Animal Crackers

By George S. Kaufman
You must do your best tonight, 
be on your toes, men. 
There's an honored guest tonight. 
He's one of those men, 
who are being feted 
by the smart-set. 
We'll see 
that he gets what he deserves. 
Treat him as they do a king, 
in manner royal. 
Like a subject to a king, 
you must be loyal. 
On this 
you must have your hearts set. 
We'll do nothing to get on his nerves.

Again I mention: 
Be on your toes, men. 
He craves attention, 
he's one of those men. 
We will give him 
just what he deserves. 
Oh, Hives... 
- Yes, Mrs. Rittenhouse? 
I'd like to reassign the rooms. 
- Very good, madam. 
Mr. Chandler 
should have the Blue suite. 
Captain Spaulding, as guest of honor, 
gets the Green duplex with 2 baths. 
Two? - Yes. I think the Captain 
would like 2 baths, don't you? 
If he's just returned from Africa, 
he may need 2 baths. 
Mr. Roscoe W. Chandler. 
Mrs. Rittenhouse! Well, I... 
Mr. Chandler! 
So nice to see you. 
- The famous Beaugard, as promised. 
How can I ever express my gratitude? 
- Oh, 'tis nothing. 
Nothing? You return from Europe 
with a masterpiece worth $100,000,
and instead of displaying it yourself,
you let me unveil it
at my party for Captain Spaulding.
You call that nothing?
- Mrs. Rittenhouse, I...
Please remove it to where it will be exhibited. - Very good, sir.
And very careful, please.
You think that is something?
I would do much more for you.
You are a very beautiful woman.
- No, no, Mr. Chandler.
Well, maybe I'm wrong.
- What?
Please do not go. I love you.
- I know. Mr. Chandler, now look...
Hello, Mother. Playing house?
Well, if you'll pardon me.
Have you seen Johnny Parker?
- Forget him. Think more of our guest.
Your problem is you don't take these social affairs seriously.
What would you suggest, Mom? Suicide?
I would suggest...
That must be him.
- Captain Spaulding has arrived.
What a pleasure! I'm so glad.
Friends,
Captain Spaulding has arrived.
At last we are to meet him,
the famous Captain Spaulding.
From climates hot and scalding,
the Captain has arrived.
Most heartily we'll greet him,
with plain and fancy cheering,
until he's hard of hearing.
The Captain has arrived.
The Captain has arrived.
Mr. Horatio W. Jamison,
Field Secretary of Captain Spaulding.
The Captain insists on these conditions under which he camps here.
In one thing he is very strict.
He wants his women young and picked.
As for men,
he won't have any tramps here.
As for men,
he won't have any tramps here.
The men must all be very old,
the women warm, the champagne cold.
It's under these conditions
that he camps here.
I'm announcing
Captain Geoffrey Spaulding.
He's announcing
Captain Geoffrey Spaulding.
Oh dear. He is coming.
At last he's here.
Well, what do I owe you?
From Africa to here, $1.85?
Outrageous!
I told you not to take me
through Australia. That's criminal.
Turn around.
I want to see your license plates.
I'll attend to you later.
You're one of the most beautiful
women I've seen. Doesn't say much.
Captain, Rittenhouse Manor
is entirely at your disposal.
I'm grateful for this magnificent
washout, ah, turnout.
Vow I'd like to say a few words.
Hello, I must be going.
I cannot stay.
I came to say I must be going.
I'm glad I came,
but just the same, I must be going.
But you must stay.
If you should go away, you'll spoil
this party I am throwing.
I'll stay a week or two,
I'll stay the summer through,
but I am telling you,
I must be going.
Before you go,
will you oblige us
and tell us of
your deeds so glowing?
I'll do anything you say. In fact
I'll even stay. - Good.
But I must be going.
There's something I would like to say
that he's too modest to relay.
The Captain is a moral man.
Sometimes he finds it trying.
This I emphasize with stress. I never
drink unless... somebody's buying.
The Captain is a very moral man.
If he hears anything obscene,
he'll naturally repel it.
I hate a dirty joke, unless it's told
by someone who knows how to tell it.
The Captain is a very moral man.
Hooray for Captain Spaulding,
the African explorer.
Did someone call me Shnorrer?
He went into the jungle,
where the monkeys throw nuts.
If I stay here, I'll go nuts.
He puts all his reliance
in courage and defiance
and risks his life for science.
He is the only white man
to cover every acre.
He puts all his reliance
in courage and defiance
and risks his life for science.
Hooray for Captain Spaulding,
the African explorer.
He put his name on dying fame
and that is why we say:
Hooray, hooray, hooray.
My friends, I'm highly gratified
of this display of effusion.
And I want you to know...
My friends, I'm highly gratified
of this display of effusion...
My friends, I'm highly gratified
of this display of effusion.
Hooray for Captain Spaulding...
Well, somebody's got to do it.
It is indeed a great honor
to welcome you to my poor home.
Oh, it isn't so bad.
Wait. You're right, it's one of the
frowziest joints I've ever seen.
The wallpaper!
You're letting this place run down.
You're not getting the class of people
you need. These people look like you.
Let's put up a sign,
"Under new management".
We set up a 75-cent meal
that knocks their eyes out.
Then we can charge
whatever we want. Sign here
and give me a check for $1,500.
This insurance policy provides for
your little one and your old age,
which will be here in a few weeks.
I feel that the time has come,
the walrus said...
You stand before me as one
of the bravest men of all times.
Alright, I'll do that.
In the dark forests of Africa,
you dared all dangers.
You mind if I don't smoke?
Fearlessly
you have blazed new trails,
scoffed at the lions' roar
and the cannibals' tom-toms.
Says you.
Never once in all those months
did your footsteps falter.
Cowardice is unknown to you.
Fear is not in you.
Pardon me, a caterpillar, Captain.
The caterpillar
must have frightened him. Oh dear.
Don't just stand there,
get the whiskey.
Where's the whiskey? - In my little
black bag, in the right-hand corner.
Signor Emanuel Ravelli.
How are you? Where's the dining room?
- This is a surprise.
I used to know an Emanuel Ravelli
who looked exactly like you.
I am Emanuel Ravelli.
- You're Emanuel Ravelli?
No wonder you look like him.
But there is a resemblance.
And he thinks I look alike.
- If so, it's a tough break for you.
You are one of the musicians?
Aren't you due tomorrow?
Tomorrow's too quick.
Lucky they didn't come yesterday.
- We charge for yesterday, too.
What do you get an hour?
For playing, we get $10 an hour.
- And for not playing?
$12 an hour.
- Clip me off a piece of that.
For rehearsing, we make special rate.
That's $15 an hour.
For rehearsing?
And for not rehearsing?
You couldn't afford it.
If we don't rehearse, we don't play.
And if we don't play,
that runs into money.
How much for running into an open
manhole? - Just a cover charge.
Well, drop in some time.
- Sewer.
Well, we cleaned that up pretty well.
- Let's see how we stand.
Flat-footed.
Yesterday we didn't come.
You remember? That's $300.
Yesterday you didn't come.
That's $300?
Oh, that's reasonable.
Today we did come...
- You owe us 100.
I bet I'm gonna lose on the deal.
Tomorrow we leave. That's worth...
A million dollars.
Yeah, that's alright for me, but I got a partner.
The Professor.
The gates swung open and a Fig Newton entered.
How do you do?
Goodness.
You haven't got chocolate, have you?
He's got everything. - Hives, take the Professor's hat and coat. And send for the fumigators.
Don't you see that there are ladies present? Put that hat down.
What are you doing?
Get out of here. Go on.
A little more to the right.
That's better.
See that the drape is well-hung. The mistress will inspect it later.
Hello, Hives.
- Mrs. Whitehead!
This is a surprise.
- And how about me? - Miss Grace!
You've grown so.
- You haven't lost any weight, either.
No, unfortunately not. It seems strange to find you working here instead of our own home.
After you left for Europe, Mrs. Rittenhouse made me an offer.
Lovely. By the way, what's the secret about the painting?
No secret.
It's Beaugard's "After the Hunt". The original?
- Most original.
Be careful.
Where did she get that?
Is it very valuable?
- It must be worth a fortune.
It looks as if Mrs. Rittenhouse gets the Social Award of the Season. Can't we do something?
- We might shoot ourselves.
I'd rather shoot Mrs. Rittenhouse.
I have an idea. I copied that painting
at art school a year ago.
Well, what of it?
But I still don't get it.
I'll get the copy.
We'll substitute it for the original
and when she unveils it,
she'll have a cruel imitation.
Grace, you're wonderful.
- That's what I've been telling you.
I won't be long.
- Alright. See you later.
Oh, Hives?
Do you still feel a bond between us?
- Most certainly, Mrs. Whitehead.
Strong enough for you to do me
a big favor? - Anything at all.
If I were to ask you
to take away the Beaugard...
Do you mean...
- Temporarily, of course.
And substitute something of my own?
- Quite an unusual request.
It is, but somehow I still think
of you as one of the Whiteheads.
You may count on me.
My soul is yours,
even though my body
may belong to Mrs. Rittenhouse.
Why, Hives!
Oh, Mrs. Whitehead!
- Arabella!
May I present Mr. Parker?
- Of the Massachusetts' Parkers?
Why, no.
- Then the Southern Parkers?
No, the Central Parkers.
You know, the Benches and Trees.
I see.
Meow!
Oh, I don't like that woman.
You sit down here
and tell me whom you do like.
Oh, so that's your game.
- Vow listen. Do you really love me?
Marry me and find out.
- Marry you?
On what? Last year I sold 2 paintings.
One at 100 and one at 50.
Could we live on $150 a year?
- We wouldn't need money.
I've got a charge account
in every shop on 5th Avenue.
If I had any brains, I'd give up
painting and get a regular job.
I had a cousin who made $50,000
in Wall Street last year.
I don't wanna marry your cousin.
I'm a darn fool and wanna marry you.
Say...
we could get that old bluff Chandler
to buy a portrait from you.
Chandler?
What does he know about art?
The less he knows,
the easier it'll be for you.
They're right upstairs. You can't miss
them. Go round the other side.
Mrs. Rittenhouse.
Captain Spaulding!
How are you?
Tell me. Are you alone?
- Captain, I don't understand.
You don't? Don't give me that innocent
stuff or you'll be alone.
A big cluck like you
turning cute on me!
Mrs. Rittenhouse...
- Yes?
Oh, pardon me.
You've been affected like this before?
Oh no, Captain.
- You will be.
Mrs. Rittenhouse...
Ever since I've met you,
I've swept you off my feet.
Something has been beating in me like
the incessant tom-tom in the jungle.
Something that I must ask you.
- What is it, Captain?
Would you wash a pair of socks for me?
- I'm surprised.
It's been on my mind for weeks.
It's my way of saying I love you.
I love you. I've never been...
- Captain!
Pardon me. Am I intruding?
Are you intruding? Just when
I had her on the 5-yard line.
I should say you were intruding.
Pardon, that you are intruding.
I was using the subjunctive
instead of the past tense.
Yes, we're way past tents,
we're living in bungalows now.
Mrs. Whitehead, you haven't met
Captain Spaulding, have you?
No
How are you? - How are you?
- Fine, thank you. How are you?
And how are you?
That leaves you one up.
Did anyone ever tell you
you had beautiful eyes? - No
Well, you have.
And so have you.
He shot her a glance.
As a smile played around his lips.
I've never seen
four more beautiful eyes in my life.
Well, three anyway.
You two girls have everything.
You're tall and short, slim and stout.
Just the kind of girl I crave.
We three would make an ideal couple.
You have beauty, charm, money.
You have got money?
If not, we can quit right now.
The Captain is charming, isn't he?
- I'm fascinated.
I'm fascinated, too. Right on the arm.
Fascinated, whim-wham!
If I were Eugene O'Neill, I could tell
you what I really think of you two.
You're fortunate the Theater Gill
isn't putting this on.
And so is The Gill.
Pardon me
while I have a strange interlude.
You couple of baboons, what makes
you think I'd marry either one of you?
Strange how the wind blows tonight.
It reminds me of poor old Marsden.
How happy I could be
with either of these two,
if both of them just went away.
Well, girls, will you marry me?
Which one of us? - Both of you.
Let's all get married. It's my party.
Party... Party...
Here I am talking of parties.
I came down for a party. What happens?
Nothing Not even ice cream.
The gods look down and laugh.
The world would be better for children
if the parents had to eat the spinach.
What do you say?
We all gonna get married?
- All of us? - All of us.
That's bigamy.
- Yes, and that's big of me, too.
Let's be big for a change.
One woman and one man was enough
for your grandmother,
but who wants to marry her?
Nobody Not even your grandfather.
Think of the honeymoon. Strictly
private. No other woman allowed.
Well, maybe one or two,
but no men. I may not go myself.
You want a companionate marriage?
It has its advantages. You'd live with
your folks, I'd live with your folks.
And you'd sell Fuller brushes.
Living with your folks...
The beginning of the end.
Drab yesterdays shutting out
beautiful tomorrows.
Hideous footsteps creaking along
the misty corridors of time,
and in those corridors I see figures.
Strange figures.

**Weird figures:**
Steel 186, Anaconda 74,
American Can 138.
Where were we?
Oh yes, we wanted to marry.
What do you think? Should we?
- Marriage is a noble institution.
The foundation of the American home.
- Yes, but it can't be enforced.
It was put over on us
while our boys were over there
and our girls over here.
I've waited at these stairs
for years for just this moment.
Captain, where are you going?
- I'm sorry, ladies,
we'll have to postpone the wedding
for a few days. Maybe for a few years.
Before I get married, I'm gonna
sow a couple of wild oats.
The Captain's so amusing.
- Isn't he charming?
That's the famous Beaugard, eh?
Great picture, isn't it?
You've seen it before?
- I spent 3 days in Paris copying it.
You did?
- Me and a million other artists.
I bet yours was better than the rest.
- It wasn't bad.
I'll show it to you sometime.
Listen. - What?
- Mother's going to unveil it tonight.
Yeah?
Suppose when she unveils it,
it's not the Beaugard at all.
Suppose it's yours.
- You want to swap mine for his?
Exactly.
- You're crazy. What good would it do?
What good? Listen.
They'll unveil it. Chandler
will tell everyone how fine it is.
They'll cheer like mad, and then
we'll tell them who really did it.
They'll say you're a great artist.
You'll get 6 commissions,
and we can be married and
divorced in no time.
Sound great. But what if
eyou don't like my painting?
Isn't the chance worth taking?
I see you're admiring my picture?
- Yes, yes.
Your picture? - Yes, my picture.
- It don't look like you.
Some place I met you before.
Your face is very familiar.
I am one of the most
well-known men in America.
The newspapers
keep running my photograph.
You're not Abe Kabibble?
- Nonsense
If you're not Abe Kabibble,
who are you?
Vow please.
My name is Roscoe W. Chandler.
I don't get about the name.
Some place I met you before.
Were you ever in Sing Sing?
- Please.
No I got it. Joliet!
- Let me alone.
Alright. Don't run away.
Leavenworth!
I've never been in these places.
I've spent most of my time in Europe.
I've got it now.
You come from Czechoslovakia.
You're wrong. I've never been there.
Hey, come here.
- I tell you. Get away from me.
You remember him?
He come from Czechoslovakia.
You are wrong. I told you before.
He come from Czechoslovakia.
And I know who it is.
Abie, the fish peddler from
Czechoslovakia. - Ridiculous.
We prove it. He had a birthmark.
Please, what are you trying?
Let me alone!
There it is! The birthmark!
Abie, the fishman.
I confess. I was Abie.
How did you get to be Chandler?
- How did you get to be Italian?
Whose confession is this?
Don't tell anyone about this
and we can come to some agreement.
One that is mutually satisfactory.
Money. Money.
- Shall we say $500?
Fie to $500!
- All the cash I have with me.
$500? I tell you what.
We'll take your IOU.
That's my best offer.
- That's all you'll give?
Abie the fishman!
Abie the fishman!
Please, be quiet.
Come here.
I have a check for $5,000.
Is it good? - Of course.
Who would give me a bad check?
I would. See if it's good.
Alright, if you don't want it...
- That's all we get?
Yes.
- He's Abie the fishman!
Give me that handkerchief.
My tie! Where's my tie?
Nothing but a pair of thieves.
I get the tie. What you got?
The birthmark!
Where's your tie?
- Why I...
Fine way
for a millionaire to run around.
Have you got garters?
- Of course. Oh, they've taken them.
A likely story.
Have you at least got socks?
Certainly. Here. - They look
pretty old to me. Whose are they?
Well, old socks. Let me introduce
myself. I'm Captain Spaulding.
Roscoe W. Chandler.
- This is a treat, your treat.
You have heard about me?
I've heard about you for years,
and I'm getting pretty sick of it.
Quite naturally, I've also heard
of the great Captain Spaulding.
Fine. I've heard of you
and you've heard of me.
Have you heard the one about
the two Irishmen? - Oh yes.
Then let's get down to business.
My name is Spaulding.
Roscoe W. Chandler. - Geoffrey T.
Spaulding. What's the "T" stand for?
Thomas?
- Edgar. You were close, though.
I want to talk to you about something.
Would you like to finance
an expedition? - That is a question.
You certainly know a question
when you see it. I congratulate you.
And that brings us back to where we
were. Will you finance an expedition?
Do you have
a particular one in mind?
I've always wanted to do something
before I quit. - What is that?
Retire.
Vow, would you be interested?
My retirement would be the greatest
contribution to science ever.
This is your chance. When I think
what you have done for this country.
What have you done, by the way?
- Oh well...
I've always tried to do what I could.
Especially for art.
How have we drifted around to that?
What is your opinion of art?
I'm glad you asked.
- I withdraw the question.
He takes things seriously.
You can't ask a simple question.
Where will you build your new opera
house? - Near Central Park.
Why not right in Central Park?
- Could we?
At night, when no one's looking.
Better yet, in the reservoir. But that
could interfere with the water supply.
After all, art is art.
On the other hand, water is water.
And east is east, west is west.
If you stew cranberries like
applesauce, they tastes like prunes.
Vow tell me what you know.
I would gladly giving you my opinion.
Dandy,
I'll ask you for them someday.
Can you be
in my office at 10 tomorrow?
Ask for my secretary.
If he sees you, I'll discharge him.
Saturday at 3. No, make that Tuesday.
I'm going to Europe Monday.
My name is Spaulding.
I've always wanted to meet you.
What do you think of
the problems of traffic and marriage?
What do you think of
when you go to bed, you beast?
Well, I... - I'd rather not hear it. There are children present.
My dear Captain, it boils down to a question of money.
The nickel is not what it was 10 years ago.
I'll go further than that.
It's not what it was 15 years ago.
You know what this country needs? A 7-cent nickel.
We've had the 5-cent nickel since 1492.
Nearly 100 years.
Let's give the 7-cent nickel a chance, and then try an 8-cent nickel.
You buy a 3-cent paper and get the same nickel back.
One nickel carefully used would last a family a lifetime.
I think that's a wonderful idea.
- Really? - Yes.
Then there can't be much to it.
Forget it.
Tell me, Captain Chandler...
Excuse me, Spaulding.
I'm Spaulding. You're Chandler.
Let's have no more of this.
Alright. - Bad enough being Spaulding.
- Tell me, Captain Spaulding...
Spaulding is the right name?
- Right.
I'm Chand...
No, I'm Spauld...
Show me the program. For all he knows, I might be coming next week.
Captain Spaulding, you're quite a traveler.
How about South America?
I'm going there soon.
Where exactly?
- Uruguay.
You go your-a-way, I'll go mine.
Let's change the subject.
Take the foreign situation.
Take Abyssinia.
And I'll take a hot butterscotch sundae on rye.
Let's see what the boys in the back room are up to.
Let's see how yours compares with the original. - Alright.
No difference! - Look closer. Maybe you'll find it's better.
You seen my partner?
- No
Oh, Mr. Raviola!
Ravelli. Ravelli. - Oh, Mr. Ravelli.
Would you do something for me?
I'd do anything for you.
What do ya want?
You see that painting?
- You mean this piksh?
Take it out of the frame and put this one in its place.
You want I should take this one down and put this one upstairs? - Yes.
You want I should steal?
- No It's not stealing.
Then I couldn't do it.
- Oh, Mr. Raviola!
Hey, get up. Come here.
That's all you do.
Chase the women. Oh, stop.
Everybody plays cards, but they don't ask us.
We just wasting our time.
We've been here all day.
How much we make? Nothing
Soon we go to the old ladies' home.
How do you like that?
No, that's no good.
These people here got money.
We gotta find someone to play with us.
I'd play anything. Poker, pinochle...
- Signor Ravelli,
I want to talk to you about the music.
What's wrong with you?
It would be nice...
Go away from me!
What is this?
Hello, Professor.
What's the matter with his feet?
We play all kinds of games.
Blackjack, soccer...
One, two, three...
Why don't you leave him alone?
Vow that this game is over,
how about some bridge?
You play bridge?
- A little. - What do you play for?
Just for small stakes.
- And french-fried potatoes?
Set it up right over there, Hives.
- Very good, madam.
What is he up to? Look at this.
Take it away, Hives.
- Extraordinary.
How do you want to play? Honest?
- I hope so.
You put that right away.
It's your own fault.
We'll cut for partners.
- No, I only play if he's my partner.
It's against the rules.
We have to cut for partners.
Alright, we cut for partners.
I got ace of spades.
He's got ace of spades.
Coincidences!
Two aces of spades?
- Yeah, he's got thousands of them.
He has the choice of seat then.
- You have the choice of seat.
Not on her lap.
- Sit down.
What's the matter with him?
- He thought it was contact bridge.
Just a moment. Shuffle the cards.
- You gotta scrumble them up.
Just a moment. I'd like to cut them.
That's a winner.
Your bid, partner.
You pass?
Misdeal.
You pass? I bid one spade.
I pass.
- Three spades.
Four spades.
One club.
- I don't understand this bidding.
You don't have to.
You bid four spades, eh?
I haven't a spade in my hand.
- Alright. We double.
Something's wrong here.
Let's do over the bidding.
Oh, she want to bid again.
He bids one.
One? One what?
- That's alright. You'll find out.
But we have to know what he's bidding.
Two what? - Two of the same he bids.
Vow the bidding's over. That's enough.
It's your lead.
You can't lead that.
- Why not?
We can't take it.
- What should I lead?
He'll show you.
Ace of spades. That's-a very good.
Three of spades. Four of spades.
You trump it?
You call that finesse.
No spades, partner. No spades.
Ace of hearts.
Ace of clubs.
Dummy leads.
The dummy leads.
I'm not the dummy.
- Well, you could be.
Ace of diamonds.
Hundred aces, eh?
Two hundred? That's better.
Ace of hearts.
Atta boy. Make a big slam.
Make a big, big slam.
Ace of spades.
Ace of spades.
That's a good guy. Plays a good game.
Ace of spades.
Plays a fine game.
Ace of spades.
- I refuse to play any longer.
You're nothing but two cardsharps.
- My shoes are gone.
Graciousness.
He has your slippers. Come along.
Hey, you take-a the ladies' shoes?
Quiet!
Hide. Somebody's coming.
Alright, I make a mistake.
Get up, come on.
Come on. Hurry up.
You know what we do? We hang
that picture upstairs, for the lady.
Don't touch.
You got everything ready?
Shovel, axe, dynamite, pineapples?
Where's the flash?
Flash, flash.
That's no the flash.
That's a fish!
I don't want the fish. Flash!
Stop it. You crazy.
When you go out at night,
you gotta have the flash.
That's no flash.
That's a flisk. Flash.
When you wanna see somebody,
you gotta have the flash.
That's a flush.
What I gonna do with the flush?
That's a flitz.
What I gonna do with flitz?
What do ya got?
That's a flutz.
All you got is a fish and a flutz
and a flitz and a flutz...
Stop this. Where's the flash?
Look, when everything's light and you wanna make 'em dark. What ya do?
Hey, you crazy. I want no blackjack.
My mistake. When everything's dark and you wanna make 'em light.
Yeah, that's a flash.
That's a flash.
Hey, that's good, alright.
The storm put the lights out.
Nobody can see what we do.
Where's the flash?
Where's the flash?
I no want the fish. Flash.
No, no flutz.
What's the matter with you?
Flash.
Before the people are coming.
What's a matter? You lose it?
You gotta find it. Look for it.
Alright, never mind.
We'll work without it.
Hide! Hide!
Somebody's coming. Hide.
Quiet, quiet. Shut up.
Keep quiet.
I know where you are. It's alright.
Oh, Captain Spaulding, where are you?
- Yeah?
Oh, Captain...
- What's the trouble?
The lights have gone out. You can't see your hand before your face.
It wouldn't be very pleasant, anyway.
Well, I'm going to take a nap.
Leave me a call for three o'clock.
Make it three-thirty.
The service here is excellent.
Pardon me, did you lose a fish?
- What?
Somebody lost it.
Will you have it fried for me?
Did you hear that?
Somebody's over there.
I say somebody's over there.
- Nonsense The house is settling.
- I don't see anybody.
There you are. If anybody was there, he'd see him, wouldn't I?
What is it, Captain? What is it?
You know what I think?
I think you got roaches.
You got roaches alright.
And the biggest one has asthma.
Horrible! Come on, Captain.
This can't be the library.
This must be the operating room.
We get the picture
and we don't make a sound.
Somebody turned on the lights.
Alright, we get the picture
and don't make one sound.
What do you want?
Oh, the fish. Go on.
That's some storm, eh?
A regular tornado.
Let's go this way.
I think it's a shortcut.
Come on, let's go.
California.
Before we start the musical program,
Captain Spaulding will tell us
about his trip to Africa.
Captain Spaulding.
- Me?
Friends, I'm going to tell you of that
great, mysterious, wonderful Africa.
Africa is God's country,
and he can have it.
We left New York drunk and early
on the morning of February 2.
After 15 days on the water
and 6 on the boat, we reached Africa.
We proceeded 300 miles inland,
where I shot a polar bear.
This bear was 6' 7" in its stockinged feet, with shoes on. - Just a moment.
I always thought
polar bears lived in the frozen north.
You did? This one was anemic
and couldn't stand the cold.
He was a rich bear
and could afford the trip.
You take care of your animals,
and I'll take care of mine.
Frozen north, my eye!
From our arrival,
we led an active life.
The first morning saw us up at 6,
breakfasted and back in bed at 7.
This went on for 3 months. We got so
we were able to be in bed by 6:30.
One morning
I was smoking some meat...
Smoking some meat?
- Yes, there was no cigar store.
I was sitting in front of the cabin,
when I bagged 6 tigers.
Captain. Did you catch 6 tigers?
I begged them to go away,
but they hung around all day.
They were the most persistent tigers
I've ever seen.
The principal animals in Africa are
moose, elks and Knights of Pythias.
You all know what a moose is.
The first day I shot two bucks.
As I say,
you all know what a moose is.
A moose eats cheese
and is chased by cats.
The elks live in the hills, and
hold their convention in the spring.
It's interesting
when they come to the waterhole.
Boy, do they run
when they see it's only a waterhole.
What they're looking for
is an alco-hole.
One morning I shot an elephant
in my pajamas.
How he got in them, I don't know.
We tried to remove the tusks.
That's not so easy to say, tusks.
Oh, simple. Tusks.
My name is Spaulding.
I've always wanted to meet you.
As I say, we tried to remove
the tusks, but we couldn't budge them.
In Alabama, the tusks are looser.
But that's entirely ir-elephant.
We took pictures of the native girls,
but they weren't developed.
But we're going back
in a couple of weeks...
Very enlightening.
- Hooray for Captain Spaulding.
Three cheers!
Three cheers for Captain Spaulding!
Three cheers...
- No one asked for the chairs.
Put them back. Vow get along.
Go on, go on!
And now, friends, Signor Ravelli
will oblige us at the piano.
His first selection is
"Somewhere My Love Lies Sleeping"
with a male chorus.
Say, if you get near a song, play it.
I can't think of the finish.
That's strange.
I can't think of anything else.
You know what?
I think I went past it.
If you come around again,
jump off.
I once kept this up for three days.
You wouldn't consider hush money,
would you?
I can't get 'em now. I've gotta wait
for inspiration. - It's about time.
Play the song about Montreal.
- Montreal?
"I'm A Dreamer, Montreal."
Don't know it. I'll play one of my own
compositions, by Victor Herbert.
Make it short.
He plays them both well.
Your team scored that time.
And the old blue one.
Why do you push?
- They may exterminate each other.
The best thing for either of them.
That one's for old Purdue.
I was afraid of that.
I thought I had the finish.
- I wish you did. Yours.
Play the song
about the Irish chiropodist.
"My Fate Is In Your Hands".
Is there a horse in the house?
They got everything else here.
And now, Mrs. Rittenrotten...
Rittenhouse. - Yes, a slight error.
I have a surprise for you.
The man is here for the piano.
- Oh, Captain!
When I departed from the natives
in Africa, they gave me a gift.
And this I give to you, at a low fare.
- How wonderful.
Don't be too hasty...
- I can't wait...
It was all done
with the white of an egg.
What is it, Captain?
What is it?
It's a hope chest for a guinea pig.
This magnificent chest...
No, this magnificent chest
I present to you with my compliments.
- This leaves me speechless.
See that you remain that way.
- And now, ladies and gentlemen...
Step outside and say that.
Mrs. Rittenhouse has perhaps a greater
surprise for us in the library.
This way, Captain.
Mrs. Rittenhouse, how do you pay
Hives? By the week or by the pound?
And now it is my privilege to reveal the masterpiece of François Jacques DuBois Gilbert Beaugard. No trains will be sold after the magazines leave the depot. "After the Hunt."

There! I said you were a great artist. Shall we spill the beans? - Wait. Something might happen. We'd all enjoy a few words from Mr. Chandler, who will tell us something of Beaugard's life and work. And keep it clean!

Mr. Chandler!

My friends, you are all familiar with Beaugard. This is perhaps his masterpiece. In it he has achieved a greatness in the handling of color and line. Vow you will see here...

Wait! This is not my picture. This is a rank imitation. What do you mean? - See for yourself. You are right. It's not the Beaugard. - Certainly not. A dog is missing. Captain Spaulding, what shall I do? - Call the dog-catchers at once. They've taken the original. - I'll throw some light on this. Anyone have a match? - What happened? Hives, where are you? Turn on the lights. Did you lose that fish again? - I'm so worried. Good heavens. That one is gone, too. - Oh, this is awful. The crooks are escaping. Follow me, men. No, just the women! Right this way. They went out here.
Oh, the excitement. I never saw anything so funny before.
This is great.
And there goes her old party.
Wasn't it funny?
- Oh, v-v-v-very.
You're not afraid, are you?
- Oh no. Not at all.
But they were talking about the police and I don't want them suspecting me.
They won't suspect you.
- Oh yes!
The last time they suspected me, I got four years. - Hives!
You give me the painting, and I'll take care of it. - Good.
Good heavens. It's gone.
- Gone? - I left it in there.
There must be thieves at this party.
If I'd known that, I never would have come. Wait!
That professor!
- The Professor! I see!
That's the culprit. We've got to get that picture away from him.
Might I suggest this?
Very satisfactory in these cases.
A few drops on a handkerchief and the Professor is out.
You're sure it'll work?
- Absolutely. You want to try some?
No thanks, Hives.
Let's find the Professor.
How did the thieves get away?
And who was it?
Lucky that we switched it.
Imagine them getting the original.
Oh? It would have been okay had they taken mine?
I didn't mean that.
But what would Mother do?
It's worth $100,000.
How could she have replaced it?
Oh, I understand.
Isn't it exciting? Just think,  
the thief was in the room with us.  
Isn't it romantic?  
All the boys I've known  
used to say I was made of stone.  
I would always leave them alone  
in despair.  
I've been on the pan,  
I've been called an electric fan,  
told I'm even much colder than  
Frigidaire.  
I began to wonder  
if I was all wrong.  
I thought so  
till you came along.  
Tell me, dear,  
why am I so romantic?  
When you're near,  
why am I so romantic?  
What a grand feeling,  
when your lips meet mine.  
That certain something comes  
stealing up and down my spine.  
I don't know  
what it is you've done to me.  
You don't know  
half of the good you do me.  
Other boys bore me,  
they just leave me blue.  
Oh, why am I so romantic  
with you?  
Tell me, dear,  
why am I so romantic?  
When you're near,  
why am I so romantic?  
What a grand feeling,  
when your lips touch mine.  
That certain something comes  
stealing up and down my spine.  
When we touch,  
close in your arms you hold me.  
I forget all that my mother told me.  
Other girls bore me,  
they just leave me blue.
But why am I so romantic with you?
Oh, Signor Ravelli!
I've been looking for you all morning.
I was busy all morning.
- You've got to return that painting.

Painting? What painting?
The painting you changed last night.
You mean the piksh?
- Yes.
First you want it upstairs, then downstairs. Make up your mind.
I do thank you. But you've got to return it before the police come.
The police are coming? - Yes.
- I give it you. You put it back.
Where's the piksh?
- What do you mean?
I put 'em in here. It's gone.
You take 'em? - Me?
No, I know.
Abie the fish peddler.
Did Mother invite a fish peddler here?
I don't know, but he's here.
Come on, we find him.
Good morning. - Good morning,
Mr. Jamison. How is Captain Spaulding?
He didn't sleep a wink.
He went horseback riding last night.
I'm sorry.
We've all been pretty upset.
Good morning, Captain.
Did you enjoy your ride?
What are you looking for?
- I lost my horse.
He slipped out from between me.
I had my feet in the stirrups, too.
Never mind.
But I lost the bit you loaned me.
I'll get you another bit.
- Then I owe you two bits.
I hope you weren't distressed by last night's sad occurrence.
You mean dinner?
- No, the stolen painting!
A painting was stolen?
I haven't seen one in three weeks.
Why didn't you inform me?
What do I engage you for?
I didn't know it.
- You should have asked me.
I'm sorry. - You're sorry?
You're a contemptible cur!
I repeat. You're a contemptible cur.
If I were a man, you'd resent that.
Please keep quiet!
I can get along without you.
I got along without your father.
And your uncle.
And your uncle. And my uncle.
I didn't come to be exonerated.
- I beg your pardon.
You do, eh? I'd like to see you
crawl out of a rumble seat.
The police are here.
- Have them come in.
Oh, so that's your game.
You can't shut me up!
You can talk to my attorney.
Jamison, take a letter to my lawyers.
I'll show you a thing or two.
Or three.
I'll show you a thing or three.
Sending for the police!
Take a letter to my lawyers.
Sending for the police!
Take a letter to my lawyers.
- I am.
Read me what you have so far.
Honorable Charles H. Hungadunga,
c/ o Hungadunga, Hungadunga,
Hungadunga, Hungadunga & McCormack.
Semicolon.
How do you spell "semicolon"?
- Alright, make it a comma.
Honorable Charles H. Hungadunga,
Hungadunga... & McCormack.
Gentlemen, question mark. Er-r-r!
Do you want "er-r-r" in the letter?
- No, put that in an envelope.
Vow then...
In re yours of the 5 inst,
yours to hand and beg to rep,
brackets,
that we have gone over the ground
carefully and we seem to believe,
i.e., to wit, e.g., in lieu,
that despite all our precautionary
measures,
we seem to believe it is hardly
necessary for us to proceed
unless we receive an ipso facto
that is not negligible at this moment.
Quotes, unquotes and quotes.
Hoping this finds you...
- Finds him where?
Let him worry about that.
Don't be so inquisitive.
Sneak!
Hoping this finds you,
I beg to remain...
I'll show you where I get off.
Sending for the police.
Vow read me the letter.
"Honorable Charles H. Hungadunga."
That's it.
"C/ o Hungadunga, Hungadunga,
Hungadunga & McCormack."
You've left out a Hungadunga.
You left out the main one, too.
Thought you could slip one
over on me, didn't you?
Alright, leave it out.
Put in a windshield wiper instead.
I tell you what. Make it three
windshield wipers and one Hungadunga.
They won't all be there
when the letter arrives.
"...and McCormack.
Gentlemen, question mark."
Put it on the penultimate
and not on the dipthonic.
You should brush up on your Greek.
Get a Greek and brush up on him.
"In re yours of the 5 inst."
- I see.
A lot of things you said weren't
important, so I just omitted them.
Oh Captain! Good gracious.
Omitted them, eh? You just omitted
the body of the letter, that's all.
Just left out the body of the letter.
Yours is not to reason why.
You've left out the body.
Alright, send it that way
and tell him the body will follow.
The body in brackets?
No, it'll never get there in brackets.
Put it in a box.
Put it in a box
and mark it 'fragilly'.
Mark it what?
- 'Fragilly! ' F-R-A-G...
Look it up in the dictionary,
under fragile.
Look under the table
if you don't find it there.
"Quotes, unquotes and quotes."
- 3 quotes? - Yes, sir.
Add another and make it a gallon.
Regards.
- That's a fine letter, Jamison.
That's an epic. Make two carbon copies
and throw the original away.
Then throw the copies away.
Just send a stamp. Air mail.
Mrs. Rittenhouse? I'm Inspector
Hennessey. - How do you do?
I'm Captain Scotland of Spaulding
Don't make the same mistake again.
- I'm glad to know you.
Between us we can solve this crime.
Especially if you go home.
No hasty arrests, please!
I don't want my guests embarrassed.
We won't arrest anybody.
- He's lucky to not go jail himself.
Would you take the Inspector
and his men to the scene of the crime.
Certainly. This way.
Come on, boys.
Jamison, count the spoons.
I didn't know you'd been a detective.
- There's a lot you don't know.
I suppose so. - Darn right!
Where were you on June 5, 1774?
I don't know.
- Where was I?
I don't know. - Me neither.
If I did, I wouldn't tell you.
Take a number from 1 to 10.
- Alright.
Which one? - 7.
- That's right. 7 is right.
I could solve this in 5 minutes
if I wanted to worry.
I don't want you to worry. Nothing
should interfere with your weekend.
Nothing interferes with my weak end.
And don't be so personal!
Where's my secretary? Jamison!
- I didn't want to offend you.
Dastardly cracker! I wish I was
in the jungle where men are monkeys.
Captain, I'm so sorry.
- Jamison! No, no.
Good morning, Mrs. Rittenhouse!
- Good morning.
Charming party. I wouldn't have
missed it for the world.
It's just full of surprises.
- Glad you're enjoying yourself.
Hives!
Good morning. Some breakfast?
- Nothing doing. Where's the painting?
I watched all night, but the Professor
did not sleep in his room.
Very strange.
- Good heavens. What will we do?
  I don't know.
Until we see the Professor...
You keep an eye on him
till I get back with the bottle.
Don't worry,
he'll not get away from me this time.
Did you get it? - Yes.
- I'll engage him in conversation.
You trail behind and knock him out
when the time comes.
Very good, madam.
Hello. I've been looking all over
for you! Where were you?
What's the matter with this?
Are they the morning papers?
No, that isn't the one I want.
Show me the others.
That still isn't the one.
Out!
Yes, out!
The birds... Come on, sit down.
I want to talk.
Don't you like me?
You don't?
Well, I like you.
I like little boys like you.
How old are you?
Five years old?
You're just a baby.
Oh, isn't that nice? I like that.
No, no, no.
All joking aside,
 isn't there someone you do like?
Isn't there someone you love?
Think again. Isn't there someone
you really and truly love?
Is there?
Tell me who!
Why, that's a horse!
You love a horse?
Come on, lift him up.
Come on. He's out.
- Let's go.
Arabella! - I've been trying to find you. Ravelli has lost the painting. I just found one on the terrace.
The Beaugard?
- No - Oh, yours?
If it's not yours, and not the Beaugard, whose is it?
Someone switched it for mine, thinking they got the original.
Somebody swiped my scheme, eh?
Then Chandler never saw your painting? - No
You may still be a great artist.
Where is this picture?
Up in my room.
- You get it and I'll get the Captain. He'll get to the bottom of this.
Then John found the third painting.
- Very interesting. Well, sort of. We have to keep our eyes open. - If I don't find it, Mother's out $100,000.
Give me 24 hours for the case.
Then we'll call in someone else.
Wait till tomorrow.
Remember the Charlie Ross case?
I was on that, and he was never found.
Captain Yard of Scotland Spaulding always gets his women, or paintings.
Do you know what's happened with the painting I found?
It's been stolen from my room.
You see! I've been on the case five minutes and another one is gone.
I bet it's not even three minutes.
My watch is gone. This is too much.
It wasn't going, and now it's gone.
And my room was locked.
- Who could it have been?
Wait. I think I've got a clue.
No, it's a red hair.
The Professor? No, it couldn't be.
He's Crook of the Month this month.
Anyhow, we'll investigate it.
You know Conductor Hennessey?
Inspector!
Inspect her yourself. You know that redheaded fellow? - Yes.
Well, get those flagpole sitters of yours to find him.
Come on, boys.
We'll soon get to the bottom of this.
Hey, what's that cop doing there?
It didn't take that long to find him.
- This is it!
Yes, but which one is it?
- The one just taken from my room.
Maybe my watch is back, too.
Vow the fob is gone!
Well, I still got the pocket.
Anything I retain now is velvet.
Except the coat. That's Prince Albert.
Well, all the jokes can't be good.
If we find the fella who painted this, it'd be a pretty good clue. - What?
If we find the fella who painted this, it'd be a pretty good clue.
You just said that.
How dull you turned out to be!
Let me see that a minute.
It's signed "Beaugard".
There's the criminal.
No Beaugard is dead.
Dead? Then it's murder!
Vow we've got something.
What do you got?
- Jacks and aces. And you?
Good. I was bluffing. - Does something strike you funny about this picture?
It isn't as funny as all that.
Did you ever see a tree like that?
Tree? That's a spinach.
- It can't be. Where's the egg?
It could be spinach.
Look at all the sand.
You mean it's an old Spinach custom?
No, it's not that.
No That's my mistake.
You know what it is? Coleslaw.
Coleslaw?
- Yeah.
Did you ever see a coleslaw like that?
- Sure, look at this.
I don't want any of your lip now.
Did you ever see anything like that?
You know what this is?
A left-handed painting.
There's a signature.
- That's right.
This is either a left-handed painting
or a vegetable dinner.
If we can find the left-handed person,
we'll have "The Trial of Mary Dugan".
I saw that. Goodbye.
- Wait. I'm going to need you.
We mustn't lose this evidence.
Take it to your room
and leave the door open this time.
And not a word about this to anybody.
Not even to me.
Ravelli, we've got to find
the left-handed painting.
The first thing to do
is to find the motive.
What was the motive
of the Beaugard crooks?
I got it. Robbery!
Would you mind
crossing the street when it's red?
Si, Capt'. Sit down.
I know how we find this painting.
In such a mysterious case,
you gotta get the clues.
You gotta use the Sherlock Holmes
method. It goes like this:
You say, "What happened?"

**The answer:**
You say, "What was stolen?"
The answer come back: "A painting."
Are you a ventriloquist?
Vow you say, "Where was this painting stolen?" The answer: "In this house."
Vow, so far I'm right?
It's pretty hard to be wrong
if you keep answering yourself.
You go a little further and say,
"Who stole the painting?"
A very important question. When you
answer it, you got the whole solution.
Especially if you find the picture.
Vow put all the clues together
and what do ya got? - Bread pudding.
No Something was stolen. Where?
In this house. By who? Somebody here.
Vow all you gotta do is ask
everyone in the house if they took it.
I could rent you out
as a decoy for duck hunters.
You're going to ask everyone here
if they took the painting?
And suppose no one here took it?
- Go next door.
Great.
Suppose there is no house next door?
Well, then we gotta build one.
Vow you're talking.
What kind of house should we build?
My idea of a house is something
nice and small and comfortable.
Exactly, nothing elaborate.
A little place to call home and tell
the wife I'm not coming for dinner.
I see. You want a telephone booth.
No, in that case
I'd just call Chic Sale.
What do ya say
we build right about here?
Here? - Yeah, here.
- I'd like it over here if possible.
I don't like junior crossing the rails
on his way to reform school.
Actually I don't like junior at all.
Alright. We got something over there,
and believe me, that's convenient.
You just open the door, step outside,
and there you are.
There you are? Where?
- Outside.
If you want to get back in again?
- You had no right to go out.
Don't do anything
until I hear from you, will you?
Maybe the painting is in the cellar!
- That's no cellar, that's the roof.
Down there? - Yeah, so the chimney
don't get wet when it rains.
I'm off to get x-rayed.
I'll be back in a little while.
I think you're wrong, Ravelli.
- Don't get excited.
Here's the rooms.
This is your room. This is mine.
And this is the maid's room.
I'd have to go through your room?
That's alright, I won't be in it.
You couldn't put the maid in your
room? - Who says I couldn't?
There's going to be a lot of traffic.
I can see that.
Well, what do ya say?
You ready to sign the lease?
I'd like to talk to my husband first.
Could you come back later?
You married?
- I've got a girl as big as you are.
Alright. Get me one.
- Don't get vulgar, Ravelli.
How about the painting?
We take care of that.
I'll tell you my idea.
The kitchen should be white.
Outside, green. Inside, cerise.
The painting, I say!
What you think I talk?
Painting the kitchen white...
The painting that was stolen!
- Stolen?
Don't you remember? Mrs. Rittenhouse
lost a painting worth $100,000.
No, I'm a stranger here.
What do you think I am?
One of the early settlers?
Don't you remember Mrs. Beaugard
lost a Rittenhouse oil painting?
No, but I've seen you
someplace before.
Yeah, I was there.
But I'll stay away in the future.
Hey, Capt!
It come to me like a flash!
This painting wasn't stolen.
It has disappeared.
Yes, disappeared. And you know
what make it disappear?
Moths! Moths eat it!
Left-handed moths!
Go away.
I'll be alright in a minute.
Left-handed moths ate it?
- That's my own solution.
I wish you were in it.
Left-handed moths!
I'd buy you a parachute
if I thought it wouldn't open.
Hey, I got pair of shoes.
He's crazy.
Let's go and get the reward.
We solved it. You solved it.
It was eaten by left-handed moths.
- We did good work.
Are you tired?
Lie down for a couple of years.
Lie down until rigor mortis sets in.
I know what we'll do. Go to court
to get a writ of habeas corpus.
To get rid of what?
I never should have started that way.
I say, we'll go to court
to get a writ of habeas corpus.
Yes, corpus.
- Didn't you ever see a habeas corpus?
No, but I see "Habeas Irish Rose".
Good morning.
- Good morning.
Why don't you go to the beach with the others? You'd feel better.
I'd feel better with my Beaugard.
We're doing everything we can.
Mrs. Rittenhouse! I have it!
- The Beaugard!
Wonderful! My Beaugard!
Wait. This is a rank imitation.
Where did you find it?
In Mr. Parker's room, madam.
- Parker?
One thing is certain. Whoever did this also stole the Beaugard.
Hives, ask Mr. Parker to come here.
Wait. My men will bring him in.
Get Mr. Parker.
What's wrong with this? - It's obvious that it's a rank imitation.
Mother, what's wrong?
Something very strange has occurred and only you can explain it.
Gladly.
We found this in your room.
What have you done with the original?
Come clean!
- I think it would be wise...
I don't know where the Beaugard is.
Why did we find this in your room?
You'd better come with me.
You can't take him.
This program is coming to you from the House of David
Either this suit is on upside-down or there is no law of gravity.
Einstein or no Einstein.
- My tie!
Captain, what shall I do?
They're going to arrest John.
Who?
- I am!
In Scotland Yard they teach you never to arrest an innocent man.
He's not innocent.
I'll have to arrest him.
Of course, or nobody's safe here.
You can't arrest him. I stole it.
- Don't listen to her. I did it.
They're both lying. I did it.
- He's crazy. I confess. I did it.
Maybe there was no painting.
- That's right. I saw it.
Stop this! Who stole the painting?
I did!
- Good gracious.
You? You took the picture?
Where is it?
Aw, that's a horse.
That is my Beaugard!
- No, that isn't your Beaugard.
Ridiculous. I paid $100,000 for this.
I know what I bought.
Look at the signature.
John Parker. Somebody changed it.
That is my Beaugard!
That's it, I tell you.
But that one has the color,
the depth, the soul of the Beaugard.
Only a master could have
produced a painting like that.
You mean, you painted it?
- Yes, sir. - You're a genius.
I commission you
to paint a portrait of me immediately.
It'll have to wait until tomorrow.
I'm going to be busy all day. - Yes.
You come with me.
- Don't take him away, officer.
He returned the paintings.
My name is Spaulding.
I've always wanted to meet you.
Alright. Just this time.
But I want to tell you something.
You're running around with the wrong
people. You wanna be a crook?
Why don't you go home?
- He's got no home.
Go home and stay home.
Your poor old mother sits there...
...sits there, night after...
night after night...
waiting to hear your steps on the
stairs. - Ain't got no stairs.
And I can see a little light
burns in the window.
No you can't!
The gas company turned it off.
What I'm telling you
is for your own good.
And if you listen to me,
you can't go wrong.
This may go on for years.
- There's just one thing...
What's delaying that coffee pot?
Where's the cream?
- You certainly surprised me.
Me too. I thought he had more.
- No use giving you any advice.
Captain, this time I'm afraid
I'll have to take him. Come on.
Oh, what are you doing? My dear!
What's the idea?
- Take a letter to my lawyers.
Oh no, don't! Anything but...
That I've got to go! So young!
Good. Let's get out of here
before they all wake up. Hurry up.