

Seven Keys To Baldpate

A COMIC THRILLER
In a Prologue, Two Acts and an Epilogue

A new adaptation
By
DAVID JACKLIN
Of the Play
By
GEORGE M. COHAN

And based on the Novel, "Seven Keys to Baldpate,"
By
EARL DERR BIGGERS

This adaptation (C) 2016
David Jacklin
394 Keays Road, R.R. 1
Balderson, Ontario
K0G 1A0
(613) 267-1884
barndoorproductionstheatre@gmail.com
www.barndoorproductions.ca

CHARACTERS

Hal Bentley, owner of the Baldpate Inn and president of Reuton-Asquewan Suburban R. R. 50s-60s

William Hallowell Magee, a novelist. 30s

John Bland, Bentley's right hand man. 30s-40s

Peters, the Hermit of Baldpate. 50s-60s

Lou Max, the Mayor's man "Friday." 30s-40s

Jim Cargan, the crooked mayor of Reuton. 50s-60s

Jiggs Kennedy, Chief of Police of Asquewan Falls. 50s-60s

Mary Norton, a newspaper reporter. 20s

Mrs. Rhodes, a charming widow. 40s-50s

Myra Thornhill, a blackmailer. 20s-30s

THE SCENE

The scene is laid in the lobby of Baldpate Inn.

Time: Sometime in the Jazz Age (1920s)

**SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE
PROLOGUE**

(A country hotel lobby, the moon shining through glass doors and windows. There is a clerk's desk C.R. with mail pigeon-holes behind it and a practical telephone exchange, now covered with a cloth. There is a table C.L. with chairs around it, some chairs under the windows upstage, along with the main door, also U.S. Stairs U.L. lead to a balcony with three doors in it, running up and down on the stage left side. Two doors under the balcony with a fireplace between them. The chimney extends through the balcony and up out of sight.)

(The wind is heard howling outside. The effect is that of a terrific storm taking place. Everything within the scene proves that it is a deserted, desolate spot; in fact, it is a summer resort inn on Baldpate Mountain, Maine, now closed for the winter.)

(After the scene has established, HAL BENTLEY appears at door upstage and is seen swinging a lantern. He does this as if guiding someone who is following. He fumbles with a bunch of keys he has taken from his pocket, finds the right key and unlocks the door. As the door swings open the wind is heard howling unmercifully. He holds the door open for WILLIAM MAGEE to enter past him, carrying a suitcase and a portable typewriter. They both stamp their feet to get them warm. BENTLEY goes down stage, holding up lantern and peering around room, then goes up R. and to C. and down to table L., on which he places the lantern. MAGEE, after closing the door, goes slowly down L. to table, meanwhile stamping feet, removing ear-muffs and placing hat and gloves on table. BENTLEY removes his gloves, and they both stand rubbing their hands and ears. All this business is done without a word being spoken. The two are half frozen after their climb up the mountain.)

MAGEE. You know, I think it's colder in here than it is outside.

BENTLEY. *(Shivering)* No argument from me.

MAGEE. Maybe we'd better leave the door open and let in some warm air.

BENTLEY. *(Nods toward fireplace.)* We'll build a fire.

MAGEE. *(Starts R., stops and stamps his feet)* I think my feet are frozen. They must be down there, but I can't feel them. *(Knocks hands together.)*

BENTLEY. I don't wonder. Lord, I'll never forget this night! *(MAGEE is looking for wood.)* Any firewood there?

MAGEE. All laid ready. I'll have a blaze in a minute if I can find my matches. *(Searches through his pockets.)* Yeah, here they are! *(He strikes a match and sets it to the*

firewood.) Why I let you talk me into staying in a summer hotel on the top of a mountain in the dead of winter, I'll never know.

BENTLEY. To win five thousand dollars, but it's not too late to back out, Magee.

MAGEE. Some chance of that. *(Fire begins to blaze up)* It's catching. I expect to win that five thousand, but I didn't expect I'd be frozen to death while I did it. *(Looks at fire, which is blazing.)* Ah, there she goes. That'll warm it up a little. *(Goes L.C. to BENTLEY during next speech.)*

BENTLEY. I didn't actually think you'd do it. *(Pulls a telegram from his pocket and reads.)* "William Hallowell Magee agrees to all details of his arrangement with you. He will occupy Baldpate Inn tonight to undertake the task agreed upon." I should have had the housekeeper fix up one of the rooms.

MAGEE. I won't be sleeping for the next twenty-four hours.

BENTLEY. You'd better use that first room to the left. *(Points to room on balcony R.)* That's the one I use when I come. There's a nice fireplace in it.

MAGEE. *(Going up the stairs with suitcase and typewriter.)* A summer hotel in the dead of winter! It beats all what some people will do for five thousand dollars! *(Exits door L., leaving door open.)*

BENTLEY. Is there firewood up there?

MAGEE. *(OFF.)* Yep, plenty – *(MAGEE comes out onto the balcony without suitcase or typewriter.)* – but I think I'm frozen through.

BENTLEY. *(Going up the stairs.)* I've got the thing for that. *(Takes flask from his pocket and hands it to Magee.)* Here, try a little of this.

MAGEE. *(Sees flask and grabs it)* Thanks! *(Takes a long drink. Offers flask to BENTLEY.)* Thanks again, a thousand thanks.

BENTLEY. Just put that in your pocket; you might need it later on.

MAGEE. All right, I will. Thanks.

(He pockets the flask and they come back down the stairs. MAGEE removes overcoat, muffler and hat, and places them on chair)

A night like tonight makes me believe everything Jack London ever wrote. *(Crosses to L.C, looking at everything, very much interested, and rubbing his hands.)* So this is Baldpate, is it? Well, this lobby's too big a barn to work in. I'll work upstairs. I'll be more comfortable up there. *(Warms himself at the fireplace.)*

BENTLEY. Give me the matches. I'll set a fire upstairs for you.

MAGEE. Thanks. I think I'm starting to thaw out. *(He hands BENTLEY the box of matches, who starts for stairs and goes up on balcony. MAGEE strolls around stage looking at everything carefully.)* This certainly is old John H. Seclusion himself.

(All the lights in the lobby suddenly come on.)

Good Lord, where did those lights come from?

BENTLEY. *(Comes out and leans on balcony rail. Laughs)* I called the power company earlier and told them to turn the power back on. I knew you'd have to have some real light for this kind of work. *(BENTLEY exits back into R. balcony door. From OFF.)* Do you really think you can do it – having seen the place?

MAGEE. That's just what I was wondering. The critics all say my thinking process is screwy, and, hearing that wind and feeling that cold, I think they may be right. *(Moves chair out and sits L.C.)*

BENTLEY. *(OFF.)* Not too late to back out.

MAGEE. You never read the kind of stuff I write? The sort of novels that are sold by the pound in railroad stations?

BENTLEY. *(Coming out onto balcony.)* Nope. I read the Wall Street Journal.

MAGEE. Well, as a writer of those novels, I say you are missing out.

BENTLEY. *(Coming down the stairs.)* I'll get along.

MAGEE. Wild, thrilling tales for the tired business man's tired wife; shots in the night; chases after fortunes; Cupid busy with his arrows all over the place. Love at first sight. It's good fun and there's money in it, and, what's more, I like to do it.

BENTLEY. *(Back down on the main level.)* Well, there's money and then there's money.

MAGEE. Oh, not Wall Street money, of course, but I get along. They say it's just cheap melodrama. Perhaps they're right.

BENTLEY. Perhaps.

MAGEE. Did you ever read "Anna, Karen and Nina"?

BENTLEY. Never did.

MAGEE. My first. Wrote it in three days, on nothing but coffee and two egg salad

sandwiches. Sold thirty thousand copies at a dime a piece.

BENTLEY. My, my.

MAGEE. I can do better than that here with the crackle of the fire, the roar of the wind, and the ticking of my watch for company. "The loneliest spot on earth," you said.

BENTLEY. Was I wrong?

MAGEE. Nope. Baldpate Inn – in winter.

BENTLEY. The thing is, though, no more trash. This as a chance to write something good.

MAGEE. I shall create a novel so literary that Ralph Waldo Emerson will come to me with tears in his eyes and beg me to join the immortals. And all right here, on this mountain, in twenty-four hours – starting at midnight. Right?

BENTLEY. Magee, I can't figure out whether you're a smart man or a damn fool.

MAGEE. *(Laughs)* I've been stalled between those two opinions of myself for years. My publisher says I'm a smart man; my critics call me a damn fool. But, to be honest, I've been running short of inspiration, lately. "The loneliest place in the world." That's inspiration.

BENTLEY. You're going to work through the night?

MAGEE. I do most of my work in the dead of night. It's easier to concentrate. But I must have absolute solitude.

BENTLEY. Oh, you'll get it.

MAGEE. *(Pulling a paper from his pocket.)* Here's my copy of the agreement, with your signature attached, Mr. Bentley. *(Reads)* "You are to arrive in Asquewan Falls at ten-forty. We will go directly to Baldpate Inn, a-top Baldpate Mountain, where I will turn over to you the only key to the inn in existence." The only key? Really?

BENTLEY. It's the only key I know of.

MAGEE. Good! *(Continues reading.)* "You are to begin work at twelve o'clock Tuesday night. I shall return at twelve o'clock Wednesday night when you will turn over to me the completed manuscript of a ten-thousand-word story of provable literary value." All correct?

BENTLEY. So far.

MAGEE. *(Continues reading.)* "If this task is successfully completed, Mr. Hal Bentley will

pay to Mr. William Hallowell Magee the sum of five thousand dollars. If this is not successfully completed, Mr. William Hallowell Magee will . . ." – well, we know the rest, don't we?

BENTLEY. Yes, we do. So, you're going to write a book – in the next twenty-four hours.

MAGEE. Five thousand dollars is a lot of incentive.

BENTLEY. A real book of literary value. No surprise endings and love at first sight stuff.

MAGEE. Charles Dickens will weep in his grave for jealousy.

(Phone rings. They both jump.)

Now what?

BENTLEY. I had the service renewed. They're just testing it. *(Goes to phone switchboard, pulls off the sheet, plugs in a plug and stops buzzer. He picks up the receiver.)* Hello, hello! . . . Yes. Yes, right on time . . . Half frozen, thank you. *(He hangs up the receiver and unplugs the switchboard.)*

MAGEE. I hope that thing's not going to ring all night.

BENTLEY. You won't be disturbed. "The loneliest spot on earth." You still want to do it?

MAGEE. Typewriter, blank paper and a half-dozen sandwiches. I'm ready.

BENTLEY. I don't see how you can do it.

MAGEE. And, that opinion is going to cost you five thousand, old man. *(Laughs.)* Have you the exact time, Mr. Bentley?

BENTLEY. Mine says half-past eleven.

MAGEE. Thirty minutes to get my bearings and frame up a character or two for a start. *(Crosses to R.C.)* You're sure I won't be disturbed?

BENTLEY. No one ever comes within a mile of this place till spring. The only time I remember anybody coming here in the winter was the time when a bunch of City Hall reformers up at Reuton got after a bunch of crooked politicians, and they broke in here and hid a bag of bribe money in that safe over there. *(Points to safe. MAGEE goes up to safe, opens the door, then comes down to BENTLEY, after closing safe door.)*

MAGEE. You mean to tell me the reformers hid money in that safe?

BENTLEY. Not the reformers! The politicians. Reformers never have any money.

MAGEE. *(Laughs as he goes R.)* So, what happened?

BENTLEY. Oh, someone gave them away, and the police came the next morning and found it. Some officials got tossed out of office, I believe. That was twenty years ago. *(Goes L. to table and gets his gloves and hat.)* Are you ready, Magee?

MAGEE. Ready.

BENTLEY. Well, goodbye, then. *(He starts for the door.)*

MAGEE. You've forgotten something, Bentley.

BENTLEY. Forgotten what?

MAGEE. The key.

BENTLEY. Oh, yes, the key! Here it is. *(Hands MAGEE the key.)*

MAGEE. You're quite sure that this is the only key to Baldpate Inn?

BENTLEY. Quite sure. Going to lock yourself in?

MAGEE. Precisely.

BENTLEY. Sooner you than me. Don't be afraid of the ghost.

MAGEE. Ghost!

BENTLEY. Oh, not what you think! There's an old fellow up here on the mountain – a hermit.

MAGEE. A hermit?

BENTLEY. His wife ran off with someone and he lives alone in a little shack; people call it the Hermit's Cave. The summer boarders buy picture postcards from him. We think he's been frightening people away from the valley by running around with a white sheet wrapped around him, waving a lantern.

MAGEE. But no one ever proved it was him?

BENTLEY. Who else could it be? There are no such thing as ghosts, are there, Mr. Magee?

MAGEE. Well, I hope not.

BENTLEY. I'll say good-night, sir. *(Offers hand to MAGEE.)*

MAGEE. *(Shaking hands)* Good night. And remember, twelve o'clock sharp, to-morrow

night.

BENTLEY. I'll be here on the dot. *(Goes up toward door, followed by MAGEE.)*

MAGEE. *(Opens door. Wind effect.)* I don't envy you your trip down the mountain. Good night. Keep a sharp lookout for ghosts and hermits. *(Laughs.)*

BENTLEY. *(Outside.)* In this cold, I'll be moving too fast for them to catch me! *(Exits.)*

MAGEE. *(Slams door quickly, locks it, waves his hand to BENTLEY, then stands looking at key in his hand)* The only key, eh? Now, that's interesting!

(Puts key in his pocket, looks around room, thinks, then claps his hands as if decided on something)

To work!

(He grabs his coat and hat from chair near fire, extinguishes lamps and bracket lights, takes a last look around room, and then exits upstairs into room R. on balcony.)

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(Black.)

END OF PROLOGUE

SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE
ACT I

(The clock strikes twelve. The sound of a typewriter is heard clicking from the room occupied by MAGEE. A short pause of absolute silence, then BLAND appears at door, peering into room.)

BLAND. *(Opens door, enters, locks door, then comes down to c. and looks about, rubbing his hands and blowing on them to warm them. Sees safe, goes up to it, tries the door, opens it, and goes down R. As he starts for phone he sees fire burning, and stops dead.)* A fire! Who the devil built that? *(Thinks, goes to phone and puts in plugs.)* 287, West. Hurry it along, sister. *(MAGEE enters from room and stands on balcony listening, leaving door of room open. In phone.)* This is Bland. . . Yes, I'm at Baldpate . . . Damn near frozen . . . Awful! Like Napoleon's tomb. . . I thought you said the Mayor would meet me here? . . . Well, somebody's been here: there's a fire lit. No, I can't stay here all night; I'd go mad . . . All right. The money will be here in the safe. It's safer here than any spot on earth . . . I'll lock it as soon as I put the package in. . . . Mayor Cargan knows the combination . . . It'll be safe until he gets it. It's the last place they'll look for it. Besides, how could they get in? My key to Baldpate is the only one in existence. *(MAGEE, on balcony, takes out his key and looks at it.)* I've got the president's car waiting at the foot of the mountain . . . All right. *(Hangs up receiver, goes C., takes package of money from his pocket, looks at it and around room, then goes to safe and deposits the money therein. MAGEE starts slowly and stealthily downstairs. BLAND closes door of safe, turns the handle, tries doors to see if they are locked securely, then comes down to fireplace and warms himself. As he turns his back to the fire, he comes face to face with MAGEE, who by this time is standing C. BLAND's hand goes to his pocket for his gun as he comes slowly c. to MAGEE.)* Hey!

MAGEE. *(Cool and collected.)* Good evening, or perhaps I should say, good morning.

BLAND. *(Keeping his hand on gun as he advances toward Magee.)* Who are you?

MAGEE. I was just about to put that question to you.

BLAND. What are you doing here?

MAGEE. Another question I was going to ask.

BLAND. Did you follow me up the mountain?

MAGEE. Now, I wasn't going to ask that one. Yeah. I followed you so fast, I got here an hour ahead of you.

BLAND. How'd you get in here?

MAGEE. *(Points.)* Through that door.

- BLAND. There's only one key to that door, and I have it right here in my pocket.
- MAGEE. Well, as your key fits the lock, and my key fits the lock, there are evidently two keys to Baldpate instead of one. *(He shows Bland his key.)* See?
- BLAND. You trying to tell me that's a key to Baldpate?
- MAGEE. I'm not only trying to, I did. I heard you tell your friend your key was the only one in existence. *(Laughs.)* It sort of handed me a laugh. Me standing here and all.
- BLAND. You heard what I said?
- MAGEE. Every crooked word.
- BLAND. *(Pulls pistol.)* You don't think you're going to live to tell it, do you?
- MAGEE. Oh, I think I will. It's hard to hide a body. Besides, why turn a bit of . . . larceny? . . . into murder? I don't care about whatever's going on with that safe, but I would object to getting shot. But would you answer me one question? Where did you get your key to Baldpate?
- BLAND. None of your damned business! What do you want? The story of my life?
- MAGEE. Could you at least relate that portion that leads to you intruding on a man who only wants seclusion?
- BLAND. Intruding? Who's intruding?
- MAGEE. I was here first.
- BLAND. Who gave you that key?
- MAGEE. None of *your* damned business! That's the right answer, isn't it?
- BLAND. *(Goes slightly nearer Magee.)* You've got nerve to talk like that with a gun in front of your face.
- MAGEE. Oh, that doesn't disturb me in the least. I've written so much of this melodrama that it's kind of funny to discover that my brand of literary trash is the real thing, after all. You may not believe it, but you're one of my favourite characters! *(Laughs heartily and slaps BLAND on the shoulder. The latter backs away. MAGEE sits at table, still laughing heartily.)*
- BLAND. *(Up close to MAGEE.)* Say, I killed a man once for laughing at me.
- MAGEE. You see! I used that line in "A Tale of Three Cities." Four hundred thousand

copies. I'll bet you've read it.

BLAND. *(Pointing gun.)* If you don't tell me who you are and what you're doing here, I'll kill you as dead as a door-nail. Come on, I mean business! Who are you?

MAGEE. Well, just call me Smith.

BLAND. What are you?

MAGEE. A writer of popular novels. *(Up close to BLAND.)* Now, why don't you just toddle off and leave me to myself for the night. I've got to complete a story in twenty-four hours. I don't need any interruptions.

BLAND. *(Sneeringly.)* You must think I'm an awful fool to swallow that!

MAGEE. Go upstairs into that room with the open door – *(Points to room R. on balcony. BLAND looks up and backs away.)* – and you'll find a typewriter, several pages of manuscript scattered on the floor, and a letter on the dresser from the owner of this inn to me, proving that all I've told you is the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help me, there you are.

BLAND. *(Up close to MAGEE.)* I think you're a cop.

MAGEE. No. I wish I were. They say the bribes are pretty good.

BLAND. What's this "letter from the owner" say?

MAGEE. I'll get it for you. *(Starts upstairs, but is stopped by BLAND halfway up.)*

BLAND. *(Shouts.)* Get back here!

MAGEE. *(Comes down and goes to L.C.)* What's the matter?

BLAND. *(Going L.C. to MAGEE.)* I've been double-crossed before. I'll find it.

MAGEE. Suit yourself. *(He turns from BLAND. As he does so, BLAND frisks him for a gun. MAGEE turns, surprised; then, as he understands, he laughs.)* Ha, ha, ha! I've never carried a gun in my life.

BLAND. But you keep one in your room, eh?

MAGEE. Search the room if you want.

BLAND. That's just what I'm going to do. I guess I'll keep you in sight, though. Go on; I'll let you show me the way.

- MAGEE. All right. *(Starts toward stairs.)* If that's the way you feel about it, I won't try to stop you. *(Goes upstairs leisurely, followed by BLAND, who keeps him covered. MAGEE starts to exit into room. BLAND stops him.)*
- BLAND. *(C. of balcony.)* Wait a minute; I'll peek around that room first. You're too damned willing. *(Goes to door of room R. MAGEE steps out to R. of door.)* I'll call you when I've satisfied myself you're not trying to spring something.
- MAGEE. You still don't trust me, after all we've been through together . . .
- (BLAND exits into room, keeping his eyes fixed on MAGEE. The latter stands thinking for a moment, then turns and slams door quickly, locks it, and runs downstairs to phone. When he is halfway down BLAND starts hammering on door.)*
- BLAND. *(Yelling and hammering on door.)* Open this door! *(Hammers.)* Damn you, I'll kill you for this!
- MAGEE. *(At phone.)* Hello! Hello! Get me the Asquewan police headquarters . . . That's what I said, police headquarters.
- (BLAND pounds on door. As MAGEE sits waiting for connection, MARY Norton appears at door. She unlocks it and enters, closing door. The cold wind attracts MAGEE, who yells:.)*
- MAGEE. Hey, close the door! Where were you born?
- MARY. Don't shoot; I'm harmless!
- MAGEE. How did you open that door?
- MARY. *(Slightly down toward MAGEE.)* With a key, of course.
- MAGEE. *(Half aside.)* Another one! *(To MARY.)* Who are you?
- MARY. Who are you?
- MAGEE. Oh, now I asked first.
- MARY. *(Comes toward MAGEE.)* My companion is outside. It's very cold. May I call them in? Then I'll explain who we are and why we're here.
- MAGEE. A companion, huh? It's kinda cold for that kind of thing.
- MARY. Nothing of the sort! *(Going up to door.)* She's just another perfectly harmless female who agreed to accompany me on a wild adventure. *(Turns to MAGEE.)* I

have your permission?

MAGEE. *(Looks up at room, R., then back at MARY, puzzled.)* Sure, bring in the whole team!

MARY. Thank you. *(Opens door and calls.)* Missus . . . !

(MRS. RHODES screams off stage, then enters and runs past MARY to above table L., terribly frightened.)

MAGEE. What's the matter? What happened?

MRS. RHODES. *(Shouting to MARY.)* Lock the door! Lock the door!

(MARY hurriedly locks door.)

MAGEE. *(Crosses to Mrs. Rhodes, speaking hurriedly.)* What is it?

MARY. *(Runs down L. to MRS. RHODES.)* What frightened you, Mrs. Rhodes?

MRS. RHODES. A man!

MARY. A man?

MRS. RHODES. A man!

MAGEE. What man?

MRS. RHODES. He suddenly appeared at the window above, with a revolver, and then he jumped through the window to the ground and started running down the mountain-side.

MAGEE. The window up there? Are you sure?

MRS. RHODES. That's the one.

MAGEE. Just a moment. *(Turns and darts upstairs, taking key from his pocket as he goes.)*

MARY. *(To MAGEE, going R.C. with MRS. RHODES.)* Who was it? What's wrong?

MAGEE. I'm beginning to think I am. *(Opens door R. on balcony and exits.)*

MRS. RHODES. *(Still hysterical.)* Why did we ever come here?

MARY. *(Coolly.)* I have my reasons – very good reasons.

MAGEE. *(Enters from room R. and comes to C. of balcony.)* The birdie flew the coop, but

he dropped this when he took the jump. *(Points gun at women. MRS. RHODES runs R., screaming; MARY screams and runs L.)* Don't get your bloomers in a bunch; I'm not going to shoot – at least, not yet. *(Drops the gun into his pocket. Coming downstairs as he speaks next lines.)* Lovely as it is to have some feminine company, isn't it a little late for a midnight visit? *(Snaps on bracket lights and comes down C.)*

MARY. *(Goes L.C. to MAGEE.)* I can explain in a very few words.

MAGEE. That will suit me. In the time it takes you to say one word, I could be typing two. I'm losing thousands of dollars. Be brief, please. *(Looks at MARY intently.)*

MARY. Why do you stare at me so?

MAGEE. Do you ever read any railroad station novels?

(MRS. RHODES takes a step toward them, surprised.)

MARY. What do you mean?

MAGEE. I've written a lot of them, and it was in every one, but I never believed in it. It's really remarkable! *(Looks from MARY to MRS. RHODES, then laughs in an embarrassed manner.)* Pardon me, you were about to explain.

MARY. Well, to begin with, I . . . *(Phone rings. ALL turn and look at it.)*

MAGEE. *(Goes to phone, stops buzzer, then backs upstage C. MRS. RHODES is R.C. To MARY.)* Will you please answer that phone? I don't care to turn my back on anything but a solid wall to-night. *(As MARY looks surprised.)* Please.

MARY. Very well. *(Goes to phone. MRS. RHODES goes R.C, above MARY.)* Hello! . . . It's who? . . . Oh. Hold the wire, please, I'll see. *(Turns to MAGEE.)* Did you call the Asquewan police?

MRS. RHODES. *(Goes to MAGEE C., frightened.)* Police!

MAGEE. *(Crossing MRS. RHODES, who goes over to R. of table L.)* Well, I did, but . . . *(Starts, then stops and looks up at room R. on balcony.)* But, just say they must have made a mistake. *(Backs upstage C.)*

MARY. *(In phone.)* Hello! . . . No, no such call was put in from here. Must be some mistake. That's all right. *(Stands up receiver and goes L. MAGEE goes to phone, severs connection, then comes down C. MARY up to him.)* Then you *did* call the police?

MAGEE. I did.

MRS. RHODES. *(Goes to C.) Why did you call the police?*

MARY. Yes, why did you call the police?

MAGEE. *(Looks at both, puzzled, then laughs.)* You know, I couldn't write 'em this good. No sooner do I get rid of one best seller, than along comes another dyed-in-the-wool "to-be-continued-in-our-next." *(To MARY.)* You promised to explain.

MARY. Which I fully intend to do; but first . . . *(She hesitates.)*

MAGEE. Proceed.

MARY. How did you get in here without this key? *(Shows him her key.)*

MAGEE. *(Laughs.)* Oh, no, no! *(Laughs.)* You know, I'm beginning to think this whole thing is a set-up.

MARY. What do you mean?

MAGEE. *(Points to her key.)* That's the only key to Baldpate in existence, right?

MARY. Yes, it is.

MAGEE. Ladies, Baldpate has more keys than a piano factory. *(He holds up his key.)*

MARY. Then he lied!

MAGEE. Who lied?

MRS. RHODES. *(Quickly.)* Mary! *(Crosses to chair in front of fire and sits.)*

MAGEE. *(Follows MRS. RHODES with his eyes, making complete turn.)* Well?

MARY. I can't tell you.

MAGEE. Well, at least tell me who you are.

MARY. I'm . . . Mary Norton. I do special stories for the "Reuton Star."

MAGEE. *(Surprised.)* You're in the newspaper game?

MARY. I am. And this lady – *(Pointing to MRS. RHODES who is now removing her gloves and scarf.)* – this is Mrs. Rhodes, with whom I live in Reuton.

MAGEE. All right. Nice to know you both. Now, why are you here?

MARY. Well, I shouldn't say . . .

MAGEE. That won't do, at all.

MARY. Well — it's . . . it's about money and an agreement between two men and . . .

MAGEE. Oh, you heard about the bet, did you? How did you hear?

MARY. Your bet? Of course.

MAGEE. Who told you about it?

MRS. RHODES. Remember your promise, Mary.

MAGEE. *(Crosses to R.C.; MARY goes L.C. MAGEE looks at MRS. RHODES and then at MARY.)* You've made many a promise, haven't you, Mary?

MARY. *(Comes down R. of table, MAGEE following her.)* Well . . . I have my sources in . . . New York? Now that you know, will you let me stay here and “get the beat”, as they say, I promise we won't get in your way.

MAGEE. You won't tell me who gave you the story?

MARY. I can't.

MAGEE. Or where you got the key?

MRS. RHODES. Your promise, Mary.

MAGEE. *(Goes toward her as she starts up.)* Mrs. Rhodes, I know Mary is a very promising young woman, but why continually remind her of the fact? *(Laughs apologetically.)* Just my little joke. *(Goes to MARY C. MRS. RHODES goes to window looking out.)* Let me get this clear. You're here to write the story of my twenty-four hour task?

MARY. Yes. Your twenty-four hour task.

MAGEE. You don't think I can do, do you?

MARY. I'm not the one who made the bet.

MAGEE. Well, I promise you I can write a novel in twenty-four hours — if people leave me alone. Now, if you'd asked me half an hour ago, I'd have said emphatically, no; but since I met the gun-flourishing, defenestrating gentleman, I'm inclined to entertain the idea of a companion — *(Looks at MRS. RHODES.)* — or two

MRS. RHODES. *(R. of MAGEE.)* Who was the man with the gun?

MARY. And why did he defenestrate?

MAGEE. You might as well ask me why he placed a package of money in that safe.

MARY/MRS. RHODES. *(Look toward safe.)* Money!

MAGEE. Or why he telephoned someone who was to pass the word along to Mayor Cargan.

MRS. RHODES. *(Turns to MAGEE, amazed.)* Mayor Cargan! Impossible! Impossible!

MAGEE. Methinks the lady doth protest too much.

MARY. *(To MAGEE, C.)* Mrs. Rhodes is a widow. She is to become Mrs. Cargan next week.

MAGEE. Oh, indeed! *(MARY goes up C, then down again during next speech. MAGEE crosses to MRS. RHODES.)* Well, congratulations, I guess.

MRS. RHODES. A more honest man than Jim Cargan never lived.

MAGEE. I am not accusing Mayor Cargan of anything, honest or dishonest. I was merely pointing out that it has been a wild night up to now. If you want to risk it, stay. It won't disturb me in the least, and this young lady just might get the story of her life. *(Goes toward MARY. Looks at his watch and whistles.)* I've lost half an hour already, and every minute means money. I'll have to work fast to make up for lost time. *(To MRS. RHODES; MARY comes down L.C.)* I hope the story proves a whale, Miss. I wish . . .

MARY. What do you wish?

MAGEE. Oh, nothing. I was just thinking. Good-night.

MARY. Good-night.

MAGEE. *(As he goes up the stairs.)* I'd gladly offer you ladies my room, but it's the only one that's heated, and I can't type if my fingers are frozen.

MRS. RHODES. I see that you're not a gentleman.

MAGEE. Nope. I'm a novelist. *(On balcony R.)* Goodnight, ladies.

MARY. Good-night.

MAGEE. *(A long look at MARY and then at MRS. RHODES.)* I still wish you hadn't brought

her with you. Good-night.

MARY. Good-night.

(MAGEE exits into room R. on balcony, closing door. PETERS is seen through the window U.S., wearing a sheet.)

MRS. RHODES. *(Over to MARY, R.C.)* Jim Cargan couldn't be part of this, could he? Could he, Mary?

MARY. I hope not, for your sake, but it's certain that somebody is bribing someone.

MRS. RHODES. I can't believe it! I won't believe it! *(Crosses to L.C.)*

MARY. *(Following MRS. RHODES.)* But if he is crooked, it's best you should know it now.

MRS. RHODES. *(Going toward safe.)* Money hidden in that safe, he said.

MARY. Yes, and that dovetails with the tip I got yesterday. *(Both come downstage a trifle.)* A story on a silly bet! And he believed it! I've got bigger fish to fry!

MRS. RHODES. He's probably part of it!

MARY. I hope not. I may get two stories with one broom. I'd be made!

MRS. RHODES. *(Sees PETERS looking in window.)* Great Heavens, Mary, look!

MARY. What is it? *(Looks up at door, sees PETERS. MRS. RHODES screams and runs R. and hides behind chair. MAGEE enters on balcony.)*

MAGEE. *(Looking down at women.)* How's a guy supposed to work with all that going on?

MRS. RHODES. A ghost!

MAGEE. A what?

MARY. A ghost! A ghost!

MAGEE. *(Laughing.)* I'll bet you a nickel that ghost's wife ran away on him! *(Starts to come downstairs.)*

MARY/MRS. RHODES. *(They wave MAGEE back.)* Ssh!

(MAGEE snaps out lights. PETERS unlocks the door, enters, locks door, then throws the sheet over his arm and comes down stage,

looking from MARY to MRS. RHODES, who both come forward a trifle. MAGEE comes to L. of PETERS at C.)

MAGEE. Say, pal, just how many keys there are to this flat?

PETERS. *(Turns to look at MAGEE, but ignores question.)* What are you doing with these women here?

MAGEE. Nothing yet. What's it to you?

PETERS. I don't like women.

MAGEE. Well, isn't that swell for you?

(PETERS growls angrily and steps menacingly toward MRS. RHODES, who screams and runs behind MARY.)

It's all right, ladies; he's only a part-time ghost. Most of the time, he's in the picture postcard business.

PETERS. *(Gruffly.)* I'll knock you down and stomp on you!

MAGEE. *(To PETERS.)* Just hold on a minute, Bosco. We'll get to that. *(To ladies.)* If you ladies will give me a minute, I'll either kill this apparition or cure it.

PETERS. *(Gruffly.)* What are you on about?

MAGEE. *(To PETERS.)* See here, that's the second time you've barked at me. Don't do it again 'cause my bite's worse than your bark! *(MAGEE down to PETERS.)* So you're the ghost of Baldpate, are you?

PETERS. How'd you people get in here?

MAGEE. *(Laughs.)* Don't tell me you've got the "only key in existence"!

PETERS. What?

MAGEE. You know there are other keys besides yours.

PETERS. Imitations! Mine's the real key. The old man gave it to me the day before he died.

MAGEE. What old man?

PETERS. The father of that young scamp who owns this place now.

MAGEE. I've never heard Hal Bentley called a "young scamp" before. A lot of other

things, but never that.

PETERS. His father built this place up and that young hellion's run into the ground – more interested in his New York chums. I hate him and all his men friends.

MAGEE. Oh, you don't like men, either?

PETERS. I despise them!

MAGEE. How do little kids strike you?

PETERS. Bah!

MAGEE. *(Laughs.)* Can't imagine why your wife left you.

PETERS. Don't you mention my wife, or I'll . . . *(Raises lantern to strike MAGEE.)*

MAGEE. *(Pulls lantern out of PETERS' hand.)* Or you'll what? Now listen, old man, any more of that and I'll take away your white sheet and put you out of the ghost business. Why don't you stick to your own line of work? Hermit's an ancient and honourable profession.

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PETERS. Don't you call me that!

MAGEE. Why not? Cut out the ghost stuff and be a regular hermit!

PETERS. I play the ghost because I love to see the cowards run.

MAGEE. Oh, they're all cowards too, are they?

PETERS. Cowards, yes! *(Laughs gruffly.)*

MAGEE. Well, I'm not, see? So, show a little respect.

PETERS. No, you're no coward. I can see that.

(A woman screams OFF. PETERS laughs and dances up to door and peers through.)

Ha, ha! She nearly fell of the mountain!

MAGEE. *(Up to door and peers through.)* What's that?

MARY. What is it?

MRS. RHODES. Is someone hurt?

MAGEE. Did you hear a woman scream?

MARY. *(Frightened.)* Distinctly.

PETERS. *(Dramatically, as he goes toward door L. slowly.)* A woman in white, a woman in white! She looks like the ghost! *(Laughs.)* She took a real tumble. *(Almost whispers.)* She looks like the ghost. Look! *(He points out the window and, when they all look, ducks out a hidden door L.)*

(MYRA Thornhill appears at door C. and is seen unlocking it.)

MAGEE. *(Rushes MARY and MRS. RHODES to foot of stairs.)* Another key!

MARY/MRS. RHODES. What?

MAGEE. Ssh! It's a woman! *(He waves them back.)* Up!

(MARY and MRS. RHODES go up and into room R. MAGEE crouches behind banister, unseen by MYRA until he speaks. MYRA enters, locks doors, then tiptoes cautiously to dead C. She takes a sweeping glance around, then goes to fire and warms herself; comes to C. again, and on making sure that no one is in the room, she goes to safe and starts working combination, first picking up lantern from desk and holding it in her left hand, while working combination with her right.)

MAGEE. *(Snapping on bracket lights.)* A little more light will help you work faster. *(MYRA puts lantern on desk and throws up her hands.)* What? Oh, right. *(Puts his hand in his coat pocket like a gun.)* All right, lady, come on out here! *(MYRA comes around desk R. to C. slowly.)* Now, stick 'em down! *(Laughs as he takes his hand out of his pocket. MYRA, confused, puts her hands down.)* This is right out my fifth book, "The Last of Moe Higgins". *(MYRA continues to advance to him slowly.)* You know, you're the best looking burglar we've had here tonight. That is, if you *are* a burglar. Are you?

MYRA. *(Coolly.)* Are you with Cargan's crowd or the Reuton Suburban people?

(MARY and MRS. RHODES enter, on balcony and listen.)

MAGEE. Me? I'm just trying to win a bet, but the chances are getting slimmer by the minute. So, tell me who you are.

MYRA. Answer me one question, first.

MAGEE. *(Laughs.)* Sure! I'll answer that one before you ask it. I got in with my little key. Oh, you thought you had the only key, but I have a cute little key of my own.

Now, there are keys and keys, but I love my little key best of all. (*Shows her his key, kissing it.*) See?

MYRA. I don't understand a word you're saying.

MAGEE. Well, you're no worse off than me, then. About two more keys, and I'll pack up, go back to New York, and never make another bet as long as I live!

MYRA. (*Up close to him.*) And, what's your name, handsome?

MAGEE. Well, I *was* Smith but you can call me Jones. *Yours* is Smith, I assume?

MYRA. Names doesn't matter. Oh, I don't know who you are, but I know you can help me. (*Puts her arms around his neck and looks up at him, batting her eyelashes.*) You will help me, won't you?

MAGEE. (*Interested.*) Sure! Sure! What do you want me to do?

MYRA. (*Looks at MAGEE without speaking, then goes up to safe and back to MAGEE.*) In that safe, there is a package . . .

MAGEE. Everybody knows that.

MYRA. . . . containing two hundred thousand dollars.

MAGEE. Two hundred thousand dollars! (*Whistles.*) That *is* new information!

(*MARY and MRS. RHODES start downstairs very slowly.*)

MYRA. (*Following MAGEE up R.*) A man named Bland was to put it there tonight. He's . . . my husband's man.

MAGEE. And who's your husband when he's home?

MYRA. He is the presi . . . he has invested thousands in the city street-car franchise but that gang of crooks at Reuton City Hall is demanding a pay-off before they'll give him the franchise. Mayor Cargan himself is at the bottom of it all. (*MARY and MRS. RHODES start at mention of mayor's name.*) I begged him not to but my husband agreed to do it. It's bribery but he's desperate. I know Cargan will never keep his word. They'll cheat him and, if he tries to go to the newspapers, they'll charge him with attempted bribery. That's why I risked the mountain on a night like this. They'll pick up the money before morning. They may be out there now. You've got to help me! My husband is being cheated, robbed, probably ruined.

MAGEE. That's a bad combination, but, unfortunately – (*He indicates the safe.*) – I don't know the combination.

MYRA. *(Wringing her hands.)* Oh, there must be something we can do! Please, please. *(She kneels at his feet and puts up her hands imploringly.)* For the sake of my children, help me, please!

(MARY, on the stair, applauds ironically. MYRA stands and faces MARY and MRS. RHODES, then turns abruptly to MAGEE.)

Who are these women? What are they doing here? *(She has changed from hysteria to dignified coldness.)*

MAGEE. Oh, of course, pardon me! *(Goes to women at foot of stairs. MYRA crosses to R.)* Let me make some introductions. Let's see: if I'm Jones and you're Smith, these ladies must be . . .

MYRA. *(Cuts him off sharply.)* Don't bother!

(MARY and MRS. RHODES step off stairs and remain L., keeping their eyes fixed on MYRA and MAGEE. MAGEE goes R. to MYRA.)

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(Leaning close to MAGEE and speaking low.) Please, they mustn't know who I am. My husband must never learn that I've been here. Please, for my sake!

MAGEE. And for your children.

MYRA. Children? Yes! My children!

MAGEE. Of course! I sympathize with you very deeply, Madam, and I promise you that, if you don't get that money tonight, no one will.

MYRA. You give me your word as a gentleman?

MAGEE. *(Offers his hand.)* Better than that, I give you my word as a novelist.

MYRA. *(Takes his hand.)* Very well.

MAGEE. *(Pulls down his vest and goes up to MARY and MRS. RHODES.)* Ladies, I wish to present an old chum of mine, Miss Smith, who came all the way up to Baldpate to cheer on my endeavour to break all records as a speedy story-writer.

MARY/MRS. RHODES. Miss Smith?

MAGEE. And, if she's Miss Smith, then this is Miss Brown – *(Indicating MARY)* – and this is Mrs. Green. *(Indicates MRS. RHODES, then takes out his watch and looks at it.)* And after those colourful introductions, I'm almost an hour behind myself. However, I expect to catch up with myself before the night is over. Provided, of

course, there aren't a dozen gross more keys to the old front door.

MARY. *(Goes up to MAGEE C.)* I need to have a word with you – alone.

MAGEE. Delighted. I'd like to be alone with you forever. *(To MYRA.)* Go right upstairs, Miss Smith, and make yourself at home. Oh, Mrs. Green, will you be good enough to show Miss Smith to the room, while I talk with Miss Brown? If she needs a little drop of something after that bitter cold trip up the mountain, you'll find a flask on the table.

MRS. RHODES. *(Starting up the stairs.)* I've already found it. Come along, Miss . . . Smith. *(Exits room R.)*

MYRA. *(Following MRS. RHODES upstairs.)* Well, really, I don't know what to say.

(Stops C. on balcony, looks down and warns MAGEE to silence with finger on her lips. He reassures her, then goes C.)

MRS. RHODES. *(Appearing at door.)* Right in here. Miss . . . Smith.

MYRA. Thanks, awfully. *(Exits into room, followed by MRS. RHODES, who closes door.)*

MARY. *(Goes quickly to MAGEE at C.)* Who did that woman claim to be?

MAGEE. That's a secret I've promised never to reveal.

MARY. You know perfectly well I overheard everything she said!

MAGEE. Well! No secrets around here.

MARY. She lied.

MAGEE. No! She lied?

MARY. She claimed to be the wife of a man who had invested in the city railway – the Asquewan-Reuton Suburban. I've known them all my life – I went to school with their daughters. She's not who she claims to be. There's a mystery of some kind here, Mr. Smith. *(Goes upstage excitedly, looking up at door R.)*

MAGEE. Yes, and it's not the one I'm supposed to be writing! I'll never get any work done tonight, I can see that. *(MARY comes down C.)* But what do I care? I've met you! And, you can call me Magee – everybody does.

MARY. Magee? Very well, Magee, if there's really two hundred thousand dollars in that safe, you're aren't going to give it to that woman, are you?

(PETERS enters from L. and hides behind banisters.)

MAGEE. Well, not if she lied. I can stand a lot, but not a liar.

MARY. Oh, dear. Do you . . . *(She looks up at him.)* Do you believe me?

MAGEE. *(Hands on her shoulders.)* Believe you! Look, Mary, I've written a lot of Romeo speeches in my novels, but I never got one right, yet. But, here goes: The moment you walked through that door and I laid eyes on you, I made up my mind that you were the one woman in the world for me. There's nothing I wouldn't do for you. Try me.

MARY. Oh, my! *(Beat.)* Magee, I have to tell you the truth. I – I didn't come up here to do a story on your bet. I didn't know about it. I didn't even know you were here.

MAGEE. Then what are you here for?

MARY. That woman was telling the truth about the bribe. I got a tip that it would happen tonight – here. I came up to find out what was happening.

MAGEE. That's the first honest thing anybody's said to me tonight. You're a brave girl, Mary. What do I do?

MARY. Help me get that package out of the safe and reach Reuton with it. With that money as proof, I'll wipe out the street car trust *and* Cargan's crowd with one stroke. And save Mrs. Rhodes from marrying a thief! I always knew Cargan was crooked. Oh, what a story! Think what it will mean to Reuton . . . and to me, of course. *(Puts her arms around his neck pleadingly.)* You will do this for me, won't you, Magee? Please, please!

MAGEE. Well, when you put it that way. But, how do we open that safe?

MARY. There must be a way! *(Goes up toward safe, MAGEE following.)*

MAGEE. You got any dynamite in your handbag?

MARY. *(Grabbing his hands.)* Oh, Magee! There must be way!

MAGEE. But now I want that two hundred thousand more than ever.

(PETERS moves chair just enough to betray his presence.)

MARY. *(Comes down to MAGEE, frightened.)* What was that?

MAGEE. Oh, that was nothing. It was just the wind creeping through the cracks, I fancy. *(Whispers.)* Go upstairs; there's someone hiding in this room. *(Aloud.)* Goodnight,

Miss Norton.

MARY. Goodnight. *(She hurries upstairs and exits into room, R.)*

(MAGEE looks around room for a moment, reaches over banisters and snaps out lights; starts whistling, and then goes upstairs to L. room on balcony, opens door, slams it loudly, and then comes out and sits behind banisters, watching PETERS. PETERS makes sure no one is in sight, then goes quickly over to safe and starts working combination quietly, but hurriedly, MAGEE watching him from stairs. CARGAN and MAX appear outside, peering through into room. CARGAN unlocks the door and, as the safe door flies open, they enter quickly, CARGAN first. MAX enters and goes quickly up C. and covers PETERS with gun. CARGAN closes door and goes quickly to PETERS.)

MAX. Put your hands up! *(PETERS' hands go up.)* Get away from that safe! *(PETERS moves away.)*

CARGAN. *(Recognizes him as he goes toward safe.)* Oh, it's you, is it? *(To MAX.)* The ghost came near walking that time, for sure! *(To PETERS.)* Come out of there! *(PETERS comes in front of desk.)* How did you know the combination to that safe? *(No reply from PETERS.)* Who told you there was money in there? *(No reply from PETERS. Pushes PETERS toward L.)* What do you mean by breaking in here in the middle of the night? Throw him in the cellar, Max.

MAX. Come on, hurry up! Get going! *(Shoves PETERS L.)*

PETERS. *(At door L.)* Damn you, Cargan, I hate you!

CARGAN. Well, that'll keep me awake nights. Get going! *(Goes up and locks door.)*

MAX. Go on, get going!

(PETERS exits L. door. MAX follows him off and returns almost immediately.)

CARGAN. *(Goes to safe and gets package of money. MAX enters.)* We weren't any too soon! *(Goes to table L.)* Another minute, and it would have been gone, for sure. It would be good-bye hermit if he ever got hold of a roll like this! *(Flips bills in his hands.)* Two hundred one thousand dollar bills.

MAX. You mean, it's there? It's all there?

CARGAN. It's here. *(MAGEE comes downstairs and goes behind desk while MAX and CARGAN are counting money.)* You seem surprised.

MAX. What do you mean “surprised”?

CARGAN. *(Rises, puts money in his pocket, then comes in front of table. MAX comes forward and stands L. of CARGAN, below table.)* I'm going to tell you something, Max. I didn't trust you all day, and I don't trust you to-night.

MAX. What do you mean you don't trust me?

CARGAN. You were going to double cross me. You planned to beat me to the bankroll through this woman, Thornhill.

MAX. Myra Thornhill?

CARGAN. No, Abigail Thornhill. Of course, Myra. I've had you watched. You've met with her three times during the last forty-eight hours. *(As MAX makes a motion of protest.)* If the money was gone, Max, I made up my mind to kill you, and that's just what I'm going to do if you ever double cross me, do you understand?

MAX. *(In a hangdog tone.)* Yes, I understand.

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(MAGEE, who has been crouching between safe and desk, now rushes over and turns on bracket lights.)

MAGEE. *(Shouts loudly as the lights come on.)* Hands up!

CARGAN. My God, we're caught! It's the police! *(Reels against table. MAX draws back L.)*

(At the sound of MAGEE's shout, the women come out on balcony, frightened, and stand looking down at men.)

MAGEE. *(Comes down R.C., showing a gun.)* No, it's not, but it soon will be if you don't toss that package of money over here! *(CARGAN hesitates.)* Hurry up! I mean business! I wrote this scene into my seventh book, “An Innocent and A Broad”, and it didn't go well for the guy on the other end. *(CARGAN throws money to MAGEE R.C. The latter picks it up and puts it in his pocket.)* You see, being a writer of cheap novels, I'm well up on melodrama.

MRS. RHODES. *(On balcony, watching CARGAN.)* Jim Cargan!

CARGAN. *(He and MAX look up and see women on balcony.)* What are you doing here? *(MRS. RHODES doesn't reply. CARGAN sees MYRA, turns slowly to MAX.)* Myra Thornhill! So you were trying to cross me, you snake! *(Chokes MAX. Women scream.)*

(MAGEE taps CARGAN on the top of his head, gently, with his gun. CARGAN stops and looks at him, still with his hands on

MAX's neck. MAGEE points to his gun. CARGAN releases MAX.)

MAGEE. No rough-house, gentlemen, there are three ladies present. Well, two, at least. *(To MAX.)* Be good enough to put that gun of yours on the table. Hurry now. *(MAX does as directed.)* Now kindly remove the gun from Mr. Cargan's pocket – I'm sure he has one – and put that on the table, too. *(MAX hesitates.)* I don't want to shoot you, but *he* does. Hurry, please.

(MAX takes CARGAN's gun and places it on table.)

MAGEE. Mrs. Rhodes, kindly ask the street car president's wife to step back into that room, then lock the door and remove the key. *(MYRA goes slowly to room R. MRS. RHODES follows her, locks the door, then comes to C. of balcony.)* Thank you. And now, Miss Norton, will you take those two revolvers from the table and place them in the hotel safe, and then close the safe and turn the combination. *(MARY places guns in safe, turns combination, and remains up near desk.)* Thank you very much. *(To men.)* Now, gentlemen, upstairs to the room on the right of the balcony. Mrs. Rhodes, please lock the door when these gentlemen are on the other side. *(MRS. RHODES crosses balcony, goes to room L., unlocks door, and stands aside for the men to pass in.)* Lively, now, gentlemen! Hay foot! Straw foot! *(As man start upstairs slowly.)* That's it! Now to your right. Now straight ahead. *(MAX exits into room. CARGAN stops as he gets to door, and turns and looks appealingly at MRS. RHODES, who ignores his outstretched hands.)* Keep going, Your Honor. *(CARGAN exits into room L.)* Lock the door, Mrs. Rhodes, and bring the keys to me. *(MRS. RHODES locks door and brings keys to MAGEE at C.)* That's the ticket! Thanks, very much. *(MARY comes to C.)* Well, how was that? Some round-up, wasn't it? *(To MRS. RHODES.)* I'm awfully sorry, Mrs. Rhodes.

MARY. *(To MAGEE, R. of him.)* It's best she should know. *(To MRS. RHODES, extending her hand.)* Isn't it, dear?

MRS. RHODES. *(Going R.C., after taking MARY's hand.)* I suppose so, Mary, I suppose so.

MAGEE. Well, come on, girl! You've got to work fast. Here's the money. *(Takes money from his pocket and gives it to MARY.)* Now what?

MARY. I've everything planned. I know just what I'm going to do. What's the time?

MAGEE. *(Looking at watch.)* One-thirty.

MRS. RHODES. The morning train out of Asquewan Falls isn't until five.

(MARY crosses to L., gets muff, and places money in it; returns L.C. to MAGEE.)

MAGEE. Get a taxi or a bus or a horse cart or whatever they have in the darned town; but

get out of Asquewan Falls as soon as you can.

MARY. I'll find a way. Are you going to stay here?

MAGEE. *(Looks up at room R. and L.)* I'll have to keep guard on this crowd of lady and gentleman bandits until I'm sure you're well on your way. I'll keep them here until you phone and tell me you're out of danger, even though it's all night to-night and all day to-morrow.

MARY. But your work?

MAGEE. I can write a novel any old time. And what's the bet matter? I've met you. *(He kisses her gently.)*

MRS. RHODES. Well, really! Liberties!

MAGEE. That's all right. I don't mind. Take good care of her, Mrs. Rhodes!

MRS. RHODES. Come along, Mary. We'll take the back trail down the mountain. It's faster. *(Starts for door and stands looking up at door L. on balcony.)*

MAGEE. *(To MARY, near door.)* Say, how do I find you, again?

MARY. I live in Reuton, Magee – it's a small town. Good-bye. *(MRS. RHODES exits. MARY pauses, looks at him intently, then kisses him and exits quickly.)*

MAGEE. Good-bye. *(MAGEE locks door, stands peering out at them for a moment, looks up at door L., then comes down stage and stands thinking.)* Crooked politicians, an adventuress, safe robbers, love at first sight! *(Points to different rooms and at safe.)* And I'm supposed to get away from melodrama!

CARGAN. *(OFF, pounding on door.)* Let us out! You can't keep us in here! It's kidnapping!

MAGEE. What's a little kidnapping after all that's going on here?

MAX. *(OFF, pounding on door.)* Let us out, I say! You've no right!

MAGEE. I've got a good right! And a good left, too!

CARGAN. *(OFF, pounding on door.)* When I get out of here, I'll . . .

(MAGEE bounds up the stairs and stands in front of the R. door.)

MAGEE. Listen, you pair of two-bit crooks, in about three seconds, I'm going to start shooting through that door. And, I ain't particular about what's on the other side! Get me? *(The pounding stops.)* Boy, I'm going to have to use that one in my next

book.

(MYRA begins to rattle the door handle of the L. door.)

Now, don't you start!

MYRA. Oh, please! I'm so frightened in here! I can't stand it! I'll go mad, I know I will.

MAGEE. Somehow, I think you can stand just about anything. Lie down and have a nap.

MYRA. When I get out of here, I'll . . .

MAGEE. You'll have to get in line, toots. *(He bangs on the door with his gun.)* Quiet down!

(BENTLEY appears at the main door and puts the key in the lock. MAGEE hears him, and comes down to foot of stairs.)

And still they come!

(BENTLEY unlocks the door, enters very quietly, locks it, puts key in his pocket, takes off gloves, rubs his hands and nose trying to warm them. He moves quietly to the stairway and listens, then comes to fireplace and stands with his back to the fire. As he turns he comes face to face with MAGEE, who has come to C.)

BENTLEY. Magee! I didn't mean to disturb you. I have some business I must attend to here. I'll just do it very quietly and leave. I thought you'd be hard at work.

MAGEE. Not tonight. *(C.)* I'm just the zoo-keeper tonight.

BENTLEY. Zoo-keeper!

MAGEE. Yes, I've collected quite a menagerie. Do you want to see the exhibit? Free admission, tonight only.

BENTLEY. Listen, Magee. I'm here as president of the Reuton-Asquewan Suburban Rail Road. I have important business to conduct.

MAGEE. Oh, I get it! We've been waiting for you, Mr. President.

BENTLEY. *(Pompously.)* I, I, you what?

MAGEE. *(Looks at BENTLEY, and then up at room R. and laughs.)* Your wife's here.

BENTLEY. What!

- MAGEE. Yes; locked in that room up there. (*MAGEE points to room R. on balcony. BENTLEY turns and looks up. As he turns, MAGEE frisks him for a gun. BENTLEY turns to MAGEE quickly, sputtering.*) Pardon me, it's protocol around here tonight. Just a minute; I'll tell the Mayor the President has arrived. (*Starts upstairs, laughing.*) The First Lady can wait.
- BENTLEY. (*When MAGEE is on first landing.*) Have you gone crazy, Magee?
- MAGEE. That's what the critics say, but I'm beginning to think I'm not and they are! Sit down, Mr. Bentley. I'll tell the boys you're here. (*Unlocks door L. and steps aside.*)
- BENTLEY. The boys!
- MAGEE. Come on, boys; everything's all right; the president's here. (*As men come down, BENTLEY steps forward toward stairs.*) Watch your step. Easy! That's it. One at a time, please. Lead on, boys. I'll walk a little behind.
- (CARGAN and MAX come downstairs, followed by MAGEE who covers them with his gun. As men get to foot of stairs, BENTLEY backs away, thunderstruck. MAX goes to table L. MAGEE goes over R. CARGAN comes down to BENTLEY C.)*
- PLEASE CONTACT THE AUTHOR FOR RIGHTS
- CARGAN. (*Gruffly.*) Hello, Bentley.
- BENTLEY. What is the meaning of this, Cargan?
- CARGAN. I don't know. Ask him. (*Nods toward MAGEE.*)
- BENTLEY. (*To CARGAN.*) What's he got to do with it?
- CARGAN. I don't know, and I don't give a damn! We're nailed, that's all I know. (*Sits R. of table L. PETERS enters from door L., sees crowd and starts to back out.*)
- MAGEE. No, you don't! Come back here. I'll keep my eye on you, too. You'd better sit down and join the boys, Hermy. (*PETERS sits L. of table.*)
- BENTLEY. (*Up to MAGEE, who is R.C.*) I'd like to know what's happening here, Magee!
- MAGEE. Your wife will be down in a minute; she'll tell you all about it.
- BENTLEY. My wife is home in bed!
- MAGEE. (*Laughs.*) You're not the first fellow who's thought that. (*BENTLEY backs away from, MAGEE. MAGEE throws key to PETERS.*) Here, Hermy; take that key and open the first door to the left on the balcony, and tell Mrs. Bentley that her husband wants to see her downstairs right away. (*As PETERS hesitates.*) Hurry

along, that's a good ghost. Go on. *(PETERS, mad all through, does as he is told, picking up the key from floor and going upstairs.)* Better sit down, boys, and make yourselves comfortable. We're liable to be here a while.

(MAX sits L. of table. MAGEE goes up R.)

BENTLEY. Well, this is nonsense. My business will have to wait. I'll be running along.

MAGEE. *(Stops BENTLEY.)* Better stay, Mr. Bentley; I'd like you to meet your wife. I don't think she's had the pleasure. And I don't think you have, either.

(MYRA and PETERS enter on balcony and start downstairs.)

BENTLEY. *(Down to CARGAN, R. of table.)* What the devil does he mean, my wife?

(BLAND knocks on door. ALL jump and look upstage.)

BENTLEY. It's my man, Bland. I have his key; I'll let him in. *(Starts for door.)*

MAGEE. Don't bother. I have a dandy little key of my own, if you remember. I'll let him in. *(Opens door, keeping all covered. BENTLEY goes over R.)*

BLAND. *(Enters as MAGEE unlocks door, keeping them all covered as he does. BLAND comes down R. to BENTLEY. Men all sit as BLAND enters. To BENTLEY.)* What's the matter, Guv'nor?

BENTLEY. I don't know. Did you leave the package?

BLAND. Sort of. *(Goes to MAGEE, L.C, as he recognises him.)* That's him, that's the man who locked me in!

MAGEE. Well, well! Are you back again? I thought you jumped clear off the mountain.

BLAND. *(Over to CARGAN at table. MAGEE goes over R.C.)* Did you get it all right?

CARGAN. No; *he's* got it. *(Indicating MAGEE.)*

BLAND. What? *(Rushes over to MAGEE.)* Give me that money!

MAGEE. *(Covering BLAND with gun.)* Say, I killed a man once for hollering at me. *(BLAND backs away to L.)* That's from my ninth novel, "The Legend of Creepy Wallow." *(PETERS comes downstairs to L. above table. To MYRA, as she advances slowly to C.)* Ah, here we are! Mr. Bentley, although I think she could do better, this lady claims to be your wife.

BENTLEY. What! *(Over to MYRA, C.)* You claim what?

- MYRA. Go on, holler your head off, grandpa! *(As she strolls languidly over R. to fireplace.)* It's music to my ears to hear an old guy squawk. *(Sits in chair in front of fire. BENTLEY goes to BLAND, L.C.)*
- BLAND. *(Waves BENTLEY away. BENTLEY goes upstage. BLAND crosses to MAGEE, R.C.)* What are you going to do with that money?
- MAGEE. *(Goes up around BLAND and up R.C, keeping all covered.)* I'm not going to do a thing with that money. *(All turn and look at him in amazement.)* It's on its way to Reuton. Miss Norton took it and she'll see that it is placed in safe and proper hands directly she arrives at the office of the "Reuton Daily Star."
- CARGAN. The "Daily Star!" That rag! They've got it in for me! *(To MAGEE.)* Where did Mrs. Rhodes go?
- MAGEE. Out of your life, Cargan; she's got your number. *(CARGAN lowers his head without speaking. MAGEE gets chair for BLAND and places it R.C.)* Sit down there. *(BLAND pays no attention.)* Did you hear me? Sit! *(BLAND sits slowly and sulkily.)* Sit down, Hermy. Come on, that's a nice ghost, go on. *(PETERS sits above table. MAGEE places chair for BENTLEY.)* Sit down, Bentley.
- BENTLEY. I don't care to sit down.
- MAGEE. Do as you're told; sit down – or maybe you want I should sit you down.
- BENTLEY. Let me guess. Your tenth novel?
- MAGEE. No, that one I just came up with, but it'll go in my next one, too.
- BENTLEY. Confound it, Magee, I'm the president of the Reuton-Asquewan Suburban Rail Road!
- MAGEE. I wouldn't care if you were president of the National League. Sit down! *(BENTLEY sits, indignant. MAGEE sits in chair, front of switchboard, facing all and covering them with gun.)* Now we're all going to stay right here till that phone rings and I get word that Miss Norton is safe and sound in Reuton. That may mean three hours or it may mean six hours; but we're all going to stay right here together, no matter how long it takes; so get comfortable and sit as easy as you can. *(All move uneasily.)*
- CARGAN. *(To MAX, after a pause.)* So you tried to cross me. I'll kill you for this.
- BLAND. *(After a pause, to BENTLEY.)* I made a mistake in bringing you up here, Guv'nor.
- BENTLEY. *(After a slight pause.)* You're always making mistakes, you blockheaded fool!

MAX. *(After a pause.)* I'm sorry I got you into this, Myra. *(No reply from her.)*

MYRA. *(Turns and looks at MAX.)* Go to hell!

PETERS. *(After a slight pause.)* I hope to God you're all sent to prison for life!

MAGEE. Now, now. Tempers, all around. This is going to be a nice, pleasant little party; I can see that right now. Relax, people. We've got a long wait.

(He sits back in a chair, stretches his legs out and crosses his ankles. He crosses his arms, with the gun held up conspicuously. He closes his eyes. BLAND rises and starts to sneak toward him. MAGEE's eyes open and he levels the gun at BLAND. Lights to black.)

END OF ACT ONE

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**SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE
ACT II**

(The curtain rises on the same situation. After curtain is up, there is silence for about six seconds, then the clock is heard striking two. BENTLEY takes out his watch and looks at it. All squirm and look at each other impatiently.)

MAGEE. Two o'clock. We've been sitting here twenty minutes already. Time just flies when you're in good company. Say, Hermy, you'd better put another log on the fire. *(PETERS crosses to fireplace, puts a log on the fire, looks closely at MYRA in front of fireplace, then goes back to former position and sits.)* I think someone ought to say something. Come on, let's start a conversation. Things are getting awfully dull.

BENTLEY. *(Gets up after a short pause and goes toward MAGEE.)* This is all damned nonsense! I refuse to stay here another minute.

MAGEE. *(Coolly, and without moving.)* Sit down, Bentley. I think friendship's off tonight, so sit down before I shoot you down! That's a good little president. *(BENTLEY sits sulkily.)* Now, let me see, what can we talk? I have it! Let's all tell each other where we got our keys to Baldpate. *(All move uneasily.)* No? Well, I'll start the ball rolling, then perhaps we'll all 'fess up. I made a bet with Mr. Bentley that I can write a book here in twenty-four hours, and he turned his key over to me so I could do it. That's how I got mine, so I know it's the genuine article. Next? *(Pause. No one speaks.)* No? Big secrets, eh? *(Laughs.)* By George! that's funny. Let's see, how many keys are there? I had the first, Bland the second. Miss Norton the third, our friend the ghost the fourth, this, uh, lady had the fifth, and, if I'm not mistaken, you had the sixth key, Mr. Cargan. Bentley let himself in with Bland's key, so he doesn't count. Six keys to Baldpate, so far. That's a good title for a book.

PETERS. *(After a pause.)* There are seven keys to Baldpate. *(All turn and look at PETERS.)*

MAGEE. Seven keys to Baldpate! Even better! How do you know?

PETERS. The old man told me the day before he died. Mine's the original and all the others are imitations. *(All turn from him in disgust.)*

MAGEE. Seven keys, eh? More company expected. More melodrama. Where did you get your key, Bland?

BLAND / MAGEE. *(Together.)* None of your damned business!

MAGEE. *(Laughs.)* I knew you were going to say that. How about you, Mr. Mayor? Care to shine a light through the keyhole? Where did you get yours?

CARGAN. I wouldn't tell you if my life was at stake.

- MAGEE. You know, it might be. Well, perhaps the young lady will be good enough to inform me where her key came from? *(ALL turn and look at MYRA.)*
- MYRA. *(Turns and faces men.)* I've no objections.
- MAX. *(Pleadingly.)* Myra, please!
- MYRA. *(Pointing to MAX.)* He gave the key to me. *(ALL turn and look at MAX.)*
- CARGAN. *(To MAX.)* Where did you get a key to Baldpate?
- MAX. I can't tell you, Mr. Mayor; I've sworn never to tell.
- CARGAN. *(To MYRA.)* I suppose he also gave you the combination to the safe.
- MYRA. He did.
- MAX. *(Pleadingly.)* Myra!
- MYRA. Oh, shut up! You've got me into this mess! Do you think I'm going to sit here like a fool and not pay you back when I've got the chance? *(Gets up and faces men. They all stare at her.)* I'll tell you the whole scheme. I was to come here and make off with the package. When Cargan arrived, he'd find it gone. Max and me were to meet to-morrow and divide the money.
- CARGAN. *(Turns on MAX.)* You rat! *(MAX turns from CARGAN in hang-dog fashion.)*
- MYRA. He was going to blame Bland for never having put it there. *(Points to BLAND at mention of his name.)*
- BLAND. What! *(Starts toward him.)*
- MAGEE. Sit down, Bland. *(BLAND hesitates, then sits.)*
- BLAND. *(Turning to BENTLEY.)* Do you hear that, Guv'nor? He was going to accuse me of stealing the money.
- CARGAN. *(To MAX.)* You mark my words, I'm going to kill you for this!
- BLAND. *(To CARGAN.)* Where did you get a key to Baldpate, Cargan? You told me you couldn't get in here unless I met you and unlocked the door. *(CARGAN looks embarrassed, but does not reply.)*
- MYRA. He was to meet you here to-morrow morning at nine o'clock, right?

BLAND. That's right.

MYRA. Well, he would have been just as surprised as you when you discovered the safe empty and the package gone. In other words, *he* was going to cross *you* (*Points to BLAND.*) and Lou Max tried to double-cross *him*. (*Points to CARGAN. Laughs and sits.*) And, if I hadn't been interrupted by our friend here (*Nods her head in MAGEE's direction.*) I'd have gotten the money and triple-crossed the bunch of you!

BLAND / BENTLEY. What!

MYRA. You think I'd have shown up tomorrow with the money, Maxy, you crook?

CARGAN. (*Starts up.*) Who's a crook?

MAGEE. Sit down, Crook.

CARGAN. (*Infuriated.*) Do you think I'll stand here and be double-crossed by . . .

MAGEE. Triple-crossed. (*Sternly.*) You'll sit down or I'll right cross you! (*CARGAN looks at him stubbornly.*) Be a good little mayor and sit down. (*CARGAN sits.*)

MYRA. (*Sneeringly, after a slight pause.*) You're not even a smart crook, Cargan. You trusted Max, and Max trusted me. (*Laughs.*) And me? I don't even trust myself.

BENTLEY. (*To BLAND, after thinking a moment.*) Who is this woman?

CARGAN. (*Turns to BENTLEY.*) Her name is Thornhill. Don't believe a word she says, Bentley; her oath isn't worth a nickel. She's a blackmailer, pure and simple.

MAGEE. (*Laughing.*) I never heard of pure and simple blackmail!

MYRA. And my "word" will carry as much weight as the word of a crooked politician or his ex-con flunkey.

MAX. (*Starts up.*) What!

MAGEE. Sit down, Maxy; it's just getting good. (*MAX slinks into his chair.*)

BENTLEY. (*Jumping up; to BLAND.*) Fine people you've introduced me to, you lunk-headed idiot!

BLAND. Oh, sit down! (*BENTLEY sits.*) You idiot! I told you this deal was wrong. Now, we're all going to spend five years making little rocks out of big rocks! I tell you right now, I'm going to make a clean breast of it. I don't care who I send away, so long as I can save myself. Don't think I love you enough to keep my mouth shut.

No, sir; I'm telling the truth, and I give a damn who else suffers.

MYRA. *(Laughs.)* One of our best little squealers!

BLAND. *(To MYRA.)* Well, you squealed, didn't you?

MYRA. Sure, I'm with you, Cutey! I'm going to scream my head off all over the place.
(ALL show alarm.)

CARGAN. *(To MAX, after a pause.)* So you tried to cross me, eh?

MAX. Why not? It's the thing to do these days. *(Rises.)* I've stood for your loud talk long enough, Cargan. You're bluff, that's all you are, and the next bluff you pull on me will be your last! *(Smashes table with fist. Pause, then looks at BENTLEY.)* You didn't think you were going to get that franchise for two hundred thousand, did you, Bentley? Why, this man would have bled you for half a million before the bill went through, and then held you up for hush money besides. Go ahead, call me a liar! *(ALL look at CARGAN, who does nothing in fear of MAX's attitude.)*

BENTLEY. Cargan, you thief! You were going to rob me of this money?

CARGAN. *(Turns to BENTLEY.)* If I'm a thief, it's your kind that has made me so – with your rotten money, tempting men to lie and steal! *(Settles back in his chair.)* Big corporations such as yours are the cause of corrupt politics in this country. You're worse than a crook: you're a maker of crooks. *(Turns to BENTLEY, leans forward and points at him.)* But I promise you, Bentley, that if I go up for this, you'll go with me! It's your fault that I entered into this thing, and, I'll get even if I have to lie over a Bible and swear your life away! *(Turns, facing audience.)* Rob you! Humph! You've got a hell of a gall to yell about being robbed, you have!

PETERS. *(After slight pause.)* I hope the prison catches fire and you're all burned to a crisp!

MAGEE. *(Laughs.)* You know, I said start a conversation, not a True Confessions.

BENTLEY. *(After a slight pause.)* This woman who took the money – who is she?

MYRA. A newspaper reporter.

BLAND. On the "Daily Star."

CARGAN. The sheet's been lying about me ever since I took office. They'll accuse me of anything to sell papers.

MAGEE. Yeah, theft, bribery, malfeasance in office. What a bunch.

MAX. *(After a pause, looking nervously at MAGEE.)* How much longer are you going to

keep us here?

MAGEE. That's for the telephone to say. I'll release you as soon as I'm sure Miss Norton is safe and sound in Reuton. *(ALL turn toward MAGEE, surprised.)*

BLAND. Then you're not going to turn us over to the police?

MAGEE. Why should I? *(Movement of relief from ALL.)*

PETERS. *(Gets up.)* Because they're a lot of crooks. *(ALL turn toward PETERS.)* Oh, how I'd love to be on the jury!

MAGEE. Sit down, Hermy. I need a little target practise, and remember, there's no law against killing ghosts.

BENTLEY. The train to Reuton leaves at five o'clock. So, we stay here till six, eh?

MAGEE. I'm afraid so, unless they find a car in Asquewan. It means several hours at the best, so you might as well be patient; you've got a long wait. *(ALL move uneasily.)*

MYRA. *(Cuddling up in her chair.)* Me for my beauty sleep! Good-night. *(Short pause, then phone rings. ALL start and stare at it. MAGEE gets up and stops buzzer.)*

MAX. She couldn't have made it as quick as that. It's over an hour by car.

MAGEE. *(Keeps them all covered with gun.)* Answer that phone, Mrs. President. I'm going to keep looking straight ahead of me, tonight. Hurry up. *(MYRA gets up and goes to phone. MAGEE backs upstage.)* Give me the message as you get it. I'll tell you what to say if it requires an answer.

MYRA. *(At phone, in a bored tone.)* Hello! . . . Yeah, it's Baldpate Inn. . . . oh, I know who you mean, all right. Hang on. *(To MAGEE.)* A lady wants to talk to you.

MAGEE. Get the name.

MYRA. *(In phone.)* What's your name, honey? Really? *(Turns to MAGEE.)* She said Miss Norton. Then she said Mary.

MAGEE. Tell her it's impossible for me to turn my back to come to the phone. Take a message and repeat it to me as you get it.

MYRA. *(In phone. MAGEE backs up R.C.)* If he turns his back on this gang of apes, they'll jump him in a second. Give me the message and I'll repeat it . . . You're talking from the Commercial House in Asquewan . . . You lost the package of money and only found out five minutes ago. . . *(ALL turn.)* You either dropped it in the inn before you left, or else lost it coming down the mountain . . . She wants

you to search the inn. *(Pause, while all look around room.)* Ask him whether or not you should notify the police. *(All show fear.)* Hold on, toots. *(Turns and looks at MAGEE.)* Well, isn't that a development? What do I say?

MAGEE. *(Looks around at all, then, after a pause.)* Tell her to hold the wire.

MYRA. *(Into phone.)* Hold the wire. *(Gets up and goes toward chair R.)*

BENTLEY. The money lost!

CARGAN. Well, there goes the evidence!

BENTLEY. There goes two hundred thousand dollars, idiot!

MAX. Who ever heard of losing two hundred thousand dollars in twenty minutes!

MAGEE. Can't be done outside of Wall Street.

BLAND. I think she's holding out on you.

MAGEE. *(Smiles.)* You're a quick thinker, Miss Thomhill.

MYRA. *(Turns to MAGEE.)* What are you saying?

MAGEE. I saying I don't believe that was the message at all.

MYRA. *(Shrugs her shoulders indifferently.)* She's still on the wire – ask her yourself. *(Sits in chair in front of fire.)*

MAGEE. Come here, Hermy.

PETERS. My name's not Hermy; my name's Peters.

MAGEE. It'll be mud if you don't come here. *(PETERS goes up to MAGEE, up R.)* I know you don't like anybody in this room any better than I do, so I'm going to take a chance on you. Take this gun and guard that door until I get this message, and you kill the first man or woman that makes a move, do you understand? *(He hands PETERS the gun.)*

PETERS. *(Takes the gun, eyes gleaming.)* I'd like to kill them all!

MAGEE. No, you can only kill the first five that move. *(He goes to phone.)* Hello!

PETERS. Damn you, Cargan, I've got you at last!

(PETERS goes toward CARGAN and is grabbed by BENTLEY.)

MYRA screams and jumps up. BLAND springs on MAGEE and struggles with him. MAX rushes over to R., and the two overpower MAGEE at phone. When BENTLEY grabs PETERS, CARGAN rushes over and struggles with PETERS, wresting gun from him.)

MAX. *(To MAGEE.)* Take it easy, bub; you haven't got a chance.

BLAND. We've got him!

CARGAN. *(Grabs gun from PETERS and knocks him down.)* What do you think of that? *(BLAND and MAX are R., each holding MAGEE by the arm. PETERS is on the floor C., CARGAN standing over him, with gun. BENTLEY is L., looking on. CARGAN to PETERS.)* So you wanted to take a shot at me, eh? *(Kicks PETERS.)* Get up! *(PETERS crawls backward in fear. CARGAN backs upstage slightly.)* Put them both up in the room where he put us, and lock the door.

BLAND. They can make a getaway from the window, Cargan; I did it myself.

CARGAN. *(Indicating the linen closet.)* There's no window in *that* room; it's a linen closet. Put them up there. *(He backs upstage, gun in hand. PETERS starts upstairs.)*

MAGEE. *(Passing CARGAN on way to stairs.)* Think you can get away with it, Cargan?

CARGAN. *(Backing up c. and pointing gun.)* Shut up or I'll left cross you. *(BENTLEY goes to extreme L. as PETERS and MAGEE go upstairs, followed by MAX. BLAND goes R., below phone. CARGAN speaks next lines to MYRA with his back to her.)* Miss Thornhill, tell that woman to forget the police. Tell her to return here at once.

(MYRA goes to phone. MAGEE and MAX are now on landing. PETERS is standing at door of room L. on balcony.)

MYRA. *(In phone.)* Hey, you still there? . . . Yeah, he says don't tell the police anything. In fact, don't tell anyone, but get back here at once. . . . That's what he said. . . . Good. Toodles. *(Hangs up receiver.)*

CARGAN. *(To MYRA, still watching MAGEE.)* All right.

MYRA. *(Rising from switchboard.)* As quick as she can get here, she says. *(Goes down R. to chair.)*

MAGEE. *(Stops on landing as he hears phone conversation.)* Getting her back here won't get your money back, Cargan. She lost it, remember?

CARGAN. Never mind; I know what I'm doing. Get in there! *(PETERS exits into room L. on balcony.)*

MAGEE. You harm that girl, and I'll get you if it takes the rest of my life!

CARGAN. I've read that kind of talk in books.

MAGEE. I write that kind of talk in books, but I'm talking real talk now!

MAX. *(To MAGEE.)* Get in there.

(MAGEE goes upstairs and exits into room. L. MAX locks door and comes to foot of stairs. BLAND has gone L. CARGAN puts gun in his pocket and comes down C.)

BENTLEY. *(Over to CARGAN at C.)* Now what's the move, Cargan?

CARGAN. We're going to get that money if she's got it on her.

BLAND. You don't think she'd be fool enough to bring it back with her, do you?

BENTLEY. What are you going to do with it if you find it on her, Cargan?

CARGAN. Keep it, of course.

BENTLEY. It's my money.

CARGAN. Our agreement holds good. You people will get the franchise. Don't worry.

BENTLEY. You've just admitted that you were going to rob me blind.

CARGAN. Oh, I was mad clean through. Wasn't I being accused right and left? I didn't mean it, Bentley. I don't even know now what I said. *(Pats BENTLEY ingratiatingly on the shoulders, then goes up c, looking up at room L.)*

BENTLEY. *(Goes to BLAND, who is below table L.)* What do you think, Bland?

(CARGAN and MAX come downstage to C.)

BLAND. Don't ask me; you bawled me out once to-night; that's enough!

CARGAN. I haven't forgotten what you said to me, Max.

MAX. I don't want you to forget it. I want you to remember it all your life. *(As CARGAN reaches for gun.)* I wouldn't care if you had six guns on you. Cut out that wild talk; I ain't going to listen to it any more. Why, you're nothing but a cheap coward, Cargan! *(CARGAN looks at MAX a moment, then turns upstage, cowed. MAX crosses to MYRA, R.)* So you tried to double cross me, eh?

- MYRA. *(Turns and faces MAX.)* I might have. Who are you, again?
- MAX. Why, damn you! *(Raises his hand to strike MYRA, who shrinks away.)*
- BLAND. *(Crossing quickly to C.)* Here, Max; nothing like that while I'm around.
- MAX. *(Turns to BLAND.)* Maybe you want some of it? Why, I . . . *(Raises his hand to strike BLAND.)*
- BLAND. *(Grabs MAX's arm and throws it back.)* Now behave yourself. The same speech you just made to Cargan goes for me. Enough of this wild talk. I'm not going to listen to any more of it. I'll put you on your back and stomp on you, too!
- BENTLEY. *(Goes toward MAX and BLAND, C.)* Gentlemen, gentlemen, please! *(MAX and BLAND look each other in the eye for a moment, then MAX goes up R., near safe.)*
- BLAND. *(Turns to BENTLEY after MAX has gone up R.)* You keep out of this, Bentley; you'll get all you're looking for if you don't. *(Raises his hand to BENTLEY as if to strike.)*
- BENTLEY. Put it down! Put it down, you hear me? I can whip a whole army of cowards like you! Now get away from me! Get away before I knock you down! *(BLAND, surprised at BENTLEY's attitude, goes up to C. door, after staring at BENTLEY a moment. BENTLEY goes to MYRA R. MAX goes to safe and begins working combination. To MYRA.)* And you! What do you mean by claiming to be my wife? Me, married to someone like you?
- MYRA. *(Turns quickly and angrily on BENTLEY.)* Now let me tell you something, old man. You can scare these three little boys, but don't annoy me, because I've got a nasty temper; so get away before I lose it!
- (BENTLEY stares at MYRA, dumbfounded, then goes quickly to L. MYRA seats herself in chair after BENTLEY turns from her. MAX, by this time, has worked combination of safe, and at this point the door flies open. He grabs a gun from safe and slams door shut. CARGAN, who has been standing at foot of stairs looking up at room L., turns quickly as he hears the door slam and crosses quickly to L.C, catching MAX at safe door. BLAND crosses CARGAN to L.C.)*
- CARGAN. *(Pulling his gun.)* Get away from that safe! What are you doing there?
- MAX. *(Flashes revolver. MYRA rises and stands L. of chair and below it.)* Oh, don't worry. I ain't going to do anything, only . . . *(MAX has come in front of desk while speaking above lines, and now takes deliberate aim at MYRA and shoots. She screams and drops into chair.)*

BLAND. *(Runs to MYRA.)* God!

CARGAN. *(Crosses to L. of MAX.)* Max! Have you gone crazy? *(Puts gun in his pocket.)*

BENTLEY. *(Over to R. of MAX, looking toward MYRA.)* Now we're in for it. Is she dead?

MAX. *(Down L. of BENTLEY.)* I- I- it was an accident! I didn't mean it, I tell you!

(MAGEE raps on door upstairs. All look up.)

MAGEE. *(From upstairs.)* What's going on down there? *(Raps again.)* What happened?
(ALL stand rigid, staring.)

BLAND. *(In a low voice.)* Put out the lights.

(CARGAN tiptoes upstage and turns out bracket lights, leaving only the reflection of the fire on MYRA, then tiptoes back to C.)

BENTLEY. How bad is it, Bland?

BLAND. *(Feeling MYRA's pulse.)* Well, you're good at one thing, Max. She's dead!

CARGAN. Don't say that! *(Backs away to L.C.)*

BENTLEY. It can't be possible!

BLAND. It's all over – she's dead! *(Drops her hand, then turns her chair around to L.)*

MAX. *(U.C. and wild-eyed.)* But I didn't mean it, I tell you, it was an accident!

BLAND. You lie!

CARGAN. I saw you take aim.

BENTLEY. So did I.

MAX. *(Pleadingly.)* No, no, don't say that! It isn't so! I swear it was an accident!

(MAGEE pounds on door upstairs. All look up.)

BENTLEY/CARGAN/BLAND. *(To MAX. BENTLEY is L. of MAX.)* Ssh!

MAGEE. *(From room R.)* Tell me what's going on down there!

CARGAN. *(Goes to foot of stairs and coils up.)* Everything's all right! Nothing wrong.

MAGEE. I know better! Open this door! (*Pounds on door.*)

BLAND. Give me a hand, Cargan. Get her out of here. (*MAX and BENTLEY go up C.*)

CARGAN. (*Over to BLAND.*) Where?

BLAND. (*Pointing to room R. on balcony.*) Up in that room. Come on, hurry up! (*CARGAN assists BLAND in lifting MYRA to the latter's shoulders. BLAND starts for stairs, carrying MYRA; CARGAN following with her wraps, etc.*)

MAX. (*BLAND passes with MYRA.*) I didn't mean it, I tell you! I wouldn't hurt a fly!

BENTLEY. (*Goes R.C. to MAX and silences him roughly.*) Keep quiet, you damn fool! Do you want the world to hear you?

(MAGEE resumes pounding on the door. Just as BLAND and CARGAN get to first landing, MAGEE kicks the door open from the inside. MAGEE enters on balcony as the door flies open, PETERS following him out. MAGEE comes to first landing and follows BLAND and CARGAN up opposite stairs a few steps. PETERS remains outside door. BLAND and CARGAN stop only a second on first landing, and then continue on up the stairs during following lines.)

MAGEE. What's happened?

CARGAN. She's fainted, that's all.

MAGEE. Where are you taking her?

CARGAN. You'll keep out of this, if you know what's good for you! (*BLAND and CARGAN exit into room R., CARGAN closing door.*)

MAGEE. (*Has followed them on balcony. Watches them exit with MYRA, then rushes downstairs to BENTLEY C.*) Who fired that shot?

MAX. (*Blurts out.*) It was an accident!

BENTLEY. (*Quickly to MAX, R.C.*) Shut up!

MAGEE. See here, Bentley, you can't afford to be mixed up in this; you're too big a man.

MAX. (*Hysterically.*) I didn't mean to kill her. It was an accident.

MAGEE. (*L.C.*) Oh, it's murder! Is that the idea?

BENTLEY. *(R. of MAGEE.)* Whatever it is, we're all in this thing together. We've got to come up with a story and stick to it, do you understand?

MAGEE. What do you mean, we?

BENTLEY. It was – suicide!

MAX. *(Going toward C.; BENTLEY goes up C.)* That's it! She killed herself! I was an eye-witness – she killed herself!

MAGEE. Do you think I'd stand still for that? *(BLAND and CARGAN enter and stand on balcony C, listening.)* If it's murder, there's the murderer – *(Points to MAX, crosses to him R., then back to L.C.)* – self-confessed. But you're all accessories – every one of you! It's rotten politics and greed that led to this. I've had my ear against the crack of that door for the last five minutes. I heard every word. I'll tell the story straight from the shoulder. It's murder in the first degree, and you're all going to pay for it!

(BENTLEY and MAX stand staring at him. BENTLEY goes up R. near desk. CARGAN and BLAND, after a bit of pantomime, come downstairs, CARGAN goes to L. of MAGEE and BLAND to R. of him. MAX is R.)

CARGAN. *(After a pause, U.L. of MAGEE.)* I was afraid it was like that.

(PETERS sneaks across balcony to R. of it and stands listening to next few speeches, hidden behind post R.)

I'm sorry for you. From the bottom of my heart I pity you. *(Takes stage a little L. MAGEE does not reply; simply looks at CARGAN, then at BLAND.)*

BLAND. *(After a pause.)* Yeah! That's it. Deranged! I saw you kill her!

(MAGEE looks BLAND in the eye, then at CARGAN. The latter turns upstage after a pause, then crosses down to back of chair L. MAGEE crosses to BENTLEY, who comes down C.)

BENTLEY. *(Comes down C. to R. of MAGEE.)* Better plead insanity, Magee; it's the only chance you've got. I'll back it up. Up here, all by yourself. Yes, insanity!

(MAGEE stares at BENTLEY, then crosses over to C. and looks MAX straight in the eye. MAX stares back at him.)

MAX. *(After a pause.)* Bad business, carrying guns. Who was the woman? Your wife?

(PETERS goes into room balcony R. BLAND is L.C.)

MAGEE. *(Turns, sees the three staring at him, smiles and comes C.)* No, no! You can't get away with that! It may be good melodrama, but I know every trick of the trade. I've written it by the yard. You can't intimidate me. You work very well together, but it isn't going to get you anything. Besides, you forget I have a witness in Peters, the hermit! *(He points to the balcony; ALL turn and look up. No Peters.)*

CARGAN. *(To BLAND.)* Get him. Bring him down. *(Goes to foot of stairs as BLAND goes upstairs.)*

BLAND. *(Runs up and looks into room. L., then comes out on balcony.)* He's gone!

(BENTLEY looks at MAX, then back to BLAND.)

CARGAN. Gone! Where?

BLAND. *(Comes quickly down the stairs.)* He probably found a way; he knows the place better than we do. *(Goes R. of MAGEE.)*

CARGAN. *(Comes down to MAGEE, R.C.)* I saw you when you fired; you shot to kill.

BLAND. *(R. of MAGEE.)* I tried to knock the gun down, but I was too late. *(Goes upstage.)*

BENTLEY. *(R. of BLAND.)* I didn't witness the shooting myself, but I turned just in time to grab you before you got away.

MAX. *(U.C.)* But you shouldn't have choked her; that was the brutal part of it.

MAGEE. *(Starts for MAX, who backs away to fireplace, frightened.)* Why, you dog, I . . .

(Chief KENNEDY appears outside door and pounds on it three times. All on stage stop abruptly and look toward door. KENNEDY pounds again.)

CARGAN. *(Loudly.)* Who's there?

KENNEDY. *(Yells through door from outside.)* Open, in the name of the law!

MAX. The police!

BENTLEY. *(Quickly to MAX.)* Keep quiet! *(Gets behind desk.)*

BLAND. *(To CARGAN.)* You'd better let them in, Cargan.

MAGEE. *(Starts for door.)* I'll unlock the door.

CARGAN. No, you don't; I'll attend to it!

(Crosses MAGEE goes up to door and unlocks it. KENNEDY steps in, watching CARGAN as the latter locks the door. As CARGAN is about to put key in his pocket, KENNEDY speaks. BLAND has gone L., above table, when CARGAN goes up to door.)

- KENNEDY. *(Up L.C., just inside door.)* Here, wait a minute! I'll take that key. And I'll take that gun I saw you stick in your pocket.
- BLAND. *(Takes a couple of steps toward KENNEDY up L.)* By what authority?
- KENNEDY. *(Comes down L.C. to BLAND.)* Close your trap! I'm Chief Kennedy of the Asquewan Falls Police. That's my authority!
- CARGAN. *(Down to KENNEDY, pointing to BLAND.)* It's all right, Chief; he's all right.
- KENNEDY. Where's the light switch?
- MAGEE. Up there by the door.
- KENNEDY. *(Goes up L. of door and turns on lights, then comes downstage L. of CARGAN, recognizing him.)* Mr. Mayor! What are you doing here?
- CARGAN. I can explain all that.
- MAGEE. *(Pointing to MAX.)* That man has a gun on him also. *(BENTLEY moves over toward L. slowly.)*
- KENNEDY. *(Goes over R.C. and looks MAGEE over carefully.)* Who are you? *(CARGAN crosses to L.C.)*
- MAGEE. I'm the little birdie telling you that man has a gun. You'd better get on the job quick, Chief. Two of these men are carrying guns, and two of them also have keys to that door. I'm telling you this to prevent a getaway.
- KENNEDY. You think you run the police department?
- MAGEE. Chief, there's hundreds of thousands of dollars involved, and crimes committed. You should arrest everybody in this room immediately.
- KENNEDY. *(To CARGAN.)* What's this all about, Mr. Mayor? *(ALL appear anxious.)*
- CARGAN. He's unstable, Chief. He's stalling for a chance to break away.
- KENNEDY. Nobody'll get away; I've got men outside. *(Crosses MAGEE to MAX R., and looks at him closely.)* Lou Max, eh? Quite a crowd of celebrities. *(To MAX.)* You got a gun? *(MAX hands him his gun.)* What are you totin' this for? *(No reply from MAX.)*

KENNEDY turns and frisks MAGEE.) He's clean. *(Turns MAGEE upstage and crosses to CARGAN.)* I'm sorry to trouble you, Mr. Mayor, but I'll have to relieve you of that hardware. *(CARGAN hands KENNEDY his gun.)* And the key, too, please. *(CARGAN hands KENNEDY his key.)* Something funny's going on here and I've got to do my duty. *(Crosses CARGAN over to BLAND L.C.)*

BLAND. *(Holding up his hands as KENNEDY approaches him.)* There's nothing on me.

KENNEDY. *(Frisks BLAND.)* Who's got the other key? He said there were two.

BLAND. *(Points to BENTLEY.)* This gentleman.

KENNEDY. *(Goes to BENTLEY L., who hands the KENNEDY his key.)* Hello! Mr. Bentley. Humph! This is a real highbrow affair, isn't it? Well! *(Smiles, goes up C. to R. of CARGAN and looks them, all over.)* Come on, somebody open up. What's the big gathering all about?

MAX. *(Pointing to MAGEE.)* He's got a key. Make him give it up.

KENNEDY. *(To MAGEE.)* Come on. *(MAGEE hands Chief his key.)* You got anything more to say?

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MAGEE. I'll tell my story in the presence of witnesses. I know my rights.

KENNEDY. I'll bet you do.

MAGEE. Yeah, and I insist upon the immediate arrest of everyone here, myself included.

BENTLEY. Don't listen to him, Chief. I've known him for years; he's a madman.

KENNEDY. Well, somebody phoned police headquarters from here about two hours ago, and when we got on the wire Central said they'd hung up. We got a new connection, and asked if they'd called, and some woman said, "No, it was a mistake." We got to thinking it and we checked and found that the call *had* been put in from Baldpate Inn, so I made up my mind to investigate.

MAGEE. Good thinking, Chief.

KENNEDY. Now, when I started up the mountain ten minutes ago the lights were on full blast, and all of a sudden they went out, and there was a pistol shot, too. Every one of my men heard it, and it came from this direction. Now, what's it all about?

MAGEE. I called police headquarters. *(ALL look at MAGEE.)*

KENNEDY. You! The Sergeant said it was a woman's voice on the wire.

MAGEE. That was the second time when you called up, but I tried to get you first.

KENNEDY. What for?

MAGEE. I'll won't tell my story until I'm under oath. I want every word I say to go on the court records. I accuse these men of conspiracy and murder!

KENNEDY. Murder? What is this? Mayor?

CARGAN. Poor devil, he's gone mad,. He killed a woman a few minutes ago, and he's accused every man here of it.

KENNEDY. Murder?

BENTLEY. Shot her down in cold blood.

KENNEDY. *(To MAGEE.)* Who was the woman you shot?

MAGEE. Oh, no, Chief. I can prove why I'm here to-night. *(Pointing to MAX.)* There's the real murderer. They all know it as well as I do. They're trying to save their own necks but this man is a stool pigeon. Put it to him! Ask about the scheme to steal the right of way for a street-car franchise in Reuton. Ask him about the bribe money they put in the safe. Ask them why they're here, and let's hear what they have to say.

(KENNEDY looks from one to the other without speaking.)

CARGAN. He's been raving like that for the last ten minutes, Chief.

KENNEDY. *(To MAGEE.)* Why *are* you here tonight?

MAGEE. Simple. I'm writing a book.

KENNEDY. A book?

MAGEE. Right.

KENNEDY. In the middle of the night?

MAGEE. Right.

KENNEDY. In Baldpate Inn?

MAGEE. Right.

KENNEDY. In the middle of winter?

- MAGEE. Right.
- KENNEDY. *(To CARGAN.)* He's a lunatic, sure enough. *(To CARGAN.)* Who was the woman that telephoned to headquarters?
- MAGEE. Miss Norton, of the "Reuton Star."
- KENNEDY. Norton of the "Reuton Star," eh? *(To MAGEE.)* Why'd you kill her?
- CARGAN. No, no; the dead woman's name is Thornhill.
- KENNEDY. Not Myra Thornhill? I've got twenty warrants out on her. *(Looks around.)* And, where is she?
- CARGAN. Upstairs.
- KENNEDY. Was there anybody else here besides you people?
- MAGEE. Yes; Peters, the hermit.
- KENNEDY. Another crazy man, eh?
- BLAND. But he's disappeared.
- KENNEDY. Well, he won't go far. *(Goes upstage and looks out of door.)* I've got the house surrounded. *(Coming downstage.)* I'll look the ground over before I send for the coroner. He'll have to come in from Reuton; can't be here till seven or eight o'clock. You people will have to stay here till he comes. *(CARGAN, BLAND and BENTLEY sit near table L. MAX sits R.)* What room is she in? *(Looking up at balcony.)*
- CARGAN. *(Gets up from table.)* I'll show you, Chief. *(Starts toward stairs, leading the way, followed by the KENNEDY, BENTLEY, BLAND and MAX in order named. All look back at MAGEE as they go upstairs.)*
- KENNEDY. *(To MAGEE, when he gets on balcony.)* Take my advice and don't try to get away, young fellow. One of those cops outside will blow your head off if you do.
- MAGEE. *(Goes L. near foot of stairs as men go up.)* I'm staying right here, and so's my head, and I'm going to make sure these jokers do, too, until we're all snug in handcuffs.
- BENTLEY. It's a sad case, Chief.
- KENNEDY. We're used to it. They often go out of their minds after they shoot. Where is she?

CARGAN. *(Goes to door of room R.)* In here, Chief.

(KENNEDY exits into room, followed by BENTLEY, BLAND, MAX and CARGAN, the latter closing the door. During the last few speeches PETERS has been peering through glass in dining-room door L. He now enters and goes quickly to MAGEE C.)

PETERS. They won't find her up there!

MAGEE. *(Amazed.)* What!

PETERS. I heard them accuse you, so I carried the body from that room through the secret passage to the cellar. *(Backs toward door L. slowly.)* And they'll never find the secret passage. *(Laughs.)* They'll never find the body! *(Laughs viciously.)*

MAGEE. What did you do that for, you damn fool? *(Door opens on balcony R.)*

PETERS. Hist! *(He points up at door R. on balcony. MAGEE looks up. PETERS exits hurriedly through door L.)*

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(CARGAN enters, wild-eyed, from room, runs downstairs and comes to L.C. MAX follows and goes to R. BENTLEY follows MAX, and comes down to L.C. BLAND follows BENTLEY, and comes to R. All the men show agitation. MAGEE, standing C., watches them. KENNEDY comes out on balcony, looks at people downstairs, then back at room, then out again.)

BENTLEY. *(To CARGAN, who is front of table C.)* What do you make of this, Cargan?

CARGAN. The damn place is haunted!

MAX. She must have escaped by the window, like Bland did.

BLAND. How could a dead woman jump from the window?

(They all stand staring up at balcony. KENNEDY appears from room R. and closes door.)

KENNEDY. *(Comes to C. of balcony and stands looking down at men.)* All right, you men, what are you trying to do? *(Starts downstairs.)* I was born and brought up in New York City, even if I do live in Asquewan Falls. *(Comes down to C.)*

CARGAN. She was in that room ten minutes ago, Chief.

BLAND. I'll take a solemn oath on that.

BENTLEY. I can't understand it.

MAX. My God, I'm going insane! *(Grabs chair to steady himself.)*

KENNEDY. What's this all about? *(Looks from one to the other.)* If you people think you can make a fool of me, you're mistaken. I won't stand for it.

MAGEE. It's no joke. Chief; there has been a murder committed here.

KENNEDY. Then where's the victim?

MAGEE. Oh, she's floated down to the cellar.

BLAND/CARGAN/BENTLEY/MAX. What!

KENNEDY. The cellar?

MAGEE. If I'm not mistaken, that's where she went after she was murdered.

BENTLEY. You lie!

CARGAN. You know she was taken to that room. *(Points to room R. on balcony.)*

BLAND. You saw us carry her there.

MAX. Of course he did.

KENNEDY. *(To MAGEE.)* What are you trying to do, trap me in the cellar?

MAGEE. I tell you, Chief, you'll find the victim in the cellar.

KENNEDY. I'll get at the bottom of this pretty quick! *(MARY appears outside door.)* If you're trying a practical joke, you'll all land in jail for it. I've got two years to retirement. I'm not going to be the laughing stock of Asquewan Falls, I'll tell you that right now. *(MARY, who has been peering through door, opens it during this speech and enters. KENNEDY turns as door opens and goes upstage.)* Hello! Who's this?

MAGEE. *(Goes L. as MARY enters.)* Mary! *(MARY locks door and starts down L.C.)*

KENNEDY. *(To MARY.)* I'll take that key, please.

MARY. Chief Kennedy! *(Hands KENNEDY the key and goes to MAGEE L.C.)* Why are the police here?

(KENNEDY goes down R.C. to BLAND.)

MAGEE. *(Reassuring MARY.)* It's all right.

KENNEDY. Who are you?

BLAND. She claims to be a newspaper reporter.

MAX. She's a thief; she stole a package of money!

KENNEDY. Whose money?

BENTLEY. My money.

CARGAN. *(U.C., in front of table.)* No, my money.

MAGEE. It's bribe money, Chief.

KENNEDY. Where is the money?

MARY. *(Turns and faces KENNEDY.)* The money's been lost.

BLAND/BENTLEY/MAX/CARGAN. *What!*

KENNEDY. Say, what are you people trying to do to me, anyway?

MAGEE. *(To MARY.)* Where did you lose it?

MARY. *(To MAGEE; KENNEDY goes over, listening.)* I don't know – somewhere between here and Asquewan Falls. I searched every inch of the way from the bottom of the mountain to the top. It's gone!

MAGEE. Where is Mrs. Rhodes?

MARY. She was too hysterical to return. I left her at the Commercial House in Asquewan.

KENNEDY. How much money was it?

MAGEE. Just two hundred . . . thousand-dollar bills.

KENNEDY. *(Looks from one to the other.)* Cut out the kidding! How much was it?

BENTLEY. *(U., near table.)* That's the exact amount the package contained, Chief – two hundred thousand dollars.

KENNEDY. *(To MARY.)* Where'd you get that kind of money?

MAGEE. I gave it to her.

KENNEDY. Where did you get it?

MAGEE. From Mayor Cargan.

KENNEDY. Where did you get the money, Cargan? *(No reply from CARGAN.)*

MAGEE. *(After a pause.)* He took the money from that safe.

KENNEDY. *(Goes upstage a couple of steps, looks at safe, then comes back to C.)* How'd you open the safe, Cargan?

CARGAN. I didn't open the safe.

KENNEDY. Who did?

MAGEE. Peters, the hermit.

KENNEDY. And Peters put the money in the safe?

MAGEE. No, Bland. *(Points to BLAND.)* That man to your right.

KENNEDY. *(Over to BLAND, R.C.)* Where'd you get the money to put in the safe?

BLAND. From Mr. Bentley.

KENNEDY. *(Looks at BENTLEY, L.)* And, where'd you get the money?

BENTLEY. I refuse to answer that question on the grounds that it might tend to incriminate me.

KENNEDY. I ain't too keen on the Fifth Amendment. *(Over to MAX, R.)* What do you know about this. Max?

MAX. Don't ask me; I don't know. My brain's on fire – I'm going mad! *(Tugs at his collar, breathing hard.)*

KENNEDY. *(Comes to C. and looks them all over.)* Huh! Bentley gives the money to Bland; Bland puts the money in the safe; Peters opens the safe; Cargan takes the money from Peters; this fellow takes the money from Cargan and gives it to the newspaper reporter; she loses the money in the mountains; then somebody kills a woman and the corpse gets up and walks away!

MAGEE. That was good. Do that again!

KENNEDY. You expect me to believe this bunk?

- MARY. (To *MAGEE*.) What does he mean by saying that somebody killed a woman?
- KENNEDY. Oh, right. The dead woman in the cellar. (*He goes to the cellar door.*) Nobody moves while I'm down there. (*He goes down into the cellar.*)
- MARY. Dead woman in the cellar? *Magee*, what's happening?
- MAGEE. Oh, it's just a little murder, that's all. Nothing to worry about.
- MARY. Murder!
- KENNEDY. (*Off stage.*) Come on, come on! Go on, get up those stairs! (*The cellar door opens and KENNEDY pushes PETERS onstage.*) That's all I could find in the cellar.
- MAGEE. No dead bodies? No packages of money?
- KENNEDY. Just that! (*He indicates PETERS.*) So that's where you hide, eh? In the cellar of *Baldpate*? Well, you'll have a nice room in the county jail to-morrow.
- PETERS. Damn all police! I hate them!
- MAGEE. Why don't you just tell us who you *do* like? It'll save time.
- KENNEDY. (*Pushes PETERS to R.*) Go on, get over there! (*MARY and MAGEE come down to L. C. KENNEDY comes down stage to MARY.*) You'll have to step upstairs. Miss. I've got a lot to say to these men here, and I'm not particular about my language when I'm on a case; so come on, step upstairs.
- BENTLEY. (*Extreme L., near table.*) I don't believe this girl lost the money, Chief.
- KENNEDY. Well, I'll get the matron of the jail here and have her searched. If she's got anything on her, we'll get it. (*MARY starts for stairs, KENNEDY following her up.*) Go in one of those rooms till I call you. (*MARY is now on balcony C. KENNEDY comes downstage to C.*) Who is the woman this girl says she left at the Commercial House?
- CARGAN. Mrs. Rhodes. She's all right.
- BLAND. (*Goes slightly toward CARGAN.*) How do we know? Maybe they're working together.
- CARGAN. That's enough out of you, Bland.
- KENNEDY. (*As he goes toward phone all back up and watch him.*) I'll call up the Commercial House and see if she's there. (*In phone.*) Hello! Get me 35, Central, quick. (*MARY exits into room R. on balcony.*) Ring me when you get it. (*Hangs up receiver and*

comes down to C.) What's her name again?

MAGEE. Mrs. Rhodes. *(MARY screams off stage and rushes from room to balcony.)* Now, what?

MARY. *(Screaming.)* She's dead! Someone's killed her!

ALL. Who?

MARY. *(Hysterically.)* The woman there in that room!

(KENNEDY looks at MAGEE. MAGEE looks at CARGAN. All stand rigid, staring at each other for a moment; then KENNEDY, CARGAN, BLAND, BENTLEY and MAX rush upstairs on balcony and cross to room R. As they pass in front of MARY, she backs up against windows and stands with arms outstretched against them. PETERS is standing R., laughing.)

MAGEE. *(Goes over R. to PETERS quickly.)* What did you do, bring her back to that room?

PETERS. Isn't that what you wanted?

MAGEE. No, you blithering idiot! *(Turns and takes MARY in his arms as she runs to him.)*

MARY. Tell me who did this! How did it happen?

MAGEE. Take it easy.

(MAX, BLAND, CARGAN and BENTLEY enter from room R. in this rotation, all wild-eyed. They line up on balcony and keep their eyes glued to door of room. KENNEDY enters on balcony, also keeping his eyes fixed on room,. He looks at men on balcony and then down at MAGEE and MARY, who stare up at him; then at PETERS, who is over R.)

KENNEDY. Say, what are you people trying to do to me? *(To men on balcony, who are still staring at door.)* Go on, get downstairs where you belong. *(Four men come downstairs and go to former positions. Telephone rings. KENNEDY runs downstairs.)* Don't touch that phone! I'll answer it! *(Looks from one to the other suspiciously.)* Is this dump haunted, or is the joke on me? *(No one replies. The phone still rings.)* I'll soon find out! *(Goes to phone. All back up and watch him.)* Chief Kennedy, here! . . . Yes, I called. Listen, Charlie, is there a woman there by the name of Rhodes? . . . She did, eh? How long ago? . . . I see . . . She left a what? *(All look at each other, startled.)* Where have you got it? . . . And the safe's locked? . . . All right, listen, Charlie. Call police headquarters and get a man over there. Give him that package, and tell him to bring it up to Baldpate Inn as quick

as he can. Understand? . . . Never mind, you do as I tell you. And listen. Tell them to watch the depot, and put all strangers under arrest, men and women . . . I know what I'm doing, Charlie. Oh, and get the coroner in Reuton on the phone and tell him to get up here to Baldpate Inn in a rush. We need him . . . Don't lose any time now. Keep your mouth shut and get busy. *(Hangs up receiver and comes to C. All come forward.)* She left the hotel a quarter of an hour ago. She put a package in the hotel safe before she went. *(He looks them all over. They stand staring at each other.)* Humph! Somebody steals some money. The money disappears and then comes back! Somebody kills a woman – the victim disappears and then comes back! That's pretty good stuff! Somebody ought to write a novel.

MAGEE. *(Aside to MARY, R.C.)* Did she really steal it from you?

MARY. *(Aside to MAGEE.)* It must have been as we were running down the mountain. Maybe I dropped it and she picked it up. *(The handle of the door rattles. ALL turn and look toward door.)*

KENNEDY. Now who is it? *(Rushes up to door and unlocks it and opens it.)* Well, it's the bird that tried to fly away with the coin. *(Opens the door as MRS. RHODES appears. She enters. KENNEDY locks door.)*

MRS. RHODES. *(Turns, takes in situation, then to KENNEDY.)* What's all this?

KENNEDY. *(Up near door.)* That's what I'm trying to find out.

MRS. RHODES. *(Goes to MARY, R.C.)* Is there any trace of the money?

(MARY turns from her without replying. MRS. RHODES then turns and looks at men, who all give her a contemptuous look. KENNEDY comes downstage C, standing back of her.)

BENTLEY. Are you going to search these women, Chief?

KENNEDY. *(Down L. of MRS. RHODES.)* Not necessary. *(Looks intently at MRS. RHODES over her L. shoulder.)* We'll wait until we see what's in the package she left at the Commercial House. *(MRS. RHODES starts, regains her composure, then seeing all watching her, she turns and makes a dash for the door. KENNEDY speaks as he follows her up. BENTLEY crosses back to L.)* No, you don't! Nobody leaves here until I find out who killed that woman!

MRS. RHODES. *(Turns, startled.)* Killed a woman! *(Over to CARGAN.)* Oh, Jim, you didn't . . . ? *(CARGAN turns from her without speaking. She goes to MARY.)*

MARY. *(To MRS. RHODES.)* You stole the money from me, didn't you? *(MRS. RHODES goes to CARGAN without replying to MARY.)*

CARGAN. *(Looks MRS. RHODES in the eye.)* I'll never trust another woman as long as I live!

PETERS. *(R.)* They're no good – they never were.

KENNEDY. *(To PETERS.)* Shut up! *(Comes to MRS. RHODES at C.)* Well, what have you got to say, Missus?

MRS. RHODES. *(After a pause.)* Yes, I did steal the money.

(MARY looks at MAGEE; others look at Mrs, Rhodes.)

(Over to CARGAN, L.) But I did it for you, Jim. If the story is ever made public you would be ruined. That money was the evidence that would convict you. I intended to return it to Mr. Bentley and save you. I did it because I thought you cared, and what is my reward? You stand there ready to turn against me – to condemn me. Very well, now I'll turn! *(Turns to KENNEDY.)* Officer, these men have bargained and bribed to cheat the city of Reuton out of many thousands of dollars. I demand their arrest!

BENTLEY. It's a lie! PERUSAL COPY ONLY

MAGEE. PLEASE CONTACT THE AUTHOR FOR RIGHTS It's the truth, Chief, the absolute truth. This young lady and I will testify against these men and prove them guilty of conspiracy and murder.

MRS. RHODES. Murder!

KENNEDY. What have you got to say to this, Mr. Cargan?

CARGAN. Nothing at all. *(Sits at table L. BLAND crosses to above table C.)*

MAX. I can't stand this any longer! *(Goes to KENNEDY. PETERS takes chair MAX vacates. During following speech MAGEE takes MARY up L.)* I killed that woman upstairs. I shot her down like a dog. I know that I haven't got a chance, but, for God's sake, don't send me to the chair! I'll confess, I'll tell the truth, I'll turn State's evidence, anything – but, for God's sake, don't let them kill me! *(Kneels at KENNEDY's feet.)*

KENNEDY. *(To MAX.)* Get up. *(MAX rises. KENNEDY takes handcuffs from his pocket.)* Come on. You'll have to wear these. *(Puts handcuffs on MAX.)*

BLAND. *(Throwing up hands.)* There we go!

BENTLEY. *(To CARGAN.)* What are we going to do, Cargan?

CARGAN. Not less than ten years, I'm afraid.

- KENNEDY. *(To MAX.)* Go on, get over there. *(Pushes MAX over R., then goes upstage R. and down in circle. MAX takes PETERS' chair.)*
- MRS. RHODES. *(Goes to MARY, U.C.)* Can you ever forgive me?
- MARY. *(Giving MRS. RHODES her hand.)* I didn't understand. I do now. *(Both go to foot of stairs, crossing in front of KENNEDY.)*
- KENNEDY. *(Down to MAGEE, R.C.)* And you! You really came here to write a book?
- MAGEE. That was the original idea.
- KENNEDY. You know, I don't know yet whether you people are kidding me or not. Now, we just have to wait until the package from the Commercial House arrives.
- MRS. RHODES. It won't.
- KENNEDY. What?
- MRS. RHODES. If you want the money, I have it. It's . . . under my petticoats.
- KENNEDY. *(PLEASE CONTACT THE AUTHOR FOR RIGHTS)* All right, lady, let's have it. *(He holds out his hand.)*
- MRS. RHODES. Well, really, I . . . *(She turns her back and fumbles under her skirts; turns back with the package in her hand. She hands it to KENNEDY.)*
- KENNEDY. If this turns out to be a bunch of cigar coupons, I ain't goin' to be happy. *(Opens package and sees bills.)* Great Scott, it's the real thing! How much did you say was here?
- MAGEE. Two hundred thousand dollars.
- BENTLEY. *(Goes to KENNEDY, C.)* I'll take that money, please; it belongs to me.
- CARGAN. *(Goes to KENNEDY C.)* No, it doesn't; it belongs to me.
- MAGEE. You hold on to that money, Chief; it's the evidence of bribery we need.
- KENNEDY. Everybody, back up! *(He threatens them with his gun. BENTLEY goes upstage; CARGAN goes R. of chair at table; MAGEE goes C.)* You needn't tell me what to do; I know my business. *(BENTLEY crosses to L. of table. KENNEDY put money in his pocket and goes to phone. As he does so, ALL back up and watch him. In phone.)* Hello! Get me 13, Central. *(Wait.)* Hello! Hello! Betty? . . . Listen, Betty, listen carefully. Get some things together; get the children ready and take the five o'clock train to New York . . . Never mind now, listen. When you get there, get on the quickest train to Montreal . . . Montreal. That's in Canada. I'll be at the train

station there waiting for you Thursday morning . . . Don't ask a lot of questions; do as I tell you . . . What are we going to do there? We're going to live there . . . Montreal. . . I don't know. *(Turns to MAGEE.)* How do you spell Montreal? *(No one replies.)* Listen; go to Canada – I'll find you. How big can it be? What? Never mind the furniture; we're going to live in a palace. Canada, that's all. You do as I tell you. *(Gets up from phone and goes C, looking at the money. As he sees everyone staring at him, he puts it in his pocket.)*

MAGEE. What do you think you're going to do?

KENNEDY. You heard me, didn't you? I'm going to Canada.

PETERS. Canada! I hope to God you freeze to death!

MAGEE. You mean you're going to steal that money?

KENNEDY. Is it stealing to take money from a gang of crooks?

ALL BUT KENNEDY: Yeah!

KENNEDY: I've worked all my life and now that I'm getting near retirement, there's not enough to live on. This is my one chance to get this much money. You think I'm going to hand it back to you? Not me! I'm going to live high for the rest of my life!

MAGEE. Can you do that in Canada?

BLAND. *(Over to KENNEDY.)* Do you imagine we're going to stand by and let you get away with it?

KENNEDY. *(Whips out his gun and backs upstage. All but BLAND and MAGEE back away from him.)* That's just what you're going to do, if you know what's good for you!

(CARGAN shuts off the lights and the stage goes dark, lit only by light from outside. BLAND knocks the gun from KENNEDY's hand. MAGEE grabs his arms and pins them behind him. BLAND gets a hold on his legs. Women scream, and run halfway upstairs.)

MAGEE. I've got him! Get that money!

PETERS. *(Rushes toward KENNEDY, yelling.)* I'll get it! I'll get it!

KENNEDY. *(Yelling from the time he is grabbed.)* Let me go, do you hear! Let me go!

PETERS. *(Grabs money from KENNEDY's pocket.)* I've got it!

- CARGAN. *(Starts for PETERS.)* Give me that money!
- BENTLEY. *(Starts for CARGAN and grabs him by the arm when the latter is C.)* No, you don't, Cargan; that's my money.
- MAGEE. Don't let them get it, Peters!
- PETERS. Let them try to get it! *(BLAND and MAGEE release KENNEDY.)* Now let me see you get it! *(Throws money in fire, laughing viciously. ALL stare into fire, watching the money burn.)* Watch the rotten stuff burn!
- MAGEE. *(Comes down C.)* What have you done!
- BLAND. He's burned the money!
- CARGAN. A fortune!
- BENTLEY. Good God!
- KENNEDY. *(Pulling one of the confiscated guns from his pocket.)* That was my money! I'll shoot you down like a pack of hounds! Cargan, you crook, you're first!
- (He starts toward CARGAN, raising his pistol. MRS. RHODES grabs the gun KENNEDY dropped. She points it at him and fires. KENNEDY falls.)*
- MRS. RHODES. Oh, Jim! I've saved you! I've killed him!
- MAGEE. What is going on? *(He starts to back away from the group.)*
- MAX. *(Looks out window and yells.)* Look, look! *(All look as he points out the window.)*
- MAGEE. What!
- MARY. The door! The door! *(Screams.)*
- (The sound of a key in the lock of the main door. The knob rattles.)*
- BENTLEY. The seventh key!
- BLAND. The seventh key!
- MAGEE. The *seventh* key?

(The door flies open and MYRA enters, all in white, face and all.)

PETERS. A ghost! A real ghost!

(MARY screams and grabs MAGEE; MRS. RHODES screams and grabs CARGAN; BENTLEY crouches L.; BLAND jumps behind desk; PETERS huddles up in chair near fire; MAX is on his knees.)

MAX. Go away! I didn't mean to kill you! Go away! AAAH!

MAGEE. *(Yells.)* Let me out of this place! It's a madhouse! It's a graveyard! *(Backing away.)*

MARY. *(To MYRA.)* Who are you?

MYRA. *(Eerily.)* I am the Ghost of Baldpate Inn. I must have – REVENGE!

(MARY and MRS. RHODES scream.)

MAGEE. *(Backing across stage.)* This isn't true! It can't be true! Crooks, murderers, ghosts, pistol shots, dead policemen, dead people walking. Hundreds of thousands of dollars, and keys and keys and keys! My God, what was I thinking? Twenty-four hours! Why, I couldn't write a book in twenty-four years in a place like this! *(He is all the way D.L. facing the rest who are U.S.)* I give up – I lose the bet!

(ALL but MAGEE start laughing ad lib. CARGAN switches on the lights. MAGEE stands looking at them in utter amazement.)

MARY. Nobody's going to hold you to that, Magee, but you need to know this isn't real.

MAGEE. What isn't real?

MRS. RHODES. *(Steps toward MAGEE, smiling.)* I'm not a real widow. *(Crosses to foot of stairs. MARY comes down C. MYRA goes up to desk, laughing.)*

CARGAN. *(Comes to MAGEE.)* I'm not a real politician. *(Goes upstage.)*

PETERS. *(Downstage to MAGEE.)* This isn't real hair. *(Takes off wig and goes upstage.)*

BLAND. That wasn't real money that was burned. *(Goes upstage R.)*

MAX. *(To MAGEE.)* These aren't real handcuffs, see? *(Opens handcuffs and goes up.)*

MYRA. *(Appears on balcony U.)* I'm not really dead. *(Hearty laugh from ALL.)*

KENNEDY. *(Rising.)* And, neither am I. *(Backs upstage.)*

MAGEE. *(To MARY, after looking around in amazement. Goes to her, L.C.)* Are you real?

MARY. Not a real newspaper reporter.

MAGEE. I mean a real girl.

MARY. *(Smiles.)* That's for you to say.

MAGEE. *(Turns to BENTLEY.)* Well, for heaven's sake, don't keep me in the dark. Explain!

BENTLEY. It means, Magee, that I wanted to prove to you how improbable and terrible those awful stories you write would seem if they really and truly happened. After we made the bet, I left you, went directly to the Empire Theatre and engaged the entire stock company. The manager and I laid out the whole plan; I came ahead by car, while they ran over the scenario on the train and got to Asquewan Falls by ten o'clock – in time to arrive at the top of the mountain at exactly twelve o'clock. Since then you know what's happened. We've all been watching the proceedings from outside, and making our entrances as the time seemed right. If it were not for the fact that we nearly froze stiff, I'd call it a wonderful night.

(ALL except MAGEE laugh heartily.)

MAGEE. You're all actors? *(All but BENTLEY take a bow. To BENTLEY.)* You did this to me?

BENTLEY *(Nods and laughs.)* Are you angry? Of course, if you want to go through with the bet, why . . .

MAGEE. No, thanks; the bet's off! I've had enough of Baldpate. Me for the Commercial House until the train is ready to start. *(Over to MARY, L.C.)* Is your real name Mary? *(She nods affirmatively.)* Well, Mary, I'll admit the shots in the night, the chases after fortunes, and all the rest of the melodrama may be hooey, but will you help me prove that at least one part of it is true?

MARY. What part is that?

MAGEE. Can't you guess?

MARY. That there really is love at first sight?

(ALL show interest. She puts her arms around MAGEE's neck.)

I think you've proven the point conclusively.

MAGEE. *(He puts his arms around her waist.)* Now, how do these kind of stories always end? *(Hearty laugh from ALL as she kisses him.)*

(Lights black.)

END OF ACT II

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**SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE
EPILOGUE**

(The fire is out. The stage is bare. The sheet is over the telephone exchange again. Typewriter is heard clicking from room R. on balcony. It is night. The clock strikes twelve. The typewriter stops clicking. After a few moments, BENTLEY is seen outside as in the first act, except that instead of unlocking the door, he raps on it. MAGEE enters from room R. and gets to C. of balcony, and BENTLEY raps again. MAGEE goes back into room R., then comes out on balcony with hat and coat on, and carrying the suitcase and typewriter case and a manuscript under his arm. He comes down the stairs, puts the cases on the table L. and then goes up to door and unlocks it.)

- MAGEE. *(As he opens door.)* Step right in. Bang on time, I see. *(Closes door.)*
- BENTLEY. *(Comes down R.C.)* We've been out there in the car ten minutes waiting for the clock to strike. Well? Did you finish your book?
- MAGEE. *(Handing BENTLEY the manuscript.)* Allow me.
- BENTLEY. Lord! All that in twenty-four hours!
- MAGEE. Just made it. Finished working as you knocked.
- BENTLEY. Were you disturbed at all?
- MAGEE. *(Looks left and right for a beat.)* Never heard a sound. *(Sits at table C.)*
- BENTLEY. No ghosts? No hermits?
- MAGEE. Nary a ghost nor a hermit, except those of my imagination. *(Rises.)* Is there a hotel in Asquewan Falls? I'd like to get a bath and a bite to eat before I take that train.
- BENTLEY. There's the Commercial House.
- MAGEE. The Commercial House! Now, that's strange! I guessed the name.
- BENTLEY. How?
- MAGEE. I needed a hotel in the story, so I invented one: the Commercial House.
- BENTLEY. The Commercial's not the best place. We'll get you some breakfast at our house. And a nice feather bed for you to take a nap in. The train doesn't go till five.

MAGEE. Lord, I'm tired! *(Sits at table C.)* Some wild and woolly scenes have been enacted in this room since you left last night, Bentley. Murder and mayhem and more.

BENTLEY. *(Alarmed.)* Murder? What happened?

MAGEE. *(Waving him down.)* Oh, nothing *really* happened. Just in the story. And in my head. Takes a lot out of a fellow, you know.

BENTLEY. I still can't believe anybody could write all this in one day.

(The door opens and MARY enters.)

There she is.

MAGEE. She sure is. *(Crosses to her.)* Hello, Mary.

MARY. *(Putting her arms around him.)* Hello, Magee. *(To BENTLEY.)* Did he finish it?

MAGEE. Of course. I said I'd do it, didn't I?

MARY. Where is it?

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BENTLEY. *(Holding up the manuscript.)* I've got it right here. *(To MAGEE.)* What's the name of the story?

MAGEE. It's on the cover.

MARY. *(Taking the script and reading.)* "Seven Keys to Baldpate."

BENTLEY. "Seven Keys to Baldpate"? *(To MAGEE.)* There's only one key to Baldpate. The one I gave you.

MAGEE. *(Holding out his key.)* Only one real one, old man. *(Gives it to BENTLEY.)* But up here – *(Taps his temple.)* – there's a story full of them – oh, wild, horrible melodrama, I admit – the stuff you always roast me about. But, I think it's good.

MARY. I know it is.

BENTLEY. Hmph! It was supposed to be of lasting literary value.

MARY. *(Leafing through pages.)* And, who says it isn't? Why, this story could last a hundred years. *(Stopping on a page.)* Say, Dad, you're in it!

BENTLEY. I am?

MAGEE. Sure. You're in it, and Mary's in it – and I'm in it, too. Shots in the night; hidden

treasure; and love at first sight. Hal, this book's going to sell over a million copies.

MARY. Admit it, Dad. He won the bet, fair and square.

BENTLEY. Well, all right. He won. I guess you *will* be able to support my daughter. *(Shakes hands with MAGEE.)* Welcome to the family, son. Let's go. It's cold up here.

MARY. Aren't you forgetting something, Dad?

BENTLEY. What?

MARY. *(She holds out her hand.)* A cheque for five thousand dollars, please. *(Putting her arms around MAGEE again.)* Magee and I have a train to catch. We've got a honeymoon to get started on.

(BENTLEY pulls out a cheque-book.)

BENTLEY. Where are you two going?

MAGEE. Some place warm!

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(Lights to black, as MAGEE and MARY kiss and BENTLEY begins to write a cheque.)

END OF PLAY