

THE BUTTER AND EGG MAN 79

BEGIN

MARTIN

I don't believe Mr. Lehman mentioned your name.

PETER

Peter Jones.

MARTIN

[Taking his hand for a moment.]

I'm Mary Martin, Mr. Jones. I'm in the show.

PETER

Really? Our show?

MARTIN

So you and I will probably see a good deal of each other.

PETER

We will?

MARTIN

[Gushingly.]

Indeed, yes.

PETER

Which one are you? In the show, I mean?

MARTIN

Oh, the lead.

PETER

Ma'am?

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MARTIN

The leading rôle.

PETER

Oh! It's a good part, all right. I mean, she gets in a lot of trouble.

MARTIN

You're coming to rehearsals soon, aren't you, Mr. Jones? I'm sure we all want to get your ideas.

PETER

My ideas?

MARTIN

Of course! And I do especially!

PETER

Oh, I don't know that I'd be much good at—

MARTIN

You'd be wonderful! And I can tell!

PETER

I did make a few productions out in Chillicothe that seemed to go pretty well.

MARTIN

You see! I knew the minute I saw you! Now, I want you to promise me you'll come to rehearsals

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and that whenever you have any suggestions for me, you'll tell me.

PETER

[*Weakly.*]
All right.

MARTIN

I'm so glad! And I can't tell you how relieved I am that you've come in to take charge of things.

PETER

I probably won't do much. You see—

MARTIN

[*Feigning sudden recollection.*]
I knew there was something, Mr. Jones. I wonder if you'd do me a very great favor?

PETER

Surely.

MARTIN

I don't like to trouble you, but I left my check-book at home this morning. And just now I saw the darlinest little dress, and they won't hold it.

[*For one terrible second she skirts the edge of baby talk.*]

PETER

Why—that's all right.

[*The check-book comes out again.*]

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MARTIN

Oh, thank you, so much. It'll be taken out of my salary. Just a hundred.

PETER

Just a hundred.

[Starts to write.]

MARTIN

Just make it to cash. I think it's wonderful, your coming in with us, Mr. Jones. It makes everything seem different. Oh, that's just fine. I'm ever so much obliged.

[She takes the check.]

Thank you. Now, don't forget! You're coming to rehearsals, and you're going to tell me just what you think.

PETER

Oh—I was thinking, a little while ago—if you don't mind?

MARTIN

Mind? I'm crazy for suggestions.

PETER

You know that part where you're in—that place?

MARTIN

Place? I'm not sure just which scene—

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PETER

You know. The place—that you go to?

MARTIN

You don't mean the heaven scene?

PETER

No, ma'am. Just before that.

MARTIN

Oh, the brothel.

PETER

Yah. That's where, if I were you, I'd really do some of my best acting—where you bring in the strong talk. You priests are no better than a lot of rabbis—I'd really give it to them—like that.

MARTIN

Oh, yes! Indeed I will, Mr. Jones. And thank you.

PETER

I'll come to rehearsals myself, tomorrow.

MARTIN

Yes, indeed.

[Heads for the center door.]

I can go out this way, can't I?

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PETER

Yes, ma'am. I guess so.
[*He opens the door.*]

MARTIN

[*Takes his hand again.*]
It's been a great pleasure, Mr. Jones.

END

PETER

It has been for me, too.

MARTIN

Something tells me we're going to be very good friends. Because I know you'll produce other plays too, won't you?

PETER

I don't know.

MARTIN

Of course you will—a man like you.

PETER

Well, a few.

MARTIN

And now good-bye—until tomorrow. And I want to tell you what a pleasure it is to be under your management. Good-bye.