The birds became famous. The other actors on the program were not pleased, however. Once, in Minneapolis, a lady opera singer refused to go on the stage unless the penguins were put away. Down in the basement, the birds soon discovered another flight of steps going up; and the penguins’ heads suddenly appeared, one by one, in the orchestra pit, where the musicians were playing. The musicians kept on playing, and the lady on the stage sang all the louder to show how angry she was. The penguin jumped up on the stage and hid under the singing lady’s blue skirts. That stopped the singing entirely except for one high, shrill note that had not been written in the music.

Five thousand dollars a week may sound like a great deal of money, and yet the Poppers were far from rich. It was quite expensive to live in grand hotels and travel about town in taxicabs. Every one of their walks looked so much like a parade that it always tied up the traffic. So Mr. Popper, who never liked to be a nuisance to anyone, always took taxis instead. The bills in the fine restaurants where the Poppers often took their meals were often dreadfully high.

Up to now, it had not been too difficult to keep the penguins comfortable. But a warm spring wind was blowing, and at the hotel Mr. Popper had to have the ice brought up to his rooms in thousand-pound cakes. He was glad that the ten-week contract was almost up.
Already Mr. Greenbaum was writing about a new contract. Mr. Popper was beginning to think, however, that he had better be getting back to Stillwater, for the penguins were growing irritable.