

The Girl in the Tutu

*(Or The Villain Kept
Her on Her Toes)*

By Eddie Cope and Carl Williams

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STORY OF THE PLAY

Here's a fast-moving, fun-filled play that mixes melodramatics with show business. A young, handsome theatre student (the hero, of course!) tries to assemble a dance act to save his parents' failing restaurant in the Gold Country of Old Californy. But a crooked con-man shows up with three clumsy dancing girls and a scheme to take over the café by plotting murder and cheating two old prospectors out of their newly re-found "lost" goldmine. One of the old guys is the father of a beautiful and talented ballet dancer (our lovely heroine!) who gets caught up in the mayhem. The play features a wacky cast, plenty of action, and side-splitting humor.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(6 m, 6 w)

BEN (PA) NUGGETT: Grizzled former prospector, 50s.

MA NUGGETT: His wife, restaurant owner, 50s.

SONNY NUGGETT: Their son, handsome, neat dresser, 20s.

DILLY: Local bumpkin, poorly dressed, 20s.

POOCH: Local bumpkin, poorly dressed, 20s.

COLONEL QUESTUS QUANTRELL: Shady showman, 40s.

MONDAY: Quantrell's "daughter," 20s.

WEDNESDAY: Quantrell's "daughter," 20s.

FRIDAY: Quantrell's "daughter," 20s.

FRED SLINE: Gold prospector, 50s.

CORA SLINE: His daughter, attractive, 20s.

LYDIA O. LYDIA: Over the hill, painted-up entertainer, 40s.

Production Note:

The authors invite the director to insert local references (names, places) at his or her choosing.

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SETTING

A run-down restaurant in Slippery Rock, California, 1899. Sparse, but neat. At least one table has a white tablecloth. There is a door left to street, a door right to kitchen, a door UC to living quarters. There is also a small platform upstage left.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Act I

Scene 1: Late morning, Nuggett Restaurant.

Scene 2: Later that afternoon.

Act II

Scene 1: Moments later.

PROPS

Sign that reads, "Dancers Wanted."

(3) Pistols

(3) Holsters

Carpetbag

Pocket watch

Letter and map

Tutu for Cora

Suitcase

Chicken leg

Biscuit

Cast-iron skillet

Coins

SOUND EFFECTS

Stagecoach arriving

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: PA NUGGETT stands, slamming his fist on a table.)

PA: Just looky here at this place! Coming on toward lunchtime and not a single customer! Dad-blast it! Dad-gum it! Dad-nab it! *(Stops, grabs HIS chest, sinks into chair, groaning.)* Help! Helllp!

(MA NUGGETT ENTERS from right in dowdy housedress and apron.)

MA: Can't you see I'm busy in the kitchen?

PA: *(Gasps.)* My ticker. I need one of my heart pills.

MA: We don't have any. Druggist cut off our credit because we're so far behind.

PA: That's where I'd like to kick him.

MA: Every time I turn around, you're having one of your spells. Trouble with you is, you've got Dunlap's Disease.

PA: Dunlap's Disease? What's that?

MA: Your stomach done laps over your belt.

PA: Never you mind. *(Works HIMSELF into a frenzy.)* I'm sick, I tell you. Sick! Anything could happen to me.

MA: Now don't go getting yourself all worked up. You ought to be in a good mood, seein' our boy's coming home this morning.

PA: 'Bout time he got a little sense.

MA: That'll be enough of that. He's leaving school to come help us out.

PA: You're the one who let him go off to Frisco to study how to be a dancer. *(PA gets up to do a little dance step, but the effort is too much for him. He falls back into his chair.)*

MA: Our Sonny's a good boy, and I'm proud of him.

PA: Hah! He should've gone into something that was good for somethin' -- like boxing or wrestling or football --

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(SOUND of a stagecoach arriving offstage.)

MA: That's the morning stagecoach. Sonny should be on it.

PA: He left on a stage, and now he's come back on a stage,
right where he set out from -- in Slippery Rock, California.

Shows he had no business leaving in the first place.

MA: Don't matter about the first place when this place is the
last place.

*(SONNY ENTERS from left in a suit, carrying a large
carpetbag.)*

SONNY: Hello, everybody! I'm home!

MA: *(Hugs HIM.)* My boy!

(PA makes a weak, derisive gesture.)

SONNY: I've missed you. *(Pulls away to shake hands with
PA.)* Pa! Good to see you.

PA: *(Pushes HIMSELF out of chair.)* I half expected you to
come through the door on tippy-toes. *(Awkwardly
demonstrates, nearly falls over.)*

SONNY: I came back to save the family business, not to be
made fun of.

MA: Sonny, you wrote that you had a great idea to attract
customers. Want to tell us about it?

SONNY: Sure do. Wait'll you see the sign I made. *(SONNY
takes a sign out of the carpetbag, with the sign's lettered
side turned away from the audience.)*

PA: A blank sign! That's stupid.

MA: Pa!

PA: Even an old prospector like me knows you can't perk up
business with a blank sign.

MA: Hush!

SONNY: You have to give the public a reason to patronize
your establishment. Entertainment! I learned that in San
Francisco.

PA: Listen, you young idiot. People come here to eat your
Ma's good home cooking, not to see a dog and pony show.

End of Freeview

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