

The Bickersons
"The Tax Refund"

(MUSIC)

ANNOUNCER: The Bickersons never tire. Poor husband John, a chronic insomniac, and suffering from slugger's disease, struggles during an acute patch of his ailment while Blanche Bickerson attempts to describe his symptoms over the phone to Dr. Hershey. Listen...

BLANCHE: This is worse than ever, Dr. Hershey. Can't you come over?

DOCTOR: Mrs. Bickerson, it's almost three o' clock. I'm sure his condition is pretty good, I'll come over in the morning.

BLANCHE: But he might recover by morning. I wouldn't want that to happen.

DOCTOR: What?

BLANCHE: Wait a minute! I'll carry the phone into the bedroom, and you can hear what John's going through.

F/X: DOOR OPENING

JOHN: (SNORING)

BLANCHE: Hear that?

JOHN: (SNORING LIKE SIREN)

DOCTOR: I can't hear your husband on account of those fire engines.

BLANCHE: That's my husband.

DOCTOR: What?

JOHN: (SNORING)

DOCTOR: Incredible! Tell him to do that again.

BLANCHE: I don't have to, he will.

JOHN: (SNORING)

DOCTOR: Mrs. Bickerson, there's only one thing.

BLANCHE: Just a minute, Doctor, wait until I get the phone out of the room.

F/X: DOOR CLOSING

BLANCHE: Now what were you saying?

DOCTOR: It's definitely a post (garbled) condition, and that roaring indicates he's a mouth breather.

BLANCHE: Maybe, but John isn't breathing through his mouth.

DOCTOR: What makes you so sure?

BLANCHE: I taped it shut with plaster.

DOCTOR: That isn't wise, Mrs. Bickerson. I'd rather you tape his nostrils, it's less dangerous.

BLANCHE: I tried that last night. I think my husband snores through his pores. I'd give anything if you could cure him.

DOCTOR: There's only one course of treatment, but it's very expensive. It'll be two hundred dollars down, and twenty-five dollars a month for eleven months. Plus, charges for extras.

BLANCHE: Sounds like buying a new car.

DOCTOR: I am. Good night, Mrs. Bickerson.

BLANCHE: Good night, Dr. Hershey.

F/X: HANG UP PHONE

BLANCHE: Maybe John's quiet now.

F/X: DOOR OPENING JOHN: (SNORING)

BLANCHE: John! John! Turn over on your side, go on. John, stop making that silly noise.

JOHN: (MUMBLES THROUGH TAPE)

BLANCHE: I forgot the adhesive tape.

F/X: RIP AND SCREAM

JOHN: What's the matter with you, Blanche? Who taped up my mouth?

BLANCHE: I put it on to stop you from snoring.

JOHN: Oh, I never heard of such a thing. You had to go and tape up my mouth just when I'm raising a moustache. Pull out every hair.

BLANCHE: That's too bad. You've caused me enough suffering. I'd rather lose your moustache, than lose my sleep.

JOHN: What's the matter with you, Blanche? What's the matter?

BLANCHE: I just can't stand it anymore, John. Never a kind word, never a sign of affection, never a good night kiss. And to think you used to kiss me every time I turned around.

JOHN: I never kissed you when you turned around.

BLANCHE: I've been a trusting fool all these years. I should've known you don't love me. You never did.

JOHN: I did too. I mean I do too.

BLANCHE: You don't, you don't, you don't!

JOHN: Oh, Blanche, I love you!

BLANCHE: You're lying! Swear you love me!

JOHN: I hope I drown in a pool of bourbon if I'm lying!

BLANCHE: There's the answer to all our problems. You think more of a bottle of bourbon than you do of me! It's true isn't it, John?

JOHN: What's true?

BLANCHE: You're in love with a bottle of bourbon!

JOHN: Oh, for heavens sake!

BLANCHE: Go on, say it. I can stand the truth. Just give it to me straight.

JOHN: It's better with soda.

BLANCHE: Don't try and switch things around. You know you indulge in it more than what is absolutely necessary. No other wife would put up with a thing like that.

JOHN: Now just a minute, Blanche, I resent that.

BLANCHE: I don't care.

JOHN: You can accuse me of being selfish or inconsiderate, or anything else, but drinking is not one of my failures.

BLANCHE: No, it's one of your few successes.

JOHN: That is not true! I don't drink more than any six men you know.

BLANCHE: Huh?

JOHN: Now, you cracked me into that. The only reason I use bourbon is because the doctor prescribed it. He said I would stop snoring if I took a jigger of bourbon and two aspirin before I went to bed tonight.

BLANCHE: That's not what you do, though.

JOHN: It is.

BLANCHE: It is not. You're six months behind on the aspirin, and two years ahead on the bourbon.

JOHN: Well, the aspirin gives me a headache.

BLANCHE: You'd better listen to me, John. We'd get along beautifully if you'd think of me once in awhile. If there's an extra dollar in the

house, it goes for your pleasure. Only two weeks ago you had your life insured for ten thousand dollars.

JOHN: What about it?

BLANCHE: You're always thinking of yourself.

JOHN: Myself? Now what kind of idiotic talk is that Blanche? If I die, you get the ten thousand.

BLANCHE: You know perfectly well you have no intention of dying. You only got your life insured to tantalize me.

JOHN: I'll drop dead in the morning.

BLANCHE: You say it, but you won't do it.

JOHN: Blanche, what's the matter with you? Do you realize what you're saying?

BLANCHE: I'm sorry. I didn't mean it that way, I'm sorry.

JOHN: That's okay, just calm down. Try to get some sleep.

BLANCHE: I can't sleep, I'm too upset. You can't stand the sight of me, can you, John?

JOHN: I can stand it fine.

BLANCHE: I'd like to hear you talk that way to Gloria Gooseby.

JOHN: Now don't start with Gloria Gooseby.

BLANCHE: Anybody could be pretty with the money she spends on clothes. Everytime her husband wants a kiss he has to buy her a dress. Believe me, you're lucky you've got a cheap wife like me. If you were married to Gloria Gooseby, you'd have to pay her for kisses.

JOHN: I'm not married to her, and I get Ôem for nothing. And I hate Gloria Goosy. I'm warning you Blanche, if I ever hear you mention her name again I'll, I'll . . .

BLANCHE: That's right hit me, you've done everything else.

JOHN: Oh for heaven's, Blanche will you please put out the light. I have to get up so early in the morning. Good night.

BLANCHE: Are you angry, John?

JOHN: No, I'm just sick.

BLANCHE: Do you hate me?

JOHN: You know I do.

BLANCHE: Ahh.

JOHN: I mean, I don't hate you. Blanche, what's the matter with you tonight? What've you done?

BLANCHE: I've been so upset, I forgot to give you something, it came for you yesterday.

JOHN: A letter?

BLANCHE: Special delivery, and registered. It was addressed to you and marked strictly personal and private.

JOHN: Oh. What did it say?

BLANCHE: You needn't be so snide about it, John. I wouldn't of read it, but I accidentally steamed it over when I was pouring myself a cup of tea.

JOHN: Let me see it.

BLANCHE: You can read it in the morning. Go to sleep.

JOHN: I want to read it right now, put the lights on and give it to me.

BLANCHE: Oh, all right, here it is.

JOHN: Oh. From the government.

BLANCHE: Goodnight, John.

JOHN: (reading) Mr. John Bickerson. Sir, in checking your return for 1946, we find, you have overpaid your taxes. Enclosed find a check for seventy-six dollars and fifty cents. Well say, what a break. I finally, Blanche.

BLANCHE: Huh.

JOHN: Where's the check?

BLANCHE: Huh?

JOHN: Don't act sleepy now. What did you do with my seventy-six dollars?

BLANCHE: I bought a beautiful Evan handbag. It's sharkskin trimmed with snake skin, and it matches my calf skin shoes.

JOHN: Seventy-six dollars for a shark skin snake. Take it back! Take it back, do you hear me?

BLANCHE: Stop screaming!

JOHN: How could you squander my hard eared money like this? I deny myself everything. I've been cutting the scraps off your old garter belts, and wearing them for bow ties. I had my feet hand soled in a Blacksmith, just to save on shoes. I don't even drink my bourbon anymore. I just lick the label and stick my nose in the ??????. I don't spend a nickel on myself!

BLANCHE: You bought a new watch chain yesterday.

JOHN: What watch chain? The zipper came off my pants! You get that money back you hear me.

BLANCHE: How can you do that John? You didn't buy me anything for our anniversary. Can I keep it, please?

JOHN: No.

BLANCHE: Please.

JOHN: Oh, what's the use?

BLANCHE: Can I keep the bag John?

JOHN: How I slave and sweat to bring money and soul together. Deprive myself of every tiny luxury to try to make both ends meet. It isn't worth it. One fatal swoop and she squanders two years savings. What's a man got to live for? I wish I had the courage to, maybe I will. Life means nothing anymore. It's one thing to do.

BLANCHE: John.

JOHN: (SNORING)

BLANCHE: Oh, John.

(MUSIC)