

O'HARA puts on lights and goes upstairs to landing, when he sees MORTIMER.] Hey! You stood me up. I waited an hour at Kelly's for you. [He comes downstairs and over to MORTIMER and looks at him then speaks to JONATHAN and EINSTEIN.] What happened to him?

EINSTEIN. [Thinking fast.] He was explaining the play he saw tonight—that's what happened to the fella in the play.

O'HARA. Did they have that in the play you saw tonight? [MORTIMER nods his head—yes.] Gee, they practically stole that from the second act of my play — [He starts to explain.] Why, in my second act, just before the — [He turns back to MORTIMER.] I'd better begin at the beginning. It opens in my mother's dressing room, where I was born—only I ain't born yet — [MORTIMER rubs his shoes together to attract O'HARA's attention.] Huh? Oh, yeah. [O'HARA starts to remove the gag from MORTIMER's mouth and then decides not to.] No! You've got to hear the plot. [He gets stool and brings it to R. of MORTIMER and sits, continuing on with his "plot" as the curtain falls.] Well, she's sitting there making up, see—when all of a sudden through the door—a man with a black mustache walks in—turns to my mother and says—"Miss Latour, will you marry me?" He doesn't know she's pregnant.

CURTAIN

ACT III

SCENE 2: Scene is the same. Early the next morning. When the curtain rises again, daylight is streaming through the windows. All doors closed. All drapes open. MORTIMER is still tied in his chair and seems to be in a semi-conscious state. JONATHAN is asleep on sofa. EINSTEIN, pleasantly intoxicated, is seated L. of table, his head resting on table top. O'HARA, with his coat off and his collar loosened, is standing over the stool which is between him and MORTIMER. He has progressed to the most exciting scene of his play. There is a bottle of whiskey and a water tumbler on the table along with a plate full of cigarette butts.

O'HARA. —there she is lying unconscious across the table in her lingerie—the chink is standing over her with a hatchet—[He takes the pose.]—I'm tied up in a chair just like you are—the place is an inferno of flames—it's on fire—when all of a sudden—through the window—in comes Mayor LaGuardia. [EINSTEIN raises his head and looks out the window. Not seeing anyone he reaches for the bottle and pours himself another drink. O'HARA crosses above to him and takes the bottle.] Hey, remember who paid for that—go easy on it.

EINSTEIN. Vell, I'm listening, ain't I? [He crosses to JONATHAN on the sofa.]

O'HARA. How do you like it so far?

EINSTEIN. Vell, it put Chonny to sleep.

[O'HARA has just finished a swig from the bottle.]

O'HARA. Let him alone. If he ain't got no more interest than that—he don't get a drink. [EINSTEIN takes his glass and sits on bottom stair. At the same time O'HARA crosses, puts stool under desk and whiskey bottle on top of desk, then comes back to center and goes on with his play—] All right. It's three days later—I been transferred and I'm under charges—that's because somebody stole my badge. [He pantomimes through following lines.] All right. I'm walking my beat on Staten Island—forty-sixth precinct—when a guy I'm following, it turns out—is really following me. [There is a knock on door. EINSTEIN goes up and looks out landing window. Leaves glass behind D. S. drape.] Don't let anybody in.—So I figure I'll outsmart him. There's a vacant house on the corner. I goes in.

EINSTEIN. It's cops!

O'HARA. I stands there in the dark and I see the door handle turn.

EINSTEIN. [Rushing downstairs, shakes JONATHAN by the shoulder.] Chonny! It's cops! Cops! [JONATHAN doesn't move. EINSTEIN rushes upstairs and off through the arch.]

[O'HARA is going on with his story without a stop.]

O'HARA. I pulls my guns—braces myself against the wall—and I says—"Come in." [OFFICERS BROPHY and KLEIN walk in R., see O'HARA with gun pointed at them and raise their hands. Then, recognizing their fellow officer, lower them.] Hello, boys. BROPHY. What the hell is going on here?

O'HARA. [*Goes to BROPHY.*] Hey, Pat, whaddya know? This is Mortimer Brewster! He's going to write my play with me. I'm just tellin' him the story.

KLEIN. [*Crossing to MORTIMER and untying him.*] Did you have to tie him up to make him listen?

BROPHY. Joe, you better report in at the station. The whole force is out looking for ya.

O'HARA. Did they send you here for me?

KLEIN. We didn't know you was here.

BROPHY. We came to warn the old ladies that there's hell to pay.

The Colonel blew that bugle again in the middle of the night.

KLEIN. From the way the neighbors have been calling in about it you'd think the Germans had dropped a bomb on Flatbush Avenue

[*He has finished untying MORTIMER. Puts cords on sideboard.*]

BROPHY. The Lieutenant's on the warpath. He says the Colonel's got to be put away some place.

MORTIMER. [*Staggered to feet.*] Yes! Yes!

O'HARA. [*Going to MORTIMER.*] Gee, Mr. Brewster, I got to get away, so I'll just run through the third act quick.

MORTIMER. [*Staggering R.*] Get away from me.

[*BROPHY gives KLEIN a look, goes to phone and dials.*]

KLEIN. Say, do you know what time it is? It's after eight o'clock in the morning.

O'HARA. It is? [*He follows MORTIMER to stairs.*] Gee, Mr. Brewster, them first two acts run a little long, but I don't see anything we can leave out.

MORTIMER. [*Almost to landing.*] You can leave it all out.

[*BROPHY sees JONATHAN on sofa.*]

BROPHY. Who the hell is this guy?

MORTIMER. [*Hanging on railing, almost to balcony.*] That's my brother.

BROPHY. Oh, the one that ran away? So he came back.

MORTIMER. Yes, he came back!

[*JONATHAN stirs as if to get up.*]

BROPHY. [*Into phone.*] This is Brophy. Get me Mac. [*To O'HARA, sitting on bottom stair.*] I'd better let them know we found you,

Joe. [*Into phone.*] Mac? Tell the Lieutenant he can call off the big manhunt—we got him. In the Brewster house. [*JONATHAN hears this and suddenly becomes very much awake, looking up to see KLEIN to L. of him and BROPHY to his R.*] Do you want us to bring him in? Oh—all right, we'll hold him right here. [*He hangs up.*] The Lieutenant's on his way over. JONATHAN. [*Rising.*] So I've been turned in, eh? [*BROPHY and KLEIN look at him with some interest.*] All right, you've got me! [*Turning to MORTIMER, who is on balcony looking down.*] And I suppose you and that stool-pigeon brother of mine will split the reward?

KLEIN. Reward?

[*Instinctively KLEIN and BROPHY both grab JONATHAN by an arm.*]

JONATHAN. [*Dragging CORP D. S. C.*] Now I'll do some turning in! You think my aunts are sweet charming old ladies, don't you? Well, there are thirteen bodies buried in their cellar.

MORTIMER. [*As he rushes off to see TEDDY.*] Teddy! Teddy! KLEIN. What the hell are you talking about?

BROPHY. You'd better be careful what you're saying about your aunts—they happen to be friends of ours.

JONATHAN. [*Raving as he drags them toward cellar door.*] I'll show you! I'll prove it to you! You come to the cellar with me!

KLEIN. Wait a minute! Wait a minute!

JONATHAN. Thirteen bodies! I'll show you where they're buried.

KLEIN. [*Refusing to be kidded.*] Oh, yeah?

JONATHAN. You don't want to see what's down in the cellar? BROPHY. [*Releases JONATHAN'S arm, then to KLEIN.*] Go on down in the cellar with him, Abe.

KLEIN. [*Drops JONATHAN'S arm, backs D. S. a step and looks at him.*] I'm not so sure I want to be down in the cellar with him. Look at that puss. He looks like Boris Karloff. [*JONATHAN, at mention of Karloff, grabs KLEIN by the throat, starts choking him.*] Hey—what the hell—Hey, Pat! Get him off me.

[*BROPHY takes out rubber blackjack.*]

BROPHY. Here, what do you think you're doing! [*He socks JONATHAN on head. JONATHAN falls unconscious, face down.*]

[*KLEIN, throwing JONATHAN'S weights to floor, backs away, rubbing his throat.*]

KLEIN. Well what do you know about that?

[*There is a knock on door R.*]

O'HARA. Come in.

[LIEUTENANT ROONEY bursts in R., slamming door after him. He is a very tough, driving, dominating officer.]

ROONEY. What the hell are you men doing here? I told you I was going to handle this.

KLEIN. Well, sir, we was just about to — [KLEIN'S eyes go to

JONATHAN and ROONEY sees him.]

ROONEY. What happened? Did he put up a fight?

BROPHY. This ain't the guy that blows the bugle. This is his brother. He tried to kill Klein.

KLEIN. [*Feeling his throat.*] All I said was he looked like Boris Karloff.

ROONEY. [*His face lights up.*] Turn him over.

[*The two cops turn JONATHAN over on his back. KLEIN steps back. ROONEY crosses front of BROPHY to take a look at JONATHAN. BROPHY drifts to R. of ROONEY. O'HARA is still at foot of stairs.*]

BROPHY. We kinda think he's wanted somewhere.

ROONEY. Oh, you kinda *think* he's wanted somewhere? If you guys don't look at the circulars we hang up in the station, at least you could read *True Detective*. [*Big.*] Certainly he's wanted. In Indiana! Escaped from the prison for the Criminal Insane! He's a lifer. For God's sake that's how he was described—he looked like Karloff!

KLEIN. Was there a reward mentioned?

ROONEY. Yeah—and I'm claiming it.

BROPHY. He was trying to get us down in the cellar.

KLEIN. He said there was thirteen bodies buried down there.

ROONEY. [*Suspicious.*] Thirteen bodies buried in the cellar? [*Deciding it's ridiculous.*] And that didn't tip you off he came out of a nut-house!

O'HARA. I thought all along he talked kinda crazy.

[ROONEY sees O'HARA for the first time. Turns to him.]

ROONEY. Oh, it's Shakespeare! [*Crossing to him.*] Where have you been all night? And you needn't bother to tell me.

O'HARA. I've been right here, sir. Writing a play with Mortimer Brewster.

ROONEY. [*Tough.*] Yeah? Well, you're gonna have plenty of time to write that play. You're suspended! Now get back and report in!

[O'HARA takes his coat, night stick, and cap from top of desk. Goes to R. door and opens it. Then turns to ROONEY.]

O'HARA. Can I come over some time and use the station typewriter? ROONEY. No!—Get out of here. [O'HARA runs out. ROONEY closes door and turns to the cops. TEDDY enters on balcony and comes downstairs unnoticed and stands at ROONEY'S back to the R. of him. ROONEY, to cops.] Take that guy somewhere else and bring him to. [*The cops bend down to pick up JONATHAN.*] See what you can find out about his accomplice. [*The cops stand up again in a questioning attitude. ROONEY explains.*] The guy that helped him escape. He's wanted too. No wonder Brooklyn's in the shape it's in, with the police force full of flatheads like you—falling for that kind of a story—thirteen bodies in the cellar! TEDDY. But there are thirteen bodies in the cellar. ROONEY. [*Turning on him.*] Who are you? TEDDY. I'm President Roosevelt.

[ROONEY does a walk U. S. on this, then comes down again.]

ROONEY. What the hell is this?

BROPHY. He's the fellow that blows the bugle.

KLEIN. Good morning, Colonel.

[*They salute TEDDY, who returns it. ROONEY finds himself saluting TEDDY also. He pulls his hand down in disgust.*]

ROONEY. Well, Colonel, you've blown your last bugle.

TEDDY. [*Seeing JONATHAN on floor.*] Dear me—another Yellow Fever victim?

ROONEY. What?

TEDDY. All the bodies in the cellar are Yellow Fever victims.

[ROONEY crosses exasperatedly to R. door on this.]

BROPHY. No, Colonel, this is a spy we caught in the White House. ROONEY. [*Pointing to JONATHAN.*] Will you get that guy out of here!

[Cops pick up JONATHAN and drag him to kitchen. TEDDY follows them. MORTIMER enters, comes down stairs.]