



PUPPET
PLAYS

GRACE STEARNS

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PAUL McPHARLIN

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Columbine's Birthday

1 Scene, 10 Characters, Plays 35 Minutes

Suited to Puppets

As played in Perry Dilley's Puppet Theatre
San Francisco

Woodcuts by PERRY DILLEY

1931

Printed in Detroit

Characters:

APOTHECARY
PIERROT, His Servant
OLD WOMAN
POLICHINELLE
CASSANDRE
COLUMBINE, His Daughter
GENDARME
DEVIL
PARROT
PIG



THE APOTHECARY

Scene: A street. Houses in silhouette against a pink sky, at back;
Apothecary's house, front stage left; Cassandre's, stage right.

COLUMBINE'S BIRTHDAY*
A ONE-ACT COMEDY FOR PUPPETS
by GRACE STEARNS

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As curtains part, the APOTHECARY is discovered before his house, stirring with pestle in mortar; he is singing:

APOTHECARY.

I sail over the hocean blue,
I catcha da plenty a feesh;
The rain come down, she do,
I meex heem in da deesh.
Aie, aie, aie, aie,
Aie, aie, aie, aie—

(Suddenly aware of audience, he bows.)

Oh, hello. I am the old apothecary. I meex in my mortar beautiful cordial for Columbine. Her birthday today. Her house (*points*) where she lives with her rich papa, M'sieur Cassandre. M'mm, lots a money up there; (*catching scent of cordial*) and lots a good smells in here. (*He begins to stir and hum again. Suddenly jumps up.*) Oh, I

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4 have forgot da bottle. I wonder haf I a bottle? (*Goes to house and opens door, disclosing row upon row of shining bottles.*)

Just what I thought: not a single bottle beeg enuf. (*Pauses at door, thinking.*) I must send to the gless factory—yes! (*Smiling.*) He shall go—that lazy, good-for-nothing servant of mine, Pierrot.

(*Calls.*) Pierrot! Pierrot! Hey! Pierrot!

PARROT (*flying to window, where it perches*). Hoo! Hoo! Butter your whiskers! Squawk. (*And other remarks.*)

APOTHECARY (*shaking his fist*). I haf not called you—it is Pierrot—hey! Pierrot! Get out of here!

PARROT. Get out of here! Hello, darling! Coo coo!

APOTHECARY. Shoo! ! (*Hits PARROT with his pestle.*)

PARROT *vanishes with a squawk*, APOTHECARY *shaking his fist at it.*) That green fowl—one of two things shall happen: either Pierrot shall get rid of his parrot or I shall get rid of Pierrot. (*Turning again to window.*) Pierrot! Come here. Pierrot!

PIERROT (*his head appearing at window*). Did you call me?

APOTHECARY. Yes, I called you. I haf a errand. Come here.



PIERROT. What errand?

APOTHECARY. None a your business—come down and find out.

PIERROT. All right; I don't mind.

APOTHECARY (*to empty window*). You neffer mind anybody! (*Goes back to mortar.*)

PIERROT (*coming out of door*). Well—here I am.

APOTHECARY. So—you got here, eh?.. Now look here: I haf made beautiful corrdial for Columbine.

PIERROT (*beaming*). For Columbine's birthday present!.. Oh, let me smell... (*Bends over mortar; APOTHECARY leans back in anticipated enjoyment of his pleasure.*)

APOTHECARY (*as PIERROT straightens up—to his tip-toes*). Pretty good, eh?

PIERROT. Wonderful. (*Leans down again. APOTHECARY grabs him and lifts him back from mortar.*)

APOTHECARY. Not too much—you might want to drink it! Now listen. I haf no bottle for the corrdial. In the gless factory I haf seen the verry one, in the window.

PIERROT. Oh yes, I know—a tall, beautiful glass bottle, with criss-crosses on it. (*He demonstrates, outlining form of bottle with his two hands.*)

6 APOTHECARY. Yes—it wass seven francs. (*Reaching in robe.*) Here iss a ten-franc piece. (*Gives it to PIERROT.*)

PIERROT. Thank you!

APOTHECARY. You will bring back the change?

PIERROT (*disappointed*). Oh!

APOTHECARY. How much?

PIERROT. Ten francs - - - seven francs - - - two francs!

APOTHECARY. No, you don't—three francs—you hear? One, two, three francs.

PIERROT. Oh, all right.

APOTHECARY. All right. Hurry up now—for Columbine. (*Turns back to mortar as PIERROT starts across to stage right, finally reaching COLUMBINE'S house.*)

PIERROT. For Columbine! Oh, Columbine—her house—her window—her very doorknob where her little fingers rest. (*Leans over and kisses doorknob loudly.*) Smack!

APOTHECARY (*looking up at noise—sees PIERROT not yet gone*). What! I think I tell you to hurry! (*PIERROT does not hear—still enraptured at doorknob.*) Hurry! (*He thwacks PIERROT on the head with pestle.*)

PIERROT (*jumping up in sudden surprise*). Oh yes, I was to hurry.

Oh, I will hurry. I will run just as fast as I can run. I will run. (*Exit, 7 stage right.*)

APOTHECARY (*gazing after him*). Ectually he iss running. H'mm . . . (*Looking up at window.*) It iss for Columbine he runs. Then always I shall tell him "errands for Columbine."

(*He goes back to his mortar, sniffing. POLICHINELLE pokes his head around the corner of the house—stage right.*)

APOTHECARY. Oh, such a odor! (*POLICHINELLE tiptoes in, gets on other side of mortar, and also sniffs. APOTHECARY jumps back in alarm.*) Polichinelle! You scare me out of half my life!

POLICHINELLE. Serves you right. What you got there? (*He leans down for a taste; APOTHECARY grabs him back; they struggle, APOTHECARY finally holding POLICHINELLE firmly upright.*)

APOTHECARY. I safe your life that time!

POLICHINELLE. Why, what is it?

APOTHECARY. Deadly poison! (*POLICHINELLE shakes himself free of APOTHECARY and spits out stuff in his mouth.*) That's right—spit it out and *get out*. You got no business in here!

POLICHINELLE. Is that so? (*Nevertheless he does go out, stage left. APOTHECARY looks after him; then addresses audience, downstage.*)

APOTHECARY. Thet rescal—eef he know fine corrdial in there, he

8 might drink it. Old apothecary too smart for him that time. (*Examines cordial, thinking.*) Something ees lecking—m'mmm, a little thyme, mebbe—yes, little leaves off thyme, all powdered up—I theenk in the shop I haf some. (*Goes into his shop, leaving door open.* POLICHINELLE *has heard all of the last speech, peeking around the corner of the APOTHECARY'S house. As soon as the APOTHECARY is inside, he tiptoes in, looks about, gently closes the door, and is just about to pick up the mortar when he is frightened out by the APOTHECARY'S voice, as the latter returns with thyme. Exit POLICHINELLE, stage right.*)

APOTHECARY (*offstage, then entering*). Yes, on the top shelf, just where I thought. (*Brings in the thyme in a bag, gives three shakes of it into mortar; on the last it fizzes up into his face; he sneezes.*) Ah! the perfect reaction! (*Puts down bag; stirs; dips fingers into cordial, examining it.*) What a color—it iss divine! How pleased Columbine will be! (*Starts suddenly.*) But the bottle! It must go into the bottle right away; it weel spoil. Oh, Pierrot, where are you? (*Looks off where PIERROT left—jumps in surprise.*) Why, he ees coming! What a dust he makes where his little feet come running. (*Turning to audience.*) I did him a injustice—he will get here in time after all. (*Bends over mortar, his back toward stage right.*)

(The PIG enters, stage right, snuffing; he has a large lavender ribbon ⁹ around his neck; APOTHECARY, not looking up:) Fine, Pierrot, you get here just in time; bring here the bottle. (The PIG grunts, pokes APOTHECARY in rear. APOTHECARY jumps up; is dismayed at the sight of PIG.) A wild beast! I thought it wass Pierrot. Hey, get out!

(The PIG starts for the cordial, APOTHECARY holding him back; he butts APOTHECARY across stage, toward his shop; APOTHECARY finally makes PIG turn around and urges him toward CASSANDRE'S house, and past it, stage right, where PIG first entered, the PIG meantime grunting loudly, APOTHECARY hitting him and hollering at him to be off.)

APOTHECARY. Hey you! Get out! Out of here, off with you!

(As PIG is finally almost off stage, the OLD WOMAN enters, stage right, breathless, and almost falls on top of him.)

OLD WOMAN. Primrose! My darling primrose piggy—I thought I had lost you! (Pets PIG, murmuring over him.)

APOTHECARY (in surprise). Why Madame Brrown—

OLD WOMAN (seeing APOTHECARY for first time). Mr Apothecary, isn't he the sweetest little piggy?

APOTHECARY. A darling little piggy! (He has crossed stage, and is between OLD WOMAN and PIG; on the last word he hits PIG on nose; PIG

10 *snorts; APOTHECARY turns to OLD WOMAN.*) And what brings you to my shop, Madame Brrown?

OLD WOMAN (*hands clasped to head*). My head—my poor head—such a headache, Mr Apothecary—I thought maybe you could help it. (*On "my poor head" the PIG butts APOTHECARY into OLD WOMAN; APOTHECARY turns to PIG with a sweet word and a wallop; then back to OLD WOMAN.*) Well, Madame Brrown, shall we go into my shop? I could talk more quiett with you in there. We could find out just the trouble, so to geeve you just the right medicine.

OLD WOMAN. Yes, Mr Apothecary. Come, Primrose.

APOTHECARY (*crossing to open door*). Come, Madame Brrown. (*He goes into shop.*)

OLD WOMAN (*goes toward house; PIG tries to get into shop.*) No, Primrose, you can't come in. (*She partly closes door.*) Wait here for Mother—that's the good piggy. (*She shuts door altogether, PIG grunting outside at crack of door. PIG turns around, sniffs questioningly at mortar, approaches it, suddenly draws back. Same business again. POLICHINELLE enters, stage right, sees no one but PIG; starts for cordial, but PIG at this moment decides to sample it and puts his snout into mortar; POLICHINELLE approaches; PIG grunts and butts him away; POLICHINELLE grabs him on other side; PIG butts again, his rear end*

against POLICHINELLE's legs; POLICHINELLE tries to haul him away, 11
from the back; suddenly lets go and reaches for his stick.)

POLICHINELLE. I'll fix you! (Before POLICHINELLE can strike, the
PIG, having drunk all the cordial, is suddenly extremely unwell. He emits
a curious hiccough and collapses. POLICHINELLE regards him with sur-
prise and drops his stick.) Hey! I haven't hit you yet. (PIG hiccoughs.)
Well, well! (Another hiccough.) Oh, I guess he's just singing a little
song—ta dee, dee dee, dee dee, dee dee—

CASSANDRE (*his head appearing at window*). Did I hear a noise? . .
Oh, good morning, Polichinelle.

POLICHINELLE. Good morning. (*He keeps between CASSANDRE and
the PIG, hiding it.*)

CASSANDRE. Did you hear a peculiar noise in the street?

POLICHINELLE. No, I didn't hear anything. (PIG hiccoughs.)

CASSANDRE. There, that noise—

POLICHINELLE. I didn't hear anything. (Another hiccough.)

CASSANDRE. There—*that* noise.

POLICHINELLE. Oh that! Why that's just my pig. (*He steps back,
revealing PIG.*)

CASSANDRE. Oh, a pig. But what does he make that noise for?

POLICHINELLE. Why all pigs make that noise; that's the way they

12 talk—I understand him. (*He swaggers.*)

CASSANDRE. An intelligent pig—upon my word! I must investigate this phenomenon. I shall be down at once. (*He vanishes from window, to appear a moment later at door. He goes over to PIG, looking him over carefully.*) He looks healthy enough.

POLICHINELLE. Oh yes, he's healthy; he's fine and fat. (*He pokes PIG in the ribs. PIG hiccoughs.*)

CASSANDRE (*startled*). What does that signify?

POLICHINELLE. Oh, he's just agreeing with me.

CASSANDRE. Oh. (*He looks PIG over again.*) You know, he looks tired.

POLICHINELLE. Yes, he was tired, but he's resting.

CASSANDRE. You rascal, I'm afraid you have been chasing him.

POLICHINELLE. No, I haven't; no, I haven't—!

CASSANDRE. You must never chase a pig; it results in tough ham. Now with calves and young cows—(*PIG hiccoughs.*) What did he say then?

POLICHINELLE. Oh, he says you talk too much.

CASSANDRE (*enraged*). You insolent fellow, I don't believe a word of what you say—not a word of truth in it—not a word! (*He prances off, indignant, to his door.*)



POLICHINELLE. Hey, wait a minute, don't you want to buy him?

CASSANDRE (*turning with surprise*). Buy that pig? What would I do with a pig? Ridiculous—absurd—!

POLICHINELLE. Why, isn't this your daughter's birthday?

CASSANDRE (*remembering*). So it is—now that you mention it. . . .

POLICHINELLE. Well, have you a suitable present for her?

CASSANDRE. I had forgotten all about it. Dear me—what shall I do?

POLICHINELLE. Well, here you are. What nicer present can you get for her than this dear little pig? The lavender ribbon goes with it.

14 CASSANDRE. A pig—for Columbine? Preposterous! What would Columbine do with a pig? (PIG *hiccoughs*.)

POLICHINELLE. He says Columbine likes pets.

CASSANDRE (*taken aback*). So she does—yes. The little mice that chase their tails, very fond of them. And last birthday, the canary I gave her—oh yes—delighted. But a pig, now—a pig is no canary—

POLICHINELLE. Oh, he sings beautifully. (PIG *hiccoughs*.)

CASSANDRE. No—much too big. Messy. He'd smash the china—break up the furniture. No, we have no place for a pig . . . except . . . the back yard.

POLICHINELLE. Just the place for him.

CASSANDRE. No-o . . . We have a vegetable garden there.

POLICHINELLE. Oh, he likes vegetables—

CASSANDRE. Well, so do we, as it happens. No, I can't use a pig. Thank you for your offer. Good morning. (*He starts into the house, POLICHINELLE calls to him to wait, and grabs his cape, pulling him back.*)

CASSANDRE (*enraged*). Sir! You are forgetting your manners.

POLICHINELLE. Well, *you* are forgetting something important. Listen: in a month or two she'll get tired of him. (*He points to PIG.*) And then (*he whispers*) baked ham!

CASSANDRE. A profound idea; a pragmatcal notion, as it were; it 15
had escaped me. M'mmm—let me look at him again. (*He goes to PIG
and pokes gently with his cane.*) You say a month or two. I give him a
good six months. And I *do love baked ham!*

POLICHINELLE. Ssh! Not so loud! (PIG *hiccoughs.*) Oh, he heard you.

CASSANDRE. Poor fellow! How could I be so thoughtless? Well, how
much do you ask for him?

POLICHINELLE. Fifty francs.

CASSANDRE. Fifteen francs.

POLICHINELLE. *Fifty* francs.

CASSANDRE. I heard you the first time—fif-teen francs.

POLICHINELLE. No. Fifty francs—fifty—half a hundred . . .

CASSANDRE (*digs into pocket; extends money to POLICHINELLE*). Here
are fif-teen francs.

POLICHINELLE (*grabs money and hastily goes, stage left*). Oh, thank
you.

CASSANDRE. A rascally fellow (*turning to PIG*) but a fair bargain,
I think. (*Urges PIG up.*) Come now, piggy, this way. No, no—*this*
way . . . Come along, ducky. (PIG *enters house.*) You shall lie back of
the stove, and you can sleep there until you wake up. (*He closes door
behind him.*)

16 OLD WOMAN (*heard within APOTHECARY'S shop*). Dear Mr Apothecary, thank you so much. (*She opens door, her head just showing out, back to audience.*) Those pills have made my head feel better already. I'll take another in an hour, and another in another hour, if I don't feel better.

APOTHECARY (*also heard from within house*). That's right, Madame BROWN: one in one hour and anudder in anudder hour—and if you don't feel all right you will come right back, huh?

OLD WOMAN. Oh yes, dear Apothecary. (*Coming out.*) Come, Primrose . . . Where is Primrose? Oh, back of the door . . . (*She closes it and looks behind it.*) No . . . Primrose, Primrose! Here, piggy, piggy, piggy. (*She hunts all over, first quietly and then more and more frantically, her voice rising to a shriek.*) Primrose!

APOTHECARY (*dashing out*). What iss the matter? Are you dying?

OLD WOMAN. No, I have lost Primrose!

APOTHECARY. And what iss Primrose?

OLD WOMAN. My little piggy.

APOTHECARY. Oh, you have lost your pig. Well, isn't that fine?

OLD WOMAN. What did you say?

APOTHECARY. I said it's all right. Listen—Primrose iss a intelligent pig, isn't it? (*OLD WOMAN nods.*) She iss waiting a long time for you,

isn't it? (OLD WOMAN *nods.*) Well, Primrose say to herself, "I will go 17
home so she will find me waiting on the front porch when she comes"—
see?

OLD WOMAN. Oh, do you think so?

APOTHECARY. Of course. (*Urging her to leave, stage right.*) You go
right along, Madame Brown—right along. (*She goes, he turns his back
toward shop; suddenly notices mortar upset; shouts.*) What is thiss?

OLD WOMAN (*runs in again*). Have you found Primrose?

APOTHECARY. Oh my corrdial—all spilled—*aie—~~aie~~—!*

OLD WOMAN. Were you making something?

APOTHECARY. Was I making something? Already I had made—
beautiful corrdial—very special—for Columbine—what will I do?

OLD WOMAN (*looking on ground where it is spilled*). Look! Primrose's
hoofprints in the mud!

APOTHECARY. Primrose's hoofprints . . . Your pig—your pig has
drunk my corrdial! (*He shakes fist at her.*)

OLD WOMAN. My pig has drunk your corrdial? *Oh!* My pig is
poisoned!

APOTHECARY. My corrdial iss stolen!

OLD WOMAN. I shall call the police!

APOTHECARY. You shall call the police?

OLD WOMAN. Poisoning is a legal crime—

APOTHECARY. Stealing is a legal crime—

OLD WOMAN. You have poisoned my pig!

APOTHECARY. You have stolen my corrdial!

OLD WOMAN. Poisoned, poisoned! I shall call the police!

APOTHECARY. Stolen! Stolen! *I shall call the police!*

OLD WOMAN (*pushing him back as he is about to dash off*). No! I shall call the police! Police! Police! (*She runs off, screaming.*)

APOTHECARY. Police! Police! (*He goes yelling, after first dashing back to close his door.*)

PARROT (*appearing in window*). Police! Police! Hello darling. Pretty Polly. Come piggy, piggy, piggy. Pretty Primrose. Here piggy, piggy, piggy.

(*The door of CASSANDRE'S house is pushed open and the PIG crosses to APOTHECARY'S shop.*)

PARROT. Shoo! (*PIG retreats. PARROT calls again. He approaches. It flies down from window and peeks at him around the edge of the door, the PIG grunting, the PARROT cawing softly. As they are almost touching noses, the PARROT gives a loud squawk, flaps its wings and jumps at PIG, which gallops off stage right, the PARROT retiring within shop.*)

Enter the GENDARME, with book and pencil.



GENDARME. I represent law'n order.

OLD WOMAN (*following, all out of breath*).
Yes, Mr Officer, this is the right place.

GENDARME. This is the scene of the crime?

OLD WOMAN. Yes, it all happened right here.

GENDARME (*writing in book*). Scene of crime
right here . . . Now madame, I must have all
the evidence.

OLD WOMAN (*showing mortar*). Here is the
mortar that had the poison in it.

GENDARME (*writing in book*). Pig undoubt-
edly demolished by mortar.

OLD WOMAN. Demolished!? Oh, Mr Officer,
you don't think she's killed?

GENDARME. Now, madame, what was your mother's maiden name?

OLD WOMAN (*trying to think*). Oh—I—am—afraid—I have for-
gotten it.

GENDARME. Come! Come! Come! Come! (*Tapping foot as he speaks.*)
You're holding everything up! *What was your mother's maiden name?*

OLD WOMAN (*nervously*). Oh—would—Jemima do?

GENDARME (*writing in book*). Jemima. (OLD WOMAN *sighs with relief*.) Now what was the color of this pig?

OLD WOMAN. It was a darling little—

PARROT (*in window*). Brown pig, brown pig.

GENDARME (*writing in book*). Brown pig.

OLD WOMAN. No, it wasn't a brown pig—it was a pi—

PARROT. Brown, brown—

GENDARME. Yes, that's what I've got: Brown pig. Now, madame, we must have witnesses.

OLD WOMAN. But there was nobody here—that's just the trouble.

GENDARME. We cannot do without witnesses. Here are houses (*he sweeps arm down street*) there must be witnesses within. I shall knock at this door. (*He does so.*) Open in the name of the law. (*Raps at APOTHECARY'S shop.*)

PARROT. Open! In the name o' the law! Coo coo! Hello, darling.

GENDARME. This is contempt of court. I shall write it down: Contempt of the law at this house.

PARROT. Contempt of the law, contempt of the law—write it all down! (*As he straightens up, his hat is within reach of its beak; it nibbles at it, cawing gently.*) Pretty polly. Coo coo. (*He turns around to*

face it.) Hello, darling.

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GENDARME. This is un-press-i-dented! (*He straightens up suddenly, his hat strikes the PARROT on the nose; it vanishes with a shriek. GENDARME strides to CASSANDRE'S house.*) I shall now knock at this house. (*Knocks.*) Open, in the name of the law.

CASSANDRE (*inside*). Did I hear a knock?

GENDARME (*pounds again*). Open in the name of the law.

CASSANDRE. Oh yes, undoubtedly some one is knocking. Let me see (*puts his head out of door*)—an officer! How fortunate!

GENDARME. I apprehend you as a witness in this case. (*He points to OLD WOMAN.*)

CASSANDRE (*looking at OLD WOMAN*). This case?

GENDARME. This unfortunate woman has lost her pig. This is the scene of the crime. Yours is the nearest house. Therefore, I apprehend you as witness.

CASSANDRE. I must refuse to be a witness to any crime. But I have a disorder to report.

GENDARME. Disorder? (*He is ready with book and pencil.*)

CASSANDRE. On this very spot, not an hour ago, I purchased a pig—my daughter's birthday, you understand—went to get it just now and it's gone! Gone, I tell you. *Stolen!*

GENDARME. Second pig stolen.

CASSANDRE. Little white pig—lavender ribbon about neck—

OLD WOMAN. Lavender ribbon?

CASSANDRE. Yes, madame, a lavender ribbon.

OLD WOMAN. Then it's my pig; my pig had a lavender ribbon.

CASSANDRE. No, madame, I assure you, it was *my* pig.

OLD WOMAN. Oh, but mine was a little white pig with a lavender ribbon—Mr Officer! (*He pays no attention, busily writing in book.*) Mr Officer! My pig had a lavender ribbon. Mr Officer! (*She grabs him and shakes him gently.*)

GENDARME. Madame, this is a diffrunt case entirely.

OLD WOMAN. But Mr Officer—

GENDARME. You will be notified directly your pig has been located. Console yourself. The law is taking steps. Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. (*He walks toward her on "steps," forcing her backward off stage left, and bows her off, after each "good morning." She protests as she retires.*)

CASSANDRE. Sad case.

GENDARME. Very . . . What was your mother's maiden name?

CASSANDRE. Jeree. J-e-r double e. (GENDARME *writes.*) Father's name Pierre Cassandre, same as mine. Spell it with a C please.

(GENDARME *writes.*) Number of this house is 659. I presume I shall be notified— 23

GENDARME. Directly your pig has been located. Console yourself. The law is taking steps. (*He takes them.*) Good morning. (*He bows and starts to leave.*)

CASSANDRE (*turning as he is about to re-enter his house*). Oh, Officer—telephone number, Devon 842 . . . And only call me between ten and eleven—in the morning. Good day. (*He enters his house, closing door.*)

GENDARME (*finishes writing, starts off; gets whiff from mortar; draws in deep breath and rises to his toes*). Ah . . . Well, I must get back to the office and make this all out in triplicate. (*He starts to go, stage left.*)

Enter APOTHECARY, *running, stage right.*

APOTHECARY. Oh, Mr Gendarme, all ofer the town I haf been running for you, and now you go away.

GENDARME. What's the matter?

APOTHECARY. I haf to report a crime.

GENDARME. Crime? (*He gets out book again—with great weariness.*)

APOTHECARY. This morning I make in my mortar beautiful corrdial—along comes old lady with pig—und steals it—stolen it iss—my—

GENDARME. Third pig stolen. (*Profoundly.*) Some one has been stealing pigs around here.

24 APOTHECARY. No. It iss not a pig I haf lost. I am not a farmer—look, I am an apothecary—see, my little shop where I meex things—medecines—corrdivals—see? (*He opens door and GENDARME takes a look about. Withdrawing, he writes down the word "Apothecary" with great care, spelling the word letter by letter from the sign above the door.*) I theenk mebber you get me the damages, eh, Mr Gendarme?

GENDARME (*writing finished*). What was your mother's maiden name?

APOTHECARY (*scratching head*). M'mmm—what did that old woman call it? Oh, Primrose—that was it.

GENDARME. Primrose. (*Writes.*) What was the color of this pig?

APOTHECARY (*striving for accuracy*). Little pinkish, whitish, yellowish pig, mebber?

GENDARME. Pink pig. (*Writes.*)

APOTHECARY. And you would get me them damages, huh? It wass verry special corrdival—

GENDARME. You will be notified as soon as your pig has been located. Console yourself. The law is taking steps. Good morning. (*He has turned to exit stage right.*)

APOTHECARY (*protesting*). But I haf not lost a pig—it ees a corrdival—

GENDARME (*turning*). Everything will be found out.

(At this moment great noise, stage right: POLICHINELLE's voice, PIG's 25 grunts—and POLICHINELLE is butted backward across stage by PIG. He in turn bumps GENDARME, who falls on top of APOTHECARY, and the whole pile collapses through doorway of shop. Door crashes to. Grand racket of breaking glass, grunts of PIG, wails of APOTHECARY, shouts of GENDARME.)

APOTHECARY. Oh, my bottles—aie—aie—don't shut him in, shut him out! (The PIG bursts open door and gallops off stage right.)

GENDARME'S VOICE. So! You are the culprit. (He throws POLICHINELLE to centre of stage.)

POLICHINELLE. No, I'm not—let me go.

GENDARME (comes out and throws him to ground). Here is the key to the pig situation.

POLICHINELLE (getting to his feet). I'm not a key!

GENDARME (grabbing him by shoulder). You are under arrest on the following three charges. (He clears his throat violently; POLICHINELLE jumps.) Number one, (he looks in book) for stealing a pig. Number two, (looks again) for stealing a pig. Number three, (again) for stealing a pig.

POLICHINELLE. How many?

GENDARME. Three. (POLICHINELLE has managed to loosen himself

26 *from GENDARME. Now he reaches for his stick, which is visible to audience, but not to GENDARME, who is looking straight at audience.)*

POLICHINELLE. How many did you say?

GENDARME. One, two, three.

POLICHINELLE. Well, one, two, three! (*He hits him on each count, the GENDARME giving a groan after each blow, being completely collapsed after the third.*) Hee hee hee hee hee! (*Picks him up and throws him in shop.*) Here's your friend.

APOTHECARY (*appears at door*). Polichinelle! What haf you done to the Gendarme?

POLICHINELLE (*striking him with fist*). That's what I did to him. (*APOTHECARY melts to ground.*) Ha ha ha ha ha! That's what happens to people who try to get funny with Polichinelle! Ha ha ha ha ha! (*He dances up and down, stage right. Meantime at the very edge of the APOTHECARY'S shop appear first a red hand, then the DEVIL'S head, and, as POLICHINELLE stops laughing, the DEVIL, laughing. Startled, POLICHINELLE turns about to face him.*)

DEVIL. Ah ha! Lying is it? Cheating is it? Stealing is it?

POLICHINELLE. No no nonononono . . . I don't want to go . . . (*He disappears, drawn to hell by the DEVIL, whose laughter continues a moment.*)

(Then enters PIERROT, stage right, bearing a large tray of beautiful 27
cherry tarts.)

PIERROT. I couldn't find a bottle anywhere. But I did find a bakery where they had the most beautiful tarts. So I bought the whole trayful for Columbine's birthday present. See? (He shows the tarts to the audience, almost dropping the tray, and whirls about to catch his balance. Then, kicking mortar out of the way, he sets the tray down.) They're delicious. I ate one to make sure. Columbine! Oh, Columbine, star of the sky, flower of the earth, sun of my day, come out! (The last more or less chanted, with appropriate gestures.) Hoo hoo!

COLUMBINE (inside). Is that you, Pierrot, calling me? (She opens door, and comes out.)

PIERROT. Happy birthday!

COLUMBINE. Oh, thank you, Pierrot.

PIERROT. Columbine, I got a present for ya.

COLUMBINE. Oh, have you, Pierrot? How nice of you.

PIERROT. Guess what it is.

COLUMBINE. Oh, I couldn't guess.

PIERROT. What would ya rather have than anything else in the whole world? Look!

COLUMBINE. Tarts! What beautiful tarts!

28 PIERROT. Cherry tarts.

COLUMBINE. Oh, but there are so many, Pierrot, I couldn't eat all of them myself.

PIERROT. Aw, no, you couldn't—but I'll help you.

COLUMBINE. Oh, thank you, Pierrot. We'll eat them together.

PIERROT (*enraptured, he kneels*). And Columbine . . . when we grow up, will you marry me?

COLUMBINE. Why yes, Pierrot . . . *always* . . . (PIERROT *kisses her hand.*)

(*A music box is heard playing the Blue Danube. They waltz. At the end of the dance they kiss. Suddenly aware of the audience, one runs to each curtain and they pull them together. A moment later, PIERROT parts the curtains and comes out for the tray of tarts, which COLUMBINE helps him to carry. With the curtain still drawn a little, they are seen going backstage together, with the tarts.*)



Curtain.

PUPPET PLAYS *Edited by* PAUL McPHARLIN — a List

1 ● THE WOLF AT THE DOOR, by Grace Dorcas Ruthenburg, author of the *Gooseberry Mandarin*. *Linocut illus.* by Paul McPharlin. How a poet worsts a wolf and pens an ode to the moon. 2 characters; 10 minutes; for puppets, marionettes or shadows. ● 25c

2 ● LINCOLN AND THE PIG, by Edgar Caper. Woodcut mask of Lincoln by Pablo Parlando. Wherein Abe Lincoln is altruistic and his horse Ned isn't; from the well-known legend. 3 characters; 10 minutes; for marionettes or shadows. ● 25c

3 ● WEATHER, by Forman Brown. *Illus.* by Bewick Cutter. Often played by The Yale Puppeteers. Mr. Rainy and Mr. Sunny effect a merger in making umbrellas and bricks. 2 characters; 15 minutes; for puppets or marionettes. ● 30c

4 ● DE COURTIN' COUPLE, by Weaver Dallas. Photo of scene as played by The Rag-Bag Alley Puppets. Southern Negro lore; Sis Goose is rescued from Brer Fox by "plain ole one and sixpence" Brer Dog. 4 characters; 25 minutes; for puppets or marionettes. ● 50c

5 ● PUNCH AND JUDY, a new version by James Juvenal Hayes. Woodcut *illus.* by Pablo Parlando. The old favorite in up-to-date dress; everyone should know this version. 11 characters; 25 minutes; for puppets. ● 50c

6 ● COLUMBINE'S BIRTHDAY, by Grace Stearns. Woodcut puppet portraits by Perry Dilley. Pierrot, Polichinelle, the Apothecary and others in merry fracas about a birthday present. 10 characters; 35 minutes; for puppets. ● 75c

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