKS *feebly to gate, ZEB watching him*)

ZEB. I jedge so. About as spry as a hired man goin' to work. (*Laughs at URIAH. URIAH turns, makes face at ZEB and EXIT R. through gate*)

MANDY. You oughtn't ter hector Uriah so. He's gittin' old.

ZEB. An' mighty complainin' too. It was only yesterday he tongue-lashed me cos I didn't hev no pip medicine in the house—jes' as if I was the chicken doctor of the county.

ENTER JIM NELSON *as a tramp, from behind house.*  
*Stops and listens.*

MANDY. Yer act like two big babies. Well, did yer draw the money?

ZEB. Every cent I hed in the bank—jes' two thousand' dollars. (*Takes out pocketbook and shows her the money*) Bran' new. Mr. Thurston said they jes' cum from the factory at Washington. Thet four hundred Sim sent in Speck's letters helped out mighty considerable.

MANDY. Bless his heart. An' thet'll clear the hull farm, won't it?

ZEB. Ev'ry durned inch of it, when I pay it over to-morrow. (*Places notes in pocketbook, and book in coat pocket. Turns as he does this, so JIM can see the action*) Crops has got ter yield somethin' now, Mandy, fer livin' expenses. (*JIM shakes fist at ZEB, and dodges behind house*)

MANDY. Well, we'll jes' trust in the Lord. (*Rises and CROSSES to house*) Yer want ter be mighty keerful o' thet money. Hadn't I better take keer of it fer you till mornin'?

ZEB. It's safe with me, Mandy. Yer might git up in the night an' use it fer dish-rags. (*Laughs*)

MANDY (*on steps, turning*). Want ter know. Smart, ain't yer? [EXIT *into house*

ZEB. Mandy's grow'd nervous since she hed thet back tooth pulled. Guess I'll step over to the barn an' see how thet sick roan is. [EXIT L.

ENTER SPECK *from house; carries a pitcher and is singing. CROSSES to dairy, sets pitcher on bench, GOES into dairy, humming continually. ENTER SIM through gate from R. RE-ENTER SPECK from dairy and confronts SIM.*

SIM (*politely, tipping hat*). Beg pardon. Is not this Miss Speck?

SPECK (*startled*). Yes, sir; but I don't know you.

SIM. Well, you should, considering you have been writing to me for six months in father's behalf.

SPECK. What! You are not Mr. Sim?

SIM (*smiles*). I am guilty. (*They gaze at each other a moment, wonderingly*)

SPECK. But where have I seen you before?

SIM. I was about to ask you the same question.

SPECK (*thinking*). I know now. I met you in New York. You must remember me. (*Yells*) Violets—sweet violets!

SIM. What! The little flower girl who gave me such good advice?

SPECK. I guess so. Shake! (*They shake hands warmly*)

SIM. Well, I'm flabbergasted! But you—I can't get it through me—how is it *you* are here—at my old home?

SPECK. It's a long story. Don't question me now. Will tell you all later. But I'm so glad to see you—and your people will be rejoiced to know you have returned.

SIM. Think so? I have my doubts about the old gentleman.

SPECK. You needn't. He will be only too glad to welcome you. He's over at the barn. I'll go call him. (*STARTS to GO L.*)

SIM. Not for the world. I'm afraid he's got it in for me yet, and will never forgive me for running away from home six years ago. But I have tried hard to redeem myself, and have saved up a little money that may be useful to him.

SPECK. Oh, he will be delighted to hear that. When did you arrive?

SIM. Two days ago, and am stopping at the hotel. No one seems to know me, for I have grown out of their memory. I have been here several times—loitering about—just to get a glimpse of father and Aunt Mandy, but never could. I wanted to walk boldly into the house every time, but I did not have the courage.

SPECK (*laughing*). Kinder scary, eh?

SIM. That's it, I guess. (*Laughs*) Now, little girl,



don't say anything just yet to them. I'll run over to the hotel and get my suit-case, and will be right back.

SPECK. Come back for good?

SIM. Yes, for good. A young and interesting person like yourself in the house will be an incentive, if there were no other.

SPECK. Ain't that nice? Well, I'll say nothing.

SIM. Thank you for that. I want you to stand between us if dad has a pitchfork in his hand when we meet. (*Laughs*)

SPECK. No danger. But I'll help you out. I can work him all right.

SIM. That's encouraging. Well, good-bye for half an hour. (*GOES to gate*)

SPECK. Good-bye.

SIM (*looking L.*). Who are those hard-looking cusses down the road there? (*SPECK RUNS UP to gate*) I saw them loitering near the house as I came up the road.

SPECK. Tramps, I guess. But they never trouble us.

SIM. Never can tell. Better keep an eye on them.

[*EXIT R. through gate*]

SPECK. Just to think—the young fellow I used to preach to on the Bowery—is here—right under their noses—and they don't know it. I'm just dying to tell them. My, but he's turned out a nice young man, and I guess none of us will see our beds till 12 o'clock to-night. (*GOES into dairy*)

ENTER MANDY *from house.* *GOES to clothes line, and feels the linen.*

MANDY (*as she* *CROSSES*). How's the milk a-creamin', Speck?

SPECK. Splendid. Guess we'll skim three or four pints in the morning. (*Remains in dairy*)

ENTER ZEB *L.*

ZEB. The roan's all right, Mandy. Otis says she's eatin' better to-day.

MANDY (*as she takes linens from line*). Glad to hear

thet, fer Sim used to ride her when she was a colt, an' thet mare was his favorite. Dear boy. I'm jes' dyin' to see him.

ZEB. I guess we both be. It wunt be many more moons now.

MANDY (GOING DOWN, *with armful of linen*). What was it he writ to Speck 'bout comin'?

ZEB (*takes letter from pocket*). I read it to yer one't.

MANDY. Well, read it agin.

ZEB. He says: (*Reads*) "'Tell dad an' Aunt Mandy they will see me un-ex-pect-ed-ly.'"

MANDY. Thet's a big word, ain't it? What's it mean?

ZEB. I'm s'prised at yer. It means thet he will git here afore he knows it himself. Oh, Sim's no slouch at slingin' big words. (*Folds letter and puts it in pocket*) An' Tom Mason writ me thet Sim was the best figgerer in his store.

MANDY. Ain't thet fine? I alles told yer thet boy'd turn out all right. What did Mr. Thurston say 'bout takin' him in the bank?

ZEB. Said he'd give him a good persition if I would go on his bond. I told him I'd do it if it cost me the price of the farm.

MANDY. Thet's right. Nothin' too good fer thet boy. Well, yer'd better wash up fer supper. (*Sounds of clarionette in distance R.*)

ENTER URIAH R. *through gate.*

ZEB. Well, hev yer found thet mule yit?

URIAH. Guess I did. Down by the station. Them truck hands was a ticklin' him with straws. Jake's a drivin' him hum now.

ZEB. 'Yer ought ter run a chain through thet mule's ear, an' hitch him to a stall.

URIAH. Guess I'll hev ter. (*GOES towards L. and turns*) Say, Zeb, I noticed Pritchard's hogs was in yer pertato patch agin. [EXIT L.

ZEB. I'll kill half a dozen o' them hogs yet. (*Clarionette grows louder*)

MANDY. There's thet idjit agin.

ENTER BEN R., *through gate, blowing lustily.*

ZEB. Here, here—stop thet caterwaulin'. What do yer want?

BEN (*to MANDY*). Ma says will yer cum over an' tell her how much vinegar yer put in a pan o' biskit. (*ZEB and MANDY laugh heartily. BEN blows clarionette*)

ZEB. Stop it! Stop it! (*BEN stops*) Want ter drive us as crazy as you be? Go hum an' tell yer ma four quarts o' vinegar to one pan o' dough.

BEN (*loudly*). Haw! haw! haw! (*Blows again, and EXIT L. through gate*)

MANDY. Should think they'd put thet boy in some confirmatory.

ZEB. Let him alone. He'll blow t'other side of his brain out some day.

[*EXEUNT MANDY and ZEB into house*]

ENTER JIM *stealthily from behind house, and looks in.*

JIM. He's got money! I saw it! And I'll have it before morning. That will be some revenge. (*CROSSES stealthily to R. Sees SPECK coming out of dairy, and grasps her wrist as she ENTERS*) Oh, you're here, are you?

SPECK (*frightened*). Jim!

JIM. Yes, it's Jim—and you've kept me on the jump hunting you for a whole year.

SPECK. Let go my wrist! (*Struggles and breaks away*)

JIM. You're spunky, ain't you?

SPECK. What do you want with me? I'm nothing to you.

JIM. No—I don't s'pose you want to be either. And you're living in fine style, ain't you, in your nice duds and plenty to eat and drink?

SPECK. Leave this place, or I'll call for help.

JIM. Oh, you will, will you? Well, call if you want 'em all to know you are my niece, and that you deserted me in my misfortunes.

SPECK. You deserved them all, for you were too lazy to work and lead an honest life. If you had any manhood in you, you would have helped me from the life I had to live to support you and dear mother.

JIM. Well, you were better able to work than I was, wasn't you?

SPECK. No. Heaven gave you health, education and ability, which you abused to satisfy your craving for drink and a profligate life.

JIM. Well, that was my business. I'm sober now (*Pulls out both pockets*) but not healthy here.

SPECK. What's that to me? I have no money to give you.

JIM. Oh, yes you have. You haven't been working here a whole year without having a little nest egg.

SPECK. I have no nest egg, as you call it. These good people here have simply done what it was your duty to do—given me a home. I work hard, and am not ashamed of it. Let me pass.

JIM (*getting in front of her*). Not yet. I haven't tramped all over New England to find you—and now that I have, you've either got to shell out or tramp back to the city with me.

SPECK. Heavens, what shall I do?

JIM. Do? Do as I say. You ain't going to live in fine style here, while your poor uncle has to exist on the scrapings of farmhouses and country hotels. See here—that old man in there has got money—right in his pocketbook. I saw it—and I want you to get some of it for me.

SPECK. What! Steal from my benefactor?

JIM. I don't care. Stealing from him is a virtue. See that arm? (*Bares it*) 'Tain't straight yet. You saw him do it, and I'm going to get even if it costs me my life, and his, too.

SPECK. Would you harm Uncle Zeb? (*Frightened*)

JIM. Oh, he's your uncle, too, eh? Well, you're picking up uncles fast, ain't you? But you do as I say, or back to the city you go.

SPECK. Back there, to slave again in the streets for you? Never!

JIM. But you will! (*Raises his arm threateningly*)

SPECK (*facing him defiantly*). Strike if you dare!

MANDY (*inside house*). Specky dear.

JIM (*sarcastically*). Specky dear! Somebody's calling you. Not a word that you saw me here, or look out for yourself. I'll be on your track, wherever you are.

SPECK (*CROSSING*). Yes, Aunt Mandy, in a minute. (*On steps, turning*) Jim Nelson, if you know what's good for you, you will leave here at once. One word from me, and the boys will have you struggling for your life in the canal. [EXIT *into house*

JIM. Will they? Let them try it. That's a pretty way to treat her own flesh and blood. (*Peeps in house*) The old man's taken off his coat. Wonder where he keeps it? Well, I'll find out before midnight, and what's in it, too. (*Clarionette heard in distance L.*) That country fool. (*CROSSES DOWN*) Why don't they hang him? [EXIT *L.*

ENTER SIM R. *through gate, pompously. Carries suitcase and walks as if he were going to face the ordeal bravely. Stops at steps, looks in house, and retreats.*

SIM. Oh, Lord—my courage has oozed away. If Speck were only here. (*Slaps his breast, as SPECK appears on steps, sees his action, and laughs*)

ENTER SPECK *from house.*

SPECK. Oh, you're back again. Afraid to come in?

SIM. Not afraid—just a little timid.

SPECK. Well, I promised to help you. (*Turns and calls*) Uncle Zeb! (*GOES DOWN*)



ZEB (*inside*). Yes, Speck—what is it?

SIM. He's coming! Don't spring him on me all at once.

SPECK. Hide behind the dairy. (*SIM hides*)

ENTER ZEB *from house. He is in shirt sleeves.*

ZEB. What's up, little gal? Got a hornet in yer hair?

SPECK. No—but I've got a surprise for you.

ZEB (*GOING DOWN*). S'prise fer me? What's it? Mus' be funny, yer laughin' so.

SPECK. Well, what would you think if—if—think—if—if——

ZEB. I ain't a thinkin'—yer doin' it all. Spit it out! What's the s'prise?

SPECK. There—there it is, right over there! (*Pointing to dairy*)

SIM (*coming from behind dairy*). Father!

ZEB (*seeing him, with good business of trying to realize*). Why, it's—no it ain't—it ain't Sim?

SPECK. Yes it is—that's him! (*Bobs her head up and down*)

ZEB (*nervously*). Jes' wait till I git the ants out o' my garret. (*Scratches his head, adjusts his glasses, and surveys SIM a moment*) My boy! My boy! (*They rush into each other's arms, with good business. ENTER URIAH L., stands surprised*) Got yer hum at last, haven't I? (*SPECK busies herself about dairy*)

SIM. Yes, father.

ZEB (*holds both his hands, and surveys him*). My, how you hev grow'd. Why, yer look as slick as a ripe apple. Come right here agin! (*They embrace again*)

URIAH. What's matter, Zeb? Havin' a fit?

ZEB. You shet up! You'd hev a fit, too, if yer'd stumble up agin yer boy what yer haven't seen fer six year. (*To SIM, admiringly*) Jumpin' skeeters, but ain't yer fine lookin'? Why, yer a real out-an'-out man now, ain't yer?

SIM. Pretty near it, dad. (*Laughs*)

ZEB. Why, Uriah, you 'member what a leetle kid he was?

URIAH. Yes—he wa'n't mor'n grasshopper high when I seed him last.

SIM (GOING to URIAH). And this is our old next-door neighbor. (*Shake hands*)

URIAH. Powerful glad ter see yer back. Yer dad jes' worried himself inter connipshuns arter yer left hum.

SIM. I know it was wrong, but it was for the best, and I know (GOING to ZEB) dad will forgive me.

ZEB (*wiping his eyes*). Hain't got nuthin' to fer-give. I jes' know I've got yer hum agin, an' yer got ter stay if I hev ter chain yer to ther groun'.

SIM (*laughing*). I'll not run away again, dad. I have seen the world, reveled in its fancies and follies, and am tired of it all, and dear old Pop-Over Farm will be my refuge now.

ZEB. I'm mighty glad ter hear yer say thet. (*Aside to URIAH*) Say, Uriah, did yer ketch on ter the fine language?

URIAH. Yes. He seems powerful eddicated now.

SIM. But where's dear old aunty?

ZEB (*still a little flustered*). Fergot all 'bout her. Speck, go tell Mandy we got a s'prise for her out here.

[EXIT SPECK *into house*]

SIM. An interesting little girl that, dad. Where did she come from?

ZEB. Jes' picked her up frum the slums of adversity an' transplanted her in a purer soil—thet's all. We've 'dopted her.

SIM. I'm glad of that. Say, dad, does she have any beaux coming around?

ZEB. Not much. She hain't no use fer 'em. Bob Durkins' boy saw her in church one night, an' sent her four sticks o' molasses candy the nex' day. She sucked 'em all up, an' I b'leeve thet's 'bout as fur as Bob's boy got.

SIM. I'll buy her a whole box.

ZEB. She's not sellin' out fer candy, an' yer energy

will hev ter be in purty good workin' order to git ahead o' thet leetle gal.

URIAH. Yes—she's par-tick-e-lar. (*Chuckles*)

ENTER MANDY *from house, sees SIM, and primps herself.*

MANDY. Sakes alive! A fine young man.

SIM. Howdy, Aunt Mandy?

MANDY (*looks at him a moment in surprise*). Why, it's Sim! (*Rushes into his arms, and kisses him repeatedly*)

URIAH. She's hevin' a fit now.

ZEB. Jes' let her work it off. I had to.

MANDY. Oh, who'd a thunk it—my leetle Sim—my leetle Sim! (*Almost blubbers*) Gimme anuther hug, er I'll scream. (*Quick embrace and business*)

URIAH. Better break 'em away, Zeb, er she'll go in-ter connipshuns.

ZEB. Let her connip. It's doin' her good.

MANDY (*disengaging herself*). Back agin! Our boy's back agin, Zebediah.

ZEB. Yes—I've jest noticed it.

MANDY. An' yer ain't goin' ter leave us no more, are yer?

SIM. No, aunty—I've come home to stay.

MANDY. Thank the Lord fer that. (*SPECK appears on steps with a tray and five glasses of cider*)

ZEB. Cider. Yer mighty thoughtful, Speck.

SPECK (*GOING DOWN*). I felt that you might want to drink the health of the young man. (*Serves them and places tray on bench*)

ZEB. I guess we do. Yer all ready? (*Holds up glass*) Here's to the return of the prodigal. May he realize thet none kin love him better than his own flesh an' blood.

MANDY. Amen ter thet. (*All drink, leaving a little in their glasses and place them on tray. Lights down a little*)

ZEB. Speck, jes' run an' tell Otis to kill a chicken fer supper. Nuthin' too good fer my boy.

SPECK. All right. [EXIT L.

URIAH. Glad yer goin' ter hev chicken fer the boy, cos I smelt corn beef a cookin' as I cum by the kitchen door. An' say, Zeb, I'll jes' run over an' fetch a bottle o' my apple-jack.

ZEB. Hev it good an' snappy; an' say, Uriah, fetch yer gals over to supper. I want 'em ter see the kid they used ter make mud pies with.

URIAH. I'll jes' do it. [EXIT L.

MANDY. Say, Sim, 'skuse me if I made a fool o' myself. Ain't seen yer fer so long thet it flustered me all over.

SIM (*laughing*). That's all right, aunty. I scarcely deserve such an affectionate welcome.

ZEB. Nuthin' yer don't deserve. Yer've made a man o' yerself, an' thet's mor'n many of yer playmates hev done. Say, Mandy, hadn't yer better go in an' git Sim's room ter rights?

MANDY. It's spick an' span. Speck takes keer of it ev'ry day. But I'll go in an' see 'bout thet chicken. Oh, I'm so glad our boy's back. (*Embraces him quickly*) [EXIT *into house*

ZEB. Yer'll find yer room jes' the same, my boy, only the wall paper's been changed from yaller to tur-key red.

SIM (*laughs*). That's all right, dad.

ZEB. Say, Sim, I got the money yer sent me, an' it's helped out mighty consider'bul. To-morrow the farm will be free from debt.

SIM. Why, that's glorious.

ZEB. But I guess we'll hev ter sail a leetle close to the wind fer a spell—cos thet's all the money I had.

SIM. Not so, dad. I have a few hundred in the bank, which I placed there this morning—and it's all yours.

ZEB. Say, don't take my breath away. Yer got money in the bank here, 'sides what yer sent me?

SIM. Yes—over six hundred.

ZEB. Over six hun — (*Turns his back to him*)  
Say, Sim, kick me!

SIM (*laughing*). Oh, no, dad. It ought to be six thousand.

ENTER SPECK L.

SPECK. Oh, Uncle Zeb, Pritchard's hogs are in the radish patch again.

ZEB. Darn them hogs. Jes' go in the house, Sim, an' take possession, while I go vaccinate them hogs. (*Lights still lower—stage quite dark*) [EXIT L.

SPECK. Those hogs give Uncle Zeb an awful lot of trouble. You must be quite hungry, aren't you?

SIM. Oh, no—not at all.

SPECK. Well, supper will be ready soon. (GOES DOWN)

SIM. Tell me—do you like it here—away from the busy city?

SPECK. Oh, yes. Your father has made me one of the family; and my heart is so full when I think of all they have done for me, that I scarcely know how to voice my gratitude. Will you stay with us long?

SIM. I'm pretty certain I will—at least as long as you remain with us.

SPECK. You may find me poor company.

SIM. I'll take my chances. I haven't been in the house yet, and if you interest me as much inside of it as you do on the outside, I may never want to go outdoors. (*Takes her hand, which she gently withdraws*)

SPECK. I hope to win your respect, and I'll try to be a good little sister to you.

SIM. A sister? Don't you think you could be nearer to me than that?

SPECK (*shyly*). I understand you; but is it not better to let the future take care of questions like that? Our acquaintance is young yet. Wait till it grows older.

SIM. You are a sensible little girl. Just box my ears.

SPECK. No, I'll not do that. (*Laughs*) But look!



(Points R., her features changing quickly) Don't you see those two *gurgs* skulking out there in the brush?

SIM (looking R.). Yes. Those two tramps. I'll wager they're round here for no good. See—they're sneaking this way. Are you brave, little girl?

SPECK. Brave enough to keep an eye on *one* of them.

SIM. And I will on the other. Hide behind the house, and I will get behind the dairy. (SPECK runs behind house, and SIM behind dairy)

ENTER JIM R., sneakingly, a tramp following him.

JIM tiptoes over to house and looks in. GOES to c., meets TRAMP; both simultaneously spy cider on bench, both eagerly rush for it, and hastily drain glasses.

JIM. Somebody must have had a thirst on before we got here. Say, pard, couldn't be a better time. They are all in the back of the house. You hide in that milk-house there (Pointing) until you see me coming out. Keep a close watch, and if you see anybody coming up the road, you know the signal. Go in now. (EXIT TRAMP into dairy. JIM tiptoes to house) Quiet as a churchyard. Now for that money. (Sneaks up steps and into house. SIM and SPECK put their heads out from corners of both houses. He motions her back. She retires. SIM cautiously ENTERS, and makes a quick dash inside the dairy. Noise and scuffle inside, mingled with voices, and at end a crash, as if milk-cans had fallen. SIM, with the tramp's linen duster on and hat over his eyes, identical as the tramp had worn them, ENTERS simultaneously with JIM from the house. JIM sneaks down backward, holding in his left hand ZEB'S pocketbook. They meet c. SPECK peers from behind house) See—I've got it! (Opens book quickly) Oh, look at the lovely notes! (Pushes them in and closes book hurriedly. Holds book in his left hand back of him, as he points with the other off R. SPECK tiptoes to JIM'S side) Now, pard, get over by the station, and I'll meet you there in ten minutes, and we'll divvy up.

SPECK (*jerks pocketbook from his hand*). But not this evening, Jim Nelson!

ZEB and MANDY ENTER *from house and stand surprised*.

JIM (*turning, surprised and incensed, and grasps SPECK'S free arm*). You, eh? Give me that book, or I'll — (*Raises his hand to strike her, when SIM falls him quickly with a blow of his fist. Then throws off his hat*)

ZEB. }  
MANDY. } Sim!

#### PICTURE AND CURTAIN

For second curtain, the tramp without coat or hat, with blood on his face and generally demoralized, sneaks out of dairy and towards R., where he is met by URIAH, who ENTERS quickly and points a pitchfork at him. SIM is on one knee, with his hand about JIM'S throat, and SPECK is on steps, handing book to ZEB. BEN ENTERS R., blowing clarionette, sees state of affairs, stops blowing, looks frightened, and runs out. MANDY clinging to post on the porch, as if about to faint.

#### ACT IV

SCENE.—*Same as ACT III. Six months later. Towel hanging on line. If desired, quartette can be sung before raising curtain. ENTER SIM from house, wiping mouth with handkerchief. ENTER SPECK from dairy, carrying jar of jam with white paper wrapped loosely around it.*

SIM. Hello, little one. What are you doing? (GOES DOWN)

SPECK. Licking jam. Want some? Awful good.

SIM. No, thanks. Just had dinner. But you didn't get it all in your mouth. You've got a smudge on your cheek.

SPECK (*holding up her face to him*). Wipe it off. (*He does so*) Some on my fingers, too. (*He wipes them*) Going back to work now?

SIM (*looks at watch*). Well, I've got fifteen minutes yet.

SPECK. I'm glad of that. You can tell me a heap in that time. Anything new about the robbery at the bank?

SIM. Don't know. That Boston detective told the president that he thinks he will soon be able to put his hand on the robber.

SPECK. That's good. Say, Sim, I don't like the looks of that detective, nor his actions. He hobnobs with all the villagers, but whenever he sees me on the street, he always keeps out of my way. Why, do you suppose?

SIM. Don't know. It's strange, isn't it?

SPECK. If I could think Jim Nelson could become as respectable looking as that man appears to be, I'd almost swear they were one and the same.

SIM. I'm afraid you would be sadly mistaken. Jim Nelson has never been seen since he attempted to steal dad's money—at least in these parts. But come, sit down. (*Looks at watch*) I have only ten minutes now, and as soon as I post my books at the bank, I'll have to go to the train to meet Tom.

SPECK. I forgot all about that. (*Sets jar on end of the bench*) But I wish he wasn't coming.

SIM (*sitting on bench and pulling her to him*). Why, little one?

SPECK. Oh, just 'cause.

SIM. That's no reason. (*Laughs*) Oh, I know. You think I will have to pay him so much attention that I will neglect you.

SPECK (*biting her apron or dress*). Huh! huh!

SIM (*placing arm around her*). I could never do

that, for you know my whole life is now centered in you and your happiness.

SPECK. Oh, ain't that nice? Say, Sim dear, what made you like me?

SIM. Ask me something easy. What made me like you? Do you really want to know?

SPECK (*bobbing her head*). Huh! huh! I'm just like other girls, you know.

SIM. Well, I learned to like you because of your goodness, your unselfishness—the exalted qualities of your mind and heart. Little by little—day by day—you drew me to you through your noble character and womanly worth, until, with all the fervor of my nature, I had to confess that I loved you. Like the sensible little woman that you are, you told me to stop and weigh well the importance of my words, which I did—and this is the result. (*Presses her close to him*) Is it displeasing?

SPECK. No—I like it. (*Buries her face against his shoulder*)

SIM. So do I.

SPECK (*after this business*). Well, why don't you kiss me? (*He does so*) Oh, Sim dear, I wonder if we are doing right? We are both so young, and sometimes I think neither of us understands matrimony.

SIM. Nobody does till they investigate—and that's what we are doing. When we are married we will thoroughly understand it. (*Laughs. Clarionette heard quite near. They separate*)

ENTER BEN *from L., stands at gate.*

BEN. Ma says will yer lend her yer corkscrew.

SIM. What for, Ben?

BEN. Wants to draw a hair out o' the butter. Haw! haw! haw! (*Blows clarionette and EXIT R.*)

SIM (*laughing*). If that booby wasn't so funny, I'd vote to cremate him.

SPECK So would I—just now.

SIM. Ah, well. Good-bye for a little while. (*Embraces* SPECK)

ENTER ZEB R., *with a rake.*

ZEB. Break away! (*They separate quickly*) My, what a hurry young folks be in nowadays. Time yer was gittin' back to ther bank, ain't it, Sim?

SIM (*looking at watch*). Guess it is, dad. Gee whiz! Just can make it. (*Steals a kiss as ZEB's back is turned*)

[EXIT L. *hurriedly through gate*

ZEB. I guess you kinder like thet youngster, don't yer?

SPECK. Indeed I do. Can't help it. He made me.

ZEB. Thet's right. Lay it on ter the man. Women never do nuthin'.

SPECK. Well, you like him, too, don't you?

ZEB. Every hair of his head.

SPECK. Well, you can't blame me then. (*GOES to him*)

ZEB (*taking her in his arms*). I don't, little gal. If yer didn't, yer wouldn't be sniffin' agin his vest so much. Why, any gal in the village 'd give her corset strings jes' fer a smile from him. But his smiles ain't fer sale. He's resarvin' 'em all fer you. (*Pats her on the back*)

ENTER MANDY *from house.*

MANDY. Land o' Goshen! I s'pose you two'd be huggin' each other if yer was in a open-face street car.

ZEB. Wuss'n thet, Mandy. We'd do it in a democratic convenshun.

MANDY. Well, yer'd oughter be in better bus'ness. Yer city company may pop in any minnit, an' we ain't got a bit o' tea in the house. Wish yer'd run over to the grocery an' git a pound.

SPECK. I'll go, aunty. [EXIT SPECK *through gate* R.

MANDY. Don't keer who goes so's it gits here.

[EXIT MANDY *into house*

ENTER URIAH L.

URIAH. Say, Zeb, thet Boston detective jes' called over to see me.

ZEB. What'd he want?

URIAH. Dunno 'zactly. Asked me all sorts o' questions 'bout Sim an' thet bank robbery. But he didn't git nuthin' frum me.

ZEB. He's gittin' purty fresh. Didn't say nuthin' agin Sim, did he—any insinnewations—yer know?

URIAH. No—nuthin' like thet. He was jes' tryin' ter nose out things.

ZEB. Well, he'll git his nose in a vice if he says anything agin my boy.

URIAH. Say, didn't thet robber leave no clue behind?

ZEB. Nuthin' but some bloody finger marks on a dab o' paper. Guess he must hev cut his hand purty bad. The cashier showed the marks to me an' Speck t'other day.

URIAH. What 'd they look like?

ZEB. Oh, like a duck's tracks in the mud. Can't tell nuthin' by them. Had yer dinner?

URIAH. Yes—half a hour ago.

ZEB. Then 'skuse me while I go in an' git a bite.

[EXIT *into house*]

URIAH. Mandy'll give it to him fer bein' late.

ENTER MANDY *from house*.

MANDY. Hain't Speck got back yit, Uriah? (CROSSES *to gate and looks out*)

URIAH. Hain't seed her.

MANDY. Ner I don't see nuthin' of her neether. (GOES DOWN) How's yer sister to-day, Uriah?

URIAH. Seems to hev a little tetch o' the rheumatiz.

MANDY. She ought ter be rubbed with beech-nut oil. She's been keepin' house fer you a long time, hain't she?



URIAH. Nigh on twenty-five year. You've been keepin' house fer Zeb a long time, too.

MANDY. Can't help myself. Should think you'd git married agin, an' give yer sister a rest.

URIAH. I've thort the same thing 'bout you an' Zeb.

MANDY. Sakes alive! Nobody would hev me.

URIAH. I guess yer wouldn't hev to look far. (*Grins and pokes her in the ribs*)

MANDY (*giggles*). Now, you jes' stop yer foolishness.

URIAH. Say, Mandy, I was tellin' Zeb t'other day that we ort ter swap housekeepers, git married, settle down, an' grow up with the village. (*Smiles silly, and puts arm around her*) He thort it was a good ijee.

MANDY. Now you jes' stop, Uriah Speed. (*Kittenish business*)

ENTER SPECK *through gate from R., sees them, doubles up with laughter and tiptoes down to them.*

URIAH. I ain't a-doin' nothin'. (*Looks at MANDY and grins*)

SPECK (*loudly*). Here's your tea, Aunt Mandy! (*MANDY grabs tea, looks daggers at SPECK and EXIT hurriedly into house. EXIT hurriedly URIAH R.*) Gee! Didn't they scoot! (*Laughs heartily and picks up jar of jam from bench*)

ENTER JIM NELSON *through gate L.; he is disguised as a detective. SPECK, with her back to him, has her fingers in the jam and then licks them. She turns and both meet C., SPECK, a little startled.*

JIM (*politely, and with slight change of voice*). Good day, young lady.

SPECK. Good day, sir. Want to see Uncle Zeb?

JIM. Yes, if he is in.

SPECK (*eyeing him suspiciously*). I guess he's eatin' dinner. (*Changes her demeanor to that of simple country girl*) You be the new postmaster, bean't yer? (*Licks her fingers*)

JIM. No—just looking over the territory a little.

SPECK (*walking around and eyeing him*).—Gee, but you look spruce. Thet coat must hev cost yer nigh onto five dollars, didn't it?

JIM (*laughing pleasantly*). Oh yes—five times that much. What's that you're eating?

SPECK. Ras'berry jam what aunty put up. Finest in the county. Like jam?

JIM. Yes—I'm very fond of it.

SPECK. Well, you jes' taste thet.

JIM. You have no spoon. (*Laughs*)

SPECK. Tastes better when yer lick it frum yer fingers. Jes' try it thet way.

JIM. Odd way to eat jam. But just to please you. (*Laughs*)

SPECK (*holds jar up and as he puts his fingers in, she raises jar quickly, smearing all his fingers, and laughs. JIM laughs and simply tastes it*) Why don't yer lick it all?

JIM. No—that's enough. (*Takes out handkerchief*)

SPECK. Don't use yer wiper. Stains won't cum out of it. Hold this, and I'll git yer somethin'. (*Hands him jar, his fingers staining white paper wrapper. She jerks towel off line and hands it to him, which he uses. As she takes jar, sees the stains, and unperceived by him, tears paper from it, expressing her satisfaction*) Thet's mighty fine jam when yer git used to it. (*Places jar on porch and paper behind her, while JIM turns and throws towel on the bench. Aside*) Now to the bank with this. (*To JIM*) Say, yer heven't ketched that feller what stole the bank's money, hev yer? (*Eyes him*)

JIM. Not yet; but I hope to soon.

SPECK. Aw, you ain't no good detective. Don't b'leeve he's in this town, do yer?

JIM. I certainly do.

SPECK (*GOING to him, and significantly*). So do I!

[EXIT L. *through gate, JIM watching her*

JIM. What did she mean by that? She plays the country girl well, but if she sees through my disguise, she's the first to do it. It was a big effort to shed my

old life, become half-way respectable, and get on to the Boston detective force. But a few shady transactions in that sanctimonious city put me on easy street, and I did it. And I've got the papers here that will send that boy up for some years, and I'll serve them to-day, too. That's some revenge for the scar he gave me here for life (*Indicating his neck*), and retaliation against that old farmer for weaning that girl away from me. Here he comes now.

ENTER ZEB *from house.*

ZEB. How be yer, sir? Who might yer wish to see?

JIM (*lightly*). Was passing, and just dropped in to see if I could get a little information. I am a detective.

ZEB. You be thet Boston detective?

JIM. The same. I am detailed to find out, if possible, the party who robbed your local bank last month. Your son, I believe, is employed there.

ZEB. Has been fer six months—an' there ain't nuthin' agin him neether.

JIM. No—the president and officers speak highly of him. He was the last one, however, to leave the bank that night, and who placed the money in the safe and locked it. That might implicate him. But whoever captured that five thousand was a daring burglar, for the door was blown off its hinges. The house itself is not secure from entrance by expert thieves.

ZEB. Yer know I told thet to the directors one't, but they said there wa'n't no thieves in this county, an' there ain't been no tramps along here since my son knocked the daylights out o' a couple of 'em right here six months ago.

JIM. Indeed? What was the offense?

ZEB. Got inter the house an' stole my pocketbook. It had two thousan' dollars in it, which I draw'd from the bank thet day ter pay on my farm. But Sim ketched him, an' done him up in fine style. He choked the darn cuss till his eyes run blood.

JIM (*aside*). Yes—damn him. (*To ZEB*) He was a brave lad.

ZEB. Don't make no better roun' here. But the darn robber broke jail thet same night, an' skipped the county.

JIM. An old hand at the business evidently. Would you or your son know him if you were to see him again?

ZEB. No—don't think he would. He was jest a plain every-day tramp.

JIM (*evinces satisfaction aside*). You were in luck to recover your money. I must be moving. Excuse this intrusion. (GOES UP)

ZEB. Don't mention it. It's yer business. (EXIT JIM R., *through gate*) Durned perlite feller fer a detective. [EXIT L.

ENTER BEN R., *blowing clarionette; gets to gate, stops blowing.*

BEN (*loudly*). Maw says kin you tell her — (*Sees no one on stage, blows and GOES towards L.*)

ENTER SIM, TOM and AMY, L. BEN *blows clarionette in their faces and EXIT L.*

TOM. Queer looking character that.

SIM (*laughing*). That's our country clown. (*All laugh as they COME through gate*)

TOM. He looks it. Ah, how familiar the old farm seems. And there's the same old dairy.

AMY. And the same old house. I remember it when a little girl.

TOM. Not much change in things, Sim.

SIM. No—it's the same old town, where the spirit of progress is always dozing.

AMY. Should think you would die of ennui here.

SIM. Well, it was dull at first, but I am used to it now.

TOM (*pointing L.*). And there's the same old barn,

where you and I, Sim, used to play in the hay. It takes us both back a few years, doesn't it?

AMY. But how comforting to know your dear father and aunt are still alive and well, and enjoying the old home, and their boy with them again.

SIM. Yes indeed. I am very content here with my people, and I owe much of it to my loyal friend here, whose aid and advice led me away from the breakers of the city.

AMY. Oh, he's always doing something he ought to do. (*Laughs*)

TOM (*smiling*). Well, the good was in you, Sim, and it had to come out.

SIM. Thanks, old boy. But where are the folks? (*Looks in house*)

ENTER ZEB L.

ZEB. Gosh ding them hogs. Si Pritchard's got ter pay fer them pertaters, or ——— (*Sees the others; surprised*) Well, bless my soul! Tom Mason and Miss Amy. Howdy. Yer got here at last, didn't yer? (*Shakes hands with TOM*)

TOM. Yes, I finally kept my promise. I know I've been a long time fulfilling it. But business, you know. (*Smiles*)

ENTER SPECK *through gate from L., seems surprised, and converses back with SIM.*

ZEB. Well, I'm powerful glad ter see yer both. Howdy, Miss Amy? (*About to shake hands with her, when TOM stops him*)

TOM. Mrs. Mason, if you please!

ZEB. Do tell? Yer haven't been an' done it?

TOM. Yes—six months ago.

ZEB. Well, that'll take both hands. (*Shakes both her hands*)

AMY. Yes—and I have got him beautifully tamed already. (*The three laugh*)



ZEB. Don't say? Yer done it quick, didn't yer? It took my wife nigh on ter six year to kick her initials on my disposition.

SIM (GOING DOWN *with* SPECK). Say, Tom, you remember this little girl, don't you?

TOM (*in surprise*). Why, it's little Speck! (*Shakes hands*) Why, how in the world —

SPECK. Did I come to be here? Ask my good friend there. (*Points to ZEB*)

ZEB. Jes' fetched her here—thet's all—away from the temptations of yer big city.

SPECK. He's always doing good, sir.

TOM. Well, I am indeed glad to know you have fallen into such excellent hands.

SPECK. I am very thankful, sir.

SIM. And the next time you come down you'll have the pleasure of addressing her as Mrs. Simeon Wiggins. (*Takes her in his arms*)

SPECK (*releasing herself*). Don't. They're looking. Ain't you ashamed?

TOM (*laughing with the others*). Has it got as far as that?

ZEB. Been that way ever since he cum home. Why, them two be so lovin', they fergit when supper's ready.

AMY. Let me congratulate you both in advance.

SPECK. Oh, thank you, Miss. (SIM *bows*)

ENTER *quickly* MANDY *from house*.

MANDY (*seeing others*). Oh, the city company. (*Primps herself*)

SIM (*introducing*). My aunt—Mr. and Mrs. Mason.

MANDY (*courtesying awkwardly*). Real glad fer to know yer. (GOES DOWN. *Speaks rapidly*) Been expectin' yer all day. S'pose yer hed a good trip. But the roads must hev been orful dusty, an' them keers git so stiflin' hot when the dust is flyin'—an' —

ZEB. Jes' jack-knife yer remarks, Mandy. (*To the others*) When she gits to throwin' language, no man livin' kin untie it.



MANDY. No sech thing, Zeb Wiggins. Yer don't even know how to converse with yerself, let alone coughin' down others what knows more'n you. (*To TOM*) Yer've got a mighty nice lookin' wife, Mr. Mason. Is she yourn? (*All surprised, exclaim "What!" and laugh*) Didn't say nuthin' wrong, did I, Zebediah?

ZEB. Nuthin' but yer words. There be times, Mandy, when yer kin improve yer conversashun by keepin' yer tongue still.

MANDY. Oh, yer don't say? Well, if my tongue couldn't 'spress better words then yourn, I'd go to ther dentist's an' git it pulled. Yer must discuse him. He allers did like ter show off afore company.

SIM (*laughing*). One on you, dad.

ZEB. Reckon it be. When Mandy kin give me away, she feels as good as a certified check.

SPECK. One on you, Aunt Mandy. (*Laughs*)

MANDY. 'Tain't much. If he didn't open his mouth he wouldn't say nuthin'. (*General laugh*)

ZEB. That's all right, Mandy. Now, s'posin' yer take Mrs. Mason in an' show her her room.

MANDY. Fergot all 'bout thet. Mecbbe she wants ter rest a mite afore supper too. Jes' cum this way.

AMY. Thanks. (*CROSSES to MANDY*)

ZEB. Say, Mandy, made any fresh pop-overs?

MANDY. Some's a-bakin' now. I'll give her a real fresh one an' a glass o' cider.

[*EXEUNT MANDY and AMY into house*]

ZEB. Thet's right. Mandy kin jes' beat the hull county makin' pop-overs. Melt in yer mouth soon's they feel yer breath.

SIM. Yes—Aunty's pop-overs are quite celebrated. And that's why the villagers call this Pop-Over Farm. (*Sounds of the clarionette heard L.*)

ENTER BEN L. *Stops at gate.*

BEN (*loudly*). Ma says kin you tell her is yer cat's new bunch o' kittens all girls? Haw! haw! haw!

[*EXIT, blowing, R.*]

ZEB (*takes off his shoe quickly, and is about to throw it at him, when BEN disappears. All laugh*). The darn fool! If it wa'n't fer his parents I'd set thet boy on fire some day.

TOM (*laughs*). He certainly is a simpleton.

ZEB. Simpleton? (*Puts on shoe*) Why, he's so simple he don't know how ter turn over in bed. His pa has ter help him. But let's go in an' git a glass o' cider.

SIM. Good scheme, dad. (*All about to CROSS to house*)

ENTER JIM *through gate L.*

JIM. Beg pardon. Which of you is Simeon Wiggins?

SIM (*surprised*). I am he.

JIM. Sorry to have to inform you that I have an order for your arrest. (*Takes out paper. All astonished*)

SIM. My arrest?

ZEB. See here—what do yer mean?

JIM. He is accused of robbing the Booneboro Bank of five thousand dollars on the night of the fourth of September.

ZEB. Say, yer want to be mighty keerful what you are sayin', fer I'd make it darned hot fer the man what says anything agin my boy's honor.

TOM (*exercised*). And I'd give you the gun to do it.

JIM. Gentlemen, I am an officer of the law, and am not here to parley. The evidence we have points directly to your son as the culprit.

ZEB. Evidence? What evidence? There ain't none.

JIM. Oh, but there is. The door of the safe was blown open, and a small box of dynamite was subsequently found in a far corner of a drawer in this young man's desk.

SPECK (*facing JIM defiantly*). Who placed it there?

ZEB. Did *you*, Sim? (*Positively*)

SIM. No, father—before Heaven I did not.

TOM. And I believe you, Sim. It's a trick of some enemy.

SPECK. I'm sure it is! (*Looks daggers at JIM, who does not notice her*)

JIM. May I ask, sir, if your son spends *all* his evenings at home?

ZEB. He gen'rally does, 'cept when he takes this leetle gal somewhere.

JIM. It is known that on the night of the robbery he did not return home till after midnight, and the young lady was not with him.

ZEB. Where was you, my boy?

SIM. I cannot recall, father. Perhaps at one of the neighbor's.

ZEB (*positively*). Well, Speck allers went with yer when yer went a-visitin'. If yer stole thet money, where is it? Be a man! Spit it out right here!

SIM. What, father, do you believe—

ZEB. I don't b'leeve nuthin'. I want ter know.

SPECK. Why, don't you remember, Uncle Zeb, that was the night you sent him over to Roxbury to get some papers from Lawyer Thompson, and the sulky broke down on the road when he was returning?

JIM. You seem to know a great deal about his movements, young woman—more than any one else.

ZEB. Well, why shouldn't she, seein' as how they be engaged?

JIM. That's immaterial in the case. Moreover, a week after the robbery your son bought you a new three hundred dollar sulky. I suppose he remembers that?

SIM. I do; and it was from money honestly earned.

JIM. That you must prove to the court. (*ZEB falls in chair R., quite overcome*)

SIM. Is it possible, father, you can believe this man's insinuations?

ZEB. I dunno. Yer've got to prove he's a-lyin'. There never was a stain on this family's honor afore, an' yer got to remove this one, or yer no son o' mine. (*SPECK GOES to ZEB*)

JIM (*to SIM*). Come, sir—I am waiting. (*Takes out a pair of handcuffs*)

SIM (*stepping up to him*). And I am ready.

ZEB. Han'cuffs on my son! (*Breaks into tears*)

SPECK (*while JIM is adjusting handcuffs on SIM*). Look up, Uncle Zeb; don't cry. Sim never robbed that bank!

ZEB. He's got ter prove it, an' I don't b'leeve he kin. Things look blue now, my child, an' it may not be long afore I am in the street where I fust met you.

SPECK (*kneels to him*). And if you are, I will be by your side. You've been a good father to me, and Speck will never swerve in her loyalty to you. (*Buries her head on his knee; he pats it*)

ENTER MR. THURSTON *through gate from L., followed by an OFFICER.*

JIM (*to SIM*). Come, sir. (*They turn to go, and THURSTON confronts them*)

THURSTON. One moment.

JIM. For what purpose? I cannot be interrupted in my duty.

ZEB. That's the president of the bank. (*He and SPECK rise*) What's he want?

THURSTON (*handing paper to JIM*). Restraining order from the court.

JIM (*surprised*). A restraining order? That's strange, (*Unfolds paper*) now that I have caught the criminal.

THURSTON. You are instructed to read it to your prisoner.

JIM. This is unprecedented, sir. (*Reads*) "In view of new developments, Simeon Wiggins is hereby declared exempt from arrest in connection with the recent robbery of the Booneville Bank, as the real criminal has been traced, and will soon be in custody. J. P. Suttiff, Judge." (*Aside*) The devil! (*To SIM*) Congratulate you, young man. It's a lucky escape for you

*just now.* (To THURSTON) I will see the judge about this unwarranted interference. (Takes handcuffs off SIM) I wish you all good day. (Starts to go)

MANDY and AMY ENTER from house, and stand surprised.

THURSTON (*interposing*). One moment, detective. Will you favor me with your name?

JIM. Detectives keep their names to themselves, and also their business.

THURSTON. Rather masonic, I see. Young lady, (To SPECK) you handed me this paper to-day at the bank. On it is the imprint of fingers, the exact duplicate, on comparison, of the finger marks left by the robber. Can you tell me whose these are? (Points to stains on paper—JIM shrinks)

SPECK. Yes, sir—that man's! (Points to JIM. Sensation)

JIM (*wildly*). It's a lie! The girl knows nothing of me!

SPECK. But I know that voice now!

TOM. Who is he, Speck?

SPECK. Who? Jim Nelson, the New York crook! (JIM, incensed, rushes for SPECK, when he is caught and held by TOM and SIM, and is being handcuffed by the OFFICER, as CURTAIN DESCENDS. THURSTON shakes hands with ZEB, SIM takes SPECK in his arms, and MANDY holds up her hands in astonishment)

ZEB (to THURSTON). She's a sharp leetle gal, ain't she?

## PICTURE AND CURTAIN

For second curtain, SPECK, ZEB and SIM are in foreground, SPECK in ZEB's arms. MANDY is at bottom of steps, still astonished. AMY over R. by TOM. JIM and OFFICER outside gate, JIM shaking fist at them all, and THURSTON, with his back to audience, watching them. BEN ENTERS, tooting, as curtain falls.



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Just for Fun (27c.)	"	3	2	4	2h
Men, Maids, Matchmakers	" (27c.)	3	4	4	2h
Our Boys	"	3	6	4	2h
Puzzled Detective	Farce	3	5	3	1h
Three Hats	"	3	5	4	2h
Timothy Delano's Courtship	Comedy	2	2	3	1h
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Fleeing Flyer	"	1	4	3	1¼h
From Punkin' Ridge	Drama	1	6	3	1¼h
Handy Solomon	Farce	1	2	2	20m
Hoosier School	"	1	5	5	30m
Kiss in the Dark	"	1	2	3	45m
Larry	"	1	4	4	45m
Love Birds' Matrimonial Agency	"	1	3	4	30m
Married Lovers	Comedy	1	2	4	45m
Ma's New Boarders (27c.)	Farce	1	4	4	30m
Mrs. Forester's Crusade	"	1	1	2	30m
New Pastor	Sketch	1	2	2	30m
Relations	Farce	1	3	1	20m
Standing Room Only	Comedy	1	3	1	35m
Stormy Night	"	1	3	1	40m
Surprises (27c.)	Farce	1	2	3	30m
Tangles (27c.)	"	1	4	2	30m
Little Rogue Next Door	"	1	2	3	40m
Till Three P. M.	"	1	2	1	20m
Train to Mauro	"	1	2	1	15m
When Women Rule	"	1	2	4	15m
Won by a Kodak	Comedy	1	2	3	50m
April Fools	Farce	1	3	0	30m
Fun in a Schoolroom	"	1	4	0	40m
Little Red Mare	"	1	3	0	35m
Manager's Trials	"	1	9	0	45m
Medica	"	1	7	0	35m
Mischievous Bob	Comedy	1	6	0	40m
Cheerful Companion	Dialogue	1	0	2	25m
Dolly's Double	"	1	1	1	20m
Drifted Apart	"	1	1	1	30m
Gentle Touch	"	1	1	1	30m
John's Emmy	"	1	1	1	20m
Point of View	"	1	1	1	20m
Professor's Truant Glove	"	1	1	1	20m
Belles of Blackville	Minstrel	1	0	any no.	2h
Sweet Family (27c.)	Entertainment	1	0	3	1h
Conspirators (27c.)	Comedy	2	0	12	40m
A Day and a Night (27c.)	"	2	0	10	1h
Gertrude Mason, M.D. (27c.)	Farce	1	0	7	30m
In Other People's Shoes	Comedy	1	0	8	50m
Maidens All Forlorn (27c.)	"	3	0	6	1¼h
Mary Ann	"	1	0	5	30m
Romance of Phyllis (27c.)	"	3	0	4	1¼h
Fuss vs. Feathers	Mock Trial	1	4	4	30m
Tanglefoot vs. Peruna	"	1	7	18	1½h
Great Libel Case	"	1	21	0	2h



## PLAYS WE RECOMMEND 0 017 401 325 1

For Schools and Colleges

Twenty-five cents (Postage 2 cents extra)

		Acts	Males	Females	Time
Irish Eden	Comedy	3	8	6	2h
Kidnapped Freshman	Farce	3	12	4	2¼h
Matrimonial Tiff	Farce	1	2	1	1h
Little Savage	Comedy	3	4	4	2h
Lodgers Taken In	"	3	6	4	2½h
Miss Mosher of Colorado	"	4	5	3	2h
Miss Neptune	"	2	3	8	1¼h
My Uncle from India	"	4	13	4	2½h
Never Again	Farce	3	7	5	2h
New England Folks	Drama	3	8	4	2¼h
Next Door	Comedy	3	5	4	2h
Oak Farm	Comedy	3	7	4	2½h
Riddles	"	3	3	3	1¼h
Rosebrook Farm	"	3	6	9	1¾h
Stubborn Motor Car	"	3	7	4	2½h
Too Many Husbands	Farce	2	8	4	2h
When a Man's Single	Comedy	3	4	4	2h
Where the Lane Turned	"	4	7	5	2h
After the Honeymoon	Farce	1	2	3	50m
Biscuits and Bills	Comedy	1	3	1	1¼h
Chance at Midnight	Drama	1	2	1	25m
Conquest of Helen	Comedy	1	3	2	1h
The Coward	Drama	1	5	2	30m
Sheriff of Tuckahoe	Western Sk.	1	3	1	1h
Bashful Mr. Bobbs	Comedy	3	4	7	2½h
Whose Widow	"	1	5	4	50m
Alice's Blighted Profession	Sketch	1	0	8	50m
Regular Girls	Entertainment	1	0	any no.	1h
100% American	Comedy	1	0	15	1½h
Parlor Patriots	"	1	0	12	1h
Fads and Fancies	Sketch	1	0	17	1h
Mr. Loring's Aunts	Comedy	3	0	13	1¼h
My Son Arthur	"	1	2	8	¾h
Sewing Circle Meets	Entertainment	1	0	10	1¼h
Every Senior	Morality play	1	0	8	40m
Bride and Groom	Farce	3	5	5	2¼h
Last Chance	Comedy	2	2	12	1½h
Bubbles	"	3	4	3	1½h
Hurricane Wooing	"	3	4	3	1½h
Peggy's Predicament	"	1	0	5	½h
Found in a Closet	"	1	1	3	20m
Slacker (?) for the Cause	Sketch	1	3	1	20m
Baby Scott	Farce	3	5	4	2¼h
Billy's Bungalow	Comedy	3	5	4	2h
College Chums	"	3	9	3	2h
Delegates from Denver	Farce	2	3	10	¾h
Football Romance	Comedy	4	9	4	2½h
Held for Postage	Farce	2	4	3	1¼h
In the Absence of Susan	"	3	4	6	1½h
Transaction in Stocks	Comedy	1	4	1	45m
Aunt Dinah's Quilting Party	Entertainment	1	5	11	2h
Bachelor Maids' Reunion	"	1	2	any no.	1½h
In the Ferry House	"	1	15	11	1½h
Rustic Minstrel Show	"	1	any no.	any no.	1½h
Ye Village Skewl of Long Ago	"	2	any no.	any no.	2h
Rainbow Kimona	"	2	0	9	1½h
Rosemary	Comedy	4	0	14	1½h
Pharaoh's Knob	"	1	1	12	1h