BOX. Instantly remove that hatter!

COX. Immediately turn out that printer!

BOUN. Well — but gentlemen —

COX. Explain! (pulling him round)

BOX. Explain! (pulling him round) Whose room is this!

COX. Yes — whose room is this?

BOX. Doesn't it belong to me?

BOUN. No!

COX. There! You hear, sir — it belongs to me.

BOUN. No — it belongs to both of you!

COX & BOX. (together) Both of us?

BOUN. Oh, yes! Gents, don't be angry — but you see, this gentleman — (*pointing to* **BOX**) — only being at home in the daytime, and that gentleman — (*pointing to* **COX**) — at night, I thought I might venture — until my little back second-floor room was ready—

COX & BOX. (*together, eagerly*) When will your little back second-floor room be ready?

BOUN. Why, to-morrow—

COX. I'll take it!

BOX. So will I!

BOUN. Excuse me — but if you both take it, you may just as well stop where you are.

COX & BOX. (together) True.

COX. I spoke first, sir!

BOX. With all my heart, sir! The little back second-floor room is yours, sir — now go!

COX. Go? Pooh — pooh —!

BOUN. Now don't quarrel, gentlemen. You see, there used to be a partition here —

COX & BOX. (together) Then put it up!

BOUN. Nay, I'll see if I can't get the other room ready this very day. Now, gents and officers, don't fight; but keep your tempers.(*Exit* L.C.D.)

COX. What a disgusting position! (*walking rapidly round the stage*)

BOX. (*sitting down on chair, at one side of table, and following* **COX'S** *movements*) Will you allow me to observe, if you have not had any exercise to-day, you'd better go out and take it?

COX. I shall not do anything of the sort, sir. (*seating himself at the table opposite* **BOX**.)

BOX. Very well, sir.

COX. Very well, sir! However, don't let me prevent you from going out.

BOX. Don't flatter yourself, sir. (**COX** *is about to break a piece of roll off.*) Halloa! that's my roll, sir. (*snatches it away* — *puts a pipe in his mouth and lights it with a piece of tinder* — *puffs smoke across the table towards* **COX**.)

COX. Holloa! What are you about, sir?

BOX. What am I about? I'm about to smoke.

COX. Wheugh! (goes to the window at BOX'S back, and flings it open)

BOX. Halloa! (turning round) Put down that window, sir!

COX. Then put your pipe out, sir!

BOX. There! (*puts pipe on the table*)

COX. There! (slams down window and re-seats himself)

BOX. I shall retire to my pillow. (gets up, takes off his jacket, then goes towards bed and sits upon it, L.C.)

COX. (Jumps up, goes to bed and sits down on R. of **BOX**.) I beg your pardon, sir — I cannot allow any one to rumple my bed. (both rising)

BOX. Your bed? Hark ye, sir — can you fight?

COX. No, Sir.

BOX. No? Then come on. (sparring at COX.)

COX. Sit down, sir - or I'll instantly vociferate "Police!"

BOX. (seats himself, COX does the same) I say, sir —

COX. Well, sir?

BOX. Although we are doomed to occupy the same room for a few hours longer, I don't see any necessity for our cutting each other's throat, sir.

COX. Not at all. It's an operation that I should decidedly object to.

BOX. And, after all, I've no violent animosity against you, sir.

COX. Nor have I any rooted antipathy to you, sir.

BOX. Besides, it was all Bouncer's fault, sir.

COX. Entirely, sir. (gradually approaching chair)

BOX. Very well, sir!

COX. Very well, sir! (*pause*)

BOX. Take a bit of roll, sir?

COX. Thank ye, sir. (*breaking a bit off — pause*)

BOX. Do you sing, sir?

COX. I sometimes dabble in a serenade.

BOX. Then dabble away.

No. 7. The Buttercup (DUET SERENADE)





























































⁽COX plays on the gridiron like a guitar. BOX takes an opera hat and imitates a concertina.)

BOX. Have you read this month's Bradshaw, sir?

COX. No, sir, my wife wouldn't let me.

BOX. Your wife!

COX. That is — my *intended* wife.

BOX. Well, that's the same thing! I congratulate you. (*shaking hands*)

COX. (*with a deep sigh*) Thank ye. (*seeing* **BOX** *about to get up*) You needn't disturb yourself, sir, she won't come here.

BOX. Oh! I understand. You've got a snug little establishment of your own *here* — on the sly — cunning dog. (*nudging* **COX**)

COX. (*drawing himself up*) No such thing, sir —I repeat, sir, no such thing, sir; but my wife — I mean my *intended* wife, happens to be the proprietor of a considerable number of bathing machines —

BOX. (suddenly) Ha! Where! (grasping COX'S arm)

COX. At a favourite watering place. How curious you are!

BOX. Not at all. Well?

COX. Consequently, in the bathing season — which luckily is rather a long one — we see but little of each other; but as that is now over, I am daily indulging in the expectation of being blessed with the sight of *my* beloved. (*very seriously*) Are *you* married?

BOX. Me? Why — not exactly!

COX. Ah — a happy bachelor ?

BOX. Why — not precisely!

COX. Oh! a — widower ?

BOX. No — not absolutely.

COX. You'll excuse me, sir — but, at present, I don't understand how you can help being one of the three.

BOX. Not help it?

COX. No, sir— not you, nor any other man alive!

BOX. Ah, that may be — but I'm not alive!

COX. (*pushing back his chair*) You'll excuse me, sir — but I don't like joking upon such subjects.

BOX. But I am perfectly serious, sir; I've been defunct for the last three years!

COX. (shouting) Will you be quiet, sir?

BOX. If you won't believe me, I'll refer you to a to a very large, numerous, and respectable circle of disconsolate friends.

COX. My very dear sir — my *very* dear sir — if there does exist any ingenious contrivance whereby a man on the eve of committing matrimony can leave this world, and yet stop in it, I shouldn't be sorry to know it.

BOX. Then there's nothing more easy. Do as I did.

COX. (eagerly) I will! What is it?

BOX. Drown yourself!

COX. (shouting again) Will you be quiet, sir?

BOX. Listen —

No. 8. Not Long Ago (ROMANCE)







































































COX. Dear me! I think I begin to have some slight perception of your meaning. Ingenious creature! You disappeared — the suit of clothes was found —

BOX. Exactly — and in one of the pockets of the coat, or the waistcoat, or the pantaloons — I forget which — there was also found a piece of paper, with these affecting farewell words:— "This is thy work, oh, Penelope Ann!"

COX. Penelope Ann! (*starts up, takes* **BOX** *by the arm and leads him slowly to front of stage*) Penelope Ann?

BOX. Penelope Ann!

COX. Originally widow of William Wiggins?

BOX. Widow of William Wiggins!

COX. Proprietor of bathing machines?

BOX. Proprietor of bathing machines!

COX. At Margate?

BOX. Ramsgate!

COX. It must be she! And you, sir — you are Box — the lamented, long lost Box?

BOX. I am!

COX. And I was about to marry the interesting creature you so cruelly deceived.

BOX. Ah! then you are Cox!

COX. I am!

BOX. I heard of it. I congratulate you — I give you joy! and now I think I'll go and take a stroll. (*going*)

COX. No you don't! (*stopping him*) I'll not lose sight of you till I've restored you to the arms of your intended.

BOX. *My* intended? You mean *your* intended.

COX. No, sir — yours!

BOX. How can she be my intended, now that I am drowned?

COX. You're no such thing, sir! and I prefer presenting you to Penelope Ann. Permit me, then, to follow the generous impulse of my nature — I give her up to you.

BOX. Benevolent being! I wouldn't rob you for the world. (*going*) Good morning, sir!

COX. (seizing him) Stop!

BOX. Unhand me, hatter! or I shall cast off the lamb and assume the lion!

COX. Pooh! (snapping his fingers in **BOX'S** face)

BOX. An insult! to my very face — under my very nose! (*rubbing it*) You know the consequences, sir — instant satisfaction, sir!

COX. With all my heart, sir! (*they go to fireplace* R., *and begin ringing bells violently, and pull down bell pulls*)

BOTH. Bouncer! Bouncer!

(BOUN. runs in, D.L.C., all three sing "Rataplan" and stop in the middle.)

BOUN. What is it. gentlemen?

BOX. Pistols for two!

BOUN. Yes, sir. (going)

COX. Stop! You don't mean to say, thoughtless and misguided militiaman, that you keep loaded firearms in the house.

BOUN. Oh, no — they're not loaded.

COX. Then produce the murderous weapons instantly. (Exit BOUN. L.C.)

BOX. I say, sir!

COX. Well, sir!

BOX. What's your opinion of duelling, sir?

COX. I think it's a barbarous practice, sir.

BOX. So do I, sir. To be sure, I don't so much object to it when the pistols are not loaded.

COX. No; I dare say that does make some difference.

BOX. And yet, sir — on the other hand — doesn't it strike you as rather a waste of time, for two people to keep firing pistols at one another, with nothing in 'em.

COX. No, sir — no more than any other harmless recreation.

BOX. Hark ye! Why do you object to marry Penelope Ann?

COX. Because, as I've already observed, I can't abide her. You'll be happy with her.

BOX. Happy? me? With the consciousness that I have deprived you of such a treasure? No, no, Cox!

COX. Don't think of me, Box — I shall be sufficiently rewarded by the knowledge of my Box's happiness.

BOX. Don't be absurd, sir.

COX. Then don't you be ridiculous, sir.

BOX. I won't have her!

COX. No more will I!

BOX. I have it! Suppose we draw lots for the lady — eh, Mr. Cox?

COX. That's fair enough, Mr. Box.

BOX. Or, what say you to dice?

COX. With all my heart! Dice by all means. (*eagerly*)

BOX. (*aside*) That's lucky! Bouncer's nephew left a pair here yesterday. He sometimes persuades me to have a throw for a trifle, and as he always throws sixes, I suspect they are good ones. (*goes to cupboard at* R., *and brings out dice-box*)

COX. (*aside*) I've no objection at all to dice. I lost one pound seventeen and sixpence at last Barnet Races, to a very gentlemanly looking man, who had a most peculiar knack of throwing sixes. I suspected they were loaded, so I gave him another half-crown and he gave me the dice. (*takes dice out of his pocket — uses lucifer box as substitute for dice-box, which is on the table*)

BOX. Now then, sir!

COX. I'm ready, sir! (*they seat themselves at opposite sides of the table*) Will you lead off, sir?

BOX. As you please, sir. The lowest throw, of course, wins Penelope Ann?

COX. Of course, sir!

BOX. Very well, sir!

COX. Very well, sir! (BOX rattling dice and throwing.)

No. 9. Sixes! (GAMBLING DUET)















































BOX. It's perfectly absurd your going on throwing sixes in this sort of way.

COX. I shall go on till my luck changes.

BOX. I have it — suppose we toss for the lady.

COX. With all my heart.


























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BOX & COX. (together) Is the little back second-floor room ready?

BOUN. Not quite, gentlemen. I can't find the pistols, but I have brought you a letter — it came by the General Post, yesterday. I am sure I don't know how I came to forget it, for I put it carefully in my pocket.

COX. And you've kept it carefully in your pocket ever since?

BOUN. Yes, sir. I hope you'll forgive me, sir. (*going*) By-the-bye, I paid twopence for it.

COX. Did you ? Then I *do* forgive you. (*Exit* **BOUN.**, D.L.C.) (*looking at letter*) "Margate!" The postmark decidedly says "Margate."

BOX. Oh, doubtless a tender epistle from Penelope Ann.

COX. Then read it, sir. (*handing letter to* **BOX**)

BOX. Me, sir?

COX. Of course. You don't suppose I'm going to read a letter from your intended.

BOX. *My* intended? Pooh! It's addressed to you — C O X.

COX. Do you think that's a C? It looks to me like a B.

BOX. Nonsense! fracture the seal.

COX. (opens letter — starts) Goodness gracious!

BOX. (*snatching letter — starts*) Gracious goodness!

COX. (*taking letter again*) "Margate, May the 4th. Sir, — I hasten to convey to you the intelligence of a melancholy accident, which has bereft you of your intended wife." He means *your* intended.

BOX. No, yours! However, it's perfectly immaterial; go on!

COX. (*resuming letter*) "Poor Mrs. Wiggins went for a short excursion in a sailing boat — a sudden and violent squall soon after took place, which, it is supposed, upset her, as she was found, two days afterwards, keel upwards."

BOX. Poor woman!

COX. The boat, sir! *(reading)* "As her man of business, I immediately proceeded to examine her papers, amongst which I soon discovered her will, the following extract from which will, I have no doubt, be satisfactory to you: — 'I hereby bequeath my entire property to my intended husband'". Excellent, but unhappy creature. (*affected*)

BOX. Generous, ill-fated being. (*affected*)

COX. And to think that I tossed up for such a woman.

BOX. When I remember that I staked such a treasure on the hazard of a die.

COX. I'm sure, Mr. Box, I can't sufficiently thank you for your sympathy.

BOX. And I'm sure, Mr. Cox, you couldn't feel more, if she had been your own intended.

COX. *If* she'd been *my own* intended! She *was* my own intended.

BOX. *Your* intended? Come, I like that! Didn't you very properly observe just now, sir, that I proposed to her first?

COX. To which you very sensibly replied that you'd come to an untimely end.

BOX. I deny it.

COX. I say you have!

BOX. The fortune's mine!

COX. Mine!

BOX. I'll have it!

COX. So will I!

BOX. I'll go to law!

COX. So will I!

BOX. Stop — a thought strikes me. Instead of going to law about the property, suppose we divide it.

COX. Equally?

BOX. Equally. I'll take two thirds.

COX. That's fair enough — and I'll take three fourths.

BOX. That won't do. Half and half.

COX. Agreed! There's my hand upon it —

BOX. And mine — (*about to shake hands* — *a postman's knock heard at street door without*)

COX. Holloa! Postman again?

BOX. Postman yesterday — postman to-day —

(Enter BOUN., D.L.C.)

BOUN. Another letter, Colonel Cox — twopence more!

COX. I forgive you again! (*taking letter*) Another trifle from Margate. (*opens letter, starts*) Goodness gracious!

BOX. (snatching letter, starts) Gracious goodness!

COX. (snatching letter again - reads) "Happy to inform you, false alarm."

BOX. (*overlooking*) "Sudden squall — boat upset — Mrs. Wiggins, your intended —"

COX. "Picked up by steamboat —"

BOX. "Carried into Boulogne —"

COX. "Returned here this morning —"

BOX. "Will start by early train to-morrow —"

COX. "And be with you at ten o'clock exact." (*Both simultaneously pull out their watches.*)

BOX. Cox, I congratulate you —

COX. Box, I give you joy!

BOX. I'm sorry that most important business at the Colonial Office will prevent my witnessing the truly happy meeting between you and your intended! Good morning! (*going*)

COX. (*stopping him*) It's obviously for me to retire. Not for worlds would I disturb the rapturous meeting between you and your intended. Good morning! (*going*)

BOX. You'll excuse me, sir — but our last arrangement was that she was *your* intended.

COX. No, yours!

BOX. Yours!

BOTH. Yours! (Ten o'clock strikes — noise of an omnibus.)

BOX. Ha! What's that! A cab's drawn up at the door! (*running to window*) No, it's a twopenny omnibus!

COX. (leaning over Box's shoulder) A lady's got out —

BOX. There's no mistaking that majestic person — it's Penelope Ann!

COX. Your intended!

BOX. Yours!

COX. Yours! (Both run to door, L.C., and eagerly listen.)

BOX. Hark — she's coming up stairs!

COX. Shut the door! (*They slam the door, and both lean against it with their backs.*)

BOUN. (without, and knocking.) Colonel!

COX. (*shouting*) I've just stepped out!

BOX. So have I!

BOUN. (*without*) Mr. Cox! (*pushing at the door* — **COX** and **BOX** *redouble their efforts to keep the door shut*) Open the door! It's only me — Sergeant Bouncer!

COX. Only you? Then where's the lady?

BOUN. Gone!

COX. Upon your honour?

BOX. As a Militiaman?

BOUN. Yes: and she's left a note for Brigadier Cox.

COX. Give it to me.

BOUN. Then open the door!

COX. Put it under! (A letter is put under the door, **COX** picks up the letter and opens it.) Goodness gracious!

BOX. (*snatching letter*) Gracious goodness! (**COX** *snatches the letter, and runs forward, followed by* **BOX**.)

COX. (*reading*) "Dear Mr. Cox — pardon my candour —"

BOX. (*looking over, and reading*) "But being convinced that our feelings, like our ages, do not reciprocate —"

COX. I hasten to apprize you of my immediate union —"

BOX. "With Mr. Knox."

COX. Huzza!

BOX. Three cheers for Knox. Ha, ha, ha! (*tosses the letter in the air, and begins dancing,* **COX** *does the same*)

BOUN. (*putting his head in at door*) The little second floor back room is quite ready!

COX. I don't want it!

BOX. No more do I!

COX. What shall part us?

BOX. What shall tear us asunder?

COX. Box!

BOX. Cox! (*About to embrace* — **BOX** *stops, seizes* **COX'S** *hand, and looks eagerly in his face.*) You'll excuse the apparent insanity of the remark, but the more I gaze on your features, the more I'm convinced that you're my long lost brother.

COX. The very observation I was going to make to you!

BOX. Ah — tell me — in mercy tell me — have you such a thing as a strawberry mark on your left arm?

COX. No!

BOX. Then it is he! (*They rush into each other's arms.*)

COX. Of course we stop where we are?

BOX. Of course!

COX. For, between you and me, I'm rather partial to this house.

BOX. So am I — I begin to feel quite at home in it.

COX. Everything so clean and comfortable

BOX. And I'm sure the master of it, from what I have seen of him, is very anxious to please.

COX. So he is — and I vote, Box, that we stick by him!

BOX. Agreed!

No. 10. My Hand Upon It (FINALE)



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