

HARPER AND ABBY

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HARPER & ABBY, pg. 1

START:

HARPER. ~~No, thank you.~~ I must admit, Miss Abby, that war and violence seem far removed from these surroundings.

ABBY. It is peaceful here, isn't it?

HARPER. Yes—peaceful. The virtues of another day—they're all here in this house. The gentle virtues that went out with candlelight and good manners and low taxes.

ABBY. (*Glancing about her contentedly.*) It's one of the oldest houses in Brooklyn. It's just as it was when Grandfather Brewster built and furnished it—except for the electricity—and we use it as little as possible. It was Mortimer who persuaded us to put it in.

HARPER. (*Beginning to freeze.*) Yes, I can understand that. Your nephew Mortimer seems to live only by electric light.

ABBY. The poor boy has to work so late. I understand he's taking Elaine with him to the theatre again tonight. Teddy, your brother Mortimer will be here a little later.

~~TEDDY. (*Baring his teeth in a broad grin.*) Dec-lighted!~~

ABBY. (*To Harper.*) We're so happy it's Elaine Mortimer takes to the theatre with him.

HARPER. Well, it's a new experience for me to wait up until three o'clock in the morning for my daughter to be brought home.

ABBY. Oh, Dr. Harper, I hope you don't disapprove of Mortimer.

HARPER. Well—

ABBY. We'd feel so guilty if you did—sister Martha and I. I mean since it was here in our home that your daughter met Mortimer.

HARPER. Of course, Miss Abby. And so I'll say immediately that I believe Mortimer himself to be quite a worthy gentleman. But I must also admit that I have watched the growing intimacy between him and my daughter with some trepidation. For one reason, Miss Abby.

ABBY. You mean his stomach, Dr. Harper?

HARPER. Stomach?

ABBY. His dyspepsia—he's bothered with it so, poor boy.

HARPER. No, Miss Abby, I'll be frank with you. I'm speaking of your nephew's unfortunate connection with the theatre.

ABBY. The theatre! Oh, no, Dr. Harper! Mortimer writes for a New York newspaper.

HARPER. I know, Miss Abby, I know. But a dramatic critic is constantly exposed to the theatre, and I don't doubt but what some of them do develop an interest in it.

ABBY. Well, not Mortimer. You need have no fear of that. Why, Mortimer hates the theatre.

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HARPER. Really?

ABBY. Oh, yes! He writes awful things about the theatre. But you can't blame him, poor boy. He was so happy writing about real estate, which he really knew something about, and then they just made him take this terrible night position.

HARPER. My! My!

ABBY. But, as he says, the theatre can't last much longer anyway and in the meantime it's a living. *(Complacently.)* Yes, I think if we give the theatre another year or two, perhaps... *(A knock on R. door.)*

Well, now, who do you suppose that is? (They all rise as Abby goes to door R. Teddy starts for door at same time, but Abby stops him.)

No, thank you, Teddy. I'll go. *(She opens door to admit two cops, Officers Brophy and Klein.)* Come in, Mr. Brophy.

BROPHY. Hello, Miss Brewster.

ABBY. How are you, Mr. Klein?

KLEIN. Very well, Miss Brewster.

(The cops cross to Teddy who is standing near desk, and salute him. Teddy returns salute.)

TEDDY. What news have you brought me?

BROPHY. Colonel, we have nothing to report.

TEDDY. Splendid! Thank you, gentlemen! At ease!

(Cops relax and drop D.S. Abby has closed door, and turns to cops.)

ABBY. You know Dr. Harper.

KLEIN. Sure! Hello, Dr. Harper.

BROPHY. *(Turns to Abby, doffing cap.)* We've come for the toys for the Christmas Fund.

ABBY. Oh, yes.

HARPER. *(Standing below table.)* That's a splendid work you men do—fixing up discarded toys to give poor children a happier Christmas.

KLEIN. It gives us something to do when we have to sit around the station. You get tired playing cards and then you start cleaning your gun, and the first thing you know you've shot yourself in the foot. *(Klein drifts U. L. around to window seat.)*

ABBY. *(Crossing to Teddy.)* Teddy, go upstairs and get that big box from your Aunt Martha's room. *(Teddy crosses upstage toward stairs.)*

MORTIMER & ELAINE, pg 1

~~(Martha stops her from sitting.)~~

~~MARTHA. Abby—haven't we something to do in the kitchen?~~

~~ABBY. Huh?~~

~~MARTHA. You know—the tea things.~~

~~ABBY. (Suddenly seeing Mortimer and Elaine, and catching on.) Oh, yes! Yes! The tea things—(She backs toward kitchen.) Well—you two just make yourselves at home. Just—~~

~~MARTHA. —make yourselves at home.~~

~~(They exit kitchen door, Abby closing door.)~~

~~ELAINE. (Stepping to Mortimer, ready to be kissed.) Well, can't you take a hint?~~

~~MORTIMER. (Complaining.) No...that was pretty obvious. A lack of inventiveness, I should say.~~

~~ELAINE. (Only slightly annoyed as she crosses to table, and puts handbag on it.) Yes—that's exactly what you'd say.~~

START — MORTIMER. (He is at desk, fishing various pieces of notepaper from his pockets, and separating dollar bills that are mixed in with papers.) Where do you want to go for dinner?

ELAINE. (Opening bag, looking in hand mirror.) I don't care. I'm not very hungry.

MORTIMER. Well, I just had breakfast. Suppose we wait until after the show?

ELAINE. But that'll make it pretty late, won't it?

MORTIMER. Not with the little stinker we're seeing tonight. From what I've heard about it we'll be at Blake's by ten o'clock.

ELAINE. (Crosses to U.S. C.) You ought to be fair to these plays.

MORTIMER. Are these plays fair to me?

ELAINE. I've never seen you walk out on a musical.

MORTIMER. That musical isn't opening tonight.

ELAINE. (Disappointed.) No?

MORTIMER. Darling, you'll have to learn the rules. With a musical there are always four changes of title and three postponements. They liked it in New Haven but it needs a lot of work.

ELAINE. Oh, I was hoping it was a musical.

MORTIMER. You have such a light mind.

ELAINE. Not a bit. Musicals somehow have a humanizing effect on you. (He gives her a look.) After a serious play we join the proletariat in

MORTIMER & ELAINE, pg. 2

the subway and I listen to a lecture on the drama. After a musical you bring me home in a taxi, *(Turning away.)* and you make a few passes.
MORTIMER. *(Crossing D. C.)* Now wait a minute, darling, that's a very inaccurate piece of reporting.

ELAINE. *(Leaning against D.S. end of table.)* Oh, I will admit that after the Behrman play you told me I had authentic beauty—and that's a hell of a thing to say to a girl. It wasn't until after our first musical you told me I had nice legs. And I have too.

(Mortimer stares at her legs a moment, then walks over and kisses her.)

MORTIMER. For a minister's daughter you know a lot about life. Where'd you learn it?

ELAINE. *(Casually.)* In the choir loft.

MORTIMER. I'll explain that to you sometime, darling—the close connection between eroticism and religion.

ELAINE. Religion never gets as high as the choir loft. *(Crosses below table, gathers up bag.)* Which reminds me, I'd better tell Father please not to wait up for me tonight.

MORTIMER. *(Almost to himself.)* I've never been able to rationalize it.

ELAINE. What?

MORTIMER. My falling in love with a girl who lives in Brooklyn.

ELAINE. Falling in love? You're not stooping to the articulate, are you?

MORTIMER. *(Ignoring this.)* The only way I can regain my self-respect is to keep you in New York.

ELAINE. *(Few steps toward him.)* Did you say keep?

MORTIMER. No, no. I've come to the conclusion that you're holding out for the legalities.

ELAINE. *(Crossing to him as he backs away.)* I can afford to be a good girl for quite a few years yet.

MORTIMER. *(Stops and embraces her.)* And I can't wait that long. Where could we be married in a hurry—say tonight?

ELAINE. I'm afraid Father will insist on officiating.

MORTIMER. *(Turning away R. from her.)* Oh, God! I'll bet your father could make even the marriage service sound pedestrian.

ELAINE. Are you by any chance writing a review of it?

MORTIMER. Forgive me, darling. It's an occupational disease.
~~*(She smiles at him lovingly and walks toward him. He meets her*~~

STOP

MORTIMER, MARTHA & ABBY, pg. 1

START:

ABBY. No, dear, this makes twelve.

(Mortimer backs away from them, stunned, toward phone stool at desk.)

MARTHA. Oh, I think you're wrong, Abby. This is only eleven.

ABBY. No, dear, because I remember when Mr. Hoskins first came in, it occurred to me that he would make just an even dozen.

MARTHA. Well, you really shouldn't count the first one.

ABBY. Oh, I was counting the first one. So that makes it twelve.

(Phone rings. Mortimer, in a daze, turns toward it and without picking up receiver, speaks.)

~~MORTIMER. Hello! (He comes to, picks up receiver.) Hello. Oh, hello, Al. My, it's good to hear your voice.~~

(Abby, at table, is still holding out for a "twelve" count.)

~~ABBY. Well, anyway, they're all down in the cellar—~~

~~MORTIMER. (To aunts.) Ssshhh— (Into phone, as aunts cross to sideboard and put candelabras from top to bottom shelf.) Oh, no, Al, I'm sober as a lark. I just called you because I was feeling a little Pirandello—Piran—you wouldn't know, Al. Look, I'm glad you called. Get hold of George right away. He's got to review the play tonight. I can't make it. No, Al, you're wrong. I'll tell you all about it tomorrow. Well, George has got to cover the play tonight! This is my department and I'm running it! You get ahold of George! (He hangs up and sits a moment trying to collect himself.) Now let's see, where were we? (He suddenly leaps from stool.) TWELVE!~~

MARTHA. Yes, Abby thinks we ought to count the first one and that makes twelve. *(She goes back to sideboard.)*

(Mortimer takes chair R. of table and faces it toward R. stage, then takes Martha by the hand, leads her to chair and sets her in it.)

MORTIMER. All right—now—who was the first one?

ABBY. *(Crossing from above table to Mortimer.)* Mr. Midgely. He was a Baptist.

MARTHA. Of course, I still think we can't claim full credit for him because he just died.

ABBY. Martha means without any help from us. You see, Mr. Midgely came here looking for a room—

MORTIMER:
TWELVE!

MORTIMER, MARTHA, & ABBY, pg. 2

MARTHA. It was right after you moved to New York.

ABBY. —And it didn't seem right for that lovely room to be going to waste when there were so many people who needed it—

MARTHA. —He was such a lonely old man...

ABBY. All his kith and kin were dead and it left him so forlorn and unhappy—

MARTHA. —We felt so sorry for him.

ABBY. And then when his heart attack came—and he sat dead in that chair (*Pointing to armchair.*) looking so peaceful—remember, Martha—we made up our minds then and there that if we could help other lonely old men to that same peace—we would!

MORTIMER. (*All ears.*) He dropped dead right in that chair! How awful for you!

MARTHA. Oh, no, dear. Why, it was rather like old times. Your grandfather always used to have a cadaver or two around the house. You see, Teddy had been digging in Panama and he thought Mr. Midgely was a Yellow Fever victim.

ABBY. That meant he had to be buried immediately.

MARTHA. So we all took him down to Panama and put him in the lock. (*She rises, puts her arm around Abby.*) Now that's why we told you not to worry about it because we know exactly what's to be done.

MORTIMER. And that's how all this started—that man walking in here and dropping dead.

ABBY. Of course, we realized we couldn't depend on that happening again. So—

MARTHA. (*Crosses to Mortimer.*) You remember those jars of poison that have been up on the shelves in Grandfather's laboratory all these years—?

ABBY. You know your Aunt Martha's knack for mixing things. You've eaten enough of her piccalilli.

MARTHA. Well, dear, for a gallon of elderberry wine I take one teaspoonful of arsenic, then add a half teaspoonful of strychnine and then just a pinch of cyanide.

MORTIMER. (*Appraisingly.*) Should have quite a kick.

ABBY. Yes! As a matter of fact one of our gentlemen found time to say "How delicious!"

MARTHA. (*Stepping u.s.*) Well, I'll have to get things started in the kitchen.

ABBY. (*To Mortimer.*) I wish you could stay for dinner.

MARTHA. I'm trying out a new recipe.

MARTHA & ABBY

START —

~~MORTIMER. (Taking stationery.) That'll be fine. I can save time if I write my review on the way to the theatre. (He exits R. The aunts stare after him. Martha crosses and closes door. Abby goes to sideboard and brings two candelabras to table. Then gets matches from sideboard—lights candles during lines.)~~

MARTHA. Mortimer didn't seem quite himself today.

ABBY. (Lighting candles.) Well, that's only natural—I think I know why.

MARTHA. (Lighting floor lamp.) Why?

ABBY. He's just become engaged to be married. I suppose that always makes a man nervous.

MARTHA. (During this speech she goes to first landing and closes drapes over window, then comes downstairs and turns off remote switch.) Well, I'm so happy for Elaine—and their honeymoon ought to give Mortimer a real vacation. I don't think he got much rest this summer.

ABBY. Well, at least he didn't go kiting off to China or Spain.

MARTHA. I could never understand why he wanted to go to those places.

ABBY. Well, I think to Mortimer the theatre has always seemed pretty small potatoes. He needs something big to criticize—something like the human race. (She sets one candelabra D. L., the other U. R. on table.)

MARTHA. (At c.) Oh, Abby, if Mortimer's coming back for the services for Mr. Hoskins, we'll need another hymnal. There's one in my room. (She starts upstairs to first landing.)

ABBY. You know, dear, it's really my turn to read the services, but since you weren't here when Mr. Hoskins came I want you to do it.

MARTHA. (Pleased.) That's very nice of you, dear—but, are you sure you want me to?

ABBY. It's only fair.

MARTHA. Well, I think I'll wear my black bombazine and Mother's old brooch. (She starts up again when doorbell rings.)

~~ABBY. (Crossing as far as desk.) I'll go, dear.~~

~~MARTHA. (Hushed.) We promised Mortimer we wouldn't let anyone in.~~

~~ABBY. (Trying to peer through curtained window in door.) Who do you suppose it is?~~

~~MARTHA. Wait a minute, I'll look. (She turns to landing window and peeks out the curtains.) It's two men—and I've never seen them before.~~

STOP

ABBY, JONATHAN, EINSTEIN, MARTA,
& TEDDY, pg. 1

~~ABBY. This looks more the way you used to look, but still I wouldn't know you.~~

~~JONATHAN. I think we'll go back to that face, Doctor.~~

~~EINSTEIN. Yah, it's safe now.~~

START — ABBY. (*Rising.*) Well, I know you both want to get to—where you're going.

JONATHAN. (*Relaxing even more.*) My dear aunts—I'm so full of that delicious dinner I'm unable to move a muscle.

EINSTEIN. (*Relaxing too.*) Yah, it's nice here.

MARTHA. (*Rises.*) After all—it's very late and—

(*Teddy enters on balcony wearing his solar topee, carrying a book, open, and another topee.*)

TEDDY. (*Descending stairs.*) I found it! I found it!

JONATHAN. What did you find, Teddy?

TEDDY. The story of my life—my biography. (*He crosses above to L. of Einstein.*) Here's the picture I was telling you about, General. (*He lays open book on table showing picture to Einstein.*) Here we are, both of us. "President Roosevelt and General Goethals at Culebra Cut." That's me, General, and that's you.

(*Einstein looks at picture.*)

EINSTEIN. My, how I've changed.

(*Teddy looks at Einstein, a little puzzled, but makes adjustment.*)

TEDDY. Well, you see that picture hasn't been taken yet. We haven't even started work on Culebra Cut. We're still digging locks. And now, General, we will both go to Panama and inspect the new lock.

(*Hands him topee.*)

ABBY. No, Teddy—not to Panama.

EINSTEIN. We go some other time. Panama's a long way off.

TEDDY. Nonsense, it's just down in the cellar.

JONATHAN. The cellar?

MARTHA. We let him dig the Panama Canal in the cellar.

ABBY, JONATHAN, EINSTEIN, MARTHA,
& TEDDY, pg. 2

TEDDY. (*Severely.*) General Goethals, as President of the United States, Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy and the man who gave you this job, I demand that you accompany me on the inspection of the new lock.

JONATHAN. Teddy! I think it's time you went to bed.

TEDDY. I beg your pardon! (*He crosses above to L. of Jonathan, putting on his pince-nez as he crosses.*) Who are you?

JONATHAN. I'm Woodrow Wilson. Go to bed.

TEDDY. No you're not Wilson. But your face is familiar. Let me see—you're not anyone I know now. Perhaps later—On my hunting trip to Africa—yes, you look like someone I might meet in the jungle.

(*Jonathan stiffens. Abby crosses in front of Teddy, getting between him and Jonathan.*)

ABBY. It's your brother, Jonathan, dear.

MARTHA. (*Rising.*) He's had his face changed.

TEDDY. So that's it—a nature faker!

ABBY. And perhaps you had better go to bed, Teddy—Jonathan and his friend have to go back to their hotel.

JONATHAN. (*Rising.*) General Goethals, (*To Einstein.*) inspect the canal. (*He crosses to U. C.*)

EINSTEIN. (*Rising.*) All right, Mr. President. We go to Panama.

TEDDY. Bully! Bully! (*He crosses to cellar door, opens it.*) Follow me, General. (*Einstein goes up to L. of Teddy. Teddy taps solar topee in Einstein's hand, then taps his own head.*) It's down south you know. (*He exits downstairs.*)

(*Einstein puts on topee, which is too large for him. Then turns in cellar doorway and speaks.*)

EINSTEIN. Well—bon voyage. (*He exits, closing door.*)

JONATHAN. Aunt Abby, I must correct your misapprehension. You spoke of our hotel. We have no hotel. We came directly here—

MARTHA. Well, there's a very nice little hotel just three blocks down the—

JONATHAN. (*Cutting her off.*) Aunt Martha, this is my home—

ABBY. But, Jonathan, you can't stay here. We need our rooms—

JONATHAN. You need them?

ABBY. Yes, for our lodgers—

- STOP -

JONATHAN & EINSTEIN

START:

EINSTEIN. Hey, Chonny, down in the cellar— *(He sees aunts and stops.)*

JONATHAN. Dr. Einstein—my dear aunts have invited us to live with them.

EINSTEIN. Oh, you fixed it?

ABBY. Well, you're sleeping here tonight.

JONATHAN. Please get our room ready immediately.

MARTHA. Well—

ABBY. For tonight.

(They exit through arch. Jonathan comes to foot of stairs.)

EINSTEIN. Chonny, when I go down in the cellar, what do you think I find?

JONATHAN. What?

EINSTEIN. The Panama Canal.

JONATHAN. *(Disgusted, crossing to c.)* The Panama Canal.

EINSTEIN. It just fits Mr. Spenalzo. It's a hole Teddy dug. Six feet long and four feet wide.

JONATHAN. *(Gets the idea. Opens cellar door and looks down.)*
Down there!

EINSTEIN. You'd think they knew we were bringing Mr. Spenalzo along. That's hospitality.

JONATHAN. *(Closing cellar door.)* Rather a good joke on my aunts—their living in a house with a body buried in the cellar.

EINSTEIN. How do we get him in?

JONATHAN. *(Drops D.S.)* Yes. We can't just walk him through the door. *(He sees window in L. wall.)* We'll drive the car up between the house and the cemetery—then when they've gone to *bed*, we'll bring Mr. Spenalzo in through the window.

EINSTEIN. *(Taking out bottle flask.)* Bed! Just think, we've got a bed tonight! *(He starts swigging.)*

JONATHAN. *(Grabbing his arm.)* Easy, Doctor. Remember you're operating tomorrow. And this time you'd better be sober.

EINSTEIN. I fix you up beautiful.

JONATHAN. And if you don't— *(Gives Einstein shove to door.)*

ABBY. *(She and Martha enter on balcony.)* Jonathan! Your room is ready.

JONATHAN. Then you can go to bed. We're moving the car up behind the house.

- STOP -

EINSTEIN & JONATHAN

START:

EINSTEIN. (*Down to floor.*) Chonny, please—I'm tired—and tomorrow I got to operate.

JONATHAN. Yes, you're operating tomorrow, Doctor. But tonight we take care of Mortimer.

EINSTEIN. (*Kneeling in front of Jonathan, trying to pacify him.*) But, Chonny, not tonight—we go to bed, eh?

JONATHAN. (*Rising. Einstein straightens up too.*) Doctor, look at me. You can see it's going to be done, can't you?

EINSTEIN. (*Retreating.*) Ach, Chonny—I can see. I know dat look!

JONATHAN. It's a little too late for us to dissolve our partnership.

EINSTEIN. OK, we do it. But the quick way. The quick twist like in London. (*He gives that London neck another twist with his hands and makes a noise suggesting strangulation.*)

JONATHAN. No, Doctor, I think this calls for something special. (*He walks toward Einstein, who breaks U.S. Jonathan has the look of beginning to anticipate a rare pleasure.*) I think perhaps the Melbourne method.

EINSTEIN. Chonny—no—not that. Two hours! And when it was all over, what? The fellow in London was just as dead as the fellow in Melbourne.

JONATHAN. We had to work too fast in London. There was no esthetic satisfaction in it—but Melbourne, ah, there was something to remember.

EINSTEIN. (*Dropping D.S. as Jonathan crosses him.*) Remember! (*He shivers.*) I wish I didn't. No, Chonny—not Melbourne—not me!

JONATHAN. Yes, Doctor. Where are the instruments?

EINSTEIN. I won't do it, Chonny.—I won't do it.

JONATHAN. (*Advancing on him as Einstein backs D.S.*) Get your instruments!

EINSTEIN. No, Chonny!

JONATHAN. Where are they? Oh, yes—you hid them in the cellar. Where?

EINSTEIN. I won't tell you.

JONATHAN. (*Going to cellar door.*) I'll find them, Doctor. (*He exits to cellar, closing door.*)

- STOP

(*Teddy enters on balcony and lifts his bugle to blow. Mortimer dashes out and grabs his arm. Einstein has rushed to cellar door. He stands there as Mortimer and Teddy speak.*)

O'HARA & MORTIMER

START:

O'HARA. I never go to the movies. I hate 'em! My mother says the movies is a bastard art.

MORTIMER. Yes, it's full of them.—Your, er, mother said that?

O'HARA. Yeah. My mother was an actress—a stage actress. Perhaps you heard of her—Peaches Latour.

MORTIMER. It sounds like a name I've seen on a program. What did she play?

O'HARA. Well, her big hit was *Mutt and Jeff*. Played it for three years. I was born on tour—the third season.

MORTIMER. You were?

O'HARA. Yep. Sioux City, Iowa. I was born in the dressing room at the end of the second act, and Mother made the finale.

MORTIMER. What a trouper! There must be a good story in your mother—you know, I write about the theatre.

O'HARA. You do? Saay!—you're not Mortimer Brewster, the dramatic critic!

MORTIMER. Yes.

O'HARA. Well, I certainly am glad to meet you. *(He moves his hat and stick preparatory to shaking hands with Mortimer. He also picks up the sport shoe which Martha has left on the table. He looks at it just for a split second and puts it on the D.S. end of table. Mortimer sees it and stares at it.)* Say, Mr. Brewster—we're in the same line of business.

MORTIMER. *(Still intent on shoe.)* We are?

O'HARA. Yeah. I'm a playwright. Oh, this being on the police force is just temporary.

MORTIMER. How long have you been on the force?

O'HARA. Twelve years. I'm collecting material for a play.

MORTIMER. I'll bet it's a honey.

O'HARA. Well, it ought to be. With all the drama I see being a cop. Mr. Brewster—you got no idea what goes on in Brooklyn.

MORTIMER. I think I have. *(He puts the shoe under his chair, then looks at his watch, then looks toward balcony.)*

O'HARA. Say, what time you got?

MORTIMER. Ten after one.

O'HARA. Gee, I gotta ring in. *(He starts for R. door but Mortimer stops him at C.)*

MORTIMER. Wait a minute, O'Hara. On that play of yours—I may be able to help you. *(Sits him in chair R.)*

O'HARA. *(Ecstasy.)* You would! *(Rises.)* Say, it was fate my walking in here tonight. Look—I'll tell you the plot!

- STOP -

ROONEY, BROPHY, KLEIN, O'HARA,
& TEDDY, pg. 1

~~(Klein, throwing Jonathan's weight to floor, backs away, rubbing his throat.)~~

~~KLEIN. Well what do you know about that?~~

~~(There is a knock on door R.)~~

~~O'HARA. Come in.~~

START:

(Lieutenant Rooney bursts in R., slamming door after him. He is a very tough, driving, dominating officer.)

ROONEY. What the hell are you men doing here? I told you I was going to handle this.

KLEIN. Well, sir, we was just about to— *(Klein's eyes go to Jonathan and Rooney sees him.)*

ROONEY. What happened? Did he put up a fight?

BROPHY. This ain't the guy that blows the bugle. This is his brother. He tried to kill Klein.

KLEIN. *(Feeling his throat.)* All I said was he looked like Boris Karloff.

ROONEY. *(His face lights up.)* Turn him over.

(The two cops turn Jonathan over on his back. Klein steps back. Rooney crosses front of Brophy to take a look at Jonathan. Brophy drifts to R. of Rooney. O'Hara is still at foot of stairs.)

BROPHY. We kinda think he's wanted somewhere.

ROONEY. Oh, you kinda *think* he's wanted somewhere? If you guys don't look at the circulars we hang up in the station, at least you could read *True Detective*. *(Big.)* Certainly he's wanted. In Indiana! Escaped from the prison for the Criminal Insane! He's a lifer, For God's sake that's how he was described—he *looked* like Karloff!

KLEIN. Was there a reward mentioned?

ROONEY. Yeah—and *I'm* claiming it.

BROPHY. He was trying to get us down in the cellar.

KLEIN. He said there was thirteen bodies buried down there.

ROONEY. *(Suspicious.)* Thirteen bodies buried in the cellar? *(Deciding it's ridiculous.)* And that didn't tip you off he came out of a nut-house!

O'HARA. I thought all along he talked kinda crazy.

ROONEY, BROPHY, KLEIN, O'HARA,
& TEDDY, pg. 2

(Rooney sees O'Hara for the first time. Turns to him.)

ROONEY. Oh, it's Shakespeare! *(Crossing to him.)* Where have you been all night? And you needn't bother to tell me.

O'HARA. I've been right here, sir. Writing a play with Mortimer Brewster.

ROONEY. *(Tough.)* Yeah? Well, you're gonna have plenty of time to write that play. You're suspended! Now get back and report in!

(O'Hara takes his coat, night stick, and cap from top of desk. Goes to R. door and opens it. Then turns to Rooney.)

O'HARA. Can I come over sometime and use the station typewriter?

ROONEY. No!—Get out of here. *(O'Hara runs out. Rooney closes door and turns to the cops. Teddy enters on balcony and comes downstairs unnoticed and stands at Rooney's back to the R. of him. Rooney, to cops.)* Take that guy somewhere else and bring him to. *(The cops bend down to pick up Jonathan.)* See what you can find out about his accomplice. *(The cops stand up again in a questioning attitude. Rooney explains.)* The guy that helped him escape. He's wanted too. No wonder Brooklyn's in the shape it's in, with the police force full of flatheads like you—falling for that kind of a story—thirteen bodies in the cellar!

TEDDY. But there are thirteen bodies in the cellar.

ROONEY. *(Turning on him.)* Who are you?

TEDDY. I'm President Roosevelt.

(Rooney does a walk U.S. on this, then comes down again.)

ROONEY. What the hell is this?

BROPHY. He's the fellow that blows the bugle.

KLEIN. Good morning, Colonel.

(They salute Teddy, who returns it. Rooney finds himself saluting Teddy also. He pulls his hand down in disgust.)

ROONEY. Well, Colonel, you've blown your last bugle.

TEDDY. *(Seeing Jonathan on floor.)* Dear me—another Yellow Fever victim?

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& TEDDY, pg. 3

ROONEY. Whaat?

TEDDY. All the bodies in the cellar are Yellow Fever victims.

(Rooney crosses exasperatedly to R. door on this.)

BROPHY. No, Colonel, this is a spy we caught in the White House.

ROONEY. *(Pointing to Jonathan.)* Will you get that guy out of here!

(Cops pick up Jonathan and drag him to kitchen. Teddy follows them. Mortimer enters, comes down stairs.)

TEDDY. *(Turning back to Rooney.)* If there's any questioning of spies, that's my department!

ROONEY. You keep out of this!

TEDDY. You're forgetting! As President, I am also head of the Secret Service.

- STOP -

(Brophy and Klein exit with Jonathan into kitchen. Teddy follows them briskly. Mortimer has come to C.)

MORTIMER. Captain—I'm Mortimer Brewster.

ROONEY. Are you sure?

MORTIMER. I'd like to talk to you about my brother Teddy—the one who blew the bugle.

ROONEY. Mr. Brewster, we ain't going to talk about that—he's got to be put away!

MORTIMER. I quite agree with you. In fact, it's all arranged for. I had these commitment papers signed by Dr. Gilchrist, our family physician. Teddy has signed them himself, you see—and I've signed them as next of kin.

ROONEY. Where's he going?

MORTIMER. Happy Dale.

ROONEY. All right, I don't care where he goes as long as he goes!

MORTIMER. Oh, he's going all right. But I want you to know that everything that's happened around here Teddy's responsible for. Now, those thirteen bodies in the cellar—

ROONEY. *(He's had enough of those thirteen.)* Yeah—yeah—those thirteen bodies in the cellar! It ain't enough that the neighbors are all afraid of him, and his disturbing the peace with that bugle—but can you imagine what would happen if that cock-eyed story about

MORTIMER & ROONEY, pg. 1

~~ROONEY. Whaat?~~

~~TEDDY. All the bodies in the cellar are Yellow Fever victims.~~

~~(Rooney crosses exasperatedly to R. door on this.)~~

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START:

MORTIMER. Captain—I'm Mortimer Brewster.

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ROONEY. (He's had enough of those thirteen.) Yeah—yeah—those thirteen bodies in the cellar! It ain't enough that the neighbors are all afraid of him, and his disturbing the peace with that bugle—but can you imagine what would happen if that cock-eyed story about

MORTIMER & ROONEY, pg. 2

thirteen bodies in the cellar got around? And now he's starting a Yellow Fever scare. Cute, ain't it?

MORTIMER. (*Greatly relieved, with an embarrassed laugh.*) Thirteen bodies. Do you think anybody would believe that story?

ROONEY. Well, you can't tell. Some people are just dumb enough. You don't know what to believe sometimes. About a year ago a crazy guy starts a murder rumor over in Greenpoint, and I had to dig up a half acre lot, just to prove that—

-STOP-

(There is a knock on R. door.)

MORTIMER. Will you excuse me? (*He goes to door and admits Elaine and Mr. Witherspoon, an elderly, tight-lipped disciplinarian. He is carrying a briefcase.*)

ELAINE. (*Briskly.*) Good morning, Mortimer.

MORTIMER. (*Not knowing what to expect.*) Good morning, dear.

ELAINE. This is Mr. Witherspoon. He's come to meet Teddy.

MORTIMER. To meet Teddy?

ELAINE. Mr. Witherspoon's the superintendent of Happy Dale.

MORTIMER. (*Eagerly.*) Oh, come right in. (*They shake hands. Mortimer indicates Rooney.*) This is Captain—

ROONEY. Lieutenant Rooney. I'm glad you're here, Super, because you're taking him back with you today!

WITHERSPOON. Today? I didn't know that—

ELAINE. (*Cutting in.*) Not today!

MORTIMER. Look, Elaine, I've got a lot of business to attend to, so you run along home and I'll call you up.

ELAINE. Nuts! (*She crosses to window seat and sits.*)

WITHERSPOON. I had no idea it was this immediate.

ROONEY. The papers are all signed, he goes today!

(Teddy backs into room from kitchen, speaking sharply in the direction whence he's come.)

TEDDY. Complete insubordination! You men will find out I'm no mollicoddle. (*He slams door and comes down to below table.*) When the President of the United States is treated like that—what's this country coming to?

ROONEY. There's your man, Super.

MORTIMER. Just a minute! (*He crosses to Teddy and speaks to him*