

"A TRIP TO CHINATOWN"
-: OR :-
"AN IDYL OF SAN FRANCISCO"
-: BY :-
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ACT. 1st.

(Scene drawing room in Sen Gay's house)

SLAVIN.

Mr. R. Gay! I haven't a doubt that it's an R. and it's meant for Mr. Rashleigh. Besides it's from a lady; The shape, the perfume (*Smelling*) the hand writing all prove it to be from a lady and the old gentleman never receives notes from ladies. There's no doubt in my mind it's for Rashleigh. Still the R. looks enough like a B., I think to warrant me in giving it to Uncle Ben; he'll open it and hope find out from it, how the young man is going on. I'll give it to the old man.

(Enter Wilder)

WILDER.

Noah, has Mr. Rashleigh come in!

NOAH.

(R.) No Mr. Daly.

WILDER.

When do you expect him!

NOAH.

I don't expect him sir; I would not dare take the liberty of expecting him sir. I know my place sir.

(Enter Rash.)

RASH.

Hullo Wilder old man you hero. I was over at your house looking for you.

NOAH.

Is anything required of me!

RASH.

Yes; get out!

(Exit Noah)

WILDER.

Now Rash. You know the masquerade ball tonight; well

RASH.

I know I'm going to be there.

WILDER.

Yes; but the girls are going. Flirt is up in Tony's room now; the scheme's all fixed.

RASH.

They going! Why how! I can get out, but Uncle Ben'll never let Tony out and your father'll never let Flirt go.

WILDER.

To the ball! No! But we're not supposed to be going there. We have got permission to go on a night tour of Chinatown. That will account for our being out late; well, instead of going to Chinatown, we all meet at the Riche, have a jolly supper; our masks will be sent there we'll put them on and go to the ball. Being en masque nobody'll know us and when we get home the old folks will never suspect we haven't been to Chinatown. See!

RASH.

That's all very well; if it works. How did Flirt get your father to consent to her going to Chinatown!

WILDER.

Oh he consented when Mrs. Guyer said she'd go as Chaperone. Didn't you get a note from her telling you all about it!

RASH.

No; did she send me one!

WILDER.

Yes; sent it by messenger from our house.

RASH.

I never got it, very strange!

WILDER.

Now does it all go!

RASH.

Why yes; if Uncle Ben will consent to Tony's going through Chinatown.

WILDER.

Leave the girls to coax him.

RASH.

But say; if the widow's going along, we'll need a third fellow to balance the party. You bet she doesn't go without a fellow all to herself.

WILDER.

The widow! Well hardly! She's the one who got up this whole scheme my boy! The trip to Chinatown story and all; and you bet she's taken care the party isn't short on men. She's got Towne Painter to go as Flirt's escort so you can devote yourself entirely to the widow.

RASH.

Well that suits me! The widow's more fun than any girl I know. Say Wilder I don't believe a woman is ever at her best till she becomes a widow.

WILDER.

The boys all seem to think she's in her prime anyway. That's a great song Billy Barker wrote and dedicated to her.

(Starts song- Duet: Rash & Wilder)

(Voices heard outside)

WILDER.

It's the girls and your Uncle.

(Enter Ben Flirt and Tony)

BEN.

I don't care if night trips to Chinatown are the fashion I say no!

TONY.

But Uncle I've lived here in San Francisco all my life and have never been through the China quarter and this is such a good chance; we'll have a whole party together and of course a policeman. And we'll ask Mrs. Guyer to Chaperone us.

BEN.

I don't see that she'd make any difference.

FLIRT.

Why she's a widow.

BEN.

Yes and is always sniveling about it. Why doesn't she get married again? I suppose because no man's fool enough to yield to her blandishments. I know I wouldn't.

TONY.

But if she goes-

BEN.

She goes alone! I won't have you out all night chasing through Chinatown. That settles it.

TONY.

(Bursts into tears) I think you're just as mean as you can be.

(Exits crying)

FLIRT.

(Crying) Poor Tony!

(Exits crying.)

RASH.

Come, Wilder!

(They exeunt)

BEN.

Now I'm an informal old beast, I suppose. Well I can't help it! They're my sister's children and I'll do my duty as their guardian if I earn their everlasting hatred.

(Enter Noah with letter.)

NOAH.

Letter left here for you sir by messenger boy.

(Gives letter.)

BEN.

(Looks at it) For me!

NOAH.

Yes, sir. Anything I can do for you sir!

BEN.

Yes. Go away.

(Exit Noah)

Looks like a woman's letter. What woman would write to me?

(Opens letter reads)

"My dear old boy" *(Look)* You must take me to the grand masquerade ball, tonight. Even if I am in mourning I'm bound to go on the strict Q.T. and you are the only man I dare to trust. You get the masques- it wouldn't do for me to order them- meet at the Riche, don our masks and drive to the ball and nobody'll know anything about it. Don't fail for I'm dying of a good time. Yours- P.S. If you want to make it a party of four, I can bring Flirt.

(Speaks)

Well I'll be ----- Well that letter's plain enough. These widows know what they want and are not afraid to declare themselves. But this to me- Why I know she's been running to the house to see Tony but I never suspected it was me she was after! Da-n bright woman that widow! I'll not disappoint her. But how can I stay out all night without the family knowing it? Change my

mind. Let 'em go to Chinatown. By jove how lucky it comes.

(Orchestra begins)

There's that cursed street band; playing dance music too. That's suggestive. I hope I haven't forgotten how to shake my feet.

(Dance- at close enter four young people and catch him)

TONY.

Why Uncle Ben!

BEN.

I was only thinking! I've turned matters over in my mind.

TONY.

I should think you must have with such violent exercise.

BEN.

I've decided to let you go to Chinatown. It's highly proper that you should see it and see it thoroughly. Promise me you will go. Go early and stay late.

All 4.

We will!

(Exit Ben R.)

All 4.

Well!

FLIRT.

There's a change of mind for you. I wonder what did it!

TONY.

I don't know nor care. We go to the ball; that's the point!

(All burst into chorus during which Widow enters and goes to C.)

WIDOW.

And for it all you can thank me.

2 GIRLS.

Our Chaperone!

WIDOW.

That will do young ladies! Rashleigh why did you not answer my note!

RASH.

Because I didn't get it.

WIDOW.

Didn't get it! How stupid of you!

RASH.

Oh I know what it said. And it's all right. So you can dispense with those black looks.

WIDOW.

Not for 29 days. You must remember I'm a widow.

WILDER.

Still mourning for poor Jack.

WIDOW.

Bitterly! I shall wear a black mask at the Ball. Wilder don't forget that in ordering the masks.

(Enter Noah with letter)

NOAH.

Note for you, sir. *(Gives letter)* Can I oblige you, sir?

RASH.

Yes! Go and hide yourself!

(Exit Noah)

It's a note from Painter!

(Reads)

"Dear Rash: May be a little late, but will join you at the Riche. Will inquire for Mr. Gay's room. Wait for me! Yours Towne Painter" That settles it! Our party of six is complete! Of course we'll wait for him. You wouldn't care to go with the party one man short.

WIDOW.

Care to! I just wouldn't!

(Enter Ben.)

BEN.

Now Tony- Why Mrs. Guyer, good morning. How do you do.

WIDOW.

(Rather surprised) Good morning sir!

BEN.

(To himself) I see! Discretion!

TONY.

Uncle she's going to Chaperone us!

BEN.

Is she! That's nice! But if she changes her mind.

(Winking at widow)

You can go just the same.

(Aside)

She's throwing 'em off. Fly women! I must speak to her.

(Aloud)

Tony, I want you four young people to get 'round the d--- piano and sing me my favorite quartette

TONY.

Anything to oblige.

(The 4 gather 'round. Bus. at piano-)

BEN.

Mrs. Guyer sit down *(Seats her)* *(Aside to her)* Of course you mean to keep your appointment tonight!

WIDOW.

Most surely! Why!

BEN.

Oh I shouldn't let the young folks go out only for that.

WIDOW.

You flatter me! *(Aside)* What ails the man!

TONY.

We can't find the quartette, but here's a quintette. Come Mrs. G help us out

(She goes to sing.)

BEN.

(Aside) Rats! I asked 'em to sing so I could talk to her. Well I'll be----

(Quintette-)

FLIRT.

Does that satisfy your craving for music!

BEN.

Entirely! I don't care if I never hear you sing again!

WIDOW.

That's nice! Now I must run home and get rested for night. Good bye all.

BEN.

(Opening portiers - aside to Widow) Everything O.K.!

WIDOW.

I hope so!

BEN.

You and I are all right, but no Flirt.

WIDOW.

Certainly not.

(Exit)

BEN.

Young ladies there's a woman whose example you ought follow.

TONY.

You don't know how hard we try to, sir.

(Enter Noah with Telegram)

NOAH.

Telegram sir! *(Hands it)* Any service I can perform sir!

BEN.

Yes; leave the room! *(Exit Noah)* *(Ben reads Tel.)* "You will probably see me before this reaches you, for I am at Oakland will reach your house in an hour. Welland Strong" Well! I didn't expect him till tomorrow.

FLIRT.

Who is he? A nice young fellow or an old codger like--- oh lots of folks.

BEN.

He is a dying man: an old and deep boyhood friend of mine upon whom death has fixed its clutch. He comes here as my guest in the hope that our glorious climate may prolong his existence. Poor fellow. He used to be the picture of health. I dread to see him hollow chested, cheeks hectic flushed and glassy eyed. And he my boyhood's dearest friend. Say he's liable to be here at any moment. We must *(Rings)* make ready to receive him. Get a lounge ready

(Girls obey)

(Enter Noah.)

NOAH.

Did you ring!

BEN.

Ring! I next thing to turned in a fire alarm. Get a glass of wine ready on this table. Bring fans and smelling salts. Have a man help you bring him from the carriage-

(Everybody bustling and when everything fixed)

He'll probably faint after his long journey. Now is everything ready?

(Enter Strong with Cat and Parrot.)

STRONG.

Ah, there!

(All turn to him)

BEN.

What Welland Strong!

STRONG.

Yes! Welland Strong!

BEN.

Why how do you do!

STRONG.

I may die before night!

BEN.

Sit down! Here Noah! Take the gentleman's wraps! Have glass of wine!

(Exit Noah with wraps.)

STRONG.

I will! Wine is harmful to me. It shortens my life. But I'll take it.

(Drinks)

BEN.

You don't look badly old man!

STRONG.

No! That is one of the exasperating things about it.

WILDER.

Which lung is affected sir!

STRONG.

Neither. But the left one probably will be by Saturday night.

RASH.

Do you cough much!

STRONG.

Not at all! That's a very serious feature. My malady is so deep seated that I can't bring the cough to the surface. But instead I felt a sensation which in a well man would be called a thirst for liquor.

TONY.

And what do the doctors say!

STRONG.

>No two agree.

BEN.

And who shall decide when doctors disagree!

STRONG.

Usually the Coroner. Why I had seven of them. One fool said that nothing ailed me. Do you know the only man who really understood my case was a horse doctor. He said if I stayed in Seaton I'd die in sixty days. Out here I'd live two years if I obeyed certain rules. Here's the book of rules and it tells just how much I shorten my life each time I break one. That glass of wine shortened it 10 hours.

(Enter Noah.)

NOAH.

Shall I take the gentleman's game to his room, sir!

STRONG.

He may as well.

NOAH.

Anything else I can do!

BEN.

Yes; keep out!

(Exit Noah with pets.)

STRONG.

By the way. Can you give me the address of a good horse doctor!

BEN.

Why yes. But hadn't you better see our family physician!

STRONG.

Oh no; he's no good! None of these M. D's are! They're used to catering to their patients whims. Giving them what they want to take. A horse doctor don't try to please his patients. He gives them what they need. I'll never trust any but a horse doctor.

BEN.

Well well! I'll see you have one. I know a man who cured my males of colic.

STRONG.

That's the man I want. He'll keep me along, if any one can.

TONY.

What feature of our climate do you rely on to help you!

STRONG.

The earthquakes!

ALL.

Earthquakes!

STRONG.

Yes. They're very invigorating!

BEN.

Have you ever seen an earthquake.

STRONG.

I was chased three miles by one once.

BEN.

Now old man you've got two or three years anyhow and we'll try to make you comfortable. After dinner we'll sit down and talk over old times.

(Aside)

I forgot! I've got to be out tonight. What'll I do with him?

(Aloud)

We'll have the house all to ourselves for the young people are going to see Chinatown by night. You'd enjoy it if you were only able to go with them.

(4tette look)

TONY.

But he isn't Uncle. It's a very fatiguing trip.

STRONG.

I don't know! I have sworn to see Chinatown; and fading daily as I am, I shall never again be so able as tonight. It will of course shorten my life, but I'll go if the young people will take me!

BEN.

Why of course. Just delighted to have you go. Aren't you?

4TETTE.

Oh yes!

STRONG.

Then I'll sacrifice *(Looking at book)* ten days of my life and go.

(Cats heard outside - Enter Noah all scratched)

NOAH.

Your cat's got at our cat sir. You'd better come sir!

(Exit Strong and Ben excited)

(Brief cat fight outside)

(Four young people down C.)

WILDER.

D.

FLIRT.

'M---M

(Movement of dash.)

TONY.

'M----m

(Same as Flirt.)

FLIRT.

This is a nice fix!

TONY.

We're dished on going to the ball and we've got to put in a night toting that old fool all over Chinatown.

FLIRT.

It's bad enough to lose the ball.

TONY.

But toting him 'round is such a cheerless task!

WILDER.

What's to be done!

OMNES.

Ask the widow.

(Mrs. G. Entering.)

WIDOW.

What? How to get out of this new scrape.

GIRLS.

You know---

WIDOW.

Just met your Uncle in the hall; he told me this Mr. Strong would go with us to Chinatown so I need have no compunctions about not going. And then he winked most mysteriously.

TONY.

Uncle winked at you! I can't understand what he meant.

WIDOW.

Neither can I; and I'm a widow.

FLIRT.

But this dying creature that's tricked upon me! What are we to do with him!

WIDOW.

Take him along.

All 4.

To Chinatown!

WIDOW.

No. To the ball.

TONY.

But if we tell him where we're going he will go straight to Uncle with the story.

WIDOW.

But don't tell him where. He's going; just take him along.

TONY.

But when he comes home he'll tell on us.

WIDOW.

Then he'll have to tell on himself too! I don't know this Mr. Strong, but if he isn't as deep in this scrape as we are, before we get home then-- May I always remain a widow.

TONY.

But he'll make a four men to three ladies. Some girl will have to manage two beaux.

WIDOW.

I think somebody will prove equal to that emergency!

TONY.

On the whole I'm rather glad he's going. We'll have a lot of fun with him.

WIDOW.

He's got an exciting evening in store for him.

(Strong enters.)

STRONG.

The excitement of that cat fight has taken a week off my life.

TONY.

Here he is. Oh Mr. Strong, I want to introduce you to our charming young widow Mrs. Guyer.

WIDOW.

(Courtseys) I am honored!

STRONG.

(Pathetically) A widow and a woman.

WIDOW.

Those affiliations usually go together.

STRONG.

How pathetic! In the flower of youth to be bereft of sweet companionship. To be doomed henceforth forever to tread life's pathway inaided and alone.

WIDOW.

Ye-yes. But say! There's no law against her marrying again.

WILDER.

Well, if I left a widow-----

WIDOW.

You'd be just pig enough to want her to stay one. That's a man. He thinks it a slur on him for his widow to marry. Nothing of the sort. It's a compliment. Shows he made married life so happy that she wants more of it.

RASH.

When I marry I think I shall marry a widow.

FLIRT.

Oh Rashleigh! Why!

RASH.

I'm too lazy to do any of the courting myself.

WIDOW.

We will change the subject. Mr. Strong is your visit to San Francisco for pleasure!

STRONG.

I came here to die.

WIDOW.

To die!

STRONG.

Yes! It's a sure thing. The remedy I am taking for my lung trouble contains dynamite. If the disease conquers the remedy. I die of the disease; if the remedy conquers the disease I shall be so full of dynamite eventually that I'll go off bang! (*Widow startled*) like a torpedo dropped from a roof on a policeman's head. Think, I may suddenly vanish with a loud report (*Widow screams*) before your eyes (*Widow screams*) And it may happen at any moment! Now!

WIDOW.

(Shrieks wildly and faints in chair)

STRONG.

Great Heavens! She's fainted! Send for a horse doctor!

WIDOW.

(Springing up and glancing at him) What!!

-: *CURTAIN* :-

ACT. 2nd.

(Private supper room at Right - Slavin discovered.)

SLAVIN.

Mr. Rashleigh Gay's party of six. Well that means up all night for me and plenty of wine on ice; but it also means \$5. for a tip. Mr. Gay may sometimes forget some of the commandments but he always remembers the waiter. He'll go to heaven.

(Voices outside)

Here they are.

(Open door C.)

Right this way, Mr. Gay. This is your room.

(Enter 3 ladies, Rash, & Wilder.)

TONY.

Number 10; with a piano I'm glad we've got that!

FLIRT.

But what's that orchestra!

WILDER.

They have one play every night in this restaurant from 8 to 12.

SLAVIN.

The ladies dressing room is there *(R.U.E.)* the gentlemen's here. *(L.U.E.)* The dresses are in the rooms.

FLIRT.

Let's go and get dressed at once, while they're getting supper so we'll lose no time. Come on Tony.

(Exit Tony and FLIRT R.U.E.)

WILDER.

(To Widow) What shall we order for supper!

WIDOW.

Oh some Pommery.

(Exit R.U.E.)

RASH.

Mr. Painter's not here yet!

SLAVIN.

No, sir.

WILDER.

We'll have to wait for him, he's got our tickets to the ball.

RASH.

Couldn't we buy others?

WILDER.

No; none are sold at the door. So we've got to wait for him. We'll go ahead with supper, tho' Sa- Say! Where's our dying companion! Strong!

(Enter Strong.)

STRONG.

Here I am!

RASH.

What's happened!

STRONG.

The hackman said \$5. I said \$2.

WILDER.

What did you agree upon!

STRONG.

Five. Tell me! Do we stop here long!

WILDER.

Our friend Mr. Painter who is to meet us here hasn't arrived and he has the tickets s----

STRONG.

Tickets! For Chinatown!

WILDER.

Ye-yes; of course!

RASH.

Oh you're not let into Chinatown without tickers. *(To Slavin)* Isn't that so!

SLAVIN.

Yes sir. Fifty cents please.

(Rash gives him coin.)

STRONG.

Supper! *(Consulting book)* Eating at night shortens my life ten days!

RASH.

Well you can sit and see us eat.

STRONG.

You're very kind. But I'll not impose upon your courtesy. Lend me a pencil till I put down

(Writes)

"Late supper ten days off." What's ten days life to me! Here waiter, my coat and hat.

(Exit Slavin C. with wraps.)

WILDER.

Now Rash we must be getting dressed. But say; We haven't ordered the supper.

RASH.

That's so, Mr. Strong, what would you like? Won't you give us the order!

STRONG.

I fear the taste of a dying man may not exactly suit your fancies.

WILDER.

I don't know. I never tasted one. But you go ahead and order the supper.

(Rash and Wilder to L.U.E.)

RASH.

The wines we get out here are harmless.

(Exeunt two boys L.U.E.)

STRONG.

I don't quite understand all this! *(Enter Slavin C.)* Oh, waiter! I hope you were careful of my coat -- there was a large bottle of medicine in each pocket.

SLAVIN.

Yes, sir!

STRONG.

If the medicine got mixed they would explode.

SLAVIN.

Why didn't you say so before.

(Grabs caraffe and drinks)

STRONG.

Waiter. I will order the supper. Give us etc.

(Pantomime bus. & order)

And waiter could you give me a glass of Whale's milk.

SLAVIN.

Whale's milk!

STRONG.

Yes; my doctor recommends it.

SLAVIN.

Well you tell him to go milk a whale and get you some. It ain't on our bill of fare.

STRONG.

Too bad. Say Waiter. Will you do me a favor. There's a porous plaster between my shoulders that's driving me crazy. Will you kindly reach down my back and pull it off.

SLAVIN.

Certainly sir. *(Puts hand down Strong's back)* How do you like your agony, sir.

STRONG.

Take it slow there's not a bit of hurry.

SLAVIN.

I know sir. A hair's breadth at a time. I won't hurt you sir.

STRONG.

Easy! Easy!

(Bell rings in office- Slavin bolts for door R.I.E taking porous plaster with him- leaves Strong quivering with pain- looks at annunciator)

He took skin and all.

(Enter Slavin with plaster stuck to fingers.)

SLAVIN.

I'll swear I heard a bell ring. Didn't you?

(Bus. with plaster.)

STRONG.

No sir! I wasn't listening for bells.

(Slavin bothered by plaster)

SLAVIN.

Here's your plaster sir!

(Given plaster to Strong- it sticks to Strong's hands)

STRONG.

I don't want it. I never save these things as souvenirs. You throw it out!

SLAVIN.

Excuse me! I've got to get supper

(Exit C. and re-enter door C. in R. room- office)

STRONG.

(Bus. with porous plaster- gets bodily snuck up with it and in desperation exits C. calling)
Waiter! Waiter!

(Meantime Slavin has gone behind office desk- Enter Office Ben.)

BEN.

Has a lady been here inquiring for Mr. Gay!

SLAVIN.

No, sir!

BEN.

Just in time. Show me to a private supper room for two.

SLAVIN.

Certainly sir! This way. *(Exit door from office both)*

(Enter Widow L.U.E. Hamlet dress.)

WIDOW.

It seems I am to go to the ball in the guise of a man. I was forced to it. A man among the women! Well that's what I always wanted to be! What sort of a fellow shall I be to catch the girls? The very English young man: Good morning dear boy: awfully pleased, awfully! Beastly weather this- in London you know- come 'round to the Club old Cappie, have a brandy and soda, we've new windows in our Club now. Special glass, magnificent fog effect. Brightest day make you feel right at home in London, dear boy." And there's the young freshman in College: We boys ha ha ha, have lots of ha ha, fun. We've had a cow in the ha ha president's chair twice and haha! We've had a can-rush ha ha ha and three men had cones broken and it was lots of fun and ha ha ha let's waltz- What, engaged for the next and all the rest and here comes Mr. Winner. Yes he's a senior and I'll have to excuse you! Oh! Or I might be one of those dear delightful toughs: Soy dere sia come and do a turn. What's dat. Engage! be blowed. If he says a word I'll throw him out see? But I guess I'll do best as just the average young man right up to date.

(Song & dance and exit R.U.E.)

(Ben and Slavin enter Room L.)

BEN.

This will do. When the lady calls show her right in. And say, You'd better have supper all ready. I shan't have to wait long for her.

SLAVIN.

Yes sir! Champagne and what else sir!

BEN.

The best of everything. A corking supper my boy. Nothing too good.

SLAVIN.

Yes sir. Like to look at the evening paper sir!

BEN.

No. No paper for me!

(Exit Slavin)

I'll just sit and think of what a lucky dog I am. I wonder how Strong's enjoying Chinatown.

(Sits smokes -- Enter Widow and two girls R.U.E.)

WIDOW.

I think you are very unkind girls to make any such remarks, you know I won't be out of mourning for 29 days yet and it's the only black dress of the lot.

(Strong enters C. sees Widow exit C. and coughs outside.)

WIDOW.

Here comes Mr. Strong! I- I- Where's my mask!

(Dons mask)

Now to win him over to our frolic. I wonder if he's got a mash.

(Strong looks C.)

STRONG.

May I come in!

WIDOW.

Certainly. Mr. Strong I want to ask you a question. Are you stuck!

STRONG.

Not now!

WIDOW.

But you have been!

STRONG.

That waiter told her! *(Aloud)* yes!

WIDOW.

And you may be again someday.

STRONG.

Not if I know it!

(Enter two girls in costume R.U.E.)

TONY.

Will these do? *(See Strong)* Oh!

STRONG.

Bless my soul! What does all this mean!

WIDOW.

Girls, we may as well throw aside all attempt at concealment. (*Strong turns to go*) Mr. Strong (*Removing mask*) We are not going to Chinatown. We are going to the masquerade! We expect you to go with us; to join in the fun with us and when we go home we rely on your sense of honor to swear that we've been to Chinatown!

STRONG.

But my dear---

WIDOW.

Swear as an honest man that you will do this.

STRONG.

But I don't think your Uncle would deceive me

(2 girls offer him glass of wine.)

BEN.

I wonder what Strong would say if he knew I was here.

WIDOW.

Swear it!

STRONG.

I do!

TONY.

Ah! I knew he was a thoroughbred!

STRONG.

Say! Come to think of it, it's a mighty good joke on the old fellow.

(Laughs)

One moment.

(Produces book)

This means two weeks more off of my life. But let her rip.

(Enter two boys L.U.E.)

FLIRT.

Are you dressed at last!

BASH.

We are! Now for the supper and then we're ready to start.

WILDER.

Mr. Strong perhaps we ought to explain.

STRONG.

It might be as well, but if you've got a really good lie fixed up for me I don't mind hearing it.

TONY.

He knows and he's with us.

2 Y. MEN.

He is! Good boy!

(One on each side of him and sing)

We'll show you Frisco

(One of each side of him and sing "Out for a Rackett" - Girls in between them and all repeat it- touch and go on stage)

BEN.

(Looks at watch) Ten minutes of ten! By jingo one ought to be here. It's prolonging the agony.

(Rings enter Slavin) Waiter are you sure the lady hasn't called!

SLAVIN.

Sure, sir! Supper's ready to serve when you want it.

BEN.

I don't want it till she gets here. She can't be long now.

SLAVIN.

Patience is a great thing in these cases sir. Don't you want the evening paper, sir!

BEN.

No, no! I didn't come here to read the evening paper. Bring me a cocktail

(Exit Slavin.)

FLIRT.

Say, let's not wait supper for Mr. Painter, I'm starved.

(Enter Waiter C. with tray)

RASH.

Waiter you can bring the supper.

(Music begins)

TONY.

There's the orchestra. Say we're losing time! What's the matter with dining right here.

FLIRT.

That's so! Come on! Mr. Strong you'll dance.

STRONG.

If you can hear the spectacle of a man with one foot in the grave trying to be merry with the

other I'll do my best.

(Minuet- to finish it waiter who has been setting table drop tray Strong falls in choir - Slavin exits C.)

STRONG.

There goes that lung!

FLIRT.

Why no! The waiter dropped a tray of dishes!

STRONG.

I thought that lung had busted sure. It's likely to at any minute.

BEN.

Some pack of hoodlums in that next room! By jove this is getting monotonous.

(Enter waiter with four cocktails)

SLAVIN.

You didn't say what kind of a cocktail, so I brought 4.

BEN.

You know your business.

SLAVIN.

I can take three of them back.

BEN.

Over my dead body.

(Takes tray)

SLAVIN.

Hadn't you better look at the evening paper, sir!

BEN.

No, sir! I had not!

(Exit Slavin)

(The four men about widow R.U.E. Tony and Flirt alone down L.)

FLIRT.

Will you look at that!

TONY.

Excuse me! I'd rather not see it!

FLIRT.

I don't know why men go so crazy over widows! It's enough to drive one--

TONY.

To marrying some man and then poisoning him. This man Strong's only going to live two years. I've a mind to make love to him. With what I'd keep him out nights I think I could shorten his existence to six months.

TONY.

She's doing her duty as chaperone. Taking care we don't get familiar with the gentlemen.

FLIRT.

Yes; and taking great satisfaction in it. I can see she's laughing at me!

TONY.

I vow I'll break it up.

(Aloud)

Mrs. Guyer, how long did Mr. Guyer last after you were married!

WIDOW.

Only six months.

(Men draw away)

TONY.

I- I heard he died from the effects of blowing up!

WIDOW.

(Unruffled)

Yes; excursion boat. Dear boy! He was insured for fifty thousand dollars.

(Men right back around her.)

TONY.

(Aside to Flirt.) I wish I was a man or a parrot! I want to swear! Say Flirt, sing a song, they'll have in common decency to listen.

FLIRT.

I can't.

TONY.

Then ask me to.

FLIRT.

(Aloud) Say everybody! Tony knows this song the orchestra's playing. I want you to all listen to it.

(Song "Never to Know" TONY.- weeping bus. with song.)

STRONG.

Beautiful! So touching! How much we miss in this life by not daring to speak out. I went thirty two days in a prohibition town because I didn't dare to ask the landlord for a drink. *(Weeps*

again) Forgive these tears! But that song has turned all my thoughts to sadness. The separation of two fond beings makes me think of the fast approaching day when one of my lungs will be withered and vanished leaving the other desolate, alone and overworked. I have often in the still watches of the night pondered on this and at last my sad musings took the form of a little poem.

TONY & WIDOW.

Oh give it to us.

STRONG.

(Takes drink and makes memorandum in book.) It's called the "Lay of the Lingering Lung" I wish that band would play a soft tearful melody.

(Recitation with music Strong.)

(As they break up, Strong goes to Tony and Rashleigh to Flirt Widow sizes up situation.)

WIDOW.

Ahem! Have you heard the latest scandal?

(Every man rushes to her)

3 MEN.

What is it!

TONY.

What have you been doing!

WIDOW.

That remark was contemptible! Now you shan't hear the story!

(Tells story to men in dumb show)

(To girls)

It isn't long! And I really am not trying to monopolize the gentlemen entirely. I shall presently insist as a favor to me that they devote themselves to you.

(Goes on with story)

(Makes gestures.)

TONY.

There they are again! I vow I'll be a widow within a year.

FLIRT.

I know what it is it's the dress.

(Widow makes paranthetical gesture.)

TONY.

Did you see that gesture! I'll bet I know what she said a widow'll say anything. Come Flirt!

(They rise) Gentlemen, we wish to use your dressing room just a moment.

(Exeunt R.L.U.E.-- Ben rings.)

WIDOW.

I'll bet I know what they're up to.

(Rises)

Pray excuse me.

(Exit Widow R.U.E. - Slavin enters Ben's room.)

BEN.

Fill 'em up again all 'rround.

SLAVIN.

(Takes tray) Yes sir! I have the evening paper.

BEN.

Keep it! *(Exit Slavin)* By thunder that widow takes her time.

(During above Rash has filled glasses and passed them)

STRONG.

Gentlemen you ought not to tempt me like this. *(Drinks and reaches for bottle)* Every glass of this stuff is a day off my life. *(Drinks)* You are aiding and abetting suicide. *(Produces book)* Has anybody kept tab on me!

WILDER.

That last one was seven I think.

STRONG.

A week gone. I've wasted five weeks of my life tonight and I come here for my health.

(Enter Slavin with note and four cocktails on tray C.)

WILDER.

What's those!

SLAVIN.

Cocktails! The gentleman in the next room ordered them.

RASH.

Very good of him.

(Passes glasses)

STRONG.

(Taking glass)

That man's bent on my murder.

(All drink and replace glasses on tray. Straw bus. for Slavin.)

BEN.

I wonder what's become of my cocktails.

(Rings)

RASH.

Tell the gentleman we're very much obliged.

SLAVIN.

Yes sir. A note sir.

(Gives note and exits C.)

RASH.

(Reads note)

It's from Painter! Unavoidably detained. See you very soon.

(Slavin enters Ben's room.)

BEN.

Where's my cocktails!

SLAVIN.

Gentlemen in the next room drank them sir, and sent in their compliments.

BEN.

They did! Well I like their nerve! You go back quick and get me four more. Stop! Make it eight! And say! Are you quite sure that lady hasn't got here!

SLAVIN.

Sure sir! Only ladies here are with party next room. I rather think sir-

BEN.

Think what!

SLAVIN.

You're shook!

BEN.

Shook!

SLAVIN.

Hadn't you better eat your supper alone, sir!

BEN.

No sir! She'll be here sir! You get those cocktails!

SLAVIN.

The evening paper.

BEN.

D'n the evening paper! *(Exit Slavin)* Shook! Me shook!

WILDER.

Mr Strong this isn't the first time you've been out for a pleasant evening, I see by the way you handle that bottle.

STRONG.

When I was on earth I was not obtuse to the redeeming features of wine, women and song.

RASH.

Well, be a boy again. We have the wine and the women, give us the song.

STRONG.

If you care to listen to a voice from the grave, I'll let me see- give you a little story of the course of true love

(Song- 2:15- Strong.)

(During this scene Strong and two boys drunk)

BEN.

I'm having a devil of a good time. This is what you get for trusting a widow.

(Enter Slavin with cocktails)

SLAVIN.

Cocktails sir! Shall I put them down?

(Strong getting a bit loaded)

BEN.

No, I'll do that.

(Takes tray)

SLAVIN.

The evening paper.

BEN.

(Somewhat jagged) Give it to me! *(Takes paper tears it up)* Now are you easy in your mind? I came here to have supper with a lady! Do you think I'll be satisfied with an evening paper.

SLAVIN.

What about that supper sir!

BEN.

I'll eat it. Bring it up.

SLAVIN.

The evening paper sir had a whole page about a scandal in high life.

BEN.

(Looks at fragments) It did! Well I'll be. Have you got another copy!

SLAVIN.

No sir.

(Exit- Ben gets on floor and tries to piece paper together- Enter two girls in shape dresses.)

TONY.

How can we have a little attention?

(Enter Slavin at C.)

(Musical introduction- Tony and Flirt down C. and sing then two boys join them, then as they go up R. and L. Widow enter R.U.E. in white Chinese dress. Does Chinese specialty. Then Strong who is getting drunk down C. and sings with widow all joining in chorus and dance at finish.)

TONY.

The widow is white! Have the 29 days gone by so soon!

WIDOW.

(Bursts into tears) Oh Tony! How cruel of you! To think I'd forgot the respect due poor Jack. Don't you see this is a Chinese dress and the Chinese for mourning wear white! I know my business.

SLAVIN.

Supper is served.

WIDOW.

Come on! Let's get it over before you boys get to making love to each other's girls and the quarrels begin.

(They sit at table. Filling time while Ben speaks.)

BEN.

I can't put it together. I'll all mixed up with the market reports.

(Reads)

"The infuriated husband revolver in hand rushed madly after a drove of prime western hogs just arrived." Oh, rats!

(Rings pretty drunk - kicks at paper - falls in chair)

By jove I'm drunk!

(Rises and tries himself)

Drunker'n a boiled owl. That's a good one! I'll just keep it up and get paralyzed. I'll have some fun out of this racket yet.

(Sings.)

WIDOW.

Please pass the salt.

RASH.

With all my heart.

WIDOW.

Just the salt, please.

TONY.

(Rising) Well, here's to us all!

ALL.

Drink hearty!

(Drinking song Tony and Chorus-- They're same seats.)

STRONG.

Anybody have some cold meat? Mutton or beef.

FLIRT.

Which is the best!

STRONG.

(Smelling each) It appears to be a case of horse and horse! Waiter, this knife is very dull.

SLAVIN.

Permit me, sir! *(Takes knife gets behind Strong. Imitates sharpening knife)* Try that sir.

STRONG.

(Tries it) Much better!

SLAVIN.

Anything else you want sir!

SLAVIN.

Everything on earth.

STRONG.

If there's anything you have not got, I want it.

SLAVIN.

I can give you anything from a train of cars to a dog fight.

ALL.

Give us a dog fight.

(Slavin's imitation.)

(At start of dog fight. Ben exit looking for it.)

(Exit Slavin)

STRONG.

Ladies and gentlemen

(Rising)

WIDOW.

He's going to make an after dinner speech stop him!

RASH.

Head him off!

ALL.

Come on!

-: *MEDLEY* :-

(End of Medley all off.)

BEN.

(Enters and rings.) She's here! I've found this handkerchief in the hall and it's here. *(Enter Noah.)* You demented lizard do you see that! It's her handkerchief. She's here! Now trot her out!

SLAVIN.

Was that the lady you were waiting for.

BEN.

Yes; well!

SLAVIN.

Why we thought it was your wife. We said you were not here.

BEN.

Well!

SLAVIN.

And she went away.

BEN.

(Grabs him) While I've waited she's been here and you sent her away.

SLAVIN.

I regret it sir.

BEN.

Regret it! Regret it! I'd kill you where you stand only I don't want to become known as a fool killer! But I'll make it cost you your job. I'll give you a character at the office.

(Bolts out waiter after him)

(Strong enters L.U.E. X'es to R.U.E.)

STRONG.

(Rapping) Did any of you four ladies bring a corn knife.

TONY.

(Looks out) No, will a curling iron do?

STRONG.

No, thanks! I can't curl my corns.

(Exits L.U.E. Enter Ben at office followed by waiter who goes behind desk.)

SLAVIN.

What is it sir!

BEN.

I want to see somebody in authority.

SLAVIN.

Gaze right on me!

BEN.

Yes! You're in authority. Well I want to tell you that the waiter I've had is a blear-eyed trump a bandy-legged idiot and a foul hedge hog!

SLAVIN.

I'll make a note of it. Anything else sir!

BEN.

Yes. Your place is a dive and I'll never set foot in it again.

(Starts to go.)

SLAVIN

(Looks door)

Hadn't you better settle your bill first.

BEN.

I forgot. How much is it!

SLAVIN.

One hundred dollars.

BEN.

One hundred dollars. What for!

SLAVIN.

Well there's \$65. For the supper.

BEN.

But I haven't had supper.

SLAVIN

But you ordered it.

BEN.

All right! I deserve it! I- I-

(Bus.)

Why I've- I've lost my pocketbook. I'll send you the money tomorrow.

SLAVIN.

We don't do business that way.

BEN.

But I'm perfectly good.

SLAVIN.

What name!

BEN.

Excuse me! But you shall have your money.

SLAVIN.

I mean to- before you go.

BEN.

But my boy--

SLAVIN.

Send home for it.

BEN.

Send for money to pay for a racket here. Impossible! Now my dear boy--

SLAVIN.

No! I'm a blear-eyed tramp and I get that money or you go to jail! See!

STRONG.

(Enter L.U.E.) I'll see why they don't answer that bell.

(Exits C.)

SLAVIN.

Do I get it or do I ring for the Police!

BEN.

My very dear boy-- I'm a respectable citizen! Don't arrest me! The story'll be all over town.

SLAVIN.

Yes; but you won't be all over to hear it. You'll be in jail.

(Strong enters office)

STRONG.

You hyena, I want

(Strong and Ben look at each other- Both yell - Strong turns to run.)

BEN.

Here! I want you!

(Starts after Strong.)

SLAVIN.

Here! Come back now!

(Starts after them.)

-: GRAND CHASE :-

(As they rush through centre room, everybody rushes on exclaiming)

What's the matter!! etc.

(Strong and yells Murder and help- Ben and Slavin ad. lib.- Everybody working up excitement. At finish Ben overtakes strong in room C. and grabs him.)

BEN.

Now I've got you!

STRONG.

I'm a dying man! Mercy!

BEN.

Mercy! Not a damned bit! Lend me \$100.-

-: CURTAIN :-

ACT. 3rd.

SCENE: Private conversation in house of Benj. Gay- Tony and Flirt in wrappers discovered.)

FLIRT.

I think we're the first ones up. And I had a good mind not to get up at all.

TONY.

This settles the "out for a racket" business for me. Flirt do you realize that we're in an awful scrape? Of course Uncle can't do anything worse to you then tell your father--

FLIRT.

That's so. He couldn't do anything worse. I'd rather he'd whip me. I guess it does settle the "out

for a racket" business. Oh Tony isn't there any way to keep him from telling? I'd get killed!

TONY.

I don't know of any. We'll all have to suffer except the widow. And she's the only one who had any fun. The way the men devoted themselves to her ruined my evening. Flirt, I've made up my mind! I'm going to be a widow.

FLIRT.

Oh Tony! But you've got to be a wife first and your husband may live forever.

TONY.

No, he won't! I shall marry Mr. Strong. Heaven has sent him here, I feel, to my relief.

(Enter Wilder and Rash.)

FLIRT.

Oh Wilder, did you send word home that we are here!

WILDER.

I did. And say! It's lucky we didn't go to the ball. It was closed by the police.

RASH.

And Painter was arrested: that's why he didn't come to the Riche.

(Enter widow.)

WIDOW.

Good morning, everybody!

OMNES.

Good morning.

TONY.

To what are we indebted for this early call!

WIDOW.

I've come over, first to have a little practice with the foils.

(Throws off cloak disclosing fencing costume)

Second to get you get out of your scrape.

FLIRT.

Oh can you!

WIDOW.

Well, you know me; what do you think!

WILDER.

We'll bet on you every time!

WIDOW.

Last night after I reached home I began to think that you were in a fix. "They've got to tell some story to get you out of it" said I "and they're not good at telling stories said I!" "They may lay the blame on me said I"! Then my reputation will be in the laundry. And a widow has to be so careful of her reputation I must go over there and tell a story that'll get us all out of it" said I. And here I am.

TONY.

One word for us and two for yourself. You're very good.

WIDOW.

Now am I in time!

RASH.

I think so neither Uncle or Mr. Strong are up yet.

WILDER.

That Strong's a thoroughbred after all!

WIDOW.

A delightful man. It's a pity he's got to die so soon-

TONY.

Nothing of the sort-- I-- I mean- perhaps he hasn't-- (*Aside*) But I'm sure he has!

FLIRT.

Well I say! What story are we to tell Uncle?

WIDOW.

I don't know yet. But there's a way out of this scrape, and I know I can find it. I've only one favor to ask. Don't you mix in and spoil things. How soon will they be up!

RASH.

Nobody knows.

WIDOW.

I've got to be at my dressmakers in an hour. Can't you call them!

TONY.

Not for worlds!

WIDOW.

Then we must, make such a racket they'll have to get up. Where are their rooms!

TONY.

There and there.

(R. & L.)

Come Flirt let's get our gymnasium suits on.

(Exit two girls)

WIDOW.

We may as well start the racket. Come on!

-: *MEDLEY* :-

(During which two girls return in gymnasium dresses. At finish. They all exeunt- Enter Strong R.- Ben L. wrecks. They see each other, turn to go but finally meet C. Neither knows what to say. Strong has bowl of ice.)

STRONG.

(Offers bowl.) Have a piece.

BEN.

(Takes ice)

Thanks! Don't you think a little absinthe would do us good.

(Rings.)

STRONG.

It can't shorten my life much!

(Noah heard singing below- comes up stairs still singing. "Out for a Racket")

NOAH.

Here I am!

(Pretty drunk.)

BEN.

Slavin! Siwah! What does this mean?

NOAH.

I've been right with you! Drink as a boiled owl! I knew everybody else was on a toot so I filled up. Three very pretty jags we three gentlemen had.

STRONG.

What a beastly fellow!

BEN.

You dog! Do you mean to say I was drunk.

NOAH.

Both of you! When you got home you tried to unlock our door with your toothbrush and he rung the fire alarm on the lamp post for the door bell. Only way we got you upstairs was to bait the top landing with a bottle of Bourbon.

BEN.

Get downstairs quick and bring two absinthe frappes.

(Noah goes to head of stairs.)

NOAH.

I shan't hurry a mite!

(Slips- is heard falling down stairs.)

BEN.

He's fallen down stairs. I hope he's killed, Mr. Strong. I feel called upon to ask a question. What were you doing at the Riche last night!

STRONG.

I feel called upon to ask a question, what were you doing there!

BEN.

I- I- *(Aside)* I hadn't thought of that! Idea! *(Aloud)* Why I went there in pursuit of you and my young folks to take you away from the place.

STRONG.

Was it necessary for you to get drunk to find us!

BEN.

Strong old friend, can I trust you!

STRONG.

I trusted you for a hundred dollars last night.

BEN.

This is strictly between us. My catching you was an accident. I went to the Riche to have supper with a lady.

STRONG.

You old rascal!

BEN.

But if this family knew that I'd lose their respect forever.

STRONG.

Why you didn't do anything wrong did you!

BEN.

No damn it! The widow didn't!

STRONG.

The widow didn't what!

BEN.

Why- er- that's that's something you didn't understand. What I was going to say is this, that loan of a hundred dollars squares you but in order to save my reputation I must make these youngsters believe that I followed them there and I must punish them accordingly, it's rough on them but-

STRONG.

Don't make it too rough, remember we used to enjoy a little racket in the days gone by when we were their age.

BEN.

By thunder we did!

(Duet "Days Gone By," Strong and Ben.)

(Enter Noah with three drinks.)

NOAH.

Here we are brother sufferers.

BEN.

(Takes drink)

If you don't stop your impudence I'll discharge you.

(Ben and Strong drink.)

NOAH.

That's what I want! I'm drunk and glad of it! I'm a whale!

STRONG.

A whale! Oh no!

NOAH.

This is the first time in 40 years I've dared to open my head and now I'm a going to let her go. I'm looking to get kicked out of the house.

BEN.

You shall be!

(Exit down stairs kicking Noah.)

STRONG.

He'll just give it to those children to prove his own profits. I think I'll take to bed 'till the affair's all over.

(Enter Tony.)

TONY.

(In Gym. dress) Oh there he is! Oh if I can get him to marry me! Black is so becoming to me! Ah hem! Good morning Mr. Strong, how do you feel this morning!

STRONG.

I think I shall live until dinner time.

TONY.

Oh I hope so, we should so miss your cheery "Yea thanks" when the wine is served. Oh Mr. Strong do you know everything about you so interests me; have you a wife!

STRONG.

A wife, no!

TONY.

Then you're a jolly bachelor!

STRONG.

No not a bachelor.

TONY.

Not a bachelor, oh! Forgive me if I have touched a tender spot in your heart, you are a widower.

STRONG.

No not a widower.

TONY.

Excuse me Mr. Strong, you say you're not a single man.

STRONG.

I am not.

TONY.

Nor a married man, nor a widower, will you kindly tell me what you are!

STRONG.

Well if you must know, I am a divorced man.

TONY.

A divorced man! How romantic!

STRONG.

Yes and very expensive.

TONY.

And when are you going to- to try it again!

STRONG.

Never.

TONY.

Never! Oh don't say that!

STRONG.

Why I'm a dying man.

TONY.

That's it! With a glorious opportunity to make a woman a widow you have no right to remain

single a minute you ought to marry the first woman you can lay your hands on.

STRONG.

(Puts hands behind him and edges away) But I don't want a wife.

TONY.

You do, to wear mourning for you. How you must-

STRONG.

But the divorce forbade me to marry, it would be contempt of Court.

TONY.

Then contempt the court, positively despise it!

STRONG.

And go to prison, say it's time to take my medicine *(Exits L.)* Excuse me!

TONY.

Well I declare

(Enter Wilder)

WILDER.

Sweetheart I want-

TONY.

Oh go away!

WILDER.

What!

TONY.

Go away you weary me!

WILDER.

Weary you? Why I thought you loved me!

TONY.

I do, but now won't do! You are not going to die in two years.

WILDER.

I hope not.

TONY.

Then that lets you out. You're not in it! So don't bother me!

(Pushes off)

WILDER.

Well I declare!

(Terrible crash below enter three ladies)

3 LADIES.

(Ad lib)

What's that etc.

(Noah comes up stairs singing girls much alarmed at him)

NOAH.

(Has parrot and cat.)

(To Wilder)

You're wanted below!

(Throws him downstairs- girls scream)

That's two! I'm going to do 'em all! I've been discharged and before I go I'm going to lick every man in the house! Then I'll kiss all the women.

(Women scream and exit-Widow into Ben's room)

I'm a whale! Where's that dying man, he's my pie! I'll make him eat his own game.

(Exiting)

I'll give you your medicine.

(Tremendous crash R. enter Tony, Flirt & Rash.)

RASH.

What is it!

FLIRT.

Noah is in there killing Mr. Strong.

TONY.

Go save him!

(Crash R.)

RASH.

Give me something to hit him with.

(Grabs indian club.)

That's too heavy!

(Drops it- Crash R.)

TONY.

(Hands club)

There try this!

RASH.

That's too light (*Crash R.*) Where's my ball bat!

FLIRT.

Locked up in the locker the key's down stairs.

RASH.

Go get it!

(Exit Flirt down stairs- tremendous crash R.)

Oh wait 'till I get something to hit him with.

(Crash)

TONY.

Oh he'll be killed! Take the indian club!

RASH.

No! I can't! I must have the bat!

(Crash R.)

TONY.

Oh Rashleigh save him! He'll surely be killed!

RASH.

Then I'll avenge him!

(Enter widow L.)

WIDOW.

What's the matter!

TONY.

Noah is killing Mr. Strong!

(Grand crash widow and girls yell enter Strong throwing on Noah who is all torn up mouth full of parrot feathers)

STRONG.

I have shortened my life one year.

NOAH.

You've shortened mine fifty! I'll never be able to digest that parrot!

ALL.

The parrot!

NOAH.

He made me swallow it

(All laugh)

That's right! And *(Bus)* D--n it how I hate feathers!

(Spitting)

Ladies and gentlemen, is there anything I can do for you!

ALL.

Yes, get out!

(Exit Noah C.)

WIDOW.

Mr. Strong, you are a brave man.

STRONG.

I know it.

WIDOW.

Hadn't somebody better go and see if the others are hurt!

STRONG.

With pleasure.

(Exits R.)

WIDOW.

Tell me, who's room was that I ran into there!

TONY.

Why Uncle Ben's.

WIDOW.

(Bursts out laughing)

I see it all! You're out of your scrape, oh this is funny!

(Laughs)

(Enter Wilder C.)

ALL.

What is it!

WIDOW.

Only a letter I saw lying on his desk. *(laughs)* But I shan't tell you a word more, only back me up in all I say to him and I'll get you out of your scrape. But listen, we must all seem very merry and when he comes in all laugh at the good joke on him.

FLIRT.

But what is the joke!

WIDOW.

You'll see. Come on, start a chorus or something. What, must I start it, very well.

(Specialty Widow and 4tette)

(Enter Strong C.)

STRONG.

The servant has apologized to everybody but me. He says he hasn't done anything to me and I agree. By the way your Uncle's coming.

(Enter Ben C.-all laugh at him)

BEN.

Oh! That's the way that you feel, is it? I suppose you consider this affair of last night a laughing matter!

WIDOW.

Decidedly, with the laugh on you!

ALL.

With the laugh on you!

BEN.

On me? We'll see about that!

WIDOW.

Gently now. Mr. Gay, we want you to settle a bet.

BEN.

I never settle bets.

STRONG.

How about loans? I have the check here as evidence.

WIDOW.

(Grabs check) Just what I wanted. Now Mr. Gay listen your niece here, poor innocent Tony was telling us what a good man you were and I laughed at her.

BEN.

Very nice of you.

WIDOW.

I offered to bet her a supper at the Cliff House that if any decent looking woman asked you to take her to the masquerade you'd do it.

BEN.

(Aside) I've been bunkoed.

WIDOW.

She took the bet, and so I wrote this note which I have just picked up in your room (*Shows note*) for you to meet me at the Riche. Then we all went to the Riche to see if you were there, and you were.

WILDER.

(*Aside to Tony.*) What a corking lie! She's a wonder.

TONY.

Oh Uncle! I never thought it of you!

(*Widow whispers to Tony who exits L.*)

FLIRT.

What will my father say when I tell him.

BEN.

(*Yells*) Hold on! I- I- Why that letter made me think that you had all gone to the Riche so I went there to catch you, and I did, ha! ha!

WIDOW.

How did you happen to run up such a big bill?

(*Looks at check*)

What is this item for supper ordered for self and lady?

(*All laugh- enter to X L. with masks*)

TONY.

And what did you want of these two masks!

BEN.

Why I- you understand.

WIDOW.

Mr. Gay, don't you think I've won that bet!

BEN.

I- Oh I don't think anything about it. Don't one of you dare to mention this affair again so long as you live. (*To Flirt*) Especially to your father.

WIDOW.

But about that supper at the Cliff House-

BEN.

Oh I'll pay for that and we'll all have a good time together, eh Strong!

STRONG.

It will shorten my life a year, but I'm with you!

(Chorus "Out For a Racket")

(Curtain)

-. FINALE :-

