

LAURA: Tom ! Tom, what are you doing?

TOM: Looking for a door-key.

LAURA: Where have you been all this time?

TOM: I have been to the movies.

LAURA: All this time at the movies?

TOM: There was a very long programme. There was a Garbo picture and a Mickey Mouse and a travelogue and a newsreel and a preview of coming attractions. And there was an organ solo and a collection for the milk-fund - simultaneously - which ended up in a terrible fight between a fat lady and an usher!

LAURA [innocently]: Did you have to stay through everything?

TOM: Of course! And, oh, I forgot! There was a big stage show! The headliner on this stage show was Malvolio the Magician. He performed wonderful tricks, many of them, such as pouring water back and forth between pitchers.

First it turned to wine and then it turned to beer and then it turned to whisky. I knew it was whisky it finally turned into because he needed somebody to come up out of the audience to help him, and I came up - both shows! It was Kentucky Straight Bourbon. A very generous fellow, he gave souvenirs. He gave me this. This is his magic scarf. You can have it, Laura. You wave it over a canary cage and you get a bowl of gold- fish. You wave it over the gold-fish bowl and they fly away canaries. . . .

But the wonderfulest trick of all was the coffin trick. We nailed him into a coffin and he got out of the coffin without removing one nail, [He has come inside.] There is a trick that would come in handy for me - get me out of this 2 by 4 situation !

LAURA: Tom? Shhh!

TOM: What're you shushing me for?

LAURA: You'll wake up mother.

TOM: Goody, goody ! Pay 'er back for all those 'Rise an' Shines'. You know it don't take much intelligence to get yourself into a nailed-up coffin, Laura. But who in hell ever got himself out of one without removing one nail?