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EXCUSE ME!

Novelized from the Comedy of the Same Name

By Rupert Hughes

ILLUSTRATED From Photographs of the Play as Produced By Henry W. Savage

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SYNOPSIS.

CHAPTER I.—Lieut. Harry Mallory is ordered to the Philippines. He and Marjorie Newton decide to elope, but wreck of taxicab prevents their seeing minister on the way to the train.

CHAPTER II.—Transcontinental train is taking on passengers. Porter has a lively time with an Englishman and Ira Lathrop, a Yankee business man.

CHAPTER III.—The elopers have an exciting time getting to the train.

CHAPTER IV.—"Little Jimmie" Wellington, bound for Reno to get a divorce, boards train in maudlin condition. Later Mrs. Jimmie appears.

CHAPTER V.—She is also bound for Reno with same object. Likewise Mrs. Sammy Whitcomb.

CHAPTER VI.—Latter blames Mrs. Jimmie for her marital troubles. Classmates of Mallory decorate bridal berth.

CHAPTER VII.—Rev. and Mrs. Temple start on a vacation. They decide to cut loose and Temple removes evidence of his calling.

CHAPTER VIII.—Marjorie decides to let Mallory proceed alone, but train starts while they are lost in farewell.

CHAPTER IX.—Passengers join Mallory's classmates in giving couple wedding hazing.

CHAPTER X.—Marjorie is distracted over their situation.

CHAPTER XI.—Ira Lathrop, woman-hating bachelor, discovers an old sweetheart, Anne Gattle, a fellow passenger.

CHAPTER XII.—Mallory vainly hunts for a preacher among the passengers.

CHAPTER XIII.—Mrs. Wellington hears Little Jimmie's voice. Later she meets Mrs. Whitcomb.

CHAPTER XIV.—Mallory reports to Marjorie his failure to find a preacher.

CHAPTER XV.—They decide to pretend a quarrel and Mallory finds a vacant berth.

CHAPTER XVI.—Mrs. Jimmie discovers Wellington on the train.

CHAPTER XVII.—Mallory again makes an unsuccessful hunt for a preacher.

CHAPTER XVIII.—Dr. Temple poses as a physician. Mrs. Temple is induced by Mrs. Wellington to smoke a cigar.

CHAPTER XIX.—Sight of preacher on a station platform raises Mallory's hopes, but he takes another train.

CHAPTER XX.—Missing hand baggage compels the couple to borrow from passengers.

CHAPTER XXI.—Jimmie gets a cinder in his eye and Mrs. Jimmie gives first-aid. Coolness is then resumed.

CHAPTER XXII.—Still no clergyman. More borrowing.

CHAPTER XXIII.—Dr. Temple puzzled by behavior of different couples.

CHAPTER XXIV.—Marjorie's jealousy aroused by Mallory's baseball jargon.

CHAPTER XXV.—Marjorie suggests wrecking the train in hopes that accident will produce a preacher.

CHAPTER XXVI.—Marjorie tries to induce the conductor to hold the train so she can shop.

CHAPTER XXVII.—Marjorie's dog is missing. She pulls the cord, stopping the train. Conductor restores dog and lovers quarrel.

CHAPTER XXVIII.—Lathrop wires for a preacher to marry him and Miss Gattle. Mallory tells Lathrop of his predicament and arranges to borrow the preacher.

CHAPTER XXIX.—Kitty Lewellyn, former sweetheart of Mallory's, appears and arouses Marjorie's jealousy.

CHAPTER XXX.—Preacher boards train.

CHAPTER XXXI.—After marrying Lathrop and Miss Gattle the preacher escapes Mallory by leaping from moving train.

CHAPTER XXXII.—Mallory's dejection moves Marjorie to reconciliation.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—The last day on the train brings to Mallory the fear of missing his transport.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—Mallory gets a Nevada marriage license from Reno divorce drummer who boards the train.

CHAPTER XXXV.—Mr. and Mrs. Jimmie make up.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—Kitty Lewellyn refuses to return Mallory's bracelet.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Hands Up!

All this time Lieutenant Mallory had been thinking as hard as an officer in an ambuscade. His harrowing experiences and incessant defeats of the past days had unnerved him and shattered his self-confidence. He was not afraid, but intensely disgusted. He sat absent-mindedly patting Marjorie on the back and repeating:

"Don't worry, honey; they're not going to hurt anybody. They don't want anything but our money. Don't worry, I won't let 'em hurt you."

But he could not shake off a sense of nausea. He felt himself a representative of the military prowess of the country, and here he was as helpless as a man on parole.

The fact that Mallory was a soldier occurred to a number of the passengers simultaneously. They had been trained by early studies in those beautiful works of fiction, the school histories of the United States, and by many Fourths of July, to believe that the American soldier is an invincible being, who has never been defeated and never known fear.

They surged up to Mallory in a wave of hope. Dr. Temple, being nearest, spoke first. Having learned by experience that his own prayers were not always answered as he wished, had an impulse to try some weapon he had never used.

"Young man," he pleaded across the back of a seat, "will you kindly lend me a gun?"

Mallory answered sullenly: "Mine is in my trunk on the train ahead, damn it. If I had it I'd have a lot of fun."

Mrs. Whitcomb had an inspiration. She ran to her berth, and came back with a tiny silver-plated revolver.

"Ti lend you this. Sammy gave it to me to protect myself in Nevada!"

Mallory smiled at the .22-caliber toy, broke it open, and displayed an empty cylinder.

"Where are the pills that go with it?" he said.

"Oh, Sammy wouldn't let me have any bullets. He was afraid I'd hurt myself."

Mallory returned it, with a bow. "It would make an excellent nut-cracker."

"Aren't you going to use it?" Mrs. Whitcomb gasped.

"It's empty," Mallory explained.

"But the robbers don't know that! Couldn't you just overawe them with it?"

"Not with that," said Mallory, "unless they died laughing."

Mrs. Wellington pushed forward: "Then what the devil are you going to do when they come?"

Mallory answered meekly: "If they request it, I shall hold up my hands."

"And you won't resist?" Kathleen gasped.

"Not a resist."

"And he calls himself a soldier!" she sneered.

Mallory writhed, but all he said was: "A soldier doesn't have to be a jackass. I know just enough about guns not to monkey with the wrong end of 'em."

"Coward!" she flung at him. He turned white, but Marjorie red, and made a leap at her, crying: "He's the bravest man in the world. You say a word, and I'll scratch your eyes out."

This reheartened Mallory a little, and he laughed nervously, as he restrained her. Kathleen retreated out of danger, with a parting shot: "Our engagement is off."

"Thanks," Mallory said, and put out his hand: "Will you return the bracelet?"

"I never return such things," said Kathleen.

The scene was so painful and such an anachronism that Dr. Temple tried to renew a more pressing subject:

THE HOLD-UP.

"It's your opinion then that we'd best surrender?"

"Of course—since we can't run."

Wedgewood broke in impatiently: "Well, I consider it a dastardly outrage. I'll not submit to it. I'm a subject of His Majesty the—"

"You're a subject of His Majesty the Man Behind the Gun," said Mallory.

"I shall protest, none the less," Wedgewood insisted.

Mallory grinned a little. "Have you any last message to send home to your mother?"

Wedgewood was a trifle chilled at this. "D-don't talk of such things," he said.

And by this time the train-robbers had hastily worked their way through the other passengers, and reached the frantic inhabitants of the sleeper, "Snowdrop."

"Hands up! Higher!! Hands up!"

With a true sense of the dramatic, the robbers sent ahead of them the most hair-raising yells. They arrived simultaneously at each end of the aisle, and with a few short sharp commands, straightened the disorderly rabble into a beautiful line, with all palms aloft and all eyes wide and wild.

One robber drove ahead of him the conductor and the other drove in Mr. Manning, whom he had found trying to crawl between the shelves of the linen-closet.

The marauders were apparently cattlemen, from their general get-up. Their hats were pulled low, and just beneath their eyes they had drawn big black silk handkerchiefs, tied behind the ears and hanging to the breast.

Over their shoulders they had slung the feed-bags of their horses, to serve as receptacles for their swag. Their shirts were chalky with alkali dust. Their legs were encased in heavy chaparejos, and they carried each a pair of well-used Colt's revolvers that looked as big as artillery.

When the passengers had shoved and jostled into line, one of the men jabbed the conductor in the back with the muzzle of his gun, and snarled: "Now speak your little piece, like I learned it to you."

The conductor, like an awkward schoolboy, grinned sheepishly, and spoke, his hands in the air the while:

"Ladies and gents, these here parties in the black tidies says they want everybody to hold his or her hands as high as possible till you git permission to lower 'em; they advise you not to resist, because they hate the sight of blood, but prefer it to argument."

The impatient robbers, themselves the prey of fearful anxieties, broke in, barking like a pair of coyotes in a jumble of commands: "Now, line up with your backs that way, and no back talk. These guns shoot awful easy. And remember, as each party is finished with, they are to turn round and keep their hands up, on penalty of gittin' 'em shot off. Line up! Hands up! Give over there!"

Mrs. Jimmie Wellington took her time about moving into position, and her deliberation brought a howl of wrath from the robber: "Get into that line, you!"

Mrs. Wellington whirled on him: "How dare you, you brute?" And she turned up her nose at the gun.

The anxious conductor intervened: "Better obey, madame; he's an ugly lad."

"I don't mind being robbed," said Mrs. Jimmie, "but I won't endure rudeness."

The robber shook his head in despair, and he tried to wither her with sarcasm: "Pardong, mamselly, would you be so kind and condescendin' as to step into that there car before I blow your husband's gol-blame head off."

This brought her to terms. She hastened to her place, but put out a restraining hand on Jimmie, who needed no restraint. "Certainly, to save my dear husband. Don't strike him, Jimmie!"

Then each man stuck one revolver into its convenient holster, and, covering the passengers with the other, proceeded to frisk away valuables with a speed and agility that would have looked prettier if those impatient-looking muzzles had not pointed here, there and everywhere with such venomous threats.

And so they worked from each end of the car toward the middle. Their hands ran swiftly over bodies with a loathsome familiarity that could only be resented, not revenged. Their hands dived into pockets, and up sleeves, and into women's hair, everywhere that a jewel or a bill might be secreted. And always a rough growl or a swing of the revolver silenced any protest.

Their heinous fingers had hardly begun to ply, when the solemn stillness was broken by a chuckle and low hoot of laughter, a darkey's unctuous laughter. At such a place it was more shocking than at a funeral.

"What ails you?" was the nearest robber's demand.

The porter tried to wipe his streaming eyes without lowering his hands, as he chuckled on: "I—I—just thought of sumpum funny."

"Funny!" was the universal groan.

"I was just thinking," the porter snickered, "what mighty poor pickings you-all are goin' to git out of me. Whilst if you had 'a' waited till I got to 'Frisco, I'd jest nachelly been oozin' money."

The robber relieved him of a few dimes and quarters and ordered him to turn round, but the black face whirled back as he heard from the other end of the car Wedgewood's indignant complaint: "I say, this is an outrage!"

"Ah, close your trap and turn round, or I'll—"

The porter's smile died away. "Good Lawd," he sighed, "they're goin' to skin that British lion! And I just wore myself out on him."

The far-reaching effect of the whole procedure was just beginning to dawn on the porter. This little run on the bank meant a period of financial stringency for him. He watched the hurrying hands a moment or two, then his wrath rose to terrible proportions:

"Look here, man," he shouted at the robber, "ain't you-all goin' to leave these passengers nothin' a tall?"

"Not on purpose, nigger."

"No small change, or nothin'?"

"Nary a red."

"Then, passengers," the porter proclaimed, while the robber watched him in amazement; "then, passengers, I want to give you-all fair warnin' heah and now: No tips, no whisk-broom!"

Perhaps because their hearts were already overflowing with distress, the passengers endured this appalling threat without comment, and when there was a commotion at the other end of the line, all eyes rolled that way.

Mr. Baumann was making an effort to take his leave, with great politeness.

"Excoose, pleass. I vant to get by, pleass!"

"Get by!" the other robber gasped. "Why, you—"

"But I'm not a passenger," Mr. Baumann urged, with a confidential smile, "I've been going through the train myself."

"Much obliged! Hand over!" And a rude hand rummaged his pockets. It was a heart-rending sight.

"Oi oi!" he wailed, "don't you allow no courtesies to the profession?" And when the inexorable thief continued to pluck his money, his watch, his scarf-pin, he grew wroth indeed. "Stop, stop, I refuse to pay. I'll go into bankruptcy foist." But still the larceny continued; fingers even lifted three cigars from his pockets, two for himself and a good one for a customer. This loss was grievous, but his wildest protest was: "Oh, here, my frient, you don't vant my business carts."

"Keep 'em!" growled the thief, and then, glancing up, he saw on the tender inwards of Mr. Baumann's upheld palms two huge glisteners, which their owner had turned that way in a misguided effort to conceal the stones. The robber reached up for them.

"Take 'em. You're velcome!" said Mr. Baumann, with rare presence of mind. "Those Nevada nearlies looks almost like real."

Keep 'em," said the robber, as he passed on, and Mr. Baumann almost swooned with joy, for, as he whispered to Wedgewood a moment later: "They're really real!"

Now the eye-chain rolled the other way, for Little Jimmie Wellington was puffing with rage. The other robber, having massaged him thoroughly, but without success, for his pocketbook, noticed that Jimmie's left heel was protruding from his left shoe, and made Jimmie perform the almost incredible feat of standing on one foot, while he unshod him and took out the hidden wealth.

"There goes our honeymoon, Lucretia," he moaned. But she whispered proudly: "Never mind, I have my rings to pawn."

"Oh, you have, have you? Well, I'll be your little uncle," the kneeling robber laughed, as he overheard, and he continued his outrageous search till he found them, knotted in a handkerchief, under her hat.

She protested: "You wouldn't leave me in Reno without a diamond, would you?"

"I wouldn't, eh?" he grunted. "Do you think I'm in this business for my health?"

And he snatched off two earrings she had forgotten to remove. Fortunately, they were affixed to her lobes with fasteners.

Mrs. Jimmie was thoroughbred enough not to wince. She simply commented: "You brutes are almost as bad as the customs officers at New York."

And now another touch of light relieved the gloom. Kathleen was next in line, and she had been forcing her lips into their most attractive smile, and keeping her eyes winsomely mellow, for the robber's benefit. Marjorie could not see the smile; she could only see that Kathleen was next. She whispered to Mallory:

"They'll get the bracelet! They'll get the bracelet!"

And Mallory could have danced with glee. But Kathleen leaned coquettishly toward the masked stranger, and threw all her art into her tone as she murmured:

"I'm sure you're too brave to take my things. I've always admired men with the courage of Claude Duval."

The robber was taken a trifle aback, but he growled: "I don't know the party you speak of—but cough up!"

"Listen to her," Marjorie whispered in horror; "she's flirting with the train-robber."

"What won't some women flirt with!" Mallory exclaimed.

The robber studied Kathleen a little more attentively, as he whipped off her necklace and her rings. She looked good to him, and so willing, that he muttered: "Say, lady, if you'll give me a kiss, I'll give you that diamond ring you got on."

"All right!" laughed Kathleen, with triumphant compliance.

"My God!" Mallory groaned, "what won't some women do for a diamond!"

The robber bent close, and was just raising his mask to collect his ransom, when his confederate glanced his way, and knowing his susceptible nature, foresaw his intention, and shouted: "Stop it, Jake. You 'tend strictly to business, or I'll blow your nose off."

"Oh, all right," grumbled the reluctant gallant, as he drew the ring from her finger. "Sorry, miss, but I can't make the trade," and he added with an unwonted gentleness: "You can turn round now."

Kathleen was glad to hide the blushes of defeat, but Marjorie was still more bitterly disappointed. She whispered to Mallory: "He didn't get the bracelet, after all."

(To be continued)

PROTECTION; HOW IT WORKS

Rhode Island, a Tariff-Made State, as Described By Miss Ida M. Tarbell.

"The doctrine of protection is worth looking at as it works," declared Governor Wilson at Easton, Pa., the other day. He added, in characteristic phrase:

"I haven't any reverence for any economic doctrine whatever—except as it works."

How does the Aldrich doctrine of "protection" work?

Ida M. Tarbell is admittedly one of the foremost tariff experts who have taken sides with the people in the tariff controversy. She is a sober, thoughtful student and writer, whose conclusions, though often annoying to some highly-placed gentlemen, have almost invariably been found correct. Here is what Miss Tarbell says of that "tariff-made state," Rhode Island:

"This, then, is high protection's most perfect work—a state of half million people, turning out an annual product worth $187,000,000; the laborers in the chief industry underpaid, unstable, and bent with disease; the average employers rich, self-satisfied, and as indifferent to social obligation as so many robber barons. It is an industrial oligarchy made by a nation's benficence, under the mistaken notion that it was working out a labor's paradise. . . . It is feudalism, and not even benevolent feudalism."

No one can question the justice of Governor Wilson's statement, that economic doctrines are to be judged by their works.

By their fruits ye shall know them. The fruits of the Aldrich tariff are bloated fortunes, corrupted politics, enhanced cost of living.

Correct.

My critics say I am in it only to advance my own interests. If that were my purpose I would fail.—T. R.

Yes, that will be the reason why.—Harper's Weekly.

Saved by His Wife.

She's a wise woman who knows just what to do when her husband's life is in danger, but Mrs. R. J. Flint, Braintree, Vt., is of that kind. "She insisted on my using Dr. King's New Discovery," writes Mr. F. "for a dreadful cough, when I was so weak that my friends all thought I had only a short time to live, and it completely cured me." A quick cure for coughs and colds, it's the most safe and reliable medicine for many throat and lung troubles—grip, bronchitis, croup, whooping cough, quinsy, tonsilitis, hemorrhages. A trial will convince you. 50 cts. and $1.00. Guaranteed by P. A. Clemmer. T

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R. Wentworth, Market St., Cresco, says: "For some time I was troubled by kidney complaint and rheumatic pains through my shoulders At night I suffered more intensely and was unable to rest well I found no relief from the remedies I used and was feeling miserable when I began taking Doan's Kidney Pills, procured from the Milz Pharmacy I was greatly pleased in few days to see that this remedy was helping me. I continued using it and before long was free from the trouble" (Statement given November 10, 1902.)

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Dr. John J. Clemmer

PUBLIC NOTICE!

To the General Public, also, to the Public of Howard County, Iowa, and also, to any and all persons who are, or may be, concerned:—

You, and each of you, will take notice, that there is now on file, in the office of the Auditor of Howard County, Iowa, a petition, application, of the undersigned, to the Board of Supervisors of Howard County, Iowa, in which petition the undersigned, asks and petitions the said Board of Supervisors, for permission for it and its assigns the privilege, of using certain highways within the said County of Howard, Iowa, for the period of twenty years, for the purpose of erecting and maintaining therein, poles and wires for conveying, conducting, electricity for lighting, heating and power, and the said use, privilege, to be subject to all of the conditions and limitations, provided in Chapter 94, of the Laws of the 33rd General Assembly of the State of Iowa, and such other reasonable regulations as may be fixed or provided by either the said General Assembly, or this Board of Supervisors of Howard County, Iowa, in the future, and the said highways, or Public Roads, being particularly described, and designated as follows, to-wit:—

Road No. 1:

and the said road being one that runs east and west through the City of Cresco, Howard County, Iowa, and reaching, on the east of said City, to the West Line of Winneshiek County, Iowa.

And you are hereby further notified, that the said petition will be called for hearing and consideration, by the said Board of Supervisors of Howard County, Iowa, at the Court House of said County, in the City of Cresco, Howard County, Iowa, on the 11th day of November, 1912, at the hour of 2 o'clock p. m. of the said day. And you will govern yourselves accordingly.

Dated Oct. 5, 1912.

UPPER IOWA POWER COMPANY,
By J. H. Duncan, Secretary.

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