

"MAN PROPOSES."

An Original Comedietta,

IN ONE ACT,

BY

FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE.

AUTHOR OF

"Fair Rosamond's Bower," &c.

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"MAN PROPOSES."

Characters.

JACOB SQUERIBEEER, Esq., J.P.
JOE THORNE
TOM GROVE
MRS. JOE THORNE
MRS. GLAWBACK
ELVIRA

TIME—PRESENT DAY.

SCENE.

JOE THORNE'S APARTMENTS

In Mrs. Glawback's House.

"MAN PROPOSES."

SCENE.—*A comfortably furnished Apartment. At back, C., a window opening into garden; doors, L. and R.; table laid for breakfast; JOE reading the "Times;" MRS. JOE pouring out coffee.*

JOE. (*laying down paper*) Thirteen weeks to-day, Dolly, since Destiny, in the shape of a hackney cabman, landed me at the Pit entrance of the Royal Leopold Theatre.

MRS. JOE. Thirteen weeks? so it is. I remember it was the third night of the great emotional drama, "Betrayed; or, the Weird Witch of the Wiltshire Wolds!"

JOE. Abounding with sensational situations and startling dénouements, and pronounced by the unanimous voice of the public to be the most astounding and unparalleled performance ever witnessed in this or any other country.

MRS. JOE. Yes, Joe, it was a dead failure, and the puffs were consequently quite hysterical!

JOE. I sat in the second row. My neighbour on the right was sucking bulls'-eyes, which somewhat overpowered the aroma of the stable, exhaled by my friend on the left. It was the middle of the second act, and the bad baron, in pink stockings and liquor, was just making an appointment with the Weird Witch.

MRS. JOE. That was Miss Menella Montrose; she was very cheap at twenty-five shillings a-week.

JOE. The band tuned up—the trombone was particularly active—and you entered, Dolly.

MRS. JOE. But I wasn't me! I was Miss Helen Montague then.

JOE. Oh, what a change came over the place! The mouldy old theatre was transformed into a fairy palace; the baron's nose didn't seem at all unpleasantly red, and I felt quite an affection for the weird witch. What a fool I was, Dolly.

MRS. JOE. I don't see much change in you, Joe.

JOE. You flatter me! It was a rapid courtship, Dolly. I threw you a bouquet that night, and in three weeks we had taken that foolish and fatal step which has entailed upon us all our present misery.

MRS. JOE. Don't be an idiot, Joe.

JOE. In other words, then, in three weeks I had made over to you the whole of my heart, and an equal share in all my present possessions and future expectations.

MRS. JOE. Two meerschaums and a bottle and a half of Marsala, with the prospect of being sued by your tailor and cut off by your uncle.

JOE. Yes; and that cheerful prospect is by no means clouded now, for my uncle remains to this day in utter ignorance of the gratifying fact that he has an actual niece and a theoretical great nephew.

MRS. JOE. Oh, Joe, what a coward you are! Do tell him; he can't eat us!

JOE. No, my pet, his digestion was never strong; but he could and would stop my allowance—a far more serious calamity!

MRS. JOE. But if you sent him a very pretty and penitent letter, and told him what a nice girl I am——

JOE. That would only aggravate the matter. According to his views, the prettier a woman, the more dangerous she is, and consequently your capacity for mischief would be enormous.

MRS. JOE. What an old wretch he must be! May he pay the penalty of his opinions by wearing stockings with holes and shirts without buttons as long as he lives!

JOE. Touching sentiment! Amen.

MRS. JOE. May the laundress send his night-shirt home damp.

JOE. Once again, Amen.

MRS. JOE. May he catch hideous colds in consequence, and have the groom to tallow his nose, and give him his gruel in bed.

JOE. For the third time, Amen, supplemented by So be it.

Enter MRS. GLAWBACK, L., with telegram.

MRS. G. Telegram, sir, as ought to have been delivered half-an-hour ago, which I've watched the boy a-playing marbles.

JOE. Young rascal! (*opens telegram*) Halloo! it's from uncle. (*reads*) "Called to town unexpectedly—shall be with you about nine."

MRS. JOE. Why it's nine now—I hear the church-clock striking. What's to be done?

JOE. To be done? We are, uncommonly brown.

MRS. JOE. (*shouting to MRS. GLAWBACK, who is leaving the room*) Tell him we're gone to the seaside.

MRS. G. Lor, no, mum; how can you ask it of me, as was brought up religious!

JOE. Say we've got measles in the house.

MRS. G. Which you know, sir, we have not, nor never had—

SQUERIBER. (*heard speaking below*) Leave it alone, will you—I say I'll carry it myself.

JOE. He's here! There's no mistaking those dulcet tones. Farewell, hope! Now to meet my doom like a man. (*folds his arms, and leans back, with the air of a martyr*)

MRS. JOE. To meet it? To escape it, you mean. What a helpless creature a man is. I've got it!

JOE. What, the measles?

MRS. JOE. No; an idea—say I'm Tom Grove's sister.

JOE. Splendid notion! You've saved us, Dolly.

Enter SQUERIBER, carrying portmanteau, and travelling rug.

SQUERI. Well, Joe.

JOE. How are you, uncle? (*wringing his hand*) I'm delighted to see you; unexpected pleasures are so very pleasant.

SQUERI. Thanks—where shall I put my traps? (*shouting*) Stop him, stop him! I've left my umbrella. *Rushes off, L.*

MRS. JOE. What an old fright!

JOE. Irreverent girl! he's my uncle, and a J.P.

Re-enter SQUERIBER, with umbrella.

SQUERI. Only just in time, the fellow was going off with it. (*shouting*) Stop him, stop him! the scoundrel's robbed me!

Rushes off, L.

MRS. JOE. What a placid old party! We shall have a charming time of it, Joe.

JOE. How he's thumping down stairs, he'll break his neck, if he doesn't take care.

MRS. JOE. Oh, I do hope he won't take care!

Re-enter SQUERIBER.

SQUERI. He's gone, but I know his number, 11,005. I'll follow him. I'll send him to the tread-mill, he shall get six months for it. (*paces up and down excitedly*)

JOE. Why, what the deuce is the matter? Has he picked your pocket?

SQUERI. No, he's given me a threepenny-bit instead of a fourpenny. (*sees MRS. JOE*) Hallo! I wasn't aware. (*whispering*) Who's that young woman, Joe?

JOE. Miss Grove, sister of my old friend Tom Grove, she's a delightful girl.

SQUERI. Oh, of course, they all are. Beware of her, Joe; she looks dangerous.

JOE. Oh, not at all; she's devoted to district-visiting, and thinks of going into a convent. You'll like her immensely.

SQUERI. I'm off—give me my portmanteau.

MRS. JOE. Joe, you savage, you haven't introduced me.

JOE. Miss Grove. My uncle, Mr. Squeribeer.

SQUERI. How are you, miss? I hope you're well, miss. (*aside*) She's uncommonly pretty. Joe must take care.

MRS. JOE. Now, uncle—I mean Mr. Squeribeer—do take off your coat, and let me give you some coffee.

SQUERI. Thank you, miss, I will. Give me a hand, Joe. (JOE *pulls off his coat*) No sugar. (*seats himself at table*)

JOE. Take a roll, uncle, and you'll find those sausages good.

SQUERI. Sausages? No, thank you—most indigestible things you can eat; they lie on the conscience like the murder of a young family.

MRS. JOE. I made them, Mr. Squeribeer.

SQUERI. Did you? Joe, why don't you ask me if I'll take a sausage. (JOE *helps him*)

MRS. JOE. How well you're looking, uncle—Mr. Squeribeer.

SQUERI. (*aside*) Uncle again! She's evidently setting her cap at Joe. I must talk seriously to that young man. (*aloud*) I can't say I feel particularly bobbish. (*aside*) That sausage has played the deuce with my digestion.

MRS. JOE. You country folks always look so fresh and bright.

SQUERI. The town seems to suit you pretty well, miss. I suppose you get your roses in Covent Garden?

JOE. No, she finds the chemist's cheaper.

MRS. JOE. Don't be too brilliant, Joe—you quite take one's breath.

SQUERI. She calls him Joe—very familiar. (*aside*) Capital sausages!

JOE. They ought to be good. Dolly—Miss Grove—sacrificed her pet tortoiseshell.

SQUERI. Did she? I'll trouble you for another.

TOM. (*heard speaking without*) You may get me a chicken, Mrs. Glawback. That last fowl must have died uncommonly hard, for it was uncommonly hard when it came to table. Tell the laundress that if she'll oblige me with a little starch in my collars, she needn't trouble about my night-shirts.

SQUERI. Who's that?

JOE. Tom Grove—he's staying on the next floor.

MRS. JOE. No, he isn't—he's coming here.

Enter TOM, R.

TOM. *Bon jour*, Joe, as I used to remark, when I spent three days at Boulogne. Same to you Mrs.—(JOE *gesticulates*)

MRS. JOE. (*rushing to him*) Good morning, Tom, dear. Give me a kiss. (*throws her arms round his neck, and kisses him*)

TOM. (*aside*) She's going it—before Joe's face too. This comes of being handsome. I thought she was getting a little too sweet on me.

JOE. Let me introduce you to my uncle, Mr. Squeribeer—my uncle, Tom. (*winks impressively*)

TOM. (*shaking hands with SQUERIBEE*) Oh, you're the party, are you? Joe's very grateful to you, sir; he never mentions your name without tears in his eyes!

SQUERI. Doesn't he? then I hope he don't mention it often, or he must go to great expense in pocket-handkerchiefs.

TOM. By-the-bye, Mrs. —

MRS. JOE. (*putting her hand over his mouth*) Give me another kiss, do, there's a darling brother.

TOM. (*aside*) Brother—brother! that's a neat way of putting it; hang it, I wish she'd wait till Joe's out of the way.

JOE. (*aside*) Confound it, she needn't be quite so affectionate.

SQUERI. (*to JOE*) Mrs.! Why does he call her Mrs.?

JOE. Oh, it's a playful way he's got. He's a regular wag. Arn't you a wag, Tom?

TOM. Well, a little, not altogether. I once sent a conundrum to "Punch."

MRS. JOE. Did they put it in?

TOM. Well, no, I can't say they did.

JOE. (*looking at his watch*) Come, Tom, it's about time we started for the hospital. I'm down for a leg to-day.

TOM. Ah, I've gone in for the liver-wing, and a couple of slices off the breast!

MRS. JOE. I've got some shopping to do, I'll walk with you part of the way.

TOM. (*aside*) She can't bear to leave me—poor Joe!

MRS. JOE. You'll excuse our leaving you, uncle—Mr. Squeribeer—we shan't be long.

SQUERI. Certainly, my dear—I ought to say, Miss Grove—perhaps I shall have a nap. *Exit MRS. JOE.*

TOM. D'ye know, Mr. Squeribeer, there's a very remarkable likeness between you and Joe?

SQUERI. D'ye think so? We always considered Joe plain.

JOE. Ah, that accounts for the resemblance.

TOM. He's got your chin—he's got your nose—

SQUERI. Has he? that's awkward—I was just about blowing it.

Enter MRS. JOE, dressed for a walk.

MRS. JOE. Now I'm ready.

SQUERI. (*aside*) She looks deuced well in a hat.

JOE. If you want a little light literature; there's my library—Tupper, Bradshaw, and last week's "Figaro."

SQUERI. Thanks—I'll have Bradshaw.

Exit MRS. JOE, MRS. JOE, and TOM, L.

That little woman's uncommonly pretty. Such a wicked eye—in fact two of them—such a dimpled chin, and such a plump little figure. I like 'em plump—a woman ought to be sent to a reformatory if she isn't plump. She and Joe seem to be on pretty free-and-easy terms—a deal too free-and-easy in fact. She's setting her cap at Joe, there's no mistake about that. What she sees in him, I can't make out—a lath of a lad like that. Now if I were a woman I should like a comfortable sort of a man. There's an air of dignity about a breadth of waist-coat. 'Pon my soul, I've fallen in love again—very deep indeed, head over ears in fact, with only the tips of my hair showing. I was jilted once, twenty years ago, but love's a complaint you can have any number of times, and vaccination is no security against a second attack. Hang it all, I'll cut Joe out—I'll excise him radically. The worst of it is, it's so long since I made love, I shall hardly know at which end to begin—that sort of thing requires constant practice. Ah, here comes the landlady—I'll take her into my confidence, and get her to give me a hint or two.

Enter MRS. GLAWBACK, L.

MRS. G. I'll just clear away, sir—we're rather short of forks.

SQUERI. Mrs. Glawback, I believe you're a widow?

MRS. G. Yes, sir, Glawback was took very sudden.

SQUERI. Was he? poor man! Of course you were very happy?

MRS. G. Happy, sir? Happy ain't the word. We was comfortable. He *were* violent when in liquor, but there was few like him.

SQUERI. (*aside*) That's lucky. Now, Mrs. Glawback, I want to consult you in a matter of great delicacy. Mrs. Glawback, I'm a bachelor!

MRS. G. Poor gentleman! I can feel for you. A widder's lot is lonely!

SQUERI. Thank you; I'm sure you're a very good sort of woman!

MRS. G. Well, sir, I've always kept myself respectable, which I wish I could say as much for them at Number Five. The cold meat never comes twice to table there, sir.

SQUERI. Don't it? Sometimes I think, Mrs. Glawback, I should be happier with a wife of my own.

MRS. G. Of course, sir, it would never do to have one of somebody else's.

SQUERI. Just so. I'm troubled with the lumbago, Mrs. Glawback!

MRS. G. Ah, sir, many's the time as I've rubbed Glawback's spine with the best Croton oil! (*wipes her eyes*)

SQUERI. I hope there's nobody listening! (*makes a vicious lunge at the keyhole with his umbrella*) Now, Mrs. Glawback, there's a little woman in this house that I think would suit me to a T—d'ye take, aye? (*digs her in the ribs*)

MRS. G. Oh lor, sir, it's so sudden, and Glawback only put in his coffin this day six months.

SQUERI. (*aside*) What does the woman mean? You know the party well enough, don't you, Mrs. Glawback?

MRS. G. Well, sir, I'm a plain-spoken woman, and it would be a falsehood to say as I didn't—which a lie, sir, is dreadful wicked, except in the way of business.

SQUERI. So now we understand one another, aye?

MRS. G. Lor bless you, sir, no fear of that; and proud and pleased I am, though it is sudden—it certainly is sudden.

SQUERI. To be sure we haven't known one another long; but, after all, what's the good of your long courtships? A man can't afford to stand shilly-shallying at my time of life.

MRS. G. No, sir, nor yet at mine; though still, as the saying is, in my prime.

SQUERI. A nice, cosy little body—eh, Mrs. Glawback?

MRS. G. You're very civil, I'm sure; but my figure ain't what it were; which the neighbours knows as I've brought up nine!

SQUERI. Halloo! there's somebody coming!

MRS. G. I'll take the tray. (*going out*) But it is sudden—it certainly is sudden! *Exit, L.*

SQUERI. She's a queer woman. I suppose bringing up nine's very trying to the constitution. Ah, here's the maid; perhaps she can give me a tip.

Enter ELVIRA, R., carrying a pair of boots.

SQUERI. Well, Betty, my dear, and how are you this morning? Your name is Betty, ain't it?

ELVIRA. Lor, no, sir—that's an 'orrid low name. My name's Elvira, and I was christened after a hopperer.

SQUERI. Ah, yes, Elvira—that's more the sort of thing. You've got a good place here, Elvira, haven't you?

ELVIRA. Well, sir, I haven't no fault to find, though missus hasu't no heye for the genteel whatsomdever, and when she

objects to my paniers this morning, I says to her, "If the paniers goes, I goes," which them was my very words.

SQUERI. And very proper too, nothing like having a spirit of your own.

ELVIRA. No, sir, and my connections is good, though my present spere am 'umble. I 'ave a hown cousin as is a non-commissioned officer.

SQUERI. You don't say so! I suppose you've got plenty of beaux—the fellows won't leave you alone—aye, Elvira?

ELVIRA. Pretty well for that, sir, thanking you. There's Mr. Grubb, the greengrocer, as follows me continual when fetching the beer, a making hoffers of his 'and and 'art. But, bless you, sir, I've no patience with him—his legs is that bowed.

SQUERI. Hang him, it's like his impudence!

ELVIRA. Then there's Mr. Pumping, wot keeps the dairy, as winks till I tremble for his heyesight; but I says to him only yesterday, "Pumping," say I, "there is different stations in society, which milk," says I, "am not the cream."

SQUERI. Just so, Elvira, love in a milk-walk wouldn't suit you at all. Now, Elvira! (*chucking her chin*) What d'ye think a pretty young woman would say to me?

ELVIRA. Oh, sir, you're a-making game of me.

SQUERI. I'm perfectly serious, upon my soul I am. Now I know a little girl that's just the thing for me—"All my fancy painted her;" she don't paint herself.

ELVIRA. Lor, no, sir, which my roses is grown on the premises.

SQUERI. She's such a tempting little figure, *petite*, cosy, snug, squeezable. (*puts his arm round her waist*) None of your great stalking ostriches for me. I like a woman little and good.

ELVIRA. Who is the young person, sir? hoping the question's fair.

SQUERI. Ah, you shy little puss, you know that well enough. She's about your height, same coloured hair, same wicked eyes. Don't come here with your innocent ways.

ELVIRA. Oh, sir, you make me blush, it is so very sudden.

SQUERI. (*aside*) That's queer. Just the same as the old lady said. Now, Elvira, I'm a bad hand at making an offer. I'm confoundedly out of practice. How the deuce ought a fellow to set about it?

ELVIRA. Well, sir, you ought by rights to flop down on your right knee, though at your time of life, and being stout—

SQUERI. I think I can manage it. Give me your hand, Elvira.

ELVIRA. There it is, and my 'eart in it, with my best respects to you, sir.

SQUERI. (*on his knee*) She's quite a character. (*aside*) Much obliged, I'm sure. Now, what's the next thing to be done?

ELVIRA. Why, bless you, it's all over now, except to seal the contract with a kiss. (*throws her arms round his neck*)

SQUERI. The girl's gone mad. (*aside*) Halloo! what's that? there's somebody coming.

ELVIRA. I must run. Missus would be that wild. (*going*)

SQUERI. (*making frantic efforts to rise*) I can't get up! Bother that lumbago! Help me, Elvira, for the love of heaven.

ELVIRA. Oh, lor, sir! I daren't—they're here. *Exit, R.*

Enter JOE and MRS. JOE.

SQUERI. I've dropped a halfpenny; you don't see it, do you?

JOE. Never mind, the maid will find it.

SQUERI. And keep it for her honesty. Give me a hand, Joe; I'm just a trifle stiff. (*JOE helps him*)

JOE. Have you strolled round the garden, uncle?

SQUERI. Garden! No. Where d'ye keep it?

MRS. J. Come and look. (*they all go up to window*) It's rather a pretty little retreat, isn't it?

JOE. Twelve feet by nine feet six.

MRS. JOE. You see Joe's making a rockery.

JOE. I flatter myself it's rather tasteful.

SQUERI. Don't you think there's rather a profusion of oyster-shells?

JOE. Oh dear, no; I assure you they're all natives. How d'ye like the fountain?

SQUERI. Pretty—decidedly pretty! Does it play?

MRS. JOE. No; its motto seems to be, "All work and no play."

JOE. You'll excuse me, uncle; I want to give the rockery a few finishing touches.

SQUERI. By all means. (*aside*) Good riddance; I want to put my little plan into execution.

Exit JOE, through window.

MRS. JOE. Take a seat, uncle—Mr. Squeribeer. (*draws her chair up to his—aside*) I mean to be extremely fascinating, and to pave the way for Joe's confession. Don't you feel very miserable living all by yourself in the country?

SQUERI. No, my dear, I never did; but I hadn't seen you then. I shall when I go back. (*aside*) That's not a bad start.

MRS. JOE. Joe used to feel lonely.

SQUERI. Never mind Joe! Serve him right! Hang Joe! He's a very idle, dissipated young man!

MRS. JOE. Oh, Mr. Squeribeer, he's better now; indeed he is.

SQUERI. 'Pon my soul, I can't see where Joe's attractions lie—an addle-headed, knock-kneed, sandy-whiskered puppy!

MRS. JOE. (*drawing back her chair*) Stop, I won't hear Joe abused. You ought to know better.

SQUERI. Don't I allow him two hundred pounds a year, and haven't I a right to abuse him?

MRS. JOE. That's a very noble sentiment!

SQUERI. (*edging up to her*) Then I won't abuse him—for your sake, mind—only for your sake. But, my dear—(*taking her hand*) you mustn't marry him; you're a deal too good for him!

MRS. JOE. Oh, dear Mr. Squeribeer—

SQUERI. Besides, the moment I hear of his marriage, pop goes his allowance, and where would Joe be without quarter-day?

MRS. JOE. But if he married me, wouldn't you forgive him for my sake?

SQUERI. Not a bit of it. (*puts his arm round her waist*) I want to see you married to some quite, respectable, elderly—well, no, middle-aged—man, who'll be proud of you, and take care of you, and all that sort of thing. Hang Joe! Well, no, I don't meant that; but you mustn't marry him!

MRS. JOE. Then, if I don't marry Joe, I shall never marry.

SQUERI. Yes, my dear, you shall, you shall marry me! (*throws himself on his knees*) I love you with all my heart; you're an angel. Give me a kiss.

Enter JOE, who has overheard the declaration, through the window—MRS. GLAWBACK, R.—and ELVIRA, L.

JOE. What d'ye mean, sir, by making love to my wife?

MRS. G. Oh, you heartless old wretch, to trifle like this with a widder's affections.

ELVIRA. Oh, you perfidious old Mormon, which he's just been a propoging to me, as has refuged three heligible hoffers in consequence.

JOE. I've a very great mind to kick you down stairs, you old rascal!

MRS. G. I'll bring an action.

ELVIRA. So will I, you see if I don't, a breaking female 'earts 'olesale.

SQUERI. (*seizing the poker*) Get out of my sight, or I'll break a pair of female heads into the bargain.

MRS. G. Murder!

ELVIRA. Perlice!

Exeunt, screaming.

JOE. Now, sir, what do you mean by kissing my wife?

SQUERI. Your wife? she's not your wife—she's as good as promised to be mine.

JOE. She hasn't.

SQUERI. She has.

JOE. You shall pay for this.

SQUERI. Who's afraid? Come on. *(they begin sparring)*

MRS. JOE. *(getting between them)* Uncle—Joe—let me explain. We're married, uncle. *(clinging to his arm)*

SQUERI. Not a bit of it. You're Tom Grove's sister.

Enter TOM, L.

SQUERI. Look here, sir. Is that young man married to your sister?

TOM. What d'ye mean? I never had a sister.

SQUERI. Never had a sister? then who's this young woman?

TOM. Mrs. Joe Thorne to be sure. *(aside)* Joe, you ought to keep your spirits locked up.

SQUERI. *(to JOE)* Then you've swindled me, you have, you rascal. I'll stop your allowance—give me my traps—get me a cab.

MRS. JOE. *(crying)* Uncle, dear uncle, forgive us—do forgive us. We'll never do it again. *(putting her arms in his)* You will forgive us, won't you? I'll give you a kiss if you will.

SQUERI. Two?

MRS. JOE. Three.

SQUERI. Done—I forgive you. *(kisses her)* Now tell me what it all means.

MRS. JOE. Why, uncle, we were married three months ago, and Joe was afraid to tell you, and so, when you took us by surprise this morning, we invented that dreadful story about my being Tom Grove's sister.

TOM. *(aside)* That explains the sudden gush of affection. What a sell!

Enter MRS. GLAWBACK and ELVIRA, L.

MRS. G. Now, sir, how are you going to mend my broken heart?

ELVIRA. Where's the balm for my wounded affections?

SQUERI. What do you mean?

MRS. G. Didn't you make me a tender of your tender feelings?

ELVIRA. Didn't you offer me your heart and?—which Mrs. Thorne beheld him on his knees.

SQUERI. Good gracious! I begin to see the mistake. What I wasn't in earnest—I was only practising—rehearsing, don't you see. I only wanted you to give me a hint or two.

"MAN PROPOSES."

ELVIRA. Well, sir, a pretty fool you've made of me.

SQUERI. Not at all—you're making a pretty fool of yourself. *(takes her money)* There, go and marry the milkman!

ELVIRA. I will, thanking you, sir, for I know as my Pumping-rue to me.

MRS. G. And who's to cheer the widder's lot?

SQUERI. Why, my good woman, with your attractions you'll marry any one you please. *(aside)* Always excepting me.

MRS. JOE. Oh, uncle, how happy you've made us!

SQUERI. Have I, my dear? I'm rather miserable myself.

JOE. Cheer up, uncle, there's as good fish in the sea as ever ne out—you'll get a jolly little wife yet.

SQUERI. No, thank you, Joe. I've made my last appearance as a marrying man. Henceforth I subside into the confirmed bachelor!

MRS. JOE. Then you'll come and live with us, won't you, Joe?

SQUERI. On one condition, I will. That when that little anger comes to town—if it's a boy—you'll name him Jacob, or me—I'll double your allowance from to-day, Joe, and, when I'm gone, little Jacob steps into my shoes.

MRS. JOE. Then there will be but one thing wanting to complete our happiness.

SQUERI. And what is that, my pet?

JOE. Yes, what is it, Dolly?

MRS. G. Speak your mind, my dear!

ELVIRA. Out with it, mum!

MRS. JOE. The assurance, conveyed in the orthodox manner, of our efforts to amuse our friends in front have not been tirely unsuccessful.

Curtain.