

## Buying Eggs

### CHARACTERS

MRS. HAWLEY, a housekeeper.  
JANE, the maid.  
MR. PERKINS, a farmer.

SCENE: A kitchen.

Discovered, MRS. HAWLEY and JANE.

MRS. H.—Now, I'm going to bake a cake; guess I'll make an angel's food, Henry is so fond of it.

JANE.—But, Ma'am, the eggs are most all gone. There's only two left.

MRS. H.—Why, the idea! It is only a few days since we bought a lot of Mr. Perkins. Are you sure he didn't cheat us?

JANE.—Yes, ma'am, because he counted them out while I was right here at work.

MRS. H.—Well, he is coming again to-day, and I'm going to be here myself and see that he counts them right. Those last ones went so quick I am afraid he didn't give us all we paid for.

JANE.—All right, ma'am. I guess I'd better go upstairs now and do the sweeping.

MRS. H.—Very well. You must be real particular about it because, you know, my sister is coming this week and I want everything to look nice.

JANE.—Yes ma'am; I'll do my best. *(Exit.)*

MRS. H.—I guess I'll clean my silver spoons. *(Gets some spoons, a box of whiting, and a cloth, and begins to polish spoons.)* Oh, here comes Mr. Perkins now with the eggs. *(Knock is heard and she goes to the door.)* Good morning, Mr. Perkins. Come in.

Enter MR. PERKINS.

MR. P.—*(Setting down basket of eggs. These can be borrowed for the occasion.)* Good morning. I s'pose you want some more eggs this morning, ma'am.

MRS. H.—Yes, I'll take six dozen. You may count them out into this basket. *(Gets a basket for him, then goes on rubbing spoons.)*

MR. P.—I tell you these are nice, good eggs, ma'am, and fresh laid. My daughter Mirandy's home visiting, and she says they don't get any sech good eggs as these in the city. *(Counts eggs as he puts them in the basket.)* One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine— My, them's nice spoons you're scrubbin' up.

MRS. H.—Yes, they're solid silver. Most of them have been given to me. I've got fifteen.

MR. P.—You don't say! That's a lot. Fifteen! *(Goes on counting out eggs.)* Fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen, twenty, I guess you ain't been married very long, have you ma'am, you look so young.

MRS. H.—Oh, do you think I'm young looking? I've been married for years and I'm not very young any more, because I'll be twenty-eight my next birthday.

MR. P.—Wal, I declare! You don't look twenty-eight! <sup>eight</sup> Twenty-eight! Wal, wal! *(Counts out eggs.)* Twenty-eight, twenty-nine, thirty, thirty-one, thirty-two, thirty-three, thirty-four— And is your husband that young, too, ma'am?

MRS. H.—Oh, no. He's quite a lot older than I am—why, in a couple of years he'll be forty. He doesn't look that old, though.

MR. P.—Most forty? You don't tell me!—My he is a well-kept man for forty. *(Counts eggs.)* Forty, forty-one, forty-two, forty-three, forty-four, forty-five, forty-six— Now, how old do you s'pose I am, Ma'am?

MRS. H.—Why, let me see! Well, why, I should think you are about forty-five.

MR. P.—Oh, shoo, now, I'm older'n that—why, I'll be fifty-two come next August. Maybe you won't think it, but I'll be fifty-two all right. Yes, fifty-two. *(Counts eggs.)* Fifty-two, fifty-three, fifty-four, fifty-five, fifty-six, fifty-seven, fifty-eight, fifty-nine—Don't your mother ever come to visit you here? I s'pose she must be gettin' quite along in years, ma'am.

MRS. H.—Oh, yes, Mother's getting to be quite old. I was the youngest of the children. Let me see—why, ma must be about sixty-five now.

Mr. P.—Land sakes, that's quite old, but she may have a good lot of years left yet. Sixty-five! I declare! (*Counts eggs.*) Sixty-five, sixty-six, sixty-seven, sixty-eight, sixty-nine, seventy, seventy-one, seventy-two. There you are, ma'am; seventy-two nice, good, fresh-laid eggs—not a bad one among 'em, and no little, undersized ones neither.

Mrs. H.—Oh, how nice they look. And how much are they a dozen.

Mr. P.—Twenty cents, ma'am; and that's awful cheap for such nice eggs. Six dozen at twenty cents—six times twenty is a dollar and twenty cents, ma'am.

Mrs. H.—All right. (*She pays him.*) Now, you must bring us some more next week.

Mr. P.—Yes, ma'am. I'll be along again in a few days. Seventy-two eggs don't last very long when they're as good as these. Wal, I must be goin' along.

Mrs. H.—Good morning, Mr. Perkins.

Mr. P.—Good morning, ma'am. (*Exit.*)

Mrs. H.—There, now I know this time he didn't cheat me, for he counted them out loud, right before my very eyes. I don't think such an honest-seeming old man would cheat anyway. Now I can make my angel food.

CURTAIN.

## How Jimmy Saved Pa

CHARACTERS

MR. BICKER

MRS. BICKER

JIMMY

SCENE.—*Sitting room of Bicker home. MR. BICKER seated reading newspaper. JIMMY seated, looking at picture book.*

*Enter MRS. BICKER. MR. B. and JIMMY glance up timidly, then resume their reading. MRS. B. drops heavily into chair, glances severely at others.*

Mrs. B.—My, what I've gone through this past week! Work, work, work, and nothing but work from morning till night! It's the same old story from one week's end till another, slaving myself to death for those who don't appreciate it in the least. (*MR. B. glances at her apprehensively.*)

4

Monday, there was the washing, and a big one it was. If you had any consideration for your mother, you wouldn't get your clothes so dirty (*JIMMY looks frightened*), but you only follow the example set by your father. How many times have I begged you, Mr. Bicker, almost with tears in my eyes, not to use your handkerchiefs for pen wipers; towels, dust cloths, floor cloths and everything else imaginable around that dirty office of yours?

Mr. B.—(*meekly.*) I always forget, Maria.

Mrs. B.—(*severely.*) If you had to stand for an hour over the washtub trying to get them clean, perhaps you would remember.

Mr. B.—You know, Maria, I've often asked you to send the clothes to the laundry.

Mrs. B.—Send the clothes to the laundry! No, indeed. Have them come back torn into ribbons, not half clean and ironed—they oughtn't to call it ironing, really. No; while I have the strength I'll have the clothes of this family washed and ironed properly, tho' I don't know (*sighs*) how long my strength will hold out.

Mr. B.—(*timidly.*) If you would only keep a girl, Maria—

Mrs. B.—(*sharply.*) Mr. Bicker, don't you say *girl* to me again. Such lazy, impudent, shiftless, wasteful, incompetent ones which are the only kind to be found in this town shall never enter my house. I shall do the work myself and it shall be well done as long as I'm here, and when I'm gone—(*wipes her eyes.*)

Mr. B.—Oh, don't, Maria.

Mrs. B.—Oh, it's easy enough to say "don't," but you're not aware, Mr. Bicker, of the life I lead here, while you are doing nothing but sitting in your office. All week I've been a regular slave, and to-morrow's Sunday, and it's just as bad then; but I suppose I'll have to make time to drag myself to church or the neighbors will all begin to talk, though I have nothing suitable to wear. (*Ponders a minute, brightens up somewhat.*) My black silk might do. There's one thing about that dress; it's a good fit. I suppose, Mr. Bicker, you didn't forget to stop at the milliner's and get my new hat, did you? (*MR. B. gives a violent start, unnoticed by MRS. B., who has glanced out the window. She rises and crosses over to it.*) Well, I declare, there's Mrs. Winters and her New York cousin; I must get a better look at that skirt. (*Exit hastily.*)

5