

Title:	Down at Brook Farm: a realistic comedy sketch in one act
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DOWN AT BROOK FARM.

A Realistic Comedy Sketch in One Act by

Neil Litchfield.

29965
Apr. 19-1900

Characters

Uncle Zach Ryefield)

-----Neil Litchfield

Johnny, his boy)

Melissa, a country girl)

-----Mrs. Litchfield

The city governess)

"Spot," the heifer-----By herself

Scene: Landscape in three, picket fence--set house Right.

Table and two kitchen chairs Right--Dish pan, dish rag, and milk pans and sugar bowl on table--Wash bench and wash basin Left--Pail of water and dipper Left--Towel on fence.

Melissa discovered at rise of curtain washing milk pans--Music by orchestra: "Down On the Farm."

Melissa:- Nigh about time for Pa to come home. He has been down to the city for two whole days. He ought to be here pretty soon, if he ain't got kidnaped by some of them houtcheema-chouchee girls. He told me to watch and see that Rube Payne's spotted heifer didn't get in our garden patch.

Pa is awful fond of garden sass, and it would have just about broke his heart if that heifer had got into them cowcumber, and I guess it would have riled the heifer up a little bit, too.

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(Cow bell heard outside)

Uncle Zach(outside):- Abner, Rube Payne's spotted heifer is coming down the lane there, go and drive her back before she gets in the corn field.

Melissa:- He's come.

(Enter Uncle Zach--L. ^u #. E.--Music: "Turkey in the Straw")

Uncle Zach:- Well, I'll be gol darned!

Melissa:- Hello, pa!

Uncle Zach:- Hello, Melissa!

Melissa:- I see that you have got back.

Uncle Zach:- Yes, what there is left of me. I'm pretty nigh tuckered out, too, and I am so mixed up and twisted that I don't know my head from my heels.

Melissa:- Why, what's the matter?

Uncle Zach:- Oh, the streets are so darned crooked.

Melissa:- Crooked?

(Uncle Zach washing hands at bench)

Uncle Zach:- Yes. Actually the streets are so crooked that the other day I started to go from the tavern down to the

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depot and I met myself coming back.

Did your ma get that letter I wrote to her?

Melissa:- What letter? What was it about?

Uncle Zach:- Well, you see, I went into one of them places where they have a lot of little doll babies strung up in rows on a rack, and you throw base balls at them. If you hit one you get a good cigar. Well, sir, I'll bet I threw them base balls at them doll babies for more than half an hour and I never hit one of them, and the next day I wrote home to your ma and told her how I missed the children.

Is supper ready?

Melissa:- No, it's over. I got some victuals warming in the oven for you though. Be you hungry?

Uncle Zach:- Hungry? I am hungrier than a bear.

Melissa:- Didn't you get noththing to eat down to the city?

Uncle Zach:- No; I went into a place I thought was a restaurant, but I heard a man call for saratoga chips and I knew it was a gambling den and I got out of there darned lively.

Did Rube Payne's spotted heifer get in the garden patch since I been gone?

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(4)

Melissa :- No; I watched all day and I sot up nights some but I never caught her in there.

Uncle Zach :-Well, that's a good gal. Now, Melissa, I've bought you a present.

Melissa:-Present for me? What is it?

Uncle Zach:- (Takes fiddle out of flour sack) A bran new fiddle.

Melissa:-Fiddle? Gosh!

Uncle Zach:- Yes; and it's a good one, too. Cost a dollar and sixty-five cents.

Melissa:- I'm glad the heifer didn't git in the garden sass.

Uncle Zach:- Now, you can tune it up and play for me after a while.

Uncle Zach:- (Cow bell heard outside) There is that heifer comin' down the lane again. You go and drive her back, and when Johnny gits home from school you tell him to watch her and keep her off the farm. Now hurry up.

Melissa:- Well, I'm hurrying, aint I? (Exit L. ^u#. R.)

Uncle Zach:- Well, I've been down to the city a couple of days and I never had such a time in my life.

(Song: "Never Had such a Time in My Life")

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SONG

Never Had such a Time in My Life

1st Verse

Me and my wife came to town tother day

Never had such a time in my life,

Had on my wagon a big load of hay,

Never had such a time in my life

Some fellers on the street hollered "Look at the jay,"

I jumped off the wagon and my team run away

I was looking for my wife the rest of the day

Never had such a time in my life

Chorus

Never had such a time in all my life

I couldn't find my team and I couldn't find my wife

Never had such a time in all my life

Never had such a gol darned time

2nd Verse

When I jumped off the wagon to chase that scamp

Never had such a time in my life

I run right in to a big street lamp,

Never had such a time in my life

I fell in the road and I bumped my head

Skinned my shin bone, skinned it bad

When I tore my pants it made me mad

Never had such a time in my life

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Chorus

3rd Verse

Run right into a dry goods store

Never had such a time in my life

Pretty looking critter with my pants all tore

Never had such a time in my life

Asked a lady clerk in there

If she'd seen my wife Jerusha anywhere

She thought I was crazy and run up stairs

Never had such a time in my life

Chorus

4th Verse

Jumped in the elevator and pulled the string

Never had such a time in ~~all~~ my life

It shot right up the gol darned thing

Never had such a time in my life

It kept on going till it got to the top

And when it got there it didn't stop

Till it fell in the alley on the ground kerflop

Never had such a time in my life

(Exit Uncle Zach after song--Lively music--Governess enters from house)

Governess: -Well, really, this is rural simplicity. Mr. Rye-

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field has engaged me to come down here and instruct his son and daughter in the art of music and elocution. Judging from the specimen that I have just seen in the house I imagine they are more suited for the plow and washtub. However, if he is willing I am. His case makes me think of the old saying, "If you will dance you must pay the fiddler."

(Violin solo by governess)

Johnny:- (Cow bell rings outside--Johnny enters talking off)
I ain't going to watch that old heifer no more. You can tell pa if you want to. Tattle tale, tattle tale.

Governess:- Here, here--what do you want?

Johnny:- I want to go out. (Runs off)

Governess:- Why, that must be one of my new pupils.

Johnny:- (Johnny re-enters) I bet that is the new teacher. Be you the new teacher?

Governess:- Yes, I am the new teacher.

Johnny:- Well, I'm one of your new pimples.

Governess:- You are? What is your name?

Johnny:- My name is Jonathan. Pa calls me Johnny, but the boys at school call me pudden-head.

Governess:- Is that all of your name?

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Johnny:- No; I've got a middle name but I can't pronounce it--
I forgot it. Pa put all my name on the tag there. (Has express
tag attached to waist)

Governess:- Oh, your name is on the tag is it? Jonathan
Jeremiah Jehosaphet Ryefield. Well, who in the world ever
gave you such a name as that?

Johnny:- I don't know, but when I grow up if I find out I'll
make it hot for 'em.

Governess:- But what do you wear that tag for?

Johnny:- I don't know. Pa sent me down to the city on the
cars with some yearling calves and they put a tag on the calves
and they put one on me.

Governess:- So you went by freight?

Johnny:- I had to go by freight 'cause ^{I stuttered} so I couldn't express
myself.

Governess:- I see you got your books but what have you got in
that bottle?

Johnny:- I've got a grasshopper and two bumble bees.

Governess:- Bumble bees! Don't open it here! Put it away! You'll
get stung!

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Johnny:- They can't sting you; I pulled out their stingers yesterday.

Governess:- Well, they might. I don't care to chance it. You better put them away.

Johnny:- Don't you want to see the grasshopper?

Governess:- No; I don't want to see the grasshopper.

Johnny:- I can make that grasshopper give you molasses.

Governess:- Put it away, Johnny. Put it in your pocket.

Do you go to school?

Johnny:- Yes, sir! Yes, maam.

Governess:- What class are you in?

Johnny:- I'm in the class with my brother. Do you know my brother? He is a bigger fool than I am.

Governess:- You did not tell me what class you were in.

Johnny:- I'm in the B class now. They put me in the B class because I had the hives.

Governess:- Well, I'll have to see how proficient you are in your studies. I'll try you with a few examples in arithmetic.

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Johnny:- I've got a 'rithmetic.

(Goes to hand her arithmetic)

Governess:- Well, I don't require it. Supposing you had five
1
dollars and should ask you for the loan of three, what would
you have left?

Johnny:- I ain't got no money. Pa has got all the money. He
will pay you when he comes up here.

Governess:- Oh, you don't understand. Here is another little
sum in addition.

Johnny :- Can I do it on my slate?

Governess:- No, do it in your head. It is easy.

Johnny:- No, it hurts my head to do 'em.

Governess:- If your father should give your mother a twenty-
dollar bill and a ten-dollar bill what would she have?

Johnny:- She'd have a fit. She never got so much as that.

Governess:- You are too smart for me, Johnny; you can sit down--
the examination is over.

Johnny:- I can't sit down--not since yesterday.

Governess:- Why, what happened yesterday?

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Johnny:- Yesterday, Pa mashed his thumb with a hammer and I laughed at him.

Governess:- Do you know, Johnny, when I was a child and my father had to punish me he said that it hurt him just as bad as it did me.

Johnny:- That's what my father says, but it don't hurt him in the same place.

(Johnny takes out sling shot and aims at teacher)

Governess:- Well, Johnny, I'll give you a lesson now in elocution. Now when you first come out on the stage, you walk down to the front and--

Johnny:- Hold on, teacher, that bee has got out of the bottle.

(Business of writhing and squirming from bee in pocket)

Governess:- Have you got him?

Johnny:- No, he has got me.

Governess:- Did the bee sting you?

Johnny:- Yes, maam.

Governess:- Where?

Johnny:- In my hip pocket.

(Goes up to table) Didn't Pa bring me nothing?

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Governess:- Now pay attention, Johnny, and I'll show you once more.

(Business of Johnny getting hand stuck in sugar bowl and trying to get it out without teacher seeing him) Why what is the matter with him! He is having a fit.

Johnny, what can I do? shall I go for the doctor?

Johnny:- No; go for a cork screw. I've got to go and feed my chickens.

Governess:- He is hiding something. Let me see what you have in your pocket.

I ain't got nothing.

Governess:- How in the world did you get your hand in that sugar bowl?

Johnny:- Somebody must have put it in when I wasn't looking.

Governess:- Take it out of there.

Johnny:- I can't.

Governess:- Why can't you?

Johnny:- 'Cause I've got some sugar in it.

Governess:- Straighten your hand out like this.

(Showing him)

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Johnny:- Then I'll drop the sugar.

Governess:- (Pulls sugar bowl off Johnny's hand and puts it on the table) I'm all out of patience with you. I shall tell your father that you are too stupidified to learn anything.

Johnny:- Teacher, can I go out? I swallowed my slate pencil.

Governess:- Now, Johnny, pay attention and I'll show you once more. You make a bow something like this. (Makes elaborate bow and Johnny laughs) What are you laughing at?

Johnny:- You look so funny.

Governess:- Now, I want you to try it.

Johnny:- Want to hear me speak my piece?

Governess:- All right, go ahead.

Johnny:- (Makes imitation bow) I'll never chew tobacco--

Governess:- Take off your hat, Johnny.

(Takes off hat--has mouse trap on head) What in the world have you got that trap on your head for?

Johnny:- There was a boy said I had rats in my garret.

Governess:- Well, take it off.

(Johnny chews gum) Here give me that gum.

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Johnny:- I'll give you half of it.

Governess:- Take it out of your mouth.

(Johnny puts gum behind ear)

Governess:- Now speak these lines after me: There was a man
in our town and he was wondrous wise--

Johnny:- I know that--that's in my mother goose book:

There was a man in our town
And he was wondrous wise;
He jumped into a bramble bush
And he scratched out both his eyes!

Governess:- Let your voice fall there.

Johnny:- And he scratched out both his eyes!

And when he saw his eyes were out,
He searched around with his might and main;
And he married a widow with eleven kids
And now his eyes are open again.

Governess:- That's not right. You know better than that. You
are just doing that to annoy me.

Johnny:- But I got another one. Here's one; I won a prize for
speaking this one. I won a bran new tin dipper. It looks
just like silver when it's scoured.

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Johnny:- (Turning over leaves of book) Here it is where the leaf is turned down.

Governess:- Well, go ahead, Johnny and see if you can't do better this time.

Johnny:- (Business with bowing and wiping nose with handkerchief)

Now if I make any mistakes you tell me.

The boy stood on the burning deck

And he stood on the deck.

The boy stood on the burning deck

And his father told him to come away from there.

The boy stood on the burning deck

And his father told him to come away from there,

And he said he wouldn't come.

The boy stood on the burning deck

And his father told him to come away from there,

And he said he wouldn't come.

And he said he would come.

The boy stood on the burning deck

And his father told him to come away from there,

And he said he wouldn't come

And he kept standing there

And he kept standing there.

(Johnny bursts out crying loudly)

Governess:- (Governess comes down and pats Johnny on the back)

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Oh, don't cry, Johnny. You'll do better next time.

(Cow bell is heard outside--Spotted heifer comes rushing on and down stage--Governess screams and rushes across the stage and gets upon table--Heifer rushes over to table, turns around and kicks at table several times--Johnny left with whip.)

Curtain.