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# ***TIPS ON SOFT SOAP***

# **LUX**

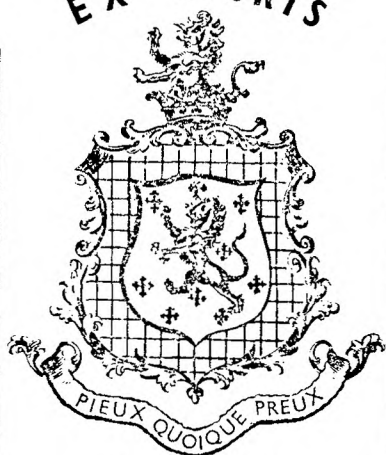
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# TIPS ON "SOFT SOAP"

*Will Almon  
Box 22  
South Melbourn  
1954*

COMPILED BY  
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### *Introduction*

For over five years, "Soft Soap" has been one of the standard effects of good Magic that almost every Magician has included in his act. It has been presented by the greatest professionals and by the newest amateurs, but whenever presented it has proven that good Magic is always good entertainment.

Originated by Dr. Howard B. Kayton and with the original rhymed patter written for it by Doc Hallock, "Soft Soap" won the Genii award for the best trick of the year 1942. In 1943 a suggestion by Fred Rickard in the Genii brought about the introduction of "Sophisticated Soft Soap", a variation in presentation that changed the scope of the effect. That same year Genii honored "Soft Soap" again by calling its sophisticated variation the best comedy trick of the year and in that same year The Sphinx gave it its Annual Award. To these honors every working Magician has added his own approval, and many have added their own new twists and variations to fit their varied presentations. These have included Kenneth Allen's latest, "Rabbit Soft Soap," which is keeping Magic audiences conscious of the value of this classic of Magic.

Realizing that there have been many suggestions made in the use of "Soft Soap," Stuart Robson asked me to compile a book to be called "Tips On Soft Soap." In my compilation I have given credit to that performer who first brought these tips to my attention as far as I have been able to do so. If I have overlooked anyone in the giving of credit, it has been unintentional. I hope that you will enjoy "Soft Soap" a little bit more, and that your audiences enjoy your presentation of it a lot more from now on.

*Gordon MacDonald*

## *Tips on Preparation*

### *Soft Soap Suggestion by "Hen" Fetsch*

"Hen" Fetsch, whose book "Milk Pitcher Magic" contains several fine suggestions for the use of "Soft Soap" in conjunction with the Milk Pitcher, has sent along the following suggestion as a means of helping with the correct removal of the special handkerchief.

Cut a small slit in the top part of the left hand side of the Lux box when it is held with the front facing the audience.

Have one end of the special handkerchief, the end that is diagonally opposite the bead, inserted through this slit so that not more than an inch of the end might show. This small portion of the handkerchief may be hidden by the hand or the thumb whenever the box is handled during the presentation.

You will find that with a very small amount of care during your presentation you can effectively keep this small tip of the handkerchief from being seen at any time.

When you have completed your turning of the box, and are ready to withdraw the clean handkerchiefs, hold the box at the bottom, the left hand covering the handkerchief tip and then remove the handkerchiefs in the normal manner. When you are ready to remove the special handkerchief maintain a firm pressure on the outside corner of the hank with the thumb of the left hand. This

results in the handkerchief completely unfolding before leaving the box. Release the pressure of your thumb just in time to allow the complete removal of the special handkerchief, thus insuring its removal without any portion being folded back or in an awkward position.

I am sure that you will quickly appreciate the help that this little tip on presentation will give you in the more simple working of the effect.

### ***Stuart Robson's Floating Lux Box***

Stuart Robson, the original Conjurer of The Conjurer's Shop, made a very simple little twist into an unusual interlude in the regular "Soft Soap" presentation.

He pressed a thumb-hole in the back of the Lux box during the early presentation of the effect. This can be done before the show if you wish, and the depressed portion of the box can be set back in place so that it will be unnoticeable to the spectators during the beginning of the effect.

When you come to the so-called "washing process" during which the box is usually shaken up and turned around, you can add a touch of eerie comedy by using this thumb-hole in the following manner:

Insert the right thumb into the hole in the back of the box so that it fits snugly tight. Hold the box with both hands, the inserted thumb hidden from the audience view, and begin to shake the box up and down. Your patter at this point may follow the line that the wonderful thing about this soft soap you use is how light it is. In fact, the more you use it, the lighter it gets as the mystic cleaning gasses are released within the box. Sometimes it even gets lighter than air itself. As you

have been pattering, begin to manipulate the box by means of the inserted thumb so that the box seems to be trying to rise in your hands. After pushing it down several times, allow it apparently to glide away from you as you seemingly follow it with your grasping hands to bring it back under control. Do this several times until at last you loosen your thumb from the box and actually flip the box into the air, free of your hands, as if it had gotten completely away from you. Catch it in the air, saying that that is light enough, turn it upside-down, and proceed with the rest of your presentation.

I am sure that with a little practice you will be able to make it appear as if the box were actually floating in the air and trying to rise out of your hands. This type of interlude should prepare the audience to join more freely in the closing features of the whole effect.

---

## *Tips on Introductions*

### *Karrell Fox's Introductions*

Karrell Fox, the "King of Korn", uses the following gag as an introduction to his presentation of "Soft Soap":

" ' Ladies and Gentlemen: we have some celebrities in our audience this evening. You've heard them on the radio; you've seen them in the movies; and here they are in person . . . It's those international favorites of stage, screen and radio, the four Ink Spots!'

"If there is music available, a few bars of the Ink Spots' theme song here is very appropriate. Now the witty magician removes his folded pocket handkerchief and imprinted thereon for all to see are four large blotches of ink! There you have my way of starting the ever popular 'Soft Soap' trick."

Another gag used as an introduction by Karrell Fox follows.

"First handkerchief is removed from inside coat pocket. Act embarrassed at finding the spots, and say, 'A clean handkerchief!' Remove second handkerchief from same pocket, appear even more annoyed at finding spots on this one too, and say, 'It's a good thing I always carry a spare!' Remove the third spotted handkerchief. 'What, this one too!!!' Then look in pocket and say, 'Hmmmmmm, no wonder'—and remove one of those large jumbo fountain pens as sold in novelty shops, then, of course, magically clean the handkerchiefs as per the regular 'Soft Soap' routine."

*What Soap Do You Use?*

Here is another suggestion that has been used by "Corde" to provide a good laugh and an early audience participation in the presentation of "Soft Soap".

Purchase a box of Rinso that is the same size as the Lux box used with the effect. Cut the front from the Rinso box and glue it to the printed back of the Lux box, trimming it to the proper size. This will give you a box having two fronts, one a Lux box and the other a Rinso box. Set up this prepared box as is done in the regular presentation of "Soft Soap".

Place the box upon your table with the Rinso side facing toward the audience. When you are ready for the effect, pick up the box keeping the Rinso front facing out, and say, "Here I have a box of Lux." The audience will undoubtedly correct you by saying, "Rinso". You then say "Oh, no, it's a box of Lux!" and then turn the box around showing the side that reads "Lux".

This should get a good laugh at the opening of the effect and prepare the audience for a vocal participation in the closing of the effect when you work the usual "sucker" finish.

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## *Tips on Endings*

### *Down in the Audience*

One method of getting more out of the "sucker" ending in your "Soft Soap" presentation is to bring the climax of the effect right down among the members of the audience. The following procedure from Bill Beecher may be used.

Work the routine as you usually do, removing the special handkerchief from the box second instead of last as is suggested in the original instructions. Then proceed as follows, suiting your own patter to the following presentation:

"Now, to prove to you beyond the shadow of a doubt that there is nothing wrong with the working of my wonderful dry cleaning soap, I should like to come right down among you and have a member of the audience help me close this effect."

Come down from your platform or away from the table where you may be working and move into the audience. Choose either a pretty girl or a lively youngster to assist you. After you have made the necessary introductions, whisper something into your assistant's ear and smile broadly at the audience.

"I have chosen one of your own group to help me finish my presentation so that no one can feel that there is any thing wrong or that I am trying to deceive you. I shall now ask my assistant to reach carefully into the box and remove the last handkerchief that is there."



As you say "last", give the assistant an obvious wink, and wait for the repercussions. It will not take long for someone to comment on the wink and to cast doubts on the emptiness of the box, especially if you close it up after the third handkerchief is shown clean and ordinary. From here on in, play up the part of the embarrassed Magician caught in some trickery, and appeal to the assistant to verify the emptiness of the box. When you have worked this part of the gag as much as seems wise, then proceed to tear open the box or disclose its absolute emptiness as you usually do.

If you wish to do so, you may use white handkerchiefs in the effect and leave the third handkerchief with the assistant from the audience as thanks for the help given.

### *A Surprise in the End*

Here's is a Jerry Blount twist on the usual "Soft Soap" routine that has a surprise element always good for a laugh. The effect is done as usual right up to the very end when, after "cleaning process" is over, the handkerchiefs removed from the box still are ink-spotted, but the color of the handkerchief material is gone. This may be accomplished by substituting for the three colored handkerchiefs, three spotted white handkerchiefs. This is a surprise type of ending which is sure to fool the fellows who think they know what you're going to do.

### *Delayed Reaction*

This is a brief variation in the matter of presentation which will make it possible for the Magician to take advantage of the apparent failure of his effect to work.

Prepare the box and handkerchiefs for presentation as usual. Put the first two stained handkerchiefs into the box as in the original routine, but put the third handkerchief far on the opposite side of the box by itself. Close and seal the box, and perform the usual turnover. Produce the two clean handkerchiefs normally, and then withdraw the third stained silk, leaving the special clean handkerchief in the box.

Upon the production of the stained silk in place of the expected clean one, appear sufficiently embarrassed. Account for the failure of the soap effect as being due to its weakness, or to weak Magic. Close and seal the bottom of the box, turn it over again, open the top once more, and place the stained silk back in the box in the usual manner. You may now proceed with the presentation in the usual form, removing the special handkerchief and then showing the box empty and all the handkerchiefs clean.

Carefully presented, this can provide the Magician with an extra opportunity for comedy and also with a delayed-reaction on the part of the audience.

### *The Spots Inside*

Dr. R. D. Moore uses an unusual variation for the ending of his "Soft-Soap" effect that gives you another laugh and provides a valid reason for tearing the box open at the close of the show. He takes a water-color brush dipped in ink and makes spots inside the box. After these are dried, the box is folded and used in the usual manner. At the finish of the effect, when the clean handkerchiefs are produced, he asks, "What became of the spots? Why, that's simple. We just left them in the box," and he tears the box open, shows the spots inside, and throws the box into the audience.

## *Tips on Presentation*

### *Milbourne Christopher's Presentation*

The following presentation is used by Milbourne Christopher in his shows. It emphasizes the manner in which this fine performer makes a trick into something special. The following is in his own words:

"As I use no tables, and work mostly in hotels and supper clubs, this presentation is designed accordingly.

" 'A trick with three handkerchiefs,' the wizard heralds, as he pulls three handkerchiefs from his inside coat pocket.

"He holds them up with a smile which changes to an expression of chagrin as he notices that not only are they marked with big black splotches of ink, but also with very embarrassing holes. (After my first few shows I cut holes in the handkerchiefs because many spectators thought that a chemical process bleached out the spots in the box. When the holes vanished, too, that made a more mystifying trick of it, for unless the audience is convinced that another set of silks is concealed in the box the sucker effect is non-existent.)

" 'By any chance, has anyone in the audience a box of Lux?' he inquires with a lifted eyebrow. There is a tap on his shoulder, and the band leader hands him a box of Lux.

" 'Ah—coincidence!' explains the performer, and he then opens the top flap. 'A little laundering

background, if you please.' The band swings into a few bars of jive. The wizard pushes the soiled silks into the box and seals the lid. He shakes it up and down a few times, then moves from side to side, explaining that this is the ironing process. All the while the drummer follows his motions with appropriate rolls and rimshots.

"Suddenly he holds the box still. The music stops. He tears open the bottom (the audience has seen him reverse the box during the shaking) and produces the three clean handkerchiefs, and tucks them one at a time into his coat. He then turns the box upside down and shakes it while the band sounds a chord.

"The applause at this point is polite, hesitant. The performer looks amazed. Then he apparently thinks of the box. 'Oh, the box.', he smiles and tears it open, and then into little pieces which he tosses back into the bandstand. His bow music begins immediately as he leaves the floor."

### *Done With a Stooge*

We realize that almost every Magician dislikes effects that are done with the aid of a stooge, but particularly in cases of large shows, the use of a stooge make possible effects that are very impressive, and that are impossible in any other manner. Here is a "Soft-Soap" presentation which makes effective use of a stooge in a larger audience.

Plant a white handkerchief with the stooge, and retain a duplicate for use in the "Soft-Soap" box. This effect is best presented when handkerchiefs colored red and blue are used in addition to the planted and duplicate white. When presenting the effect, show a stained red and a stained blue handkerchief and place them in the box as usual.

Then look about unsuccessfully for the white one, appealing to the audience for the use of a clean white handkerchief and, of course, accept the one the stooge offers. Comment upon its whiteness and cleanness and then say, "We can't have this." Remove your fountain pen and carefully or carelessly spot the borrowed handkerchief liberally with the ink from the pen. Now put this into the box in the usual manner. In making the production of the clean handkerchiefs, produce them in the order in which they were put away, saving the borrowed handkerchief for last. If the borrowed handkerchief is initialled, or if it has a distinctive border or marking, the effect will be even stronger, for the stooge can obviously identify this as the handkerchief which was ink-stained before his very eyes a few moments before.

When presenting "Soft-Soap" before a large audience, this variation makes possible a very effective presentation even though a stooge is necessary.

### *A Running Gag*

By following the Franklin Boeckel routine given here it will be possible for you to build up your show to a climax with "Soft Soap", and also provide suspense through the use of a running gag, that will keep your audience with you for most of the closing effects of your show.

Set yourself up in advance of the show by having a white ink-stained handkerchief in your outside breast pocket, a fountain pen alongside of it, another ink-stained handkerchief in your inside coat pocket, and a lip-stick stained handkerchief in your right hip pocket. In addition, be sure to have a plain pocket handkerchief in your customary pants pocket, right or left side.

Throughout the show, as you complete one effect, reach into the pants pocket, take out your handkerchief and wipe either your hands or your brow, as you will. Put the handkerchief back each time until, as you come near the end of the show, look at it closely, and then throw it onto the table or into your suitcase of discarded material. Go on with the show and do your next trick, then reach for the handkerchief again. Finding the pocket empty, you comment about carrying a "show-er handkerchief" too, and reach for the folded hank in your outside breast pocket. Without looking at it, pat your brow with the handkerchief, and start to put it back in your pocket. When you catch a glimpse of the ink stains, comment on the cheap fountain pens, throw the hank on the table near the Lux box. Then take the pen from the breast pocket and put it in your inside coat pocket and go on with the next effect.

As you finish the next effect reach for the handkerchief in the breast pocket. Upon finding it gone, remember that the handkerchief had been discarded as ink-stained. With some comment about the wisdom of carrying spares, reach into the inside coat pocket for the second handkerchief. Remove this and again pat your brow. As before, when putting it back, catch a glimpse of the ink-stains on this handkerchief also, and throw that handkerchief on the table with the first one, again commenting on cheap fountain pens. Remove the fountain pen, wrap it in a piece of newspaper, if handy, to keep it from leaking all over, and put it away. Go on with your next effect.

When you have finished this effect, again reach for the handkerchief and, upon finding it gone reach into the right hip pocket with some suitable comment and pat the brow with the handkerchief

previously placed there. Upon lowering the hand, catch sight of the lipstick stains, and with the remark, "This has gone far enough," announce that "you better clean that up before your wife sees it." Then go into the regular "Soft-Soap" routine.

It can be seen that this will provide an effective running gag which will lead up to the dramatic and reasonable presentation of "Soft-Soap" as a climax for the show. You will find that the use of such running gags will increase suspense and humor with their continued use, and, if well done, will make the "Soft-Soap" effect the best remembered item in your entire program.

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## *Tips on Combinations*

### *"Sabar's" Combination*

Sabar, "Man of Many Mysteries", hit upon the following effective combination of "Soft Soap" and "Twentieth Century Silks" one evening when necessity was really the mother of invention.

At a recent show he wanted to use both "Soft Soap" and the "Twentieth Century Silks". When he unpacked his show he discovered that he had forgotten to bring along a vanisher for the "Twentieth Century Silks", and did not want to use a palm vanish as he was using it in another effect. He then worked out the following combination of the two effects and produced a double-barrelled presentation that he has intentionally used many times since. His presentation is as follows.

Show the audience the three "Twentieth Century Silks" and the three ink-stained handkerchiefs, remarking, "I had an accident the other day I spilled ink on some of my hankies. However these three (the Twentieth Century ones) were untouched." Tie two of them together in the regular manner and place them in a glass upon the table in plain sight.

Now go into the usual "Soft Soap" routine, and after the third stained handkerchief has been inserted in the box, pick up the third Twentieth Century silk that is to be vanished, and also insert this in the soap box in the regular manner, on top of the three stained hanks. Continue with the



"Soft Soap" routine in the usual manner, ignoring the fact that the third of the Twentieth Century silks apparently has been left in the box. When the box is opened up or is torn open it is seen that the missing silk also has vanished. Now pull the tied silks out of the glass where they have been in plain sight all of the time, and the vanished silk is found between them in the usual Twentieth Century finish.

### *A Line of Wash*

Here is a method of working "Soft Soap" into the rest of your show and making a climax act out of it.

Just before doing "Soft Soap" I do a rope trick and end up with a series of knots and flourishes with the rope. I end this up by commenting on how dirty the rope has gotten after several shows and then go into my "Soft Soap" patter on the dry cleaning properties of "Soft Soap". I then open the Lux box, stuff the rope in it, pat my pockets and bring out the ink-stained handkerchiefs, one by one, show them plainly spotted, and stuff them one after the other into the box.

Closing up the box I continue with my patter, make the usual turn-over, and open the box to take out the cleaned rope and silk. The end of the rope is taken first, and as it is withdrawn it is seen that the silks, now clean of their ink-stains, are carefully hung on the rope, as on a clothes-line, held in place with little, doll-sized clothes pins carefully placed at one corner of each handkerchief. Now, what could be more convincing than the cleaning, drying, and hanging on the line of the silks, all in one operation?

The method of working should be obvious to anyone having "Soft Soap", and the previous pin-

ning of the handkerchiefs to the clean length of rope insures their removal from the box in good order.

### *A Tip With "Blendo"*

A rather obvious use for the "Soft-Soap" box and routine would be in connection with any of the various tricks of the "Blendo" type on the market such as "Rainbow" or "Perfection". Load the large "Blendo" silk in the Lux box with the opening toward the top. If this does not already contain a ring stiffening at the opening, use a small section of inch-and-a-quarter mailing tube to hold it open and to give you a grip on the "Blendo" silk through the "Soft-Soap" box. Show three colored silks, as in the usual effect, and, while apparently placing them in the box, stuff them into the opening in the "Blendo" silk. The rest of the routine follows normally and automatically, ending with the production of the large "Blendo" silk and the subsequent showing of the box to be empty. It would be possible for you to work out your own variation of this effect just as far as your own ingenuity will take you.

### *The Vitamin Wet Wash*

In presenting this effect there is a fine combination of two audience-tested bits of magic, the Milk Pitcher and the Soft Soap miracle. Load the milk pitcher with real tomato juice, and use a set of white handkerchiefs and a set of tomato red handkerchiefs, in place of the usual set supplied with your Soft Soap outfit.

The patter can follow the line of the usual "Soft Soap" routine, about the miraculous cleaning properties of "Soft Soap", the ease of working and so forth. After you have stuffed the dirty

white silks into the Lux box, comment that this is a vitamin method of cleaning. There is no more concentrated form of vitamins than tomato juice, so you just pour almost a box full of juice from your Milk Pitcher, as for the Vanishing Milk Trick. Now set the pitcher aside, hold the box carefully, as if it were dripping just a bit, close up the top tightly with a bit of Scotch Tape. In going through your washing motions you may play up the liquid angle as much as you want, faking a drip from the corners of the box, pretending to hear the handkerchiefs splashing around in the box, handling the box very gently, turning it over gingerly, and so forth. This in itself should be productive of a good comedy interlude. Don't overdo it, though, no matter what you do.

Now, with the box upside down, you are ready for the great cleaning disclosure. Open the bottom of the box and take out the tomato-colored handkerchiefs. Allow just enough time for this to strike the audience, show the hanks dry, and then go into the sucker bit with the empty Lux box. The vanish of both the juice and the ink-stained handkerchiefs, and the production of the colored hanks provide a good series of impacts.

### ***"Twentieth-Century" Soft Soap***

Another variation in which standard silk or handkerchief tricks may be combined with the "Soft-Soap" routine and idea is to be found in this twist on the "Twentieth-Century Silks." To the end of the special handkerchief which is opposite the bead, tie another handkerchief of a different color, which in turn is tied to a third handkerchief of a still different color. Load these three tied handkerchiefs into the Lux box in the usual "Soft-Soap" position. Show three duplicate colored hand-

kerchiefs to the audience separately. Place the first and third separately into the box in the usual manner. Then vanish the second handkerchief, and eventually produce the three handkerchiefs now tied together with the vanished one safely tied between the other two. In removing the handkerchiefs, remove the special one by the beaded end first. This may also be varied by showing the second set of the three handkerchiefs to be spotted or stained and by producing them tied together and clean of all their spots. Practically any of the standard-patter routines for the "Twentieth Century" effect may be used in connection with this "Soft-Soap" routine.

---

## *Tips on Variations*

### *Take a Card*

Here is an effective way to combine the usual type of card disclosure with the "Soft-Soap" routine so as to produce a stronger effect. There seems to be something about card tricks that captures the imagination of almost every person who attends a Magic show, and when they have a new or unusual twist, they make an even more lasting impression. The following idea can become a feature effect in any of your shows.

Instead of using the usual handkerchiefs for the "Soft-Soap" effect, obtain six different ones. Load the box with a solid red handkerchief, arranged to take the place of the special handkerchief supplied with the original "Soft-Soap" trick. Then add a black handkerchief with several large spots of white, so as to look as if some of the color had been removed in spots, and, last of all, load in a white handkerchief marked with black so as to represent a black spot-card, such as the Five of Spades. The box is then selected and set aside for later presentation.

When ready to perform, force in your favorite manner the black spot-card which is the duplicate of the card on the white handkerchief in the box. You may now proceed to fail to disclose the card by any number of methods you choose. You give up and say you'll do a trick with handkerchiefs instead. Take up from the table and show to the

audience a solid red, a solid black, and a solid white handkerchief, and place each of them in the "Soft-Soap" box in the usual manner. Close the box and go through the regular routine of waving and turning.

Ask the person who selected the card to concentrate upon the box, impressing upon it the value of the card he has chosen. Then open the box and remove the handkerchiefs, first the special red handkerchief, then the black handkerchief with the white spots, and finally the card handkerchief, onto which the black spots apparently have been transferred magically to form the picture of the chosen card.

If for some reason, you prefer to use a red card, then arrange the black handkerchief as the special one, spot the red handkerchief with white, and proceed as above. It is unwise to use a court card, because they include at least three colors in their make-up. If you wish, you may also use a plain white handkerchief in place of the spotted red or black, explaining that all the color was drained out of the handkerchief to make the impression upon the original white cloth. There are many other possibilities of varying this effect, both in its presentation and in its routine, and I am sure that each of you will be able to work out your own particular variation on the basis of the tip given above.

### *How "Granny" Does the Wash*

In order to provide a longer routine and several more laughs from the Soft Soap presentation, the following combination from William W. Buckley is suggested.

Load the box with the three clean hanks, on top of them place a paper for the Paper Panties to Hat

effect, and on top of this place a set of dime store false teeth.

When ready to perform, patter that your Grandmother was a very neat and clean old woman. She never used a washing machine, though, for all she needed was a box of Lux to do a "dry-cleaning" job. She'd make a pile of her dirty clothes, all ready for the wash, and then open up her box of Lux, stuff the dirty clothes into it, close it up, shake it up, and blow on it good and hard, and that was all she needed.

Now, open the box ready to remove the clean handkerchiefs. Reach in and take out the false teeth. "Poor Granny, every once in a while she blew too hard."

Now remove the paper panties, commenting that they probably didn't belong to Granny so we might as well tear them up. Do the necessary tearing and then restore as the hat. "Well, now, that's more like Granny." Then end the effect in the usual way by producing the clean handkerchiefs in place of the dirty, stained ones.

### ***"Wacky Rabbit" Production***

This variation in the use of the "Soft-Soap" effect makes it possible for the Magician to do an interesting production of the always-expected rabbit, and still add a touch of humor and comedy to the effect.

Purchase a "Wacky Rabbit," and then proceed to obtain a couple of small pieces of terrycloth towelling, some black thread, two small pieces of pink cloth for the inside of the ears, a black tuft for the tail, and two shoe buttons for eyes. Now obtain a short section of cardboard mailing tube, an inch and a quarter or an inch and a half in diameter, and about one inch long.

Fold together the Lux box, fastening the bottom with scotch tape. Then place in the box the "Wacky Rabbit," head first. The small opening at the bottom of the rabbit, sometimes used for the production of an egg, is then held open by inserting the short piece of mailing tube. The rabbit then is wedged in place in the corner of the box so that the fingers may hold the mailing tube section securely from the outside. The various bits of cloth, buttons, etc., are left near the prepared box on the table.

When ready to produce the effect, patter about how a Magician is always expected to produce a rabbit, and some people think he produces it out of thin air. "But 'you continue,' we know that something can not be produced out of nothing. What the Magician really does is to produce the rabbit out of little bits of this and that, which he collects together and then unites magically to make his production. Why, for instance, we might take a couple of pieces of nice, fuzzy white toweling such as would make a suitable skin for our rabbit and place them carefully away in the mystic box. We'll use a soap box because, of course, everything about Magic must be clean. Of course, we know that a rabbit's ears are always shell-like pink, and so we'll add our bits of pink cloth, soft and smooth, to line the rabbit's ears, and a little bit of black thread to put the proper features on his skin, and two little buttons for his two little eyes, and, last of all, a tuft of cotton to make his little black powder-puff tail."

While you have been talking in this manner, suit each action to the words, and carefully put each of the parts referred to into the opening in the rabbit. As the tuft of the tail is put in, the mailing tube can be given a push along with it so



that it, too, goes inside of the cloth body of the Wacky Rabbit. Now, proceed with the patter of the effect, closing the box, sealing it, waving it through the air, and obviously turning it over. This done, proceed to open the bottom of the box, and carefully remove the rabbit, still holding the box as if it were full. This gives opportunity for the sucker portion of the presentation, with the expressed demand that the box be opened. This may be built up, as with regular "Soft-Soap" effect, to the climax of tearing the box to pieces to prove its emptiness and its unprepared state.

If desired, the eyes may be threaded upon the black thread so as to make them less liable to fall upon the floor when the rabbit is removed from the box. In actual practice, it will be found that the cloth and cotton will quite effectively cover the hole in the bottom of the rabbit, preventing any of the smaller articles from falling. The presence of all of these items inside of the rabbit is not too bulky, but rather makes it appear as if the rabbit were more solid than flat. We have used this presentation several times, and have found it to be especially effective with children. Instead of using a Lux box, the box may be painted green and called "The Cabbage Patch," and this would provide opportunity for the presentation about the restoration of the rabbit when it was returned to its home.

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## *Tips on Patter*

### *Patter by Arnold Furst*

"I am sure glad the last trick worked because I'm not very sure of this one. It does not seem to go over as well as my other tricks. I think it's a very wonderful trick, though. I invented it myself."

"The idea is to do away with washing machines. All I use is this empty RINSO soap box. I call it RINSO because LUX won't pay me for the ad. All I use is the box. I have no use at all for the soap."

"These handkerchiefs have the black spots on them so you can imagine they are dirty. In fact, you don't have to imagine it."

"The idea behind all washing machines is agitation. That is what I use. The handkerchiefs are placed in the box (insert handkerchiefs) and then the box is shaken, and that cleans them clean. (Box is now reversed so that the word Lux is facing the audience up-side down.)

"(Box is opened) Here is the Yellow handkerchief completely cleaned, and here is the Red handkerchief without any spots, and (this remark is apparently made under the breath, but it should be loud enough so that the audience can hear it) let me see if I can find the right one, now. Ah, yes, here is the Blue handkerchief without any spots.

"Now! The amazing thing is that the box is completely empty. (Magician holds box tightly closed

so that if anything were inside it would be impossible for it to fall out.) See, I can shake the box and nothing comes out."

"(Here the audience either makes remarks or else they politely refrain from applauding. Magician looks very sad, and says) I see you did not like the trick. Well, I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'll just tear up the box and never do the trick any more." (Tear the box to pieces.)

If music is available, a long chord is indicated at this point. (After applause) "I was afraid that might happen. Now I have to go out and buy another box of soap!"

### *Doc Hallock's Color-Change Routine*

Doc Hallock, whose fine booklet, "Scream-Lined Patter Lines and Rhymes," has many verse ideas for use with "Soft-Soap" in its many variations, varies his "Soft-Soap" presentation by making it into a color-change routine. He starts with three white handkerchiefs, and ends up with three similar colored handkerchiefs following the usual "Soft-Soap" routine. He provides us with two sets of patter, one for a regular show, and one for a children's show. The rhymes are almost self-explanatory, and the action should be fitted to the words as neatly as possible. Here's a rhymed patter for the adult show.

" 'Three hankies,' said fashionable Bess.  
'We'll make them be an evening dress.  
I think 'twill be beautiful to show lots of cuticle.  
But more color is needed, I guess. ' "

During this verse, display the three white handkerchiefs, and then say in a conversational tone, "Well, the young lady was a Magician, and here's how she solved her color problem.

"She said, 'Some sorcery I shall try  
To change my Lux into a dye.' "

Pick up the Lux box, display it and open it ready for the insertion of the white handkerchiefs individually.

"She put in one. She put in two.  
The third then disappeared from view.  
She selected the box, for, as Chinese remark,  
'Magic, like boy friend, works faster in dark.'

" She waved the package about a bit  
And said, 'Now, act like Tintex or Rit.'  
And now let's see what came to pass.  
Why, here's a hanky as green as grass!"

"And here's another. Shoot me dead  
If Magic hasn't turned it red.  
The Magic still is running true  
For here's one that turned out blue."

During these verses, the various colored handkerchiefs are removed from the box in harmony with the patter.

"And, though her new gown was skimpy in  
places,  
That made an exciting display of her graces."

At this point, play up the "sucker" feature of the routine, and end by tearing open the box while you say:

"Oh, well, to settle every doubt,  
I'll show the whole thing inside out."

Doc Hallock says that he finds that cream-colored handkerchiefs can be used just as effectively as

white, and that, if you wish patter for other colors besides the red, green, and blue verses under "Dyeing Routines" from "Scream-Lined Patter Rhymes" may be substituted.

His patter for the children's show is as follows:

" 'Three hankies,' said poor little Bess  
'Will patch my torn-up party dress.  
The colors are light; that won't look so bright,  
So new colors are needed, I guess.' "

Now proceed with the rhymed patter for the adult show all the way through the production of the blue handkerchief. Then use the following verse as a closing one:

"Well, the colored patches looked quite dressy.  
They kept poor Bessy from looking messy."

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## *Short Tips on General Presentation*

There are quite a few simple ways in which many people have added fine touches to their presentation of "Soft-Soap". We have gathered some of these together here for your quick perusal. Most of these suggestions have been made by many users of the effect, and we make no attempt here to determine who was the possible originator of the idea; if it was you, we thank you for the tip.

In the folding of the Lux boxes you may save yourself a lot of fumbling if you will remember to seal the top and bottom with a bit of Scotch Tape, and if you will turn a thin strip of the tape back upon itself to make a free tab that can be caught quickly by the fingers when you wish to open the box top or bottom.

If you do not wish to tear the Lux box up into pieces for each show that you do, a little previous preparation will make the box into a repeater. Carefully separate the side flaps of the box where it is joined together, so that the entire box may be laid out flat with unprinted inside showing. For each show apply one or two pieces of Scotch Tape, as suggested above, to the side of the box to hold it together so that it may be refolded into a box. When you come to the end of your presentation instead of tearing up the box, simply undo the side tabs and open the box out flat, showing both sides to the audience. The same box may be used over and over again in this way.

If you use the box as above, you may add a final touch to the effect by printing some comment

such as "No Soap" or "Washed Up" on the plain inside portion of the opened out box.

Many Magicians sprinkle some real soap flakes in the top of the box so that when the box is opened at the beginning of the presentation these flakes accidentally or intentionally are spilled on the floor to create the impression of a real box of soap flakes. At the end, when the box is shown empty, not only have the soiled handkerchiefs disappeared but the flakes are gone too.

We have mentioned that the "Soft Soap" vanish may be used in connection with the "Twentieth Century Silks" and "Blendo", and we know that you will be able to use it for many additional vanishes of silks or handkerchiefs in connection with similar effects, such as the "Perfection Flag" or any of the numerous variations on these standard classics.

You may also paste the front of another type of soap box on the front of the Lux box, forming a flap, as in the old-time changing card, so that with a downward sweep of the hand you may change the brand of soap in order to complete the cleaning job.

Some Magicians seem to feel that the very obvious turning over of the Lux box is not to be desired, so they paste a second box front on the back, upside-down, so that when the turn-over is completed the box still appears to be right side up.

There are any number of short quips that may be used in your patter during the presentation. Some that we have heard used and have used ourselves are listed here for your reference.

"I don't need any water—I DRY-CLEAN the hanks."

"If these hanks aren't washed up completely—then *I'll* be."

"This is the only way that I can make a 'Clean-Up' in Magic."

"I always like to keep my tricks clean, so here's one with soap."

"This takes a lot out of me. I always work myself into a lather when I do this trick."

"I always use Soft Soap, that's why I'm such a slick Magician. (Or, "that's why my patter is so smooth.")

"Even the Magician comes clean in this effect."

"I guarantee that the spots will vanish, or else I will".

"This trick is sometimes a washout, but I hope this time it hits the spot."

"This Soft Soap is guaranteed to remove any kind of a spot except a bald spot."

"These spots will have to disappear; Lux against them."

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