

HOOK, LINE AND SINK HER

A Farce in Two Acts

By Susan Owens

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PUBLISHED BY

ELDRIDGE PUBLISHING COMPANY

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DEDICATION

*To Ronald Ibbs and Maureen Halligan. For their support,
faith and encouragement in all my endeavors.*

The Playwright, Susan Owens

STORY OF THE PLAY

A pushy mother, a nervous father, a whiny bride, a younger brother too busy eating to ever say a word, and countless other small town characters make this one of the most hilarious weddings you'll ever attend. Gilbert, the young owner of the local grocery store, proposed to Tina right in front of a display of Wheat Wedgie while looking for weevils that Gertrude Starnes, the town gossip, insists she saw. But pulling Wheat Wedgies off the shelves, which causes Father to lose his job at the local bakery, is the least of the problems. As a pregnant bridesmaid goes into labor at the wedding, Gertrude accuses the young groom of murdering his father while the other bridesmaid, overly-friendly Alice, admits the man actually died on a "visit" to her house. Other affairs, new loves, and a minister who passes out cold, keeps the action and laughs flying fast. This is one wedding you won't want to let get away.

TIME: The present. Summer.

SYNOPSIS OF THE PLAY

ACT I

Scene 1: Thursday night, 10:30 p.m.

Scene 2: Morning of the next day.

ACT II

Scene 1: Saturday, the day of the wedding.

Scene 2: About 30 minutes later.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(8 M, 6 W)

TINA DUNLAP: The sweet and innocent bride, 19 years old.

GILBERT THORNDIKE: The charming groom, about 20.

JANET DUNLAP: The forceful mother of the bride, about 45.

EDGAR DUNLAP: The moldable father of the bride, also 45.

LARRY DUNLAP: The kid brother of the bride, 15 years old.

ALICE HOBART: Town slut, best friend of Tina; about 20.

LOUISE DUNLAP: Tina's cousin, homely but smart, 19.

WENDY KRENSHAW: Tina's pregnant friend, 20 years old.

JACK: A box boy at Thorndike's Market, about 15 years old.

MIKE: A box boy at Thorndike's Market, about 15 years old.

GERTRUDE STARNES: The town gossip and Janet Dunlap's best friend, about 45 years old.

WALLY HAYES: Stupid son of Sheriff Hayes. Wally runs the Rambling Oaks Motel and is about 20 years old.

MATT HAYES: The sheriff, about 40 years old.

REV. HAWKINS: Prim and proper pastor, about 40 years old.

SETTING

The action takes place in the living room/dining room/kitchen combination of the Dunlaps' modest home in a small, hick town. The entry door is USR. There is a small step down into the living room. The division between the living room and the dining room is an imaginary line provided by a staircase which leads up to unseen bedrooms. The kitchen is SL. There is a window in the SL wall. A telephone is located in the kitchen area. There is a small closet under the stairway.

PROPS

EDGAR: box of Wheat Wedgies, phonograph needle, nickel.

LARRY: food, cookbook, groceries, corn chips, magazine.

JANET: bride type magazine.

SET: carton of milk, bottle of scotch, 5 drinking glasses, coffee pot, coffee cups, fishing hat with brass badge, chesse dip, small frozen fish, punch bowl and glasses, champagne, dishrag, ice cubes, phonograph, bottle of iodine, bandage.

TINA: glass of lemonade.

GERTRUDE: tape measure, binoculars, ladder.

JACK: wedding cake, cornchips, photo.

MIKE: cheese dip.

SOUND EFFECTS: Phone ringing in the distance, knocks at doors, "The Wedding March," and baby cries.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: It is about 10:30 on a Thursday night in summer. EDGAR DUNLAP is sitting at the kitchen table with the telephone receiver in his hand. He is eating from a box of Wheat Wedgies as he looks out the kitchen window. We can hear the phone next door RINGING in the distance.)

EDGAR: Come on, Alice. Answer. *(The phone RINGS again and HE waves through the window and points to the receiver he holds. The ringing stops.)* Well, that's a nice, ladylike way to greet me... Yes, Janet's home, but she's upstairs waiting for Tina. She's out with that Thorndike kid again. Look, hon, I didn't call to talk about my daughter's romantic interest. I wanted to talk about mine. How is she? Yeah, you're looking fine too...

JANET: *(Offstage)* Edgar! Is that you hiding down there?

EDGAR: *(Into receiver)* Do you hear this? If she can't see me without loosening her chin strap, she claims I'm hiding. *(To JANET)* Yes, Janet! It's me! *(Into receiver)* I should get her a T-shirt: *(Calls out)* "Olly, olly, oxen free!"

JANET: *(Offstage)* Are you clipping your nose hairs over the kitchen sink again?

EDGAR: I am not! *(Into receiver)* Listen, Alice, I think Janet's coming down, so I better...No!...I don't!...I do not! I don't even have any to clip! *(HE hears JANET coming down the stairs. Into receiver)* Gotta go, hon.

(EDGAR growls into the phone and hangs up. He waves out the window before closing the curtains. JANET appears at the bottom of the stairs in time to see the wave. Edgar sees her and waves his hand as if to wave off a fly. Janet crosses to the window and looks out as she speaks.)

JANET: What exactly were you doing down here?

(LARRY enters from the stairs and sits near the top, unnoticed. He is eating.)

EDGAR: Oh, I... *(HE sees the box of Wheat Wedgies.)*...just got a little hungry waiting for Tina. *(HE picks up the box and takes one.)* I thought I'd have some Wheat Wedgies.

JANET: Wheat Wedgies! I would think you'd be sick to death of them! You smell them cooking all day long at the bakery, use them for bait when you go fishing, and stuff your cheeks full of them 'til you look like Larry's pet rat, Spike.

EDGAR: Spike's a hamster, and I do not!

JANET: Oh, Edgar, please! Believe it or not, you and your son have the only jawbones in the world that are equipped for perpetual motion. We ought to call Mr. Ripley!

(EDGAR and LARRY move their jaws up and down.)

EDGAR: Huh?

JANET: *(Taking the Wheat Wedgies)* You don't need to be eating at this hour of the night.

EDGAR: It's 10:30.

JANET: I'm well aware of the time, Edgar.

EDGAR: Oh.

JANET: Are you aware, Edgar, that Gilbert Thorndike has had our Tina out for well over two hours? You may just have to force the issue when she gets home.

EDGAR: What issue?

JANET: *(Pouring HIM a glass of milk)* The issue, Edgar. The issue. Marriage - what else? *(SHE pours herself some scotch.)*

EDGAR: The days of the shotgun wedding are over, Janet. *(Glancing out the window)* Thank God.

JANET: *(Sitting)* I'd like to know what parents can do when a boy chases after their daughter for an entire six months without proposing marriage.

EDGAR: Oh, that's nothing nowadays. Lots of kids go together for years -- lots of them live together.

JANET: *(Gasps)* Edgar Dunlap!

EDGAR: Why, some of them even have a couple of kids before they make it legal.

JANET: Is that what you call them? Kids?

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EDGAR: Well, what would you call them? (*JANET stares at him.*) Oh! Oh, nobody thinks of them that way anymore. You've got to move with the times, go with the flow, roll with the punches.

JANET: Gilbert Thorndike will roll with my punches if he even suggests such a thing to our Tina.

EDGAR: Why are you so worried about her getting married anyhow? Most of her friends aren't married yet. Take little Alice Hobart next door. She's concentrating on a career before thinking about marriage.

JANET: (*Sarcastic*) Career!

EDGAR: Why, she could get ownership of the Poodle Parlor one day!

JANET: I would hate to think of our Tina spending the rest of her life shaving poodle butts.

EDGAR: Well, at least little Alice Hobart isn't worried about the future.

JANET: Tramps don't plan for a future—they know they have none.

EDGAR: (*Gasps*) Janet Dunlap!

JANET: Oh, Edgar! Wake up! Listen, I happen to have heard from a reliable source—

EDGAR: How is Gertrude these days?

JANET: Do you want to hear what she saw or not?

EDGAR: I'm dying.

JANET: Well, Gertrude Starnes has seen little Miss "Canine Clipper" cutting across the back parking lot of the Rambling Oaks Motel -- at noontime -- with a certain man--

(*EDGAR freezes as he is about to take a sip of milk. He switches to the glass of scotch and takes a gulp.*)

EDGAR: What man?

JANET: That's just it! She couldn't say! Just as she's about to get a look at his face, the midday sun reflects off of something shiny on his fishing hat and shines right up her field glasses. Now, Edgar, you're a fisherman -- (*EDGAR freezes again.*) What could that man have on his fishing hat that would reflect so much light?

End of Freeview

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