

The Talent Show
(A Mad Mabel Adventure)
by JoAnn Yeoman

Time: The Present

Place: *Backstage at the local community center. There is a talent competition tonight and the contestants are working on last-minute pick-ups. MABEL is practicing a soft-shoe with straw hat and cane.*

Cast: *(three women- two combatants and one filler)*

Mad Mabel/Mabel Meehan- *Early 30's. Very fit and confident. She is dressed in a version of "shirt, colorful vest (velcro/button), and stripped pants. A vaudeville look. Under the vest is the usual "Mad Mabel" super-hero shirt with the print/logo hidden under the vest. She wears a straw hat and carries a black cane (no curved handle)*

Slick - *20's/30's - dressed in a similar vaudeville style but definitely different costume. She has a top hat, character tail-coat, white gloves and spats. She also has a cane.*

Murdy - *any age. Self-important back stage coordinator of the talent show. She carries a clipboard and pen.*

At curtain MABEL is humming a little tune and practicing her soft shoe moves. She wears her top hat and cane.

MURDY *(entering stage right with clipboard)*

And you would be ... ah yes, you are Miss Slick Cooper, the "tenderest soft shoe on the east coast." Right?

MABEL

Sorry. I'm not Slick in any sense of the word. I'm Mabel Meehan but I am also entering as a soft shoe dancer. Am I OK to warm up here? All the practice rooms are full.

MURDY

We do have quite a crowd of contestants tonight. Yes. You're fine. Please just keep out of the crew's way and work as quietly as possible.

MABEL

Sure. *(continues to run the combination)*

MURDY starts to exit but is pushed aside by SLICK who enters with a vengeance. She also has a cane.

MURDY

And who are you, please? Are you working with this lady *(referring to MABEL)*

MABEL and SLICK

NO!

SLICK

Listen you. Yeah, you with the clipboard and the attitude. I need a place to warm up. I'm gonna knock these amateurs on their asses. You included Miss Goodie Two-shoes.

MURDY

I'm afraid all the rehearsal spaces are taken. You can work back here. Just keep it down.

SLICK

You mean I have to share the space with ... *(by this time MURDY is out)* Well, Little Goodie Ten Toes. Outta my way *(SLICK begins to practice. MABEL considers a retaliation, but decides to let it go and continue her own rehearsal. All is well for a few moves and then SLICK strikes out with a lavish step and knocks MABEL to the side.)*

So sorry, tippy toes. It can't be easy being as clumsy as you are.

MABEL

OK! That's it. Either you behave yourself or else ...

SLICK

Or else what? *(SLICK begins to push MABEL backward with the tip of her cane.)*

MABEL

Or else this. *(MABEL rips the vest off revealing her "Mad Mabel" heroine shirt.)* Yes, and now you'll have to deal with me: Mad Mabel the righter of wrongs. *(the first part of the fight begins. The canes can be used either as foils or as poles depending on the choreographer's expertise. I, personally, think that foils might be funnier. They fight, with both women losing their hats. MABEL has pulled off a move that leaves SLICK on the ground with her cane across the room. MABEL has SLICK exactly where she wants her with the tip of her cane at SLICK's throat. Just then MURDY enters)*

MURDY

What is this racket. Oh. *(to SLICK)* are you OK? Please be careful. We have no insurance. *(MURDY walks over to the cane, picks it up, and returns to SLICK)* This must be yours. And PLA-EEZE keep it down ladies. We're going to start the show. *(MURDY exits)*

The fight resumes and ends with MABEL completely vanquishing SLICK.

SLICK starts to limp out pampering her leg as she exits left.

MABEL *(tossing SLICK's top hat after her)*

And don't forget this!

MURDY *(entering)*

Miss Mabel Meehan, yes? You're on next. *(looks around)* What happened to your friend? She's on right after you.

MABEL

She discovered that she had another appointment and had to leave.

MURDY

How inconsiderate. There's no accounting for rudeness in the ranks is there? Well, get on out there. Break a leg.

MABEL

I think I already did.

(performs "shave and a hair-cut" and exits right)

The End.