

GEORGE BAKER

THE BOSTON
DIP

George Baker

The Boston Dip

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George M. Baker

The Boston Dip / A Comedy, in One Act

CHARACTERS

Mr. Moses Mulligrub, once Proprietor of a Fish-cart, now a rich Speculator.
Monsieur Adonis, a Dancing-Master.
Mr. Richard Dasher, a Fast Man.
Mr. Lavender Kids, an Exquisite.
Mrs. Moses Mulligrub.
Miss Ida Mulligrub.
Miss Eva Mulligrub.

COSTUMES

Full Evening Dress

Scene. —

Handsome drawing room in Monsieur Adonis's Academy. Entrances, R., L., and C. Lounges, R. and L. Screen, L. corner, back. Two chairs, R. and L. of door in flat.

Music, as curtain rises, Straus's waltz, "Beautiful Blue Danube." Miss Ida and Miss Eva discovered waltzing, introducing "The Boston Dip." They waltz a few moments, then stop. Music ceases.

Ida. Now, isn't that delightful?

Eva. Delightful! It's positively bewitching. Bless that dear Monsieur Adonis. He deserves a crown of roses for introducing to his assembly the latest Terpsichorean novelty. O, we shall have a splendid time to-night!

Ida. Especially as those charming waltzers, Messrs. Richard Dasher and Lavender Kids, "the glass of fashion and the mould of form," are to honor us with their presence.

Eva. Yes, indeed. What would the dance be without them?

Ida. Not worth the trouble of dressing. But don't you think that Mr. Dasher is a little too attentive to Miss Eva Mulligrub, — eh, sister?

Eva. Not more attentive, certainly, than is Mr. Lavender Kids to her charming sister, Miss Ida Mulligrub. — Eh, sister?

Ida. But seriously, Eva, I begin to think that you are carrying this matter a little too far. Mr. Dasher might reasonably expect, from the partiality you unhesitatingly show for his society, and the smiles you bestow upon him, to be considered your lover.

Eva. You begin to think. Why, bless you, Ida, I've thought and thought and thought, for a long time, that were I Mr. Lavender Kids, I should pop the question at once, so undeniably entranced are you by his attentions.

Ida. Eva!

Eva. Ida!

Ida. You're talking nonsense.

Eva. Well, you began it.

Ida. But you know you like Mr. Dasher.

Eva. To be sure I do. He's the best waltzer in the city. Graceful, agreeable, and decidedly good-looking.

Ida. And you would marry him?

Eva. Not unless he asked me, and then —

Ida. And then —

Eva. I should remember that he is considered a fortune-hunter, that he is too fond of horses, that possibly he might have an eye on father's bank-book, that I don't want such a husband, and should very sweetly, calmly, but decidedly say, No, thank you, Mr. Dasher.

Ida. Exactly what I should say to Mr. Kids, without the sweetness and calmness.

Eva. I hope we shall not have the chance, for then, of course, we should lose their society — and they are such superb waltzers.

Ida. But what in the world could have possessed mother to have us come so early. Hurry, girls, hurry! And here we are before the hall is lighted.

Eva. I'm sure I don't know. It's one of her whims. One would hardly think that, at her age, she would care for dancing.

Ida. But she does. I caught her to-day attempting a waltz before the glass in her room; and such work as she did make of it!

Eva. She's not very nimble with her weight of years and flesh, but she would come to-night, and without father, too.

Ida. Catch him in such a place! No doubt he's already snoring at home in his easy-chair, speculating on corner lots in his dreams.

Eva. Better that than the old life, dragging a handcart through the streets, and shouting, "Cod! haddock! halibut! eel — eel — eel — eels!"

Ida. Why, Eva, don't speak of that; and such a noise, too.

Eva. Who cares. Everybody knows what we once were, and I, for one, am not going to be ashamed of father's old occupation. He has made money in an honest way: so let us have no false pride, *Ida.* "Cod! haddock! halibut! eel — eel — eel — eels!"

Enter Mrs. Mulligrub, c

Mrs. M. Well, I never! *Eva* Mulligrub, I'm blushing with shame, petrified with mortification, and stunned with grief, to hear such words as those proceeding from your lips. I never heard such language before, never.

Eva. Why, mother! And I've heard father say those very words brought you to the window many a time when he passed; that they were the bait by which you were caught, and that you were the best catch he ever made.

Mrs. M. Fiddle-de-de! That's his twaddle. We're above such language now. But come, girls, fix me up! I'm all coming to pieces. Is that what's-its-name behind all right, and this thingumbob on my neck, and the what-you-may-call-it on top of my head? Dear me, I'm all in a pucker.

Ida. Everything about your dress is charming, mother.

Mrs. M. Well, I'm glad on't. Now girls, look here, I've made an assignment with Munseer What's-his-name to-night.

Eva. A what?

Ida. Assignment? You mean an appointment.

Mrs. M. Well, it's all the same. I'm going to learn to do that dipper thing, if I die for it.

Eva. I don't understand.

Ida. She means The Boston Dip.

Mrs. M. That's it – where you go tipping about, while the fiddlers play Struse's Beautiful Blue Dan-u-by.

Eva. You, mother, learn to waltz!

Mrs. M. And why not? There's Mrs. What's-her-name gets through it, and she's older and heavier than I. I'm going to learn it. What's the use of having money if you can't spin round like other folks. But don't say a word to your father. Bless me, how he would roar! But he's safe at home, snoozing in his chair by this time. I've arranged it all. I've engaged this drawing-room for my own party, and when you're all dancing in the hall, Munseer A – A – what's-his-name will slip in here, and practice the waltz with me, and nobody will know anything about it until I'm deficient.

Ida. Proficient, mother.

Mrs. M. Well, what's the difference? It's all arranged. I'm not going to make a fool of myself before folks when I can pay for private lessons.

Dasher appears, C

Dasher (loud). Eureka!

Mrs. M. (starting). Good gracious! You what?

Dasher. "Fortune favors the brave." Like Cæsar, I came, I saw, and I'm overcome. May I come in?

Mrs. M. Certainly, Mr. Dasher. Your presence always adds a charm to our – what's-its-name – circular.

Ida. Circle, mother.

Mrs. M. Well, what's the odds?

Dasher. Thank you, Mrs. Mulligrub. You are arrayed like an empress; Miss Ida, your costume is only eclipsed by your charming face; Miss Eva —

Eva. "Last but not least in our dear love," must of course be divine; so spare my blushes and your breath. (*Sits on lounge, R.*)

Dasher. Thank you. And now congratulate me. I threw down my pen, after a hard fight with figures, to seek the lonely recesses of my bachelor's quarters, heartily sick of life, when it suddenly occurred to me that this evening Monsieur Adonis gives one of his charming assemblies. Perhaps, thought I, there I may find rest for my weary brain from the figures of the ledger, which are dancing in my head, in the figures of the dance. But did I dream of falling into such charming society? No; most emphatically and decidedly, no. Therefore, like Cæsar —

Mrs. M. And pray, Mr. Dasher, who is this Cæsar you're making such a fuss about?

Ida. Why, mother!

Mrs. M. La, child, there's nobody of that name I'm acquainted with.

Ida. You know, mother, Cæsar was the great Roman general, who —

Mrs. M. La, yes; Mr. Dasher was only speaking metagorically. Cæsar was the man who crossed the what's-its-name, and was stabbed by a brute.

Eva. Never mind Cæsar. Here's my card, Mr. Dasher. Of course your name will be the first I shall allow upon it.

Dasher (sits on lounge beside Eva). Am I to be so highly honored. (*Takes card.*)

Eva. For a waltz, and only one.

Mrs. M. La, child, don't be so unscrupulous. You'll dance till you drop if you get a chance.

Ida. Hush, mother.

Mrs. M. Now what's the matter with you? Mr. What's-his-name will dance with you, too. Don't be so anxious.

Ida. O, dear, was there ever such a torment. (*Sits on lounge, L.*)

Enter Kids, c

Kids (*with glass to his eye*). Now, weally! Have I stumbled into the bodwaw of a bevy of enchanting goddesses? – have I, weally?

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