# BANDITS OF LOVE

By Pat Cook

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## STORY OF THE PLAY

Coming to your theatre! All the fast-paced action, all the cockeyed characters, all the romance you'd ever want and still have room for popcorn. Return with us now to those thrilling days of silent movies when anything went and usually took most of the scenery with it. Can B.B. Tackett, one step ahead of the police, make his next movie? Will Freddie Thurlow find true love with the daughter of a fruit vendor and will she be the apple of his eye?

Wise cracking their way through one scrape after another, our little band of movie makers set up shop, grab investors and foil a bank robbery all in the space of twenty-four hours. All they really wanted was food and a place to sleep.

This rapid-fire spoof is full of all sorts of early screen types, whether it be an Irish cop or an overblown dowager, ripe for the pratfall. There's even a couple of Nubian slaves thrown in. All in the name of business, art and romance. Indeed, they are all *Bandits of Love.*

## SETTING

The room is bare of furniture, except for one small table between two UPS doors. The room has obviously been barely kept, but is clean. There are three doors utilized in the plan. The front door is located SL and leads to the outside hall. Another is located on the UPS wall near the USL corner and leads to another room. The third leads to a washroom and is also situated on the UPS wall but near the SR wall. There are also two large, practical windows leading outside.

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

*(7 M, 6 W, Extras)*

**FREDDIE -** An amiable young assistant, quick on his feet but a bit awkward when faced with a crisis.

**CHICK -** A bit older than Freddie, he is a smooth-operating camera man.

**BECKY -** Secretary to Tackett, she keeps the business operating like a top sergeant.

**B. B. TACKETT -** A con man in his 50s, he is much more agile than his age and is always thinking.

**LILA -** An attractive young woman who is just dying to get into the movies, but also has a level head.

**BUTCH -** A large, dim-witted moving man.

**SMILEY -** Another moving man, smaller but a lot brighter.

**DOLORES -** The public relations lady for the business, she is in her late 30s.

***MRS. VAN DREELIN -** A large dowager of a woman, a rich society type in her mid-50s but pretends to be younger.

**CARLA -** Secretary for a taxidermy firm, she is looking for a new love.

**OFFICER ROONEY -** A large Irish policeman with a one-track mind.

**MISS FORDYCE -** A bank employee, somewhat mousy.

***MR. HOBBS -** The bank president, he is a dignified man in his 50s.

***ACTOR & ACTRESS -** For the silent spot at the opening.

***Parts can be double cast*

**Time:** Summer, 1915.
**Place:** An empty office.

## SOUND EFFECTS

Melodramatic music, Old-fashioned telephone ringing

## PROPS

Becky - suitcase, clipboard, tome of Shakespeare, ledger.
Freddy - suitcase, framed picture, wash rag, bow and arrow.
Chick - suitcase, framed picture.
Tackett - satchel with apples, old fashioned wall phone and long wire, wig.
Butch - couch, rolled up rug, desk, Nubian costume.
Lila - a sheaf of music, 3 fruit baskets, pages of clippings, suitcase.
Dolores - suitcase, wad of cash, flowered scarf, framed painting, drapes.
Smiley - camera, chair, Nubian costume, white coat, glasses, stethoscope, hammer.
Carla - a small stuffed toy animal (hamster).
Rooney - long arm.
Fordyce - envelope with money, paycheck, purse.
Hobbs - cigar.

The old fashioned camera in the play can easily be manufactured using a large, rectangular shaped box, a round short tube as a lens and two round boxes attached to the top, replicating where the “film” is supposed to be housed. A practical crank should be attached to the side. The whole thing is painted black and attached to a tripod.

## PROLOGUE

*(AT RISE: Very melodramatic PIANO MUSIC rises. On stage, two characters, acting as ROMEO and JULIET, pantomime a broad, crisis-filled scene while a FLICKERING LIGHT/STROBE effect illuminates them. Juliet motions offstage, indicating she cannot go with Romeo. He places his hand over his forehead, falls on one knee and pleads with her to flee with him. She shakes her head widely and slowly several times. He rises and draws his sword, silently vowing to fight for her if need be. She gently grabs his sword and places it back in its sheath. He feels her hand and again falls on one knee, obviously proposing. A VOICE is heard over this scene.)*

VOICE: In the early part of the twentieth century, a fledgling medium was just getting off the ground. Dubbed "silent moving pictures," they were little more than flickering images. These short one-reel films brought many great and wonderful epics to darkened theaters, using the best talent and greatest authors available at the time. This is not that story. *(The ACTORS stop in mid-scene and slowly look out at the audience as the LIGHT fades on them.)* This is the story of one, less than notable, band of creators who thought it would be a good deal to cash in on.

**ACT I**
**Scene 1**

*(AT RISE: As the LIGHTS come up, the room is quiet. The front door bangs open and, in a knot, BECKY, FREDDIE and CHICK rush into the room, each carrying cases or baggage.)*

FREDDIE: OK, first, find out if we got water. Then get those windows open and give the high sign to the boys on the street. I'll do it. Also we need some air in here. We can put the desk right here. *(HE indicates DSR and then points to the other side of the room.)* And the couch can go there! *(HE looks up.)* They got electricity? *(HE goes to a window and, after a few tugs, opens it.)*

CHICK: *(At the same time.)* OK, first, I'm going to need a room for developing. I hope this place has water. *(HE rushes over to the washroom door.)* Second, I don't want nobody rushing in where I'm working. You remember last time, I had a whole reel of the Barber building burning down and you rushed in and, WHACKO, nothing left but five hundred feet of black tapeworm. *(HE opens the door.)* Anybody in here?

BECKY: *(At the same time.)* OK, first, we only got this place for a month. B.B. found out the owner is in Canada for that long and nobody will be the wiser. At least we're near the pavement this time. I hate jumping out of windows. Now, I think we should put the desk there. *(SHE crosses SL and then points to the other side of the room.)* And the couch there. I hope there's a cafe nearby that gives credit.

FREDDIE: *(Out the window.)* Up here, boys! Second floor, at the end of the hall! Pretend like we're SUPPOSED to be here!

BECKY: Oh, and I need to set up a telephone as soon as possible.

CHICK: I can't believe it!

BECKY: What?

CHICK: We got water!

FREDDIE: OK, but don't anybody bathe unless you just have to.

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