

Quiet Home Wedding!

A Farce in One Act

By Jay Tobias and Nylene Prewitt

THE PLAYERS: (four men; seven women)

- Wilbur Dodd, Sr. (Papa)*
- Gertie Pringle (A giggling bridesmaid)*
- Wilbur Dodd, Jr. (Sonny)*
- Jody Dodd (Sister)*
- Emmy Dodd (Mamma)*
- Connie Dodd (The bride-to-be)*
- Mrs. Tweedy (A neighbor)*
- Mrs. Gadwood (Another neighbor)*
- Billy Gadwood (Her pride and joy)*
- Miss McSnoop (A reporter)*
- Horace Pottle (The straying bridegroom)*

THE PLACE: Living-room of Wilbur Dodd's home

THE TIME: A late summer afternoon

THE PLAYING TIME: Approximately forty minutes

PRODUCTION NOTES:

The stage setting may be any interior arrangement which permits three entrances—R., L., and C. The center one, used as a French door, opening into the garden, may even be omitted and the ones R. and L. used for all entrances. There is a divan R. C., a table and chair L. C., with an antique kitchen chair down L. This chair is a “break away,” previously fixed to collapse on a definite cue. There is a radio up L., with a victrola off-stage behind it, for the radio effect of music. Up R. is the telephone and desk, with a desk chair or a telephone stand. Any other furniture used to dress the set should be used sparingly, especially if the stage used is small. Drapes, pictures, tables, and lamps may be used to give a homey, lived-in atmosphere.

PROPERTY PLOT

SET PROPS:

- Divan*
- Occasional chair*
- Two small tables*
- Desk and desk chair*
- Radio*
- “Antique” chair*
- Telephone and bell*
- Off-stage music (piano or victrola)*
- Mirror (on left wall)*

HAND PROPS:

- Shoe polishing material (Wilbur)
- Comb (Wilbur, Jr.)
- Wedding dress (Connie)
- Needle and thread (Gertie)
- Large cake with thick icing (Mrs. Garwood)
- Notebook and pencil (Miss McSnoop)
- Glass of water (Gertie)
- Sheet (Wilbur)

COSTUME PLOT

WILBUR—a hot-tempered little man about forty-five years old. Upon his first appearance, he is dressed in trousers with hanging suspenders and undershirt. Later, dark business suit.

GERTIE—a rather pretty girl of nineteen, who constantly giggles with suppressed excitement. She wears a yellow bridesmaid frock and a large, floppy, yellow hat.

JUNIOR—a smart-alecky youth of seventeen. He wears white flannel trousers and a dark coat.

SISTER—a spoiled ten-year-old. She wears a pink organdie party dress, pink sox, and white slippers. This character may be played by a small adult.

EMMY—a short, plump, motherly-looking woman of forty-two, easily flustered and excited. Upon her first appearance, she wears a pink slip and a pink kimona, and her hair is in hideous curl-papers. Later, changes to an afternoon dress of flowered chiffon or print.

CONNIE—a handsome girl of twenty, high-strung, emotional and dramatic. Upon her first appearance, she wears lounging pajamas. Later, afternoon frock of blue crepe and a large picture hat, and carries a bridal bouquet.

MRS. TWEEDY—a large, statuesque widow of forty-five, with an expansive bosom. She is dressed rather flashily in a bright-colored party dress.

MRS. GADWOOD—a tall, scrawny woman of forty, with eyes and ears alert for gossip. She talks very fast. She wears a striped, tight-fitting afternoon frock which emphasizes her scrawniness.

BILLY—a scowling brat of eleven. He is dressed in a summer knicker suit. This character may be played by a small adult, either boy or girl.

MISS MCSNOOP—a presumptuous young woman of twenty-nine, always on the alert for news. She is dressed in mannish style. Plain linen suit, felt hat, shell-rimmed glasses.

HORACE POTTLE—a long, lean and lanky young man about twenty-three years old. He is nervous as any bridegroom who is late to his wedding. Upon his first appearance, he looks like a tramp. His white flannel trousers are black with dirt and badly torn; one sleeve of his soiled dark coat is ripped and loose; his collar is undone; his hair is wildly mussed, and his face is so streaked with dirt, he is unrecognizable. Later, he appears wearing Wilbur's trousers and coat, which are too short and tight for him.

NOTE: Horace may wear a dark pair of trousers like Wilbur's underneath his white flannels, in order to save time in making a quick costume change.

QUIET HOME WEDDING!

SCENE: Living-room of Wilbur Dodd's home

(At rise of curtain, Wilbur Dodd is discovered polishing his shoes; his left foot rests on the antique chair. He is loudly humming "The Bridal's March" from Lohengrin. His hanging suspenders swing rhythmically, as he brushes his shoes to march tempo.)

WILBUR: Tum-dum-dee-dee! Connie's-getting-married! Tum-dum-dee-dee—dee-de-dee—dee-dee-dee! Her-hubby-will-hafta-support-her! I'll-be-the-goat-no-longer! Tum-dum-dee-dee—dee-dee-dee—dee-dee-dee!

(Junior enters arch L., straightening his tie.)

JUNIOR: *(Proudly)* Pipe my new flannels, Pop, I betchuh I'll knock their eyes out! The guests will all be lookin' at the bride's brother, instead of the bride. Haw! Haw!

WILBUR: *(Pays no attention to Junior, Sings)* Tum-dum-dee-dee!

JUNIOR: *(Gasps)* Holy gosh, Pop! Mom'll be fit to bury if she catches you polishing your dogs on her antique chair.

WILBUR: *(Sings to tune of "The Bridal March")* Got-to-polish-'em-somewhere! Your-mother's-in-the-bath-tub!

JUNIOR: You'd sing to different music if she knew you were desecratin' her antique. *(Crosses to mirror; starts combing hair.)*

(Sister runs in arch L.)

SISTER: *(Yelling back over her shoulder)* Awright for you, Miss Smarty Connie! Miss Smarty-bride! Think you're smart getting married. You'll be sorry you didn't fix my hair-ribbon. Yah-h-h! *(Skips across R.)* Mamma! Mamma!

JUNIOR: Aw, stop squawkin', brat.

SISTER: Button up your big mouth, Junior Dodd! (*Whines.*) Papa, where's Mamma? Where's Mamma, Papa?

WILBUR: (*Sings*) Mamma's-in-the-bath-tub!

(*Warn: Phone*)

(*Gertie Pringle dashes in French window.*)

GERTIE: Hi-yuh, everybody! Pardon me for bursting in like a whirlwind. (*Giggles.*) Tee-hee-hee-e-e-e! I cut across the garden. Thought sure I was going to be late for Connie's wedding. Tee-hee-hee-e-e-e! Oh, I'm so excited—tee-hee-hee-e-e-e-e-e-e-e-e-e-e! As if I were the bride instead of the bridesmaid.

JUNIOR: Sounds like you got the ork-orks, gigglin' that-a way.

GERTIE: I always giggle when I'm excited—tee-hee-hee-e-e-e-e! Can't help it. Where's Connie? Where's the blushing bride?

SISTER: In her room, trying to calm herself for the wedding. She's got the gallopin' jitters. Gertie, that's a pretty dress you got on.

GERTIE: Thanks. You look pretty ducky yourself. I'll run in and see Connie. Maybe I can help her dress. Tee-hee-hee-e-e-e! (*Exit, L.*)

JUNIOR: That dame is dizzy as a top.

WILBUR: Wonder why Connie chose a giggling ga-ga like her for a bridesmaid?

SISTER: 'Cause Connie's prettier'n her. Sis don't want no bridesmaid who'd outshine her. (*Phone rings. Rushes to phone.*)

JUNIOR: (*Mutters.*) My girl, I betchuh. (*Also dashes to phone.*)

SISTER: I'm gonna answer. I got here first. Mr. Smarty-breeches! (*Sister and Junior scuffle for possession of phone.*) Papa-a-a-a! Papa-a-a-a!

JUNIOR: Get away from here, you-yell-for-papa girl! 'S' my call.

SISTER: How you know it's your call? You ain't no mind-reader.

JUNIOR: (*Ominously*) Brat, you're getting in my eyebrows! Better beat it while you're altogether.

SISTER: Papa! Make Junior let me answer the phone. (*Junior pinches her arm.*) Ow-w—youch! You pinched me, you big palooka. (*Shrieks.*) Papa-a-a-a! Junior pinched me! Yah-h-h-h-h-h!

(Emmy enters quickly, L., undoing one curl-paper.)

EMMY: Junior! Sister! Stop it!

JUNIOR: ‘S’ my call, Mom. Make her leggo this phone.

SISTER: I got here first, Mamma!

EMMY: Papa! Why don’t you—*(Gasps.)* Oh, Wilbur! Polishing your shoes on my best chair. I could scream!

WILBUR: Wha’d’yuh mean, best chair? This old relic’s about to fall down.

EMMY: The bathroom is the best place to polish your shoes, Wilbur.

WILBUR: How could I? You’ve been swimming around in there like a goldfish for the past hour, dadbob it!

JUNIOR: *(Jerks phone from Sister and gives her a mighty shove)* Take that, you pestiferous little pest!

SISTER: *(Howls)* WAH-H-H-H-H! Mamma, Junior pushed me! WAH-H-H-H!

EMMY: *(Rushes to phone)* I’ll answer that phone myself.

JUNIOR: *(Hurriedly in phone)* Hello! Nellie? . . . Aw, rats!

EMMY: *(Jerking phone from Junior)* Who is it?

JUNIOR: *(Shrugs)* I dunno. Isn’t my call.

SISTER: *(In sing-song)* Junior’s got a sweetie! Junior’s got a sweetie! A silly-nilly named Nellie!

JUNIOR: *(Growls)* Hush up, or I’ll pin your ears back.

EMMY: Oh, dear, I hope the minister hasn’t broken a leg, or the pianist dropped dead or something. I’m just afraid to answer. *(Diffidently in phone.)* Hello?

SISTER: Ha! Ha! Old smarty-pants got fooled. It wasn’t your silly-nilly Nellie! Do you ever kiss your silly-nilly Nellie? Look at him blush! Ha! Ha—

JUNIOR: *(Making a lunge at Sister)* Now, I’m gonna smear you!

SISTER: Help! *(Shrieking shrilly, grabs pillow off divan and runs on the other side of Wilbur.)* Don’t you dare touch me! I’ll bang you with this pillow! *(Junior gnashes his teeth like an animal)*

and creeps toward Sister, his hands extended like claws.) Help! Papa, make him stop looking like a gorillerish baboon! He-e-e-lp! (Hurls pillow at Junior and hits Wilbur full in the face, almost knocking him over.)

WILBUR: Dadbob the dadbob! *(Brandishes shoe-brush.)* I'll teach you to knock thunder out of your own father! *(Grabs Sister by the arm and starts dragging her R.)*

SISTER: I was aimin' at Junior, honest! Don't whale me, Papa! I'll be good as pie—custard pie! *(Exeunt, Wilbur and Sister, R.)*

EMMY: Now, what is it, please? Hello! You'll simply have to speak plainer. *(Sound of shoe-brush and loud weeping off R.)* Wait a minute. Hold the wire. *(Goes quickly to arch, R.)* Wilbur! The idea! Spanking Sister in the very place Connie's wedding is to be!

(Junior turns on the radio. Dance music. NOTE: A phonograph is hidden off-stage back of radio cabinet.)

SISTER: *(Runs in R., sobbing. To Junior)* You old baddie! You old palooka, you! *(Musses Junior's hair.)* There!

JUNIOR: Doggoned little demon!

WILBUR: *(Enters R.)* And let that be a lesson to you, Sister Jody Dodd!

EMMY: Oh, Wilbur, I hope you didn't upset the potted palm and all the candles! *(Sighs.)* I'd better go see. *(Exit R.)*

(Junior combs his hair in front of mirror. Wilbur resumes polishing his shoes. Sister runs over to phone.)

SISTER: *(In phone.)* Hello? *(To Junior.)* I did answer the phone, old smarty-pants! Who is it? Huh? . . . *(Shocked.)* Oh, that's naughty!

(Emmy enters R.)

EMMY: Now, what was I doing?

SISTER: Mamma! The man on the telephone swore at me! He said some awful words, Mamma, he said—

EMMY: *(Scandalized)* Sister! I'll wash your mouth out with soap.

SISTER: Mamma, let me tell you what he said. He said—

EMMY: *(Rushing to phone)* I'll teach the brute to swear at my little daughter! *(Loudly in phone.)* Hello! *(Turns to Junior.)* Turn off that radio, Junior Dodd! *(He complies.)* Hello? Hello? Hello?

CONNIE: (*Shrieks off L.*) Mamma! Has Horace come yet?

EMMY: Just a minute, Connie. Hello? Oh, Papa, I do believe it's long distance calling! What if something has happened to Horace?

(*Connie enters L., carrying wedding dress on her arm.*)

JUNIOR: Reckon Horace has been hurt?

CONNIE: (*Shrieks*) Horace? Oh, what's happened to my Horace? (*Rushes to Emmy and jerks phone away from her.*) Hello! Where is he? Where's my precious darling boy?

(*Gertie enters L., with needle and thread.*)

EMMY: Calm yourself, Connie. You'll need all your strength for the wedding.

CONNIE: (*Wildly*) Wedding? If my Horace is fatally injured, how can there be any wedding?

GERTIE: (*Gasps*) Horace Pottle had an accident? And on his wedding day, too! Tee-hee-hee-e-e-e-e!

CONNIE: I'll assure you, Gertie Pringle, it's nothing to laugh about.

GERTIE: Honey, I'm not laughing because I'm tickled. I giggle because I'm excited. I can't help it. Nervousness, I guess. Tee-hee-hee-e-e-e-e!

WILBUR: Well, something ought to be done about it. Maybe you can have it amputated—your giggle, I mean.

CONNIE: Hello! Hello! . . . I simply can't hear a thing.

WILBUR: (*Crossing to Connie*) Give me that dadbobbed phone. Now, quiet, all of you. Hello?

CONNIE: (*Dramatically holding out wedding dress*) Mamma, it was an omen—an ill-fated omen, to tear my wedding dress.

EMMY: (*Shrieks*) Great heavens! You've torn your wedding dress?

WILBUR: (*In phone*) I can't hear you, you mug! Speak louder!

CONNIE: I caught it on a nail in the closet. The minute I tore it, I knew something dreadful was going on. An evil portent!

EMMY: (*Taking dress*) It's not so bad. Can be fixed in a jiffy. Somebody get me a needle and thread. (*Sits in chair R. of table.*)

GERTIE: Here you are, Mrs. Dodd. (*Hands Emmy needle and thread.*)

CONNIE: (*Weeps*) Oh, Mamma, what if I'm a widow before I'm a bride?

SISTER: Horace used to bring me candy, and now he's dead, maybe! Wah-h-h-h-h! (*Connie and Sister wail in unison.*)

WILBUR: (*In phone*) What union? Will you gals stop bawling? Name of blazes! How do you expect me to hear anything?

EMMY: Be firm, Papa. Tell Central to give you a better connection.

WILBUR: (*Howls in phone*) Whose union suit are you talking about? That's a pretty subject to—Oh, Western Union?

CONNIE: Heaven help me! A telegram from Western Union. Now, I know my darling is dead! (*Falls prone on divan.*)

GERTIE: (*Rushing to Connie*) She's fainted! Tee-hee-hee-e-e-e-e!

EMMY: Wait, Wilbur! Don't break the news now. (*Dashing to Connie.*) Oh, my poor baby!

WILBUR: (*In phone*) Well, what about Western Union? I can't hear you, golblast it!

GERTIE: (*Chafing Connie's wrists*) They always garble a telegram over the phone. Somebody ought to go—

JUNIOR: I'll run down to Western Union and get the message.

EMMY: (*Massaging Connie's forehead*) That's right, Junior. Hurry! Take the car.

JUNIOR: Okay, Mom. I'll step on it! (*Dashes out French window.*)

WILBUR: (*In phone*) No, it ain't! (*Slams up receiver.*) Hey, Junior! Hold your dadblamed horses.

EMMY: Oh, Papa, *do* something! Poor Connie's cold as ice.

WILBUR: (*Crossing down L.*) I'll do something, all right, I'll have this blanket-blank phone disconnected. Somebody wanted to know if this was Western Union. Can you beat it?

EMMY: Oh, Central gave them the wrong number? They got us, instead of Western Union?

WILBUR: Yeah.

GERTIE: Wake up, Connie. It was the wrong number. Nothing's happened to Horace.

CONNIE: *(Sitting up)* Oh, Gertie, then I'm not a widow?

WILBUR: You fool women are always jumping at conclusions. *(Sits heavily in antique chair. One leg gives way. He falls to the floor.)* Well, dadbob me!

EMMY: *(Shrieks)* Now, you've done it! Ruined my one antique—my precious antique that I paid fifty dollars for!

WILBUR: *(Sitting up, suddenly)* You paid fifty dollars for that thing? Criminy pitchforks!

(Warn: Doorbell)

EMMY: It was a bargain, Wilbur Dodd.

WILBUR: Call the ambulance! *(Falls back.)*

SISTER: Is Papa in pain? Papa, where do you hurt the worst?

WILBUR: *(Sitting up)* In my bank balance! *(Groans.)* Fifty dollars! Your idiot mother paid fifty dollars for that old kitchen chair. *(Moans and grabs his forehead.)*

CONNIE: Mamma, I do believe he's having a spell!

EMMY: *(Sewing)* He always throws a convulsion every time a member of this family spends a penny.

WILBUR: *(Rises, wrathfully)* You call fifty dollars a penny? *(Shakes his fist.)* Emmy Dodd, if I ever catch you paying out fifty bucks again for a—

EMMY: Hush, Wilbur! I resent your bellicose attitude.

WILBUR: *(Quickly clasps his protruding stomach)* What's wrong with my bellicose attitude? You think I should wear a girdle?

EMMY: Don't try to be funny. Get your shirt on. The guests will be here any minute now.

CONNIE: Do hurry with my dress, Mamma. *(Doorbell, off R.)* Heavens! What if that's Horace? He mustn't catch me looking like this. Come help me with my slip, Gertie. *(Exeunt, Connie and Gertie, L.)*

SISTER: I wanna answer the door, Mamma. Lemme answer the door!

EMMY: *(Sewing)* All right. Now, be nice. *(Sister skips out R. Emmy calls after her.)* If it's wedding guests, seat them in the sunroom, where the ceremony's to be. Don't dare bring them in here.

MRS. TWEEDY: (*Gushingly, off R.*) Oh, hello, Jody, dearest!

EMMY: Sounds like gushy Mrs. Tweedy.

WILBUR: The vocalizing widow? Why did you invite that yawping old penguin?

EMMY: We had to have somebody sing, “Oh, Promise Me!” didn’t we?

WILBUR: Well, if she’s a singer, I’m a twittering titmouse.

(*Warn: Doorbell*)

(*Sister enters R., followed by Mrs. Tweedy.*)

MRS. TWEEDY: (*Sweetly*) Good afternoon. Oh, I’m afraid I’m a little early.

(*Wilbur, frantically pulling up suspenders, becomes entangled in them and wraps one around his neck as he bolts for arch L.*)

EMMY: (*Jumps up, grabbing at her curl papers*) Oh, my hair! I’m a positive sight. Sister, I told you not to bring anybody—

WILBUR: (*Emitting weird sounds as he tries to unwind suspenders from around neck.*) Awk! Oop! Emmy, get me—(*Chokes.*) Awk! Oop!

EMMY: Wilbur Dodd! Are you trying to hang yourself? (*Runs to Wilbur.*)

MRS. TWEEDY: Why, the poor man! Let me help unravel him. (*Scurries over to Wilbur.*)

WILBUR: Awk! Glub!

MRS. TWEEDY: Don’t get excited, Mr. Dodd, or you’ll strangle. Just breathe from the diaphragm. Diaphragm-breathing calms one, gives one poise. I’m a singer and I know. (*Places hand on Wilbur’s stomach.*) Here’s your diaphragm, Mr. Dodd. Breathe from the diaphragm!

WILBUR: (*As Emmy releases suspenders from around neck*) Madame, I can manage my own phri-a-dam, thank you! (*Exit, L., with dignity.*)

MRS. TWEEDY: Well, dear me! I was only trying to be helpful.

(*Doorbell of R.*)

EMMY: More guests already? The Lord help us!

MRS. TWEEDY: Oh, the doorbell! I’ll answer. I came early so I could assist you. Just leave everything to me, dearie! (*Exit, R.*)

(Warn: Phone)

EMMY: *(Yells.)* Seat them in the sunroom!

SISTER: What's a diagram, Mamma? What's she talking about a diagram for, Mamma?

EMMY: Oh, don't bother me! Here, take Connie's wedding dress to her, quick!

CONNIE: *(Off L.)* Mamma, was that Horace?

(Sister runs out L. with dress.)

EMMY: *(Uncurling paper from hair)* No, Connie, Horace hasn't come yet.

(Mrs. Tweedy enters R.)

MRS. TWEEDY: Two guests have arrived. I put them beneath the potted palm.

EMMY: The guests! Oh, why didn't I have time to get a marcel yesterday? *(Frantically unrolls another curl-paper. Phone rings.)* Heavenly days! Just one thing after another. *(Starts to phone.)*

MRS. TWEEDY: Now, Mrs. Dodd, let me answer that. You go ahead and get ready. *(Takes phone.)*

EMMY: *(Hesitating)* But it might be something concerning the wedding. Maybe I'd better—

MRS. TWEEDY: *(Firmly holding on to phone)* Surely, you can trust *me* to manage weddings, my dear Mrs. Dodd? I've had three, you know.

CONNIE: *(Off L.)* Mamma, is that Horace?

MRS. TWEEDY: Hello. Yes, this is Wilbur Dodd's residence.

CONNIE: *(Enters L.)* Is that Horace phoning?

MRS. TWEEDY: The what? Police court? *(To Emmy.)* It's the police!

EMMY: *(Screeches)* Police? It's a mistake. We're perfectly law-abiding citizens.

CONNIE: Oh, good gracious, what if my Horace has been thrown in jail?

MRS. TWEEDY: *(In phone)* Who? Junior Dodd arrested for speeding?

EMMY: Junior! He took the car to the Western Union office. And I told him to hurry. Oh, sweet heavenly days!

CONNIE: And Junior's to be best man at my wedding!

MRS. TWEEDY: (*In phone*) Very well. (*Hangs up receiver.*) Of course, Mr. Dodd will pay Junior's fine of forty-one dollars.

EMMY: (*Shrieks*) Fine? Forty-one dollars? Oh, what *will* Wilbur say!

CONNIE: He'll be fit to tie. He'll upset the whole ceremony!

EMMY: I don't know how we'll break the news to him—Papa is so emotional over money matters! (*Wringing hands.*) Oh, dear-r-r-r!

MRS. TWEEDY: Come, come, there is no need for anybody to lose control. With correct breathing from the diaphragm, you'll have poise and courage to face man or beast.

EMMY: Wilbur's a man, but he has a beast of a temper where losing a nickel is concerned.

CONNIE: (*Waits*) Oh, Mamma, what *shall* we do?

MRS. TWEEDY: Face Mr. Dodd with fortitude! All you have to do is—(*takes position; raises arms, going up on toes*)—inhale—(*lower arms, going down on heels*)—exhale, from the diaphragm, of course.

CONNIE: You mean that will calm us, so we can calm Papa?

MRS. TWEEDY: Exactly. (*Repeats exercise.*) Just inhale—exhale.

EMMY: It seems so foolish, somehow.

CONNIE: But, Mamma! We can't let Papa toss a tantrum before the guests over Junior's fine.

EMMY: (*Desperately.*) I'll try anything! (*Rises on toes.*) Inhale! . . . Exhale!

(*They continue exercise in unison. Sister enters L.*)

SISTER: (*Patting hair-ribbon*) Looky! Gertie fixed my hair-rib—Well, sweet kitten-breeches! Whatcha doin' that for? Is that part of the wedding, Connie? Huh?

MRS. TWEEDY, EMMY, and CONNIE: (*In unison*) Inhale! . . . Exhale!

SISTER: Gee, I wanna do it. Looky! Watch me. I can go 'way up on my toes, too. Looky, pals, looky!

EMMY: (*Moans*) What will Papa say? (*Goes up on toes.*) Inhale!

CONNIE: Oh, why doesn't Horace come? (*Goes down on heels.*) Exhale!

(*Gertie enters L.*)

GERTIE: Connie, it's almost time—tee-hee-hee-e-e-e! Oh, forever more! Well, aren't you all too utterly crazy? Tee-hee-e-e-e-e!

CONNIE: Try it, Gert. It's good for man and beast. Inhale!

EMMY: It makes a body tranquil. (*Half sobs.*) Poor Junior's been arrested for speeding. Exhale!

GERTIE: (*Gasps*) Arrested? Not *actually*? Behind prison bars and almost time for the wedding! Tee-hee-hee-e-e-e! Oh, that makes me so nervous I could die!

MRS. TWEEDY: Join us in this diaphragm exercise and you'll become calm and serene.

GERTIE: Honestly? All right. It's a perfectly darling idea! Inhale—tee-hee-e-e-e! Exhale—tee-hee-hee-e-e-e-e!

SISTER: (*Skipping about, waving arms*) Oh, I'm a golden butterfly! Flitter-flutter-flutter! Looky! Whyn't you all do this?

(*Wilbur, with his shirt on, enters L., fumbling with his tie.*)

MRS. TWEEDY, EMMY, CONNIE, and GERTIE: (*In unison*) Inhale! Exhale!

SISTER: (*Dancing around*) Tweet! Tweet! I'm a blue bird. Chirp! Chirp! Chirp!

WILBUR: (*Gasps*) Well, I'm a gargling golliwog!

EMMY: Wilbur! (*Rushes to him.*) Oh, Papa! The police!

WILBUR: (*Gasping*) Huh?

CONNIE: (*Rushes to him*) Restrain yourself, Papa! Inhale, Papa!

EMMY: Exhale, Papa! You mustn't upset the wedding, Papa!

CONNIE: (*Waits*) My one and only wedding, Papa!

EMMY: Junior's our only son; and, after all, forty-one dollars is—

WILBUR: (*Yelps*) One at a time! One at a time!

MRS. TWEEDY: (*Sweetly, as she pushes Emmy and Connie aside*) Allow *me* to explain to the dear man. (*Gertie sinks down on couch.*) Now, Mr. Dodd, dear Mr. Dodd. (*Daintily tying his tie.*)

I'm sure you have a most tolerant disposition. Really, I think you are a remarkable man in every way, (*Coos*) and such a distinguished-looking gentleman!

WILBUR: (*Swelling pompously*) I'm glad somebody around here appreciates me.

MRS. TWEEDY: You have a fine, generous nature, Mr. Dodd, and everybody says you are one of our most influential citizens. (*Intent on tie.*) Indeed, you are a stalwart bul—

(*Warn: Doorbell*)

WILBUR: (*Quickly interrupts*) I beg your pardon?

MRS. TWEEDY: (*Hastily*) A stalwart bulwark, Mr. Dodd! A champion among men. (*Gives tie a finishing pat.*) And a small matter like forty-one dollars—

EMMY: Wilbur-r-r! (*Indignantly pushes Mrs. Tweedy aside, and jerks tie undone.*)

MRS. TWEEDY: Well, dear me! I was only trying to—

EMMY: (*As she fiercely reties tie*) Wilbur Dodd, I want you to get yourself down to that police station this minute and pay his fine! You hear me? (*Gives tie a quick finishing jerk.*)

WILBUR: (*Almost choking.*) Awk! Whose fine? What fine?

(*Doorbell loudly off R.*)

EMMY: (*Whirling*) Oh, horrors! More guests arriving and I'm still in curl-papers!

CONNIE: I *know* that's Horace! Hurry, Gertie! Help me climb into my wedding gown. (*Exeunt, Connie and Gertie, L.*)

SISTER: Lemme go to the door, Mamma! Mamma, lemme—

MRS. TWEEDY: No, dearest; I'll answer the door. I love being helpful—even if it isn't always appreciated! (*Exit, R.*)

SISTER: Wah-h-h-h! I wanna answer the door.

EMMY: Oh, hush, Sister. Maybe it's the police! Wilbur, why don't you say something?

WILBUR: (*Gazing into space*) Emmy Dodd, do you realize your husband is a stalwark bulwart? I mean a stalwart bulwack? I mean—

SISTER: She called you a warty hatrack, didn't she, Papa?

WILBUR: She did not! Mrs. Tweedy said your father was a distinguished gentleman.

EMMY: (*Sharply*) Well, what of it?

WILBUR: Emmy, I'm a remarkable person. I have a tolerant disposition, a generous nature!

EMMY: (*Tartly*) Tell that to the police when you pay Junior's fine!

WILBUR: Junior's—? What's this about Junior's fine, woman?

SISTER: Junior's in jail, Papa!

EMMY: Arrested for speeding, poor child, on his way to the Western Union. Now, you must hurry down and pay them forty-one dollars—

WILBUR: (*Howls*) I must pay forty-one dollars? It wasn't *me* who got arrested for speeding. Let him lay it out in jail!

(*Mrs. Tweedy enters, R., followed by Mrs. Gadwood, carrying a cake, and Billy Gadwood. They pause just inside arch, R.*)

EMMY: (*Angrily*) Now, you listen to me, Wilbur Dodd—

WILBUR: I listen to nobody! I'm the boss around here! That young upstart, always going off half-cocked! Dashing down to the Western Union when I told him to wait. Now, he can wait behind bars! Forty-one dollars! What does he think I am, a millionaire? Doggone it, anyhow! (*Turns and gives the antique chair a vicious kick.*) OH-w-w! (*Grabs ankle and hops on one foot.*) I busted my blasted ankle! (*Mrs. Tweedy and Mrs. Gadwood suppress laughter.*) Confound the confound! (*Grabs antique chair and starts L.*)

EMMY: Wilbur, where are you taking my antique?

WILBUR: To the attic, dadbob it!

EMMY: (*Rushing to him, grabs chair*) Give me back my antique!

WILBUR: (*Sternly*) Step aside, Emmy Dodd, I have spoken!

EMMY: (*Retreats in surprise*) Why, Papa!

(*Exit Wilbur, L.*)

MRS. GADWOOD: (*Coming C.*) Mrs. Dodd—

EMMY: (*Whirls, in consternation*) Mrs. Gadwood! Heavenly days, I'm a sight!

MRS. GADWOOD: I know I'm terribly late in bringing over the cake you asked me to bake for your daughter's wedding, but truthfully, Mrs. Dodd, I never had such a time with a cake in my life!

SISTER: (*Grins at Billy*)H'lo!

BILLY: (*Sneers*) H'lo, yourself, and see how you like it.

MRS. GADWOOD: My hens aren't laying good. Would you believe it, I found only eight eggs this morning—eight eggs out of twenty hens!

SISTER: (*Sticks tongue out at Billy*) Blah!

BILLY: Blah yerself and see how you like it.

MRS. GADWOOD: It was an eleven-egg angel-food, so I had to borrow three eggs from my neighbor, Mrs. Clatterbaugh. I told her it was for your daughter's wedding cake, and she said truthfully that it seemed strange to her she wasn't invited to Connie's wedding.

EMMY: (*Unrolling a curl-paper*) Well, you see, we're not having many guests. It's just a quiet home wedding.

SISTER: (*To Billy*) Phooey to you, old smarty-pants!

BILLY: Listen, dame, I'll smash you! I'm a g-man. (*Pantomimes shooting Sister with a machine-gun.*) Put-put-put! Lay down, you're dead!

SISTER: Who's dead, you little squirt? (*Gives Billy a push. He grabs her hair and gives it a mighty yank.*) Wah-h-h-h! Mamma!

MRS. GADWOOD: My Billy's so playful—bless his heart!

SISTER: Well, I can be playful, too! (*Smacks Billy.*)

BILLY: (*Grabbing his cheek*) Ow-w-w—youch!

MRS. GADWOOD: (*Indignantly*) Truthfully, Mrs. Dodd, I think your child is an enfant terrible! (*To Billy*) Did she hurt Mamma's precious?

BILLY: Nuts!

MRS. TWEEDY: (*Sweetly*)Satan provides mischief for little hands. Now, I have a way with children. Let me manage them. Come, come, my little darlings. I will tell you a story. Once upon a time—

BILLY: Aw, go bite yerself!

SISTER: Go breathe in your diagram!

EMMY: Sister! That's rude.

MRS. GADWOOD: As I started to tell you about the cake, Mrs. Dodd, before your child interrupted me—

EMMY: Oh, yes, the cake. I'll put it in the dining-room.

MRS. GADWOOD: Now, Mrs. Dodd, I'm sure Connie will want to see the lovely cake I baked for her. Let's put it right here in the center of this table, where she can see it the first thing when she comes in. (*Sets cake on table C. Sister and Billy eye cake longingly.*) Now, doesn't that look lovely?

EMMY: Yes, but hadn't I better take to the—

MRS. GADWOOD: Tut! Tut! I'll take charge of the cake while you get ready for the wedding.

CONNIE: (*Off L.*) Mamma, has Horace come yet?

EMMY: No, Connie, not yet. Oh, good gracious! I really must hurry and dress. (*Rushes out L.*)

MRS. TWEEDY: (*Significantly*) It does seem strange the groom hasn't arrived.

MRS. GADWOOD: Truthfully, I've never known a groom to be so late.

MRS. TWEEDY: Sometimes they don't appear at all!

MRS. GADWOOD: Yes. They've been known to disappear just before the ceremony. Truthfully, Mrs. Tweedy, I have said all along I'd be surprised if she landed him.

MRS. TWEEDY: I've had my doubts about it, too.

MRS. GADWOOD: Wait until I tell Gibney—that's my husband—about Mr. and Mrs. Dodd quarreling over that antique chair. (*Laughs.*)

MRS. TWEEDY: Oh, but my dear. That isn't *half* of it!

MRS. GADWOOD: *Do* tell me!

MRS. TWEEDY: Junior Dodd has been *arrested!*

MRS. GADWOOD: What? In jail?

(*Warn: Doorbell*)

MRS. TWEEDY: (*Nods, complacently*) I took the message myself!

MRS. GADWOOD: What did he do?

MRS. TWEEDY: Well, they *said* for speeding. (*Pauses, significantly*) But I wouldn't be surprised if—

MRS. GADWOOD: He probably wrecked the car! And no telling how many people he crippled—maybe killed!

MRS. TWEEDY: That's just it, Mrs. Gadwood. No telling how many people he killed! Oh, it's too frightful to think about!

MRS. GADWOOD: Horrible! (*Doorbell off R.*) Some more guests.

MRS. TWEEDY: Come, we'll have to answer the door. (*Starts R.*)

CONNIE: (*Off R.*) Is that Horace?

MRS. GADWOOD: Poor child! When she finds Horace Pottle has left her in the lurch!

MRS. TWEEDY: (*Shaking her head and clucking*) Tck! Tck! Tck! Tck!

(*Exeunt, Mrs. Tweedy and Mrs. Gadwood, down R.*)

(*Warn: Wilbur*)

(*Sister and Billy circle around table, inspecting cake more closely.*)

SISTER: (*Impulsively sticks finger in icing; tastes it*) Um-m-m-m!

BILLY: (*Tasting icing*) Swell!

SISTER: (*Repeating performance*) UM-M-M! Yummy-yum-yum!

BILLY: Haw! You've got it on your face.

SISTER: (*Giggling*) So've you, silly.

BILLY: Looky! Le's play Indian!

SISTER: You gotta paint up to be an Indian.

BILLY: Sure. This stuff 'll make swell paint. I'll paint you and you paint me. See? Like this. (*Streaks Sister's face with icing.*)

SISTER: Like this, huh? (*Puts a big gob of icing on Billy's nose.*)

BILLY: Hot dog! I'm a big Indian chief.

SISTER: (*Dancing up and down.*) I'm a bigger Indian chief than you are.

BILLY: Nuts! You can't be a chief. Indian women are squawks. You gotta be a squawk and do as I tell yuh. Look 't, I'm a big Indian chief on the war path! (*Dances around, imitating war whoop with hand over mouth.*) WAH-WAH-WAH-WAH-WAH!

SISTER: I won't be a Indian squawk! I'm gonna be a chief. (*Imitates Billy.*) WAH-WAH-WAH-WAH-WAH!

BILLY: You're a girl, you sap! You can't be a chief.

SISTER: I can so be a chief! Know who I am? I'm Setting Bull!

BILLY: (*Sneers*) Oh, you're Setting Bull? Well, then *set!* (*Gives Sister a shove and she abruptly sits down on divan.*)

SISTER: (*Jumps up, yelling*) I'll scalp you to pieces, Billy Gadwood! (*Sister runs Billy around table. Wilbur enters L., wearing coat.*)

(*Warn: Emmy, Mrs. Tweedy, doorbell*)

BILLY: (*Grabs handful of icing off cake*) Stay 'way from me, dizzy!

(*Sister makes a grab at his hair and he slaps icing on her face.*)

WILBUR: (*Bawls*) Hey, you young hyenas! What's goin' on in here?

SISTER: (*Furiously*) Now, I'm gonna plaster icing in your hair! (*Grabs handful of icing and starts chasing Billy around the room.*)

WILBUR: Cut that out, Sister! You hear me? (*Starts running after Sister, emitting war whoop.*) WAH-WAH-WAH-WAH-WAH!

SISTER: (*Stops suddenly, surprised Wilbur wants to play. Very well pleased, she continues.*) WAH-WAH-WAH-WAH-WAH!

(*Mrs. Gadwood rushes in L.*)

MRS. GADWOOD: Quiet! Quiet! The guests are arriving. (*Gasps.*) Well, for pity's sake! (*Shrieks.*) Why are they running my precious? Stop it! (*Grabs Billy.*) Mr. Dodd! Shame on you! The idea! Your incorrigible child and you—you, a *grown* man—chasing a little boy!

WILBUR: (*Grabs Sister*) Here, young lady! (*To Mrs. Gadwood.*) Madam, look what that dadbobbed little grandson of a gorilla has done to my youngest blossom! (*Points to icing on Sister's face.*)

MRS. GADWOOD: Sir! How dare you call my baby a baboon's step-child? That little fiend of yours should be in a reform school! (*Sneers.*) A fine set of children you have, I must say! What with your son wrecking the car and killing I don't know how many people! Truthfully, I have never—

WILBUR: (*Startled*) What's that? What's that about my Junior? (*Doorbell off R. Emmy enters L., dressed in afternoon frock.*)

EMMY: (*Patting hair*) Oh, I hope I'm all together!

WILBUR: Mamma! What's all this about our Junior wrecking the car and killing a score of people?

EMMY: Junior? Wrecking? Killing? Wilbur, are you delirious?

WILBUR: That's what Mrs. Gadwood just said. (*To Mrs. Gadwood.*) Who informed you, madam?

(*Mrs. Tweedy enters, R.*)

MRS. TWEEDY: All the guests are here now. The pianist and preacher have just arrived; also, Miss McSnoop, the society reporter.

MRS. GADWOOD: (*To Wilbur*) It was Mrs. Tweedy who told me Junior had been arrested, wrecked the car and—

MRS. TWEEDY: (*Quickly*) The police said over the phone that Junior was arrested for speeding. Nothing more.

MRS. GADWOOD: (*Nettled*) But my dear Mrs. Tweedy! You distinctly told me that Junior Dodd had wrecked the car and killed several people!

EMMY: (*Falls on Wilbur's shoulder*) Oh, Papa! *Our* son!

MRS. TWEEDY: You distinctly misunderstood me, Mrs. Gadwood. I said—

MRS. GADWOOD: Don't quibble, Mrs. Tweedy. You said—

MRS. TWEEDY: I never quibble, Mrs. G. Gibney Gadwood! It was *you* who said—

MRS. GADWOOD: (*Her voice rising*) Truthfully, Mrs. T. Twyman Tweedy, you inferred more than Junior's arrest for speeding.

MRS. TWEEDY: (*Getting louder*) I inferred? Don't make me laugh! It was you, Gussie Gadwood, who implied Junior had wrecked the car and killed all those people!

MRS. GADWOOD: Talitha Tweedy, you are a two-faced woman!

MRS. TWEEDY: (*Glaring*) Is that so? Well, I'd rather have two faces like mine than one face like yours!

MRS. GADWOOD: (*Her voice trembling with rage*) Truthfully, I have never been so insulted. Never! Come, my pet, we're going home. (*Grabs Billy by the arm and jerks him out R.*)

(*Warn: Connie, Gertie*)

MRS. TWEEDY: (*Calls after her*) You needn't leave on my account, Gussie Gadwood, for I am going. (*Turns to Emmy.*) Oh, I've never been so mortified!

EMMY: But you can't leave, Mrs. Tweedy! You are singing, "Oh, Promise Me!"

MRS. TWEEDY: Oh, no, I'm not. I'm too upset to sing—too infuriated!

EMMY: Then inhale, Mrs. Tweedy. Inhale!

(*Connie and Gertie enter L. Connie is wearing her wedding dress.*)

MRS. TWEEDY: (*Snorts*) Inhale, indeed!

WILBUR: (*Grins*) Yeah, inhale and exhale, and if that don't cool you down, try breathin' from the dadburned diaphragm. Haw! Haw! Haw!

MRS. TWEEDY: (*Whirls on Wilbur*) Are you by any chance poking fun at me, my good man? (*Ominously.*) Well, let me tell you something. You'll be tittering on the other side of your face before this evening is over. Goodbye! (*Exit, R.*)

WILBUR: (*Scratching his head*) Now, what did she mean by that?

SISTER: I know, Papa. I heard her and Miz Gadwood talkin', and they said it was funny the groom hadn't come, an' Miz Tweedy, she said she doubted if he come at all, and they both said Connie had the same as been left in the lurch—

CONNIE: (*Grabbing her head*) Merciful heavens! What if Horace has deserted me at the altar? (*Totters.*)

GERTIE: (*Holding her up*) Don't faint! Tee-hee-hee-e-e-e!

EMMY: Hold on to yourself, honey! Horace is just a little late, that's all.

(Warn: Miss McSnoop)

CONNIE: *(Moans)* Oh, what shall I do? I'll never be able to lift up my head again. Perhaps I shall enter a convent! Perhaps I shall write poetry—an elegy on a bleeding heart—odes to hidden tears—sonnets to gnawing grief and faded hopes! Perhaps, like Camille, I shall pine away with quick consumption. *(With a little moan of anguish.)* OW-w-w!

WILBUR: *(Crossing to table C.)* Dadbob it, if Horace Pottle has thrown you over, know what I'll do? I'll break his neck! *(Violently bangs fist down on table; he comes within an ace of hitting the cake.)*

EMMY: Careful, Wilbur!

WILBUR: *(Getting more and more excited)* I'll commit manslaughter on that shrimp! *(Bangs table with fist and barely misses cake. Emmy gasps)* I'll—I'll—I'll jerk off a leg and beat him to death with it! *(Bangs fist down in middle of cake. Emmy screams.)*

GERTIE: Tee-hee-hee-hee-eeee! Oh, tee-hee-hee-hee-e-e-e!

EMMY: *(Wringing her hands)* The cake—the cake—you've ruined the wedding cake!

WILBUR: Gol-blast the gol-blast! *(Wipes cake off hand with handkerchief.)*

(Miss McSnoop hurriedly enters R., carrying notebook.)

MISS MCSNOOP: *(With pencil poised over notebook)* Oh, how do you do? I am Malvina McSnoop, the society reporter on the "Evening Bugle."

EMMY: So nice of you to come, Miss Snoop.

MISS MCSNOOP: *Mac*Snoop, if you please. *(Sits on divan.)* I'd like to get a few more notes for the "Bugle" about the wedding.

EMMY: It's to be just a quiet home wedding.

MISS MCSNOOP: Is it true the wedding may not take place at all?

CONNIE: *(Hysterically)* No! No! Don't you dare print that!

MISS MCSNOOP: I got my information from Mrs. G. Gibney Gadwood.

SISTER: *(Jumping up and down)* Oh, Connie, if that mean old Horace don't show up and leaves you in the lurch, I've thought of the cutest idea! You can sue him fer britches of promise!

MISS MCSCNOOP: *(Writing)* Sister of the bride implies there may be breach of promise suit.

CONNIE: (*Shrieks*) I'll die, if you print that!

MISS MCSNOOP: (*Shrugs*) Very well. (*Brightly.*) Oh, Mr. Dodd, I'd like to have your opinion of the younger generation—especially your viewpoint as a father whose son is being held for wrecking your car and killing a number of people. How many people were killed?

WILBUR: Don't you dare print that! (*Goes to phone.*)

MISS MCSNOOP: I got my information from Mrs. T. Tyman Tweedy.

WILBUR: (*Yelling in phone*) Gimme the police station!

(*Warn: Horace*)

MISS MCSNOOP: And Mrs. Dodd, I'd like your viewpoint as a browbeaten wife, whose husband refuses to let her indulge her hobby of antique furniture.

EMMY: Why, the idea! Who told you—? Really, Miss Snoop—er—Mac—don't print that!

WILBUR: Hello? Police Station? This is Wilbur Dodd, Senior!

EMMY: Be firm, Papa! Talk right up to them.

WILBUR: What's all this about my son being arrested? Forty-one dollars for speeding? Forty-one dollars? That's an outrage.

MISS MCSNOOP: (*Writing*) Irate father condemn police.

WILBUR: . . . And you say speeding isn't all? . . . *What?* He ran into a man? Why, blast the blasted . . .

GERTIE: Stop blasting, Mr. Dodd, you're blowing up the wedding. Tee-hee-hee-e-e-e!

CONNIE: (*Wringing her hands*) Oh, my wedding! *Where* is it? *When* is it? (*Furiously.*) I'll show Horace Pottle! I'll have a wedding here and now!

MISS MCSNOOP: But what about a groom?

CONNIE: (*Points R.*) I swear I'll marry the first man who enters that door—if he'll have me!

(*Screams and confusion are heard off R. All whirl R., except Wilbur.*)

WILBUR: (*Yells in phone*) What I want to know is, where is the man my son hit with the car?

(*Horace Pottle dashes in R. His clothing is torn and his face so streaked with dirt he is unrecognizable.*)

HORACE: Here he is! I'm the man!

MISS MCSNOOP: A tramp. (*Writes quickly.*) Young woman deserted at the altar vows to marry first man who enters door. Tramp takes place of groom.

CONNIE: Ohh-h-h, no-o-o-o! (*Covers face with hands.*)

HORACE: (*Rushing to Wilbur*) Quick! Give me your coat!

EMMY: (*Screams*) Oh! A robber! Don't shoot!

(*Sister dashes under table and hides.*)

HORACE: Your son, Junior—

WILBUR: (*Slamming up receiver*) I know what you're going to say. You'll sue me for damages. You'll get my coat soon enough—my shirt, too!

HORACE: Good Lord, don't any of you recognize me? I'm Horace!

WILBUR and EMMY: (*In unison*) Horace?

CONNIE: (*Rushing to Horace*) Oh, my grimey groom!

HORACE: (*Embracing Connie*) My beaming bride!

EMMY: But Horace! Your *clothes!*

HORACE: Quick, Mr. Dodd, let me borrow your coat. (*Jerks off coat and tosses on divan.*)

WILBUR: (*Removing coat*) Sure, son-in-law.

MISS MCSNOOP: (*Rushing to Horace*) Will you give me your reaction as a bridegroom who was hit by your prospective father-in-law's car that was driven by your prospective brother-in-law on the way to your wedding? And what is your opinion of in-laws, anyway?

HORACE: (*Ignoring Miss McSnoop, speaks to Wilbur, who is standing just beyond her.*) Now, gimme your pants.

MISS MCSNOOP: (*Gasps*) My *what?* I beg your pardon!

HORACE: (*Pointing to Wilbur*) I meant *his* pants, not your—that is—I mean—

MISS MCSNOOP: (*Returning to divan*) Oh! Oh, dear! Oh, dear me!

EMMY: Papa, your pants! Quick!

WILBUR: Huh? (*Pulling up trousers.*) What's wrong with 'em?

EMMY: Quick! Take off your pants and give them to Horace—not in here, you fool! (*Pushes him L.*) Now, hurry!

WILBUR: If I have to provide all his clothes before the wedding, what'll he expect afterwards? Dadbob the—(*Exit, L., growling.*)

(*Warn: Music*)

CONNIE: (*To Horace*) Hurry, my love!

HORACE: (*Embracing her, quickly*) Yes, my dove! (*Rushes off L.*)

SISTER: Whee-e-e-e! Now, we can have the wedding. (*Runs to arch R., yells.*) Play the music now! Play the wedding music!

EMMY: (*Calling out arch L.*) Make haste, boys!

(*Wedding march is heard off R.*)

MISS MCSNOOP: (*Writing in notebook*) Groom in dilemma for—ah—trousers as the wedding march starts.

EMMY: The wedding march? Horrors, not yet! (*Rushes to arch R.; calls out.*) Stop that music! Stop that music!

(*Music stops.*)

CONNIE: Oh, Mamma—*hic!*—do I look—*hic!*—all right? *Hic! Hic!*

EMMA: (*In consternation*) Why, Connie, you're hiccupping! Stop it!

CONNIE: Hic! Hic! I can't stop it. I always get the—*hic!*—*hic!*—hiccupps when I'm overly excited. Oh, what'll I—*hic!*—do?

EMMY: Hold your breath and count to ten!

MISS MCSNOOP: Pound her on the back! (*Runs to Connie and starts thumping her back.*)

CONNIE: Hic—ouch!

GERTIE: Oh, Connie, if you have hiccupps during the ceremony, I shall simply die! Tee-hee-
hee-e-e-e-e!

EMMY: That beating her is not doing any good. Somebody get a glass of water, quick!

GERTIE: I'll get it! (*Rushes out L.*)

MISS MCSNOOP: I've heard if you scare someone with hiccoughs—(*Jumping at Connie.*)Booooo! Booooo!

CONNIE: Heav—*hic!* Heavens!

MISS MCSNOOP: (*Rushing at Connie, wriggles her hands at her ears*) Boooooooooo!

SISTER: I wanna scare her! Boo! Gr-r-r-r! Woof-woof!

MISS MCSNOOP: MI-EOW-W-W-W! Pft! Pft! Pft!

CONNIE: *Hic!*

EMMA: (*Yells*) Gertie, hurry with that water!

(*Gertie rushes in L. with glass of water.*)

GERTIE: Tee-hee-hee-e-e-e-e! Oh, I just could die! Tee-hee-hee-e-e-e-e! If the earth would only swallow me up!

EMMY: What's the matter?

GERTIE: When I rushed in the kitchen to get this water, Horace and—tee-hee-hee-e-e-e-e!—and Mr. Dodd were in there changing their clothes. Imagine! Tee-hee-hee-e-e-e-e! Is *my* face vermilion! Tee-hee-hee-e-e-e-e! (*Drinks entire glass of water.*)

EMMY: Oh, good stars, you've drunk Connie's hiccough water!

GERTIE: I'm so nervous, I don't know what I'm doing.

CONNIE: Never mind, I believe I'm over the hiccoughs.

EMMY: Well, thank goodness!

MISS MCSNOOP: (*Sits on hassock, writing.*) A solemn hush prevailed as the moment drew nigh for the ceremony.

(*Horace races in L., clad in Wilbur's coat and pants, which are inches too short for him.*)

HORACE: (*Dashes to Connie with outstretched arms.*) Now, darling, I can claim you for mine alone!

EMMY: (*Rushes to arch R.*) Play! Play the wedding march!

(Music starts.)

CONNIE: *(Fondly)* My conquering—*hic!*—hero! Oh, Heavens, Mamma! I've got 'em again!
Hic!

(Wilbur jumps inside arch L., with sheet wrapped around his legs.)

WILBUR: *(Howls)* Emmy Dodd! Where the devil are my other pants?

EMMY: *(Almost beside herself.)* How should I know? I never wear them. Don't bother me now. It's time for the wedding! Horace, you go in first and wait for Connie, left of the potted palm.

CONNIE: Heavens, Mamma! How can I promise to—*hic!*—love, honor, and o—*hic!*—with the—*hic!*—coughs?

EMMY: You have to control yourself, that's all. Hurry, Horace!

WILBUR: Hey, wait a minute, dadbob it! How do you expect me to give the bride away without any pants?

EMMY: *(Frantically)* There's no time for pants-hunting now, Papa. All we need is the bride and groom, the preacher and the ring. Oh, Horace, you *do* have the ring, I hope?

HORACE: *(Startled)* Suffering Moses! *(Feverishly searches coat pockets.)* I could have sworn I put it in this right-hand pocket. Good gosh, I can't find it!

EMMY: *(Rushes to arch R.; yells)* Stop the music! Stop the music! *(Music ceases.)* Hurry and find that ring!

CONNIE: *(To Horace)* Oh, you darling idiot, that's Papa's coat you're wearing? *(Rushes to divan.)* Here's your coat; right where you threw it. *(Searches left-hand pocket.)* And, hallelujah! Here's the ring. *(Pulls out ring and holds it up.)*

EMMY: *(Dashing to arch R. again)* Start the wedding march!

(Music starts.)

(Warn: Curtain)

EMMY: All right, Horace! Hurry, give him the ring, Connie!

HORACE: *(Grabs ring and sprints for arch R. He stops suddenly, snaps his fingers and whirls toward the others)* Oh, my gosh almighty!

EMMY: Now, what's the matter?

HORACE: *(Running to Connie, takes both her hands; groans)* Darling, will you ever forgive me?

CONNIE: Forgive you what, silly precious?

HORACE: I guess I'm still dazed from the accident, or I'd never forgotten it.

CONNIE: What are you raving about?

HORACE: I was on my way to the courthouse when your brother knocked me down with his car and knocked it right out of my mind. My dearest pet, *I forgot to get the license!*

WILBUR: Criminy pitchforks! It's after six and the courthouse is closed!

HORACE: We'll have to have another quiet home wedding tomorrow.

CONNIE: *(Throws her arms wildly in air) Hic! (Falls prone on the divan.)*

EMMY: *(Staggering to arch R.)* Stop that music! Stop that music!

MISS MCSNOOP: *(Writing)* Quiet home wedding post-poned!

GERTIE: Tee-hee-hee-e-e-e-e! Oh, tee-hee-hee-e-e-e-e-e!

QUICK CURTAIN