

Oh, You Kids
OR
Two Days To Marry

Based on an anonymous play
from the Marks Brothers Archive
And a public domain play by
Walter Richardson

This adaptation by
David Jacklin

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From the title page of the MS. Of "Oh, You Kids!" found in the Perth Museum's Marks Brothers Archive: "A farcial scream". This MS. was apparently the personal property of Kitty Marks and the note is probably in her hand-writing.

CANTON HERALD (Canton, TX): June 24, 1932: "A three-act play, 'Two Days to Marry,' under the direction of Miss Jewell Phillips, will be staged by the Myrtle Springs Dramatic Club at the Myrtle Springs auditorium, Saturday evening, June 25, at 8 o'clock. This play is chuck full of comedy, and will make you laugh until tears come to your eyes. Come early as a large crowd is expected. Admission will be the nominal 10 cents."

Kerney County (where?) JANUARY 29, 1933: "Cast in the American Legion Auxiliary comedy, "Two Days to Marry" were Don Werner, Donald Golay, John Kauffelt, Mrs. Don Werner, Mrs. John Kauffelt, Mrs. Merlin Wright and Verne Golay."

From the Broadway Internet Database:

Walter Richardson, Male, Performer

Productions	Dates of Production
Black Rhythm [Original, Musical, Comedy] Performer: Walter Richardson [David Songbird]	Dec 19, 1936 - Dec 24, 1936
Africana [Original, Musical, Operetta] Performer: Walter Richardson [Prince Sayonga]	Nov 26, 1934 - Nov 28, 1934
Ol' Man Satan [Original, Play] Performer: Walter Richardson [David]	Oct 3, 1932 - Oct 1932
In Dahomey [Original, Musical] Performer: Walter Richardson	Feb 18, 1903 - Apr 4, 1903

TWO DAYS TO MARRY

CHARACTERS

In order of appearance

SIMON P CHASE.....	Who Looks After The Place
JAMES J. DARE	A Wifeless Heir
RUFORD B. SAWYER	A Timid Lawyer
EMILY JANE PINK	Who's Smarter Than You Think
SADIE L. BOISE	A Widow by Choice
IMOGENE McSHANE	A Frivolous Flapper
WALTER M. BLAIR	A Millionaire

TIME OF PLAYING: About two and one-half hours.

PLACE: Somewhere in a New York apartment house.

TIME: The present (when originally written; about 1926)

COSTUMES

CHASE:

OH, YOU KIDS
ACT I

SCENE: A sitting room. Table near center of stage, with a rocker on each side; the table lamp about center of table; if a floor lamp, it should be placed at right or left. Writing desk and chair should be place at left. Davanette up stage at left. Telephone on desk at left. Plain chair to be put in convenient place. Hall tree in proper place.

(Enter CHASE R., carrying a broom, dustpan, and duster. He wears a butler's vest and pants, ten-gallon hat and cowboy boots, into which he has tucked his pants -- his accent is pure Texas. He lays duster and pan in convenient place and begins to sweep in a lazy manner. He does not see DARE who is asleep on davanette. DARE is covered with newspapers.)

CHASE: *(talking to himself)* It's a awful thing for a man of my constitution to be tied to a broom and a dust-pan. *(Puts down broom and picks up duster.)* It's a scandal. *(Uses duster vigorously for a stroke or two, then gets lazy again.)* Here's the boss and me without a woman between us. Or even a woman in front of us. And I sure do miss the feeling. But I better not let Mr. Dare know I'm hankering for a wife, for I'd lose my job on the jump if I did. The boss says women are bad creatures to get *(sweeps)* and he ought to know. *(Straightens desk.)* For years he's been chasing flappers, and all he ever done was flop! Haw! Haw! *(Laughing at his own wit, he continues in business of cleaning up house.)* He was out all night – never touched that bed of his. Goodness knows where he is now. He's out — and the coal is out and the wood is out, and flour, butter and sugar is out! And we'll all be out – in the street – unless the boss gets some money. *(He lifts the corner of a rug and sweeps the dust pile under it.)* Mr. Dare does the best he can, I guess. He's kept this house going ever since his old aunt died four years ago, and kept me working, too, even if I ain't seen a red cent in pay for two months. Ain't many young fellows as would-a done that, I guess. *(Yawns)* Ain't nothing out of my sweet young life how much sleep he loses but I know that the nappers never catch the flappers. *(CHASE moves the papers on davanette, revealing DARE; CHASE starts.)*

(DARE throws papers aside and sits up, rubbing his eyes, stretches and yawns. He is in a tuxedo, not having been to bed.)

DARE: *(still yawning)*. Good morning.

CHASE: *(looking at clock and snickering)*. Good evening.

DARE: *(changing expression and looking at watch)*. Evening? Jumping grasshopper's galoshes! Four o'clock? I must have overslept myself.

CHASE: And that's hard to do. *(coming over closer to DARE)*. Do you want some tea this morning?

DARE: *(vexed—looking viciously at CHASE)*. Tea?

CHASE: What, then, coffee?

DARE: Coffee?

CHASE: That's what I said.

DARE: It's not what *I* said.

CHASE: All right, I know your drink now. *(Exits R.)*

DARE: *(going to mirror at R. and arranging appearances)*. Poor old Chase, he looks after me like my mother used to. *(Goes to chair.)* Come to think of it, she wasn't very good at it, either.

(Enter CHASE with coffee pot and glass of water.)

CHASE: *(pouring substance into cup.)* Here, boss, this'll wake you up.

DARE: *(drinking)*. Whew! That's strong coffee. *(Gulps down glass of water; takes another cup)*. The liquor officer will nab you if he catches you making this kind of coffee. *(Takes another cup.)* But it's not bad, at that.

CHASE: *(glancing at cup)*. So I noticed.

DARE: *(getting up and showing lots of pep)*. Well I'm sure awake now, old top. All right, Chase, any mail this morning?

CHASE: No, but this telegram came an hour ago. *(He produces it.)*

DARE: *(reads it.)* Well, that settles it.

CHASE: No bad news, I hope.

DARE: Bad news? It's an avalanche – a cyclone – a general smash-up of the whole solar system.

CHASE: Anybody hurt?

DARE: *(Opens letter and reads aloud.)* "Elgin, Illinois. Expect to arrive Saturday six o'clock. Stop. Remember the will. Stop. Wife is worth a million to you. Stop. As long as you don't. Stop. Your uncle – Walter M. Blair." *(Folds letter and puts into his pocket.)* Just think, I have to give up all my freedom for a mere million bucks! *(Drops into chair at desk.)* Well, I suppose my lawyer has everything ready – girl, church, minister, and I suspect – the divorce papers.

CHASE: Divorce?

DARE: Look here, Chase, in the next two days I must have a wife or we'll all be in the ditch.

CHASE: How's that?

DARE: Chase, you've got a head – a good head – though it does run to cabbages –

CHASE: *(aside.)* Now he's calling me a cabbage head.

DARE: I'm going to trust you with a secret. I've been a married man for two years past.

CHASE: *(aside.)* Why, he's worsen'n me.

DARE: Yet my wife is a *fata moragana*.

CHASE: What, Dutch, is she?

DARE: No, not Dutch. I have no wife, and never had one.

CHASE: Then how the dickens–

DARE: I'll tell you. That excellent old aunt of mine left me all her property with the proviso that I should marry and settle down. On my twenty-eighth birthday, providing I was still married, I was to receive the entire property in a lump – one million dollars. In the meantime, my Uncle Blair, who has charge of the property, was to pay me two hundred dollars a month as soon as I got married. I needed the money, of course, so I wrote him that I was married, and he has been sending the money right along. Of course, a married couple couldn't live on a sum like that.

CHASE: Of course not, sir.

DARE: Certainly not. So now and then I hatched up a tale of woe, which would bring an extra hundred or two from the old gentleman, and thus we have kept soul and body together.

CHASE: What did you tell him?

DARE: The usual stuff – sickness – a growing family – and so on and so forth.

CHASE: A family?

DARE: Of course, a family. We *have* been married for two years.

CHASE: Why didn't you just get married for real?

DARE: Because I've never met the right girl.

CHASE: Out of all them hundreds of girls you've been squiring?

DARE: It hasn't been hundreds. It's been . . . well, perhaps it has. No, there's only one that I'd even consider, but she won't . . . Now, confound it, there's this infernal telegram from my uncle saying that he is coming up in two days. I suppose he wants to see my interesting family before turning over the property.

CHASE: Tell him your wife is at her mother's.

DARE: Hang it all, man, I told him my wife was an orphan, never had any father nor mother.

CHASE: It's an awful muddle, sir, like trying to sort out a dozen kinds of pertaters in a bin.

DARE: Blast the muddle, find me a wife.

CHASE: Well, it'll be good to see you happily married.

DARE: *(laughing)*. Married! Why should I get married when there is no woman living who can take your place in the kitchen?

CHASE: All the comforts of home ain't found in the kitchen. For stomach trouble the kitchen is fine, but for heart trouble you need a woman. *(Acts wise.)*

DARE: *(sarcastic)* Woman! Woman! *(Laughs.)* A woman to a bachelor is not a comfort; she's a toy. *(Business of looking at a magazine.)*

CHASE: Yeah, she's a dangerous toy, too.

(CHASE is getting ready to clear away the coffee pot and things.)

DARE: *(pacing.)* Ye Gods! Only two more days; with a hundred women on my mind, and only one real prospect. *(Paces in silence.)* And she's not definite. *(Turns to CHASE, who is busy.)* Chase, it can't be done. I can't get married in so short a time. *(Drops into rocker at R.)*

CHASE: Oh, I forgot, your lawyer telephoned.

DARE: Yes? *(he waits.)* And, what did he say?

CHASE: *(Picking up tray again)*. He said he had puts ads in all the papers. *(Starts L.)*

DARE: What? What do you mean "ads in all the papers"?

CHASE: *(heading toward exit L.)* That's what he said.

DARE *(Calls to CHASE.)* Say, old thing, brush off my tuxedo. I'm dining with Miss McShane tonight. *(He takes off his tuxedo jacket and hands it to CHASE.)*

CHASE: All right. *(Exit L.)*

DARE: *(Dropping into rocker at table and picking up newspaper)*. Two more days of wonderful bachelor bliss, and then I exchange all this for nothing but a wife and money. It doesn't seem fair. *(glancing over paper, then suddenly becomes excited.)* Great Scott and little whales! Look here what my lawyer has done. *(Reads.)* "James Dare, a wealthy society man, advertises for a wife; must be married in two days time. He bars no creed or nationality. Call, write or wire his residence before the said date." *(Turns to CHASE, who has been showing signs of amusement and also amazement.)* Jumpin' Jupiters! Chase!

CHASE: (off) What?

DARE: Have any of the applicants answered yet?

CHASE: *(At door; puzzled)* Any of the which?

DARE: Why, applicants, you numb skull; don't you know what an applicant is?

CHASE: I know what an apple-cart is.

DARE: *(Exasperated)* I'm referring to women.

CHASE: There's been women swarming up here like bees, but I told them you weren't home.

DARE: Fine work. Any letters?

CHASE: The mail man said the post office ought to be moved up here, there's so many letters for you.

DARE: *(Throwing paper on table)*. Let me see them. *(CHASE exits to get the mail)* I might as well get broken in one time as another. *(Sits down at R. again.)*

CHASE: *(Exits L. and returns with large bundle of mail)*. Here's the mail, boss.

DARE: *(Taking letters)*. Great Caesar! What did you do, rob the post office?

CHASE: That's just the first delivery. Second one should be around soon.

DARE: Go and clean my tuxedo. Remember what I hired you for.

CHASE: Hmph. Fetching the mail and sweeping the floors, as far as I can see. *(Starts to exit)*.

DARE: *(Opening and looking at a letter)*. Huh! Looks as if I was the only man available. Manhasset, Maine. "Dear Mr. Dare: As you have advertised for a wife, I propose myself for the position. I am a female." That's a good start. "Under fifty." That's not so good. "And available immediately for the position." A little eager, wouldn't you say? "I

enclose a photograph of myself.” *(He looks in the envelope and takes out a small snapshot. Looks at it and turns it away from his view.)* Great Scott and little Arabs! *(Looks again.)* I swear that hurts my feelings!

(Telephone rings. DARE starts toward it and CHASE runs in and beats him to it; answers.)

CHASE: Hello! Mister Dare’s residence. *(Pause)* Just a minute. I’ll ask him and see. *(Turns to DARE, without covering the transmitter.)* There’s a woman on the phone. Do I tell her you’re not in?

DARE: *(Laying letters on table).* A little late for that, Chase. *(Takes receiver from CHASE, who exits L.)* Hello. Who? Matrimonial agency? *(Pause.)* Yes, I – or I mean my lawyer advertised for me. *(Pause.)* What’s her nationality? Swedish? *(Pause)* Tell her to go to – well, to Sweden. I’m not looking for a lifetime of herring and cold showers. *(Hangs up receiver.)* That lawyer of mine is a fast worker. He’s got me on the foreign market already. *(Goes over to chair and picks up letters and paper.)* Well, I might as well go up and get some rest, for I’m sure going to need it. *(Starts off L.)*

(Enter CHASE with a large bundle of letters. He also has tuxedo jacket in hand.)

CHASE: Second post’s here.

DARE: *(Taking letters).* Oh, yes, my lawyer’s a good fixer all right. *(Opens one)* Well, if this ain’t the June bug’s necktie – word from the Blue Grass state – *(reads):* From Eliza Sims, Miskeeter, Kentucky. “Dear Mr. Dare: – Three of my husbands are sleeping peacefully beneath the blue grass. I do not object to a fourth.” *(DARE reacts.)* “P.S. I have eleven children.” And that’s enough for me! *(He crumples up the letter and throws it over his shoulder.)* Women! Don’t bring me any more of them! *(Shoves CHASE out at L. taking jacket.)* These women! These women! If my mother hadn’t been a woman I’d have despaired of the whole race – painted people, gold diggers, spendthrifts, and I don’t know what all. I wouldn’t have one on a Christmas tree. *(He doesn’t see IMOGENE McSHANE, who has entered at R. and stands listening to his discourse on women.)*

IMOGENE: *(breaking in.)* So women are “gold-diggers” and “spendthrifts”, eh? *(Showing dignity.)*

DARE: *(Rising from desk)* Why, er-er, yes-yes, some of them; but of course, not you. *(Puts on his jacket.)*

IMOGENE: *(Extending her hand.)* Of course not; you wouldn’t say that about an old school chum.

DARE: Why, of course not. *(Shakes her hand.)* How did you get in, bribe the butler? *(Offers her a chair which she takes.)*

IMOGENE: Silly man, I have a key, remember?

DARE: Not that you've ever used it.

IMOGENE: *(Smiling)*. Not yet. *(She holds up a newspaper.)* Now, what's this?

DARE: *(Sitting in easy fashion on edge of table near her.)* Oh, that's some of my lawyer's work. One would think I wasn't able to get a wife. *(seated, hands back of head.)* As Shakespeare says, there is a tide in a man of affairs – no, there is an affair in the tide of man – no, hang it, when a man gets tied up in affairs – or something like that, anyhow. My affairs are bad enough. If Uncle Blair finds out that I'm not married, I'll be regularly done up.

IMOGENE: That's what I have been thinking, but that isn't what I came for. I just came to tell you we can't dine this evening.

DARE: *(still intent on his own thoughts.)* You know, Imogene, you could have saved me all this.

IMOGENE: Why, James Dare, how you talk. We've been through all that. And besides, you hate women.

DARE: Not true. I love women. All kinds of women. *(Sitting on arm of her chair – she resents it some)*. Listen, Imogene, remember when we were in school?

IMOGENE: And how silly we acted?

DARE: *(Stands)*. I didn't think we acted all that silly. Imogene, I have something very important to say to you.

IMOGENE: Oh, dear.

DARE: Miss McShane, have you ever –

IMOGENE: I never have.

DARE: Ever thought of –

IMOGENE: Oh yes, indeed.

DARE: Have you ever thought of committing matrimony?

IMOGENE: All by myself?

DARE: Yes. I mean, no. I mean – er – would it suit you to become Mrs. Dare?

IMOGENE: *(Affected.)* Oh, this is so sudden!

DARE: For a few days.

IMOGENE: What!

DARE: Now, don't get excited. I just need a wife for the weekend. Or at least somebody to pretend to be my wife for the weekend – from Saturday morning until my Uncle leaves.

IMOGENE: *(Laughing and rising.)* Oh, Jimmy, I must be going. Ralph's waiting to take me to the club.

DARE: Ralph! Who's Ralph?

IMOGENE: *(Elated.)* Ralph Connor. He's a club member, too. Don't you know him?

DARE: *(Walking away sullenly.)* No, I am not seeking acquaintances at present.

IMOGENE: *(Laughing again.)* Oh, you jealous thing. Why be so serious?

DARE: *(Takes her hand.)* Imogene, I was never more serious in my life. Won't you promise me— just give me one ray of hope? *(Earnestly.)*

IMOGENE: *(Half smiling)* Surely you don't want to settle down to one girl when you advertise for them wholesale. Well, so long, Jimmy; see you in church. *(Starts toward R.)*

DARE: *(Following her.)* Well, how about my dropping around sometime tonight or tomorrow?

IMOGENE: Oh, I guess you may — if you leave your harem at home. *(Laughs gleefully and departs.)*

DARE: *(Looks after her, then turns and speaks to self sarcastically.)* Oh, yes, that lawyer's a fixer all right. *(Drops into rocker at L.)* The only girl I ever cared a sniffle for, and she thinks I'm acquiring a harem. *(Rings and paces.)* If I had that lawyer I'd wring his neck. *(Goes over to bell rope L. and pulls it, comes back to chair.)*

(Enter CHASE L., drying a plate. He has on a bungalow apron.)

CHASE: Did you ring for me?

DARE: *(Riled.)* I didn't ring for the Prince of Wales. Call my lawyer at once. Think you can use the phone?

CHASE: *(Lays plate and drying cloth on table, dries hands on apron.)* Using the telephone is one of the best things I do.

DARE: *(Impatiently.)* Well, snap into it.

CHASE: *(Takes down receiver.)* Hello! Is this Miss Central? How are you today, Miss Central?

Well, my boss informs me that I'm to inform my boss's lawyer to report to my boss's headquarters immediately for important matrimonial discussions. *(Pause)*. What's that? What number? I don't know. I just want to talk to lawyer Sawyer. *(Pauses.)*

DARE: *(Rushing to phone and taking receiver)*. You ignoramus, what did I ever hire you for?

CHASE: *(Amazed)*. To scrub floors and fetch the mail.

DARE: *(At phone.)* Main one-four-six-five, please. Yes. Attorney Sawyer's office? *(Pause.)* Hello! This is Mr. Dare speaking. I'm coming over right away. Yes, I should say the business is important. *(Pause.)* Yes, right away. *(Hangs up receiver and removes his jacket and tie.)* Anything in the house to eat, Chase?

CHASE: Well, there's some eggs, but I might object to their age 'cause I'm doubtful.

DARE: Objection sustained. Anything else? *(He exits.)*

CHASE: *(Talking to DARE who is offstage.)* Some of the cold veal left from yesterday – or was it the day before? Or maybe the day before that? I could take that veal and make some chicken croquettes out of it.

DARE: *(Re-entering with suit jacket on and tie in hand)*. Never mind. I can't wait. I'm going out.

CHASE: All right. We can have the veal tomorrow. If it hasn't walked away first.

DARE: Hat and cane, Chase. *(CHASE exits. DARE is tying tie in mirror)*. The world knows I need a wife worse than a meal. *(Meditates.)* Well, today is Thursday, and my Uncle will be here Saturday evening or maybe even Saturday morning, so I might as well have a wife Friday night and be on the safe side of the fence.

(CHASE re-enters with hat and cane.)

CHASE: Here they are, boss. Any extra instructions?

DARE: *(Thoughtfully)*. Yes, you may answer all phone calls promptly, save all letters and telegrams, and inform all callers that I shall return sometime this evening. Understand?

CHASE: I think I can do that.

(Exit DARE. CHASE watches him go.)

CHASE: *(Trying to look wise)*. Well, he's off to spread the news. *(Picks up tray and dishes.)* In about twenty minutes, this place'll have more females crawling over it than a Ladies Aid rummage sale. I'd better spruce up a bit. *(Starts to L., when phone rings.)* Whoa! Here it goes. *(Stops, drops tray and rushes to phone.)* Hello! Who? The furniture collector? No, we've got no old furniture, 'cause my boss is out. That's right, he's said to tell you he was

always out when you called. *(Pause.)* Is that so? Well, you'd better talk to my boss about that. I never fight, myself. Goodbye. *(Hangs up receiver.)* I'll do most anything for Mr. Dare, but I draw the line when it comes to doing his fighting. *(Stops to pick up tray and dishes. These may be paper cups. Door bell rings. Drops tray again.)* This just ain't gonna happen. Now don't you ring. *(Points finger at phone at L.)* Here come the females. *(Exit R. and returns with five special deliveries.)* For gosh sakes! *(Looks at letters.)* Five special deliveries and all decorated with female scribbling and perfume! *(Sniffs at letters.)* Lord, that's something! *(Phone rings.)* Now I told you! *(Drops letters and rushes to phone.)* Hello! No, this is not Mister Dare; this is Mister Dare's supporter. *(Pause.)* Oh, pardon me, miss; his butler; is that better? Miss McShane? But weren't you just here? *(Pause.)* Yes, ma'am, I'll tell him to call you just as soon as he comes back. *(Hangs up receiver.)* That's the funniest phone number I ever did hear. I'll have to jot that down. *(Goes to desk.)* Let's see. *(Writes.)* Call Bully-yard 1-4-6. *(Walks cautiously towards tray and dishes, looking first at phone and then at door at R.)* Now to get rid of these dishes, and then brush the boss's tuxedo. *(After picking up dishes, he proceeds toward L., glancing suspiciously at phone and door at R.)* The boss will want to look mighty spry tomorrow when he delivers his heart to the lucky flapper. *(Exits and returns with tuxedo coat and begins to brush.)* I wonder how I'd look in such a swell rag? *(Tries on coat and views himself in mirror with satisfaction.)* Whew! If some gal could see me now, she'd die from heart palpitations. *(Backs away from mirror, still looking at image, suddenly looks at left.)* Something tells me that sink of dishes is way past full. *(Exits hurriedly.)*

(The door bell rings several times but CHASE doesn't answer. EMILY JANE PINK enters R. She is dressed in a loud, not fashionable dress and carries umbrella and suit case.)

PINK: *(Setting suit case down and expressing delight with the surroundings.)* Oh, this is sure nice. And, so tasteful, too. I don't know what this Mister Dare looks like, but he must be rich as all get out to live in a place like this. And that'll do for me. *(Primps.)*

(CHASE enters from L., wearing Dare's tuxedo. PINK mistakes him for DARE.)

CHASE: Who did you—? Pardon me. Are you looking for — ?

PINK: *(Clasping her hands romantically.)* Oh, Mister Dare, you look just like I thought you would— broad shoulders, tall, graceful, and so manly — just like the prince of my dreams. *(Look at him lovingly.)*

CHASE: *(Seeing she has mistaken him for DARE, swallows hard.)* Oh, I see. Are you one of the apple-carts?

PINK: Why, no, sir, I'm one of the Pinks — Emily Jane Pink, old Obediah Pink's girl, from Yellow Run, Virginia. Why, you must have heard of me, Mister Dare: I used to play leading ladies in the Yellow Run Amateur Thespian Company. *(Acts demure.)*

- CHASE: I never got down to Yellow Run. Now, let me see your card.
- PINK: *(Hands on hips)*. Now, the advertisement didn't say you were looking for a Union-wife.
- CHASE: You don't understand me.
- PINK: *(Coquettishly)*. Maybe not, Mister Dare, but we'll understand each other better after we're married.
- CHASE: *(Horrorified)*. Married! *(Disgusted)* I meant a calling card – a card with your prescription percolated across its surface.
- PINK: *(Brightening up)*. You mean my name and address? *(Comes closer)*. I just told you my name and you won't need my address after we're married. You'll be home every night. *(Comes closer to CHASE, who shows embarrassment.)*
- CHASE: *(Trying to explain)*. Listen, I'm not Mister Dare. I'm his—
- PINK: His brother! You will tell him I love him, won't you?
- CHASE: *(Excitedly)*. Y-yes'm— I mean no'm. I'm not his brother. I'm his—
- PINK: *(Takes CHASE's lapels in her hand)*. His father! I knew I'd guess it. Kind sir, you'll consent to our wedding, won't you? *(Pleading manner.)*
- CHASE: *(Pulling away)*. Look, I'm not his father, and before you guess again, I'm not his mother either.
- PINK: *(Getting riled)*. If you ain't Mister Dare, then who are you?
- CHASE: I'm Simon P. Chase, servant to Mr. Dare.
- PINK: *(Regarding him with suspicion)*. Simon P. Chase, eh? *(Looks him over. CHASE appears ill-at-ease.)* I don't believe it. You're Mister Dare, so get yourself together and let's get spliced.
- CHASE: But Miss Pink, I'm not — *(swallows hard.)*
- PINK: *(Chewing gum vigorously)* Oh, yes, you are! You're going to marry me if I have to call the whole police force in to witness it.
- CHASE: Bu, I'm not Mister Dare. Honest to goodness, I'm not.
- PINK: *(Looking him over)*. That's what they all say when they're cornered. *(Puts hands on him, arches eyebrows.)* So, I'm staying right here until the parson gives us the right to work in double harness. *(Removes things and sits composedly in rocker while CHASE stares in*

amazement.)

(Telephone rings, and CHASE starts, but is shoved aside by PINK, who answers.)

PINK: *(At phone).* Hello! Yes, ma'am, he sure is. *(Looks at CHASE and smiles. He is embarrassed.)* What's that? Does he still want to get married? He sure does. How do I know? Because this is his future wife talking. *(Pause.)* Why, she hung up. *(Hangs up receiver and walks to CHASE, who is almost overcome; she starts to caress CHASE, who resists vigorously.)* Come, now you know you love me. *(Makes extra attempt to caress CHASE.)*

CHASE: *(More excited than ever).* Woman, keep thy distance. I told you I'm not Mister Dare!

(Enter DARE. CHASE still has on DARE's tuxedo.)

DARE: *(Looking at the two in amazement).* What on earth is this, a wrestling match?

PINK: *(Releasing CHASE and assuming an important air).* No, it's a love match. *(CHASE is almost going wild.)*

DARE: *(Assuming dignity).* Who are you, an adventuress?

PINK: Why, no, I'm a Baptist. Who are you, anyhow?

DARE: *(Laughs.)* I am Mr. Dare!

CHASE: *(Relieved).* I told you.

PINK: Are you James J. Dare?

DARE: *(Looking first at CHASE then at PINK).* I was when I woke up.

CHASE: *(coming closer to DARE).* He still is.

PINK: Oh! *(Faints.)*

CHASE: *(Catching her in his arms and setting her in chair at R.)* Water, boss! She's shuffling off the mortal coil!

DARE: All right, I'll fetch the water works. *(Rushes off R.)*

CHASE: *(Rubbing her forehead.)* Poor little thing. She needs comforting.

(Enter DARE from L. with water and starts to dash contents into PINK's face.)

DARE: This'll wake her up.

CHASE: *(Taking hold of DARE's arm).* Not like that. She's already a Baptist. *(Takes cup and sprinkle few drops on PINK's brow.)*

PINK: *(Coming out of faint).* Wh-where am I?

DARE: *(Loftily).* Madam, you are at present in the home of yours truly— *(pointing to himself.)* James J. Dare.

CHASE: *(Looking at DARE).* Miss Pink, you are perfectly safe until you revive.

PINK: *(Pointing to CHASE).* And you're truly not Mr. Dare?

CHASE: No, I'm not.

PINK: Then – then – I'm ruined!

DARE: *(Accusingly at CHASE).* Chase!

CHASE: What?

PINK: This outfit I'm wearing cost me four dollars, and that was the last cent I had. And – and – *(To CHASE.)* You ain't Mister Dare? *(Weeps very loudly and bitterly on CHASE's shoulder. He shows much signs of discomfort.)*

DARE: *(patting her on back).* Don't cry, Miss. Mistakes often happen. You'll find another husband.

PINK: *(Still crying).* Maybe, but he'll cost another four dollars and that'll make eight dollars – and a husband just ain't worth it.

CHASE: I think *I'm* worth eight dollars.

DARE: *(Looking at CHASE).* And change. Miss Pink, you sell manhood too cheaply. *(Point to R.)* Woman, go thy way.

CHASE: *(Pointing as well).* I second the motion.

PINK: *(Picking up suit case and advancing to R.)* It's a cruel world. Farewell, Mister Dare. Farewell, Mister Chase. *(Waves.)* I'll – I'll always love you, Mister Chase. *(Cries loudly.)*

DARE: *(Moved to pity).* This is too much. *(Calls to PINK.)* Do you actually love this article? *(Points to CHASE, who shows disgust.)*

- PINK: *(Returning from R., smiling).* I surely do. I love him like a cat loves catfish.
- CHASE: *(Shuddering).* Yeah, but that ain't healthy for the catfish. *(Looks at PINK rather suspiciously.)*
- DARE: Well, I'm going to need a maid for the wife I shall have tomorrow morning, so I'll just hire you. You will then have a chance to get to know Chase better. He's a swell looking man.
- CHASE: *(Brushing off his coat).* Aw, shucks.
- PINK: *(Jumping up and down).* Do you mean that, Mister Dare?
- DARE: Absolutely.
- PINK: *(Taking off hat).* Then I'm ready for work.
- CHASE: *(Pleased).* We both are, boss. *(DARE goes to CHASE and whispers in his ear. CHASE looks confused, pulls off coat of MR. DARE's.)* Er-er, yes, of course. *(looks at PINK who is looking at his action and wondering.)* You can borrow it if you will take care of it. *(Looks pleadingly at DARE who smiles knowingly.)*
- DARE: *(Takes coat and puts it on, making his evening attire complete).* All right, I'll be careful with it. *(winks at CHASE, who winks back.)* Oh, I forgot. Have there been any letters or calls since I have been gone?
- (Business of PINK straightening up room.)*
- CHASE: *(Thinking).* Sure have. You got five specials *(hands letters to DARE.)* And three phone calls; one from the furniture collector and two from girls. One of them told me her name. *(Dusts off DARE's coat.)*
- DARE: *(Impatiently).* I'm not a good guesser. Who was it?
- CHASE: Oh. *(Going to desk and getting piece of paper on which he wrote the name and phone number.)* It was Miss McShane. She said to tell you Bully-yard 1-4-6.
- DARE: *(Turns quickly).* Bully-yard? You mean Boulevard.
- CHASE: I knew there was some kind of yard attached.
- DARE: I haven't time to phone her right now. I've got to be married in two days!
- PINK: *(To MR. DARE).* Shall I fix the future Mrs. Dare a room, sir?
- DARE: *(Staring at paper with phone number on it.)* Certainly. *(To CHASE.)* Show Miss Pink the

room that my future wife will occupy.

CHASE: This way, Miss Pink. *(He indicates L. and PINK exits L..)*

DARE: *(To himself, indicating the paper.)* That's the girl that ought to be Mrs. James J. Dare.

CHASE: *(Staring after Miss Pink.)* She's just about the sweetest, most loveable thing I ever seen. She's just a little sweet pertater. *(Referring to PINK.)*

DARE: *(Jumping up.)* You scoundrel! How dare you say that about her?

CHASE: *(Surprised at DARE.)* Why, didn't I just save her life; and didn't she just say she loves me like she loves catfish? *(Very romantic.)*

DARE: *(Catching on.)* Oh, I see. You mean Miss Pink.

CHASE: *(Hands clasped, looking skyward.)* She's a angel.

DARE: *(Amused and then bored.)* Come out of the love trance, and get my hat and cane.

CHASE: *(Comes slowly to self.)* Yes, sir. *(Goes for hat and cane, which lays on chair nearby.)*

DARE: *(Taking hat and cane.)* Chase, you may have to do it.

CHASE: Do what, sir?

DARE: Become Mrs. Dare.

CHASE: Why, Mr. Dare, this so sudden!

DARE: I mean, put on a dress and pretend to be Mrs. Dare.

CHASE: Oh, I couldn't do that, boss.

DARE: You may have to if we're to continue in the style we're accustomed to.

CHASE: Now sir, frankly speaking, do I look like a woman?

DARE: Frankly speaking, you don't, but something must be done. Unless I can introduce somebody to my Uncle as my wife, I'm utterly ruined. Chase, I may be going away on very important business. *(CHASE giggles knowingly.)* What's so funny?

CHASE: *(Looking sober.)* Nothing at all, boss, nothing at all.

DARE: *(Sternly.)* Well, listen to me; as I said, I may be gone until tomorrow about nine o'clock. My Uncle will be here Saturday at nine and I want you and Miss Pink to have things in

the pink of condition. Understand?

CHASE: Yes, sir.

DARE: *(Starting to exit R.)*. Remember, when I'm married, you are to be head-butler.

CHASE: *(Elated)*. Really? How many butlers are you going to have, boss?

DARE: Just the one. *(Exits R. And CHASE falls limply into chair.)*

(Enter PINK L., very quietly.)

PINK: Drat the fire anyhow, the coal's wet and the wood won't burn. Is he gone?

CHASE: *(Getting up)*. He's gone, honey. And before he departed, he made me head-butler.

PINK: *(Taking hold of his arms and looking admiringly up into his eyes)*. You great big wonderful man!

CHASE: Sweet pertater. *(swings hands.)*

PINK: You're another. I'll be glad when the parson makes you mine.

CHASE: Oh, now wait just a minute.

PINK: What?

CHASE: I ain't proposed nor nothing.

PINK: Well, you'd best hurry up. I ain't getting any younger. *(quickly.)* Oh! *(They separate.)*

CHASE: What is it?

PINK: I thought I heard something.

CHASE: I guess you didn't. Got to watch out just the same, 'cause if Mr Dare knew we were talking about getting yoked up, we'd both go flying quicker'n scat.

PINK: Why? He's looking to get married himself.

CHASE: He told me distinctively that if ever I got married and began raising a family, I'd be no more use to him.

PINK: I sure don't want to leave here.

CHASE: Leave here? Where I've been happy as a squash bug on a vine? Why, every time I dig a

pertater in the garden, I'll think of your starry eyes.

PINK: And every time I cut a cabbage in the kitchen, I'll think of your face.

CHASE: Emily!

PINK: Oh, but I like cabbages.

(Door bell rings.)

CHASE: *(Breaking away from PINK).* Release me, apple dumplin', duty calls. *(Goes to door and is shoved backward by MRS. SADIE L. BOISE, who enters in a furious manner. She has handbag and umbrella.)*

MRS. B.: *(looking wildly into room).* Where is he?

(CHASE and PINK look dumbfounded.)

MRS. B.: *(brandishing umbrella, still furious.)* Where is he, I say? *(CHASE and PINK hunt for cover.)*

CHASE: *(Trembling).* Wh-wh-who?

MRS. B.: *(still looking wild).* James J. Dare. The scoundrel! He won my hand, and now he advertises for a wife as if our engagement meant nothing.

PINK: Mister Dare is away at present, Miss – *(She sees MRS. B.'s furious stare.)* — zus.

CHASE: And he won't be back till tomorrow.

PINK: *(Trying to put room in order).* That's right, and he told us to put this room in the pink of condition, all ready for . . .

MRS. B: Yes, ready for that hussy who will be mistress of his house.

CHASE: *(Trying to comfort her).* Maybe he has gone to ax you to marry him. Why don't you go see if you can catch him?

MRS. B: I don't even know what he looks like. I am Mrs. Sadie L. Boise. I live in Illinois. I was contacted by a matrimonial agency weeks ago about marrying your employer. He has been corresponding with me almost daily about it. Look at these letters he wrote me! *(Produces large package of letters.)* Oh, my life is so empty. I had one husband, and lost him almost at once. And, now, I lose a second before I even meet him! Oh, oh, what shall I do? *(Cries and drops into rocker.)*

CHASE: *(Coming to her).* I'm sorry, Missus, but I can't help it if my boss is a heart-breaker. *(Pats*

her arm on shoulder.)

MRS. B: *(Jumping threateningly).* Don't touch me! I believe you're lying about Mr. Dare being away. I'll find out for myself. *(Starts toward L. exit.)* I'll search every nook and corner in this chicken coop.

PINK: *(Trying to prevent her).* Stop, Missus. Mr. Chase is telling the truth.

MRS. B: *(Pushing PINK aside).* Clear out! Don't interfere with a woman scorned. *(Exits L.)*

PINK: *(To CHASE).* She's kind of highly-strung.

CHASE: Like a pian-uh. And she's about to start busting strings. Well, she won't find the boss in there.

PINK: *(Sitting leisurely on davenport).* Well, if he marries that, I pity him.

CHASE: *(Coming over and standing near the davenport).* I'm the one to pity. Think of being chief butler in the presence of that she-cat.

PINK: *(Looking coquettishly at CHASE).* Will your Royal Highness be seated? *(Motions to portion of seat near her.)*

CHASE: Well, I think I could rest a bit. *(Sits down very far from PINK.)*

PINK: *(Looking at space between them).* Mister Chase, don't you believe the distance between us could be shortened?

CHASE: *(Slides over close to PINK).* Well, yes, but I'm worried about that wild woman tearing up the premises.

PINK: *(Nudging him with her elbow).* You better tame this wild woman first. *(She throws her arms around him.)*

(Door bell rings.)

CHASE: *(Jumping up).* Release me, woman, duty calls me. *(Goes to door and enters with MR. SAWYER.)*

SAWYER: *(Coming further on stage).* Ah, Chase. Is Mr. Dare at home? We missed each other at my office, I think.

CHASE: Well, he just went looking for you, Mr. Sawyer. But he may be going out overnight. He said he might not be back until tomorrow. *(Turns to PINK.)* Miss Pink, take the gentleman's hat and cane.

PINK: *(Obeying promptly, also amazed at CHASE's commanding attitude.)* At once, my lord.

SAWYER: *(Retaining hat and cane).* No, thank you, I must be going back. Tell Mr. Dare I will be up in the morning.

(MRS. B. enters from L. after her search and mistakes SAWYER for DARE.)

MRS. B: *(Rushing up and putting arms around SAWYER's neck much to his discomfort).* I knew you were in this house somewhere. How can you desert me like this? *(Clings to him, SAWYER is trying to break away.)*

SAWYER: *(Scared).* Great Law and little cases! What on earth does this mean?

MRS. B: *(Still holding SAWYER).* Mean? Why, honey, don't you remember how you proposed to me through letters?

SAWYER: *(Mopping brow with handkerchief).* Letters? Proposals? Why, woman, you're crazy. *(Struggles.)* Let me go, I'll faint!

(PINK and CHASE business of jumping around, looking amazed and also slightly amused; PINK near MRS. B. And CHASE near SAWYER.)

MRS. B: I'll never let you go, Mr. Dare. You must marry me.

SAWYER: Dare? Say, Chase, pull this female leach away from me. *(Struggles.)*

(PINK grabs hold of BOISE and CHASE hold of SAWYER. All four fall when separated.)

MRS. B: *(Shaking fist).* You brute! Tomorrow I'll sue you for breach of promise. *(Struggles to get at him.)*

SAWYER: *(Mopping brow).* And Dare calls that *(points to BOISE.)* a toy.

(CURTAIN)

OH, YOU KIDS
ACT II

SCENE: Same as in Act I.

(Next morning. There is a brief pause after the lights come up then DARE enters from the front door.)

DARE: That ends it all, I've tried – nobody can say I haven't tried. The money will go to an asylum for stray cats, I suppose, and I may go to jail for getting money under false pretenses.

(Enter PINK in maid's uniform.)

PINK: I thought you'd be back about now, sir. Your breakfast is sizzling hot.

DARE: *(aside.)* I'll be sizzling too, directly.

PINK: Them eggs was all right.

DARE: Happy eggs. I wish I were all right.

PINK: What seems to be the matter, sir? Ain't you feeling well?

DARE: Oh, I'm well enough.

PINK: It's an awfully hot day, especially in that kitchen.

DARE: It will be cold enough for me, though.

PINK: Something is the matter, now, I know it.

DARE: Yes, Pink, there is. I am sorry to say that you'll have to leave here.

PINK: But-but I only just got here! What have I done? I – I – I – don't want to leave here. *(crying.)* You needn't pay me any wages sir, if you'll only let me stay.

DARE: *(aside.)* Poor little thing. *(aloud.)* I can't help it, Pink. I shall have to get out myself.

PINK: *(surprised.)* Why, ain't this your house, sir?

DARE: I thought it was, but I'm afraid I'll have no house nor money either after tomorrow. I can only wish you good luck and a good husband.

PINK: *(aside.)* I've nearly got that already. *(aloud.)* And I wish you the same, sir.

DARE: I need it, especially a wife, or someone who will pretend to be.

PINK: How's that, sir?

DARE: I can't explain unless – *(Looks at her.)* By Jove, why didn't I think of her before? Pink, will you help me out of a scrape?

PINK: If I can, sir.

DARE: You can.

PINK: How?

DARE: By consenting to be my wife – for three or four hours.

PINK: Oh. *(Crosses .)* I couldn't do that.

DARE: Why not? You're unmarried. You're bright as a dollar, pretty as a picture, and besides, it is wholly a matter of form.

PINK: But sir, I –

DARE: Moreover, it will save me from utter ruin, and put a thousand dollars in your pocket.

PINK: One – thousand – whole dollars?

DARE: One thousand whole dollars.

PINK: Why, I'll be rich! I'll do it, sir.

DARE: *(quickly.)* You will?

PINK: *(nods head.)* I will.

DARE: Saved at last. *(Goes up.)*

PINK: *(aside.)* I'll be the lady of the house, and oh, won't I make Chase toe the mark? Well, I guess.

DARE: Now Pink, we may as well get the run of things. We've been married two years.

PINK: Two years? Uh-huh.

DARE: Of course, our honeymoon love is over by this time, so once in a while we'll have a row.

PINK: We row, sir?

DARE: Of course.

PINK: With you, sir?

DARE: Well, not with Teddy Roosevelt.

PINK: Oh, I dasn't sir.

DARE: It's all make believe, you know.

PINK: All right. What next, sir?

DARE: You mustn't say "sir" to me, that would give everything dead away. Call me James.

PINK: All right, James. *(suddenly.)* Oh! What would Chase say?

DARE: Chase be hanged, it's none of his business.

PINK: Of course not, sir. *(sigh.)* Oh Jiminy! *(aloud.)* But you see, sir—

DARE: "Sir", blast it all.

PINK: Well then — *(swallowing)* I suppose — James — I ought to rig up in my best bib and tucker, hadn't I, sir? James?

DARE: To be sure, put on your best bib and tucker, by all means.

PINK: *(She goes L.)* All right, sir.

DARE: *(Shouts.)* What!

PINK: *(She jumps, startled, quickly.)* James!

DARE: That's better. No more sirs, remember. My aunt left a lot of ribbons and laces and jewelry and stuff in her room. You can wear whatever you please.

PINK: Thank you — Jimmy. *(aside.)* Won't I just blossom like a rose? *(Exits L.I.E.)*

DARE: If Pink doesn't make a mess of it, I'll see my Uncle's wife and raise him one better. *(exits R.I.E.)*

(A pause, then the doorbell rings. Nothing happens. It rings again. IMOGENE enters from the front door.)

IMOGENE: Chase? *(She looks around.)* Chase? James? *(There is no one about.)* Very well, I shall make myself at home.

(She takes off her hat and gloves and looks around.)

I suppose someone will be back, sooner or later. *(Moving around, she finds the special delivery letters and looks through them.)* Well, there are plenty of women wanting to get their hands on Jimmy. But I'm not sure I'm willing to let them.

(DARE re-enters and stops short on seeing her.)

DARE: Imogene!

IMOGENE: Good morning, James. Your mail is very interesting.

DARE: My what? Oh, drat the mail! I'm so pleased to see you.

IMOGENE: Aren't you rather busy this morning?

DARE: Busy with what?

IMOGENE: Well, as I understand it, you've got to be married by tomorrow. You must be busy making the arrangements. Where is she, by the way?

DARE: Where is who?

IMOGENE: The Southern belle who answered when I phoned yesterday and said that she was your future wife.

DARE: I have no idea what you're talking about. Say, what are you doing here, anyway?

IMOGENE: I've changed my mind, Jimmy.

DARE: About what?

IMOGENE: About being your wife – for the weekend.

DARE: What? You'll do it? Oh, my dear, that's wonderful!

IMOGENE: Just exactly what is involved?

DARE: My Uncle will be here tomorrow morning. If he's convinced that I have a wife, why, I'll get a million dollars. If not, I lose everything. You just have to pretend to be my wife while he's here. Shouldn't be more than a few hours.

IMOGENE: All right. You'd better show me around the place, so I know what I'm doing.

DARE: Surely! Surely! *(They start to exit.)* Say, Imogene, you're a brick to do this.

IMOGENE: We'll see. We'll see.

(They exit. After a moment, the door-bell rings; no one comes to answer it; the bell rings again.)

PINK: *(Entering at a run; she has changed from her maid's costume into a nice dress.)*
Coming! Coming!

(She goes out to the door; a moment later she re-enters, followed by BLAIR.)

Walk right in, sir.

BLAIR: Certainly, that's what I always do.

PINK: Do what?

BLAIR: Walk when I enter a room. I always walk, I neither fly, swim nor skate.

PINK: I see.

BLAIR: Now, young woman, my name is Blair. I'm here to see my nephew on very important business. So, if you can just tell him . . .

PINK: Nephew! Then . . . you're the old goat!

BLAIR: I'm what!

PINK: We didn't expect you – we thought that you'd be – you said you were – I'll just find him, Mister Sir – Mister Uncle – Mister Goat!

(She rushes out in a panic.)

BLAIR: A very strange woman. Do you suppose that could be his wife? Well, I'll wait till he comes, see his family, turn over the property and get back home. *(Takes newspaper from pocket, sits at table.)* Poor devil – poor fellow –

(Upstage, behind him and unseen by him, PINK meets CHASE and explains in pantomime who BLAIR is. CHASE stares at PINK, then runs off, PINK exits the opposite way.)

(Putting down the newspaper.) I have the oddest feeling that something is going on around here that I don't know about.

(IMOGENE enters, crosses to the special delivery letters and picks them up. She starts to go through them and sees BLAIR.)

IMOGENE: Oh! Hello!

BLAIR: Hello to you. Where's Mr. Dare?

IMOGENE: Mr. Dare is probably attending to his own affairs. If you whistle, he might come.

BLAIR: Now, don't you get snappy with me, young woman. I don't waste time with parlour maids.

IMOGENE: *(realizing that BLAIR has taken her for the maid.)* You don't mince words either, do you?

BLAIR: I never do. I say what's on my mind.

IMOGENE: Do you ever say much?

BLAIR: Well, I might whisper to Mr. Dare that his parlour maid is going through his mail. What do you think he'd say to that?

IMOGENE: *(In mock contrition.)* Oh, sir, please don't tell Mr. Dare that I've gone through his mail! I don't know what he'd do.

BLAIR: Really? And what are you dressed up like that for? *(Indicating her fashionable attire.)* You look like you're up for a jazz night at a speak-easy.

IMOGENE: *(Playing up.)* Well sir, Jimmy likes it when I dress like this.

BLAIR: Jimmy!

IMOGENE: I mean, Mr. Dare. Please don't tell him, sir.

BLAIR: Well, of course not.

IMOGENE: Thank you, sir.

BLAIR: Oh, you don't have to call me, sir. Why don't you call me Walter?

IMOGENE: Why? Is that your name?

BLAIR: Yes.

IMOGENE: All right – Walter.

BLAIR: And what's your name, my dear?

IMOGENE: Imogene, sir – Walter.

BLAIR: That's a lovely name, Imogene.

IMOGENE: Thank you – Wally.

BLAIR: Imogene, you're a very pretty girl. *(He tries to put his arm around her.)*

IMOGENE: Why, Wally! What would Mr. Dare say if he heard you? Or his horrid, frumpy old uncle?

BLAIR: What! Old! *(He steps away from her.)* That will be all, Imogene.

IMOGENE: Yes, sir. *(She drops him a demure curtsy and exits.)*

BLAIR: Old! Humph! Still, she is a pretty girl. And I'm even more sure that there's something odd going on around here! *(He goes back to his newspaper.)*

(Enter CHASE in a woman's dress C.D.)

CHASE: I wonder if I'm harnessed up all right. I feel as crazy as a pertater bug in a can of kerosene ile. Where the dickens is the pockets in this here contramption anyhow? It beats the pigs-in-clover puzzle all holler. *(Down C.)*

BLAIR: *(Looks up.)* Ahem!

CHASE: Great Scott! *(Bolts for door.)*

BLAIR: Madam!

CHASE: Who are you calling Madam?

BLAIR: You, madam!

CHASE: I ain't no madam, I'm . . . I'm . . . *(remembering his dress)* I'm in for it.

BLAIR: What seems to be the matter?

CHASE: Nothin'. *(aside.)* I wish I was out of this.

BLAIR: Madam, who are you and what do you want?

CHASE: I'm his wife.

BLAIR: Who's wife?

CHASE: The boss's.

BLAIR: Eh?

CHASE: I mean Mr. Dare.

BLAIR: What!

CHASE: You needn't howl about it. I told you what!

BLAIR: Are you Mrs. Dare?

CHASE: Sure as eggs is eggs.

BLAIR: Are you the sweet little woman James wrote me he had married?

CHASE: That was two years ago. I've growed since then.

BLAIR: I should think so. He told me about your low sweet voice –

CHASE: That's growed too.

BLAIR: Indeed! Well, I don't doubt it.

CHASE: 'sides that, I've got the episcotic.

BLAIR: *(aside.)* My nephew must be insane. *(aloud.)* Why did he marry you?

CHASE: 'Cause I'm sorter handy to have around.

BLAIR: Oh, I see. You were his cook, I suppose.

CHASE: No sir, butler – er – gardener – er – yes, I'm a – sort of cook. *(aside.)* I'm getting all mixed up.

BLAIR: Well, there's no accounting for tastes.

CHASE: Just what I says. Some folks like summer squash, but I don't. No sir, give me the real old Hubbard squash every time. And then there's pertaters, now, about pertaters, I allus wuz –

BLAIR: Confound your pertaters.

CHASE: You let my pertaters alone. What business have you got with my pertaters, anyway?

BLAIR: My business is with your poor unfortunate husband. Where is he?

CHASE: He ain't as poor as you think, Mr. Man. He'll have plenty of money when that fool of an

old Uncle from Illinois —

BLAIR: Silence, madam! I'll not be insulted to my face by a wretched old dodo like you.

CHASE: Hey, call me a dodo? Me? You old go-cart, if you was a man, I'd kick you plumb over the fence. (*threatens him.*)

BLAIR: Keep away, you she-devil – keep away.

CHASE: “She devil”, am I? Well, I'll be a son-of-a-gun first. (*Grabs BLAIR.*)

DARE: (*Off C.*) All right, all right.

CHASE: (*Throws BLAIR on sofa.*) Now I've gone and done it. (*exit R.I.E. Enter DARE C.D.*)

DARE: Excuse me! Who are you, sir?

BLAIR: (*on sofa.*) Get out – get out –

DARE: Get out, get out? That's an odd name.

BLAIR: (*sits up.*) My name, sir, is Walter M. Blair.

DARE: You can't be!

BLAIR: Why not?

DARE: Because you're not coming till tomorrow!

BLAIR: Well, I'm here now, although I've just barely survived it. Is that you, nephew? (*Gazes into DARE's eyes.*) I haven't seen you since Wall Street was a nothing but a cow path. How are you, anyhow? (*He wobbles and sits heavily on couch.*)

DARE: What's the matter with you?

BLAIR: That woman, sir, that terrible cyclone of a woman, that's what's the matter with me. (*Crosses to R.*)

DARE: Been having a row with Miss Pink. Ha, ha!

BLAIR: A row! I've been beaten black and blue!

DARE: Good heavens!

(*Enter IMOGENE*)

(*attempting to revive BLAIR.*) Imogene! Quick! Could you go for a doctor?

IMOGENE: Certainly! Send him right in! *(She looks expectantly down the hall as if a doctor might arrive at any moment.)*

(Enter PINK L.)

BLAIR: I don't need a doctor! That woman! That terrible woman! She mopped the floor with me.

DARE: Miss Pink, is it – possible, really possible that you mopped the floor with this man?

PINK: Why, I never touched him.

BLAIR: Of course, *she* didn't touch me!

DARE: Who then?

BLAIR: Who then? Why, that husky-voiced, double-jointed, holy-terror wife of yours.

PINK: Sir, how dare you? I'm his wife!

DARE: Sh!

BLAIR: *(Double take.)* Is she your wife?

IMOGENE: Yes! Is she your wife?

PINK: *(to DARE hurriedly.)* It's all right, sir, I'll save you.

DARE: Don't save me; I've already drowned! *(Down R.)* I mean, don't save me!

PINK: Oh, the ingrate. *(Goes up L.)*

BLAIR: *(Pointing to PINK.)* Is she your wife?

DARE: Uhm – er – no! Yes! I mean . . . maybe . . .

BLAIR: *(Pointing to IMOGENE.)* And who's this?

DARE: Why, she's . . . uhm . . . she's . . .

IMOGENE: The parlour maid. Isn't that right, Walter? Or should I say, Wally?

(She winks seductively at BLAIR, who looks very uncomfortable.)

DARE: *(Looking from IMOGENE to BLAIR.)* Wally?

(Enter CHASE R.I.E., unseen by DARE. He still wears dress.)

(Getting back to the subject. Proudly.) My wife, sir, is the sweetest little woman you ever saw.

BLAIR: Little! *(Points to CHASE)* Do you call that little?

DARE: *(Looks around.)* Eh? *(To CHASE)* Get out! *(To BLAIR)* That's not my wife.

BLAIR: Who the deuce is she then?

CHASE: Why, I'm his—

DARE: Shut up.

BLAIR: She's your shut up?

DARE: No, no! That – that's my . . . washerwoman. *(to CHASE.)* Skip, you dough-head. Get out. *(CHASE exits.)*

BLAIR: *(insisting.)* She said she was your wife.

DARE: You mustn't mind her. Good woman – good woman – means well, and all that, but she is buzzy – family troubles – buried six husbands – wheels in her head – Bu-z-z-z.

BLAIR: Ah yes, then where the deuce is your wife?

DARE: Right . . . *(He looks back and forth between IMOGENE and PINK)* . . . here. *(Brings PINK down to BLAIR.)* This is my wife . . . Sally. My dear, this is my Uncle Walter Blair.

PINK: Awfully glad to know you, Uncle, and we will try and make your visit a pleasant one.

BLAIR: Well, I can only remain an hour or two.

PINK: *(Winks at DARE.)* Oh, that's too bad. Will you excuse me while I see to the luncheon?

BLAIR: Certainly, certainly.

DARE: *(to PINK.)* Great! *(PINK exits C.D.)* Imogene, why don't you help your mistress?

IMOGENE: She seems to have been helping herself.

DARE: Imogene! *(He laughs falsely.)* We'll talk about this later.

IMOGENE: Oh, we will. *(She starts to exit after PINK. Stops and flutters her fingers at BLAIR.)*

Goodbye, Wally. *(She exits.)*

BLAIR: Well, you seem to have a regular harem here, a genuine see-rag-lio. Where in creation did you corral that female prize fighter?

DARE: You're a trifle mixed, Uncle – *(a thought)* – and so was I.

BLAIR: In what way?

DARE: Well, you see the woman that shook you up wasn't a woman.

BLAIR: You're right. She was a terror.

DARE: You are wrong. She was a man. That was Chase, my butler.

BLAIR: Uhm – why did he do it?

DARE: It was one of Chase's jokes.

(Enter CHASE L.I.E.)

Wasn't it a joke, Chase?

CHASE: *(Gloomily.)* Which one, sir?

DARE: Why, dressing up as a woman, and playing tag with my Uncle!

CHASE: No, sir, that wasn't no joke.

DARE: What! *(aside.)* Say yes, confound you.

CHASE: *(gruffly.)* Yes.

DARE: Chase, look at me. Have you been drinking?

CHASE: No, sir. But it seems like a good time to start.

DARE: Well, if you haven't been drinking, then why did you do it?

CHASE: Why sir – I – I *(aside.)* Oh gosh!

DARE: *(nodding his head vigorously.)* You thought my wife was away visiting friends, and you believed a lady of the house was vitally necessary, wasn't that it?

CHASE: *(nodding his head along with DARE; positively.)* Oh, no, sir! *(DARE glares)* Yes sir! That was it! *(aside.)* Talk about gall!

DARE: Well, I've mentioned the matter to my wife, and we have decided to overlook your fault this time, but remember, Chase, it must never occur again.

CHASE: *(Groans, aside.)* Oh! *(He crosses to the sideboard and starts to load a tray with silverware.)*

DARE: My uncle doesn't like to play tag, especially when he is "it." Do you, Uncle?

BLAIR: Now, what about this Imogene, who's as fresh as I've ever seen a girl be? Don't tell me she's a man also?

DARE: Bless you no, that's . . . Chase's wife! Isn't that so, Chase?

CHASE: *(positively.)* Oh, no, sir! *(DARE glares)* Yes, sir! *(Aside.)* I got me a wife *and* a husband in one day! *(Goes up.)*

BLAIR: Well, I'm glad the tangle is straightened out.

(PINK enters L.)

DARE: Oh, my darling, here you are. *(About to kiss her.)*

CHASE: *(Loudly.)* OW! *(He drops the tray of silverware with a crash.)*

DARE: What's the matter now, Chase?

CHASE: *(Hands to jaw)* Toothache or suthin'.

PINK: Chase, you're too noisy. You may go. *(points proudly.)*

CHASE: Oh, I may, may I? Well I'd just like to –

DARE: Chase, when Mrs. Dare says "Go", it means vanish.

PINK: Yes, Chase, you may go and dig pertaters.

CHASE: I'll go an' – an' – I'll lick somebody, I don't think. *(exit C.D.)*

PINK: *(to DARE.)* Is it time for us to have a row?

DARE: Not yet. We want to make a good impression on my Uncle, you know.

PINK: Yes, sir, but when you do begin, please don't be too fierce at first, or I'll be scared sir.

DARE: Pink, if you don't stop calling me "sir", we'll have a row right now. *(Goes to BLAIR; speaking to PINK.)* Now my dear, keep Chase at work.

PINK: *(Pleased at the thought).* You bet I will.

DARE: And caution his wife not to be so fresh with my uncle again.

PINK: *(Surprised and puzzled.)* His wife?

DARE: Yes. *(Trying to get her to understand.)* Just tell Imogene – you know, Miss McShane – to remember that she is Mrs. Simon P. Chase. *(to BLAIR.)* They've been married just a short time.

PINK: So – *(Half crying.)* Chase has a wife already? *(angrily.)* Oh-h-h – just wait! If I don't make him think a cyclone has broke loose into this neighbourhood . . . !

(CHASE enters and starts to put the silverware back on the tray.)

BLAIR: Now, wait a minute. What's it to you if Chase is married?

PINK: Me? Well, it's – *(DARE looks at her.)* It's nothing to me, of course –

BLAIR: Say, are you in love with that fellow?

PINK: And me your nephew's wife? Why uncle, how can you dream of such a thing? *(Throws arms about DARE's neck.)* Jimmy's a perfect darling of a husband.

CHASE: Thunder! *(Drops the tray with a clatter and starts to stomp out.)*

BLAIR: Say! What's going on here?

DARE: Nothing!

BLAIR: If she's not in love with that fellow, then he's in love with her!

PINK: Oh, Chase, are you, really? *(She throws her arms around CHASE.)*

BLAIR: Nephew, do you allow such things in your house?

DARE: Of course, not! Sally, I'm surprised at you. Chase, I should discharge you on the spot.

PINK: Well, if you do, I'll tell.

(IMOGENE enters.)

BLAIR: Tell what? *(Seeing IMOGENE.)* And then there's this one! Now, my girl, is there anything between you and my nephew?

IMOGENE: Between us? I don't think he could get anything between us, could he, Jimmy? *(She puts*

her arms around DARE's neck and holds him close.)

BLAIR: Now, just a minute! Is that your wife? *(Pointing to IMOGENE.)*

DARE: No! No, she's the – er –

IMOGENE: Parlour maid.

BLAIR: Then is that your wife? *(Pointing to PINK.)*

DARE: No! She's the – er –

PINK: Chamber maid.

BLAIR: Well, *that's* not your wife! *(Pointing to CHASE.)*

DARE: No! He's the – er –

CHASE: Chamber-pot! I mean the head butler.

BLAIR: Nephew, you told me you had a wife. Do you, in fact, have one?

DARE: Well . . .

BLAIR: Wait! Don't answer that! I came a day early because of business, but I'll hold off that business and be back tomorrow. The will says you have until your 28th birthday to have a wife; that's tomorrow. You'd better be able to produce one – and *only* one! – by then.

(He grabs his hat and heads for the door.)

Goodbye, nephew. Until tomorrow!

(He exits; DARE drops down onto the davanette. IMOGENE is already sitting on it.)

DARE: A wife by tomorrow! One day to marry! Where am I going to find a wife in one day?

(He has idly taken IMOGENE's hand and now sits glumly playing with it.)

IMOGENE: Jimmy, do I have to slap you?

(He looks up to her and slowly it dawns on him.)

(CURTAIN)

OH, YOU KIDS
ACT III

SCENE: Same as in Act I and II. Any decorations as desired. CHASE and PINK are discovered getting the room in shape for DARE and his bride. CHASE wears servant's dress uniform and PINK is dressed as a maid.

CHASE: *(Sweeping dust into pan).* My, what a calm after such a storm.

PINK: *(Dusting off desk with duster).* Storm is right. *(Handing her duster to CHASE).* Mister Chase, take this duster along with you when you go out.

CHASE: *(Looking at her lovingly).* With pleasure, but why call me Mister?

PINK: What shall I call you, — “Miss”?

CHASE: Do I look like a woman? *(Starts toward L.)*

PINK: No, but you got just about as much nerve. You should remember your place.

CHASE: I know my place and my place is to find out what all this here high falutin' business means, b'gosh.

PINK: Then go to your wife and find out. Don't stand talking to me.

CHASE: My wife? *(aside.)* Say, I wonder if I've got 'em.

PINK: Well why don't you go?

CHASE: Didn't you say you was intending to be my wife?

PINK: Not after you went and got hitched to that flappin' flapper.

CHASE: Who?

PINK: Miss McShane.

CHASE: *(aside.)* Now I know I've got 'em. *(To PINK.)* Now don't be silly. Miss McShane and Mister Dare is off to get married together. How could I be married to her? And what about you, marrying up to Mister Dare when my back was turned?

PINK: Why, you *are* a big simpleton! I was only passing off as his wife until his uncle left.

CHASE: But supposing his uncle hadn't left?

PINK: Supposing the moon's made of green cheese. I agreed to be called Mrs. Dare for three or

four hours. Them's the identical words, and for doing that I get one thousand dollars.

CHASE: What?

PINK: A thousand whole dollars, that's what. At four dollars each, I can get a lot of husbands with that.

CHASE: Look here, woman, I won't stand for no lolly-go-geggety mashin'. I'll just bile right over.

PINK: Honey, I've been on the bile since we met.

CHASE: Now, don't kid me. I'm liable to ax you an important question.

PINK: *(Sits on davanette.)* Well, ax away. *(Tries hard to look sweet.)*

(CHASE pulls his collar away from neck. Mops his brow with large red handkerchief.)

CHASE: M-m-miss Pink, are you very lonesome? *(Still acts unsteady, plays with hands, coat, etc.)*

PINK: *(Giggling).* Why, yes, I am. *(Motions with eyes from CHASE to davanette.)*

CHASE: *(smiling weakly).* Yeah? Well, then I'll just mosey over, if you don't mind? *(Advances to davanette, but remains standing.)* I-ah- *(very nervous.)*

PINK: *(Endeavouring to help him).* Go right on, Mister Chase. *(Clasps her hands romantically.)*

CHASE: *(Trying again).* I've got something on my mind.

PINK: And shoes on your feet.

CHASE: *(Looking at her).* Good gals is hard to find.

PINK: *(Pointing to space beside her).* So please take a seat.

CHASE: *(takes hint and drops on knees with his back to R. Entrance).* Dear, I know the kindness of your lovely eyes and that you are longing to heave your loving sighs upon my manly breast. *(Pounds chest. Enters MR. SAWYER from R. He stops and stares at CHASE, who does not see him. PINK, seeing him, jumps up and begins to straighten up room. CHASE is still in proposing position).* Darling, why are you busting my poor heart like this, by running away? *(Notices PINK pointing significantly toward R.)* I— *(Glances over shoulder and see MR. SAWYER.)*

SAWYER: *(Taking off hat).* Excuse me for not ringin'; but what are you doing, Chase?

CHASE: *(Business of measuring davanette with arm lengths)*. I– ah– I was just measuring the davanette for a new cover, Mister Sawyer. *(To PINK, who catches on)*. Just four yards, Miss Pink. *(Rises to feet.)*

PINK: *(Disgusted, aside)*. It's either pertaters or yards! I never can get a husband.

SAWYER: *(Handing CHASE his hat and cane)*. That's a funny way to measure a davanette.

CHASE: But, Mister Sawyer, this was a case where the davanette had to be measured, and there was no rule in sight. *(To PINK who is nervously arranging things on desk.)* Ain't that right, Miss Pink?

PINK: *(Nodding head to SAWYER)*. Yes, sir, a case of emergency brakes or disaster. So the davanette got measured.

SAWYER: So I see. Well, when do you expect the newly-weds?

CHASE: *(Taking hat and cane toward L.)* Sometime this morning. *(Exits L.)*

SAWYER: *(Looking around the room)*. Are you sure that female wildcat that wanted to scratch me on Thursday is gone?

PINK: *(Laughing)*. She sure is, Mister Sawyer. It's a good thing I didn't let her loose, or you'd have been in the hoss-pistol.

SAWYER: I'd have needed a hoss-pistol. Do you suppose she'll show up again?

PINK: That's what she said: but she won't hurt you when she knows you are not Mister Dare.

(Enter CHASE with coffee service.)

CHASE: Have some coffee, Mister Sawyer. The boss said to make you at home. *(Pouring.)*

SAWYER: *(Drinking)*. Dare's a fine fellow. That's fine coffee, too. *(Puts glass on tray.)*

CHASE: *(Giving tray to PINK, who takes it out L.)* Have you got over your scare?

SAWYER: No, I still shy when I see a woman but I think she has a heart – if a man could get near enough to find out.

CHASE: *(Grinning)*. Are you thinking of finding out, Mister Sawyer?

SAWYER: No! Absolutely no!

CHASE: No?

SAWYER: No. I came to rehearse you in how to receive the newly-weds. Call your future wife in.

CHASE: *(Bashfully)*. Now, Mister Sawyer, be careful with your language. *(Goes to L. And calls.)*
Oh, Pinky, come in here right away.

PINK: *(Entering from L.)* What do you want now?

CHASE: Mister Sawyer is going to rehearse us on this newly-wed reception.

SAWYER: Yes, I want you to receive the newly-weds in creditable manner. Chase, you stand right over here beside the door. *(Points to R.)* They will come in this way. When the newly-weds come in, you must bow low, *(bows low to show CHASE, who bows lower; they repeat the business until:)* and take Mr. Dare's coat and hat. Understand?

CHASE: *(Moving to side of R. entrance)*. Yes, sir. Now you must instruct Miss Pink.

SAWYER: All right, Miss Pink, you stand right out here about the center of the floor. *(Points to center which MISS PINK takes.)* When the newly-weds have passed Chase, you take the Mrs. Dare's wearing apparel.

PINK: *(Looking at CHASE very much pleased)*. Yes, sir, I'll do anything to please Mrs. Dare.

SAWYER: *(Looking at the two approvingly)*. Now, I'll go out and return, and pretend I am the newly-weds. I want to see how you two act. *(Exits R.)*

PINK: *(Looking at CHASE)*. I'm so nervous.

CHASE: *(Knees shaking)*. Be calm, woman. There's nothing to fear. *(Tries to look dignified.)*

(MR. SAWYER enters at R. at the same time MR. and MRS. DARE enter unexpectedly at the L. DARE is carrying IMOGENE, bride fashion. SAWYER and DARE bump and SAWYER ends up carrying IMOGENE. All stare.)

DARE: *(To SAWYER)*. Well, Mr. Sawyer, we all reached here about the same time.

SAWYER: *(Hands IMOGENE to CHASE, who hands her to DARE)*. Er-er yes; quite unusual.

PINK: Well, did you ever?

CHASE: I never did.

(DARE puts IMOGENE down.)

SAWYER: *(To IMOGENE)*. Why, hello, Miss McShane. *(Takes hold of her hand.)*

IMOGENE: *(correcting him sweetly)*. I'm Mrs. Dare, now, Mr. Sawyer.

DARE: *(Surprised)*. You two know each other?

SAWYER: *(Laughing)*. Miss McShane used to be my stenographer. Didn't you, Miss McShane?

IMOGENE: *(Sweetly)*. Yes, but Mr. Sawyer, I am now Mrs. Dare. *(Leans lovingly on DARE's arm.)*

DARE: *(Patting her head lovingly)*. Yes, she became Mrs. Dare just a few minutes ago.

SAWYER: If Mrs. Dare can spare you for a few moments, I'd like to discuss some business with you.

DARE: All right. *(To MRS. DARE.)* Listen, dear, would you excuse me a little while?

IMOGENE: *(Putting her hand on DARE's arm)*. Certainly, James; but you won't be long, will you?

SAWYER: *(To MRS. DARE)*. I promise I won't keep him long, Miss McShane.

IMOGENE: *(Sweetly)*. You mean Mrs. Dare.

SAWYER: *(Snapping fingers)*. I'm sorry. I forgot to call you Mrs. Dare, Miss McShane.

DARE: Pink, show Mrs. Dare her room. Chase, some tea and a lunch to her room.

CHASE: Yes, sir. Tea and a lunch.

DARE: Chase. Tea. Not tea.

CHASE: Gotcha, boss.

IMOGENE: *(Leaning on DARE's shoulder.)* Thank you, dear. You make me very happy

DARE: *(Lovingly)*. And I think I'm the luckiest man on earth.

SAWYER: You said something, young man.

IMOGENE: *(Lingering)*. Goodbye, hubby.

DARE: *(Looking at her sweetly)*. Goodbye, wifey. I'll make the business short. *(IMOGENE exits L., with a look at DARE. CHASE and PINK look at each other and heave a big sigh. Both exeunt L., following IMOGENE.)*

DARE: *(Turning to SAWYER)*. Well, old top, how d'you like the new Mrs. Dare?

SAWYER: *(Seating himself in chair)*. She's a pippin, my boy, b-but—

- DARE: But what? Have I made a mistake? *(Becoming angry.)* What do you know about her?
- SAWYER: *(Looking grave).* Nothing at all, my lad, but I'm afraid you have made a grave mistake.
- DARE: Great stars, man! What's the matter? Don't kill me with suspense.
- SAWYER: *(Looking serious).* Do you happen to know Mrs. Boise of Illinois?
- DARE: *(Scratching head).* Boise of Illinois? Why er-er yes, if you mean Mrs. Sadie L. Boise?
- SAWYER: Exactly. Well, that's the mistake you've made.
- DARE: Why so? She doesn't know me. We corresponded through a matrimonial bureau. She'll never come here.
- SAWYER: *(Looking wise).* She won't? She's right here in this city now.
- DARE: *(More excited than ever).* What do you mean? *(Rises and paces floor).*
- SAWYER: I mean that old hen was here to see you yesterday in answer to your advertisement.
- DARE: *(Still paces).* Was she mad?
- SAWYER: *(Adjusting his glasses).* I never had such a narrow escape.
- DARE: Escape? What do you mean?
- SAWYER: I mean she mistook me for you, and you know the rest.
- DARE: *(Laughing).* Oh, I see. That's rich.
- SAWYER: It won't be so rich as you think. She has started a breach of promise suit.
- DARE: *(Stopping short).* But you said you would iron all such suits.
- SAWYER: I won't have to. The old girl's lawyer is going to press this one.
- DARE: *(Sits in rocker, buries head in hands).* Oh, the tragedy of it all. What will my wife think?
- SAWYER: *(Still pacing floor).* I can't say. But I know we had better get prepared. Here's her lawyer's letter. *(Produces letter from pocket.)*
- DARE: *(Looking worried).* The jig's up. What is your best suggestion?
- SAWYER: Make a clean surrender. Pay her and keep mum. Your wife will never be the wiser.

DARE: (*Resenting this advice, rises*). Never! I can't deceive my wife. Make another suggestion!

SAWYER: (*Seating himself near table*). I don't have any. What about you?

DARE: (*Seating himself opposite SAWYER*). You say she mistook you for me yesterday?

SAWYER: She did. And when she returns today I want you to inform her differently.

DARE: (*Beaming intelligently*). I have a suggestion.

SAWYER: Hold it.

DARE: When that dame calls, you pose as Mr. Dare, marry her and all's well. (*Looks wise.*)

SAWYER: (*Hitting table with fist*). I'm your lawyer, but I'm not offering myself up as a sacrifice to appease the wrath of an angry female!

(*Door bell rings, both stare excitedly at R.*)

(*Enter CHASE, L., starts toward telephone and then looks at DARE, who swallows hard and point to R.*)

CHASE: Yes, boss, my stupidity. (*Exits R.*)

DARE: (*To Sawyer*). Remember, if that is Mrs. Boise, you are Mr. Dare.

SAWYER: I'll remember I'm a darned fool for ever starting this wife hunt.

CHASE: (*Falling backwards, then picking himself up*). Look out! Miz Boise! (*Runs out exit L. DARE shows signs of distress. SAWYER makes heroic dive under table.*)

(*Enter MRS. BOISE, who sees him going under table.*)

MRS. B: Oh, you heart smasher. I'll teach you to ruin my young life. (*Pulls him from under table. DARE shows amusement.*) Come out here where I can talk business with you. (*Still holds him by collar.*)

SAWYER: (*On knees*). But, Mrs. Boise, you must listen to reason. I- I-

MRS. B: (*Still holding him*). The only thing I'll listen to is a marriage license.

SAWYER: (*Struggling*). But that man (*pointing to DARE who scowls at him*) can —

MRS. B: (*Smiling at DARE*). Can be a witness.

DARE: (*Bowing low*). Certainly, madam, I'll be glad to assist you two on your road to happiness.

SAWYER: (*Looking at DARE*). Ye Gods! How can you lie like that? I'm not Mr. Dare!

MRS. B: (*Jerking SAWYER by coat collar*). You *are* Mr. Dare and that's all I want to hear about it. (*Turns to DARE.*) Now, young man, how soon can you go with us to the parson?

DARE: (*Looking guilty*). Why er-er right away, madam.

SAWYER: (*Bewildered*). Mrs. Boise, that man (*pointing to DARE*) is Mr. Dare. I am his lawyer.

MRS. B: (*Doubtful*). Is what this man says true?

DARE: (*Mischievously*). I should say not. He's trying to shake you for another woman.

SAWYER: (*Indignant*). I am not. You lie.

DARE: (*Picking up book as if to throw it*). Don't call me a liar, Mr. Dare. (*Smiles.*)

SAWYER: Just listen to him lie! Why don't someone come to my rescue?

(MRS. BOISE is looking from one to the other in doubt.)

PINK: (*Entering from L. Goes to DARE*). Mister Dare, will you need me any longer today?

SAWYER: (*Beaming*). See! I told you he is Dare. Hear what the maid calls him?

MRS. B: (*Looking first at DARE and then at SAWYER suspiciously*). What does this mean?

DARE: (*Drawing himself up proudly*). I don't know this female. (To PINK.) Who are you?

PINK: (*Dumbfounded*). Mister Dare, you hired me two days ago to be your maid.

SAWYER: Sure thing, he did. Now, get him, Mrs. Boise!

DARE: Hold on until I see my butler. He will tell you I am not Mr. Dare.

MRS. B: Very well, I'll wait. (*To SAWYER.*) Don't you try to escape.

SAWYER: (*Seating himself*). Not guilty, madam.

DARE: (*To BOISE*). Shall I get my butler and prove this man (*pointing to SAWYER*) is Mr. Dare?

MRS. B: Yes, get him at once.

DARE: (*Starts to exit L. but collides with CHASE, entering*). Look where you are going, idiot!

CHASE: Excuse me, Mister Dare.

DARE: You dumbbell! I'm not Mr. Dare.

(BOISE begins to realize the scheme. SAWYER trembles.)

DARE: *(Winks to make CHASE understand)*. Look me over. Are you sure this *(points to self)* is Mr. Dare?

CHASE: *(Still confused)*. Y-yes, sir.

DARE: *(Trying once more by ridiculous signs to make CHASE understand)*. You are sure it is I?

CHASE: *(Confident)*. I are. Aye, aye!

DARE: Get out! *(CHASE exits L.)*

PINK: Mister Dare!

DARE: You follow him. *(PINK exits L. after CHASE.)*

MRS. B: *(To DARE)*. Now, Mr. Dare, that's settled. Come along, we'll get married.

SAWYER: *(Hands behind back. He rocks to and fro on balls of feet)*. Yes, Mr. James J. Dare.

DARE: All right. I'm Mr. Dare, but I'll never marry this. *(Points to BOISE.)*

MRS. B: *(Getting angry)*. You won't, eh! Well, you'll either marry me or pay me enough money to buy the Woolworth Building.

SAWYER: *(Enjoying it immensely)*. What suggestion have you now, Mr. Dare?

MRS. B: *(Taking hold of DARE's arm)*. I'll make all his suggestions from now on. Let's go find a parson. *(Pulls him along.)*

SAWYER: *(Buttons coat, folds arms and walks majestically after them toward R.)* Reminds me of the execution of Charles the First.

(MRS. DARE, hearing the noise, enters from L.; DARE, SAWYER and BOISE quickly turn to her as she speaks.)

IMOGENE: *(Sweetly)*. Hubby, dear, are you nearly finished? *(Stares blankly at MRS. BOISE who returns stare as if thinking.)*

DARE: *(Looking sheepishly)*. Yes, lovey-dovey, the end is near.

SAWYER: Er-er, Miss McShane, or I mean Mrs. Dare, we were just going to give your hubby a little party.

MRS. B: *(Recognizing her adopted daughter).* Imogene! *(Goes toward her with outstretched arms.)*

IMOGENE: *(Recognizing her foster mother).* Mother Boise! *(Goes toward BOISE with outstretched arms. They embrace while DARE and SAWYER fall limply into nearby chairs.)*

DARE: *(Looking at SAWYER).* Mother? Just think! That *(pointing to BOISE)* for a mother-in-law. I might as well have married her. *(Hangs head.)*

SAWYER: Well, my lad, beggars can't be choosers. It might have been worse.

(MRS. DARE and BOISE are still hugging.)

DARE: *(With a sigh).* How could it be?

SAWYER: She might have been *my* mother-in-law.

IMOGENE: *(Releasing MRS. B.).* Aren't you glad I have found my long lost mother, hubby?

DARE: *(With a sickly smile.)* I'm tickled to death.

SAWYER: I know you are pleased, you look it.

IMOGENE: Just think, dovey, I haven't seen Mother Boise in fifteen years. She practically raised me when I was a child.. I've always thought of her as my own dear mother, but, Mother Boise, how did you find where I lived?

(Both MR. DARE and SAWYER begin to explain.)

SAWYER: *(Confused).* Why, er-er I wrote Mrs. Boise about it. You see I thought you would like to see her, so I just wrote.

DARE: Y-yes, Mr. Sawyer was very thoughtful, don't you think, Mrs. Boise?

MRS. B: *(Her arms upon her daughter's shoulder).* Yes— you have both been very kind. But I'll say this: *(with a glare.)* it's a good thing I'm her mother.

DARE: *(Relieved).* You said it, mother. I would not give you up for the world. *(Walks up cautiously and puts arm upon her shoulder.)*

SAWYER: Mrs. Boise, your son-in-law has every reason in the world for loving you.

DARE: Yes, indeed. Dear, take your mother to your room and give her the very best care. *(False affection.)*

SAWYER: *(To audience).* How kind and considerate he has grown.

IMOGENE: Come, mother. *(To men.)* You two good friends just talk until I return. *(Waves.)*
Goodbye. *(Exit L.)*

DARE: *(Scowling at SAWYER)*. Well?

SAWYER: Well?

(Both drop into chairs.)

DARE: You have certainly gotten me into a thorny path.

SAWYER: I don't notice any roses strewn along my path.

DARE: Well, I guess she'll keep quiet on the breach of promise suit.

SAWYER: *(Moving uneasily in chair)*. Not changing the subject, but that new mother-in-law of yours is not a bad sort.

DARE: Stuck on her, eh?

SAWYER: *(Jumping up)*. Why er-er young man, I never thought of such a thing. How could I take the "deah old thing" away from you?

DARE: Don't worry, old man; if you want the "deah old thing", I'll gladly sign over the lease.

SAWYER: I couldn't take her from you until you have enjoyed her visit.

DARE: The only part of her visit I'll enjoy will be the day she leaves. But come, old man, let's be friends. I know I handed you a dirty deal, but I had to. *(Extends his hand.)*

SAWYER: *(Smiling)*. All right, big boy, let's shake. *(Extends hand and DARE grasps it in friendly manner.)*

(IMOGENE enters from L. and observes them shaking hands.)

IMOGENE: *(Coming toward them. They turn toward her. She extends hand to SAWYER)*. You are not leaving, Mr. Sawyer?

SAWYER: *(Confused)*. Why er-er- y-yes- no. We-we were just —

DARE: *(Confused)*. Shaking hands.

IMOGENE: So I noticed. That's the reason I asked.

SAWYER: Oh, yes, I see. Well, we belong to the same order.

DARE: Y-yes, my dear; the very same order.

IMOGENE: *(Looking lovingly at MR. DARE, who shows signs of distress).* Why, snooky-ookums, you never told me you belong to any order. What is the name of it?

DARE: *(Completely lost).* Oh, I see, you want the name *(looks at SAWYER for help)*; why er-er the name is er— What is that name, Mr. Sawyer?

SAWYER: *(Showing signs of distress).* Why-er— it's the – “Royal Degree of Wife Getters”.

DARE: *(Relieved).* Exactly. That's it. *(Looks at wife.)*

IMOGENE: *(Clasping her hands).* How romantic, and do you always get the wives?

SAWYER: *(Flattered).* Absolutely. He's *(pointing to MR. DARE)* a member.

IMOGENE: And so are you. Bring your wife and visit us tomorrow evening.

SAWYER: *(Smiling).* Of course. *(Then realizing his mistake.)* Why er-er— I have no wife.

IMOGENE: *(Laughing good-naturedly).* But you said you belonged to “The Royal Degree of—”

SAWYER: Y-yes— I do; the bachelor's degree of the order.

IMOGENE: How unique. Well, you are coming anyway. I am sure *our* Uncle will be glad to meet hubby's friends.

DARE: *(Close to his wife).* To be sure he'll come. Sawyer never fails me.

(Door bell rings.)

DARE: *(Calling off L.).* Chase, the door bell!

CHASE: *(Entering L.)* Why, is it running away? *(Enters in apron. Goes to door at R.)*

SAWYER: *(Looking around for hat and coat).* Well, I must be going.

DARE: Wait, maybe this is Uncle or word from him. *(All look to R.)*

CHASE: *(Entering holding up telegram).* Here's a telegram for you.

DARE: *(Reaching).* Hand it here. *(Seats himself in arm chair. MRS. DARE sits on arm of chair with her arm around his shoulder. SAWYER stands nearby.)*

IMOGENE: *(Impatient).* Do hurry, Sugar Plum. I am so anxious to hear from our Uncle.

DARE: All right, darling. (*Opens telegram and reads*) “Dear Nephew:— I made a sad mistake in marrying a young woman. When I saw the number of young women in your house, I knew you were making one too. Don’t make my mistake. Your wife must be much older than you are. Expect me tomorrow at nine. Remember an old wife or no million. Your loving Uncle— W. Blair.” (*Paces floor.*) Ye Gods! How can an Uncle be so heartless and be human? (*Turns to all of them.*) I’ll get that million if I have to make Uncle think Limburger cheese is perfume.

(*Enter MRS. BOISE, who is amazed at the excitement.*)

IMOGENE: (*Clasping hands*). That’s the spirit. We’re bound to win, aren’t we, mother?

MRS. B: (*Coming over to IMOGENE*). Yes, dear. What is it, is prohibition repealed? (*All laugh.*)

SAWYER: No, my dear madam, our Uncle’s consent to a beautiful young wife. (*Points to MRS. DARE.*)

CHASE: (*Forgetting self*). And a million bucks to boot. Hot dawg!

(*CURTAIN*)

OH, YOU KIDS
ACT IV

SCENE: Same as ACTS I, II and III.

(CHASE is discovered fixing cushions and pillows in easy chair, while PINK is busy dusting off furniture with feather duster. They gossip while they work. Music precedes the rise of curtain.)

CHASE: *(Busy at chair R.)* I want to make this chair comfortable. The boss was some upset when he received that telegram. *(Dusts.)*

PINK: *(Stops dusting.)* Who wouldn't be, trying to marry all the women in the state? *(Dusts.)*

CHASE: He sure seems to love that angel he married yesterday. *(Sits in chair to try it out.)*

PINK: *(Coming over near CHASE.)* She is mighty sweet.

CHASE: I know who else is.

PINK: *(Teasing.)* Who's that?

CHASE: *(Backing up nervously.)* Now, I think I might be in danger.

PINK: So am I in danger.

CHASE: In danger of what?

PINK: *(Exasperated.)* Of becoming an old maid. Chase, you are mighty slow.

CHASE: I know I am, Miss Pink, but I get lots done. *(Straightens cushion in chair.)*

PINK: Yes, in the wrong direction. All you think of is that boss of yours.

CHASE: My boss is a fine man. I sure hate to see him lose that million bucks; and then again I sure hate to see him lose that wife of his. *(Seats himself in chair.)*

PINK: If you had to choose between me and a million dollars, which would you give up?

CHASE: Woman, you can ax the hardest questions. I'd have to figure that out.

PINK: *(Sitting on the chair arm.)* If you loved me, you would give up the million.

CHASE: That's right. And then you would give me up. *(Looks wise.)*

PINK: *(Putting arm around back of chair.)* Never, darling. I love you better then the jingle of

all the money in the world.

CHASE: *(Sliding down bashful-like)*. Miss Pink, you are getting powerful personal.

PINK: *(Putting hand on CHASE's forehead)*. Honey, your head is burning up.

CHASE: *(Putting out red handkerchief and mopping brow)*. That ain't all, honey. My whole soul is on fire for you.

PINK: *(Meekly)*. Don't suffer, honey. Pop the question and cool off.

CHASE: H-here goes. *(Slides onto knees with his back to R.; PINK still on arm of chair.)*

PINK: *(Sighing)*. This is so sudden.

CHASE: *(On knees with arms outstretched.)* Once more I drop upon my rheumatic knees and offer up my heart as sacrifice to your loving and tender care. You know I love you, and love goes where culture is afraid to tread. *(Pause; mops sweat.)*

(MR. DARE and IMOGENE enter R. They observe CHASE proposing and stop. Neither CHASE nor PINK see them because they have their backs to R.)

CHASE: You are fair as a blooming lily. I know I'm a thorn bush on your loving breast, but—

DARE: *(Smiling)*. Chase, what on earth are you doing?

(PINK jumps up and starts to dust.)

CHASE: *(Glancing sheepishly over his shoulder)*. I-I-I'm just praying, boss, just praying.

DARE: *(Coming toward chair at R. of table)*. You've been with me a long time and this is the first time I ever saw you pray. *(Winks significantly at IMOGENE.)*

CHASE: *(Rising. Much perturbed.)* That's so, boss; that's so. I've been converted just lately.

DARE: *(Seating himself)*. Is that so? Who converted you: Pink?

CHASE: *(Somewhat relieved, looks at PINK)*. Yes, sir. She furnished most of the inspiration.

IMOGENE: *(Sweetly)*. Dovey, don't be so heartless.

DARE: *(Winking at her)*. Pink, how did you manage to convert this young heathen?

PINK: *(Cease dusting and comes near)*. Why, he sure was a hard sinner, but he finally gave up his heart; and—

DARE: And you took it. (*CHASE shows signs of distress.*)

PINK: Yes, sir, and I'm never going to give it back.

(MR. and MRS. DARE laugh good naturedly at CHASE's expense.)

DARE: That's all right, Chase. That's the way I got my wife. (*Looks up at her.*)

IMOGENE: You silly boy. (*They snuggle.*)

CHASE: (*Stepping up to DARE*). Boss, have you forgot that your Uncle is coming this evening and that you must have an older wife or lose that million dollars. (*Looks grave.*)

DARE: (*Excited*). Great guns! That's so, and here I am married to a mere school girl (*points to IMOGENE*). Now I'm up against it. (*Drops heavily into a chair, begins to think.*)

IMOGENE: Pink, go and see if mother needs any help.

PINK: (*Bowing*). Yes'm. (*Exits L.*)

CHASE: Boss, shall I aid Miss Pink in her duties?

DARE: No, you stay here and think.

CHASE: All right — thinking is one of the best things I do. (*Thinks.*)

IMOGENE: Dear, Uncle may be a peach and give us the million.

CHASE: He'll more likely be a leach and latch on to the million.

IMOGENE: (*Laughing*). That sounds more like it. (*Door bell rings. CHASE goes to answer it*) Well, I am in sympathy with any plan that will make me a full fledged wife again.

(Enter SAWYER. CHASE takes his hat and lays it on chair.)

SAWYER: How is everybody? (*Notices gloom.*) Why all the gloom? Someone dead?

IMOGENE: (*Laughing*). Not yet, but the day is young. Unfortunately, so am I.

SAWYER: (*Looking at IMOGENE*). Not many men find fault with a woman because of her youth. What's the matter with this Uncle, anyway?

DARE: Don't know, unless he soured on the world.

SAWYER: (*Looks at watch.*) Soon be time for his arrival, won't it? (*Sits down.*)

DARE: He will be here in about half an hour. *(Turns to IMOGENE.)* Darling, I wonder if you could make yourself look old and fool Uncle until we get the million anyhow? *(Looks questioningly at her.)*

IMOGENE: *(Sweetly)*. Dear, I couldn't think of deceiving your poor old Uncle. Besides I never use cosmetics. My beauty might be marred.

CHASE: *(Still holding coat and hat)*. I never want my wife to use them cos-me-sticks.

SAWYER: *(Assuming judicious air)*. Well, I have one thought.

DARE: Well, spit her out.

CHASE: Yeah, I'll mop her up.

SAWYER: Well, I suggest that your mother-in-law act as your wife, and—

IMOGENE: *(Helping the suggestion)*. I'll act as the parlour maid! *(Clasps hands.)*

CHASE: And my Pinky as chamber maid with me as chamber pot – chief butler! Hot dawg!

DARE: Chase, calm yourself and prepare lunch for Uncle.

CHASE: *(Taking up coat and hat)*. At your service, boss. *(Exits L.)*

SAWYER: *(Anxiously)*. How does my suggestion fit?

DARE: Like a glove. But how about mummy-in-law? Will she stand for being the goat?

(Enter MRS. B., L., overhearing last remark.)

MRS. B: Who called me a goat? *(Stares at DARE.)*

DARE: *(Rising)*. No one, my dear. W-we just wondered if you had a new coat. *(Still nervous.)*

MRS. B: Certainly, why?

IMOGENE: *(Faltering)*. Y-yes. Hubby asked me the same question. Didn't you, dear?

DARE: Why er-er of course. Why shouldn't I?

MRS. B: *(Pleased with the explanation)*. Very well, then. *(Goes over to MR. SAWYER.)* Mr. Sawyer, I beg your pardon for my actions yesterday.

SAWYER: Don't mention it, madam, little mistakes will happen.

MRS. B: (To DARE). And how is my naughty son-in-law this morning? (Strokes his hair).

DARE: Very well, mother. I'm a little weak, yet. (Acts weak.)

IMOGENE: (To DARE). Mother Boise has decided to stay with us forever, dear. Aren't you tickled?

DARE: (Smiles sickly). I'm completely overcome.

SAWYER: (Thinking). Mrs. Boise, I am going to ask a very important favour of you. (Moves closer to her.) Will you be a wife to—

MRS. B: (Quickly). Oh, Mr. Sawyer, this is so sudden!

SAWYER: B-but, Mrs. Boise, you misunderstand me.

MRS. B: (Clasping hands in a romantic gesture). A man in love is never misunderstood.

SAWYER: (Nervously). But er-er— Mrs. Boise, I'm not in love.

MRS. B: (Suspiciously). Then what are you in?

SAWYER: (Snapping finger). I'm in a devil of a fix. (To DARE.) You tell her.

DARE: (Rising). Well, mother, it's this way. My Uncle is coming here in about half an hour from now. I am supposed to inherit a million if I am married – but Uncle says it must be to a woman older than myself. If you can act that part until Uncle leaves, I get a million. If you can't, I lose. Imogene loses. (Falls into chair.) That's the whole thing in a nutshell.

IMOGENE: (Pleadingly). Please, mother dear, for my sake.

MRS. B: (Doubtful). Very well, if you promise my good name will not be dragged in the dust.

SAWYER: Madam, your name shall not even need brushing off.

IMOGENE: (Caressing MRS. BOISE). Oh, mother, you are a dear.

SAWYER: Mighty fine of you, I must say. But you are rather young looking for the part.

MRS. B: Mr. Sawyer, how you men do flatter! (Twists shoulders in coquettish manner.)

DARE: By Jove! She does look too young. (To his wife.) Angel eyes, what will we do about it?

IMOGENE: Leave it me, I'll make mother look like she was born in the early days of Pompeii.

SAWYER: (Coming up to the three). Now let's get this drama straightened out. (Points toward MRS. BOISE.) You are to be his (pointing to MR. DARE) wife.

- MRS. B: Yes, and so my name will have to be Mrs. Dare until Uncle leaves?
- SAWYER: Exactly. And *you (pointing to the real IMOGENE)* said you would act as parlour maid.
- IMOGENE: I have recent experience.
- SAWYER: What name do we call you by?
- IMOGENE: *(Leaning on DARE's arm)*. Quite simple, Mr. Sawyer, I'll just go by my "maid"-en name, McShane.
- SAWYER: To be sure you can. That will be easy to remember. And *you (pointing to MR. DARE)* are to be—
- DARE: The goat. If we pull off this comedy, we can join Tom Marks on tour.
- SAWYER: We'll pull off the comedy, and your Uncle is going to pay a million dollars for his ticket. *(Looks at watch.)* We have no time to lose. Let's get busy.
- IMOGENE: *(Taking mother by arm)*. I'll take mother up and make her into an old lady.
- DARE: *(To IMOGENE)*. Have you a maid's costume, dear?
- IMOGENE: No, but perhaps I can borrow one from Pink. She's about my size. Come, mother.
- MRS. B: *(Staring at SAWYER)*. Why er-er yes, honey. I'd almost forgotten what we were to do.
- SAWYER: *(Aside)*. That old hen's in love with me. *(Straightens tie.)* But she's only one of many.
- IMOGENE: *(To DARE)*. If Uncle comes you two entertain him until I get your "old" wife ready.
- MRS. B: *(To SAWYER)*. Good bye, Mr. Sawyer. *(Giggles.)*
- SAWYER: *(Pulls collar from neck as if choking)*. Er-er- good day, Mrs. Boise. *(Bows politely.)*
- (IMOGENE and MRS. BOISE exit.)*
- DARE: *(Hands in pockets)*. Think pretty well of the old lady, eh?
- SAWYER: Sh-she's not a bad sort.
- DARE: *(Laughing)*. I knew it. They all flop sooner or later. *(Sits in chair at L. of table.)*
- SAWYER: Young man, when your Uncle Dudley *(points to self)* flops, there'll be a reason. *(Sits in chair at R. of table.)*

DARE: There's always a reason. *(Sighs.)* I feel that million bucks slipping.

SAWYER: So do I; right into your pocket. What part am I to have in this epic production?

DARE: *(Excited)*. Lawyer, prime minister, chief suggestor, steel magnate, or anything I might call upon you to be.

SAWYER: *(Looking at DARE in disgust)*. I've got a lovely part.

(Telephone rings.)

DARE: *(Calling off L.)* Chase! Telephone!

(Enter CHASE, L., dressed in butler's suit.)

CHASE: *(Takes down receiver.)* Hello! Who? Mister Blair? *(Pause.)* Yes, sir, I'll tell him. *(Turns to DARE.)* Mister Dare, your Uncle is down in the lobby, and he wants to know if you are in. *(Realizes he didn't cover transmitter and belatedly puts hand over it.)*

DARE: *(Jumping up and pacing floor)*. Y-yes; tell him to come right up.

SAWYER: Be calm, my lad. Meet your Uncle Blair like a man.

CHASE: *(At phone)*. Hello, Mister Blair. Well, my boss performs me to perstruct you to come right up. *(Pause.)* Yes, sir. *(Hangs up receiver.)*

DARE: *(To CHASE)*. Now, Chase, treat my Uncle as a royal visitor. And mind, no blunders. Remember what I pay you for.

CHASE: Yes, sir, scrub floors and carry the mail.

DARE: *(Disgusted)*. Also to receive Uncles. Go out there and wait till he rings.

CHASE: *(Starting off R.)* Yes, sir. *(Stands attention.)* I got your order, boss. *(Exits R.)*

SAWYER: *(To DARE who still paces floor)*. For the love of our mothers! Sit down.

DARE: *(Looking blankly at SAWYER)*. All right. *(Sits heavily on chair.)* You are about to witness the downfall of the Dare Dynasty to be succeeded by the reign of Uncle-ism.

SAWYER: So be it, King Dare.

DARE: *(Looking R.)* This is no time for jesting.

(Door bell rings.)

SAWYER: *(Jumping)*. And no time for resting.

(Enter WALTER BLAIR, wearing neat business suit. He wears nose glasses attached to large cord. He pushes CHASE in ahead of him, at the same time throwing his valise, coat and hat at him. CHASE tries in vain to catch them, but fails. Both DARE and SAWYER rise.)

BLAIR: Well, well, so here we are again, nephew! *(Rushing good naturedly toward DARE. Catches him by the hand, slaps him on shoulder.)* It's such a long time since I've seen you. How are you?

DARE: *(Somewhat taken back by his Uncle's manner)*. Wh-why just fine, Uncle. Meet my lawyer and friend. *(Points to SAWYER.)* Mr. Sawyer, Uncle.

BLAIR: *(Grasping SAWYER's hand)*. Glad to know you, Mr. Sawyer.

SAWYER: *(Somewhat dignified)*. The pleasure is mutual, Mr. Blair. *(Sits down.)*

CHASE: *(Standing at attention, aside)*. I feel a storm coming.

DARE: Have this chair, Uncle. *(Beckons to L. of table.)* I'll have Chase bring you a lunch.

BLAIR: *(Taking chair L.)* No, thank you, I just ate.

DARE: Chase, take those things out and inform my wife that my *dear* old Uncle has arrived.

CHASE: Yes, sir. *(Exits L.)*

BLAIR: *(Looking quickly at DARE)*. Come off with that "Old Uncle" stuff. I'm not that old. I'm still a regular devil with the women. How about you, Mr. Sawyer?

SAWYER: Well, er-er— I'm not exactly a woman-hater.

BLAIR: *(Winking at DARE, who is seated on edge of table between the two)*. I never thought. Maybe you're *(to SAWYER)* married?

SAWYER: No, but-but —

DARE: *(Winking at UNCLE)*. But he'd like to be.

BLAIR: *(Laughing good naturedly)*. Is that so?

SAWYER: Not so, Mr. Blair. That scamp *(pointing to DARE)* has been trying to feed me to the female species ever since I have known him. *(All laugh but SAWYER, who is serious.)*

BLAIR: Speaking of women, (*slaps DARE on knee*) what is that wife of yours doing?

DARE: My wife? Oh, yes; she's upstairs getting ready to meet you.

BLAIR: So you do *have* a wife. How old is she?

DARE: (*Looking first at UNCLE and then at SAWYER*). Oh, she's about— let's see? She's er-er-about, how old is she, Sawyer?

SAWYER: (*Not expecting the question*). Why er-er she's about- about (*thinks*) old enough to die, anyhow.

BLAIR: (*Laughing*). Are you starting an old ladies' home? What's the idea?

DARE: Why, Uncle, you said I must have a wife much older than myself to get the million.

BLAIR: Quite so, about 35 or 40 will do.

DARE: Well, she's that anyway.

SAWYER: Yes, with plenty of margin.

BLAIR: Well, trot her out, James. I can't stay very long. I promised my broker in Texas I would be on the six o'clock train for Houston tonight.

DARE: That's too bad, Uncle. I had hoped you could stay at least a month.

SAWYER: Yes, the boy has been wondering how long you would stay, Mr. Blair. (*Looks significantly at DARE, who scowls.*)

BLAIR: Oh, I'll be back next week from Texas. I'll stop in. I may stay a month or two.

DARE: (*Smiles*). Fine! We'll have a big party! (*Pause.*) I'll see what's keeping her. (*Exits L.*)

BLAIR: The boy seems quite nervous.

SAWYER: Yes, newly-weds are always nervous.

BLAIR: Newly-weds? I thought they'd been married two years?

SAWYER: Did I say "newly-weds"? Well, they still act like they are.

BLAIR: I well remember when I was a newly-wed, how nervous I was.

SAWYER: You? Have you been married?

BLAIR: Many years ago, I married the sweetest woman in the world. I loved her dearly, in fact I worshipped her (*pauses*) b-but I lost her before the honeymoon ever began.

SAWYER: That seems careless.

BLAIR: We were booked on a trans-Atlantic liner. We were to meet at the dock, as I had business to deal with. I was late and by the time I got there, the ship had sailed. It was lost at sea with all aboard.

SAWYER: (*Shaking head in sympathy*). How terrible!

(Enter DARE, supporting MRS. BOISE, who is acting the part of MRS. DARE. She carries a fan and is "made up" to appear very old. DARE is very nervous. SAWYER and BLAIR rise.)

DARE: (*Nervously*). Uncle, meet my wife.

BLAIR: (*Stares at her*). Why er-er, glad to meet you, Mrs. Dare. How charming you do look.

DARE: (*Aside*). What a liar.

MRS. B: (*Staring in turn*). I'm so glad to meet you. My husband has spoken of you so often.

SAWYER: Yes, just lately, in fact.

BLAIR: Won't you sit down, Mrs. Dare? (*Offers her chair in which he has been sitting.*)

MRS. B: (*Taking chair*). Thank you, Uncle. How is business?

BLAIR: (*Taking SAWYER's chair*). Fine! I cleaned up two million dollars last month.

(DARE and SAWYER smile at each other)

MRS. B: Will you be stopping with us long, Uncle?

BLAIR: No time, but we have to clear this will up, so I stopped to see my nephew's bride today.

MRS. B: (*Fanning*). Are you disappointed?

BLAIR: (*Smiling*). No-sir-ee. I've a notion to cancel my trip to Texas and stay a month or so.

(DARE and SAWYER show signs of distress.)

MRS. B: (*smiling faintly*). How lovely.

DARE: Uncle, we would like to have you stay; but business before pleasure, you know.

BLAIR: *(In thought)*. Yes, hang it, I know.

MRS. B: What a shame! But business comes first. *(DARE and SAWYER nod their assent.)*

BLAIR: Yes. I might lose a million if I stayed here.

DARE: *(Aside)*. Yes, and so would I.

MRS. B: I am sure I will look much younger when you return, Uncle.

DARE: Yes, I am sure you will hardly know her.

SAWYER: Women are changeable critters.

(Telephone rings.)

(Enter CHASE, L., looks first at telephone, then at MRS. B. He stops on seeing her transformation. MR. DARE notices his confusion and points to phone.)

CHASE: Yes, sir. I knew it was the telephone. *(Takes down receiver.)* Hello! This is the Dare apartment. Yes, sir, I'll tell him. *(Holds hand over transmitter and turns toward MR. BLAIR.)* There's a messenger to see you in the lobby, Mister Blair. *(Waits for answer.)*

BLAIR: *(Rising quickly)*. Excuse me a minute or two. That's from one of my brokers. *(To CHASE.)* Tell him I'll be right down.

CHASE: *(At phone)*. Hello! Yes, sir. Mister Blair is coming right down. *(Hangs up receiver and stands attention.)*

MRS. B: *(Rising)*. Do you wish your hat and coat, Mr. Blair?

BLAIR: *(Advancing to R.)* No, thank you. I'll not need them. *(Exits R.)*

(DARE, MRS. B. And SAWYER change their attitude as soon as BLAIR is gone.)

DARE: *(Looking pleased)*. Our little play is going down well with Uncle.

SAWYER: He's swallowing it three acts at a time.

DARE: *(Notices CHASE standing at attention.)* Napoleon, you are excused.

CHASE: Thank you, sir. *(Struts off L.)*

DARE: *(Looking at SAWYER and MRS. B.)* You two stay here and entertain Uncle. I'm going to

have a little *tête-a-tête* with my *real* wife.

MRS. B: (*Still fanning*). Very well, I'll talk to Mr. Sawyer while you are away.

DARE: Don't scare him too badly. (*Exits L.*)

(*MR. SAWYER is viewing a picture and does not hear remark.*)

MRS. B: Mr. Sawyer, may I ask what you find so interesting back here? (*Smiles at him.*)

SAWYER: (*Turning toward her*). I-I-I'm a great patron of Art. (*Very nervous.*)

MRS. B: (*Moving closer to him*). Are you interested in anything else except Art, Mr. Sawyer?

SAWYER: (*Mopping brow*). Why er-er-yes. I like law.

MRS. B: Is there anything besides law?

SAWYER: Y-y-yes – fishing.

MRS. B: (*Disgusted at his ignorance*). Really, Mr. Sawyer. (*Points at him.*) You are in love.

SAWYER: (*Drawing back and mopping brow*). I feel like I'm in a hotter place than that. (*Mops.*)

MRS. B: Give me your hands. (*He puts out his hands. She takes hold.*) Do you feel thrilled?

SAWYER: I-I-I feel foolish.

MRS. B: Mr. Sawyer, if I should put my arm around you, would you live to appreciate it?

SAWYER: I-I don't know. I've got an awful weak heart.

MRS. B: Faint heart never won fair lady. Here goes. (*Puts arm around his back.*)

SAWYER: (*Showing signs of distress*). Woman, we're treading on dangerous ground. (*She smiles sweetly. He places his arm slowly around her.*) B-b-but you're not a bad sort.

(*The two rock back and forth child-like, smiling silly-like at each other. They do not observe MR. BLAIR who enters R.*)

BLAIR: (*Stopping suddenly, — surprised,— adjusts his glasses*). My word! What's this mean?

SAWYER: (*Jumping*). Why er-er I-I was just giving Mrs. Dare a dancing lesson. (*Both make ridiculous dancing motions. To MRS. B.*) Always dance on your toes.

MRS. B: (*Tired*). Please continue the lesson tomorrow. We shall now entertain Uncle.

BLAIR: I didn't know you were a dancing teacher.

SAWYER: *(Looking important)*. Oh, yes. Law is just my side line.

BLAIR: You surprise me.

SAWYER: I surprise myself.

MRS. B: Mr. Blair, shall I show you my home? Mr. Sawyer, will you accompany us?

SAWYER: With pleasure, Mrs. B.

BLAIR: *(Quickly)*. Mrs. B?

SAWYER: Mrs. D., of course. I used to have a stenographer by the name of Mrs. Bee. She was a great stenographer. She was a spelling Bee.

MRS. B: Come, gentlemen, we will look through my beautiful home. *(She realizes that she doesn't know her way around. She points L.)* Let's go this way, shall we?

BLAIR: *(Starting toward L.)* With pleasure. *(All three exeunt L.)*

(Enter the real IMOGENE, dressed as a maid. She has a vase of flowers, which she sets on table. She sits wearily on davanette.)

IMOGENE: *(Sadly)*. Here I am playing maid to the man I promised to love and honour and . . . what was that other one? . . . oh, and obey. *(Arranges flowers, hums.)*

(Enter DARE, R. Looks around comes up behind IMOGENE and puts his hand over her eyes. He kisses her.)

DARE: Guess who?

IMOGENE: *(Thinking)*. I can't tell. Try it again. *(He does.)* Roberto? *(He kisses her again.)* Wally?

DARE: Wally!

(He kisses her again.)

IMOGENE: I give up. *(She takes his hand away from her eyes.)* Oh, a husband! How lovely!

DARE: *(Moving away grumpily)*. Hmph! Wally.

IMOGENE: *(Comes over to DARE.)* Dear, I've been thinking . . .

DARE: What? Is anything wrong?

- IMOGENE: *(Coming closer and taking hold of his coat lapel)*. Of course not, dear. The place is wonderful, and you've been splendid, but I hated deceiving your Uncle like this.
- DARE: Cheer up, lovey. I know it doesn't seem right to have you play the part of a gay little deceiver, when you are a jewel at heart. *(She half smiles, looks up into his face.)* Rich Uncles don't grace every home with their presence; and besides, a million dollars is nothing to sneeze at.
- IMOGENE: *(Leaving him slowly and sitting on davanette)*. Well, it would buy a lot of handkerchiefs, at that *(meditates)* but, hubby, why worry about your Uncle's million? Surely you can laugh at such an amount?
- DARE: Why er- yes, of course. Can't you see by my very surroundings that Wall Street pays tribute to me? *(Smiles.)*
- IMOGENE: But, dear, your butler said you haven't paid him for months.
- DARE: Oh, he did, did he? The scoundrel! Of course you don't believe that?
- IMOGENE: Then, I'm not to believe anything he says?
- DARE: Certainly not. He never gets anything straight.
- IMOGENE: *(Cries aloud)* Aaah!
- DARE: *(Turning quickly)*. Why, Imogene, what on earth is the matter? *(Goes over, sits down and puts arm around her shoulder.)*
- IMOGENE: Ch-Chase said you loved me.
- DARE: Of course I love you, but why the tears?
- IMOGENE: You said Chase never told the truth.
- DARE: *(Taking arm from around her)*. Yes, yes, of course; or I mean no; why, Imogene *(putting arm around her should again)* you mustn't take everything to heart so. Of course I love you.
- IMOGENE: *(Pleased)*. Then you do love me?
- DARE: Certainly.
- IMOGENE: Then Chase does tell the truth?
- DARE: Absolutely lie-proof.

IMOGENE: And I can trust him?

DARE: With the keys to Fort Knox.

IMOGENE: *(Springing the trap.)* Then he was telling me the truth. You haven't paid him for months.

DARE: *(Taking arm from around her. Oh-no-no, or I mean yes. (Nods head.)*

IMOGENE: *(Quickly.)* Yes!

DARE: *(Quickly with a sickly smile.)* No.

IMOGENE: *(Quickly.)* No!

DARE: Yes, or I mean, oh darn it, I don't know what I mean. *(Very nervous.) Braces up.)* I've been a cad, Imogene. I was down to my last allowance when I married you. I know I've lied, but I've also loved. *(Pleads.)* Won't you remember the love and forget the lie?

IMOGENE: *(Laughingly.)* Oh, you silly thing. You take everything to heart so. Of course, I love you.

DARE: *(Looking lovingly at her.)* Girlie, you're a wonder. Let's begin our honeymoon all over again. *(Starts as if to kiss her.)*

IMOGENE: *(Putting her arms around his neck.)* That sounds like a splendid idea.

(Enter CHASE, L., and sees his intrusion, putting his hand over his mouth to stifle his exclamation. DARE leaves off what he was doing and turns to him.)

DARE: What now?

CHASE: Do you want me to instruct Miss Pink to have supper ready before your Uncle leaves?

DARE: Have supper at five o'clock promptly. Don't disturb us again. Understand?

CHASE: Yes, sir, understanding is the best thing I do. *(Exits L.)*

IMOGENE: Now, dear, where did we leave off, when Chase came in?

DARE: I said "Let's begin our honeymoon all over again." *(Puts his arms around her.)*

IMOGENE: *(Putting her arms around his neck.)* And I said "That sounds like a splendid idea."

(They start to kiss. Enter PINK.)

PINK: Do you want me to instruct Mr. Chase to have supper ready before your Uncle leaves?

(DARE and IMOGENE again jump apart.)

IMOGENE: *(Surprised)*. Why, Pink, Chase just asked us that.

PINK: I know he did, but the power in the kitchen has changed hands since that.

DARE: For the love of Mike, forget your battles out there and stop pestering us. Understand?

PINK: *(Scared)*. Y-yes, sir. *(Starts L.)*

DARE: *(Snaps finger)*. Then get out!

PINK: *(Excited)*. Yes, sir!

IMOGENE: Now hubby dear, you mustn't be so cross to our help. *(Arranges his coat.)* Now what were you going to do when we were interrupted?

DARE: *(Putting hands in pockets)*. Oh, I was just going to show a little appreciation for you, but this room has become a regular information bureau. *(Turns after he goes R.)* Come, let's go into another room.

IMOGENE: *(Going over to him, their profiles toward audience)*. Now, now, James, *(pointing teasingly at him)* you must not be so impatient. *(Comes closer.)* Now tell me all about it.

DARE: All right, I'll say it with kisses. *(Starts as if he intends to kiss her.)*

(UNCLE, MRS. BOISE, who is playing the part of IMOGENE, and MR. SAWYER enter L. just as DARE has IMOGENE in his arms ready to kiss her.)

DARE: *(Pushing IMOGENE away from him in very dramatic way and lecturing her)*. Why, I don't see anything in your eye, at all! *(Looks her over.)* I think you were lying to me just so I'd put my arm around you! *(Winks at IMOGENE, who catches on.)*

MRS. B: Imogene, what on earth are you up to? Any more such antics and I shall have my husband discharge you. Go to your room at once. *(Points to L.)*

IMOGENE: *(Starting toward L.)* Yes, madam. *(Exits L.)*

SAWYER: She give you a great deal of trouble, Mr. Dare?

DARE: Yes, but she's very efficient and I am loath to discharge her.

BLAIR: She's a very sweet little thing, too. Mrs. Dare, I advise you to watch this young scamp. *(Winks at MRS. B.)* He's like his Uncle when it comes to women.

DARE: Why, Uncle, such a notion!

SAWYER: *(Aside)*. Yes, such a notion.

MRS. B: *(Staring at DARE with narrowed eyes)*. I'll watch him.

(Enter CHASE from L.)

CHASE: *(In a stately manner)*. Lunch is now served. *(Beckons with sweeping bow to L.)*

DARE: *(Taking UNCLE's arm)*. Right in here, Uncle. We want you to eat one meal with us before you go. *(Starts to L.)*

MRS. B: Certainly we do, Uncle. *(Winks at SAWYER.)* Come, Mr. Sawyer, and dine with us.

SAWYER: *(Taking arm of MRS. B.)*. Thank you, I believe I will.

(All exeunt L., leaving CHASE standing at attention.)

CHASE: *(Resuming natural poise)*. This scheme to fool the Mister is sure nerve-racking. *(Drops into chair.)* I haven't even had time to speak to my little Pink about proposing or nothing. *(Jerks chair as if mad. This turns his back to L. entrance.)*

(Enter PINK from L. carrying a feather duster. She enters quietly and comes up behind CHASE and places hands over his eyes.)

PINK: *(Smiling)*. Guess who?

CHASE: *(Catching hold of her hands)*. I know right now who it is. *(Smiles.)* It's Miss Emily Jane Pink, my lover. *(Pulls her onto arm of his chair.)*

PINK: *(Coquettishly)*. Sugar lump, have you got anything on your mind this evening?

CHASE: Y-yes, honey, but this is so sudden.

PINK: We have to be sudden if any proposing's going to get done around here.

CHASE: That's right, apple dumpling. Let's go. *(Drops heavily on knees before PINK, who slides into chair.)* I'm going to lay my love-torn heart on the altar of your love for the third time. I know you have had many suitors; but this is a different kind of a suit. It's a three-piece suit.

DARE: *(Calling from dining-room)*. Chase, go and help the ice-man in the kitchen.

CHASE: Y-yes, sir. *(To PINK.)* There goes my third proposing shot to pieces. *(Exits rapidly at L.)*

PINK: *(Disgusted)*. Fate is sure against that man. *(Dusts with back to L. entrance.)*

BLAIR: *(Off)*. I'll just wash my hands.

(MR. BLAIR enters L., sees PINK and mistakes her for IMOGENE.)

BLAIR: *(Fixing tie and straightening hair)*. Ah, there's that sweet Imogene. I wonder what impression I can make on her. *(Goes up behind her and places hands on her waist.)* Imogene, I am sure you meant no harm in looking through you master's mail yesterday. I like you, you know. Do you like me?

PINK: *(Turning around)*. Sir, you've got the wrong gal. I'm Miss Pink.

BLAIR: *(Jumping back)*. Great Scott! *(Recovering and moving toward her again.)* Well, not that it makes any great difference. I like you, too, Miss Pink.

PINK: And I like you. And when we're married and living at your place, why, my whole family can come up here from Yellow Run, Virginia to live with us, and *they'll* like you, too.

BLAIR: You may go at once to the kitchen.

PINK: *(Bowing)*. I thought as much. *(Exits L.)*

BLAIR: *(Coming over to table)*. I'd better be more careful! I wouldn't have the rest of the family know this for Wall Street and the world to boot. *(Seats himself.)*

(Enter IMOGENE at L., with tray upon which she holds telegram.)

IMOGENE: *(Holding tray out to MR. BLAIR)*. Unc — Mr. Blair, a telegram for you.

BLAIR: *(Taking telegram)*. Thank you, little one. *(He reaches for the telegram with one hand and behind IMOGENE with the other.)*

IMOGENE: *(Intercepting his hand)*. Mr. Blair.

BLAIR: Beg pardon. I meant no harm. *(Opens and reads telegram; looks at watch.)* I guess I can make it.

IMOGENE: *(Still standing)*. Sir, is there anything else I can do?

BLAIR: *(Moving closer to her)*. Yes, you may stay and entertain me.

IMOGENE: Beg pardon, sir; but my master doesn't allow me to talk unnecessarily to a guest.

BLAIR: But I'm family. I'm his Uncle. Remember, I caught you looking through his mail.

IMOGENE: Y-yes sir; but I didn't mean any harm.

BLAIR: Of course you didn't. *(Puts his arm around her shoulders.)* And you didn't really have something in your eye, did you? You just wanted to get close to Mr. Dare.

IMOGENE: I'll never do it again. But I must be going. *(Tries to pull loose, but he holds her.)*

(DARE enters, sees them. Stops dumbfounded.)

DARE: Uncle! Imogene!

IMOGENE: *(Jumping away)*. Yes, sir.

BLAIR: Why, nephew, where's the fire?

DARE: *(Assuming anger)*. Imogene, go to your room at once!

IMOGENE: Please, sir, I didn't mean anything. *(Exits L.)*

DARE: *(Turning to UNCLE)*. What does this mean, Uncle?

BLAIR: I was just comforting the poor accused thing. You'll make a criminal out of her.

DARE: She's a mighty cute little girl, I'll admit; but she must keep her place.

BLAIR: If she gets out of her place again, send her to me. I need a good maid to help my cook.

DARE: All right, Uncle. *(Scrape foot nervously on floor.)* Not changing the subject, Uncle, but listen, how about my million?

BLAIR: We'll talk about the million before I leave.

DARE: Does my wife suit you?

BLAIR: *(Suspicious)*. Yes, but there's a mystery somewhere.

DARE: But, Uncle, you aren't blaming me.

BLAIR: I'm not blaming anybody. I'm letting the thing take its course.

(Enter MRS. BOISE. She goes gracefully over to BLAIR.)

MRS. B: Won't you sit down, Uncle? We haven't had a word together.

BLAIR: *(Seating himself at R. of table)*. To be sure; we haven't had any time together. *(Looks at watch.)* I can spare some time yet.

DARE: While you two chat, I think I'll go have a word with Imogene.

(He exits.)

BLAIR: Your husband's a busy man. Just like his old Uncle. Makes money hand over fist.

MRS. B: I'm going to get personal, Uncle. Why weren't you ever married?

BLAIR: Alas! I was married once. It was so sad. *(Bows head into hands.)*

MRS. B: Oh! You have been married?

BLAIR: Yes. It has been twenty long years since I lost her.

MRS. B: Lost her? She died, did she?

BLAIR: *(Head still bowed).* I never knew. I could never find her. Sadie was a wonderful woman.

MRS. B: *(Jumping up).* Sadie! Sadie who? Who was she before you married her?

BLAIR: Sadie Boise. Why?

MRS. B: *(Almost overcome).* A-a-and — wh-what is your full name?

BLAIR: Didn't your husband ever tell you? I am Walter M. Blair.

MRS. B: Ahh! *(Faints and falls.)*

BLAIR: *(Catching her in his arms).* Help! Help! Water! Quick! She's dying.

(Enter CHASE, SAWYER, PINK, IMOGENE from L. DARE has cup of water. IMOGENE and PINK have towels.)

DARE: *(Rushing to MRS. B.)* This'll wake her up! *(He prepares to throw it in her face.)*

CHASE: *(Taking hold of DARE's arm).* Easy, Boss. Illinois is a dry state. *(Takes cup from DARE.)*

BLAIR: *(Laying her gently in chair).* Hand me the water. *(Dips fingers and moistens her forehead.)* I think she will revive.

DARE: What has happened to her?

BLAIR: I don't know. We were talking of marriage when your wife took a sudden faint.

SAWYER: *(Going over to her chair).* Yes, very sudden.

DARE: That's queer. I can't understand.

BLAIR: Just you sit down. I'll attend to your wife. *(Works with MRS. B. who begins to revive.)*

MRS. B: *(Regaining consciousness).* Husband! *(Grabs feebly around BLAIR's neck.)*

BLAIR: *(Pointing to DARE).* There's your husband. You have been in a faint.

MRS. B: (*Holding on to BLAIR*). You must listen, dear. I am Sadie Boise, whom you married all those years ago. I was delayed on the way to the ship and when I got there, she had sailed. All these years, I thought you had gone down with her.

BLAIR: (*Amazed but pleased*). What! It's not possible! But it's so! (*Embraces her.*)

PINK: (*To CHASE*). Well, did you ever?

CHASE: I never did.

(The couples begin to pair off for curtain.)

BLAIR: (*Releasing her.*) But you are now married to my nephew. (*Points to DARE.*)

MRS. B: (*To DARE*). Shall I tell him?

DARE: Y-yes, I might as well start being poor one time as another.

BLAIR: (*To DARE*). Poor? What do you mean?

MRS. B: My son-in-law is afraid that you won't transfer the million dollars to him, if you don't approve of his wife.

BLAIR: Son-in-law! Great guns and little fishes. Is she our daughter?

MRS. B: No, she's *my* foster daughter — and your nephew's wife.

(CHASE and PINK act as if conversing.)

BLAIR: My nephew's wife? Great Scott. (*To DARE.*) Are you a Mormon? How many wives do you want?

DARE: Just one, Uncle, and that's she. (*Points to IMOGENE who comes over to him.*) Mr. Sawyer, explain the situation to Uncle.

SAWYER: (*At R.*) Well, Mr. Blair, you caused it all.

BLAIR: (*Indignant*). I caused it all!

SAWYER: (*Smiling*). Yes sir. You telegraphed that you were coming to meet your nephew's wife before handing over the million. Well, he didn't have one and couldn't find one, so he found a ringer instead and let Chase be the victim. Then, after your first visit, you telegraphed, saying he must have a wife before his birthday — oh! Happy birthday, James! — or lose the million. So, after much effort, he found a peach and married Imogene. Then you telegraphed that she must be an old wife or he'd lose the million. So we found a tangerine and let Mrs. Boise be the victim. You know the rest. (*Waves hand dramatically.*) There's the explanation, your honour, use your own judgement.

BLAIR: You make a good case, Mr. Sawyer.

SAWYER: Yes, but I lost.

BLAIR: Lost what?

SAWYER: A woman. *(Looks at MRS. BOISE.)* But I'm not saying who.

BLAIR: Well, you made a good plea for your defendant, Mr. Dare. Nevertheless, I find my nephew guilty of obtaining a million dollars under false pretenses. But it's worth a million to get my wife back. *(Gets out check book.)*

IMOGENE: *(Forgetting herself).* Oh, mother! *(Puts arms around MRS. BOISE's neck.)*

BLAIR: I'll forgive you all, and give him a million for locating Sadie. *(Pats wife on shoulder.)*

MRS. B: You old dear. *(Leans on his shoulder as he hands a check for a million to DARE.)*

SAWYER: *(Looking at the three couples who are happy).* What is law without love?

BLAIR: *(Arm around MRS. BOISE).* Illegal.

DARE: *(Arm around IMOGENE, and both gazing at check).* Isn't this lovely?

IMOGENE: *(Looking up into his face).* What, the check?

DARE: No, you. *(Embraces her.)*

CHASE: *(Dropping on his knee).* Pinky, dear, be mine.

PINK: *(Twists shoulders).* Well, it's about time.

(MRS. B. And BLAIR hold imaginary conversation. SAWYER looks at CHASE half-smiling.)

DARE: Chase! Get up! What did I hire you for?

CHASE: *(Moving closer to PINK).* For nothing, boss, and I'm still getting the same thing.

SAWYER: Oh, you kids!

(All bow as curtain falls.)

(Second curtain.) (All have same position and bow.)

CURTAIN.