



*Adapted and updated from the 1847 play Box and Cox,
Written by John Maddison Morton, Esq.,
Which he adapted from the 1846 French vaudeville Frisette,
Written by Eugène Labiche,
Which he adapted from...
Who knows?
It was a long time ago.
And we don't speak French.*

Initial text taken from Public Domain sources.
All further additions and revisions by
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Scene/Song Sample Packet

*In this section, our two male leads are waiting together in a room...
a room which they have only recently learned their cunning landlady has been renting
to BOTH of them at the same time. (One works days, the other nights.)
They are about to learn that they have - surprise, surprise - even MORE in common...*

FARLEY

Fair. *(Another pause.)* See any good movies lately?

MARLEY

Never! *(A slight pause.)* No, my wife doesn't like them.

FARLEY

Your *wife!*?

MARLEY

I mean - technically, my fiancée.

FARLEY

Oh, well, same difference. Congratulations! *(Crosses to the other side of the room and shakes his hand. They stand for a moment.)* Will she be...? *(He looks round to the door.)*

MARLEY

Oh, no, you won't be seeing her here.

FARLEY

Oh? Oh! I understand. This is *your* place- on the down low. Keeping secrets from the future missus already, eh?

MARLEY

What? Oh, *no!* No, it isn't like that at all. But my wife - I mean, my *fiancée* - she happens to be the co-owner of the Philadelphia Phillies.

FARLEY

(Suddenly.) The Philadelphia Phillies, you say? *(Seizes Marley's arm.)*

MARLEY

Yes. Why are you suddenly so excited?

FARLEY

(Lets his arm go.) I - oh, never mind. Go on. You were saying?

MARLEY

Well, because of her work, during the sports season she and I see each other very rarely, but as soon as the world series is over, we'll - see each other more.

Women are hard to figure. Are *you* married, Mr. Farley?

FARLEY

Me? Well - not exactly.

MARLEY

Ah - a bachelor! Here for today, and ready to play, eh?

FARLEY

Uh - not precisely..

MARLEY

Oh! A widower?

FARLEY

No - not - really.

MARLEY

Well, then, you'll excuse me at this point, sir, if I express my confusion. I was under the impression you couldn't help but be one of those three.

FARLEY

Those three?

MARLEY

Yes. Bachelor, married man, or widower. One of *those* three.

FARLEY

And... you say I couldn't *help* but be one of *those* three?

MARLEY

Of course! (*Very confused now.*) No man alive could!

FARLEY

Ah, well there you have it. You see, I'm not alive.

MARLEY

Not ali - (*Almost jumps out of his skin and rushes to the other side of the room.*) Good god, man! You're not a *ghost* are you? Mrs. Stoltzfus did say you only worked *nights!*

FARLEY

No, I'm not. And yet, I have been *dead* for three years...

MARLEY

Oh! Would you stop that!?! My *nerves*. Either you *are* a ghost or you are *not* dead.

It's that simple.

FARLEY

Well, if you don't believe me, I can point you to a large number of former friends of mine who grieve my loss to this day.

MARLEY

I - hang a moment - you - are dead - but you are - *here*. I say, Mr. Farley!

(Crosses to him with great excitement.)

FARLEY

Yes, Mr. Marley?

MARLEY

Mr. Farley - Johnny - if there is a way in this world in which a man about to get married can *leave* this world but still stay *in* this world, please tell it to me. Right now!

FARLEY

Ah! *(A pause.)* Then might I assume that things are not exactly going great between you and your *fiancee*?

MARLEY

Well -

FARLEY

Not too *fond* of her, are you? *Second thoughts*?

MARLEY

I - well - she's a fine woman - and a *very rich* one - there's just - really, Johnny, there's only one thing standing in between me and happily married life.

FARLEY

And that *is*?

MARLEY

Well, it's the simple fact that... no, I really can't *stand* the woman.

FARLEY

Aha! (*Rubbing his hands together.*) Then there's nothing simpler. Do what I did.

MARLEY

I will! (*A pause.*) What was it?

FARLEY

Drown yourself! (*A beat.*)

MARLEY

Pardon me - what?

FARLEY

Drown yourself! You heard me. Listen - I'll explain. Three years back it was my misfortune to captivate the affections of a still powerfully lovely - though somewhat middle-aged and arguably overbearing - widow who lived in a small castle on the outskirts of Philadelphia.

MARLEY

You don't say! *Precisely* the same thing happened to me three months ago.
Also near Philadelphia.

FARLEY

You don't say. Hmmm. Well, anyway, having come to my senses and feeling precisely as you do now, I decided to do what any red-blooded American male would do, with his back up against the wall and nowhere to turn - in peacetime - I decided to join the army.

MARLEY

What!?! I did, too! How unlikely!

FARLEY

Very. But the Army wouldn't have me. I completely failed the physical in just about every way a man could.

MARLEY

My rejection had more of a *psychological* slant.

FARLEY

Psychological? Hmmm... I might have guessed.

MARLEY

And what do you mean by that?!?!?

FARLEY

You do seem to work yourself into a state sometimes.

MARLEY

I am mentally sound, I'll have you know! My IQ exceeds that of many fine scholars.

FARLEY

Really? Impressive. So I thought the next best thing was to join the navy.

MARLEY

As did I!

FARLEY

But they didn't want me, either.

MARLEY

Me, neither.

FARLEY

So I tried the Air Force. I mean, we all love the movie *Top Gun*.

MARLEY

Yes! Great movie. Thank you for mentioning it.

FARLEY

But I flunked right out of there, too.

MARLEY

They told me to *leave*.

FARLEY

So I turned at last to the U.S. Coast Guard.

MARLEY

This is uncanny. I did exactly the same thing.

FARLEY

And by *god*... I got into the Coast Guard!

MARLEY

Yep! They'll take *anyone*. But it's *also* a very important force vital to the security of our nation. And I wouldn't ever wish anyone to think I don't respect the work they do.

FARLEY

No! Me, neither! Thank you for making that clear.

MARLEY

You're welcome.

FARLEY

(A slight beat.) Anyway, no sooner had I enlisted in that seafaring force, when it suddenly occurred to me that - my god, I just joined the *Coast Guard!*

MARLEY

I thought that, too!

FARLEY

All I had wanted to do was get out of an engagement, and here I had signed my life away. What was I to *do?*

MARLEY

What *did* you do?

FARLEY

Well, wouldn't you know it - my infatuated widow actually offered to pay my way back out of the ranks. Apparently, the Coast Guard was in big need of funding at that time, and she was more than happy to help them out.

MARLEY

My widow did that, too!

FARLEY

Did she? *(A pause.)* This chain of coincidences is *insane*. Anyway, the widow did make one stipulation when she paid my way out.

MARLEY
STOP IT. Mine, too!

FARLEY
I had to agree to stop stalling - even she had noticed I was stalling by then - and I had to agree to marry her THAT DAY.

MARLEY
MINE SAID THE SAME THING. This is crazy!

FARLEY
I thought about it intensely. I weighed a life at sea - patrolling the coasts of our country, my eyes stinging with salt, my skin roasted into leather by the glare of the sun - versus a life spent beside my - my BEAUTIFUL bride. (*Makes an "eh" gesture.*) And then I decided. I *would* rather marry her.

MARLEY
I didn't think about it at all. I just said, "Pay them the money."

FARLEY
I applaud your honesty. Later that day, however, I made an important discovery.

MARLEY
What?

FARLEY
I discovered I was decidedly *un*-worthy of being matched with such a wonderful woman, and I promptly told her so. But - and would you believe it - instead of being flattered by my words, the woman flew into a rage.

MARLEY
I believe it.

FARLEY
She threw a teacup at my *head*. It hit me. It *hurt*. I retaliated by *thinking* about throwing my tea cup at her, but in the end I did the brave thing.

MARLEY
Which was?

FARLEY

I ran out of that room so fast.

MARLEY

I would have, too.

FARLEY

I spent that night at a motel, but her lawyers found me the next morning.

MARLEY

No!

FARLEY

Yep. She hit me with a lawsuit. I was in breach of promise. I didn't even know that was a *thing*. It might not even *be* a thing. But her lawyers are very good; they can make things that aren't things into things.

MARLEY

And?

FARLEY

Well, the lawsuit moved fast. Bankruptcy stared me in the face; and I didn't have a lot of bank to "rupt" in the first place. So I took a desperate step. I left my motel room early one morning with a dark and terrible plan. I made my way quietly to a lonely, seaside cliff, I stared down into the churning waters. I removed my jacket and laid it to one side, I readied myself for the final dive, and...

MARLEY

And then?!?

FARLEY

Then I walked off in the opposite direction.

MARLEY

What?!? *Oh!* Oh, yes, I begin to see. You vanished from the scene. Your jacket was subsequently found -

FARLEY

Precisely. And in one of the pockets of my jacket there was found a note, written by *me*, which read, "This is all your fault, Penelope Anne!"

SONG: PENELOPE ANNE WITH AN 'E'
Track starts... dialogue spoken over top

MARLEY

Penelope Anne! (*Seizes Farley by the arm and walks him to the front of stage.*) Penelope Anne?

FARLEY

Yes, Penelope Anne!

MARLEY

You mean, Penelope Anne, the widow of William Wadsworth Wiggins? Of Walworth, Wisconsin?

FARLEY

The widow of William Wadsworth Wiggins! Of Walworth, Wisconsin.

MARLEY

Co-owner of the Philadelphia Phillies?

FARLEY

Yes!

MARLEY

Of Philadelphia?

FARLEY

Yes!

MARLEY

Well, then it must be the *same* Penelope Anne. And you, sir, are *THE* Mr. Farley. The much-lamented, long-lost Mr. John Farley!

FARLEY

I am, sir!

MARLEY

Then *I* am intended to marry the same woman *you* abandoned!

FARLEY

Ha! Then you are *THAT* Mr. Marley. Mr. *James* Marley!

MARLEY

I am, sir!

FARLEY AND MARLEY

And she... the same....

(singing now)

Penelope Anne with an 'e'

After the 'n' of course - and also after the 'p'

Don't forget the extra vowel, she's known to yell, she's prone to scowl

She's rich as rich can be - Indeed - SPOKEN: "p,E,n,E,l,o,p,E 'space' a,n,n,E"

Penelope Anne with an 'e'

FARLEY

Johnny Farley and Jimmy Marley... I knew our names reminded me of something! (*Grasps him suddenly by the hand and starts shaking it again.*) Well, then, allow me congratulate you all over again, Mr. Marley! I wish you much joy. I never could stand the woman myself, but I'm happy she makes you happy. And now, if you'll excuse me - I think I will be go -

MARLEY

Oh, no, you don't! (*Stopping him.*) If you think for one minute I'm going to let you out of my sight until I've restored you to your beloved Penelope Anne, you've got another thing coming. She's missed you! She'll be overjoyed to see you!

FARLEY

My beloved Penelope Anne? You mean, *your* beloved! She's obviously over me. She's marrying you!

MARLEY

No, sir! I am but a poor replacement. You are her true love!

FARLEY

Well, how can I be her true love, now that I'm drowned?

MARLEY

You are no such thing! And I much prefer the thought of *your* being with her.

FARLEY

Well, I have no wish to come between the two of *you*; only a cruel man stands in the way of a loving marriage.

MARLEY

Well, how's that? You proposed to her first!

FARLEY

And what of that? I came to an untimely end, and you swooped in and rescued the lady. She's yours!

MARLEY

True enough!

FARLEY

True *enough!*

MARLEY

And yet, you, Johnny Farly, being far cleverer than *I*, are much more *worthy* of the lady. Permit me, then, to behave with generosity of spirit - I *yield* her to you!

FARLEY:

To me!?!?... the same

(singing now)

Penelope Anne with an 'e'

After the 'n' of course - and also after the 'p'

Don't forget the extra vowel, she's known to yell, she's prone to scowl

She's rich as rich can be - Indeed - SPOKEN: "p,E,n,E,l,o,p,E 'space' a,n,n,E"

Penelope Anne with an 'e'

(spoken in rhythm)

MARLEY

So why here in Amish country?
How long have you been a baker?

FARLEY

I'm a Chemical Engineer, that's right, a Chemical engineer
Summa Cum Laude from MIT, I had done rather well with my degree...
A pharmaceutical sort of career.... A Chemical Engineer

MARLEY

So... why are you a baker? And why are you rhyming?

FARLEY

The only job I could find in this town... after the day that I had drown.
And baking involves a chemical mind,
Add a touch too much salt and surely you'll find
Your pie will taste like soot! ----- Kaput!

MARLEY

Your story is so similar to mine.

FARLEY

AH! Do tell.

MARLEY

I'm an Orthopedic Surgeon, yes, an Orthopedic Surgeon
Shoulders, hips, and knees and feet. My exit was so bittersweet
Conditions were quite urgent...yes... an Orthopedic Surgeon

FARLEY

And I suppose the butcher was an easy transition?

MARLEY

I had to flee her frightful face, My skills would work in either place
A foot's a foot, a hip's a hip.... A cut's a cut, a snip's a snip
A guy, a girl, a pig, a cow! FARLEY: WOW!!!
BOTH: AMAZING TO THINK WHEN YOU'RE PUSHED TO THE BRINK
THE STEPS THAT ONE MIGHT TAKE... TO SIMPLY ESCAPE....

(singing now)

***But I couldn't I shouldn't And neither should I
It might just surprise you - I wouldn't deprive you
I know in my heart she belongs... to... you... To me??? No....***

(singing now)

Penelope Anne with an 'e'
After the 'n' of course - and also after the 'p'
Don't forget the extra vowel, she's known to yell, she's prone to scowl
She's rich as rich can be - Indeed - SPOKEN: "p,E,n,E,l,o,p,E 'space' a,n,n,E"
Penelope Anne with an 'e'

FARLEY

Oh, you generous soul! I'll not take advantage of such a saintly being. (*Going.*)

I bid you good day, sir!