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BREAD, BUTTER AND ROMANCE

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT

BY

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"Mrs. Hoops-Hooper and the Hindu," "The Old Oaken Bucket,"
"Shadows," "Jolly Monologues," "Merry
Monologues," etc.



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BREAD, BUTTER AND ROMANCE

FOR ONE MAN AND THREE WOMEN

CHARACTERS.

MAISIE.....*With a Taste for Romance*
MAGGIE.....*A Neighborly Neighbor*
HAGAR.....*A Gypsy Fortune-Teller*
MANUEL.....*A Romantic Vagabond*

SCENE—*The Living Room in Maisie's Home.*

TIME—*The Present.*

TIME OF PLAYING—*About Twenty Minutes.*

COSTUMES AND CHARACTERISTICS.

MAISIE—A young girl of romantic disposition. Wears a simple house dress and dainty coverall apron.

MAGGIE—An older woman, with a warm Irish heart and a sense of humor. Wears bonnet and shawl, with a fantastic costume that carries out the humorous idea of the character.

HAGAR—A young gypsy woman. Wears red skirt, black bodice, white waist, head-dress of yellow; plenty of beads, etc.; carries tambourine.

MANUEL—A young gypsy man. Wears long or short trousers, white blouse, red sash, short black coat, red tie, soft black felt hat with brim rolled up on one side, hoop earrings, etc.

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NOTES ON STAGING.

The cast may be formed with four women, if desired, one taking the part of Manuel, the gypsy man.

The play will be more effective with a song and a violin accompaniment, only one verse to be sung on the stage. There should be no encore, as this interrupts the action. If the performers cannot sing and play, the music may be given in the wings, omitting the lines in the dialogue which introduce the song on the stage.

As a musical number suitable for this purpose, "Jolly Gypsies" is recommended. It can be had, with complete words and music, from the publishers of this play, for 35 cents postpaid.

"Bread, Butter and Romance" has been produced in Chautauqua with immense success, and may be easily presented on any platform without special scenery.

PROPERTIES.

Table, three chairs, table cover, telephone, book, tea tray, tea pot, cups and saucers, ring for MAISIE, pocket-book with money for MAISIE, handkerchief for MAISIE, pocket-book with money for MAGGIE.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

Up stage means away from footlights; *down stage*, near footlights. In the use of *right* and *left*, the actor is supposed to be facing the audience.

BREAD, BUTTER AND ROMANCE

SCENE: *The living room in Maisie's home. A door at the right is supposed to lead to another part of the house, and a door at the left is the entrance from outside. There is a living room table in the center of the room with a chair on either side, and another chair at the left. The table is covered with a spread, and on it are a telephone and a novel. The room may be further fitted as the director wishes, with properties that are simple and in good taste.*

As the curtain rises, the room is empty. MAISIE enters from the right, humming the air of some popular song. She carries a tray with a pot of tea, tea cups and saucers. She puts the tray on the table and sits right of table. She picks up the novel and begins to read. The telephone rings three times before she hears it. Then she picks up the receiver, regretfully taking her gaze from the book.

MAISIE (*to phone*). Hello? * * * Hello? * * * Oh, you'll give me one guess? * * * Let's see. Tom Browne? * * * Ed Smith? * * * Charlie Jones? * * * (*Laughing.*) There, Jack. Don't get peeved. Of course I know who it is. * * * I was only teasing. * * * Well, I couldn't answer right away. I was reading the loveliest book, called "The Gypsy Queen's Revenge." * * * (*Annoyed.*) Now you needn't make fun, Jack Roberts. It's a perfectly darling book. * * * I didn't say it that way. You haven't one bit of romance in your system. * * * What? Romance doesn't go far at the corner grocery? * * * Well, all you care about is bread and butter. I'm changing my mind about you. * * * We aren't suited to each other. You like bread, and I like romance. * * * What? I ought to be a gypsy? Well, I would like to be. * * * What did you say? * * * There's a band of gypsies in town? I know, and I think they are charming. * * * What? I ought to have a gypsy sweetheart? Well, you ought to marry Susie Brooks. Goodness

knows she's unromantic enough. You have been talking with her at the Post Office corner—stood there half an hour. * * * You did, too. Several people saw you and told me about it. Why don't you marry Susie? * * * What? * * * Your father is going to give you a position in the Wholesale Bakery? No, Jack, I've made up my mind. We aren't suited to each other. I love trees and moonlight and flowers, and you care for nothing but bread. You don't care for romance at all. We quarrel all the time. * * * What do I mean? I'm breaking my engagement, that's all. I'll lay your ring right here on the table. You can have it any time you wish. (*Puts ring on table.*) There! You might marry Susie Brooks. She'll bake bread for you. Goodbye. (*Hangs up receiver, rises, and cries.*) Well, it's all over. I always feel so tragic when I break an engagement. That's the third one. (*Picks up ring.*) It wasn't a very pretty ring. But Jack was nice, though. (*Puts ring down on table.*)

MAGGIE enters from the left.

MAGGIE. How air ye, darlin'? What's the matter? You're lookin' sad. (*Comes to left of table.*)

MAISIE. No, I'm very happy. (*Sobs and sits right of table.*)

MAGGIE. Happy? I saw Mr. Jack coming out of a grocery store a while ago. Ye haven't quarreled, have ye?

MAISIE. We have just decided to part forever, and I'm very happy. (*Rises and crosses left, crying.*)

MAGGIE (*crossing right in front of table*). Happy, is it? Accordin' to that I ought to be laughin' mesilf sick at me own swateheart's funeral just to show me misery. Not but what there's funerals that would tickle me to death, I'll tell ye thot.

MAISIE. But Maggie, Jack and I are not suited to each other. He loves bread, and I love romance. I hate this humdrum existence—get up in the morning, dress, eat, work around a little, eat, work some more, eat and then go to bed. I just exist—that's all.

MAGGIE. Sure, that's better than dyin'. (*Crosses left.*) There, there! You're just feelin' blue because your mother went away. That's why I came over to see how you were gittin' along while she was on her trip.

MAISIE. It isn't that, Maggie. I'm glad she could go. She needed the rest.

MAGGIE. Sure, I'll tell ye what. Have a cup of tay (*turns to the table*). It's very soothin', a cup of tay.

MAISIE. No.

MAGGIE. Yes, dear. (*Pours out the tea.*)

MAISIE. Well. (*Sits left of table, takes tea cup and sips.*) Oh, Maggie, the tea is cold.

MAGGIE (*starting toward right*). I'll make some frish tay.

MAISIE. No, I don't want any—thank you.

MAGGIE. Well, I'll take some of this mesilf. (*Sits right of table.*) Maybe I'll be seein' your swateheart come back to you in the tay grounds. (*MAISIE shakes her head.*) Well, maybe I'll be seein' a new swateheart for you.

MAISIE. Oh, Maggie, I saw the handsomest man down by the brook the other day. He was a gypsy.

MAGGIE (*exclaiming*). A gypsy! God save us! (*Sets down her cup with a bang in the saucer.*)

MAISIE. Yes, he told me how charming I was, and he wanted me to roam the world with him.

MAGGIE. Sure, your fate would get awful tired roaming the world with a gypsy.

MAISIE (*rising*). He wanted me to fly with him.

MAGGIE (*jumping up*). Did he have an airship?

MAISIE. No, no. You don't understand. That's only a figure of speech. Oh, I'd love to be a gypsy and roam all day out under the blue skies.

MAGGIE. Well, the skies ain't always blue. Sometimes it's rainin' cats and dogs and a few pigs.

MAISIE. Oh, I love the great out-of-doors. I adore life—and color—and beauty.

(*Music of gypsy song and violin is heard outside. MAISIE and MAGGIE listen, then run to center, up stage.*)

MAISIE (*looking out of left door*). Oh, Maggie! It's the gypsies, and the handsome one I saw yesterday. Let us hide and see what they will do. (*They exeunt right.*)

HAGAR and MANUEL *enter from the left.*

HAGAR (*calling*). Tell your fortune—tell your fortune—
MANUEL. No one in here.

HAGAR. You cannot be too sure no one in here.

MANUEL (*goes to table and tastes tea*). Bah! Tea—and cold!

HAGAR. I tell you what we do. We play moosic and then we see if any one here. If no one here, we look around; maybe we get money.

MANUEL. The idea it is good.

(*He plays violin and she sings a verse of gypsy song. At close of song MANUEL is right and HAGAR is left.*)

MAISIE and MAGGIE *enter right.*

MAISIE. Oh, that was beautiful—and so romantic!

HAGAR. Tell your fortune—tell your fortune.

MAISIE (*eagerly*). Oh, yes.

HAGAR. Cross my palm with silver.

(*MAISIE goes for her pocket-book on table.*)

MAGGIE. Say, that's an awful pretty dress you have on. I'd like one like it.

(*MAISIE crosses left to HAGAR, who accepts coin and takes her hand.*)

HAGAR (*reading MAISIE's palm*). I see two young men; one is fair. You quarrel; he turns away. I see a great building with many men and women working—

MAISIE (*interrupting*). Jack's father's bakery! Can I never get away from bread?

(*MANUEL, spying pocket-book, crosses back of table, takes up pocket-book and examines it.*)

HAGAR (*to MAISIE*). You do not like great building. You shudder and turn away.

(MAGGIE discovers MANUEL and grabs the pocket-book from him. He shrugs his shoulders and turns back right. This by-play is unnoticed by MAISIE.)

HAGAR (to MAISIE, continuing). I see a dark young man and a running brook. (MAISIE and MANUEL exchange glances.) You run about in the woods. Then the forest grows dark, night falls, and you are left alone.

MAGGIE (crossing right). Ah, don't be lavin' the darlin' alone in the forest! Git her out some way.

MANUEL (snaps). Bah!

MAGGIE (mimicking him). "Bah!" Ain't you a scrame in thim clothes? That's an awful pretty sash you have on. But it looks quare to see a mon wearin' a sash. Excuse me for laughin'. (Laughs heartily.)

HAGAR (to MAGGIE). Tell your fortune?

(MAISIE crosses to center, back of table.)

MAGGIE (crossing left to HAGAR). Sure, I'd like you to tell my fortune. But don't be lavin' me alone in the forest. I'm kind o' nervous, loike.

(MANUEL crosses center, back of table, to MAISIE.)

HAGAR. Cross my palm with silver.

MAGGIE. You mean you want some money?

HAGAR. Yes.

MAGGIE. I'll see what I have. (Crosses right, followed by HAGAR.) I'll tell you what I'll do. You tell my fortune and I'll give you the money. I'd rather play safe wid you.

(MAISIE and MANUEL cross left and sit down. He makes love to her.)

HAGAR (to MAGGIE). You're Irish.

MAGGIE. How did you iver know thot, mum? Straight from the Imerald Isle I came, and God knows I hated to lave me old fayther and mither.

HAGAR (looking at MAGGIE'S palm). I see a cabin and an old man.

MAGGIE. That's me fayther. God bliss him. Do you see me mither?

HAGAR (*looking at palm*). I see an old woman.

MAGGIE. That's me mither. Lord love her. Do you see me sister Kate?

HAGAR (*looking at palm*). I see a girl with red hair.

MAGGIE. That's Kate—long life to her.

HAGAR (*looking at palm*). You have a long life line.

MAGGIE. My grandfayther died at the age of 106. How did ye know me family was such long livers?

HAGAR (*looking at palm*). You have a big fate line.

MAGGIE. Sure, I know I have awful big sized fate, but I didn't think you could tell that in me hand. (*Laughs.*) Is there somewan else you see, mum? (*Turns coyly from side to side and smiles.*)

HAGAR (*looking at palm*). I see a young man.

MAGGIE. That's Terry, mum. He's a butcher, but he's goin' to be a policemon, and thin—

HAGAR (*looking at palm*). Oh, I see a church and a great many people. It's a wedding.

MAGGIE. It's me and Terry, mum. I always hoped we might get married, mum. I'll tell Bidy and Mary, me friends, about that, mum.

HAGAR (*looking at palm*). You have two girl friends.

MAGGIE. Sure. Bidy and Mary. How did you know, mum? I'll have thim come have their fortunes told—that is, if I can iver get away from the auld hen I'm workin' for.

HAGAR. I see you're above your station. You should have been a great actress, or a singer.

MAGGIE. Yis, mum. I've often thought I'd like to be won of thim movie actresses, mum. Ivry wan says I look like— (*some popular picture star*), mum.

HAGAR. Money, please; fifty cents.

MAGGIE (*takes money from pocket-book*). Sure, that's chape, mum. (*Gives her money. Sees MANUEL and MAISIE.*) Oh, Lord love us, look at that!

HAGAR. Manuel! We go. (*MAISIE and MANUEL rise.*)

MAISIE (*eagerly*). Oh, take me with you! I want to be a gypsy.

HAGAR. You? No, no. (*Pushes MAISIE aside, and crosses left to MANUEL.*) So, you have been busy again. I cannot take my eyes from you. And you (*turns to MAISIE*)—you are in love with Manuel?

MAISIE. Yes. He wants me to fly with him.

(MAGGIE *crosses to MAISIE.*)

HAGAR. To fly with him! So—one, two, twenty girls would fly with Manuel. No! Manuel have no airship (*laughs, scornfully*). You stay on the ground (*angrily*). I alone fly with him. I am his wife.

MAISIE. His wife!

HAGAR (*coming at MAISIE*). I scratch the eyes out of any girl who take Manuel from me!

(MAGGIE *holds MAISIE protectingly.*)

MAISIE His wife! (*Crosses to MANUEL.*) Oh, Manuel, how could you?

(MANUEL *turns away up stage.*)

MAGGIE (*crosses left to MAISIE*). Oh, don't mind them old gypsies. They're good for nothing.

(MANUEL *takes MAISIE'S purse and ring from the table, unperceived by MAISIE and MAGGIE, and exits left.*)

HAGAR (*at right*). Ha, ha! Storm come. Young lady left alone. I tell your fortune another day. Goodbye. (*Exits left.*)

MAGGIE. Go along wid you.

MAISIE. Oh, Maggie, all my romances are bursting like soap-bubbles.

MAGGIE (*putting her arms around MAISIE*). Don't be wapin'. I niver yet saw the man worth wapin' for.

MAISIE. But I sent Jack away, and he was good and kind. I wish he'd come back.

MAGGIE (*starting left*). I'll go and see if I see him anywhere.

MAISIE (*catching her arm*). No, no. Don't tell him. I'd die of mortification.

MAGGIE. Maybe he'll be comin' back.

MAISIE. No, I'm afraid not.

MAGGIE. Maybe he'll be comin' back to git the ring.

MAISIE. Yes; the ring— (*They turn to the table.*) Where is the ring? (*They search.*)

MAGGIE. Yes, where's the ring? Oh, thim thavin' gypsies took it!

MAISIE. Oh, what will I do?

MAGGIE (*picks up phone*). Now you'll have to call him.

MAISIE. I can't. I can't!

MAGGIE (*urging*). Go on.

MAISIE (*tearfully*). No, I can't.

MAGGIE. All right. I'll call him myself. (*Takes phone and talks in a loud voice.*) Hello! Give me 1-2-3-4 Main. * * * 1-2-3-4 Main—The Universal Bakery. * * * Is Mr. Jack Roberts there?

MAISIE (*excitedly*). Oh, Maggie, is he there?

MAGGIE. Hello. * * * Is this Mr. Roberts? * * * (*Twists in a coy way.*) Did you think this was your swateheart talkin' to you? * * * No, it ain't; but she's right here.

MAISIE (*excitedly*). No, no, Maggie!

MAGGIE (*in a loud voice*). No, she ain't here, but she's feelin' awful bad. * * * Sure, some thavin' gypsies stole that ring you gave her right off the table and she wants you to give her another one.

MAISIE. Oh, no, no, Maggie!

MAGGIE (*in a loud, excited voice*). No, she don't. But come over and make up. She's been cryin' for ye all day.

MAISIE. Oh, Maggie—

MAGGIE. Here, take this phone yourself. I'm gittin' it all mixed up. (*Forces MAISIE to take phone.*)

MAISIE (*to phone*). Hello, Jack. * * * What? * * * You're coming right over? * * * What? With another ring? * * * A diamond? (*Looks at MAGGIE delightedly.*) Oh, Jack! * * * Yes, you'll be right over. Do come.

(*Puts up receiver and catches MAGGIE's hands.*) Oh, Maggie, it's all right! He's coming right over, and I'll go and put on my pink dress. (*Runs out right.*)

MAGGIE. Well, I'll come and hook you up. It's all right, God bless us! (*Exits right.*)

CURTAIN.



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