

Document Citation

Title	Another fine mess
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Publisher name not available</i>
Date	
Type	book excerpt
Language	English
Pagination	106
No. of Pages	1
Subjects	
Film Subjects	Another fine mess, Parrott, James, 1930



Another Fine Mess

HAL ROACH—M-G-M, 1930. *Three reels. Directed by James Parrott.*

With Laurel & Hardy, Thelma Todd, James Finlayson.

Wealthy big-game hunter Finlayson takes off on a vacation, leaving to his butler and maid the task of renting his mansion while he's away. Glad to see the back of him, his far from loyal servants leave as soon as his taxi has taken him to the docks. Laurel & Hardy, fleeing from a policeman, find in the deserted mansion an ideal refuge—and since the policeman maintains his vigil outside, they are forced to remain there. A crusty British aristocrat and his sexy American wife come to take up residence in answer to Finlayson's ad, and in order to stay in their safe refuge, Hardy masquerades as the owner of the house, and Laurel as his maid. Despite some bad slip-ups, Hardy's aplomb carries the day—until Finlayson, having forgotten something, returns from the boat, is flabbergasted by the situation confronting him, and summons the police. Laurel & Hardy, dis-

guised as one of his trophies—a horned goat—make their escape on a bicycle, the police in hot pursuit.

Although the three-reel length seems hardly justified, some better than average situational humor (slapstick is at a minimum), good dialogue, Hardy's smooth savoir-faire as the bogus huntsman-millionaire, and Laurel's dame masquerade more than carry the day. Hardy's small talk about big game hunting and his inability to find his way about his own house works well with the traditional "silly ass Englishman" opposite number. Laurel, called upon to make so many quick changes from "butler" to "maid" that there are occasional overlappings of costume, has one excellent sequence where he settles down to some "girl talk" with the young bride. The dialogue here, pungent and more than a little risqué, with Laurel covering up one faux-pas by a worse one, is markedly better than usual. Despite the preponderance of plot and dialogue, the film moves well and the climactic gag with the apparent bicycle-riding goat pursued by fearful police is a bizarre episode that might well have been explored even further.