

THE JOKE'S ON YOU

An original musical comedy.

Book and lyrics by James C. Main, Edward Atwater, and Arthur M. Mellor

Music by Arthur M. Mellor

ACT I

Scene 1. Pancake Flats, Kansas; Street scene; Extras milling around stage rear; enter boy stage right and girl stage left.

BOY: Good morning, Sadie!

GIRL: Howdy, Li'l Abner! (Boy and girl join crowd at stage rear. Enter Corny Fritter and Flo from stage left. Flo joins crowd at rear.)

CORNY: Mornin', everybody!

ALL: Mornin', Corny! (etc.)

SORNY: Sure is a nice day!

Song; IT'S A LOVELY DAY IN PANCAKE FLATS Solo by Corny Fritter with Chorus.

CORNY: It's a lovely day in Pancake Flats,  
The birds are flying high;  
Ladies and gents, please remove your hats,  
Throw them into the sky!

It's a lovely day in Pancake Flats,  
The clouds are white as snow;  
The sun is drying up the dew,  
And I'm with my best gal, Flo.

CHORUS: It's a lovely day in Pancake Flats,  
And this is our day off;  
Tonight is the barnyard dance,  
The one up by the loft. (Enter Metro G. Mayor.)

It's a lovely day in Pancake Flats,  
There's a picnic lunch today.  
There'll be lots of corn on the cob,  
So let's all shout hooray! Hooray!

CORNY: It's a lovely day in Pancake Flats,  
Let's step out for a stroll;  
And we'll take our fishing poles along  
Down to the swimming hole.

There'll be eating, swimming, fun for all,  
It's a grand time for romance;  
Let's go, folks, and have a spree  
Before the barnyard dance.

CHORUS: It's a lovely day in Pancake Flats,  
The birds are flying high;  
Ladies and gents, please remove your hats,  
Throw them into the sky!

It's a lovely day in Pancake Flats,  
The clouds are white as snow;  
The sun is drying up the dew,  
And the temperature is low. (Metro steps up  
to Corny in stage center.)

METRO: I beg your pardon, sir. I don't suppose you've heard of me, but I'm Metro G. Mayor, you know, the one who roars before every movie. (Roar.) I'm a Hollywood producer, and I'm looking for a new face.

CORNY: Well, I don't think you're that bad-looking.

METRO: No, that's not what I mean. I'm looking for a new actor. When I heard you singing, I knew you were the one for my new extravaganza, A Winter Place. You'll play opposite Cynthia Wynthrop,

CORNY: Me next to the real Cynthia Wynthrop? Hot dog!

METRO: Yes. As a matter of fact, I discovered her too. In short,

Song: THE DISCOVERY SONG Solo by Metro G. Mayer

METRO: Greta Garbo and Helen Hayes  
Were my best in their days;  
But now with the coming of a brand new age  
I'm forced to turn to the popular rage.

Refrain: That's why I need you,  
Yes, indeed I do,  
To come to Hollywood,  
And do the films some good.

Since Gregory Peck is out of place  
We need some one with a brand new face;  
Since Tyrone Power took a mort,  
We need some one to hold the fort.

Refrain.

When Scott Brady was shooting up the plain  
I viewed the flicks with great disdain.  
When Charlie Chaplin clowned around  
That's the time they turned to sound.

Refrain.

When Rudy Valey sang a score  
There never were complaints of bore;  
But as other movies were made,  
The great Valey began to fade.

Refrain.

When Marlene Dietrich was the fad  
And all the villians were really bad,  
There romantic movies began,  
And now I've found the perfect man.

Refrain.

How fast can you pack your bags so that we can leave  
for California?

CORNY: Aw, shucks, M.G., I ain't got no clothes but the  
ones I'm wearing.

Curtain

Scene 2. M.G.M.'s office in Holly wood; House scene;  
Onstage are Corny Frittor, Metro G. Mayor, and Noel, his  
secretary.

METRO: The first thing we must discuss is your renovation.  
You were brought here to play the part of a romantic hero.  
However, with your name and accent, you won't go far.  
Let's discuss your new first name first, so to speak.  
Something like Jim, that sounds rather masculine. No, no,  
perhaps Jock. No, Jack, that's it. Now for your last  
name, something fit for a star. Hm. That's it, Starr.  
That's a rather stellar name.

JACK: I thought I was supposed to be a man.

METRO: What do you mean?

JACK: You can't call me Stella.

METRO: Yes, and speaking of accents, can you speak in a  
more refined manner?

JACK: (With no accent) You mean like this?

METRO: Well, you are a good actor, aren't you?

JACK: No. Actually I speak like this all the time. We just

put on our accents to fool the tourists back home.

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METRO: Now I know I can use you, so let's get back to business. About your contract, as I told you in Pancake Flats, you'll be co-starring with Cynthia Wynthrop.

NOEL: Louella Parsons says she's not really a blond.

METRO: Quiet, Noel, when I want your advice, I'll give it to you. Cynthia is in the reception room. We can discuss your contracts together. Noel, please get Miss Wynthrop.

NOEL: Yes, sir. (Noel leaves stage right, returns with Cynthia Wynthrop. Cynthia stands by desk.)

CYNTHIA: Hello, M.G., darling.

METRO: Hello, Cynthia. I'd like you to meet your new leading man, Jack Starr.

CYNTHIA: How do you do, darling. (She kisses Jack on forehead.) It's so nice to meet you.

JACK: It's rather nice to meet you also, Miss Wynthrop.

CYNTHIA: (Sitting down.) Please, darling, to you it's Cynthia.

METRO: Now that you two have met, let's get on with the business. Cynthia, you will play Doris, and Jack, you will play Alec in my new romantic drama, A Winter Place. You can just sign here; everything's in order. Noel will send you your shooting assignments.

JACK: (With accent) Sounds like an assassin.

METRO: What, Jack?

JACK: (without accent) I need an anacin.

METRO: Aren't you feeling well?

JACK: I'm feeling fine. I just heard that it was the thing to do in Hollywood in the morning.

METRO: I see. Here, sign on the dotted line. (He hands Jack and Cynthia their contracts. Cynthia signs hers.)

JACK: Which name should I use?

METRO: Your real one, of course. (Jack starts to sign Corny Fritter.) No, no, now Jack Starr is your real name. (Jack signs Jack Starr.) O.K., Cynthia, thanks a lot. We'll see you later.

CYNTHIA: Right, M.G. Goodbye, Jack. (She exits stage right.)

JACK: She's a good-looking girl. And awfully nice, too.

METRO: Come back to earth, Jack. I want you to meet some of my other discoveries. Noel, go get the leading men and ladies in the other three movies I'm making. (Noel

leaves stage right and returns with Buster Crebbe, 5  
Jane Oop, Rock Pebble, Brenda Gee, Tom Mex, Dale Ovens,  
and Gabby Hawes, all in movie costumes. They line up in  
stage center.) People, I want you to meet Jack Starr, my  
new discovery, who is going to play Alec in A Winter Place.  
Jack, this is Buster Crebbe. He's starring in our  
current film, The Ape and I, you know, one of those spine-  
tingling jungle movies.

BUSTER: Hi, Jack.

METRO: And Jane Oop.

JACK: Hello, Jane.

JANE: How do you do, Jack?

METRO: This is Rock Pebble, who plays the King of Swing in  
our new rock and roller, Sing Me the Blues Or I'll Die  
In My Shoes.

ROCK: Hiya, Jack.

JACK: Hello, Rock.

METRO: And Brenda Gee, Tom Mex, Dale Ovens, and Gabby Hawes.

(pointing) Tom, Dale, and Gabby are in the shooting of  
our new adult western, Custer's First Stand.

ALL: Hi, Jack! (etc.)

JACK: Hello, everybody.

METRO: Noel will send you your assignments and we'll  
start shooting Monday.

ALL: O.K., M.G. (etc.) All but Metro and Jack exit stage  
right.)

METRO: It's about lunchtime for me. Care to join me, Jack?

JACK: No, thanks, M.G. If you don't mind, I'll stay here  
and look at these pictures.

METRO: O.K., Jack. See you later. (Exit stage right. Jack  
looks at the pictures on the walls. He turns to the  
audience and steps into the spotlight. All lights off  
except spot.)

JACK: Cynthia. I' can't get her out of my mind.

Song: CYNTHIA Solo by Jack Starr

Cynthia, I'm lost in a world of mist

Ever since that first kiss

That you gave to me.

Cynthia, with the bewitching eyes

And all your tender sighs,

For someone like me.

Cynthia, I'll love you till the day I die,  
Till the sea climbs to the sky,  
I'm yours to then, now and ever,  
Cynthia, I've prayed the whole day through  
Hoping our love is true  
For you and for me.

Cynthia, I'll love you till the day I die,  
Till the sea climbs to the sky,  
I'm yours to then, now and ever,  
Cynthia, I'm lost in a world of mist  
Ever since that first kiss  
That you gave to me.

Cynthia, I love you so.

Curtain

## ACT II

Scene 1. Western set of M.G.M. Studios. Metro sitting beside right tormentor. Curtains; desert; campfire.

METRO: Alright, let's get this show rolling. Campfire scene, take four, Custer's First Stand. Actors ready? Dale? Gabby? O.K., lights camera, action. (Roar) (Dale Ovens, Gabby Hawes, and extras ~~enter stage right~~ and settle around campfire stage center.)

EXTRA I: What a long day! My feet is aching!

EXTRA II: Yea, this is our eight day out; I wanna be getting back to the bunk.

DALE: Daddy, do you think we'll ever find Custer? He's been out looking for Injuns for two weeks now.

GABBY: Don't worry, little darling. We'll find him. He can't be far from here. After all, you can hear those Injuns rampaging. (War whoops heard off stage.)

DALE: Oh Daddy, Custer might be hurt. Can't we do anything?

GABBY: You know very well that we're doing everything possible. Why not hit the hay so's we can get an early start in the morning?

DALE: But Daddy, I can't sleep. (Coyote cry) What's that? Why what is this? I'm so nervous. I just don't know what's the matter.

GABBY: NOW, dear, just because this is an adult western, we

mustn't get neurotic.

METRO: (aside) Arthur, cut that line before printing.

GABBY: But wait! Is that thunder I hear? No! It's a horse!  
Could it be?

DALE: It is, Daddy! It is General Custer! I can tell by  
the horse hair on his hat! General, general, are you  
alright? (Enter Buster Crebbe dressed in leopard skin.)

BUSTER: Ugh! How are you? You Dale, me ~~Tarzan~~ Custer.

(Typical Tarzan scream. Dale, Gabby, and extras look be-  
fuddled but continue.)

DALE: Are you alright? Are you alright?

BUSTER: Me fine, except for a few elephant bites.

METRO: Arthur, let me see that script. Let's go! Continue!

DALE: I'm so glad you're well. I was so worried.

Song: COMING BACK Duet by Dale Ovens and ~~Gabby Hawes~~ <sup>Buster Crebbe</sup>.

DALE: I thought that you would not come back,  
I thought that you would not come back.

But now that you are here,

I do see you so clear,

So please take that arrow from your back.

BUSTER: Oh, cowgirl, me come back to you,

Yes, cowgirl, me come back to you.

But now that we are here,

And you're so full of cheer,

Why not go back to your nom in Timbucktoo.

DALE: Why do you treat your gal so bad?

Why do you treat your gal so bad?

But now that you are here

~~Take~~ the nyin-nyin from your ear,

And please remove the arrow from your head.

BUSTER: Yes, cowgirl, me treat you so bad,

Yes, cowgirl, me treat you so bad.

But now that we are here,

And you seem so full of cheer,

Why not go back to your Mom and to your Dad?

BOTH: But I think we can get along,

But I think we can get along.

With just a little dough

We will quarrel no more

And we will happily end this song.

METRO: Cut, cut! That's horrible! Crebbe, how did you get in here? Don't bother explaining. Break until next Monday. Well, this will give me a chance to get a head start on our great stereophonic cininascope spectacle, The Ape and I, on sound stage B.

Curtain.

Scene 2. Forest set, campfire.

METRO: Alright, let's get this show on the road. Campfire scene, take three. Lights, camera action. (Roar) (Enter Jane Oop and ape extra. They sit by campfire.)

JANE: Daddy, when will Tarzan come home? He's been off fighting mad elephants for two weeks. By the way, Daddy, why are elephants grey?

EXTRA: So you can tell them from oranges, stupid.

JANE: Let's look for him, Daddy.

EXTRA: O.K. We'll organize a caravan in the morning.

JANE: Wait, Daddy. I hear the squeaking of vines. Could it be? Yes, it's Tarzan, Home from the Hills. I can tell by the leopard skin. (Enter Jack Starr dressed in Madison Avenue suit.)

JACK: Good day, Jane; hello, father-in-law.

JANE: Are you alright?

JACK: Yes, although I suffered a slight concussion when I was hit by a car.

METRO: What's going on here? No, don't stop now.

JANE: Thank goodness you're O.K. I would have screamed if you'd been hurt.

Song: I COULD HAVE SCREAMED Duet by Jane Oop and Jack Starr

JANE: I could have screamed (scream)

If I had dreamed

You'd be away from me so long!

JACK: Why should you scream? (scream)

Would I be mean

And stay away from you so long?

BOTH: Can it be true

That I'm with you?

It is so real



JANEE                    That you make me squeal, (scream)  
 I could have squirmed (squeak)  
 If I had learned  
 You were ate by an elephant!

JACK:                    Why should you squirm (squeak)  
 When I just burn  
With a sizzling love for you?

BOTHE                    Can it be true  
That I am with you?  
It is so real  
That you make me squeal, (scream)

JANE:                    I could have cried (cry)  
 After that sigh  
 If you got hit by that poison dart.

JACK:                    Why should you cry (cry)  
 When I just try  
To make a stab at love?

BOTH:                    Can it be true  
That I'm with you?  
It is so real,  
That you make me squeal (scream)

METRO: Stop, stop! This take is ridiculous. The only good  
~~part~~ part in the take is my roar. Next Friday we've got to  
 get organized. Well, maybe Sing Me the Blues or I'll Die  
in My Shows is going better. I'll go over there now.

Curtain.

Scene 3. Drug Store Scene. Extras in rock dress on stage  
 sitting at counter.

METRO: O.K., let's roll it. All set? Cameras, lights, action.  
 (Roar) (Enter Brenda Gee who sits at counter)

BRENDA: (Speaking to extra next to her) Say, cool daddio.  
 Like what will we do? He's been rumbling the Sharks  
 for three hours. I'm shook, man, shook.

EXTRA: Stay loose, baby, no perspiration.

BRENDA: Wait, Daddio. I hear the clicking of cleated  
 shoes. Could it be? Yeh, it is. It's Knife! (Enter  
 Tom Mex in western garb.)

TOM: Howdy, Partners.

BRENDAL Didn't take a mort, did ya?

TOM: Well, nothin' much; just caught an arrow in my stomach,  
that's all.

METRO: Aw, no! (groan)

BRENDA: Let's not drag, cat. Let's swing!

Song: SWINGING IN THE PHARMACY Duet by Brenda Gee and Tom  
Mex

BRENDA: Ice cream sodas, chocolate shakes,  
Hot fudge sundaes, coffee malts!  
We are rocking at the pharmacy  
We are rocking, bopping happily  
For Knife is back from his way out shack,  
We'll have a swinging time at the pharmacy!

BOTH: Oh, it's a rockin', boppin' pharmacy,  
It's a ringin', swingin' pharmacy.  
It's cool - don't drool,  
It's a cool movin' pharmacy.

TOM: Great big pizzas, raw hamburg,  
Hero sandwiches, and hot dogs!  
All the chicks are here at the pharmacy  
Even Knife LaDue and Aura Lee  
It's a swinging time of a rocking ~~time~~ kind,  
We'll have a boppin' time at the pharmacy.

BOTH: Repeat chorus.

Pepsi cola, lemon lime,  
Cherry phosphates, all for a dime!  
Yes, the gangs all here at the pharmacy,  
Headin' for a rumble as sure as can be.  
It's Saturday night *and*  
We're ready for a fight,  
*Repeat Chorus* We'll have a rockin' time at the pharmacy.

METRO: Now we're getting from the sublime to the ridiculous.  
Cut, cut, cut! I hope Jack pulls through in the clutch.  
But then, in this business, there are good days, bad days,  
and Ben Days.

Curtain.

Scene 4. House scene; fireplace. Cynthia and her father  
sitting in stage center.

METRO: Cynthia, darling, we're taking this for the first

time. Play it by ear; Jack is new at this game. All set? Cameras, lights, action. (Roar)

CYNTHIA: Daddy, dear, Alec hasn't written me since he went back to Princeton. I'm so worried. Do you think he'll be up for my debutante party?

EXTRA: Don't you worry, my little pet. When he was at our winter place over Christmas vacation, he told me that you were the only one he's ever loved.

CYNTHIA: But, Daddy, why hasn't he written? There could only be one reason, but even that seems incredible. He might be planning to surprise me by taking this weekend off.

EXTRA: Doris, listen! Is that a 1960 Corvette with fuel injection and triple carbs coming up the driveway?

CYNTHIA: It is, Daddy. It is Alec. I can tell by the license plate of his car - U2. (Enter Rock Pebble dressed as rock.)

ROCK: Like I've made the scene, baby.

CYNTHIA: Are you alright?

ROCK: Yep, except for a zip-gun wound in my leg.

METRO: So to speak. (moan)

CYNTHIA: Alec, darling, what were you doing at Princeton, when you should have been here by my side.

Song: HERE BY YOUR SIDE Duet by Cynthia Wythrop and Rock Pebble

CYNTHIA:	I can remember That last December When you and I were together.
ROCK:	You were so loving When we were nudging On that crisp, clear, and cold night.
CYNTHIA:	And we have been many, many, many miles apart Yet never once did you leave my heart!
BOTH:	Now it nears summer And I'm at your knee, So please make love to me.
ROCK:	And we have been many, many, many miles apart Yet never once did you leave my heart!
BOTH:	Now it <del>is/summer</del> nears summer

And I'm at your knee,  
So please make love to me.

METRO: Stop this. Are you all going mad? (He rises and starts to leave.) Noel! Confound it! Noel! I want to see all these fools in my office tomorrow morning. And speaking of mornings, this morning has been spent in mourning.

Curtain.

ACT III

Scene 1. Park bench scene; Forest scene with branches, etc.

Jack and Cynthia onstage sitting on bench.

JACK: At last we're alone, Cynthia.

CYNTHIA: I've been waiting for this, dear.

JACK: Cynthia, do you love me?

CYNTHIA: I do, darling, I do.

JACK: Will this be a typical Hollywood romance?

CYNTHIA: No, dear; I'll love you now and for ever.

Song: AT LAST Duet by Cynthia Wynthrop and Jack Starr

BOTH: At last I've found you -  
I've looked all over,  
We are together once again.

At last I've kissed you,  
Oh, how I've missed you  
But now we two can be one.  
But now I love you so truly,  
And so we'll stay like this for ever.

At last I know you;  
I've waited long  
For one to love me as you.  
But now I love you so truly,  
And so we'll stay like this for ever.

At last I've found you -  
I've looked all over  
We are together once again.  
I'll love you now and for ever,  
I'll love you now and for ever.

Curtain.

SCENE 2. M.G.M.'s office; Extras and Tom Mex, Dale Ovens, Gabby Hawes, Rock Pebble, Brenda Gee, Buster Crebbe, Jane Oop running across stage, on and off. Noel seated at desk.

ALL: What does he want us for? What's this conference about?  
(etc.) (Enter Cynthia and Jack.)

CYNTHIA: Do any of you know what this is all about?

ALL: No, no! (etc.)

JACK: We'll soon know, anyway. M.G. is on ~~his~~ <sup>the</sup> way. (Enter M.G. who sits at his desk. All gather round his desk.)

METRO: Alright, let's settle down. Perhaps you're wondering why I invited you here. Well, the performances yesterday were disgusting. With all these actors' strikes and foreign dignitaries invading our studios, dissatisfied because they can't see Disneyland, I realize that there are many strains on all of you; but how can you explain all that embarrassing confusion you caused me yesterday? Who was the cause of it all? Jane?

JANE: No, sir; I was as confused as you.

METRO: Tom?

TOM: No, M.G.

METRO: Rock?

ROCK: Man, like I was as shock as you.

METRO: And you, Dale?

DALE: Nope.

METRO: Brenda?

BRENDA: No chance, man!

METRO: Buster?

BUSTER: Not me, M.G.

METRO: Cynthia?

CYNTHIA: No, darling. I couldn't do a thing like that to you.

METRO: Gabby?

GABBY: Nope.

METRO: And how about you, Jack?

JACK: Now, M.G., you know I'm too new at this game to be scoring.

METRO: Well, then, there's only one person who could have done it. Noel, (who is sitting at her desk trying to hide

behind her motion picture magazine.) do you wish to tell me how this all happened?

NOEL: Well, Mr. Mayer, I guess I can't hide it from you anymore. I was so surprised last week when I read that Tony Martin left Janet Leigh, I just got confused and sent out the wrong assignments to the wrong persons.

METRO: Well, in spite of the expense and time you've wasted, and I'll bet you were reading the gossip columns on my time, I guess I'll have to forgive you. After all, where else could I find such a good-looking secretary?

Song: THE JOKE'S ON YOU Chorus with incidental solos.

METRO: You've traveled down the great white way,  
And often seen a Broadway play,  
A comedy or musical revue.  
Though they all have satirized,  
You have never realized  
The butt of all the jokes is you!

ALL: (Refrain)

Things are not as they appear  
Though life may seem really clear,  
It's just one paradox until it's through,  
You may stand and look paternal  
Watching o're the joke eternal,  
Then you look and see the joke's on you!

LEADING ACTORS AND ACTRESSES:

As actors often on this stage  
With motives sometimes narrow gauge  
We've always gotten credit if not dough.  
Comes this musical along,  
And we're acting for a song,  
The joke's on us and not ho, ho!

ALL: Repeat refrain.

You pay a high tuition  
Hoping it will reach fruition,  
And you'll make the grade at Hyde Bay tire d  
and true;  
But head councilor George Chandlee  
Doesn't let you get off free  
So off to Camp Chenang o with you.

Repeat refrain.

METRO;            You strike an oil well,  
                   Everything is going swell,  
                   You're carefree and couldn't give a (cough)  
                   But you very quickly learn  
                   That the more you seem to ~~learn~~  
                   The more you send to Uncle Sam.

ALL: Repeat refrain.

Now we've had you sitting tight  
And to leave would not be right  
So you've had to stay until we're done;  
But although the joke's on you,  
We believe it to be true  
The paradox is half the fun.

Repeat refrain.

Curtain

The words to THE JOKE'S ON YOU were written in December, 1957,  
 by Robert Lewis Conklin Morse.