

WEDDING BELLS

A Comedy In Three Acts

By

EDWARD SALISBURY FIELD

Adapted and Edited by
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CHARACTERS

(In Order of Their First Appearance)

JACKSON, *An English servant.*

REGINALD CARTER, *A wealthy young New York socialite.*

SPENCER WELLS, *His English-born best friend.*

DOUGLAS ORDWAY, *A young and sensitive poet.*

MRS. HUNTER, *A dowager member of New York Society.*

MARCIA HUNTER, *Her Daughter.*

ROSALIE, *Reginald's ex-wife.*

HOOPER, *An English maid.*

SETTING

A Cheerful room in Reginald Carter's house in Madison Avenue, New York City. About 1920.

ACT I: An afternoon in April, the day before Reginald's wedding.

ACT II: that evening.

ACT III: the next morning.

NOTES

This is another script from the archives of Perth's Marks Brother Dramatic Company. Unlike most of them, this is clearly a script that was issued by the author for production. Its original revision date is October, 1920, meaning that it was probably a version that was edited based on the script for the Broadway run. For this edition, I have edited it extensively, to get the run time down to a manageable level and massaged things a bit, getting rid of a Japanese houseboy character and generally tidying things up a bit.

Wedding Bells ran for some 168 performances on Broadway in 1919 and the 1921 movie starred Ida Darling, Constance Talmadge (both major silent movie names) and *Harrison Ford!* Like his namesake, the silent-era Harrison Ford was a well-respected leading man who played both action-adventure and romantic roles in his career.

Wedding Bells is a thoroughly playable piece, even today. It's witty, sexy, bright and clever. What more can you ask from a comedy?

WEDDING BELLS
ACT ONE

SCENE: *A Cheerful room in Reginald Carter's house in Madison Avenue, New York City. The furnishings are handsome and substantial. Doors up C. open on a hall which connects with the front door. Doors down R. connect with the dining room. All doors shut.*

TIME: *Afternoon in April.*

AT RISE: *We hear the door bell ring impatiently. JACKSON, the ideal English servant, enters R. then immediately exits C. and R. Pause. REGINALD CARTER enters C. with hat and a walking stick, which he hands to JACKSON, who follows and stands R. of him.*

REGGIE: I'm sorry, Jackson. I've lost my keys.

(JACKSON picks keys from table R. and hands them to REGGIE)

What are those?

JACKSON: Your keys, sir. Will there be anything else, sir?

REGGIE: *(Xes R.)* No, don't bother me, Jackson. I've enough to bother me, today. *(Sits L. of table.)*

JACKSON: *(Starts off C.)* Yes, sir.

REGGIE: Oh, Jackson, if Mr. Wells telephones, tell him to come right over.

JACKSON: Mr. Wells has already telephoned, sir. He is coming directly.

REGGIE: All right, Jackson.

(JACKSON exits, closing doors. REGGIE takes long envelope from inside packet and lays it on table, Rises, goes R., looks at desk up L., Xes to desk, unlocks a door, then takes out a box the size of a shoe box but not so deep. With this in his hand he comes to table R. of sofa L. He is trying to untie the pink silk ribbon around the box when JACKSON enters R. E. with the Wall Street editions of the Post, Sun, Mail, and Globe.)

JACKSON: *(Xes to table L.)* Would you care to look at the papers, sir?

REGGIE: *(Who has hastily placed the box beside him)* Not now, Jackson.

- JACKSON: Thank you, sir. *(Lays papers on table L. Goes towards C. stops)* Did you get the Marriage License, sir?
- REGGIE: What? Oh yes! *(Feels pockets.)* There it is. *(Points at table R. JACKSON puts it in interior pocket.)* And for Heaven's sake don't lose it. I had a deuce of a time getting it.
- JACKSON: *(Picks up menu from table R.)* I'm sorry, sir. I thought I'd arranged it so everything would go smoothly at the license bureau.
- REGGIE: There are some things even you can't foresee, Jackson.
- JACKSON: *(Offers menu)* Yes, sir. The menu.
- REGGIE: Menu?
- JACKSON: *(L.C.)* For dinner tonight, sir.
- REGGIE: *(Studying it.)* What's g-r-e-n-o-u-i-double l-e-s?
- JACKSON: Frogs' legs, sir.
- REGGIE: Really? Seems like a good dinner. *(Half unconsciously he tucks menu into space between seat and side of sofa where it remains until wanted.)*
- JACKSON: It is, sir. And I secured the railway tickets this morning, sir – and the drawing room.
- REGGIE: I'd forgotten all about them. If you ever marry, Jackson, take my advice: elope.
- JACKSON: I always do, sir.
- REGGIE: Always do what?
- JACKSON: Elope, sir.
- REGGIE: *(Interested)* Why, I thought you were a bachelor. You've been married?
- JACKSON: Oh yes, sir! Three times!
- REGGIE: Dear me! And now you're a widower?
- JACKSON: Oh, no, sir! I'm still married.
- REGGIE: What? You mean you're still married – to all three?

JACKSON: That's why I left England, sir.

REGGIE: But, weren't you – aren't you afraid of being found out?

JACKSON: Yes, sir. But every man is that, sir.

REGGIE: *(Severely)* Jackson, I'm not sure I shouldn't discharge you on the spot.

JACKSON: As for that, sir, I was about to give notice.

REGGIE: But why?

JACKSON: You see, sir, in a married establishment, there are always housemaids about. And that would mean trouble, sir, sooner or later.

REGGIE: But our housemaids might not prove susceptible.

JACKSON: Housemaids are always susceptible, sir. I'm sorry, but I'm afraid I'll have to leave you – unless –

REGGIE: Unless what, Jackson?

JACKSON: Has it ever occurred to you, sir, that it's far easier to get a good wife in America than a good servant?

REGGIE: *(Rising)* I believe you're right.

JACKSON: There's no doubt of it, sir.

REGGIE: *(Up to Jackson)* Yes but – look here, Jackson, I don't want to lose you. Suppose I were to promise you we'd do without housemaids, would you stay then?

JACKSON: There would still be a lady's maid, sir – your wife would demand that – and my experience has been, sir, that ladies' maids are even more susceptible than housemaids.

REGGIE: But supposing my wife's maid were married – happily married?

JACKSON: *(Sadly)* Ladies' maids are never happily married, sir,

REGGIE: Well, much as I'd like to keep you, I can hardly cancel my wedding on that account. *(X. R.)* It's tomorrow, for heaven's sake.

JACKSON: I didn't think you would, sir, but I thought I would mention it. Is there anything else, sir?

REGGIE: No. That will be all, Jackson.

JACKSON: Very good, sir. Thank you, sir.

(He goes out C. and R. leaving doors open. REGGIE makes sure he is gone, sighs, then once more takes box. He sits on sofa, removes the string, takes off cover, and is about to take out contents of box. JACKSON enters up C.)

JACKSON: Beg pardon, sir. *(L. of doors C.)*

REGGIE: *(Crossly)* What is it, Jackson?

JACKSON: Mr. Wells is here, sir.

(REGGIE hastily restores cover and places box besides him as SPENCER WELLS, a gay irrepressible young man decidedly English in manner and appearance, enters.)

SPENCER: *(Coming down cheerfully as JACKSON goes out.)* Hullo! Hullo! Hullo! How's the merry little bridegroom today?

REGGIE: Oh, don't be so damned jolly!

SPENCER: *(Down to sofa.)* Oh, I say! Anything wrong?

REGGIE: Everything's wrong.

SPENCER: Bad as that?

REGGIE: Worse. I've had a row with Marcia.

SPENCER: *(Lays hat and stick on table R.)* Oh, is that all?

REGGIE: No, that's not all. Wait till you hear about Jackson.

SPENCER: What about Jackson?

REGGIE: He's leaving me.

SPENCER: *(Appalled)* Leaving you?

REGGIE: He doesn't approve of my marrying.

SPENCER: By Jove! No wonder you're down! To lose both your freedom and a treasure like Jackson all in one day – !

REGGIE: It is pretty steep, isn't it?

SPENCER: Precipitous, old boy! Lucky for me, though. I've always envied you Jackson.

REGGIE: I thought you had a good man.

SPENCER: I have. But I'll sack him in a minute if I can get Jackson.

REGGIE: Yes, well, first I ought to tell you: Jackson's a bigamist.

SPENCER: A bigamist?

REGGIE: Yes – has three wives at the moment. I thought you should know.

SPENCER: *(To C.)* I don't mind it at all. I never marry – Jackson's always marrying! Sort of evens up the household, what? *(Turns away REGGIE lays box on lap.)*
(SPENCER turns, noticing box. To L.C.) I say! What's in the box? Been reading old love letters!

REGGIE: I haven't any.

SPENCER: Poor chap! I couldn't live without mine.

REGGIE: I didn't know you'd ever received any love letters.

SPENCER: I haven't. But I've written a lot. Always keep copies of them and you've no idea how good some of them are. But I say! *(To table)* What's all this about your having a row with Marcia? *(Sits on table R.C.)*

REGGIE: *(Lays box on sofa, rises, goes to front of chair R.C.)* Spencer, I've a mind to tell you a secret.

SPENCER: Well, don't. By and by, you'll hate me for knowing it.

REGGIE: Rot!

SPENCER: It's a fact.

REGGIE: *(Turns from him.)* Well, you'd probably find it out anyway.

SPENCER: Oh? If I'd find it out anyway, that's different. Shoot, old boy. *(Sits on table.)*

REGGIE: Spencer, what would you say if I were to tell you I'd been married before?

SPENCER: I don't know. Is it the sort of thing you're likely to tell me?

REGGIE: Seriously.

SPENCER: Married?

REGGIE: Yes. A year ago last October.

SPENCER: And you never told me – your best friend?

REGGIE: Oh, I never told anybody. It happened on my way to Japan. We met in Santa Barbara. We were at the same hotel. Her name was Rosalie.

SPENCER: Rosalie. Pretty name that.

REGGIE: It was very romantic. I put my shoes outside my door to be cleaned. Her dog chewed one of them up. And – and two days later we were married.

SPENCER: By Jove! You didn't lose much time.

REGGIE: *(Turns to Spencer)* You see, she was going to Japan, too, and she had her ticket on the same boat.

SPENCER: Traded two first-class singles for a double?

REGGIE: *(Hotly)* Nothing of the sort! It was a love match. You've no idea how wonderful she was, Spencer.

SPENCER: My dear boy, they're all wonderful. But what happened?

REGGIE: Well, I've always admired red hair.

SPENCER: Oh, yes – did she have red hair?

REGGIE: No! Well, not at first. One day, I pointed out a woman in the dining room who had red hair – and the next day Rosalie dyed her hair red. Oh! I was furious, and I told her she looked like – *that* kind of a woman. *(To R.C.)*

SPENCER: Yes, I know.

REGGIE: And she said it was plain I preferred – *that* kind of a woman, for the woman I'd admired looked like – *that* kind of a woman.

SPENCER: Exactly!

REGGIE: *(To chair L. Of table R.C.)* And then she left us.

SPENCER: Us?

REGGIE: Me and the dog.

SPENCER: And you didn't follow her?

REGGIE: I couldn't. I came down with the measles.

SPENCER: Measles?

REGGIE: Yes, measles. Got 'em from some kids at the hotel. I was ill for a long time.

SPENCER: Well, why didn't you send Jackson after her?

REGGIE: I didn't have Jackson, then.

SPENCER: Didn't you try to find her after you got well?

REGGIE: Of course I tried. By that time she'd disappeared completely. *(To R.C.)* I couldn't find a trace of her – not a trace.

SPENCER: Didn't her people know where she was? Who were her people?

REGGIE: I don't know.

SPENCER: Don't know?

REGGIE: You see, the few days we were together I was so busy talking about myself –

SPENCER: Naturally – naturally. But go on. Tell me what happened.

REGGIE: *(Front of chair R.C.)* Well, I was feeling awfully down at the time and I knew she wouldn't have left me like that if she'd really cared – and I couldn't find her – and I had my ticket – and there was a boat sailing from San Francisco –

SPENCER: And so you went to Japan?

REGGIE: Yes. And a month later – at Kobe – or maybe it was Nagasaki– I received word from her lawyer that she'd divorced me.

SPENCER: Oh! She divorced you!

REGGIE: Of course. I couldn't be marrying Marcia tomorrow if she hadn't, could I?

SPENCER: Did you ever hear from her again?

REGGIE: Not a word. I didn't think I would ever look at another woman as long as I lived – until I met Marcia.

SPENCER: *(Rises)* What a quaint idea! So, what was the row with Marcia? *(To R.)*

REGGIE: *(Indignantly)* It was that damned clerk at the Marriage License Bureau. What's this country's coming to, Spencer, when a chap, like that – a public servant, mind – can ask questions that might easily wreck your whole life?

SPENCER: Bally outrage! What did he ask you?

REGGIE: He asked me if I'd ever been married before, and I had to confess I had – with Marcia standing right there at my elbow.

SPENCER: Marcia didn't know you had been married before?

REGGIE: No – and I didn't want her to know it. Her mother doesn't believe in divorce.

SPENCER: Well, it must have been a shock for her. You patched it up though, didn't you?

REGGIE: *(Sighing)* No, we didn't. You see, she wanted to know all about Rosalie.

SPENCER: And?

REGGIE: If I told her the truth, she'd be imagining things about every red-headed woman I ever looked at. And besides – *(looking around)* – I loved Rosalie and – hang it all – *(Xing L.)* a man shouldn't talk about the woman he loved yesterday to the girl he loves today. It isn't decent. *(JACKSON enters up C.)*

JACKSON: *(At door R. - announcing)* Mr. Ordway.

(DOUGLAS ORDWAY enters. He is a dark, pale youth with burning eyes and no sense of humor. JACKSON goes out, REGGIE takes box and puts it in drawer.)

SPENCER *(R.C.)* Hello! Here's our little poet.

REGGIE: *(Up L. at desk puts away box.)* Hello, Douglas.

DOUGLAS: *(Down C. -- Faintly sinks into sofa cushion)* 'Lo!

SPENCER: Another cheerful soul! I say, lunch disagree with you?

DOUGLAS *(With vehemence)* Life disagrees with me!

SPENCER: *(To L.C. Cheerfully)* Same thing, old boy. Have a stomach tablet.

DOUGLAS: I don't want a stomach tablet.

REGGIE: *(Back of sofa, R. end, inspecting Douglas.)* He does look a little pale.

SPENCER: I believe the rascal's in love.

DOUGLAS: I'm not!

SPENCER: *(L.C.)* That proves it. If you weren't, you wouldn't deny it.

DOUGLAS: *(Defiantly)* Well, supposing I am in love? I *am* in love! Hopelessly, tragically, miserably in love.

SPENCER: By Jove! I congratulate you on being in love like that! That's splendid!

REGGIE: Let him alone, Spencer. He'll bite you. Come, come now. Buck up. You've got to be in good form for my farewell bachelor dinner tonight.

DOUGLAS: *(Rises.)* That's what I came to tell you. I can't come to your bachelor dinner.

SPENCER: But man, dear, you've got to come. Why, it's Reggie's last party!

DOUGLAS: I know. I'm awfully sorry but I can't possibly come.

(JACKSON enters up C.)

JACKSON: Mrs. Hunter and Miss Hunter are here, sir. *(DOUGLAS rises)*

REGGIE: What?

SPENCER: *(X up R.)* By Jove!

REGGIE: Show them in, Jackson. *(JACKSON exits.)*

SPENCER: Come on, Douglas, we'd better beat it.

(DOUGLAS Xes C. to get a glimpse of Marcia.)

REGGIE: *(Stopping Douglas, up L.C.)* No, don't go. Wait in the dining room, and Jackson will mix you a cocktail.

SPENCER: *(Holds Douglas by R. arm)* Good idea. Come on, Douglas. Have a cocktail.

DOUGLAS: *(Complainingly)* I don't want a cocktail. *(Eyes turned toward C.)*

SPENCER: *(Pulls him off R.)* All the better, old boy. There'll be more for me. *(They go out R. JACKSON enters to announce.)*

JACKSON: Miss Hunter – Mrs. Hunter.

(MARCIA and MRS. HUNTER enter, JACKSON goes out, closing door behind him. MARCIA stares at REGGIE for second and goes down L. MRS. HUNTER down R. C.)

REGGIE: *(As he meets her.)* Marcia. *(MARCIA goes down to front of sofa.)* *(To MRS. HUNTER)* Mother. *(MRS. HUNTER goes down R.C.)* *(Down C.)* This is an unexpected pleasure. *(To MRS. HUNTER.)* I'm awfully glad to see you. *(To MARCIA.)* And you, too, Marcia. *(MRS. HUNTER who is a sentimental, rather old-fashioned woman of about fifty-five, bows stiffly. MARCIA, ignoring REGGIE's greeting completely has passed him without a word.)* *(To MRS. HUNTER.)* Won't you sit down?

MRS. HUNTER: Thank you. Reginald, I may be many other things, but first of all I'm a mother.

REGGIE: *(Politely)* That's awfully good of you, I'm sure.

MRS. HUNTER: Reginald, my mother's heart tells me you have acted very badly towards my ewe lamb.

REGGIE: I'm awfully sorry.

MRS. HUNTER: It seems you have been married before.

REGGIE: Yes, I –

MRS. HUNTER: And you didn't tell Marcia one word about it.

REGGIE: No. I –

MRS. HUNTER: Why didn't you tell her?

REGGIE: My present and future are Marcia's if she wants them. My past is my own.

MRS. HUNTER: If you'd wanted your past to be your own, you should have kept it hidden.

REGGIE: I tried to keep it hidden.

MRS. HUNTER: That was very wrong of you, Reginald. You should have told Marcia. You – *(Looks at him.)* – have wounded my poor girl deeply. *(Arms around MARCIA.)*

REGGIE: *(C)* Well, I'm awfully sorry.

MRS. HUNTER: *(Turns to him.)* If you're really sorry, you'll ask Marcia to forgive you.

REGGIE: *(Who is becoming slightly, irritated.)* How can I? She won't even speak to me.

MRS. HUNTER: Marcia is young, and spirited and perhaps a little spoiled. But at heart she's generous and forgiving. Aren't you, my darling? *(Embracing MARCIA)*

MARCIA: *(Out of her arms.)* No! I'm not! *(Turn to face REGGIE as she stands L.)*

REGGIE: *(To Mrs. Hunter)* There! You see?

MARCIA: *(Xes to REGGIE)* I didn't want to come here at, all, Reggie. Mother made me.

MRS. HUNTER: Why, Marcia! It was you who insisted on coming.

MARCIA: Mother, leave the room.

MRS. HUNTER: But, Marcia!

MARCIA: Mother!

MRS. HUNTER: But where shall I go? *(Up to L. of doors.)*

REGGIE: Spencer and Ordway are in the dining room.

MARCIA: *(X.L. - Brightening)* Oh! Is Douglas here?

REGGIE: Yes. *(To Mrs. Hunter.)* If you like, they'll join you in a cockt— a cup of tea — *(Rings.)*

MRS. HUNTER: *(Looks at Marcia)* Thank you, Reginald. I would like a cup of tea. *(MARCIA nods consent. JACKSON enters R.)*

JACKSON: You rang, sir?

REGGIE: Yes, tell Mr. Wells and Mr. Ordway that Mrs. Hunter will join them in a cockt— a cup of tea.

JACKSON: *(Above doors R.)* If you'll step this way, ma'am.

MRS. HUNTER: *(Xes between JACKSON and REGGIE – turning)* Now, Marcia – be your sweet generous self.

(She goes out, followed by JACKSON; REGGIE eyes MARCIA with misgiving; MARCIA is plainly furious.)

MARCIA: *(Xes R. Suddenly after a pause.)* Mother hasn't the brains of a rabbit!

REGGIE: *(Down R. C.)* At least she seems to know her own mind. *(L. of table.)*

MARCIA: Meaning that I don't. Well, you're mistaken. It was outrageous for you to marry and divorce without telling me a word about it.

REGGIE: Well, you know about it now, don't you?

MARCIA: Yes, no thanks to you!

REGGIE: That's just it. I knew you wouldn't thank me for telling you, so I didn't tell you.

MARCIA: But you haven't told me anything. *(Pause.)* Why did you *get* married if you didn't intend to *stay* married?

REGGIE: I did intend to stay married.

MARCIA: Then why didn't you ? Had you known her long?

REGGIE: N-not very.

MARCIA: Who introduced you?

REGGIE: Nobody.

MARCIA: What?

REGGIE: I mean somebody who wasn't exactly anybody. *(Lightly)* You see she had a little dog, and – and I met her through the little dog.

MARCIA: *(Turns away)* Oh! She was – *that* kind of a woman!

REGGIE: No, she wasn't – *that* kind of a woman. Look here, Marcia, I know you're disappointed and – well! If you want to chuck me, it isn't too late. *(To C.)*

MARCIA: *(Horried)* What! And not get married tomorrow?

REGGIE: Well, you don't seem to care for me very much,

MARCIA: Why, Reggie! How can you say that?

REGGIE: Because if you really cared for me you wouldn't make me so unhappy.

MARCIA: Unhappy?

REGGIE: Yes, Marcia, unhappy. I want to forget about the past and you won't let me.

MARCIA: But – Reggie – !

REGGIE: When I asked you to be my wife, I thought the past was buried. But today has brought it all back. I want to forget it, I tell you! I want to forget it!

MARCIA: Did you – did you love her?

REGGIE: Yes.

MARCIA: *(To him)* Do you – love her now?

REGGIE: I tell you I'd forgotten until today. And I'll forget tomorrow. Only please don't talk about it any more! Please?

MARCIA: I will talk about it if I want to.

REGGIE: *(To her.)* No, Marcia. That's one thing I insist on. If you're going to marry me, I insist that you never mention it again.

MARCIA: But – Reggie – !

REGGIE: I mean it. If you're going to forgive me, you've got to forgive and forget.

MARCIA: But you haven't asked me to forgive you.

REGGIE: Well, I ask you now. Only it's got to be real forgiveness, mind! You're not to bring this up against me every time you think you have a grievance.

MARCIA: *(Front)* But that isn't fair.

REGGIE: Why isn't it?

MARCIA: I might really have a grievance.

REGGIE: Well, if you ever have, you can use the grievance against me. But if we're going on with this, you've got to promise me on your sacred word of honor that you'll never refer to my – to what you found out this afternoon – again.

MARCIA: *(To chair R.C.)* I'll do nothing of the sort.

REGGIE: *(Goes R.C.)* Well then, we won't get married tomorrow.

MARCIA: But – Reggie – !

REGGIE: *(Over to her)* I mean it, Marcia. *(MARCIA crying, sits.)* I'm sorry this has made you unhappy. I should have told you. But you're either going to forgive

and forget – or remember, and not forgive. Which is it?

MARCIA: You seem to think I have no choice in the matter,

REGGIE: Certainly you have a choice.

MARCIA: Well, then, if I have a choice– *(Rises.)* I forgive you, Reggie! *(Into his arms)*

REGGIE: *(Pleased, kisses her.)* That's the girl! And you'll promise never to mention my first wife – my first past again?

MARCIA: Yes, Reggie.

REGGIE: Well then, everything's all right, isn't it?

MARCIA: *(Doubtfully)* Y-yes. Only don't tell mother you were divorced!

REGGIE: Didn't you tell her?

MARCIA: No. You know she doesn't believe in divorce, so I just let her think your – that person I promised not to mention – died.

REGGIE: Oh! Well, I can't see any harm in that.

MARCIA: Mother's frightfully old-fashioned, but I wouldn't want to hurt her feelings.

REGGIE: Of course not!

MARCIA: Then, that's that. *(Changing her mood and smiling – lead him R.)* Now run along, you old divorced darling, and tell Mother we've made up.

REGGIE: *(R. of her.)* Let's both tell her.

MARCIA: No, I'd rather you told her.

REGGIE: All right. Want some tea?

MARCIA: *(To front of table.)* No, but you might send Douglas in to amuse me.

REGGIE: Douglas won't amuse you.

MARCIA: Why not?

REGGIE: He's in love.

MARCIA: *(Startled)* What?

REGGIE: Yes. He's got it bad.

MARCIA: Wh—who is he in love with?

REGGIE: I don't know.

MARCIA: *(Very much relieved)* Oh!

REGGIE: *(Nearer to Marcia.)* But whoever she is, it's hopeless. Poor old Douglas is blue as indigo. He isn't even coming to my farewell bachelor dinner tonight.

MARCIA: Isn't he?

REGGIE: And he really ought to come. *(To her.)* Maybe you can persuade him.

MARCIA: Maybe I can.

REGGIE: Well, I wish you would. I'll send him in. *(Turns down to her)* You've been just bully about all this, Marcia. I'm no end grateful.

(He goes out R. MARCIA, humming, opens bag, peers at herself in mirror, powders her nose, goes up L. and down to C. sees DOUGLAS coming, down L. DOUGLAS enters R.)

DOUGLAS: *(Over to her. She has her back to him.)* Marcia! This is wonderful!

MARCIA: *(Faces him – front of sofa.)* What's wonderful?

DOUGLAS: To see you alone. I never thought I'd see you alone again.

MARCIA: Why did you want to see me alone, Douglas?

DOUGLAS: Because I – I've written a poem to you, Marcia.

MARCIA: *(Pulls him down on sofa.)* A poem? How splendid! Where is it?

DOUGLAS: Here. *(He takes paper from breast pocket.)*

MARCIA: Oh, I'm so excited! I never had a poem written to me before.

DOUGLAS: It isn't a very long one – only four lines.

MARCIA: Only four lines! *(Rises.)* Well, I don't think that's very much, why you wrote sixteen lines to that old hop-toad you found in the garden at Port Washington!

DOUGLAS: *(Takes her hand, reseats her.)* The more one feels, the less one has to say,

Marcia. This poem was written, not with my hand – but with my heart.

MARCIA: *(Sighing luxuriously)* You do say such nice things to me, Douglas. *(He leans towards her. She pushes him away gently)* Go on. *(He sits back.)*

DOUGLAS: *(Besides her, looking at poem again and again for word he has forgotten.)*
You are like a lily in a lovely garden,
You are like moonlight on an enchanted sea;
You are like the dawn of a summer morning –
But alas! *(Pats her hand.)* You are not for me.

(Rises sadly and turns away.)

MARCIA: Why, Douglas!

DOUGLAS: *(To her in conversational manner.)* Do you like it, Marcia?

MARCIA: *(Rises.)* I love it! Poor boy! Do you really care so much?

DOUGLAS: *(Turns away.)* Yes, Marcia.

MARCIA: *(Touches his arm.)* I care for you, too, Douglas.

DOUGLAS: Marcia! *(He moves towards her. She stops him by speaking quickly.)*

MARCIA: Not enough to marry you. But I do care. And I'm glad you love me. It's very comforting to a girl to know that *somebody's* going to love her after she's married. Besides I had a perfectly dreadful shock today,

DOUGLAS: A shock? *(MARCIA nods, She goes around sofa to C. looks off.)*

MARCIA: Yes. About Reggie. You mustn't mention it– because I promised him I wouldn't talk about it. *(Down to him.)* Reggie has a past.

DOUGLAS: Oh, is that all?

MARCIA: Well, I haven't any past.

DOUGLAS: *(Front.)* Most men have pasts, Marcia. It's the penalty for being a man.

MARCIA: I'm sure you haven't any past, Douglas. You're too sweet and good.

DOUGLAS: *(Turns away – holding poem well out in R. hand.)* Don't, don't!

MARCIA: *(Takes poem from his outstretched hand. He glances at empty hand.)* If you're lonely while I'm away, you may write to me. Of course we're not telling

everybody where we're going – but I'm sure Reggie wouldn't mind. We're going to Palm Beach! (*DOUGLAS shivers.*) So you can write to me there. And you'll come and see me very often after we get back, won't you?

DOUGLAS: No, Marcia. I'm going away. And I'm never coming back.

MARCIA: Why, Douglas!

DOUGLAS: I love you too much! I couldn't bear to see you married to someone else.

MARCIA: But I don't want you to go.

DOUGLAS: (*Turns away.*) I must go!

MARCIA: You must?

DOUGLAS: Yes, I must.

MARCIA: Then it's – it's goodbye?

DOUGLAS: Yes, Marcia, it's goodbye – goodbye forever.

MARCIA: (*Takes his hand.*) You'll – you'll always love me, won't you?

DOUGLAS: Always.

MARCIA: Goodbye. (*She looks over her shoulder, then kisses Douglas.*)

DOUGLAS: Marcia!

MARCIA: (*X-ing R.*) Now go – please.

DOUGLAS: (*Following her*) Yes, I must go.

MARCIA: (*As he hesitates*) Well, why don't you? (*REGGIE enters R.*)

REGGIE: Are you coming, Douglas?

MARCIA: No, he's going.

DOUGLAS: No, I'm going.

MARCIA: He has an engagement.

DOUGLAS: . . . engagment.

MARCIA: Goodbye, Douglas.

REGGIE: (R. of Douglas) Yes, but my dinner tonight? *(To Douglas.)* You ought to come Douglas. It's my last party you know.

MARCIA: No, he really couldn't.

DOUGLAS: No, I really couldn't. Goodbye Reggie. Goodbye, Marcia.

(He goes out up C.)

REGGIE: If he didn't want to come, why did he accept in the first place?

MARCIA: You must make allowances, Reggie. A great sorrow has come into his life.

REGGIE: *(Down L.C.)* Poets! Every time they fall in love, the world comes to an end.

MARCIA: I think it's wonderful to love like that.

REGGIE: Well, I don't. I like to have good time.

SPENCER: *(Off R.)* I think you are quite right, Mrs. Hunter.

(Enter with MRS. HUNTER.)

REGGIE: We're going to have a bully time at Palm Beach, Marcia. *(Speeches overlap here) (Enter SPENCER and MRS. HUNTER from dining room.)*

SPENCER: *(Entering -- seeing MARCIA.)* Hullo! How's the fairest of the fair today? *(Down R. of her)*

MRS. HUNTER: *(Around table to L. of Marcia.)* Need you ask, Mr. Wells? *(Archly at MARCIA.)* Reginald told me you had kissed and made up. After this, when misunderstandings arise, you must talk things over. *(MARCIA Xes to REGGIE; to SPENCER.)* That's what my poor dear husband and I always did.

MARCIA: Mother, we must decide about tomorrow.

MRS. HUNTER: It's all decided, my darling. You're going to marry Reginald at St. Martin's tomorrow at high noon. And the Bishop is going to officiate.

MARCIA: Yes, but where shall we meet?

REGGIE: Why, I thought Spencer and I would go from here and meet you and your mother at the Church. Would that be alright?

MARCIA: Yes. But don't be late.

SPENCER: I'll answer to that.

MARCIA: Very well, Spencer, I'll hold you responsible. *(Starting up C.)* Come, Mother. Goodbye, Spencer.

SPENCER: Goodbye.

(MARCIA goes out followed by REGGIE. MRS. HUNTER hesitates, then turns to SPENCER.)

MRS. HUNTER: Now that my little bird is flying to a new nest, I shall be lonely. *(Down.)* You must come and see me, Mr. Wells. *(Hand shakes.)*

SPENCER: *(Amused)* Why, thanks, I'd love to.

MARCIA: *(Appearing in doorway)* Mother!

MRS. HUNTER: *(Turns up C.)* Yes, dear! *(MARCIA disappears. Goes up C. then turns and smiles near door.)* Goodbye! *(Smiles.)* Mr. Wells. *(Laughs coquettishly.)*

(MRS. HUNTER goes out. SPENCER shows his amusement over his new conquest. Then crosses to door R. I.)

SPENCER: Oh, Jackson, come here a minute. *(Goes to table.)*

JACKSON: *(Coming in.)* You wanted me sir?

SPENCER: Yes, Mr. Carter tells me you're leaving him and I'd jolly well like to take you on myself. If you haven't made any further plans. Is it a go?

JACKSON: *(R.)* Why sir, I hadn't thought about a new position. *(REGGIE enters L.C.)*

SPENCER: Well, think about it. Of course I have more clothes to look after than Mr. Carter has, but I patronize a better tailor. I also smoke better cigars than he does. And I've the second best wine cellar in New York.

JACKSON: Have you any housemaids, sir?

SPENCER: No. But I can get you some.

JACKSON: I'd much prefer you didn't, sir. On the whole, sir, I shall be very glad to come.

SPENCER: That's splendid! Thank you, Jackson.

JACKSON: Thank you, sir. Is there anything else, sir?

SPENCER: No, that will be all, Jackson.

JACKSON: Thank you, sir. *(He goes out C.)*

(SPENCER turns and finds REGGIE has been listening.)

REGGIE: My God, Spencer, you hate yourself, don't you?

SPENCER: Oh, there you are!

REGGIE: *(Picks up newspaper.)* You didn't lose much time in engaging Jackson.

SPENCER: *(Xing and placing hand on Reggie's shoulder.)* Back up, old boy. I realize you're going to miss Jackson, but you know what life is. I say! In case Marcia ever leaves you, I'll give you Jackson back. Fair enough, what?

REGGIE: Marcia's never going to leave me. When I get married, it's going to be for keeps – this time.

SPENCER: Well, I hope so!

REGGIE: I hope you hope so.

SPENCER: *(After a pause.)* You know I hope so. We've had some ripping good times together. *(Sadly)* Well, maybe we'll have some more.

REGGIE: What makes you think we won't?

SPENCER: Well – marriage – you know – anyway, we'll give you a great send-off tonight.

REGGIE: I can enjoy it now. Marcia played up like a perfect brick, Spencer. I'm a lucky dog to get a girl like Marcia to marry me.

SPENCER: Of course you are, old boy. Well – I'm off. See you tonight.

REGGIE: Goodbye, Spencer.

SPENCER: Bye-bye, old things.

(He goes out up C. REGGIE sighs, goes over to table R. paper in hand and sits down to read it. JACKSON enters up C, bearing a card on a small silver salver. He comes down.)

JACKSON: *(Extending salver.)* A caller, sir.

REGGIE: *(Taking card.)* Madame Brousseau. I don't know any Madame Brousseau.

JACKSON: I think she knows you, sir.

REGGIE: I can't remember anybody of that name. What is she like, Jackson?

JACKSON: Very attractive, sir.

REGGIE: *(Sighing)* Well, I can't see any very attractive women today. Tell her I'm out.

JACKSON: Out, sir?

REGGIE: Out. Not. At. Home.

JACKSON: Oh, I hope you'll see *her*, sir!

REGGIE: Why?

JACKSON: It's this way, sir. She gave me ten dollars to arrange an interview, and if you don't see her, I shall feel in honor bound to return the money.

REGGIE: That was uncommonly cheeky of you, Jackson.

JACKSON: Yes, sir. *(Turning)* It was, sir.

REGGIE: But rather than have you lose the ten dollars, I'll see her. *(Lays paper down and rises and goes two steps R. Looks at card again and pockets it.)*

JACKSON: Thank you, sir. *(He goes out up C. In hall.)* This way, ma'am. *(Entering and announcing.)* Madame Brousseau. *(L. of doors.)*

(ROSALIE enters. Her hair is no longer red, but she is so chic and charming that neither the Deity nor the audience can blame Reggie for what happens later. JACKSON goes out, closing door softly behind him.)

ROSALIE: Hello, Reggie! *(They stare at each other.)*

REGGIE: Rosalie!

ROSALIE: *(Down)* I – I suppose you're surprised to see me.

REGGIE: *(To her.)* Surprised! I should say I was!

ROSALIE: I – I hope it's a pleasant surprise.

REGGIE: Pleasant? Why, I was thinking about you only a minute ago. It's the nicest thing that ever happened to me, your dropping in to see me like this.

ROSALIE: *(Agitated and unsure of a welcome, gains confidence as she goes.)* Yes, that's it. I – I just dropped in. You see, I only arrived this morning, and I found your address in the telephone book, so – I – thought I'd call and – get my dog.

REGGIE: Your dog?

ROSALIE: Yes, Pinky – the dog I left with you in Santa Barbara.

(As REGGIE is silent.)

Don't tell me anything has happened to him!

REGGIE: I'm awfully sorry, Rosalie.

ROSALIE: Then something has happened!

REGGIE: Yes.

ROSALIE: He – he's not dead?

REGGIE: I hope not. He was stolen.

ROSALIE: Stolen?

REGGIE: Yes.

ROSALIE: *(To L.C.)* Poor Pinky! I think you might have taken better care of him.

REGGIE: *(To her.)* I couldn't take care of him, Rosalie. The day after you left me, I came down with – an illness – a severe illness. I was sick quite a long time.

ROSALIE: You poor boy! What was it?

REGGIE: It was – er – measles.

(As ROSALIE laughs Xing R, repeating "Measles!")

I can assure you, for a man of my age, measles is no laughing matter.

ROSALIE: *(To front of table.)* So you turned red – like my hair.

REGGIE: Yes, and I looked like the devil – and so did you.

ROSALIE: I know I did, Reggie. That's one reason I ran away.

REGGIE: It was?

ROSALIE: But I thought of course you'd follow me.

REGGIE: *(L. of table R.C.)* Well, I was angry with you for leaving me like that. And when I got over being angry, I had measles. And you can't follow anybody anywhere when you've got measles. And then, when I did try to find you, I couldn't – and I knew you didn't love me any more – and I'd lost your dog –

ROSALIE: Then you did try to find me?

REGGIE: I should say I did! I hired detectives and everything!

ROSALIE: Did you honestly?

REGGIE: Yes, I did. And before I got through I had a photograph or description of every red-headed woman in California. *(Sadly)* But none of them was you.

ROSALIE: *(Sits R.)* So you went to Japan.

REGGIE: Well, I had to go somewhere, didn't I?

ROSALIE: Yes, but we were going there together. If you'd really cared, you couldn't have gone there alone.

REGGIE: I would too, because I did. And I wouldn't do a thing I did if I wouldn't do it. *(Pause.)* Besides, you had no right to leave me like that – and hide so I couldn't find you. *(Pause.)* And then to divorce me on the grounds of desertion. I didn't desert you. *(Pause.)* *You deserted me!*

ROSALIE: *(Smiling)* I know, but the courts of California are so obliging. Did you like Japan, Reggie?

REGGIE: No.

ROSALIE: Did you go to China, too?

REGGIE: Yes.

ROSALIE: Did you like China?

REGGIE: No. And I went to India and I didn't like India. And I came back to California and I didn't like California and I returned to New York and I didn't like New York.

ROSALIE: Why didn't you like them, Reggie?

REGGIE: You know very well why – and then to have you come and see me like this.

(Taking her card from pocket and studying it.)

Somehow I'd hoped you wouldn't marry again.

ROSALIE: *(Rise.)* Marry again? What do you mean? *(As she sees card in hand)*

REGGIE: *(Reading from card)* Madame Brousseau.

ROSALIE: Oh, that – *(Goes to piano stands pensive over the keys, faintly strikes one.)*

REGGIE: *(Up to bar L.)* Oh, Rosalie, how could you?

ROSALIE: Then you don't believe in marrying again?

REGGIE: *(Emphatically)* No ! *(Startled by what he has said and hastily changing the subject.)* I mean one doesn't – one shouldn't – *(Desperately)* Where did you meet him, Rosalie?

ROSALIE: *(Who is thinking about something else.)* Meet whom?

REGGIE: Mister – Monsieur Brousseau. Did he come to town, too?

ROSALIE: No, Reggie. Why?

REGGIE: *(Throws card on table.)* Oh, nothing.

ROSALIE: I met him in Paris.

REGGIE: So *you* went to Paris!

ROSALIE: I had to. It's the only place where they really understand hair.

REGGIE: Hair? Has he got whiskers?

ROSALIE: *My* hair! Hadn't you noticed I'm not wearing it red?

REGGIE: Certainly, I noticed. I noticed it the minute you came into the room.

ROSALIE: That's nice. One does like being noticed.

REGGIE: Are you happy, Rosalie?

ROSALIE: Why, yes, Reggie. Perhaps, I'm not so happy as I might be. (*Down R.*) But I'm ever so much happier than I was . . . when I wasn't happy.

REGGIE: We were happy.

ROSALIE: Past tense, Reggie. That's where one finds happiness – in the past tense.

REGGIE: Well, I'm happy this minute. It's wonderful to see you again. I never thought I would. Won't you have some tea, or a cigarette, or a cocktail, or something?

ROSALIE: No, Reggie. Thanks just the same. (*X.L.C.*) I just came to get Pinky. And since he isn't here, I'll – I'll be going.

REGGIE: No, no! Please, Rosalie! I can't let you go – not yet. Shall you be in town long?

ROSALIE: No, I'm leaving tomorrow – for the West.

REGGIE: California?

ROSALIE: Yes – Santa Barbara,

REGGIE: (*Who can't believe his ears.*) Santa Barbara?

ROSALIE: Why not?

REGGIE: I don't see how you can go there, Rosalie,

ROSALIE: But I love Santa Barbara.

REGGIE: So do I! But I wouldn't go there with anybody else – not after . . .

ROSALIE: Why, you sentimental old thing! (*He advances, she retreats to back of sofa.*) (*Looking about her.*) You do yourself rather well, Reggie. (*Around sofa – to L. end.*) Rather interesting to see where I might have lived — if I hadn't gone in for red hair. Are you in town for the winter?

REGGIE: No, I'm – I'm going South tomorrow.

ROSALIE: Florida?

REGGIE: Yes. Palm Beach.

ROSALIE: Going alone?

REGGIE: N-no. There's – er – two of us going.

ROSALIE: Pleasure trip?

REGGIE: It's – it's supposed to be.

ROSALIE: You don't seem very enthusiastic about going.

REGGIE: *(Over to R. end of sofa.)* How can you expect me to be enthusiastic about going south when you're going West?

ROSALIE: Then why go?

REGGIE: I've – I've promised. Rosalie, we may never see each other again.

ROSALIE: Why not? It's a small world.

REGGIE: Yes. But I'll never dare to see you again after I get – to Florida.

ROSALIE: In that case, I think we ought to make the most of the little time we have.

REGGIE: We ought.

ROSALIE: *(Goes to him in front of sofa.)* We might dine together. Would you like that?

REGGIE: Like it? I should say I would!

ROSALIE: Then that's settled. Where shall we dine?

REGGIE: I – I can't dine with you, Rosalie.

ROSALIE: But I thought you said – *(Coldly)* Of course if you have an engagement.

REGGIE: *(Sighing)* Yes – that's it – I'm – I'm engaged.

ROSALIE: *(X back of sofa to door C.)* Then it's good-bye after all.

REGGIE: No, no! I can't never see you again. I – I will dine with you, Rosalie.

ROSALIE: *(Down R.C.)* No, Reggie, you refused my invitation once. It's cancelled.

REGGIE: But – Rosalie – !

ROSALIE: *(Eyeing him keenly)* Yes, Reggie, I mean it. *(He turns away. Smiling.)* But of course if *you* were to ask *me* to dine with you . . .

REGGIE: Rosalie! Will you?

ROSALIE: Why, yes! I'd love to. Where shall we dine? At the Ritz?

REGGIE: *(Disturbed)* No, let's not dine there.

ROSALIE: Delmonico's then?

REGGIE: No, I couldn't dine there, either. Somebody might see us.

ROSALIE: What!

REGGIE: I mean I'd rather not. You see – *(A sudden thought)* I've got it. We'll dine here!

ROSALIE: Here?

REGGIE: Yes, I've got a bully dinner round here somewhere. *(He hurries to back of sofa and hunts for menu, throwing pillows on floor before he finds it.)*

ROSALIE: *(To C.)* What in the world are you doing?

REGGIE: *(Discovering menu)* Oh! Here it is!. *(He hands it to her.)*

ROSALIE: *(Taking it.)* What is it?

REGGIE: The dinner we're going to have – the menu –

ROSALIE: Oh, the menu!

REGGIE: Yes.

ROSALIE: *(Studying it)* What's g-r-e- n-o-u-i-double l-e-s?

REGGIE: You should know being married to a Frenchman. Frog's legs, of course.

ROSALIE: It's a wonderful dinner, Reggie. Sure you weren't giving a party?

REGGIE: That's just it. I was giving a party.

ROSALIE: I didn't dream you were giving a party. That changes everything. *(Down R.C.)*

REGGIE: No, it doesn't. I'll get rid of the party.

ROSALIE: How?

REGGIE: *(Worried)* I don't know. *(Pause.)* But I'll get rid of it.

ROSALIE: No, Reggie, I won't let you.

REGGIE: But I want to, Rosalie. I never wanted anything so much in my life. Besides, it's only a stag party – just a lot of men.

ROSALIE: Oh, if it's only men! You're sure you'd rather have me?

REGGIE: You know I would. You'll come?

ROSALIE: Why, yes, Reggie. I'll come with pleasure.

REGGIE: Rosalie! It's so sweet of you to come. I'm so glad you're coming. I don't know what to do.

ROSALIE: Well, you might tell me what time dinner is.

REGGIE: Any time you say.

ROSALIE: Eight o'clock, then. I'll bring my maid of course.

REGGIE: Oh, I shouldn't do that – if she's good-looking.

ROSALIE: Why not?

REGGIE: On Jackson's account.

ROSALIE: Jackson?

REGGIE: Yes. My man Jackson – he's a bigamist.

ROSALIE: Bigamist?

REGGIE: Always getting married. If you bring your maid, it might lead to trouble.

ROSALIE: *(Up C.)* Oh, you needn't worry about Hooper!

REGGIE: *(As she starts up C.)* You're not going!

ROSALIE: *(At door)* I only landed this morning. I've just come from Paris, Reggie, and there are trunks to unpack, and all sorts of things to do.

REGGIE: You're sure this isn't all a dream, Rosalie? You're really coming back?

ROSALIE: *(At door.)* Yes, Reggie.

REGGIE: Cross your heart, and hope to die if you don't,

ROSALIE: *(Crossing her heart.)* Cross my heart and hope to die. *Au revoir*, Reggie.

(She goes out.)

- REGGIE: Oh, I'm going with you as far as the door. *(He follows her. A few words are heard indistinctly in the hall – JACKSON enters R. He smiles appreciatively, discovering cushions on floor, and restores them to sofa, REGGIE enters up C. beaming,)* (C.) Madame Brousseau is dining with us tonight, Jackson.
- JACKSON: *(L.)* With you and the gentlemen, sir?
- REGGIE: No, with me.
- JACKSON: Very good, sir. But where will the gentlemen dine?
- REGGIE: That's just it. Where will they dine? What do you suggest, Jackson?
- JACKSON: *(Thinking rapidly)* Well, I'm afraid, sir, you'll have to be taken suddenly ill.
- REGGIE: Yes, yes! I'm ill. Go on.
- JACKSON: Then I'll ring up Mr. Wells and ask him to take over the dinner, sir. And I'll send the flowers and decorations over to the club, and order the dinner there.
- REGGIE: Good! You'll find Mr. Wells at the club. Get busy, Jackson. *(Goes R.C.)*
- JACKSON: Yes, sir. *(He goes up to telephone which is on desk.)*
- REGGIE: *(Goes to Jackson)* Oh, I forgot. *(JACKSON turns.)* Madame Brousseau's maid is coming tonight, too.
- JACKSON: *(Bowing)* Oh, thank you, sir.
- REGGIE: *(Raises finger of warning.)* Now, no foolishness, mind!
- JACKSON: Oh, no, sir.
- REGGIE: And no matter what happens, we are not to be disturbed.
- JACKSON: Yes, sir.
- REGGIE: Now, I don't want any mistake about that, Jackson. We're not to be disturbed. Are you quite sure you understand?
- JACKSON: *(Telephone raised. With a knowing look.)* I understand perfectly, sir. Perfectly.
- REGGIE: *(Embarrassed and enraged)* Oh, go to the devil! *(Turning up.)*

END OF ACT ONE

WEDDING BELLS
ACT TWO

SCENE: *Same as Act One.*

TIME: *Evening, nine o'clock, of the same day.*

RISE: *JACKSON, enters R U. and as doors open laughter of Reggie and Rosalie. He Xes to table takes lid off cigarette box to see if it's full. Pushes electric button. Brackets in room light. Foots and border up. He picks up a beautiful evening wrap and a pair of long white gloves from sofa. He smiles, shakes his head, and glances knowingly at dining room door. Smells gloves, sighs, eyes upturned. JACKSON enters R I E. With tray containing decanter of cointreau and two glasses.*

JACKSON: A little drink, here. Quite so. *(He carries wrap and gloves, and lays them carefully on chair extreme L)*

(He Xes to desk and carefully lifts receiver off hook)

Receivers off the hooks, nobody can ring us up.

(X to back of table R C; door bell-rings)

JACKSON: *(Goes up)* That will be the lady's maid. *(JACKSON straightens his tie, runs his hand across his hair, throws out his chest, and is ready for immediate conquest. The voice of REGGIE calling him twice from the dining room is heard. With an impatient gesture, JACKSON goes off R. Pause. HOOPER, Rosalie's maid, comes in then comes down L C.)*

(HOOPER is a rosy-cheeked, good-natured Englishwoman of about twenty-eight, neatly dressed in black with a very low Cockney accent! Indicating chair R C)

HOOPER 'Ello? 'ello? Where's my lady? Ma'am? *(She looks off L, with her back to the doors R)*

(JACKSON enters from dining room. He is alert and interested. He advances gracefully and bows)

JACKSON: Good evening, Miss.

(HOOPER turns her head slowly, the light of conquest in her eyes. When she sees Jackson, her expression changes to one of unbelief and amazement)

HOOPER: Wilfred!

JACKSON: Emily! (*Sternly*) What are you doing here?

HOOPER: My lady's dining 'ere. I've come for 'er.

JACKSON: (*C.*) Oh! Then you didn't know I was here?

HOOPER: No, Wilfie. If I 'ad, I expect I wouldn't 'ave come.

JACKSON: Well, aren't you glad to see me?

HOOPER: (*R. of table*) Why should I be glad to see you – wife deserter!

JACKSON: I didn't desert you, Emily. I only went away for a while.

HOOPER: And us married only four months.

JACKSON: Shameful, some would call it.

HOOPER: (*To front of sofa – looks front*) Good riddance, I called it.

JACKSON: Why, you ought to have been heart-broken.

HOOPER: Just like a man.

JACKSON: Emily, have you – have you been true to me? (*Over to her*)

HOOPER: (*Turns on him, raising her voice*) 'Ow dare you ask me that, and you running around loose all these years!

JACKSON: Ah! Then you haven't been true to me.

HOOPER: I'm not saying I 'aven't.

JACKSON: (*Pleased*) Ah!

HOOPER: And I'm not saying I 'ave.

JACKSON: (*Not pleased*) Ah.

HOOPER: (*To him*) And don't tell me you've been true to me, nighver. I know different.

JACKSON: (*Anxiously*) What do you know?

HOOPER: (*To L*) I know you, Wilfie.

JACKSON: Can I help it if I'm attractive to the ladies? And I can say this, Emily: for the

past year I haven't had much to do with – many. *(She looks)* Now, doesn't that show I've changed?

HOOPER: *(Front of sofa)* Maybe you ain't changed like you think. Maybe you ain't so attractive as you was.

JACKSON: *(Startled)* I hadn't thought of that.

HOOPER: *(Walks front)* Well, think about it. It'll do you good.

JACKSON: *(Reproachfully)* Emily!

HOOPER: *(To L end of sofa)* Sorry, old dear, but you asked for it.

JACKSON: *You've* grown into a very beautiful woman, Emily.

HOOPER: I see you 'aven't forgot 'ow to spread the sugar. Only I'm fed up wivv sugar. *(Sits to L of table)*

JACKSON: *(Over to her)* Who's been feedin' you sugar, Emily?

HOOPER: There's been dozens! There was a swell after me – an American wanted to marry me 'e did. 'E was a nice boy, too. Used the most wonderful language. I remember his very words. *(Front and half declaiming)* 'Twas towards sunset, the fairy hour when dreams come true, and in a 'edgerow of 'awf-'orn and wild roses, a blackbird caroled to 'is mate.

JACKSON: He said all that?

HOOPER: *(Rises, goes round table to back of it)* 'E said a lot more, but I forget the rest.

JACKSON: Emily, the minute I saw you tonight I says to myself, I says – there's the only woman who ever really understood me.

HOOPER: You ain't 'ard to understand, Wilfie. Give you wot you want and you don't want it. Deny you, and you will 'ave it. That's you.

JACKSON: *(Over to her)* Emily – let's start all over again.

HOOPER: No fear!

JACKSON: I'll be good to you.

HOOPER: There's plenty as'd be good to me if I'd let 'em.

JACKSON: I've saved quite a bit of money.

HOOPER: *(Faces front, interested)* 'ow much?

JACKSON: Over a thousand pounds.

HOOPER: *(Over to him)* You always 'ad a way wivv you, Wilfie.

JACKSON: Would you mind kissing me, Emily?

HOOPER: And you wivv a ffousand pounds? Lord, no! I'd love to –

JACKSON: Emily!

HOOPER: Wilfie! *(They embrace)*

(REGGIE and ROSALIE, in high spirits, enter from L.)

REGGIE: *(To Rosalie, indicating Jackson and Hooper)* What did I tell you?

(HOOPER Xes to Jackson's left; REGGIE is back of table)

ROSALIE: *(R. as Hooper and Jackson spring apart)* Hooper, I'm surprised at you.

HOOPER: Oh, ma'am, it ain't what you ffink.

JACKSON: *(Bowing)* I'm her husband, ma'am.

REGGIE: That was quick work, Jackson.

JACKSON: No, she really is, sir.

ROSALIE: Oh! *(To Hooper)* Are you quite sure he's your husband, Hooper?

HOOPER: Oh, yes, ma'am!

ROSALIE: Well, in that case, carry on. *(She goes to piano, sits down and plays softly)*

REGGIE: You and your wife might continue your reconciliation elsewhere, Jackson.

JACKSON: Yes, sir. Thank you, sir. *(To Hooper)* This way, Miss. *(Stands at door R. HOOPER passes him, turns.)*

REGGIE: *(As Jackson is about to follow her)* Oh, Jackson. *(HOOPER exits)*

JACKSON: *(Turning)* Yes, sir.

REGGIE: *(Down L)* I'm going to ask you rather an impertinent question, Jackson.

JACKSON: *(To C)* Thank you, sir.

REGGIE: You see, things have occurred here tonight that are – er – rather unusual.

JACKSON: *(Glancing at Rosalie)* Yes, sir. They have indeed, sir.

REGGIE: *(Coldly)* I refer to your discovery, under my roof, of a long-lost wife.

JACKSON: I think you will agree with me, sir, that one's first love is one's best love.

REGGIE: *(Heartily)* Certainly. *(Seeing Jackson's glance at Rosalie, pulls at Jackson's sleeve)* That's not the point. What I want to know is: is she really your wife?

JACKSON: Oh, yes, sir.

REGGIE: Your first wife?

JACKSON: My sacred oath on it, sir.

REGGIE: All right, that will do, Jackson.

JACKSON: Thank you, sir. *(Goes out L)*

REGGIE: *(Xing to piano)* She's really his wife. *(ROSALIE stops playing)* Just fancy that rascal Jackson finding his wife like that. And me finding *(Leans across end of piano)* you. I tell you this is a great evening! *(He beams happily)*

ROSALIE: *(Who has been playing softly and humming a little tune)* Yes, isn't it? Do you remember that song I used to sing for Pinky, Reggie?

REGGIE: The one that made him howl?

ROSALIE: Yes. He used to always howl at the same place. Remember?

REGGIE: I should say I do!

ROSALIE: Will you howl for me, Reggie?

(ROSALIE sings the song; REGGIE at a certain passage imitates Pinky howling; they laugh, she stops playing)

REGGIE: Rosalie, do you remember the time you thought you'd lost your –

ROSALIE: Yes. And all the time it was hanging up behind your –

REGGIE: Yes. And you accused me of hiding it –

ROSALIE: Yes. And then you made me apologize by –

REGGIE: Yes. And then you put it on – *(They smile)* And afterwards, we went out to the Country Club for lunch. *(They laugh)*

ROSALIE: And after lunch, we went to see that house we nearly bought.

REGGIE: Prettiest little house I ever saw!

ROSALIE: Such sweet furniture.

REGGIE: Yes. Chintzes and things.

ROSALIE: And that lovely wide veranda!

REGGIE: Yes. All covered with yellow roses.

ROSALIE: Why, Reggie! Those roses weren't yellow – they were pink.

REGGIE: Pink nothing! I remember them perfectly. They were yellow.

ROSALIE: But Reggie – they weren't yellow.

REGGIE: There you go! It's like that time we went over the San Marcos Pass. You said it was only twenty miles, and I said it was thirty. And I was right.

ROSALIE: I may not be good at mathematics, but I know pink roses when I see them.

REGGIE: Yes – when you see them.

ROSALIE: Well, we won't quarrel about it.

REGGIE: No, of course not.

ROSALIE: *(Pause.)* Only they were pink.

REGGIE: All right. If you say they were pink, they were pink.

ROSALIE: Oh! Oh! Then you admit – ?

REGGIE: I admit nothing. If you want the roses to be pink, I'll let them be pink.

ROSALIE: I don't want them to be pink. I'd just as soon they'd be yellow.

REGGIE: Then, why contradict me when I say they were yellow?

- ROSALIE: Didn't you contradict me when I said they were pink?
- REGGIE: Yes, I did. *(Pause.)* And I'm sorry. The roses were pink, Rosalie.
- ROSALIE: No, Reggie, they were yellow.
- REGGIE: Well, a pinkish yellow.
- ROSALIE: Or a yellowish pink. *(They smile)*
- REGGIE: It's just like old times. *(ROSALIE sings refrain of "Wedding Bells". REGGIE harmonizes last half)* Rosalie, why didn't we end that other quarrel like this?
- ROSALIE: How could we when you didn't say you were sorry?
- REGGIE: Well, I was sorry – afterwards.
- ROSALIE: Yes. But then it was too late.
- REGGIE: It wouldn't have been too late – if you'd really cared. And now you're married to someone else.
- ROSALIE: I thought we agreed not to talk about that. *(She leaves piano and Xes to sofa)*
- REGGIE: Yes. We're going to be happy while we can. *(Xing to table and pouring out two liqueurs)* Have some?
- ROSALIE: What is it?
- REGGIE: What do you think?
- ROSALIE: Not Cointreau? *(As REGGIE nods "yes")* Why, I haven't had any since – Santa Barbara. *(Sitting)*
- REGGIE: *(Coming down)* Well, I should hope not! Cointreau's our drink. *(Handing her glass)* The old toast, Rosalie.
- ROSALIE: *(Puzzled)* The old toast? *(Remembering)* Oh, you mean – *(Extending her glass)* Today is forever.
- REGGIE: Tomorrow comes never.
- (They touch glasses and drink)*
- REGGIE: *(Shivering at the thought of tomorrow, takes glass from her)* Let's not talk about tomorrow. *(Sets glasses on table L – brightly)* Want to see something?

ROSALIE: What?

REGGIE: *(Up to desk)* Oh, something!

ROSALIE: Will I like it?

REGGIE: Well, I think you'll be surprised.

ROSALIE: Will it be a nice surprise?

REGGIE: I hope so. *(Takes out box from Act One, and returns to Rosalie with it.)*

ROSALIE: *(Eyeing box)* Goodness! All tied up with silk ribbon! It must be valuable.

REGGIE: *(Sits R of her)* It is.

ROSALIE: Have I ever seen it before?

REGGIE: Yes. Lots of times.

ROSALIE: Did I – Reggie – look at me. Did I ever wear it?

REGGIE: *(Laughs)* I should say not.

ROSALIE: *(Nettled)* What are you laughing at? Men have been known to keep . . . things their wives have worn.

REGGIE: *(Hotly)* I didn't have things. I didn't have even a letter. I had nothing but this.

(He unwraps, from tissue paper, a battered patent leather shoe and holds it up. It is the shoe Pinky chewed on the memorable morning he met Rosalie)

ROSALIE: What in the world –?

REGGIE: It's my shoe.

ROSALIE: Your shoe?

REGGIE: Yes. The one Pinky chewed. I've always kept it, because if it hadn't been for Pinky chewing it, I'd never have met you.

*(ROSALIE who is deeply touched, wipes her eyes surreptitiously.
REGGIE does not notice this. Pointing to scar on shoe)*

Here are Pinky's tooth marks. I tell you, Rosalie, Pinky was some dog.

(Proudly displaying scar on wrist) See that scar! That's where he bit me.

ROSALIE: He didn't mean to bite you.

REGGIE: Of course not. Why, that dog fairly worshiped me. I felt terrible when he was stolen, Rosalie. He was all I had left. *(Puts shoe in box)*

ROSALIE: Let's not talk about Pinky anymore.

REGGIE: *(Lays box beside him)* Well, there's another thing. *(Rises to L C)* Rosalie, tomorrow I'm –

ROSALIE: *(Rise, interrupting him)* I thought we agreed not to talk about tomorrow.

REGGIE: We did. But there's something I've got to tell you sooner or later.

ROSALIE: *(To R end of sofa)* Let's make it later, then. Much later.

REGGIE: I ought to have told you this afternoon. Only if I had, you wouldn't have come. And if I told you now, you'd go home.

ROSALIE: I don't want to go home . . . yet. *(X to table)* I'm having a wonderful time. *(Seeing card on table)* Is it – is it because of *(Picking up card)* Monsieur Brousseau that you – ?

REGGIE: *(Down L. Of her)* No. Yes. Let's not talk about him, either. I hate him.

ROSALIE: Because he's French? I adore the French!

REGGIE: Yes, you marry them.

ROSALIE: Are you jealous, Reggie?

REGGIE: Rosalie, if – *(He stops abruptly)*

ROSALIE: What, Reggie?

REGGIE: Nothing.

ROSALIE: That isn't true.

REGGIE: No, but it seems so disloyal to – *(He stops)*

ROSALIE: Reggie, I had no idea you were such a Puritan.

REGGIE: I'm not a Puritan. If I were, I wouldn't be making love to another man's wife.

ROSALIE: But you *haven't* been making love to me.

REGGIE: If you knew anything about me, you'd know that every time I've looked at you I've told you I loved you.

ROSALIE: But you don't love me.

REGGIE: I do love you. I'll always love you. *(As ROSALIE puts her handkerchief to her eyes and sits L of table)* Why, Rosalie, dearest! What is it?

ROSALIE: It's because – you see, when I came here this afternoon, I – I hadn't seen you for so long, and – and I thought perhaps – there might be someone else. *(She glances at him to see how he take this. REGGIE starts guiltily and looks front)* But when you told me – and oh, it was sweet to hear you say it – that you thought – you thought it was wrong to marry again, I – I felt so guilty.

REGGIE: So did I – *(She looks at him – hastily)* I mean, one does get lonely. *(Goes up)* And one marries again just because – *(Down to her)*

ROSALIE: No, no! One doesn't marry again if one cares. *(As he looks at her wonderingly)* You – you really love me?

REGGIE: *(Turning away)* Yes, God help me.

ROSALIE: *(Rise, very alluring)* I've heard that God helps those who help themselves.

REGGIE: *(Turning as if to embrace her, then stopping, gloomily)* Not if they help themselves to something they've no right to.

(Doors up C open and JACKSON enters)

JACKSON: *(L of doors)* I beg your pardon, sir, but Mr. Wells has come.

REGGIE: I'm not at home. *(Goes L C)* *(ROSALIE goes R)*

SPENCER: *(Entering)* I say, look here, my dear old boy, what's all this about – *(Catching sight of ROSALIE, and stopping suddenly)* Oh!

REGGIE: I'm not at home to any more callers, Jackson.

JACKSON: Yes, sir. *(He goes out and closes doors up C)*

SPENCER: I'm awfully sorry, Reggie, but you see your being ill like that –

REGGIE: Didn't Jackson tell you it was nothing serious?

- SPENCER: *(Who has been trying to peer past Reggie, much to Reggie's annoyance)* On the contrary, old boy, Jackson said you were suffering from a severe – er – heart attack. So I slipped away to see how you were – the boys were worried, you know. But I see that you're all right –
- REGGIE: *(Urging Wells off – Wells starts)* Of course, I'm all right.
- ROSALIE: *(Who is R of table has been very much amused)* It was bad of Reggie to throw over the party like that. Though I feel very flattered.
- SPENCER: *(Coming down when Rosalie speaks)* By Jove, I don't blame him! *(Back of table)* I should have done exactly the same thing in his place.
- ROSALIE: *(Smiling)* You must present this nice man to me, Reggie.
- SPENCER: Yes, Reggie. *(To Rosalie, shaking hands with her)* My name's Spencer Wells. I'm Reggie's best friend.
- REGGIE: *(Taking the box, behind Spencer's back, and shoving it under the sofa, then goes around to back of sofa)* You are not!
- ROSALIE: And I once had the honor of being Reggie's wife for a few minutes.
- SPENCER: Oh! Awfully glad to meet you. Great pleasure to meet any wife of Reggie's.
- ROSALIE: Has he so many wives?
- SPENCER: Oh, no! But he's going to –
- REGGIE: *(To L C – sharply)* Spencer!
- ROSALIE: He's going to what, Mr. Wells?
- SPENCER: He – he's going to – *(REGGIE, behind ROSALIE mouths "Flor-i-da" several times)* – to Florida.
- ROSALIE: So he told me. But perhaps he'll change his mind.
- SPENCER: *(Xing to Reggie)* Oh, I say! You can't back out at the last minute like that.
- REGGIE: I have no idea of backing out.
- ROSALIE: *(Smiling)* Wait and see, Mr. Wells, wait and see. *(Sits R of table)*
- SPENCER: *(Deliberately misinterpreting this as an invitation, sits L of table, laying hat on table)* Oh, thanks. It's much nicer here than at the party. I'm glad I came –

because if I hadn't, I wouldn't have met you, and – if I hadn't met you –

REGGIE: *(Over to him)* Spencer! Don't you think you'd better go back to the party and tell them I'm all right? *(Takes hold of him)*

SPENCER: Yes, I expect I had. *(Brightening)* I could telephone 'em, you know.

REGGIE: *(Hands him hat)* I think you'd better do it in person. *(Gets him to doors C)*

SPENCER: *(R of Reggie – sighing)* Oh, all right. *(To Rosalie)* I do hope I'll see you again.

ROSALIE: I hope so, too, Mr. Wells. *(REGGIE touches Spencer)*

SPENCER: Thank you. Well, goodbye. *(He starts up C)*

ROSALIE: Goodbye.

SPENCER: *(To Reggie, who has followed him up C)* Goodbye, old chap. *(As he turns to go out, JACKSON enters)*

JACKSON: Excuse me, sir.

REGGIE: *(L of doors, crossly)* What is it now, Jackson?

JACKSON: *(R. of Reggie – very much worried)* A lady has come, sir.

SPENCER: *(R. of doors)* By Jove!

REGGIE: *(To JACKSON)* Didn't I tell you I wasn't at home to any more callers tonight?

JACKSON: Yes, sir.

REGGIE: *(Down L C, sharply)* Well? *(SPENCER drops down R C)*

JACKSON: *(Down)* Sir, I said to her 'You can't come in'. She came in. I said to her 'You shan't step inside this house'. She stepped. I said to her 'What do you want here?' She said 'Tomorrow your boss is going to get –'

REGGIE: *(Sharply)* Jackson!

JACKSON: Yes, sir?

REGGIE: That will do.

JACKSON: Yes, sir. She gave me this. *(REGGIE takes card and waves him away)*

SPENCER: *(Taking card and reading)* Miss Alice Wood, representing the Morning Press.

ROSALIE: Really?

SPENCER: By Jove! A newspaper woman. You'll have to see her, Reggie.

REGGIE: I will not! Look here, Jackson! Didn't I tell you I wasn't to be disturbed?

JACKSON: Yes, sir.

REGGIE: Well, I've never been so disturbed in my life.

JACKSON: I'm sorry, sir.

REGGIE: *(Indicating Wells)* First Mr. Wells comes strolling in. And now there's a newspaper woman in the library. *(Sits at table, to Rosalie)* I'm awfully sorry. *(To Jackson)* Jackson, you are to get rid of that newspaper woman.

JACKSON: I'll do my best, sir. *(He exits)*

REGGIE: *(Pointedly)* And Spencer, you're to go back to the club.

SPENCER: *(Rises)* Yes – by Jove! I must be going. *(To Rosalie)* *(Back of table)* Goodbye, again. *(Extends hand, they shake)*

ROSALIE: Goodbye again, Mr. Wells.

REGGIE: *(Impatiently)* Spencer!

SPENCER: Going, old boy, going. *(He starts up C at door, turning and smiling at Rosalie)* Well, goodbye. *(As he is about to go out and JACKSON enters)* Oh! *(He lingers hopefully)*

JACKSON: I'm sorry, sir, but the newspaper lady refuses to go.

REGGIE: Oh, does she?

JACKSON: Until she's seen you personally, sir.

REGGIE: *(R. C.)* But I can't see her. I'm ill. Didn't you tell her I was ill?

JACKSON: Yes, sir. But she said she happened to know you were not ill.

REGGIE: She did?

JACKSON: I'm afraid you'll have to see her, sir.

REGGIE: Oh, all right! I'll see her.

JACKSON: Yes, sir. Thank you, sir. *(Exits)*

REGGIE *(C.)* Now who in the world could have told that woman I wasn't ill? *(Down)*
Did you, Spencer?

SPENCER: How could I, you silly ass? I thought you *were* ill.

REGGIE: That's so. *(To Rosalie)* Rosalie? *(Pause)* You'll excuse me?

ROSALIE: Why, of course, Reggie.

REGGIE: If you want anything, while I'm gone, just ring, and Jackson will come.
(Starting up – ROSALIE and SPENCER smile at each other) Come on, Spencer.

SPENCER: *(X to Rosalie)* You don't mind my staying, do you?

ROSALIE: Why, I wouldn't dream of letting you go.

SPENCER: *(To Reggie)* There! You see?

ROSALIE: *(XL to Spencer)* I had no idea Reggie was so famous – newspaper women forcing themselves into the house to interview him!

SPENCER: Well, it's because, tomorrow, Reggie is going to –

REGGIE: *(Sharply stamps on SPENCER's toes)* Spencer!

SPENCER: *(Gasping in pain)* Florida.

REGGIE: *(He grabs SPENCER and pulls him aside; to ROSALIE)* Just a little matter of business, Rosalie.

(She turns away; they talk in pantomime. SPENCER assures him he won't tell ROSALIE about the wedding tomorrow.)

I shan't be gone long, Rosalie. *(SPENCER lays hat on table and goes R)*

ROSALIE: If Mr. Wells is as nice as he looks, I shan't miss you.

REGGIE: *(At door)* Well, he isn't *(He goes out up C)* *(Closes doors R)*

SPENCER: *(Behind sofa)* So you're Rosalie.

ROSALIE: Has Reggie told you about me?

SPENCER: Not much, actually.

ROSALIE: Really?

SPENCER: For one thing he didn't tell me how wonderful you are.

ROSALIE: *(Sits L end sofa, pleased)* I think I'm going to like you, Mr. Wells.

SPENCER: *(Leans on back of sofa)* Are you married – at present?

ROSALIE: Why, Mr. Wells? Are you?

SPENCER: *(To R end of sofa)* Oh, no! I never marry!

ROSALIE: Oh, but so many married men have said they'd never marry!

SPENCER: Yes, but I've a system. I never propose to ladies who could possibly accept me. I like to love hopelessly – and often!

ROSALIE: *(Very much amused)* What a butterfly you are!

SPENCER: Is it wrong to be a butterfly?

ROSALIE: Aren't butterflies a bit heartless?

SPENCER: If they are, why are there so many little butterflies every spring?

ROSALIE: *(She laughs)* Of course, I know how difficult it is to pin butterflies down to facts but will you tell me something?

SPENCER: Tell you anything, dear lady, anything!

ROSALIE: Then, why is it Reggie doesn't want to go to Palm Beach tomorrow?

SPENCER: Did he tell you he doesn't?

ROSALIE: You know perfectly well he doesn't.

SPENCER: I don't know anything of the sort.

ROSALIE: What is it he's trying to hide from me?

SPENCER: What could Reggie possibly want to hide from you?

ROSALIE: My poor, ingenuous friend. Do you think I'm blind? Don't you suppose I know Reggie told you not to tell me something?

SPENCER: Well, I didn't tell you, did I?

ROSALIE: Oh! Then he *did* tell you not to tell me something?

SPENCER: (*Reproachfully*) Must we talk about Reggie? Can't you be interested in me?

ROSALIE: You certainly can keep a secret.

SPENCER: What's that got to do with it?

ROSALIE: Nothing, because I know what it is Reggie told you not to tell me.

SPENCER: (*Amused*) Oh, you do?

ROSALIE: Yes, I do – You don't believe me?

SPENCER: Well, of course I believe you.

ROSALIE: But I do know. Reggie told you –

SPENCER: Yes.

ROSALIE: Not to tell me –

SPENCER: Yes.

ROSALIE: Frankly, Mr. Wells, I don't approve at all.

SPENCER: Don't approve of what?

ROSALIE: Of Reggie's marrying that Hunter girl tomorrow. (*X R C*)

SPENCER: Well, I'm da – shed! Then you do know!

ROSALIE: (*Laughs*) Of course, I do.

SPENCER: Well, Reggie doesn't know you know.

ROSALIE: I know he doesn't. He's been trying to tell me all evening, only I won't let him. I didn't count on his marrying so soon. The engagement was only announced two weeks ago.

SPENCER: You knew about it two weeks ago?

ROSALIE: Yes. I read it in the Paris Herald.

SPENCER: And you hopped on a boat and came right over.

ROSALIE: What is she like, Mr. Wells?

SPENCER: Marcia? Oh, she's like a kitten – purrs and scratches and plays about.

ROSALIE: Has she – has she red hair?

SPENCER: No. Marcia's hair isn't red.

ROSALIE: *(With a sigh of relief)* That's the one thing I was afraid of. You want Reggie to be happy, don't you?

SPENCER: Of course I do.

ROSALIE: He'll never be happy with that Hunter girl.

SPENCER: How do you know he won't?

ROSALIE: Because he doesn't love her.

SPENCER: How do you know he doesn't?

ROSALIE: Because he loves me.

SPENCER: How do you know he does?

ROSALIE: He as good as told me.

SPENCER: Did you make him tell you?

ROSALIE: Yes. But if it wasn't true he wouldn't have told me.

SPENCER: Why not? I would.

ROSALIE: Yes, but you're a butterfly. Reggie's not like that. I behaved very badly toward him, Mr. Wells.

SPENCER: Yes, I know. Dyed your hair and ran away.

ROSALIE: *(To front of table)* He shan't marry her.

SPENCER: I don't see how you're going to prevent it. He can't jilt her at the altar, can he?

ROSALIE: *(Reproachfully)* Then you won't help me?

SPENCER: Good lord, I'm Best Man. I'm supposed to help him get married, not vice versa!

ROSALIE: Mr. Wells, if you don't help me, I can make it very unpleasant for you.

SPENCER: How?

ROSALIE: By marrying you.

SPENCER: *(To C)* But, dear lady, I don't want to get married.

ROSALIE: I hope you don't think I couldn't marry you.

SPENCER: *(To her)* I know jolly well you could.

ROSALIE: You'd better change your mind and help me.

SPENCER: No! I'll not meddle with Reggie's affairs! That's flat.

ROSALIE: *(Laughs)* Poor butterfly. I used the most awful threat I could think of, and you actually believed me.

SPENCER: I say! Didn't you mean it!

ROSALIE: Of course not. But I like you much better than I did. It's rather refreshing to meet a butterfly with a backbone. *(Door slams off R)*

(Stopping suddenly and listening)

Wasn't that the front door?

SPENCER: Yes. It's that newspaper woman leaving!

ROSALIE: No, unless I'm greatly mistaken that's Miss Hunter arriving.

SPENCER: What? Marcia?

ROSALIE: *(Back of table)* Why not?

SPENCER: Jackson wouldn't let her in!

ROSALIE: No. But my maid would.

SPENCER: Your maid?

ROSALIE: Yes, I hope you don't mind. I did want to see what Miss Hunter was like.

SPENCER: By Jove! *(Suddenly suspicious)* Look here! Was it you told that newspaper woman Reggie wasn't sick?

ROSALIE: Of course.

SPENCER: Well! *(VOICE of MARCIA and MRS. HUNTER heard in hall)*

ROSALIE *(Up to R of door)* Sssh! We have callers.

(MARCIA enters followed by MRS. HUNTER, who goes round sofa to L.; MARCIA goes down to Spencer)

MARCIA: Oh, Spencer! How is Reggie?

SPENCER: *(Rises)* He's sick.

MARCIA: Then it's true!

SPENCER: Yes. But I say, how did you know?

MARCIA: A newspaper woman called to ask how long the wedding would be postponed.

MRS. HUNTER: She said Reginald was so ill he had to put off his dinner tonight.

MARCIA: And we tried to ring up, and Central said the line was out of order. Is it serious, Spencer?

SPENCER: Oh, no! It isn't – serious. Not serious –

MARCIA: Oh, I'm so glad! I had visions of the wedding postponed, and everything.

MRS. HUNTER: Then he'll be all right for tomorrow?

SPENCER: Oh, yes. He'll be all right. *(XC)* I'll go and tell him you're here.

ROSALIE: *(Who has been standing R, studying MARCIA, now coming forward)* You'll do nothing of the sort.

SPENCER: Yes, but –

ROSALIE: *(Front of table R)* I don't know what possesses Mr. Wells, but I can assure you there's nothing wrong with Reggie.

SPENCER: *(Hysterically)* Exactly! Nothing radically wrong, you know. But we just

dropped in to see how he was. We were dining together, you see, and –

MARCIA: But Douglas said you had taken over Reggie's dinner.

SPENCER: Oh, no! When Reggie and Douglas dropped out, I dropped out too! Rather! *(Trying to urge Marcia and her mother up L)* So you'd better trot along home, now and – and we'll go, too. *(To Rosalie)* I'll get your wrap.

ROSALIE: Don't bother. *(To Marcia)* There's nothing to worry about, really.

MARCIA: Yes. *(Eying ROSALIE suspiciously)* Who are you?

ROSALIE: I'm a friend of Reggie's.

SPENCER: Yes. She's a sort of relation.

MRS. HUNTER: Oh! Some relation of Reggie's!

ROSALIE: As a matter of fact —

SPENCER: Yes! As a matter of fact –

ROSALIE: As a matter of fact, I'm no relation to Reginald at all – now.

SPENCER: No, not now. You see she married a cousin of Reggie's, and the cousin died. *(Winks at Rosalie)*

ROSALIE: Mr. Wells!

SPENCER: No! It wasn't a cousin, it was an uncle – uncle. *(Winks at Rosalie – to Marcia)* You ought to go now. You ought really.

MARCIA: Be quiet. *(X to Rosalie)* I know who you are now. *(To Mrs. Hunter)* Mother, she's Reggie's divorced wife.

MRS. HUNTER: Marcia!

MARCIA: Well, she is. *(To Rosalie)* Aren't you? *(SPENCER goes up)*

ROSALIE: Well, yes – since you ask.

MRS. HUNTER: But you didn't tell me Reginald had been divorced.

MARCIA: I'm telling you now. *(To Rosalie)* What are you doing here?

ROSALIE: I came to dinner.

MARCIA: Dinner?

ROSALIE: Yes. Reggie invited me to dinner.

MARCIA: But if he was sick –

ROSALIE: Oh, that was only an excuse.

MARCIA: Reggie threw over his farewell bachelor dinner for you?

ROSALIE: Strange, isn't it?

MARCIA: It's rather strange, then, that you should have had dinner with Mr. Wells.

ROSALIE: I didn't. I had dinner with Reggie. *(Pause)* You don't believe me?

MARCIA: Frankly, I don't.

ROSALIE: I felt, in fairness to myself, I should explain why I was here. But if you don't believe me, I can't help it. We had frog's legs and Cointreau. *(ROSALIE picks up the menu from the table and hands it to MARCIA)*

MARCIA: Well!

MRS. HUNTER: *(X to Marcia)* Never mind, my darling.

MARCIA: But I do mind. *(X to ROSALIE)* You can have your old last year's husband. I don't want him.

ROSALIE: I hope you don't think I want him.

MARCIA: Well, then, why are you here?

ROSALIE: I told you: Reggie invited me to dinner. What Reggie didn't invite me to was the wedding – he didn't even tell me he was engaged!

MARCIA: But that only makes it worse.

ROSALIE: Yes. I'm very cross with Reggie. He should have told me this afternoon.

MARCIA: She was here this afternoon, too!

MRS. HUNTER: But Marcia –

MARCIA: *(To Mother)* Well, you don't think I'm going to marry a man who has tea *and* dinner with his divorced wife the day before our wedding, do you? He isn't

the only man in the world. There are plenty of others. Men much nicer than Reggie. Why, there's one breaking his heart for me this minute.

MRS. HUNTER: Marcia!

MARCIA: Well, there is. *(X to him)* Spencer!

SPENCER: Now, look here, Marcia!

MARCIA: Oh, I don't mean you. Get Douglas.

SPENCER: Douglas?

MARCIA: Yes. He's waiting in the motor. Tell him I want him.

SPENCER: Oh! Douglas, tender and true! I'll fetch him.

(He goes out up C; ROSALIE Xes slowly to piano and sits)

MRS. HUNTER: *(X to Marcia)* Marcia, why are you sending for that Ordway boy?

MARCIA: I'm going to marry Douglas –

MRS. HUNTER: You're not. I won't have it. What will people say?

MARCIA: Don't argue, mother. *(Goes L to weep)*

MRS. HUNTER: *(Following Marcia L C then X to Rosalie)* You're to blame for this.

ROSALIE: Yes, I'm afraid I am. But I shouldn't worry. She'll change her mind.

MRS. HUNTER: Oh, I hope you're right. I don't believe in divorce, but that Ordway boy – ! I've read some of his poems, and they seem quite immoral – not the kind of poems one would want the father of one's grand-children to write.

MARCIA: *(Turning)* Mother!

DOUGLAS: *(Enters, followed by Spencer – DOUGLAS glances at Mrs. Hunter, who snubs him – coming down)* You wanted me, Marcia?

MARCIA: Yes, Douglas. You needn't go away now, and never see me again, and be unhappy all your life, Douglas, because I'll marry you. *(Extends hand)*

DOUGLAS: Oh, my God! *(DOUGLAS groans in horror)*

MARCIA: Douglas! Don't you want to marry me?

DOUGLAS: Marcia, I'd give my life to marry you. Only –

MARCIA: Only?

DOUGLAS: I can't marry you!

MARCIA: *(Flatly)* Douglas. You said you loved me.

DOUGLAS: I love you with all my heart and soul.

MARCIA: Well, then –

DOUGLAS: Marcia, to see my cup of happiness almost within reach, and then to have it snatched from me. To have my dearest dream come true, and then vanish before my eyes. To – to be loved – and then – and then –

SPENCER: Oh, stop talking, Douglas, and say something. What the deuce do you mean?

DOUGLAS: I mean – I – I'm already married.

MARCIA: *(Pause)* Go away! *(Backing)* Go away! *(DOUGLAS dashes out up C. And bumps into Reggie entering breezily, ROSALIE down R)*

REGGIE: *(Down C)* I say! What was Douglas – *(SPENCER X L – back of sofa – stopping suddenly and staring at Marcia – MRS. HUNTER glares at him)* My God! *(After a strained silence, to Rosalie)* Then you know?

ROSALIE: Yes, Reggie.

REGGIE: *(Sternly to Marcia)* Marcia, what are you doing here?

MARCIA: We heard you were ill, and we were worried.

MRS. HUNTER: And we found you'd been having dinner with your divorced wife.

REGGIE: Yes, I –

MARCIA: *(Over to him)* But it's all right, Reggie. I forgive you.

REGGIE: But Marcia —

MARCIA: I know. And ordinarily, I wouldn't forgive you. But this time I don't blame you. *(X to table, gazing upon Rosalie)* She's so sweet.

ROSALIE: *(Startled at the turn things have taken)* What?

MARCIA: You used to be very fond of her, didn't you, Reggie?

REGGIE: I don't think we'll discuss that now.

MARCIA: *(To Rosalie)* Of course that was before he met me. But Reggie is like that – always loyal to old friends. He's always inviting them to dinner. I hope you'll dine with us again, after we return from Palm Beach.

ROSALIE: Very kind of you.

MARCIA: And do bring your dear little doggie.

REGGIE: Marcia!

MARCIA: Oh, have I said something I shouldn't? *(To Rosalie)* You'll excuse mother and me, won't you? I am sure you and Reggie want to . . . talk over old times. Come mother. *(MRS. HUNTER goes up)* Goodnight, Spencer.

SPENCER: Good night.

MARCIA: *(Pushes her off)* Trot along, mother.

MRS. HUNTER: Yes, my darling. *(She goes out)*

REGGIE: Goodnight, Marcia.

MARCIA: *(At C door)* Why, Reggie, aren't you going to put me in the motorcar?

REGGIE: Yes, of course. Are you quite sure you forgive me, Marcia?

MARCIA: Why, of course I forgive you! *(Looks at Rosalie)* You foolish boy. Come. *(She takes his arm and they go out together)*

SPENCER: Well, I'm damned!

ROSALIE: *(Up to bell)* Miss Hunter is much cleverer than I thought. *(Rise)* A kitten, you called her, Mr. Wells?

SPENCER: By Jove! She did scratch a bit, didn't she?

ROSALIE: *(Down R C)* She did remarkably well – for a kitten. And Reggie actually believes she's forgiven him. Why are men such idiots, Mr. Wells?

SPENCER: Dear lady, if we knew we wouldn't be idiots.

JACKSON: *(Entering R.1 E.)* Did you ring, Ma'am?

ROSALIE: *(Up L)* Yes, Jackson. I want Hooper, please. *(She goes for her cloak and gloves)*

JACKSON: Very good, ma'am. I shall inform my wife. *(Starts R)*

SPENCER: *(X to table)* Inform all of your wives if you want to, Jackson. It's no secret.

JACKSON: *(With dignity)* I don't think you understand sir. The maid in question is my wife, sir.

SPENCER: Already? Quick work! By Jove! I congratulate you!

JACKSON: She's been my wife for a good many years, sir. And I think I should tell you now, sir, that I've decided not to enter your services after all.

SPENCER: No? Why not?

JACKSON: Well sir, a bachelor's establishment is hardly the place for one's wife.

SPENCER: Well, perhaps you're right, Jackson. I hate losing you like this. But easy come, easy go.

JACKSON: Yes, sir. *(To Rosalie)* I'll tell . . . your maid, ma'am.

ROSALIE: And order a taxi, Jackson.

JACKSON: Yes, ma'am. *(He goes out)* *(ROSALIE comes center with her cloak)*

SPENCER: Here! Let me help you.

ROSALIE: *(As he helps her with cloak)* Thank you!

SPENCER: I say! Are you going to cut and run before Reggie comes back?

ROSALIE: That depends on whether the taxi comes before Reggie does.

(HOOPER enters R)

HOOPER: *(Who is not wearing a hat)* You wanted me, ma'am?

ROSALIE: *(Xing to Hooper)* Yes, Hooper. Get your hat. We're going now.

HOOPER: Going now, ma'am?

ROSALIE: Yes, Hooper.

HOOPER: Oh, please, ma'am, I can't go now.

ROSALIE: *(Front of table)* Why not?

HOOPER: *(Earnestly)* It's Jackson, ma'am. If I stay now it will be all right. But if I leave, 'e'll get to thinkin'. I don't want 'im to get to thinkin', ma'am. You understand, don't you?

ROSALIE: *(Very kindly)* Yes, Hooper, I understand.

HOOPER: Oh, thank you, ma'am! Don't worry about tomorrow, ma'am. I'll be over early in the morning. Goodnight, ma'am. Goodnight, sir. *(She goes out R)*

ROSALIE: It looks as if you'll have to take me back to my hotel. Do you mind?

SPENCER: I should be delighted. But, if Reggie marries Marcia – what will you do?

ROSALIE: I can always marry you, Mr. Wells.

SPENCER: But – you know I don't want to get married.

ROSALIE: *(X to him, smiling seductively, touching his arm)* Are you quite, quite sure?

SPENCER: *(Looking down at her)* Well, I'm not so sure as I was.

ROSALIE: *(Places one gloved finger on his lips)* Nice man. *(REGGIE enters)*

REGGIE: *(Viewing Spencer with distrust)* Spencer! *(They separate, SPENCER gets back of table)* You may not know it, but now you're really going.

ROSALIE: Yes. We're both of us going. *(JACKSON enters C)*

JACKSON: Your taxi, ma'am. *(JACKSON goes out)*

REGGIE: *(As ROSALIE starts to take Spencer's arm)* You can't go, Rosalie. *(Stops her and SPENCER goes L C; appealingly to Spencer)* Spencer –

SPENCER: All right. *(Complaining to Rosalie)* Reminds me of when I was a kid. Just as things get interesting, I get sent out of the room. *(Exit C; REGGIE closes door)*

ROSALIE: *(XL)* Well, Reggie –

REGGIE: Rosalie, I don't suppose you'll ever forgive me?

ROSALIE: Why should I?

REGGIE: But how was I to know Marcia'd come stalking in?

ROSALIE: And you didn't intend I should know you were going to be married?

REGGIE: I did intend you to know it. I was going to tell you . . . before you went home.

ROSALIE: Oh! You were saving it for the end – as a nice surprise?

REGGIE: If I'd told you this afternoon, you wouldn't have come. And I had to see you again – I just had to.

ROSALIE: Well, now that you've seen me again, are you satisfied?

REGGIE: No.

ROSALIE: But you're going to marry Miss Hunter tomorrow?

REGGIE: Yes.

REGGIE: Why, Reggie?

REGGIE: I've got to. She expects me to marry her. Her mother expects me to marry her. Everybody expects me to marry her.

ROSALIE: My mother expected me to be a boy. But I didn't mind that.

REGGIE: That's just it. You don't mind. If you'd minded, you wouldn't have come to see me this afternoon, and upset my life like this.

ROSALIE: I didn't come to see you. I came to get my dog.

REGGIE: You always did care more for that damned dog than you did for me.

ROSALIE: Well, at least Pinky was loyal to me.

REGGIE: He probably forgot about you the day after you left him. And you don't think I'm going to go through life being loyal to another man's wife, do you?

ROSALIE: You mean you're going to be loyal to Miss Marcia Hunter?

REGGIE: Yes.

ROSALIE: She's charming, Reggie. I quite like her – every bit as much as she likes me. I'm sure you'll be very happy with her.

REGGIE: I won't! How can I be happy with her, when I love you?

ROSALIE: Was that loyal to Miss Hunter?

REGGIE: I didn't say I *was* loyal to her – I said I was going to be.

ROSALIE: Oh – ! Tomorrow?

REGGIE: Yes.

ROSALIE: Well, I hope you have a nice day for it.

REGGIE: *(To R – reproachfully)* You don't care at all, do you?

ROSALIE: You want me to care? You want me to break my heart?

REGGIE: I don't. I want you to be happy. Only – hang it all, Rosalie, don't you realize we're saying "goodbye" for ever?

ROSALIE: *(Hand extended)* Goodbye. *(They shake hands. She goes to doors)*

REGGIE: Will you – will you kiss me goodbye, Rosalie?

ROSALIE: Do you think I should?

REGGIE: No, you shouldn't, but I wish you would. Will you?

ROSALIE: No, Reggie.

REGGIE: *(Down)* All right. I'm sorry I asked. But tomorrow, I'm marrying someone who appreciates me. My future is Marcia's. I'll be absolutely loyal to her. And I won't wait until tomorrow. I'll begin now – tonight. *(Back of sofa)*

ROSALIE: Is this final, Reggie?

REGGIE: Absolutely!

ROSALIE: *(Down to him)* Even if I've changed my mind? Even if I'll say goodbye to you the way you want me to?

REGGIE: *(Radiantly)* Rosalie! Will you?

ROSALIE: *(Backs up)* No, Reggie. I only wanted to find out how loyal you really were. Goodnight. *(She goes out C, smiling over her shoulder at Reggie)*

(He expresses rage)

END OF ACT TWO

WEDDING BELLS
ACT THREE

SCENE: *Same as Acts I. and II.*

TIME: *A little before 11:30 next morning.*

Curtain rises on empty stage. JACKSON comes from L in hall. He carries a high hat and a pair of white kid gloves. Leaving these in hall on table, he enters C – goes to telephone.

JACKSON: *(At phone)* Western Union Please – *(A pause)* Yes, Western Union? -- This is Plaza Three Seven Nine Yes . . . I have three wires for you . . . Yes . . . Night messages, please . . . These are my own personal messages . . . and I don't want them delivered before tomorrow morning . . . The first wire is for Miss Josephine Bellows . . . No, not Fellows, Bellows . . . BELLOWS!! . . . B! – as in Bedouin . . . Quite so . . . The address is 293 East 59th Street . . . Yes, East . . . The second wire is for . . . I'll give you that later. The text of each message is the same . . . The second is for Miss Gertrude St. John . . . *(He pronounces it "Sinjin")* No . . . *(Spelling)* Capital S – small t – period – capital J – small oh – small haitch – small n, Sinjin. It doesn't matter in the least how you pronounce it, I pronounce it Sinjin . . . Exactly . . . Miss Sinjin's address is 81 St. Jameses Place, Brooklyn . . . Thank you. The third wire is for Miss Amelia Barker *(he sighs)*, 218 West 73rd Street . . . Thank you . . . And the message for all three is . . . *(Very slowly)* "Cannot keep my appointment with you. Explanations follow. Wilfred Jackson." Thank you.

HOOPER: *(HOOPER entering R 1)* Oh, Wilfie.

JACKSON: *(Places phone on hook – then turns as Hooper enters)* What is it, darling?

HOOPER: The door bell's ringing, dearie.

JACKSON: Then I'll go. *(As HOOPER starts R 1)* Wait a minute. Put some ice in the cocktail shaker and give it a shake, will you, darling? It's probably Mr. Wells.

HOOPER: Right–ho, ducky.

(Goes out R 1; JACKSON goes out C)

JACKSON *(Off stage)* Come right in, sir.

(Ushers SPENCER WELLS, who is resplendent in high hat, morning coat, with waistcoat, white spats, gardenia boutonniere and white gloves)

SPENCER: I say! Where's Mr. Carter?

JACKSON: *(Going R)* He's dressing for the wedding, sir. Would you like a cocktail, sir?

SPENCER: Rather! *(Looking about him)* Where is it?

JACKSON: I've one all ready for you, sir. *(Goes out R. SPENCER lays hat and gloves on desk and hums Mendelssohn's Wedding March. JACKSON enters with two cocktails on a tray)*

SPENCER: *(Down L C)* Thank you, Jackson. *(Draining glass and returning it to tray)* By Jove! I needed that! Weddings always give me the willies – and make me – you know –

JACKSON: Sad, sir?

SPENCER: Rather! To see a chap standing up at the altar, swearing away his freedom, especially when that chap happens to be your best friend, is one of the saddest things I know.

JACKSON: Oh, but Mr. Carter isn't married yet, sir.

SPENCER: No! But he will be. *(Glancing at watch)* What time do you make it?

JACKSON: *(Consulting his watch)* Half eleven, sir.

SPENCER: Right! Which half?

JACKSON: Half past, sir.

SPENCER: And the wedding at high noon. If we leave here in ten minutes that will be time enough, won't it?

JACKSON: *(Starts R)* Oh, quite, sir.

SPENCER: *(Eyeing second cocktail)* I say! Who's the other cocktail for?

JACKSON: I thought Mr. Carter might like one, sir.

SPENCER: Very likely. *(Takes other cocktail)* How is he this morning, Jackson?

JACKSON: He seems depressed, sir.

SPENCER: Were you depressed all the times you got married, Jackson?

JACKSON: I hope you'll forget my alliances, sir. It would make my wife very unhappy, were she to learn about them. And I intend to run straight from now on, sir.

- SPENCER: Oh, I see! Turned over a new leaf – the first shall be last, what?
- JACKSON: Yes, sir.
- SPENCER: Then, I've quite forgotten all but number one. Here's to you, Jackson, and the Missus, and the – I mean to say, good luck, Jackson. *(Drains glass)*
- JACKSON: Thank you, sir.
- SPENCER: *(Doing a little dance around sofa)* By Jove! I feel extraordinarily nippy this morning. Went to bed last night – first time in months. *(Stopping suddenly and looking anxious)* I say! I ought to have the wedding ring, oughtn't I?
- JACKSON: Yes, sir. *(Laying down tray and producing small white jeweler's box)* Here it is, sir.
- SPENCER: *(Taking box)* Thanks. *(Places box in waistcoat pocket, then eyes the bulge it makes disapprovingly)* This beastly box spoils the set of my waistcoat.
- JACKSON: You don't need the box, sir.
- SPENCER: *(Taking box from pocket and extracting ring)* Oh! Just carry the thing loose in my pocket? Right! *(Slipping ring into pocket and returning box to Jackson)* What are the words, Jackson?
- JACKSON: The words, sir?
- SPENCER: Yes. The Bishop says something, and then I hand over the ring.
- JACKSON: The Bishop says, sir: "Thereto I give thee my troth" – and then you –
- SPENCER: Yes, that's it – *(Takes ring from pocket and offers it to an imaginary person)* Now, let's see. I'm standing here, and Mr. Carter and Miss Hunter are standing there, and – where does the Bishop stand, Jackson?
- JACKSON: *(Taking proper position)* Here, sir.
- SPENCER: *(Returning ring to pocket)* Then you say: "Thereto I give thee my troth" – and I hand the ring over to Mr. Carter. Right! Now do it, Jackson.
- JACKSON: "Thereto I give thee my troth!"
- (SPENCER takes ring from his pocket. It slips from his fingers and falls to the floor)*
- SPENCER: Good Lord! *(As JACKSON recovers rings and hands it to him)* Suppose I do

that at the wedding!

JACKSON: It does sometimes happen, sir.

SPENCER: But suppose, the bally ring rolls into a pew, or chancel, or something. And I'll be wearing kid gloves and they're as slippery as the deuce. *(Securing white gloves from desk and handing them to Jackson)* I say! Take these and rub some sandpaper or something on the fingers of the right hand.

JACKSON: Yes, sir. *(Takes gloves and tray and starts R)*

SPENCER: *(Experimenting to see exactly how he holds the ring)* And the thumb, Jackson. Don't forget the thumb.

JACKSON: No, sir.

(SPENCER hums and dances R; JACKSON exit R; REGGIE enters up C and L. He too dressed in morning coat, etc.)

REGGIE: Spencer – don't do that.

SPENCER: Oh, here you are! How do you feel, old boy?

REGGIE: *(Gloomily)* Fine.

SPENCER: So do I. *(Singing Mendelssohn's Wedding March)* Ta-ta-tata! Ta-ta-tata!

REGGIE: *(Irritably)* I wish you wouldn't do that.

SPENCER: You've got to face the music, old boy. Cheer up.

REGGIE: Where's Jackson?

SPENCER: He's sandpapering my gloves.

REGGIE: What?

SPENCER: So I won't drop the ring, you silly ass.

REGGIE: Oh!

SPENCER: Do you think we might have a cocktail? *(Starts R)*

REGGIE: I don't want a cocktail. Spencer, do you believe in God?

SPENCER: Good God, yes! Why?

REGGIE: *(Goes L)* Nothing. Only it's a damned solemn thing to get married – especially the second time. And you get to thinking about things, and wondering – *(Kneels down by sofa)*

SPENCER: *(In an awed voice)* Are you going to pray?

REGGIE: No, you idiot! I'm looking for something. *(Reaches under sofa and secures shoe he placed there in Act II. Sits to take shoe out of box)*

SPENCER: *(Eyeing shoe)* What are you going to do – throw old shoes at yourself when you get married?

REGGIE: This isn't a shoe, Spencer.

SPENCER: Looks like one.

REGGIE: It's a symbol. If it hadn't been for this shoe I might never have met Rosalie. I said I was going to keep it as long as I lived. But I'm beginning a new life today – *(Up L – picks up wastebasket and throws shoe into it)* – so that's the end of that. *(Comes L C)*

SPENCER: Goodbye Rosalie, what?

REGGIE: Yes. I've put Rosalie out of my life. I'm never going to even think of her again.

(Doors open and ROSALIE enters. She is dressed for the street, and looks charming)

ROSALIE: *(Smiling)* Good morning. *(To Reggie)* I didn't expect to find you here. Or you, Mr. Wells. Oughtn't you to be at the church?

SPENCER: Oh, there's plenty of time. It's just around the corner.

ROSALIE: *(Comes back of chair R C; surveying Spencer approvingly and smiling)* You're looking rather splendid, you know.

SPENCER: Rather! Dressed up like a horse on Derby day, what?

REGGIE: Did you – did you want something?

ROSALIE: Yes, I want Hooper.

REGGIE: *(To L)* Oh! Is she still here?

ROSALIE: That's what I've come to find out. *(To Spencer)* No maid, no railroad tickets,

my trunks only half packed, and my train leaving in two hours. Why, I don't even know if Jackson has his railroad ticket yet.

REGGIE: Jackson?

ROSALIE: *(Back of table)* Yes, Jackson's going to California with us. Didn't he tell you?

REGGIE: No. He didn't.

ROSALIE: *(R. C.)* That was bad of him. But you see how it is, Reggie. Either I had to take Jackson, or you had to Hooper. It would be cruel to part them. *(To Spencer)* I may be sentimental, Mr. Wells, but I do think when two people care for each other they oughtn't to be parted. Don't you?

JACKSON: *(Entering R 1)* Your gloves, sir. *(To Spencer)*

SPENCER: Thank you. Isn't it time for us to go to the church, Jackson?

JACKSON:: Yes, sir. The motor's been waiting for some time, sir. *(To Reggie)* Pardon me, sir. *(Puts gardenia in REGGIE's coat)* Now, sir . . .

REGGIE: Oh, very well. Get my hat and gloves. *(JACKSON goes into hall for them)*

SPENCER: I feel very important being best man – every dog has his day.

ROSALIE: Yes, and every dog must have his license – have you your marriage license, Reggie?

REGGIE: *(Much harassed, rushing out)* Yes, yes, yes!

JACKSON: I have it, sir. *(REGGIE rushes out and comes back)* Your hat and gloves, sir . . . *(REGGIE takes them, rushes out and comes back)* . . . and the license. *(Hands him the license)* Now really, sir, you ought to be going. *(Exits C)*

ROSALIE: *(To Reggie)* I wish I could have found time to go to your wedding, Reggie, but you see how it is . . . *(Xes L)*

REGGIE: *(With fury)* I see exactly how it is. *(Taking Spencer)* Come on, Spencer.

SPENCER: *(L C)* My hat! I can't go without my hat.

REGGIE: Here!

(Securing hat from desk and urges him up C; SPENCER goes out, REGGIE turns and comes down to Rosalie, still angry)

You don't care. You've never cared. If I was suffering tortures you would only laugh at me. If I was dying, you wouldn't raise a finger to help me.

ROSALIE: *(Smiling)* You're wrong, Reggie. I would raise a finger. *(She raises her right index finger and wiggles it "Bye-bye")*

REGGIE: *(Further enraged)* I don't know what I ever saw in you. You're a devil, that's what you are. But I'm through. Look in the wastebasket.

(Goes out up C. ROSALIE gazes after him, sighs, then goes over to wastebasket where she sees shoe, she rings – JACKSON enters C)

ROSALIE: *(Taking key from her handbag and giving it to Jackson, back of table R C)* Here's the key to the front door. You'd better take it, I might lose it.

JACKSON: Thank you, ma'am. *(Takes key)*

ROSALIE: Did you succeed in getting Mr. Ordway?

JACKSON: Yes, ma'am. He's in the library.

ROSALIE: You're quite sure no one has seen him?

JACKSON: Oh, quite, ma'am.

ROSALIE: Then that's all right. Are those bags in the hall the ones Mr. Carter is taking with him?

JACKSON: Yes, ma'am.

ROSALIE: Bring one of them in, please. One that isn't too tightly packed.

JACKSON: Yes, ma'am. *(Goes out up C. ROSALIE takes shoe from basket, caresses it as she goes around sofa, and as JACKSON enters with bag, hides shoe behind her)*

ROSALIE: If I ring, it will mean that I want Hooper.

JACKSON: Yes, ma'am.

ROSALIE: I'm ready to see Mr. Ordway now, Jackson.

JACKSON: Very good, ma'am. *(He goes out up C. ROSALIE opens bag, places the shoe in it. She then closes it, but fastens it so insecurely that when Reggie picks it up later it flies open. Lays bag on floor, back of table. DOUGLAS appears in doorway up C. He is the picture of despair)*

ROSALIE: Come in, Mr. Ordway.

DOUGLAS: (*C.*) Why did you send for me? Why couldn't you let me alone? (*Stamps foot.*) Why must you have me come here of all places?

ROSALIE: Because I want to help you, you poor boy.

DOUGLAS: (*Winces*) No one can help me now. I am beyond help. (*Down L.*)

ROSALIE: Your wife, Mr. Ordway.

DOUGLAS: Who? My wife?

ROSALIE: Have you any idea where she is?

DOUGLAS: No. She disappeared soon after we were married.

ROSALIE: Disappeared?

DOUGLAS: (*Sits sofa*) Yes. It's a very painful subject.

ROSALIE: Yes, I've noticed that.

DOUGLAS: I was reading her one of my poems – quite a long one. When I finished she wasn't there – (*ROSALIE sibilantly expresses sympathy.*) She'd gone –

ROSALIE: And you never saw her again?

DOUGLAS: Never. I looked for her, of course. But I never really wanted to find her – till I met Marcia. By then, it was hopeless. She was lost – irrevocably lost.

ROSALIE: But tell me! How in the world did you come to marry her in the first place?

DOUGLAS: It happened two years ago. I'd been living in Paris. You know what Paris is, with its lights, its wine, and its women – its –

ROSALIE: (*Interrupting*) I've been to Paris, Mr. Ordway.

DOUGLAS: (*Looks at her.*) Fortunately I had the strength of character to leave Paris and go to England, and in the heart of the Surrey Hills I hoped to find peace and quiet.

ROSALIE: And you found a wife, instead.

DOUGLAS: (*Looks at her.*) Oh, she was so different from the ones I'd known in Paris. Her cheeks were red like apples –

ROSALIE: I know the type.

DOUGLAS: We met in a line. 'Twas towards sunset, (*ROSALIE rings*) the fairy hour when dreams come true. And in a hedgerow of hawthorn and wild roses a blackbird caroled to his mate. (*Rises.*)

(*HOOPER enters R.*)

HOOPER: You rang, Ma'am?

(*DOUGLAS who has his back to her, turns at the sound of her voice.*)

DOUGLAS: My God! My wife!

ROSALIE: Are you sure?

DOUGLAS: Yes, that's Emily.

HOOPER: (*To table.*) I ain't, neither. I don't know what you're talking about. I ain't never set eyes on you afore in me 'ole life.

ROSALIE: Then you don't know this gentleman, Hooper?

HOOPER: No, ma'am.

ROSALIE: You'll admit he looks surprisingly like that photograph you once showed me?

HOOPER: Yes, ma'am. But that isn't 'im. That was another gentleman. I ain't never seen this gentleman afore. Never in me 'ole life.

ROSALIE: (*Smiling. Back of table.*) It seems to be a deadlock, doesn't it? (Pause) Probably the best thing to do would be to ring for Jackson.

(*She Xes to ring.*)

HOOPER: (*Lachrymose*) Oh, please don't ring for Jackson, ma'am. Him and me has just made it up. Jackson would never forgive me.

ROSALIE: Oh! Then there is something to forgive?

HOOPER: (*Faintly*) Yes, ma'am.

ROSALIE: And you did marry Mr. Ordway?

HOOPER: *(Reluctantly)* Yes, ma'am. *(Eagerly)* It weren't legal, though. I was already married to Jackson. Only 'e left me – and this young gentleman came along – and it were spring and I was lonely.

ROSALIE: Does everyone who's lonely get married?

HOOPER: Yes, ma'am. And everybody who's married gets lonely.

DOUGLAS: Then if you were already married, I'm free.

ROSALIE: One moment. *(To Hooper)* Are you quite sure you're telling the truth, Hooper?

HOOPER: Oh yes, ma'am. *(Pause)* Jackson left me.

DOUGLAS: *(Xes to her)* And you left me.

HOOPER: I was always comparing you to Jackson, sir. Will you forgive me, sir?

DOUGLAS: My good woman, I honor you for leaving me.

HOOPER: You won't tell Jackson, will you, sir?

ROSALIE: Of course he won't. No one shall tell him. You may go now, Hooper.

HOOPER: Thank you, Ma'am. *(She goes out R 1; DOUGLAS with groan leans on piano)*

ROSALIE: *(L of table – turning to Douglas)* I must say you don't seem very enthusiastic over what I've done for you. Aren't you happy about it? *(To C)*

DOUGLAS: How can I be happy? *(Glancing at his wrist watch)* At this very moment, Marcia is pledging her sweet innocent young life to . . .

MARCIA: *(Off stage)* *(To Reggie – who is off up L)* Reggie!

(ROSALIE goes L)

REGGIE: *(Off stage)* Yes . . .

DOUGLAS: *(Rising)* Marcia!

MARCIA: You'd better telephone him right away.

REGGIE: All right. I'll use the telephone in the library.

(MARCIA enters in full wedding regalia, closes door – then Xes to Rosalie)

MARCIA: This is too much! I found you here last night. I find you here this morning. I suppose when I come back from my honeymoon, I'll find you sitting on the doorstep. *(She goes to Douglas)*

DOUGLAS: Marcia!

MARCIA: As for you, I know all about you now. You're one of those hopeless lovers who go around proposing to girls the day before they're going to be married, because you think it's safe because they can't possibly accept you.

DOUGLAS: It isn't true. I love you madly. My life – my honor –

MARCIA: Honor! You talk as if you had some. *(Xes L)* Just go! Both of you! Go!

ROSALIE: *(To R C)* Miss Hunter is right. We're only in the way here. *(To Marcia)* We would have gone long ago, only I was so thrilled by Mr. Ordway's good news. The poor boy has just discovered that the woman he *thought* he'd married –

MARCIA: Thought?

ROSALIE: Yes. You see – But it's hardly my story – is it? *(Going R)* I must see my maid. She's Jackson's wife, you know. *(Smiles, nods and goes out R 1 E)*

MARCIA: Is it true, Douglas?

DOUGLAS: *(Xes to her)* No! It isn't! I'm not like that. When I love, I love with my whole being, never counting the cost. Never counting . . .

MARCIA: *(Interrupting)* . . . the number of wives you've married.

DOUGLAS: I tell you I never had a wife. She was an unscrupulous adventuress. She took advantage of my youth, my inexperience. She already had a husband.

MARCIA: She did?

DOUGLAS: And now the pitiful folly of boyhood comes back to break my heart.

MARCIA: Then you're free?

DOUGLAS: Free? I shall never be free again. I am bound eternally.

MARCIA: To her?

DOUGLAS: No. To you.

MARCIA: Well, why didn't you say so? *(Checking DOUGLAS who is about to say a great deal)* Now don't talk – just answer yes or no. Are you married?

DOUGLAS: No. A thousand times . . .

MARCIA: *(She stifles him with a hand gesture)* And you've never been divorced?

DOUGLAS: Never!

(He stops abruptly as MRS. HUNTER's voice is heard. She is accompanied by SPENCER. MRS. HUNTER is dressed for the wedding. She is very unhappy, almost in tears. MARCIA hushes Douglas and puts him L of her)

MRS. HUNTER: Never! I never thought I'd live to see this day. I shan't be able to hold up my head again. *(Enters)* Think of the scandal! *(To Marcia)* What would your poor dear father have said? What would your poor dear grandparents have said? What would – *(SPENCER R of table, mopping brow)*

MARCIA: *(Interrupting)* Never mind, mother.

MRS. HUNTER: But I do mind! My only child, my own lamb, denied the sanction of the church I was born and brought up in. And it's really my fault.

SPENCER: Oh, no, dear lady! It wasn't your fault! It was that bally old Bishop's fault.

MARCIA: Yes, Mother.

MRS. HUNTER: No! I should have remembered that no divorced person ever has been, ever could be married in St. Martin's.

DOUGLAS: *(Timidly to Marcia)* Then you're not married?

MARCIA: No, Douglas. The Bishop wouldn't marry us – Reggie has been divorced.

SPENCER: He wouldn't even let them be married in St. Martin's. The old stiff!

MARCIA: How did the Bishop know Reggie was divorced? We didn't tell him.

MRS. HUNTER: He received a note just before the ceremony.

(SPENCER looks interested)

MARCIA: A note? Who sent it to him? Do you know, Spencer?

SPENCER: *(Innocently)* Note – note? No. How should I know?

MRS. HUNTER: Everybody there – St. Martin’s crowded – the bridesmaids ready – the altar decorated – and Reginald divorced. *(She breaks down and wipes her eyes)*

DOUGLAS: *(L. – Hopefully)* Mrs. Hunter, I’ve never been divorced.

MARCIA: Do you hear that, Mother? Douglas has never been divorced – He’s never been married either. He only thought he was.

SPENCER: What?

MARCIA: An adventuress took advantage of him. She already had a husband.

SPENCER: By Jove! Did she though?

MARCIA: So you see, mother, I can be married in St. Martin’s after all – if I marry Douglas. *(Hand out toward him)*

DOUGLAS: *(Takes her hand)* My angel!

MARCIA: *(Withdraws hand shrewishly)* Be quiet!

MRS. HUNTER: *(Harshly)* But, Marcia, you can’t. People will think you’re crazy.

MARCIA: They think I’m crazy, anyway, trying to marry a divorced man in St. Martin’s.

MRS. HUNTER: But Marcia!

MARCIA: *(Smiles at Douglas)* Now don’t argue, Mother, I’ve made up my mind.

MRS. HUNTER: And Reginald is willing – ?

MARCIA: Goodness! I’d forgotten all about Reggie.

SPENCER: You haven’t talked this over with Reggie?

MARCIA: Er – not yet.

SPENCER: Well, has it occurred to you it would be just as well to mention it to Reggie?

MARCIA: Yes – I suppose somebody will have to tell Reggie. *(Looks at mother who turns away – REGGIE enters up C. He is quite cheerful)*

REGGIE: *(Down C)* It’s all right. I’ve got a minister. *(To Mrs. Hunter)* He’s a Presbyterian. He’s a regular human being, too. Didn’t seem to care that – *(He snaps his fingers)* when I told him I’d been divorced. *(Others have listened indifferently – seeing Douglas)* Oh, hullo, Douglas! Did you hear about the way they treated us at St. Martin’s? A nice thing to do to us, wasn’t it? Why I’ve been a stockholder – I mean pew-holder – in that church for years.

MARCIA: But Reggie, *they* couldn't help it.

REGGIE: Certainly they could. Who gave them the land they built their old church on? My father. Who left them a hundred thousand dollars in his will? My father. And that Bishop? Who got him his job?

SPENCER: (*Down R*) Your father.

REGGIE: Well, it was my mother, actually. And they wouldn't even suspend one of their by-laws for me! Talk about gratitude – they don't know what it means! (*Suddenly conscious that they are all regarding him gravely*) What's the matter? Anything wrong?

MARCIA: Tell him, Mother.

MRS. HUNTER: (*Up and down L*) I will not.

MARCIA: (*Appealingly to Spencer*) Spencer!

SPENCER: Not on your life!

MARCIA: Douglas?

DOUGLAS: (*Stepping forward bravely*) Yes, it's my place to tell him. Reggie, I'm about to impart – we think you should know – it has become necessary that you should be informed – (*He pauses and clears his throat*) Reggie – (*Stopping and glancing desperately at Marcia*) I can't tell him. (*Up to desk*)

REGGIE: (*Irritably*) Tell me what? What's the matter with everybody?

MARCIA: Reggie, mother has set her heart on my being married in St. Martin's.

REGGIE: Yes, Marcia. But it can't be done. There isn't any way.

MARCIA: I know a way, Reggie.

REGGIE: What is it?

MARCIA: Well, you see, the only reason *we* can't be married in St. Martin's is because you've been divorced. So I thought, in order not to disappoint mother –

REGGIE: Yes, go on.

MARCIA: In order not to disappoint mother – (*She begins to weep, and flies to her mother, burying her face on her shoulder*) Mother, you tell him for me.

MRS. HUNTER: Yes, darling. (*Xes to Reggie*) Reginald, if I had a son I couldn't be any fonder of him than I am of you. If my little Stephen had lived he would be almost your age. First my poor dear husband passed away. Then my little Stephen –

(Overcome at the tender recollection, she weeps on Marcia)

REGGIE: *(X to Spencer – a hushed voice)* For God's sake, Spencer! What's the matter?

SPENCER: *(Moved himself)* Little Stephen. Passed away, you know.

REGGIE: *(Bewildered)* But hang it all. *(To Marcia)* Look here, Marcia! You're hiding something from me. *(To C)*

MARCIA: *(Uncovers a tearful face)* Yes. *(Starts to tell – breaks down – goes to mother)*

REGGIE: Well, what is it? Oh! *(He stops suddenly at the sight of ROSALIE who enters R 1)*

ROSALIE: *(Cheerfully)* What's the matter? Everybody looks so solemn.

REGGIE: *(Baffled)* Little Stephen passed away.

SPENCER: Getting married is a very solemn business, dear lady.

ROSALIE: *(X to Reggie)* Oh! Then you're married, Reggie? Congratulations. *(Hand shake)*

REGGIE: *(Dropping her hand)* I'm not married – yet. But I *am* to be congratulated. I'm marrying a girl who will stand by me – who will stick to me through thick and thin – who will – *(L hand out)*

MARCIA: *(Takes outstretched hand interrupting him)* Wait a minute.

REGGIE: Wait for what?

MARCIA: Well, *mother* thought, in order not to disappoint everybody, if I were to marry someone who *hasn't* been divorced --

REGGIE: *(In amazement to Mrs. Hunter)* What?

MRS. HUNTER: I never –

MARCIA: *(As Mrs. Hunter starts to protest)* No, mother. He might as well know the truth. *(DOUGLAS down to back of sofa – then stands down front of sofa – sincerely, as REGGIE stares at her, not understanding – she fingers one of his buttons)* Oh, I'm so ashamed to tell you, Reggie. I don't suppose you'll ever forgive me, but I don't think I ever loved you as much as a girl should love the man she's going to marry. And even if I did, I don't now, because I love Douglas more, and – *(Hand to Douglas – ROSALIE goes to piano)*

REGGIE: Douglas?

MARCIA: *(She jumps back toward Douglas, who takes her hand)* Yes, Reggie.

- REGGIE: Do you mean to tell me you want to marry Douglas instead of me?
- MARCIA: *(Humbly)* Yes, please.
- REGGIE: *(Looks around)* This is a pretty time to tell me about it.
- MARCIA: Then you won't give me up.
- REGGIE: Certainly I'll give you up. I'm delighted to give you up. Nothing would please me more.
- MARCIA: You darling! *(She throws her arms about his neck and rains kisses on him)*
- DOUGLAS: Here now! *(Moves to take her away as JACKSON enters up C)*
- JACKSON: Beg pardon, sir, but he's come, sir.
- REGGIE: *(Disengaging Marcia's arms)* Who's come?
- JACKSON: The Reverend Mr. Walker, sir. The Presbyterian clergyman you spoke to on the 'phone, sir.
- REGGIE: Oh. Well, give him a hundred dollars and tell him we shan't need him.
- JACKSON: Shan't need him, sir?
- REGGIE: I'm not getting married. I was a fool to think I was ever getting married.
- JACKSON: I'm extremely gratified, sir. Extremely. *(Goes out)*
- MARCIA: I'll never forget your kindness, Reggie. *(Takes Reggie's hand)* Come, mother. *(Exits – DOUGLAS Xes back of sofa to C)*
- MRS. HUNTER: *(Following her up C and off)* I never thought I'd live to see this day. What would your poor father say? What would your dear grandparents say? What would – *(REGGIE Xes L)*
- DOUGLAS: *(Over to Reggie)* I hope you don't –
- MARCIA: *(Appearing in doorway)* Hurry, Douglas. We've got to get our license.
- DOUGLAS: Coming, my own! God bless you, Reggie – God bless you and you *(To Spencer)* God bless you *(to Rosalie)* – you too – *(Backing up, when suddenly REGGIE makes as if to kick him out – DOUGLAS precipitates out the door)*
- REGGIE: *(Gazing after Douglas)* Can you beat it? *(To Rosalie)* As for you, I hope you're satisfied. You wrecked my life once. But that wasn't enough. You couldn't be happy until you'd seen me made the laughing stock of New York. Well, I'd rather be the laughing stock of New York than married to any

woman ever born in America. A plain American isn't good enough for you. No! You have to have something better. So you chuck the man you've promised to marry for a good-for-nothing poet – you divorce the husband who worships you for a frog-eating, free-loving Frenchman, and that isn't all –

SPENCER: *(Interrupting)* That's all for me, old boy. I'm off. *(REGGIE X R. X to Rosalie back)* Dear lady, you're even more wonderful than I thought. *(Kisses her hand)* Next time you divorce Reggie . . .

ROSALIE: *(Eyeing Reggie)* I'm glad there's someone who appreciates me.

SPENCER: Well, you can always count on me. Old Uncle Spencer – what? *(To Reggie)* Bye-bye, old boy. See you later. *(He goes up C, stopping)* Oh, by Jove. *(Turning and taking wedding ring from waistcoat pocket)* Here's your wedding ring.

REGGIE: I don't want it.

SPENCER: *(Presses the ring into REGGIE's hand)* Well, give it to Jackson. He's always getting married. *(Goes out)*

ROSALIE: Reggie – can I be of any help?

REGGIE: I don't need any help – I'm going away.

ROSALIE: Where are you going?

REGGIE: I don't know – if I knew I wouldn't go there.

ROSALIE: Oh, if that's where you're going – here's your bag. *(Picks up bag – brings it down)*

REGGIE: *(Grabs other handle of bag – both in front of table)* Leave that bag alone.

ROSALIE: But I want to help.

REGGIE: I don't want any help – I want my bag. *(Pulls bag open – seeing shoe)* Who put that shoe in my bag?

ROSALIE: *(Snatching shoe and returning it to bag)* I did. *(They drop bag on floor)*

REGGIE: *(Taking it out and throwing it on table)* Well, I don't want it.

ROSALIE: Reggie! You said you were going to keep that shoe as long as you lived.

REGGIE: Yes. And you said you were going to love, honor and obey me as long as you lived. And what did *you* do? You left me three days after you said it.

ROSALIE: And why did I leave you? What did you tell me I looked like?

REGGIE: Well, you did look like one with that damned red hair.

ROSALIE: Not many women would have made the sacrifice I did!

REGGIE: Sacrifice?

ROSALIE: You don't suppose I wanted red hair, do you? But my husband liked red hair. So I – poor deluded creature – tried to give him what he wanted.

REGGIE: I never wanted *you* to have red hair. But of course I'm to blame. Oh, yes! I'm to blame for everything! It's my fault you ran away – it's my fault you dyed your hair – it's my fault your dog was stolen.

ROSALIE: Why, Reggie! I never said Pinky was stolen. I did say I thought you might have taken better care of him. But – *(She stops suddenly as JACKSON enters)*

JACKSON: Excuse me, ma'am. *(Takes Pekinese dog from under coat)* My wife brought him with her.

ROSALIE: Here! I'll take him. *(She takes dog – JACKSON goes out C)*

REGGIE: My God! It's Pinky!

ROSALIE: Why, so it is! *(Confidentially to Pinky)* Isn't he cunning?

REGGIE: *(Sharply)* Where did you get that dog?

ROSALIE: Why, I – I've had him all the time.

REGGIE: What?

ROSALIE: *(Nodding "yes")* You see, it seemed too much to lose a husband and a perfectly good dog on the same day, so I wired the porter at your hotel, and he sent me Pinky by express.

REGGIE: Well, I'm damned.

ROSALIE: Are you angry with me?

REGGIE: Angry? I paid that porter five dollars a day just to keep looking for that dog! And I worried about that dog! Why did you tell me you'd come to get him when you already had him?

ROSALIE: Because I wasn't sure you'd be glad to see me. So I thought if I told you I'd come to get Pinky, you wouldn't think it so queer, my coming to see you.

REGGIE: I didn't think it was queer. I thought it was wonderful.

ROSALIE: *(To Pinky)* Hear that, Pinky? He thought it was wonderful. And he had your

booful shoe all ready for you. *(To Reggie)* Give Pinky his shoe, Reggie.

REGGIE: *(Happily)* Yes. *(He picks up shoe)* No! *(He throws it down)* I'm damned if I'm going to give my shoe to another man's dog. *(Takes a few steps R)*

ROSALIE: But he isn't, Reggie. He's our dog – yours and mine.

REGGIE: Yes. That's what you tell all your husbands.

ROSALIE: But I haven't any husband.

REGGIE: My God! Did you divorce that Frenchman, too?

ROSALIE: There wasn't any Frenchman.

REGGIE: What?

ROSALIE: No, Reggie. When I called on you yesterday afternoon, I was afraid you wouldn't see me, so I sent in my dressmaker's card.

REGGIE: Then you didn't marry anybody?

ROSALIE: *(C.)* Only you, Reggie.

REGGIE: Rosalie! *(He embraces Rosalie, with Pinky in between, then suddenly runs to the door)* Jackson! Jackson! Get that minister back!

(He takes ROSALIE's hand and they run off)

END OF ACT THREE