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ONE DAY'S FUN

A Canadian Scouts' Play in Two Acts
and
Imitation Movies

AN ENTIRE EVENING'S ENTERTAINMENT

By LOVELL COOMBS

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One Day's Fun

ACT I.

The Camp in the Woods.

CAST.

Scoutmaster (or Assistant Scoutmaster).

Three full Patrols in light hiking equipment; with signal flags, staves, and first aid kits.

SETTING.

A Scout Camp in the woods—small trees (cedars, etc.), moss and leaves covering the ground. Hiking equipment hanging from branches. In front centre, a camp fire (red electric bulbs among sticks), and a pot steaming (filled with hot water just before rise of curtain).

ALERT!

Boys, when you put this play on, make it a *Scouts' job*. Don't give it until you can do every part of it well. Make it worth every cent paid for admission, and worth every hand-clap you get. (Scouts don't want charity attendance or charity applause.) Agree that every part will be taken by the Scout who can do it best. If you yourself can do nothing more interesting than holding up the platform and getting dirt down your neck—do that. That's the spirit that will make the play a "Scout's job"—the *teamwork* of Scouting.

KAY



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ONE DAY'S FUN

5

ACT I.

THE CAMP IN THE WOODS.

Scene: Two cooks preparing dinner; Norman cutting a carrot into the kettle, Dick, seated, peeling potatoes.

Grand Bear
Jack DICK: What all have you in the pot now, Norm?
Norm NORMAN: Let's see. There's the rabbit, the fish, two mutton chops—and some salt. A sausage, the ham bone, onions—and some salt. The porridge left over, and Roy's two alleged flapjacks—and quite a bit of salt. Half a can of salmon, two dried up cheese sandwiches—and some salt. A can of tomatoes, some pickles—and some more salt. Three pieces of bacon—and some salt.

DICK: I see you have put in some salt.

Jack NORMAN: The fellows this morning said I couldn't make hunter's stew. They said I didn't get enough variety into it. And they said I always forgot the salt. This time I am trying to remember the salt. 'A little more salt, please?' 'Certainly.' (Adds more salt from one of two similar boxes on the ground nearby.)

DICK: Why didn't you put in a tree or two?

NORMAN: A good idea. (Breaks twigs from a cedar and adds to the pot.) This will add a tasty wild flavour. Any more suggestions?

DICK: How about salt?

NORMAN: I had almost forgotten it. (Adds a little more salt.)

DICK: Well, here are the spuds. (Rises and drops into kettle.) Let's see, it will be an hour yet before the fellows get back. I'm going to have a nap.

NORMAN: I think I'll take about thirty-nine winks, too. (Pokes the fire.) The stew is just simmering nicely.

(They lie down some distance from the fire. Presently a whistle from nearby, then a shout:) Norm! Dick!

Enter Jack
Norm *Norm* *Norm* Enter Jack *Norm* *Norm* *Norm*

Jack JACK: Did you chaps see a Scout knife lying around? (Discovers the two asleep.) Oh, asleep—at the stew! Dinner is cooking though. (Approaches the pot and sniffs.) And it smells good. I'll bet they didn't put any salt in it. I'll put some in to make sure. (Adds generous quantity of salt. Returns to the sleepers.) How innocent they look! Who would guess they were the two greatest

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cut-ups and prank-players in the troop! Say! An idea! What's good for the goose is good for the —cooks. I'll do it! (Tiptoes to fire, secures piece of charcoal, returns, and carefully marks faces of the two sleepers with an exaggerated "grin." Then tickles Dick's ear, and disappears, laughing, as Dick awakens. Dick stretches, yawns. Rises, and goes to the fire, humming cheerfully. Sniffs at the pot.)

Said -DICK: Yep, that is going to be good. But I think I had better be on the safe side, and add a little salt. (Adds salt. Turns toward Norman. Utters an exclamation, tiptoes to Norman's side, and doubles up laughing, hand over mouth. Norman awakens. Dick hastily withdraws and busies himself at the fire, choking with laughter. Norman comes to the fire.)

NORMAN: What is the matter, Dick?

Frank -DICK (turning hastily away): Oh, nothing much! Something tickling my throat, I guess.

NORMAN (sniffing): Good. But I believe it needs just a little (reaches for one of the two salt boxes) more salt. It is about time the fellows were getting back, isn't it, Dick?

Said -DICK (composing his face and turning toward Norman): Yes, they should be here any time now.

NORMAN (under his breath): Oh, my word! (Turns quickly away.)

(For some minutes the two pretend to busy themselves about one thing and another, each striving to prevent the other discovering that he is laughing. Whistling and singing announce the return of the troop. Troop appears, led by Jack, looking expectant. All burst into laughter. The two cooks join, each thinking the laugh is at the expense of the other. Enter the Scoutmaster. He joins in the laughter. Then to Norman and Dick:)

What have they been doing to you?

(Norman and Dick become suddenly sober, run for mirrors, and amid great hilarity discover the truth.)

NORMAN All right, fellows, that's on us. Get your plates, and we'll heap coals of fire on them—and other things.

(The boys seat themselves in a half-circle about the fire, and the cooks serve them. The cooks draw aside, and watch the result,

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chuckling. The boys declare the stew excellent, and ask for more. The cooks exchange puzzled glances. Norman picks up one of the two salt boxes, and tastes its contents.)

Jack NORMAN (disgustedly, and laughing): It's sugar, ^{good} Dick! Joke's on us again!

(The meal is concluded.)

Bald SCOUTMASTER: Now, boys, let us have a little singsong. Get your ^{voices} ~~mouths~~ and mouth-organs, orchestra! What shall it be first? Our old college friends, The Three Crows? Very well; led off by the heap big chief of the ^{boys} Ravens. Come on, ~~all~~ ^{Willie}

Willie ALFRED (P.L. of the Ravens, singing briskly):

There were three crows sat on a tree,

ALL Oh, Billy Magee, Magaw!

Willie ALFRED And they were black as crows could be,

ALL: Oh, Billy Magee, Magaw!

There were three crows sat on a tree,

And they were black as crows could be;

And they all flapped their wings and cried

Caw, caw, caw, caw! Billy Magee, Magaw.

And they all flapped their wings and cried

Billy Magee, Magaw (loudly), Pling! (imitating the striking of a banjo).

Billy Magee, Magaw (moderately), Pling!

Bill Magee, Magaw—aw (softly).

Willie (ALFRED and Chorus as above:)

There lies a horse on yonder plain,

Oh Billy Magee, Magaw;

Who's by some cruel butcher slain,

Oh Billy Magee, Magaw;

There lies a horse on yonder plain

Who's by some cruel butcher slain;

And they all flapped their wings and cried, etc.

We'll eat the meat before it's stale,

Till naught remains but bones and tail.

(NOTE: Complete words and music of this and other songs used will be found in any old college song book.)

SCOUTMASTER: Everyone must contribute something. *Jack (Mascally)* Roy, you're next. Can you tell us a joke!

Jack ROY: Did you ever hear the story of the farmer who made a barrel of cider, and who wanted a neighbour's opinion as to how good it was? Well, he gave his neighbour a glass of the cider, and asked what he thought of it. "Well, John," said the neighbour, "isn't it too bad you didn't have another apple?" "Another apple?" "Yes. Then you could have made another barrel."

SCOUTMASTER: Now another song. What shall it be?

(A hubbub of shouts for "Solomon-Levi" and "Spanish Cavalier.")

SCOUTMASTER: Steady, boys, steady! Don't deafen me. What shall it be?

(Shouts for the two songs repeated.)

SCOUTMASTER: The only solution I can see is to sing both, at once. Let us try it. You fellows on that side sing the Cavalier, and we on this side will sing Solomon—repeating the verse instead of the chorus. Already? Go!

(The two songs are sung simultaneously. Are then whistled.)

(Another joke.) *This one is mine - Billy*

SCOUTMASTER: Now, *may I say* let's have the tragic tale of "The Walloping Windowblind."

("Walloping Windowblind" recited dramatically, the chorus sung by all. Should be taken up very smartly, on the last word of the recited verse.)

Other jokes and songs as desired.

SCOUTMASTER: We have had our fun, now let us do some work. *Walt* Al, you and your *sons* show us in seven minutes how many things you can do with your staves.

Walt (Alfred, P.L. of the Ravens, cups his hands and gives the call of the patrol. They spring to their places before him, and a rapid demonstration is given.)

SCOUTMASTER: Good work, *sons* Ravens. Now, the Wood-Pigeons! (Wood Pigeons take their places, headed by their P.L.) *Walt* Lee, give your boys a quiz on fire prevention and rescue. (The boys reply to a rapid series of questions; wind up with a demonstration of rescuing unconscious persons from an imaginary smoke-filled room.)

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Bill 9

SCOUTMASTER: Good. Now the ^{Early} Owls—wise old Owls. (Sanford, the ^{Bill} P.L. comes to attention.) Give us a practical demonstration in signalling. (Sanford whistles the Owls together.)

Bill

SANFORD: Bev. and Charley, look around the woods and find a blackboard. (To the audience:) Scouts find the most remarkable things, sometimes. Frank and Billy, get your flash lantern (or semaphore flags) and go to the rear of the hall. The rest of you take these blanks and go down through the audience and get a few messages. Take them back to Billy. (Sanford to the audience:) Ladies and gentlemen, we would like six or eight short messages, to signal from the back of the hall to the stage. Will some of you kindly oblige? Thank you.

Gary

(Bev. and Charley return with a blackboard. It is placed in position.)

Boys

SANFORD: ^{Boyd} Bev, you act as recorder; ^{John Green} Charley, you read the signals to Bev. (To the boys at the rear of the hall:) All right, go ahead. (NOTE: First message prepared beforehand, to avoid a wait.)

At conclusion of signalling, full troop returns to the stage and does semaphore alphabet to music. During the demonstration there are sounds of thunder from the woods, increasing in volume. The demonstration ends, and—

SCOUTMASTER: Here comes the predicted storm, boys! We are not far from old John Van Winkle's. We'll take advantage of his invitation, and pay him a visit until the storm blows over. Get your traps together.

Curtain, as the boys are hastily gathering up their things.

Bev. = Gary Taylor is record
charley = John Green (recieve)
Frank (Fred is us) (and
Billy (Boyd) reads off.

ONE DAY'S FUN
IMITATION MOVIES.

Secure an ordinary stereopticon lantern and mount at rear of auditorium. Beside it arrange a small electric fan, so placed that the fan will cut slightly into the ray of light. This will give the "flicker" to the "pictures." (Do not make it too pronounced.) Imitate the sound of the machine with a whirling rattle, or something similar. When the machine lamp is turned on, all other lights should be turned off.

For a "screen" use any white curtain of sufficient size; a large bed-sheet will do. The curtain should rise, or pull aside easily.

Make "slides" announcing the titles of the plays, and the "casts." These should be as humorous as possible; may contain local hits.

Preceding the "pictures" run some "advertising slides"—real ones, paid for; or humorous, such as the following:

USE BUNKUM'S HAIR RESTORER
IT WORKS, AND WE CAN PROVE IT.
LAST WEEK MR. JOHN BARLIKORN
BOUGHT A BOTTLE.
THINKING IT
WAS SOMETHING ELSE, HE DRANK IT.
NOW HE IS EATING MOTHBALLS!

Work in a serious one occasionally:

RELIGION GAVE YOU THE SABBATH DAY.
ARE YOU GIVING A PORTION OF IT TO RELIGION?
WHY NOT?

And a few on Scouting, as:

WE SCOUTS HAVE LEARNED ONE OF THE SECRETS OF
HAPPINESS.

WE DO A GOOD TURN TO SOMEBODY EVERY DAY.
YOU TRY IT! IT'S GREAT!

THE PLAYS.

The acting is done in gesture only, the gestures being exag-

gerated and all sounds being avoided.

The curtain should be raised as the slide announcing the play is withdrawn from the lantern.

THE BANDIT'S REVENGE.

Interior of a cabin. ^{Man} Woman sewing by light of a lamp on a table. With her foot is rocking a cradle. Door opens. Enter bandit ^{Willowby} (cowboy costume, very red face, long moustache, etc.). Woman springs up, registering extreme fright. Backs to far corner. Bandit closes door, stands with back to it. Shakes alkali dust (flour) from clothes, and laughs. Says (with lips), "At last you are in me power! Now I am going to *grab* you, and carry you out through the door, and put you up on my horse, and gallop away with you." Bandit strides toward woman. She drops to floor with upraised hands, crying (with lips), "Mercy! Mercy!" Bandit continues to advance, laughing. He sees the cradle. Halts. "Ahah! An idea!" Strides to cradle. Mother rushes to interfere. Both seize baby (a roughly made rag doll), and struggle for it. Finally bandit gets it, and holding upside down under arm, moves toward door. Door opens and husband enters. He and bandit draw guns (water pistol filled with chalk dust), and begin a duel, crouching, dodging, etc. Bandit falls to floor. Falls several times, looking for a soft spot. Husband clasps wife and child. Curtain.

THE SEWING CIRCLE.

(Boys dressed as girls.)

Girl arranging chairs in a row; looking up frequently at a clock. Large cowbell hanging beside door swings violently. Girl puts hand to ear: "Did I hear something? No." Resumes preparations. Bell swings more violently. "Ah! Here they are, *there* at the door." Hastens to door, welcomes a second girl. Second girl carries large market net-bag on wrist. Both girls talk very rapidly, at same time. Second girl seats herself, opens bag, takes out fancy work size of a postage stamp. Bell rings again. Enter third girl, carrying gunny-sack. All three talk rapidly, at same time. Third girl seated, from sack produces a sock the size of a ham (sock made of sacking), and

pair knitting needles three feet long. And so on—as many girls as desired, and as many kinds of “fancy work” as the boys can think of. Include one very small girl in spectacles, with two Scout staves as knitting needles. The girls keep up continuous talking and gesturing, except when, every few minutes, a box of chocolates is passed.

Finally a (mechanical) mouse runs across the floor, girls all scream (noiselessly), and leap upon the chairs and table. Curtain.

Other plays as suggested and worked out by the boys.

Act II.

THE TROOP BABY.

CAST: Same as Act I., and Young Lady.

SCENE: Cabin interior—Table, chairs, stove, etc.; lamp on table; small piece notepaper on floor beneath table. Door, closed, at rear centre. Door to bedroom, right or left.

(Sounds of singing and whistling, approaching. Ceases at door. A

g. h. m. c. m. c. y. knock. Several knocks.)

1 FIRST VOICE: Mr. Van Winkle! Are you home?

2 SECOND VOICE: No. He says he is out. Knock again. *Sound Party*

3 THIRD VOICE: Try the door. *Gooden House C.*

(Door opens, and Paul and Roy peer inside.) *Norman, Wally, etc.*

4 PAUL: No one here.

Norman (Troop enters; stand, looking about.)

5 NORMAN: I wonder if something has happened to him?

6 *Sound B.* DICK (looking under the table): He isn't here.

7 FRANK (looking under stove): He isn't here.

8 *Sound* BEV (looking under corner of rug): He isn't under here.

SCOUTMASTER: Perhaps he ran over to visit one of the neighbors. See, the fire in the stove hasn't been burning long. Anyhow, since he invited us, we will make ourselves comfortable until he returns. Throw off your things, boys, and arrange them tidily along the wall there.

(Boys remove hiking equipment; again stand, studying the cabin furnishings.)

9 *Sound Party* DICK: Rummy old den, isn't it?

10 SCOUTMASTER: Come, boys, don't criticize. That isn't good Scout talk; especially since we are here as guests. Now, to fill in the time while awaiting Mr. Van Winkle, let us have that First Aid contest between the Ravens and Owls. *Leland* you and your *Wood Pigeons* provide the victims. First, let us have a case of fainting—although of course Scouts themselves never faint.

11 *Eagles* LELAND (P.L. of Wood Pigeons): Earl, faint! *Janet*
12 (Earl does a dramatic faint.)

13 REID (in loud whisper): Now, fellows, the ice cream!

Janet (Earl instantly recovers, sits up.)

SCOUTMASTER: I have no doubt that would work. But you must suppose you are a long way from ~~Balmey~~ (well known local ice cream parlour). Faint again!

DICK: I'll help him. (Pretends to hit Earl on the head. Earl again does a dramatic fall.)

SANFORD (leader of the Owl-Patrol): Two of you make a stretcher with your coats and staves. (Stretcher made.) Now move the defunct hero over here under this imaginary tree (indicating). Here is a good spot. (Looks up through imaginary branches.) No, here is a better spot. Move him here. (Earl lifted.) If any money falls out of his pockets, it is mine. (Unconscious patient grabs both pockets. He is placed where directed. Is treated for fainting, at the P.L.'s direction. Recovers.)

SCOUTMASTER: What would you do, Sanford, if it were a Girl Guide who had fainted?

SANFORD: I'd say, MICE!

DICK: Not if it was ~~_____~~ (a girl's name.).

(Laughter.)

SCOUTMASTER (to Leland): Now we want a boy who has eaten too much dinner, went swimming too soon in cold water, got a cramp — and went down.

LELAND: Eaten too much; that would be Roy. Roy, consider yourself drowned.

(Roy makes motions of swimming, and dives to the floor. One of the Pigeons dives after, grasps Roy by hair. Roy yells and moves

to another spot. Another of the Ravens "takes soundings" for him — "goes down" holding nostrils with one hand, the other hand in the air. Grasps Roy by an arm, and "comes up" blinking water from his eyes. [Good opportunity for original comedy business.]

SCOUTMASTER (to P.L. of Ravens): Now bring him to.

(P.L. of Ravens directs his Patrol in work of resuscitation. Those not required in the actual work "keep the crowd back".)

SCOUTMASTER: Now, Leland, gives us a boy with a broken jaw.

LELAND: That would be ~~Taylor~~ (a well known talker).

SCOUTMASTER: Ows, fix him up.

(Patient's jaw bandaged.)

SCOUTMASTER: Now we want a broken leg. Who has a broken leg?

*forget work on medicine
necessary collect blankets
sawed to
hubs.
(stitches already made)*

Bob Wingham,
Garrett Taylor,
Howard Visher.

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(Several of the Wood-Pigeons begin hopping, limping and grimacing. ^{Easy to} to chorus of:) 29

Mine's broken.

SCOUTMASTER (to tallest boy); We'll take yours. It'll be a longer job. (To P.L. of Ravens:) Examine the leg, and tell me what kind of a break it is. (P.L. examines.) 30

P.L. of Ravens: It is a compound fracture, sir. 31

SCOUTMASTER: How do you know? 32

(P.L. describes symptoms.)

SCOUTMASTER: Fix him up quickly for removal to a hospital. 33

(P.L. directs his Patrol in doing so.)

(First Aid demonstration continued as desired. At its conclusion there comes a knock at the door. Exit Dick. He returns.) 34

slip

DICK: There is a girl at the door, sir, who wants to join our Troop. 1

(Excitement and exclamations. Scoutmaster exits and returns.)

SCOUTMASTER: Yes, boys, it is a young lady who wishes to become a Scout, and "take real hikes, and all that" she says. What shall we do about it? 2

CHORUS: Let her come in if she is good looking. 3

SCOUTMASTER (toward the door): The verdict is that you may come in if you are good looking. 4

good

(Enter Miss Jennie Rosity—boy dressed as a girl; preferably a boy with a deep voice.)

JENNIE: That's me. 5

CHORUS: Oh, help! Help! 6

(Jennie returns a chilly glance.)

SCOUTMASTER: You say you wish to become a Scout? 7

JENNIE: Yes. I am tired of doing housework after school; sweeping and washing dishes—all that. I want to go for tramps in the woods. 8

SCOUTMASTER: But we sweep, and wash dishes, and anything else we can help at around home.

JENNIE: You do! Hm! (Looks from one boy to another critically.) That's funny. You don't look like sissies, either. 10

SCOUTMASTER: I can assure you we're not. Some of us are pretty good cooks, too—if we do confess it ourselves. 11

ONE DAY'S FUN

JENNIE: Well, I guess I'll join anyway.

SCOUTMASTER: What do you say, boys? Will anyone move that we accept Miss Jennie Rosity as a member of the troop? 13

BOY: I move that we accept the lady. 14

EARL: I second the motion. 15

JENNIE: I knew you would be glad to take me in. 16

SCOUTMASTER: We will have a standing vote. 17

(All, in turn, as called, rise and vote:) No.

JENNIE: I didn't want to join your old Troop, anyway. I'm going to be a Guide. They are much nicer. 18

(Exits.)

REID (who a moment before has picked up the piece of note-paper from beneath the table, opened and glanced at it; addressing Scoutmaster): Here, sir, is a note from the Old Hermit. It must have blown from the table when we first opened the door. Perhaps it explains why he went away. 19

(Hands note to Scoutmaster, Scoutmaster reads, and whistles.)

SCOUTS (crowding around): What is it, sir? 20

SCOUTMASTER: Boys, here is a fine how-do-you-do! Listen! 21

(He reads):

Dear Sir: I ain't a coward, but one thing I don't know anything about is babies. So when I got a letter to-day saying my old friend John Dean, up in Muskoka, had gone and died, and was sending me his baby girl to take care of and bring up, I saw it wasn't no job for a old bach. So when I knew you would come here on account of the storm, like I had invited you to, I knew you, being Scouts, would know how to take care of a baby. So I've lit out, and it's up to you to take care of her. She must be quite little. There is a bottle of milk out in an old pail in the spring. The baby will be brought by a taxi auto from town to-night probably. John's letter said he had arranged that by telegraph. She should be here about 8 o'clock. Good luck to you. J. Van Winkle.

SCOUTMASTER: He'd better say good luck! 22

REID: I should say so! 23

AL: And I should say so! 24

DICK: We all should say so! 25

ONE DAY'S FUN

17

Willie
SANFORD: And a baby girl at that! 26

SCOUTMASTER: But of course, boys, we'll not be stuck! We are Scouts, and we will do the best we can. Of course I know nothing about babies. Who of you are baby experts? 27

Willie
CHORUS: Sanford has a baby sister! Bev. has a baby brother! 28

SCOUTMASTER: Good! We will put the whole thing up to them (Addressing ~~Sanford~~ and Bev:) What will be the proper thing to do when the baby gets here? 29

Willie
SANFORD: Give her some milk. She will be hungry. 30

Willoughby
BEV: And the milk should be warmed. 31

Willie
PAUL: I'll find the milk. (Exits.) 32 *Norman Halloway*

Willie
SANFORD: If she is very small she may not be able to drink milk out of a cup. 33

SCOUTMASTER: What can we do in that case? 34

(General puzzlement; scratching of heads, etc. Enter Paul with bottle of milk.) 35

Willoughby
BEV (to Paul): Put it on the stove, to get warm. 36

(Paul places milk bottle on stove.)

SCOUTMASTER: But what are we going to do about a nursing bottle? 37

Norman
REID: I have an idea! 38

(Exits, and returns with a small bicycle hand-pump.)

(Chorus of laughter.)

REID: Why not? I'll bet it would work all right! Look! (Inserts hand-pump tube in milk bottle, draws up some milk, and endeavors to feed it to Norman. Norman objects, and gets the milk in the face.) 39

Sound
DICK: You are supposed to feed the baby, not give it a bath. 40

SCOUTMASTER: No; I am afraid that wouldn't do. You might blow the little thing up like a balloon. Let us all look around to see what we can find. 41

(Exit most of the boys; Scoutmaster, Sanford, Bev and Reid look about the room.)

(Enter Norman, with a funnel.) *Norman Halloway*

Norman
NORMAN: Can't we use this? 42

REID: Man, you can't feed a baby the way you feed your Ford. You would strangle it!

SCOUTMASTER: I am afraid you would. 43

Wilton EARL (entering, with a sponge): How about this—at a pinch? (Pinches.)

SCOUTMASTER: How would you use it? 44

EARL: Dip it in the milk—so. Then put it in the baby's mouth. 45

Wilton BEV: That would never do. It wouldn't be hygienic. Let me see it. (Takes the sponge, smells it.) Wow! Where did you get it? 46

EARL: On the washtsand. 47

Wilton BEV: Oh, murder! (Throws the sponge out the door.) 48

EARL: It was clean. I washed it with soap. 49

(Enter Merritt with an old oil can, potato on spout. Holds it up. Before he can speak, Bev and Sanford grab and rush him outside.) 60

Wilton SANFORD (returning): These fellows will have us all arrested by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty. 61

(Enter Roy, holding up piece of rubber tubing.)

ROY: How about this? 62

SCOUTMASTER: Now that looks something like a possibility. How about it, Sanford? 63

(Sanford takes and examines the tubing.)

Wilton SANFORD: I believe it will do the trick. I'll try it. 64

(Goes to stove, inserts tube in bottle of milk, and drinks:) Yes, it works fine. I'll try again, to make sure. (He proceeds to take a long drink. A rush made for him by the other boys.) 65

CHORUS: Here! Hold on! Hold on! 66

(The bottle is forced from Sanford's hands and returned to the stove.)

SCOUTMASTER: Good! The nursing bottle question is settled. Now what? 67

Wilton BEV: After the baby has had its milk it should be put to sleep. 68

SCOUTMASTER: Look about, boys, and find something that we can turn into a cradle. Some of you look out in the woodshed loft. I saw a lot of junk there. The rest see what you can find in the way of blankets and pillows. 69

(Exit most of the boys by rear door, two or three by door to bedroom. Enter the boys from the bedroom with armfuls of blankets, etc.)

Wilton BEV: Hold on, fellows! We're not getting ready for a baby 70

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Home

ONE DAY'S FUN

19

elephant!

(A shout from the woodshed, and enter Merritt and Alfred with an old wooden cradle. All gather round; it is cleaned and dusted, by everyone who can get in a hand. The blankets are folded, and arranged, everybody helping. Finally all stand back to view the result.)

SCOUTMASTER: That is fine! Now we are all ready, are we not?

SANFORD: The baby may be frightened at so many strange faces. Let us practice singing her to sleep. (Exits to bedroom and returns with pillow.) I'll make an imitation of her with this pillow.

SCOUTMASTER: Another good idea. Squat around boys, and let us sing something. How about Rock-a-by Baby?
(Song, selected.)

(During the singing, Sanford makes a "baby" with the pillow. Ties a cord about one corner, to make the head; marks the features with a black crayon. One of the other boys hands him a red crayon, with which, as a last touch, he makes red hair. He then places the "baby" in the cradle. The singing concludes.)

PAUL: Is she asleep? (Rises and peers into the cradle.) No, the little rascal is as wide awake as ever.

REID: How could she go to sleep with the kind of face Sanford gave her?

EARL: It's that saw-filing tenor of Dick's that is keeping her awake.

DICK: It's Reid's bullfrog-croaking. It shakes the cradle.

SCOUTMASTER: ~~At~~ suppose you try her with your violin—a little sleep music.

CHORUS: We will all go to sleep on that.

(Violin solo, during which the boys nod, snore, etc.)

SANFORD (looking into the cradle): The young lady is still wide awake. I think her teeth are hurting her. I'll pick her up and sing to her. (Picks up the "baby", and takes rocking chair front centre, facing audience. Begins to sing, others joining gradually until all singing:)

Rock-a-by Baby in the tree top, etc.

(An auto horn sounds without. Is unnoticed; singing continuing.)

(Door opens; young lady appears. Stands in surprise. One by one the boys become aware of her presence, and abruptly cease

singing. Finally Sanford is left singing alone.)

Wille SANFORD (suddenly looking over his shoulder): What is the matter with you fellows? Are you—— (He discovers the visitor. Springs to his feet, holding the "baby" behind him.)

YOUNG LADY: Is Mr. Van Winkle here? He is expecting me, I believe. I am the daughter of an old friend of his, John Dean.

Gene (Consternation. Sanford and the boys near him try to hide the cradle. Norman grabs the milk bottle from the stove and holds it behind him.)

MISS DEAN: Why, what is the matter? I hope I have not——

SCOUTMASTER: Oh, no! No! We were expecting—that is—we—in fact—Oh, pardon me. Let me take your suitcase. (Aside to boys:) For Heaven's sake, boys, get the cradle and things out of the way! (To Miss Dean): We are delighted to meet you. Mr. Van Winkle left us to entertain you until—until he returns.

Gene MISS DEAN (coming forward): But what is the matter? What are you doing? (She endeavors to look behind the boys standing before the cradle. Dick and Reid have joined Norman, to help him hide the milk bottle. Miss Dean endeavors to look behind them. They pass the milk bottle from one to another.)

MISS DEAN: You must excuse me, but really you are all acting so queerly! What is the matter? (To Reid:) What have you behind you?

Gene REID (passing the bottle quickly): Nothing, Miss Dean.

Gene (Miss Dean turns to Norman, who hurriedly passes the bottle on to Dick. Dick misses the bottle, and it falls to the floor.)

MISS DEAN: Oh (of sudden suspicion)! (She springs to the boys standing before the cradle, and pulls them aside, discovering the cradle. From behind Sanford she drags the "baby." She drops laughing into a chair.) Oh, now I understand! Oh! Oh! Oh!

CURTAIN.

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