

DIRTY DEEDS AT THE DEPOT

**Also Known As
Professor Mack's Miracle Elixir of Life**

**By
Gary McCarver**

**A Full-Length Melodrama
Including Music & Staging Resources**

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DIRTY DEEDS AT THE DEPOT

(Use for Advertisements & Playbills)

Welcome to the small western town of San Juan Capistrano. A town where the Santa Fe Railroad has built one mighty beautiful train depot ... complete with its own mission bell.

The play begins with an old Depot's Station Master sitting on a bench reminiscing about the glory days of the Capistrano train. As he recalls the story we hear sounds growing in the darkened depot behind him ... one traveler almost trips over a suitcase as it falls over ... another traveler enters the depot rushing with arms full of baggage ... a train whistle is heard ... and steam pours in from off stage as a train arrives. It is now 34 years in the past. The year is 1895 and the now young Station Master enters the newly built ticket office announcing the arrival of the Santa Fe from Chicago - Springfield - St. Louis - Wichita and Albuquerque.

This is when gentle young Lacie Camisole enters the depot awaiting the arrival a train from Chicago to meet her "future husband". Not one of her selection, mind you, but one chosen by her father, so she can save the Camisole family ranch. Lacie has resigned herself to her fate until she finds that the new station master is her long lost, but not forgotten childhood sweetheart Justin Tyme.

Will this surprising revelation change the course of her future? Is the arrival of Professor Mack's Traveling Medicine Show merely a coincidence or does the "Professor" have a nefarious scheme up his sleeve? What brings the Gypsy Claire Voyant to town? I know "the train" ... but what is the secret that she is keeping? Will the Local School Marm innocently ruin Lacie's chances for happiness? Will the ranch get saved? What is Wyatt Earp doing in town? And why is it that you can't find a Pinkerton agent when you really need one?

Mayhem, mystery, music, dreams fulfilled, plans dashed to the rocks. Schemers, Scalawags and Scoundrels ... these are all just a small part of the Dirty Deeds going on at the Depot.

THE MAIN PLAYERS

Lacie Camisole – The Heroine – Innocent and somewhat naive Sweetheart of San Juan Capistrano and the lone heiress to the Camisole Ranch... betrothed to marry Dusty Trails in an arranged marriage between their rancher fathers. Lacie has never met Dusty who is scheduled to arrive on the noon train. Sweet as the day is long she discovers her childhood love (Justin Tyme) is back in San Juan Capistrano as the new Station Master ... an old flame is rekindled but is it too late?

Helen Highwater – The School Marm – The Heroine's best friend that is as capable with a Winchester as with readin', ritin' and 'rithmetic. Raised with 6 brothers and she could best them all in shootin', riding and wrangling. She is a strict teacher and always carries a ruler to "swat" the hands of anyone acting inappropriately. Not a woman to be trifled with.

Dusty Trails – Our Hero – The handsome son of a Texas Buffalo Rancher. Dusty is a man of few words and fewer vices. Honoring his father's wishes ... he has taken the train to California to marry the woman selected for him. Honest, but a bit tongue tied at times ... a good sort that easily gets flustered. Even though his family is rich ... Dusty dresses in the plain range-riding work clothes you'd expect a rancher's son to wear.

Claire Voyant – The Gypsy and traveling Sooth-Sayer – Claire is an old friend of the Heroine. She is musical, mysterious, and hides a secret past that involves a travelling "snake oil" salesman know as "The Professor". Most consider her a charming and harmless charlatan, but could she be a Villainess in disguise? You need to decide.

Justin Tyme – The Station Master – Former train conductor that "got promoted" to manage the newly built Santa Fe Train Depot completed in 1895. Justin has a reputation for never being early but never late either. He is a man with regrets about never traveling to see the world and about leaving his childhood sweetheart. Justin comes from a long line of "train men". Justin's prize possession is his father's gold pocket watch. Justin begins this melodrama as our narrator.

Professor Thaddeus Mack – The Villain – A traveling “Snake Oil” salesman with some nefarious scheme planned for the sleepy little town of San Juan Capistrano. Smooth talking opportunistic promoter, scoundrel and conman ... always with a plan or song up his sleeve. Could his “Miracle Elixir of Life” traveling medicine show merely be a ruse for a deeper and darker scheme? And where are the Sandwich Islands anyway?

Duncan Disorderly – The Villain’s Sidekick – Helen Highwater’s half-brother ... unfortunately taking a wrong turn at the quaint town of Temperance ... comical and quick with the “one liners”. There is much more to Duncan than may be at first apparent. Currently a front man and shill for The Professor.

Jerry Mander – The Judge – A local bureaucrat with delusions of higher office. He helped Orange County to break away from Los Angeles. So popular in town ... his name hasn’t even been needed to be put on the ballot for him to be re-elected as Mayor every election. Everyone who is everyone in town is invited to his parties over at Mander Manor.

THE HIRED HELP

Natalie Drest – The Piano Player – Bringing the melodramatic antics to life ... our resident musician tinkles out the tunes and themes that you’d expect from an authentic old west style melodrama. Remember to tip Natalie generously as good melodrama music don’t come cheap!

Cy Kosis – Our Melodrama’s Sound Effects Wizard – If it clanks, creeks, crashes or kerplunks ... you can be sure that Cy was the one behind that melodramatic sound. Dora Jarre sometimes sits in for Cy when he gets a paying job. Cy also acts as the town’s Telegraph Operator with the occasional message delivery. He is eccentric, but he is good folk.

Paige Turner – The Cue-Card Maven – For those that don’t come to melodramas often enough Paige helps remind the audience of their part in the production by holding up Cue-Card signs such as “Hisss ... Booo”, “Aaah” or even “Shameful Plug” when actors give plugs to local merchants.

THE LOCALS AND WALK-ON EXTRAS

Here are a few extra roles or “bit parts” for audience members to join in the fun ... dress them up quick before hand, give them their lines to read and take a photo of them for Facebook. You could also give these roles to those who want to act, but don't have the time to come to all the rehearsals ... it's all up to you.

Willie Becaught – The Sheriff – A clueless lawman and a fairly inept judge of men, land and horses. A very good natured but swarthy ex-sailor ... also currently acting as the town grocer – “Buy the fig marmalade ... its great!”

Phil McCavity – The Town Dentist – When not telling a tall tale or pullin' your leg ... Phil is probably pullin' your tooth. A quiet sort ... frequently showing up in crowd scenes and joining in on the occasional chorus song. He has a much bigger role in future melodramas so don't worry ... he'll be back.

Wyatt Earp – The fearless frontier lawman of Dodge City, settled briefly in booming San Diego in the 1890s where Wyatt invested in real estate and saloons. Wyatt is also a good friend of Bat Masterson and Doc Holliday and many Pinkerton Agents and made his way to San Juan as he was heading to Alaska.

Josie Earp – The ex-lawman's wife. Josie and Wyatt stopped in San Juan as they headed for Alaska to prospect and run a saloon during the height of the Alaska Gold Rush. A fun “*Here then gone*” extra role that is found just in Act 2 scene 2.

SONG LIST FOR THE MELODRAMA

**Music is from the public domain published prior to 1920.
Full music score and music CDs are available separately.**

Songs listed in order of Performance.

1. California and You

A song sung by passengers getting off of the Santa Fe train

2. Friends that are Good and True

A loyal friends' song that Lacie and Helen and Claire sing

3. Professor Mack

The Villain's Song ... a story of the cures & elixirs he brings

4. There's a Tender Look in Your Eyes

A seductive song from the Gypsy Claire to Professor Mack

5. Memories

Lacie sings a song of a lonely heart and years gone by

6. Lacie

A song that Dusty sings to Lacie to get her to love him

7. Dream Days

Justin sings a song of recollections and memories of the past.

8. San Juan

A song about beautiful and wonderful San Juan Capistrano

Interlude Music is also included in the Available Music Score

SET DRESSING NOTES

The sound effects table has a sign on the front saying "Telegraph Office" and the Piano Player has a money jar where people walking by put in money from time to time. The Professor will need a trunk or briefcase with legs for his elixir sales pitch. Traveling medicine shows were still common in the 1890s but would soon be replaced with local apothecaries and pharmacists due to regulation of patent medicines in America.

The Flag on one wall of the depot near the ticket booth is the Peace Flag (since 1891) with 13 stripes and 44 5-pointed stars in rows of 8-7-7-7-7-8. A picture of the president Grover Cleveland is appropriate. You will need a big red painted "FIRE" bucket for the cannonball style bomb in Act 2 Scene 2.

The Santa Fe Railroad in the 1890s was one of the world's longest railroad systems with over 9,000 miles of track and connections stretching from Chicago to Los Angeles. Things had however been tough for Santa Fe since the Wall Street panic of 1893 and it would about to get consolidated with other railroad lines due to a bankruptcy in just a few more years.

The Depot stage needs a table and chairs for card playing, an optional fireplace, a rack of newspapers of the late 1890s including at least the Mountain Democrat, the New York Herald, the Los Angeles Daily Globe and the Santa Ana Standard.

The Belford and Company Cannery was across the tracks from the old depot and specialized in fig marmalade and pickled olives under the "San Juan Brand" so if the wind was right ... the depot often smelled of sweet cooked fruit.

Check out the sample set renditions that follow this script as well as additional notes regarding props and costumes.

THE FIRST CAST

Dirty Deeds at the Depot was first performed in the month leading up to the annual Swallow's Day Parade in Beautiful San Juan Capistrano between March 3rd through 25th in 2006.

Performances were held at the Camino Real Playhouse where annual Melodramas have been a tradition in San Juan Capistrano since the early 1990s. This melodrama broke all box-office records for revenue and attendance to date and brought a new life to this Great American Art Form.

Lacie Camisole – The Heroine	Jennifer Hartline
Helen Highwater – The School Marm	Lynn Gallagher
Dusty – The Rancher's Son	Darrell Graeler
Claire Voyant – The Gypsy	Michelle Harrigan
Justin Tyme – The Station Master	Corey Eib
Professor Thaddeus Mack – The Villain	Gary McCarver
Duncan Disorderly – Villain's Sidekick	Bruce Alexander
Jerry Mander – The Judge	Howard Serbin
Natalie Drest – The Piano Player	Linda Eldridge
Cy Kosis – Sound Effects Wizard	Mark Parker
Paige Turner – The Cue-Card Maven	Jordan Smiley
Hugh Dunit – The Sheriff	Tom Scott
Phyllis McAvity – The Town Dentist	Various Actors
The Young Girl – A Regular Extra	Rose McCarver
The Frontier Lawman – Wyatt Earp	Various Actors
The Lawman's Wife – Josie Earp	Janet Austin

Producer & Director	Tom Scott
Stage Manager	Angelique Ward
Music Director	Gary McCarver
Scenic Artist	Beverly Blake

PROLOGUE

The Place: Just Outside the Old Capistrano Depot
The Date: March 4th, 1929
The Time: Early in the Evening

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – San Juan Capistrano 1929

(The Depot's new stationmaster - Justin Tyme is sitting on a bench in front of a darkened set. Justin is a grey haired bespectacled older man with cane in hand sitting on a bench in front and off to one side of the stage. Only a few flickering hurricane lamps betray the fact that the stage is anything more than an old building. Lights fade up only on the bench and Justin. Natalie is quietly sitting at her piano.)

*(**SOUND EFFECT** – A train whistle is softly wailing in the distance... the sound effects wizard gives this effect from off stage.)*

JUSTIN – (narrating) It wasn't too long ago when you had to take the stage to get here. Welcome to the small western town of San Juan Capistrano. A town where the Santa Fe Railroad has built one mighty beautiful train depot ... not exactly one of the biggest train depots in the west ... but back in 1895 it was pretty grand ... complete with its own mission bell and a fireplace. The depot even had its own piano.

JUSTIN – (narrating) As I recall they went through a heap of trouble to get Natalie just the piano she wanted with a big labor strike going on... and even though the country had been in a depression since the Wall Street Panic of 1893 ... the Santa Fe made sure not a shoddy brick was used in building the depot.

JUSTIN – (narrating) I haven't been back in some time now and I just stopped by to see how she's held up over the years. *(Looking around)* Not too much worse for wear. *(pause)* If only these walls could talk ... oh ... the stories they could tell you.

JUSTIN – (narrating) Where to start ... well there was a girl. I guess it always starts like that ... with a girl. And there was a friend ... I guess there's always a friend. But that was a long ... long time ago.

(SOUND EFFECT – A lonesome train whistle wailing off in the distance.)

(INTERLUDE MUSIC BEGINS)

(Lights fade out on the bench as lights begin to fade up on the depot set behind. Dialogue starts and Justin quietly EXITS behind the stage to make his costume change into the younger stationmaster. Be quick! Justin you've only got 2 minutes to remove your coat, wig and glasses and put on your conductor's hat for a youthful re-entrance in 1895.)

LIGHTS FADE OUT

ACT 1 SCENE 1

The Place: The San Juan Capistrano Train Depot
The Date: March 4th, 1895 (34 years in the past)
The Time: It is approaching noon

(Paige Turner enters from the train platform to hold up her sign then EXITS.)

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – San Juan Capistrano 1895

(Lights are fading up on the main stage. Crates of fresh produce, wines and “provisions” are on the stage with the rustling of people arriving by train. An old red bucket with the word “fire” stenciled on it is sitting next to the ticket office. A Calendar on the wall says March 4th, 1895. A traveler enters with bag in hand. The Judge and Duncan are sitting at a small table with cups of coffee playing cards.)

WALK ON EXTRA – So ... when does that noon train arrive?

THE JUDGE – *(Snapping)* Noon I suspect.

(Now turning attention to Duncan who is also seated at the small table obviously playing cards with the Judge) Blasted, jelly-boned belly-wriggling, sniveling, dribbling lot. (Mocking) “When will the noon train arrive?” (pause) ... City Slickers.

DUNCAN – Come on now Judge ... Tell me what you really think. *(beat) (a laugh)* Oh just drink ‘yer coffee and quit ‘yer yammerin’. Are you playing cards or what? *(Duncan is seen eating bread and marmalade throughout the card game.)*

THE JUDGE – I went through a heap of trouble to get our county to break away from Los Angeles and then they have to go and have to find gold in Alaska. *(Holding up a newspaper that says in the headlines GOLD FOUND IN ALASKA TERRITORY)* Blast! If it weren’t for the Hot Springs just outside of town and people deserting town for greener pastures ... this train depot would be as empty as your head.

DUNCAN – You don't have to get your dander up. There is no denying that things have been pretty tough around here since the stock market panic of '83 ... I recon' that's why folks are heading north to better their lot in life.

THE JUDGE – *(Mocking)* "When will the noon train arrive?"
Baaah! *(Subject change)* What are you eating anyway?

DUNCAN – Fig marmalade from the Belford Cannery across the tracks. I'll see your dollar and raise you a dollar!

THE JUDGE – When the wind is just right ... the whole town smells like fig marmalade. *(beat)* I hate figs. *(Noticing Helen)* Isn't that the local school marm ... Helen Highwater?

(Helen Highwater enters holding the hand of one of her students - a young girl carrying a bundle of books tied with a small belt and maybe a stuffed animal or a rag doll as well.)

DUNCAN – Judge ... are we going to play cards, or aren't we?

HELEN – Don't doddle ... I told your mother that you could tag along. I have one quick errand then it will be time for lessons.

A YOUNG GIRL EXTRA – Mary had a little lamb; its fleece was black as soot. And everywhere that lamb did go, his sooty foot he put. *(pause)* Can I have some candy?

HELEN – Not until after lessons and you'll have to ask your mother. Just skedaddle over to the schoolhouse and tell the other students that I will be over directly. Go on now ... scoot!

(The Young Girl rushes off as Helen Highwater expectantly looks around for her friend Lacie)

HELEN – *(Pondering to herself loudly)* Sometimes that Lacie can be as slow as molasses in February ... *(she now sees her)* There she is now!

(Lacie Camisole enters holding a train schedule, a telegram, and a book of poetry.)

LACIE – (*Looking up and around*) Oh ... my! The new Depot looks just grand! Is that a piano? Oh ... My ... isn't this place getting swankier and swankier. 'Oooh La La'.

HELEN – (*To Lacie*) Lacie Camisole ... as I live and breathe ... I'm here like you asked me. (beat) So this is the day?

LACIE – Thank you Helen, You're a good friend. Oh, that dress is dreadfully pretty Helen, as they say in Paris ... "tray sheek.

HELEN – (*Interrupting*) So ... Lacie ... when DOES he arrive?

LACIE – He should be coming in on the noon train from Chicago ... (*Holding a train schedule and telegram*) ... that's all my father told me when he sent me here to collect him.

HELEN – Do tell? Mighty peculiar if you ask me. Having to marry a man you've never laid eyes on before ... just because your Daddy says you've got to. It's just not right.

LACIE – Times have been hard, and Father said that this is our last chance to save our ranch. By marrying a rich Texan's son his father will send us enough money to save our lands. Helen ... there is more than just MY feelings to consider ... you know. The right thing to do is to follow my father's wishes.

HELEN – Do tell?

LACIE – (*ASIDE: I know it may seem strange, but since Mother passed, Father's worked so hard. He says this is our very last chance to save the Camisole Ranch.*)

(*Paige Turner enters and holds up her card*)

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – AAAAH

(*Paige Turner EXITS*)

HELEN – I always try to do the right thing too.

HELEN – (*ASIDE: That is of course only after I have tried everything else.*) Still ... I know your heart belongs to another.

LACIE – Yes ... that WAS true, but I have not seen nor heard from Justin since he left town almost 5 years ago. That seems like a lifetime if you know what I mean.

THE JUDGE – *(Checking his pocket watch and standing up)*
Blazes! It's nearly noon so we best be getting out of here before they all start singing.

DUNCAN – “Singing?” What are you talking about?

THE JUDGE – It happens every time people come back to California ... actually it's getting pretty darn annoying.

(SOUND EFFECT – A train whistle and the sound of a train breaking for the station)

(SPECIAL EFFECT – Steam pours in from off stage as the train arrives – smoke machine)

(The now young Station Master ENTERS.)

JUSTIN – Announcing the arrival of the Santa Fe from Chicago, Saint Louis, Wichita, and Albuquerque on track one.

DUNCAN – But we only have one track? But that is one more track than they have in Hemet *(or local town to poke fun at)*.

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Hemet?

JUSTIN – First day on the job and the train is right on schedule. Now that's the way I like to see the train arrive. Never ahead of schedule, never behind ... right on time.

(Cy Kosis and Extras ENTER the station.)

OPTIONAL EXTRA – Wonderful to be back in San Juan. Chicago is plenty nice, but I've been away far too long.

CY – That's the truth.

OPTIONAL EXTRA – Oh my! *(Looking around)* This new depot they built is mighty swanky.

CY – I hear tell this depot even has its own mission bell. I tell you ... it's great to be back in California.

SONG – California And You

Public Domain Music by Harry Puck

Lyrics by Edgar Leslie and revised by Gary McCarver

Originally Published in 1914 by Kalmar & Puck Music Co.

Verse – Sung by Cy

Oh! You ... old Pacific coast, Oh! You land I love the most,
Ev'ry other place that I see, Only makes you dearer to me;
Thro' my Pull-man window pane [Cy and Duncan start singing]
As my station's drawing near, I can hear that fond refrain,
Sung so every-one can hear.

Chorus

All on stage start singing,
Don't you remember California in September?
As we stood in the woods 'neath the beautiful sky,
It made me cry when I told you good-bye, My honey ...
Don't you remember that I promised I'd be true?
I'm so glad the train is bringing me back to California and you.

(Repeat Chorus)

THE JUDGE – *(to Duncan)* I told you, pretty annoying isn't it?

*(Cy crosses to his sound effects table which
doubles as the town's telegraph office.)
(Duncan and Helen and the Extras all EXIT)
(Lacie turns to see Justin ... their eyes meet)*

LACIE – Oh ... my! It couldn't be ... but maybe it is? Justin
back in Capistrano after all these years?

LACIE – **(ASIDE:** *My childhood sweetheart Justin. Not a day goes by that I don't wonder where he might be ... who he might be with ... and whether he is thinking of me like I think of him.)*

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – AAAAH

LACIE – Justin ... That is you ... isn't it?

JUSTIN – Lacie ... here in San Juan Capistrano?

JUSTIN – (*ASIDE: My childhood sweetheart Lacie. Not a day goes by that I don't wonder where she might be ... who she might be with ... and whether she is thinking of me like I think of her.*)

JUSTIN – Yes, it is I ... I mean me ... I mean yes. (*Rushing to embrace Lacie taking off his hat for moment or two.*)

(USE A PINK GEL for a special lighting effect when sweethearts embrace center stage)

LACIE – (*Embracing Justin*) At first, I didn't recognize you ... Justin Tyme ... back here in Capistrano. I'm amazed.

JUSTIN – Don't you mean "amazing"?

LACIE – No ... amazed to ever see you again.

JUSTIN – No ... "Ama-ZING" ... you look simply amazing! (*Stepping back to look at Lacie*) Just look ... just look at you ... you are ... beautiful!

LACIE – Oh ... My!

JUSTIN – If you hadn't heard ... I'm the new stationmaster here in town. It took me a while to get back, but finally I kept my promise to return.

LACIE – But it's been five years?! When I hadn't heard from you ... I just stayed in my room all day long. Father sent me to school in Paris to get my mind off of you ... you ... you ... why didn't you write? What happened? Why did you leave?

(As the main stage Lights dim as a spotlight or other flashback effect shines mostly on Justin)

JUSTIN – I guess nobody told you. (*pause*) It was a cold day that my father went away. My mother must have had some premonition because I remember her pleading with him to find someone else to conduct that train on that run.

LACIE – Oh ... my!

JUSTIN – ...Then my father gave me his pocket watch to hold just 'till he came back. He used to do that when I worried about him being gone on long runs. (*Fondling the watch fob leading to his vest pocket*) It was two days before I found out about the train wreck and that my father would not be coming home.

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – AHHHH

LACIE – I am so sorry ... (**ASIDE:** *I never knew.*)

JUSTIN – (*Pulling out and looking at his father's pocket watch*). He never came back to get his watch. (*Winding it*)

(SOUND EFFECT of loud watch winding –
New Year's noise maker)

JUSTIN – It's the only thing I have to remember him by. (*Pause and clearing his throat*) It hit Mother really hard. We had to move in with her sister's family ... in Hemet.

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Hemet?

(OFF STAGE VOICES – “Hemet?”)
(*Justin and Lacie look at each other and looking around*)

JUSTIN – Later on ... I got a job on the Santa Fe Line as a porter ... then I worked my way up to brakeman and then conductor (*putting back on an old conductor's style hat*), Then I finally got the chance to become the stationmaster back here in town. Honestly ... I didn't think you'd remember me.

(LIGHTS AT FULL)

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD AAAAH

LACIE – Of course I remember you. I still have that book of poetry that you gave to me, (*Holding up a small leather-bound book*) I just never thought that I'd see you again. Why didn't you write me ... not even a single letter!

JUSTIN – But ... I did write ... many times. But all my letters were returned. *(Pulls out a packet of letters tied with a string from his pocket handing them to Lacie)* Your Father said ...

LACIE – *(Interrupting)* “FATHER!” That’s why he sent me away ... That’s why he told me I had to forget the past and to move on.) Justin ... I ... I never knew.

JUSTIN – Well that is all water under the trestles now. We are together again and there’s nothing that can stand between us.

(Lacie looks at the train schedule and the telegram she carries then at Justin then bursting into tears she runs from the station)

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – AAAAH

JUSTIN – What is it, wait. Lacie wait! Was it something I said?

(Justin EXITS. The Judge and Helen ENTER)

(SET DRESSING NOTES: Newspapers of the late 1890s on included: the Fresno Weekly Republican, the Mountain Democrat, the Woodland Daily Democrat, the New York Herald, the Los Angeles Daily Globe and the Santa Ana Standard. Have several spread around the stage so the audience can read the headlines)

THE JUDGE – *(Reading with pride a newspaper)* Look here Helen... there’s an article here about our Depot ... let’s see ... it says ... “The Santa Fe Railroad is the world’s longest railroad with over 9,000 miles of track.

HELEN – “9,000 miles?”

THE JUDGE – Let’s see ... here we go ... Finally completed in 1895 ... Old San Juan will soon blossom with the finest depot on the Santa Fe system. Taking "mission style" a step further than most depots ... We invite everyone to come view this unique brick building adorned with arches, a 40-foot high dome with its own mission bell ... A *dainty* ticket office and a *quaint* old-fashioned fireplace that will capture the tenderfoot’s heart as he breathes the balmy sea air." This will put us on the map!

(Justin re-ENTERS quietly going to work behind the bars of the Depot's ticket window.)

HELEN – “Dainty and Quaint?”

THE JUDGE – I don't really care what they write ... the train is good for the town. Most of the squatters and drifters moved on when the law came to town ... and the law came to town because of the train. Sure, we still have drunken brawls in the streets most Saturday nights ...

HELEN – But that's one of the things that makes me love calling this place home.

THE JUDGE – True. But since the news reached us ... townsfolk have been leaving us in the lurch heading off to Alaska by train... there's a gold rush going on you know? *(All the Newspapers in the racks in the Depot have some variation on that headline ... ALASKA GOLD RUSH ON ... GOLD IN ALASKA. The Judge stands to leave.)*

HELEN – *(Turning the Judge's paper over to reveal the headline ALASKAN GOLD FOUND!)* Yes, I think I've heard that somewhere.

THE JUDGE – Excuse me?

THE JUDGE – Miss Lacie.

(Lacie ENTERS as The Judge EXITS.)

LACIE – Mister Mayor. *(A kerchief in hand drying a tear.)*

HELEN – Lacie ... are you, all right? *(Walking over to Lacie)*

LACIE – No ... not really but there is not much any one can do about it. I am so confused.

HELEN – What's the confusion ... you love Justin, don't you? *(Lacie whimpers)* Don't you? Well don't you? *(Lacie sobs)*

LACIE – We had all these plans. But now I just don't know ... so much has happened. I have my duty and there's the wedding my Father has planned for me and then there's ...

HELEN – (*Interrupting*) Did you tell Justin about the wedding?

LACIE – Oh NO ... not yet. The ti-ming has to be right ... well the timing has to be right. Honesty is the best policy you know.

HELEN – How do you really know that honesty is the best policy unless you've tried some of the others? I don't think you should tell Justin about Dusty. Nope.

LACIE – He will hear about the wedding soon enough.

HELEN – Yes ... and when he does he's liable to have a conniption fit. Best you no the one giving it to him.

LACIE – We will just have to figure this out before he hears.

NATALIE – (*ASIDE: Advice from friends is like the weather ... some is good and some is bad, but it's mostly unpredictable.*)

(SOUND EFFECT – Telegraph)

(Cy is writing down the telegraph message and Claire Voyant enters walking over to Helen.)

CLAIRE – Helen ... I'm Surprised. Not even going to say hello after all these years? (*Walking in like she owns the place*)

HELEN – Claire? Claire! What brings YOU back to San Juan Capistrano? I bet it's not the fig marmalade.

CLAIRE – I was wondering what that smell was? Actually ... I heard that there was going to be a wedding and I had a "feeling" that my services would be needed.

HELEN – Last time I heard you were a "sooth sayer" in a traveling circus back east?

CLAIRE – I prefer the title "prognosticator" or "medium" or "intermediary between the worlds of what is and what is to be".

HELEN – *(Nodding ... knowingly)* ... “Sooth Sayer”!

LACIE – Sakes Alive ... Claire! *(They embrace)*

CLAIRE – How are you Lacie?

LACIE – Oh *(pause)* ... Just fine.

HELEN – Don’t believe her ... She’s worse off than a cat in a room full of rocking chairs.

CLAIRE – ... and where is this man you’re about to marry?

LACIE – Well ... I suspect he will be here any time now. *(Lacie is now carefully looking at the train schedule in her hand)*

CLAIRE – Don’t be coy with me Lacie ... I’ve known you for too many years ... I sensed that there was more to the story than infatuation and ceremony.

HELEN – Horse feathers ... now you’ve even begun to believe all that fortune telling “mumbo jumbo” ...

LACIE – Helen ... just pull in your horns and stop looking for trouble. Claire is an old friend ...

HELEN – *(Glaring at Claire)* Old is right. What’s on your mind Claire? If ... you’ll forgive the overstatement?

LACIE – ... As I was saying ... Claire is one of our oldest friends and I for one am very glad to have you here in town. *(Hugging close together with one on each side of her)* Oh you two. It’s so good to be all together again, how long has it been?

CLAIRE – Too Long ...

HELEN – Not Long Enough!

LACIE – You two always fought ... you’d think you were sisters. Claire, just ignore her. It’s wonderful to see you again.

HELEN – Well ... it IS good to see you Claire. In fact, ... I’m glad you’re here, for Lacie’s sake. The truth of the matter is ...

(The telegraph sound has stopped. Cy holds and silently reads the telegram he transcribed.)

CY – *(obviously upset interrupting Helen)* Consarn, oh that can't be good! Gol-durn it, dad-blasted, dog-gone!

(The women look over at the CY.)

HELEN – Excuse me? CY ... Can we help you?

CY – I am so sorry Ladies... excuse my language. *(Walking over to Lacie)* Here's a telegram for you miss Lacie.

LACIE – What does it say?

CY – “dit dit dah dah dah dit dit dit dit dah ... dit ... dit.”

LACIE – Thank you. *(Reaching for money or her purse)*

CY – Never a charge for you Miss Lacie.

(CY then returns to his sound effects/telegraph office table)

LACIE – Oh my ... it is from my, “future husband” Dusty Trails!

CLAIRE – A telegram? What does it say?

HELEN – *(To Claire)* It's none of your business now Claire. Hush. *(To Lacie)* What ... what does it say?

LACIE – *(Reading from the telegram)* Delayed one day in Chicago ... stop ... be in San Juan on morning train ... tomorrow ... stop ... Dusty. *(pause)* What am I to do?

HELEN – Tomorrow? Don't fret ... we've got till tomorrow ... sure as shootin' ... we'll figure this out.

CLAIRE – I remember back when we were like “pees in a pod” ... no problem too big for us. Now that that three of us are back together we should get this all sorted out in short order.

HELEN – Another prediction?

CLAIRE – No ... a promise!

HELEN – Well ... Maintaining a positive attitude may not solve all your problems, but at least it will annoy people.

HELEN, LACIE, CLAIRE – *(All three laugh).*

LACIE – True friends are scarce ... especially now.

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – AAAAH

LACIE – I feel better just knowing that you two are here to help. Natalie you mind helping us out here with a song?

NATALIE – Not a problem Miss Lacie. *(Begins playing piano.)*

SONG – Friends That Are Good and True

Public Domain Music by Edmund Eisner

Lyrics by Julius Steger and slightly edited by Gary McCarver

Originally Published in 1905 by M. Whitmark & Sons.

(Verse sung by Lacie first time through ... except the “or three” line which is sung by either Helen or Claire. All three sing together second time through)

From the day when first we start,
Each in life to play her part,
Till we reach that perfect peace,
Where all care and toil shall cease,
Fate can nothing better send, *(Claire joins in the singing)*
Than a true and loyal friend,
Friend in word in thought and deed, *(Helen joins in singing too)*
Ready in hours of need,
Friends that are good and true,
Each of us finds but few,
You never can tell can you,
What friends will do for you?
Choose them with proper care,
Real friends are scarce and rare,
Happy in-deed is she,
Who can claim two or three. *(Claire sings the “or three” line)*

(Duncan is standing in the archway of the Depot just watching and waiting for a chance)

LACIE – Having to marry someone I have never met ... Finally finding out what happened to my childhood sweetheart ... confusing emotions ... What more could possibly happen to make things worse? *(Handkerchief to eyes to dry her tears)*

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – AAAAH

CLAIRE – You need a good meal and they are fixing roasted pork butts for supper over at *(Local Restaurant)* right now!

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Shameless Plug!

HELEN – More telling of the future?

CLAIRE – No ... I just ran into the Judge on my way over here and he invited us over to eat. Come on Lacie ... let's get a wiggle on. You too Helen. You know the Judge don't take no for an answer.

LACIE – I don't know?

CLAIRE – It's much more agreeable than it sounds.

HELEN – The "Judge" ... agreeable?

CLAIRE – No ... he's just as dis-agreeable as ever. I was talking about the menu.

(HELEN glares over where Duncan is hiding but doesn't quite see him clearly ... he ducks behind the archway to avoid detection.)

HELEN – Well it sounds delightful, but I've got to skedaddle. I've got lessons to teach to some very patient children ... but I will catch up with you later.

LACIE and CLAIRE – Suit yourself. Good bye Helen.

(Helen EXITS)

(Lacie talks to Claire as they walk out.)

LACIE – *Just east of town the hot springs has a nice little resort. I will have to take you out there next week.*

(Lacie and Claire now EXIT)

(Duncan stealthily ENTERS to put up Miracle Elixir Posters on various walls of the Depot.)

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Hiss ... Boo!

DUNCAN – Boo yourself. It's just a job.

(Duncan EXITS)

(INTERLUDE MUSIC BEGINS)

LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK

ACT 1 SCENE 2

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – San Juan Capistrano 1895

PAIGE TURNER – ANOTHER CUE-CARD – Later that day

DUNCAN – *(ASIDE TO AUDIENCE:* When the Professor was young, he was a genuine card shark making his first fortune at a young age dealing a game called Faro and his favorite stud poker. I heard he learned that working the sideshow in a circus. That's where he first came up with the idea to start a Traveling Medicine Show ... *(pointing at a Magic Elixir sign on the wall)* ... anyway ... it was a natural for him. More than any other man I've met ... The Professor has the gift of compressing the largest amount of words into the smallest amount of thought. He is a man of dubious credentials and unless we are very lucky ... I suspect he will be here soon.)

(The Professor enters dragging or rolling a big trunk covered in travel labels. He removes his tall black top hat and places it on the cane that is protruding from his Medicine Show Trunk.)

THE PROFESSOR – *(Wiping his brow with a handkerchief and talking to Duncan)* You have gotten all the posters up around town like I asked?

DUNCAN – Just about Professor. Only one or two more and that'll be it.

(Duncan tosses remaining posters behind him while The Professor's head is turned.)

THE PROFESSOR – I trust you've been more discreet this time. Remember when shootin' your mouth off in Abilene *(or name of a local town to poke fun at)* almost landed us in jail!

DUNCAN – Professor, I haven't told a soul the REAL reason you're here in town.

THE PROFESSOR – Good! And see that it stays that way. *(Looking around to see if anyone is listening)* Did you learn anything more about "the matter" I asked you to investigate?

DUNCAN – (*ASIDE TO AUDIENCE: He may look like a scoundrel and talk like a scoundrel but don't let that fool you ... he really is a scoundrel.*)

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Hiss ... Boo!

DUNCAN – Professor ... the word is that the shipment you were interested in will be arriving on the early train tomorrow and the stationmaster will be asked to keep it in his safe until the next train bound for Chicago.

THE PROFESSOR – Excellent! Simply excellent! That gives us all the time we need.

DUNCAN – I don't think the folks here in San Juan have a clue as to what will be passing through their little town. Professor ... with a fortune just in our grasp why take any chances hoodwinking these good townfolk with your medicine show.

THE PROFESSOR – (*ASIDE: While Duncan is not dumber than a barn swallow he is not much smarter than one either.*)

THE PROFESSOR – Does your train of thought come with a caboose?

DUNCAN – What are you talking about?

(THE PROFESSOR Holds up an Elixir bottle.)

THE PROFESSOR – To accomplish our goal in this sleepy little town ... what we need is a distraction ... and I know of no better distraction than a good old-fashioned medicine show. And who said anything about "Hoodwinking". Some people actually do get better after they drink this "elixir".

DUNCAN – Have you been drinking that elixir yourself?

(THE JUDGE, CLAIRE, HELEN, LACIE, CY and any EXTRAS all randomly ENTER)

THE PROFESSOR – Here they all come now. Watch and Learn My good man ... Watch and Learn.

(The Cast gathers around listening to The Professor's Pitch as he removes his duster or cape, pulls up his sleeves, adjusting the sleeve garters and then producing bottles of elixir, small boxes of powders and pills and a few other assorted medicinal looking props from his Travelling Medicine Show Trunk.)

THE PROFESSOR – Step right up ladies and gentlemen! No other elixir available is as strong as Professor Mack's Miracle Elixir of Life. None as Invigorating, none as Strengthening, nor as Refreshing. This wonderful and remarkable discovery cures all the ills that afflict man or beast. I invite you to step right this way. Don't be shy folks...step right this way...ladies come forward.

THE PROFESSOR – (*ASIDE: I do love forward ladies.*)

(NOTE: women cast members make "oh my" or "do tell" comments interjected as the professor runs through his spiel. Duncan wanders through the crowd of townsfolk and extras encouraging them to come forward learn more from The Professor. Duncan is first to pull out money to purchase a bottle.)

THE PROFESSOR – This wondrous elixir was concocted, constructed and devised to take care of all common afflictions. Simply use our specially prepared elixir for instantaneous relief.

THE JUDGE – Who are you?

THE PROFESSOR – Who am I? ... Did you say who am I? ... (*Directed to the Piano Player*) Maestro ... would you please?

SONG – **Professor Mack** (*derived from the song Turkestan*)
Public Domain Music by Jack Stern
Lyrics originally by Bobby Jones reworked by Gary McCarver
Published in 1919 by The Broadway Music Co.

(**Verse** sung only once by The Professor)

From the Land of Turkestan,
Where Ottoman, wander in caravans.
I climb the mountains high ... cross desert sands,
Finding cures (that) you demand.

Chorus

My name is Thaddeus Mack ... Professor Thaddeus Mack,
I traveled all the world for you, water from Hidden Springs ...
the health my Elixir brings, Miracle Remedy ... it's true!
I bring back precious things, Pills ... potions ... cures of kings,
From (*little*) Siam to the Sandwich Isles,
coughs ... colds ... and headaches gone.
Turns weakness into strong. All courtesy of Professor Mack.

(Repeat Chorus twice more – key change last time through)

CLAIRE – That song sounds strangely familiar?

THE PROFESSOR – (*Ignoring Claire's comment*) Professor Mack's Miracle Elixir of Life ... a wonderful pain destroying compound ... it treats rheumatism, neuralgia and sciatica as well as strains and sprains, frost bites and lumbago. For hours of comforting warmth and relief simply use it externally as a liniment. Turn back the hands of time with this mysteriously manipulated compound of roots, barks, leaves, and berries ... all in a suspension of water from medicinal springs.

DUNCAN – Like the medicinal hot springs right here is town?

THE PROFESSOR – There are medicinal hot springs right here in town? (*ASIDE: Well maybe in a future melodrama.*)

DUNCAN – Tell us more Professor!

HELEN – Do Tell.

THE PROFESSOR – As a tonic it is good for relief of cramps, arthritis, memory loss, dropsy, dyspepsia, ulcers, depression, poor digestion, neuralgia ... and even memory loss.

DUNCAN – Is that all?

THE PROFESSOR – Is that all? IS ... THAT ... ALL? *More than that ...* Professor Mack's Miracle Elixir of Life is the only proven cure for APHONIA ... commonly known as Laryngitis. (*Faking a sore throat*) Simply take a single spoonful to begin the healing process instantly. (*The Professor takes a spoonful then his booming voice returns*). A CURE FOR APHONIA!

THE JUDGE – (*loudly*) Balderdash! This fellow don't know any more about elixirs than a pig knows about Sunday.

THE PROFESSOR – Balderdash you say? This is not balderdash! This is not ballyhoo! This is not hocus-pocus! This elixir is the foe of pain, the friend of humanity, and the salvation of the sickly. It comes from an ancient formula obtained at great personal risk and expense by me Professor Thaddeus Mack ... from the deepest darkest rain forests of (pause) Borneo.

HELEN & LACIE – Oh ... My!

THE PROFESSOR – So powerful is this protected formula ... ancient tribesmen would trade a single ounce of this miraculous mixture for a horse or a hut or even a wife.

THE PROFESSOR – (*ASIDE: Don't get any ideas my friend.*)

THE JUDGE – Why ... I would never ...

DUNCAN – (*Acting as a shill ... from the audience*) I only have ten dollars ... can I possibly purchase half a bottle?

THE PROFESSOR – My good man ... what is your future worth? What is your health worth? What price can you place on the health and well-being of your family? Never before have I made an offer as good as you will hear in one moment. As company founder and general agent for the Pacific Coast and Sandwich Islands ... I can provide you an entire bottle of Professor Mack's Miracle Elixir of Life not for 20 dollars ... not for 10 dollars not even for 5 dollars ... but today I am letting these miracle elixirs go for the paltry sum of only one single solitary dollar per bottle. (pause) And sir ... I would like to give you this first bottle at no cost. Use it in good health!

DUNCAN – Why ... I don't know what to say. Thank you!

THE PROFESSOR – So, step right up Ladies and Gentlemen. Who will be the next to travel down the road to vibrant health? The fare is only one dollar per bottle. Step right up.

HELEN – I'll take a bottle. *(Holding up and waiving a dollar)*

THE JUDGE – Well ... I guess I'll take a bottle.
(Waving a dollar.)

NATALIE – *(Stepping forward grabbing a couple of dollars from her tip jar)* I'll take one of those.

CY – Give me two bottles ... I need some of that! *(Barging to the front of the crowd and grabbing two bottles.)*

HELEN – I was here first! *(Swatting Cy with her ruler ... "Swack".)*

CY – Stop that ... just stop that. *(He takes the ruler away from her and snaps it into two pieces and discards them. Helen smiles to audience and takes another out of her bag.)*

HELEN – CY ... wait your turn!

DUNCAN – **(ASIDE:** *It is said that Helen Highwater can whip her weight in angry cats ... not a woman to be trifled with.)*

THE PROFESSOR – *(Said quietly to Duncan).* Quickly now ... while they are distracted ... go check the telegraph desk for any news on *(Slowly)* "you know what".

(Duncan slinks over to Cy's telegraph and rifles through his papers grabbing one paper and quickly shoving it into his pocket. Pulling another from his pocket as a replacement note to give to the Professor.)

DUNCAN – Ahaaaa!

(Duncan rejoins the crowd then walks by The Professor to puts a piece of paper in his hand.)

THE PROFESSOR – (*ASIDE: The early bird may get the worm, but it's the second mouse that gets the cheese.*)

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Hissss ... Booo!

(The Professor walks back to his medicine show trunk and Claire Voyant ENTERS.)

CLAIRE – (*ASIDE: Now there's the kind of man that looks as inconspicuous as a tarantula on a slice of angel food cake.*)

CLAIRE – You villain ... You varmint ... you contemptible scoundrel.

THE PROFESSOR – Agreed ... but what's your point?

CLAIRE – I'll never forget the first time we met (*pause*) although I will keep trying. Is that YOU ... Thaddeus?

THE PROFESSOR – Ahhhh ... Claire ... You're a parasite for sore eyes. (*Opening his arms to welcome her*)

CLAIRE – Why ... thank you. (*pause*) Hey. Still up to your old tricks I see. (*Pointing at his medicine show signs*) When I first met you I thought you were a young man with promise, but it ended up you were only full of "promises". (*pause*) I waited in that wedding dress all day ... you never showed ... you cad!

THE PROFESSOR – You mean in Abilene?

CLAIRE – Abilene? I was never in Abeline! When were you in Abilene? (*Claire shakes her head "no".*)

THE PROFESSOR – (*Interrupting*) Ahhh of course ... I meant in Dodge City? (*Claire shakes her head "no".*)

CLAIRE – Dodge City? I was never in ...

THE PROFESSOR – (*Interrupting again*) ... Of course, what I really meant was ... Kansas City? (*Finally, he got it right and she nods in agreement*) Actually ... I had to leave Kansas City suddenly on account of a little "difficulty" I was having with the

local constabulary at the time.

CLAIRE – Horse feathers! What kind of “difficulty” keeps a man from showing up at his own wedding?

THE PROFESSOR – Let us just say it was the kind of “difficulty” that can bring a man to the end of his rope.

CLAIRE – Knowing you ... it was probably the end of a hangman’s rope. So ... what did you steal that time?

THE PROFESSOR – You know me well Claire. *(Clearing his throat and changing the subject)* I don’t think I’ll be able to whitewash this ... suffice it to say ... *(Said slowly)* “I apologize”. *(pause)* Do you still have that ring I gave you?

(Claire reaches out and takes The Professor’s hand. His kisses her hand and stealthily steals the ring right off of it.)

CLAIRE – Of course. I kept hoping you’d come back to me. I guess I was always in love with the false image I had of you. It took me a long time to forgive you. We really were good together once ... do you remember Thaddeus?

THE PROFESSOR – Never “good” ... but we did make a good pair. I guess I’ve always had a soft spot in my heart for fortune tellers. You’re a hard woman to forget Claire.

CLAIRE – I find that very hard to believe?

THE PROFESSOR – That I would remember you?

CLAIRE – No ... that you have ... a heart.

THE PROFESSOR – Now you’re just being rude.

CLAIRE – I’ve never tried to change you or even make you give up that medicine show business.

THE PROFESSOR – That is true.

CLAIRE – *(Making a grand gesture)* Thaddeus ... I see a

future where we are together.

THE PROFESSOR – I thought you gave up that old mind reading act you learned from Faye?

CLAIRE – I am quite serious ... we actually could have a future together.

THE PROFESSOR – And this future isn't behind bars is it?

(Claire gets close to "Thaddeus" and tries to seduce him with her song. He will have nothing of it at first but then starts to soften a bit)

CLAIRE – Natalie would you mind?

NATALIE – My pleasure. *(She begins to play)*

SONG – There's A Tender Look In Your Eyes

Public Domain Music by Victor Herbert

Lyrics by Richard Bruce and reworked by Gary McCarver

Published 1920 by T. B. Harms & Francis, Day & Hunter, N.Y.

(Verse 1 – Lovingly Sung by Claire to The Professor)

Tell me why you trifle with your heart?
You're aware love is there,
Why not listen to it's calling?
You see ... we should've never been apart,
Tell me why we can't try, you and I?

(Chorus – Claire sings - The Professor adding comments)

There's a tender look in your eyes. *(That's a lie)*
You'll surrender if you are wise. *(I deny)*
Why resist me? Why not confess? *(Baaah)*
When you kissed me, you meant "yes?" *(You digress)*
(2nd time through for The Professor: That's a Guess)
From your glances I can divine. *(I see no sign) (All right... fine)*
Fond romances none can decline *(No not this time)*
(2nd time through for The Professor: Maybe next time)
Tell me truly, Why so unruly?
You will someday be mine. *(Maybe someday you'll be mine)*

(Verse 2 – Sung by The Professor)

Hear me ... when I say you plead in vain.
I don't feel love's appeal,
I am hardened to its calling.
In Love ... no one ever can remain,
Tell me why ... we should try ... you and I.

(Repeat Chorus)

CLAIRE – Consider it a “business” proposition. We’ve always worked well together and maybe a “merger” would make sense. What do you say Thaddeus?

(Claire makes seductive motions towards The Professor ... fingers through his hair etc.)

THE PROFESSOR – Well ... I am at a loss for words.

CLAIRE – You ... at a loss for words? I can hardly believe that! Quick ... Here ... before you think too much about it ... This is the key to my Hotel room. *(Giving him her room key)* If you’re interested in further discussing my proposition ... I’ll be waiting.

(Clair EXITS throwing him a kiss.)

THE PROFESSOR – Yes ... a very hard woman to forget.

DUNCAN – Something on your mind, Boss? *(Walking to him)*

PROFESSOR – I am having second thoughts about our plans.

DUNCAN – Second thoughts that is unlike you? Have you suddenly grown a conscience?

PROFFESOR – Claire and I had “something special” once ...

DUNCAN – *(Interrupting)* You ... and her??

THE PROFESSOR – But that was many years ago. *(pause)* I don't know ... sometimes I think it might be nice to settle down maybe move to Utah ... find some nice women and start a

family ... but then I think ... *(long pause looking at each other)*

PROFESSOR & DUNCAN – *(Sarcastically in unison)*
Naaaaaaaaah!

DUNCAN – I know what you mean.

PROFESSOR and DUNCAN – *(both laugh out loud.)*

DUNCAN – I've been to Utah. *(ASIDE: The Professor has all the characteristics of a dog ... except that loyalty part.)*

THE PROFESSOR – Still *(Lost in thought a moment)* Fetch me my walking stick. *(pause)* And would you mind directing me to ... the local hotel ... I believe it is *(name of local hotel)*.

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Shameless plug

DUNCAN – Oh that's easy Professor ... right at the end of this street ... They have the best fig marmalade ... *(Duncan EXITS)*

THE PROFESSOR – Fig marmalade you say ...

(The Professor EXITS as (Lacie ENTERS)

LACIE – *(In despair)* Oh ... What am I to do? What am I to do?

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – AAAAH

LACIE – *(Holding the pile of letters that Justin wrote to her.)*
Reading the letters that I never received reminded me of how happy Justin and I once were.

LACIE – **(ASIDE TO AUDIENCE:** He saved them all these years. That has to mean something too. *Don't you think?*)

SONG – Memories

Public Domain Music by Earl Burtnett (Originally Evening)
Lyrics by Haven Gillespie and reworked by Gary McCarver
Originally Published in 1919 by A.J. Stasny Music Co

Verse *(Sung by Lacie ...)*

Now as the stillness of night starts to fall,
Thoughts of you come back to me.
My heart was lonely and only for you,
But that is just now history.

Chorus

Memories, memories, you will live on in my memories,
Oh, how I sigh for the years gone by
Still wond'ring if you knew how much I did love you
memories, memories,
Your love was just like old memories,
Here for a day (but) then faded away,
evenings brings memories of you.

(Repeat Chorus)

LACIE – Whatever shall I do? (*sobbing*) Whatever shall I do!

(Lacie EXITS)

PAIGE TURNER – **CUE-CARD** – AAAAH

(Natalie gathers her music, turns and EXITS)

LIGHTS FADE OUT

INTERMISSION

ACT 2 SCENE 1

(Natalie enters followed closely by Paige Turner to show her sign)

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – San Juan Capistrano 1895

(Another train has arrived in the station a few minutes earlier and some additional crates and added suitcases piled up in the corner of the Depot lobby. The Judge and Duncan are playing cards seated at the card table in the Depot. The Professor is walking by the table over to his trunk. The Calendar now says March 5th 1895)

NATALIE – Good morning Professor.

THE PROFESSOR – *(He grunts acknowledgement)* Morning.

THE JUDGE – One moment Professor ... do you play cards?

THE PROFESSOR – I've never really been one for games of "chance" ... *(Raising eyebrows and winking to the audience)*

THE JUDGE – Oh come now ... the name of the game is "Faro". Ever heard of it? *(Slapping the back of The Professor)*

THE PROFESSOR – Maybe you could educate me, my good man? *(Sapping the Judge's back in response)*

THE JUDGE – It's a game of chance that comes from the grandest of gaming palaces in Europe. We take a standard Deck of cards. *(Holding a deck)* The Faro is the king of hearts.

THE JUDGE – *(Holding up that card for all to see)* You simply bet on the order in which cards are drawn. Simple enough. *(pause)* So ... are you "in" Professor?

THE PROFESSOR – How difficult could that be, but if you don't mind ...?

(Sitting down at the table with the other men.)

THE PROFESSOR – Let's start with an even simpler game ... poker. I'm in. *(Pulling out money and placing in on the table)*
Mind if I deal ... Judge? *(Slapping the Judge's back)*

JUDGE – Well, I guess that would be fine ...

(The men play cards in the background as Lacie enters from the side of the stage and is followed by Justin who pulls up the blinds that were closed behind the train ticket window ... obviously in mid-conversation.)

JUSTIN – I am so sorry to hear about your mother. How is your father ... what has he been up to lately?

LACIE – My father? *(pause)* Justin ... I have to tell you something.

JUSTIN – If it's about where we will live after we get married ...

LACIE – *(Interrupting)* No actually it is ...

JUSTIN – If it's about my position ... being a stationmaster here in San Juan is just a beginning. If I do a good job here, I should be able to write my own ticket to any station or depot on the Santa Fe line. San Francisco, Chicago, even Hemet.

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Hemet?

(VOICES FROM OFF STAGE – “Hemet?”)

(Justin and Lacie both look at the audience and then look at each other again.)

JUSTIN – Unless you want me to stay here ... then I ...

LACIE – Stop interrupting me ... there is a problem.

JUSTIN – Whatever it is ... there's not a problem so big that we can't solve it together.

LACIE – I am not so sure about this one.

JUSTIN – Oh ... *(Looking at his pocket watch winding it once)*

(SOUND EFFECT – Pocket watch winding sound)

JUSTIN – I almost forgot ... if you will excuse me a moment. We've got a train that's just arrived in from Chicago ...

LACIE – But Justin ...

JUSTIN – ... And is unloading provisions and supplies. I will be right back. *(Justin goes back into the office)*

LACIE – Actually it's about that train from Chicago I want to talk about. *(Speaking up so he can hear as he walks away to do duties as the train just arrived)* Justin I need to tell you ...

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – AAAAH

(Lacie hears a sound from the train and heads out of one of the archways offstage. Helen and Claire walk into the depot in mid-conversation from the other side of the train station.)

CLAIRE – ... But knowing him sure does keep life interesting!

HELEN – *(To Claire)* It may not be my place to say, but I don't cotton to you or your choice of friends Claire. That Professor strikes me as nothin' but a four-flusher ... a cheat ... a swindler ... a hoodwinker and a chiseler.

CLAIRE – I'm not disagreeing with you. He may be a low-down cur of a man. But if I play my cards right ... he might just be MY low-down cur of a man.

HELEN – You are hopeless.

CLAIRE – No ... not yet, but I was well on the road there.

(Claire and Helen see the men playing cards.)

CLAIRE – Oh ... there he is now. Yoou whoo ... Professor.

(Claire and Helen walk over to the card game.)

THE PROFESSOR – Looks like I win again.

(The Professor gathers up his winnings in a pile then shoving it into his pockets.)

CLAIRE – You mentioned something about having to take care of some business. You could have just told me you wanted to play cards.

THE PROFESSOR – Actually this was a fortuitous and unexpected game. I guess I've had a strong run of "beginner's Luck" *(Winking at the audience)*.

THE JUDGE – He is quite right ma'am. It's a very odd thing. In fact, I think The Professor has won every hand dealt. You say you've never played cards before?

THE PROFESSOR – No ... actually I said I don't like games of chance.

THE PROFESSOR – *(ASIDE: When I play poker there is little "chance" that I won't win.)*

(Blatantly showing the audience that he has a hidden Ace or two up a sleeve or in a pocket)

CLAIRE – Thaddeus? *(Chastising him for his actions)*

THE JUDGE – In any case ... I guess I'm pretty much played out. So ... if you'll excuse me "gentlemen".

(The Judge stands to EXIT, but takes a few moments before he finally EXITS)

CLAIRE – Thaddeus ... I thought you would be over to "fetch" me when you had finished your business?

THE PROFESSOR – It is you who are "the fetching one" my dear ... I have never seen you more radiant. Helen, would you mind if I took your friend for a stroll?

HELEN – (*ASIDE: That Professor reminds me of a corkscrew ... cold, sharp, and twisted.*)

HELEN – Fine ... I like long walks, especially when they are taken by people who annoy me.

CLAIRE – Helen ... now be polite.

THE PROFESSOR – This way Claire. I am told that have a wonderful fig marmalade in town (*fading off*) ...

(The Professor and Claire EXIT the Depot)

CY – (*ENTERS Yelling*) Duncan I just heard that there's a rip-roaring time going on over at the (*Name of Local Saloon*). (*Name of local person to poke fun at*) is looking for trouble. You ought to find the sheriff.

DUNCAN – To stop it?

CY – No ... The sheriff just never likes to miss out on a good time or a good fight.

DUNCAN – I'll go tell him. (*CY and DUNCAN now EXIT*)

(The Judge stands but is intercepted by Helen)

HELEN – I want a word with you ... Judge. (*Judge sits again*)

THE JUDGE – (*sitting down*) I don't know what your problem is, but I'll bet it's a hard one to pronounce.

HELEN – Actually, Judge I do have a problem and I need your advice ... what do you think ... (*Said without a breath in one stream of excitement*) First of all my best friend is betrothed to a man she has never met in an arranged marriage her father has designed to save her family's ranch and then she discovers that her childhood sweetheart has returned to town after 5 years and they still have strong feelings for each other, but her future husband has just arrived on the train and now she wants ME to tell her what to do. That's right ... she wants ME to tell HER what to do! I'm stumped. Any suggestions?

THE JUDGE – *(ASIDE TO THE AUDIENCE: By the way ... if any of you were arriving late ... that should give you a pretty good summary of what has happened up until now.)*

(Cy Kosis EXITS.)

THE JUDGE – My dear, I don't have a solution ... but I do admire your problem. I'm afraid that you're asking the wrong person. As a city politician my job is mostly looking for trouble, finding it, misdiagnosing it and then misapplying the wrong remedies. When it comes to understanding matters of the heart, honestly, I don't have a clue.

HELEN – So ... then what should I tell Lacie?

THE JUDGE – I always advise people NOT to give advice ... at least not sober. I think we need a drink.

HELEN – I don't drink ... just give me some water.

THE JUDGE – It has been my experience that those with no vices have very few virtues. And I think you just might need something a bit stronger than mere water, my dear. *(Pulling a bottle of Gin and two glasses from behind the counter)* Besides ... did you know that water is actually composed of two gins ... OxyGIN and HydroGIN. *(As he pours gin into two glasses)* OxyGIN is pure gin ... while HydroGIN is gin and water. *(Handing one of the drinks to Helen)* Here ... drink this!

HELEN – Fine! *(Drinks in one gulp)*. Hit me with another!

(The Judge is surprised as to how fast she downed that drink. The judge pours another.)

HELEN – I recon' that'll do. *(As a toast)* Here's how... *(She downs this second drink along with The Judge)*

JUDGE – I think ... just maybe you've had quite enough ...

(Helen reaches for the bottle. The Judge resists and then Helen hits The Judge's hand with the ruler she always carries around.)

THE JUDGE – Ouch! Stop that ... just stop that!

HELEN – You have been of absolutely no help sir finding the answers that I seek. And although I may not have an answer ... honestly at this very moment I do not care.

(A now woozy Helen stands to EXIT and takes the bottle with her. The Judge EXITS also.)

HELEN – I must admit I've had a perfectly wonderful day.
(pause) Unfortunately... this wasn't it. Good day to you Judge.

(Helen EXITS and Dusty and Lacie ENTER)

DUSTY – I'm so glad you got my telegram. When my pa told me I was getting married ... at first I told him ... "not a snowball's chance in ... well ... I said that I wouldn't marry someone I'd never set eyes upon".

LACIE – I said the same thing ... except without the "snowball" part.

DUSTY – But then he convinced me that it was for the good of the family that I get married to "Carry on" the "Trails" family name.

LACIE – And me ... I'm supposed to save the "Camisole" Family Ranch.

DUSTY – Pa can be all fired convincing when he wants ta' be.

LACIE – My father as well. I'm surprised that you don't have all the local girls swooning over you Dusty.

DUSTY – Thank you kindly ... Miss Lacie ... You're as fine as cream gravy. The problem is that with most ladies ... I'm as jumpy as a toad in thunderstorm and can hardly get out a full sentence without putting my boot right in my mouth. But with you ... talking isn't as tough.

LACIE – Why thank you ... Dusty. That is one of the nicest things anyone has said to me ... I think?

LACIE – *(ASIDE: My ... oh my. He is charming and nothing*

like I thought he would be.)

DUSTY – You must have been a pretty girl when you were young. (*Flustered*) I mean ... not that you aren't pretty ... I mean not that you're not young now ... I mean you are still ... oh what's the use. I always get tongue tied when I talk to a beautiful lady.

LACIE – You really think so?

DUSTY – Think what?

LACIE – That I'm beautiful.

DUSTY – You are as “purty” as a calico dress on Sunday Miss Lacie ... I mean ...

LACIE – (*interrupting*) Just a simple yes or no will do.

DUSTY – Yes.

LACIE – Yes what?

DUSTY – Yes, I think you are beautiful like a dessert flower. I did from the moment I saw the picture your Father sent.

LACIE – My Father sent a picture?

(Dusty pulls out a small sepia photo of Lacie.)

DUSTY – Yes. And you don't do your picture justice ... I mean ... you're much prettier than I expected. When I found out we were to get hitched ... even though we hadn't met ... I was stumped as to why you'd want a simple son of a rancher. Then I found out what our fathers had cooked up and I figured to come out to California to see if maybe you'd ...

LACIE – Go on ...

DUSTY – Oh what's the use? You're so beautiful and sophisticated and smart ... I'd be crazy to think you'd want a simple rancher like me.

LACIE – I like simple ... sometimes.

SONG – Lacie

Public Domain Music by Neil Moret

Lyrics by Harry Williams and modified by Gary McCarver

Original Publication in 1918 by Waterson, Berlin & Snyder

(Verse – Sung by Dusty to Lacie as he has fallen for her)

Oh! what a shame they gave you the name of Lacie,
(I mean) There is no rose that's half as sweet as you?
Lucky the birds and the bees you meet,
Lucky the moss and the violet sweet,
When they are trod by your bare little feet,
There in the morning dew.
How can you blame me when I pine.
Lacie, to change your name to mine?

Chorus

Lacie, pretty Lacie with your hair of (raven/auburn/satin*) hue;
In your smiling so beguiling,
There's a bit of Killarney, bit of the Blarney, too.
Childhood in the wildwood,
Like a dessert flow'r you grew;
Pretty Lacie, pretty Lacie,
Can you blame anyone for falling in love with you?

*(*The hair color of the actress playing Lacie.)*

LACIE – Don't stop.

DUSTY – I've got to ... the piano quit playing. Thank you kindly.

(Dusty puts a few large bills in Natalie's tip jar and then walks back over to Lacie obviously looking for something he had misplaced.)

DUSTY – *(Embarrassed)* Excuse me ... I almost forgot. Here, I brought this for you. Just try it on for size ... for a while ... maybe it'll fit ... maybe it won't.

(Pulling a huge ring out of his pocket and placing it on Lacie's finger.)

LACIE – *(Quickly grabbing and looking at the ring)* Oh my ... I don't know what to say.

(Lacie drops her handkerchief and Dusty gets down on one knee to retrieve it and hand it to her as Justin ENTERS and looks at them.)

DUSTY – I believe this belongs to you.

LACIE – Thank you ... thank you kindly.

DUSTY – You don't have to say anything yet. Maybe our fathers know better than we do. Maybe they don't. You think maybe we could find a place just to sit and talk ... for a spell.

LACIE – *(Interrupting)* I'd love to talk for a while. I suspect it is the least that I can do since ...

(Lacie and Dusty begin to EXIT but are intercepted by Justin who walks over to them.)

DUSTY – Lacie?

LACIE – Justin! ... umm ... This is ... Dusty Trails.

JUSTIN – Nice to meet you ... Lacie has told me ... absolutely nothing about you. *(He reaches to shake Dusty's hand.)*

LACIE – I guess you'd say that Dusty is my *(pause)* betrothed.

(Justin pulls his hand back and then notices the large diamond ring on Lacie's hand.)

JUSTIN – You're ... betrothed? I take it that you two ...?

LACIE – ... Have just met.

JUSTIN – You have just met?

DUSTY – And we're supposed to be married.

LACIE – I tried to tell you about ...

JUSTIN – (*interrupting*) ... You're ... getting married?

DUSTY – I reckon that's about the whole story on that.

JUSTIN – ... Confusing.

DUSTY – Tell me about it. One day I'm riding the range looking for a lost buffalo ... we named him "stew" ... and the next week I'm heading off to California to get hitched.

JUSTIN – It takes you a week to ride across your ranch?

LACIE – Oh ... my! That sounds like a big ranch.

(Cy Kosis comes back on stage excitedly with some very important news Justin must hear.)

CY – Justin ... Justin. The conductor tells me that there's a problem getting a shipment unloaded from the train and the train can't leave until you get out there.

JUSTIN – Getting Married? (*to Lacie ... Ignoring Cy*)

CY – Justin! The conductor says ...

JUSTIN – Cy ... Hold your horses! (*Giving a stern look at Cy and a confused look at Lacie*) I will be back as soon as I can. I thought that you? ... That I? ... That we?

CY – Justin? They need you right away!

JUSTIN – All right ... already! I'm coming!

(Justin begrudgingly EXITS with Cy)

DUSTY – I reckon I'll best be heading over to my hotel. But if you don't mind I'd be honored to see you home Miss Lacie.

LACIE – Thank you ... Dusty. If it's not out of your way. Our

ranch is just about five miles east of here.

DUSTY – It could be half way to Texas and back and I wouldn't mind. Besides ... that gives us time to talk.

LACIE – Oh ... my!

(Lacie and Dusty EXIT. Justin ENTERS.)

JUSTIN – Lacie ... Lacie?

JUSTIN – *(ASIDE: Where could she have gone? I knew I should have told her how I felt sooner ...)*

(Justin goes over to Natalie's piano)

SONG - Dream Days

Public Domain Music Words and Music by Charles L. Johnson
Originally Published 1913 Modified by Gary McCarver 2005
(Sung or sung-spoken by Justin)

Twilight brings fond recollections,
Memories of days long gone by.
Thinking of some-one who loved me,
Some-one who I told good bye.
Oh take me back to those dream days,
Back to that girl I adore There let me stay,
just for one day, back in those dream days of yore.
Dream days, dream days, days gone by,
days when we strolled in the garden of love, My Lacie and I.
Dream days, dream days, I loved you so.
Oh take me back to those,
beautiful dream days of long (long) a-go.

JUSTIN – I should have told her how much. Oh, never mind.

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – AAAAH *(Justin sadly EXITS)*

LIGHTS FADE OUT

ACT 2 SCENE 2

(Paige Turner enters with her Cue-Card as lights come up)

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Later That Day

(Lacie, Claire and Helen are standing and talking in the front of the depot in the little garden that adjoins the main depot set)

HELEN – So ... if you can predict the future what do you see?

CLAIRE – I see a future where people will come from all over to see little birds visit this little town of San Juan Capistrano.

HELEN – Interesting, but not very helpful for the problem at hand.

HELEN – *(ASIDE to the Audience: Claire never lets ideas interrupt the easy flow of her conversation.)*

LACIE – Oh my! *(LACIE begins to cry loudly)*

HELEN – Look what you did Claire ... there she goes crying again. *(To Lacie)* There ... there Lacie ... don't take on so.

CLAIRE – I didn't say ...

LACIE – *(Interrupting)* I sure am going to miss San Juan Capistrano.

HELEN – Don't you have any say in this?

LACIE – My father says ...

HELEN – "My father says" ... that's nothing but just a namby pamby excuse for not doin' what you know needs doin'.

CLAIRE – What are you talking about?

HELEN – She was asking for advice ...

CLAIRE – Advice is what we ask for when we already know the answer ... but wish we didn't.

LACIE – As always ... your witty sayings prove nothing.

CLAIRE – What about these? (*Holding up the packet of letters Justin wrote to Lacie*) ... These letters that Justin wrote to you. That man thinks the world of you Lacie.

LACIE – Either way ... somebody gets their heart broken. The simple thing to do would be what my father wants me to do and marry Dusty.

CLAIRE – For every complex problem, there is a solution that is simple and neat, ... and wrong.

HELEN – I hate to admit this ... but Claire is right. Life is large and is bigger than all of us. I believe that life sometimes comes down to one moment ... one choice and that's all we get. Do you want to go to your grave safe or do you want to skid in sideways, reigns in one hand, a glass of gin in the other, totally worn out and screaming "YEE HAA what a ride!"

CLAIRE – “Yee Haaaaa”? “Bigger than all of us?” ... Helen? Have you been having more than just Sarsaparilla today?

HELEN – So, you think I went a little over the top with the “Woo Hoo” part Claire?

LACIE – Hello ... You two.

(Justin ENTERS from the depot and walks over to stand next to Lacie.)

JUSTIN – Lacie?

(Helen & Claire stand and watch. It is an uncomfortable moment or two.)

HELEN – If you need us we'll be in the depot.

(Finally Helen grabs Claire and they EXIT.)

JUSTIN – My father always told me ... “*The things we have to lose are so much greater than the things we have to gain*”.

LACIE – My mother always told me ... “*Life is too short not to live your dreams*.” But my father wants me to marry Dusty to save the Camisole Ranch. It is all so confusing. Please tell me what I should do.

JUSTIN – Lacie ... you can never tell which way the train went by just looking at the track.

LACIE – (*A confused look and pause*) What do you mean?

JUSTIN – What I’m trying to say is ... I trust you will make the right decision. (*Justin and Lacie embrace*)

(Lights fade out on front garden and brighten on rear depot part of the stage Lacie and Justin EXIT. Helen and Claire ENTER.)

HELEN – Claire ... so ... Let me get this straight. The Professor has left you at the altar twice already.

CLAIRE – Yes ... I guess you could say that ... but he promises that it wasn’t his fault ... well not exactly ...

HELEN – So ... if two wrongs don’t make a right, why not try three?

CLAIRE – The Professor gave me his word.

HELEN – (*ASIDE: Unfortunately, I have a feeling his word is about as good as his elixir.*)

HELEN – Alright ... alright ... You are my friend, so I will do my best to stay out of your business.

(The Professor slinks in with his sidekick Duncan who is carrying a big sack of tools.)

THE PROFESSOR – All right ... let me explain the plan one more time. First, I sneak into the stationmaster’s office.

DUNCAN – Because?

THE PROFESSOR – Because that is where they keep the SAFE.

DUNCAN – Yes and then?

THE PROFESSOR – Then ... I crack the safe ... removing the shipment of Alaskan gold and then we take our leave from this lackluster armpit of a town.

DUNCAN – But what if the safe can't be cracked Professor?

THE PROFESSOR – Every safe can be cracked. *(He holds up a doctor's stethoscope)* Some just call for plan "B".

(Noticing the ladies at the table)

THE PROFESSOR – Duncan, do go get me a momentary distraction so I can collect our prize from the depot's safe.

DUNCAN – Of course professor. Distraction is my middle name.

(Walking over in front of the ladies to distract them from the Professor's stealthy entrance to the stationmaster's office)

DUNCAN – A very good afternoon to you ladies ...

(The Professor sneaks behind the table and enters the ticket office)

HELEN – And a good afternoon to you.

DUNCAN – Have you ever noticed how beautiful the hills are that surround this depot? *(Pointing out the archway away from the slinking Professor and the president's picture on the wall)* And how stately Grover Cleveland looks ... so presidential.

CLAIRE – Thank you Duncan. *(Politely excusing themselves so that they can continue their own conversation.)*

DUNCAN – Excuse my interruption ladies!

(The Professor moves out of the office to the side of the depot and uses hand signals for Duncan to come over)

DUNCAN – *(Said in quiet whispered tones)* So Professor ... Where's the gold?

THE PROFESSOR – Curses ...

DUNCAN – What do you mean by “Curses”? ...

THE PROFESSOR – It's a Mei-Link Safe out of Toledo. Can't pick the lock or hear the tumblers fall. Looks like we will have to go to Plan “B”.

DUNCAN – Right ... Plan “B?” What exactly is plan “B” anyway?

(The Professor grabs the duffel bag and pulls out a large round bomb with fuse ... optionally a bundle of sticks of dynamite with fuse)

THE PROFESSOR – All I need is another moment of distraction. After that ... a big noise ... a little chaos ... and then we return to collect our gold.

DUNCAN – I thought that no one would get hurt and it would be simple and QUIET job ...

THE PROFESSOR – It will be quiet again soon enough.

DUNCAN – You never do things the easy way ... do you Professor?

THE PROFESSOR – One more moment of distraction is all I need ... go now!

DUNCAN – But professor ... you never said anything about ...

THE PROFESSOR – Go *(beat)* ... NOW! *(Pushing Duncan)*

(The Professor enters the office with the bomb as Duncan distracts the ladies once again.)

DUNCAN – ... Did I ever mention that we are the only train depot on the Santa Fe Line that has a fireplace and mission bell and...ah ... its own piano player!

(The Judge and Justin and Lacie ENTER the Depot as The Professor drops his bag of safe cracking tools as he comes out of the office. Everyone hears the tool bag dropping to the floor and looks.)

HELEN – Jumpin Jehosphats! What are you doing in there?

CLAIRE – What's going on Thaddeus?

JUSTIN – Excuse me Professor ...

THE PROFESSOR – *(Pulling out a gun)* Hands in the air everyone! Now get over there. Not you! *(To Lacie)* *(Directing everyone to the stage farthest from the ticket office with his back to the ticket office)* All I want is the gold stored in the Depot's safe. Nobody will get hurt if you just cooperate.

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Hiss ... Boo!

HELEN – *(Holding up a ruler)* You know better than that! Pointing a gun at these nice people ... *(pause and looking at The Professors gun then dropping her ruler)* Sorry ... old habit. Never mind.

CLAIRE – *(ASIDE: If you can stay calm, while all around you is chaos...then you probably haven't completely understood the gravity of the situation.)*

JUSTIN – "Gold"? Nothing in that safe except a few ledgers, some blank tickets ... and my lunch.

HELEN – *(Directed at the Judge)* Judge, you didn't say anything about any gold shipment coming to town TODAY?

THE PROFESSOR – Excuse me ... Judge? What do you know

about the gold? (*Pointing the gun in the Judge's direction.*)

LACIE – Lands Sake! Tell him what he wants to know!

THE JUDGE – If you must know ... it's due in on tomorrow's train.

JUSTIN – It's true. Now let all of these folks go safely and we'll give you a good head start before we send the sheriff after you.

THE PROFESSOR – (*Looking at Duncan*) Duncan!?!)

DUNCAN – What? Do I look like a calendar?

THE PROFESSOR – Let me see if I've got this straight. There wasn't any gold in the train? (*Everyone shakes their heads no*) ... there isn't any gold in the safe? (*Everyone shakes their heads no*) The safe has nothing but a few books and a lunch in it? (*Everyone shakes their heads yes*) ...

JUSTIN – That's true ... and a fine lunch is from (*Name of a Local Restaurant*).

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Shameless Plug!

THE PROFESSOR – Well ... If I can't have the gold at least I get the girl!

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – BOOO HISSS!

LACIE – (*ASIDE: Oh no not that.*) (*Said very deadpan*).

DUNCAN – Can I have Helen Highwater?

HELEN – Oh no not that (*Winking at the audience in approval.*)

DUNCAN – Professor ... maybe we should take him up on his offer... there's a lot to be said for being above ground instead of pushing up the daisies. Besides ... the whole town has figured out by now ... that your miracle elixir is mostly spring water and grain alcohol.

NATALIE – It is? (*Upset ... getting ready to discard the bottle*)

THE JUDGE – Grain Alcohol you say?!

(The Judge fills his pockets with several of the elixir bottles.)

DUNCAN – So ... I believe it may be about time we Vamoose, Professor.

THE PROFESSOR – Perhaps you're right ... Let's wind up this business and head north to Alaska ourselves ... I hear there is a "Gold Rush" going on up there

ALL – *(in unison)* I think I've heard about that somewhere.
(Holding up the headlines "GOLD FOUND IN ALASKA")

DUNCAN – News to me.

(The sheriff bursts in with gun drawn and pointing at The Professor and also at Duncan)

THE SHERIFF – What's going on it here? What's with all this shecoonery!

HELEN – You mean chicanery?

THE SHERIFF – That's what I said ... shecoonery! If you don't mind ... hand over that gun ... Professor!

THE PROFESSOR – Curses!

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Applause ... Hooray

HELEN – It's about time you got here!

THE SHERIFF – Hands up Professor and I'm sorry to have to say this ... you too Duncan.

DUNCAN – Actually, Sheriff, I am undercover for the Pinkertons. *(Showing a Special Agent or Train Agent Badge from under his lapel)* We've had our eyes on The Professor for quite some time. Now, I've got enough on him to put him away for years.

LACIE – Duncan? You are one of the good guys!

DUNCAN – Oh! I almost forgot Plan “B”. Professor you didn’t light the fuse, did you?

THE PROFESSOR – Well? *(Giving an “I’m sorry” expression)*

(Dusty comes out from the office holding the cannon ball style bomb with a few feet of slow burning cannon fuse or even a 4th of July sparkler or just a length of rope if you don’t want to deal with fire.)

DUSTY – I just went into the office looking for Lacie and it seems like someone forgot this strange “bowling ball” next to safe? *(Dusty starts to walk over with the bomb)* Is this yours?

ALL – “NO”! *(Pandemonium now breaks out.)*

LACIE – Throw it!

HELEN – Yes ... throw it outside!

(Dusty walks over to the audience ready to throw the bomb into the crowd.)

ALL – No!

DUNCAN – No ... don’t throw it ... it might go off!

JUSTIN – No ... people are waiting for the next train outside!

DUSTY – Fine then!

(Dusty takes the fuse out of the bomb and throws the fuse in the red “FIRE” bucket that has been sitting with water in it just waiting for this moment in the play.)

LACIE - Why ... Dusty you were so brave saving us from getting blown up an all. You saved us all ... you are our Hero.

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Applause ... Hooray

DUSTY – Pshaw ... it weren't much. *(pause)* Did you say ... blown up!?! *(Giving facial and physical expressions of realizing that he almost died. Maybe sitting down or falling down.)*

HELEN – That man doesn't know the meaning of the word fear.

HELEN – *(ASIDE: But then ... come to think of it ... he doesn't seem to know the meaning of many words.)*

PROFESSOR – Drat! *(beat)* Duncan a Pinkerton!?! How could you?

PROFESSOR – *(ASIDE: Trusted henchmen are just so hard to find these days!)*

DUNCAN – We've been through so much together Professor *(Patting him on the back)* ... and most of it was your fault. You can take him away now sheriff.

THE PROFESSOR – Curses! You'll all live to regret this! You've not seen the last of Professor Thaddeus Mack!

(The Professor gives a maniacal laugh)

CUE-CARD – Hiss ... Boo!

HELEN – *(said to The Professor)* If I promise to miss you ... will you just please go away?

THE PROFESSOR – *(said to The Sheriff)* It has all been a terrible misunderstanding my good man. Maybe, I went a little over the top with that "live to regret this" line.

LACIE – Old scoundrels never die ... they just steal away.

THE PROFESSOR – *(The Professor bursts away from the Sheriff and yells)* Why is it that things just never go right for me in this town. Curses ... Foiled Again! *(Baaaaah...)*

PAIGE TURNER – **CUE-CARD** – Applause ... Hooray!

(The Professor, Sheriff and Duncan EXIT)

CLAIRE – *(Yelling after The Professor as he is taken away) I'll wait for you Professor! (Helen at Claire's side) I'll wait for you. (They reach out their hands towards each other as he EXITS)*

(SOUND EFFECT – *Train Whistle
Cy does this effect from off stage.)*

LACIE – The Train's coming!

THE JUDGE – Oh no ... not more singing!

(The Judge attempts to leave but some of the cast members grab his arm to keep him on the set until after the 1985 San Juan song)

(SOUND EFFECT – *Another train whistle as the train comes into the station)*

(SPECIAL EFFECT – *Steam pours in from off stage as the train arrives – smoke machine.)*

(Getting off the train ... and entering the stage is Josie ... the wife of Wyatt Earp. Duncan and the sheriff come back in for the song with the professor in hand cuffs or with rope tied around his hands and lead in by the sheriff. Wyatt Earp is waiting in the wings for his entrance a few lines after the song)

SONG – San Juan *(derived from New York, I'm All For You)*
Public Domain Music and Lyrics by Edwin Weber
Lyrics modified by Gary McCarver
Originally Published in 1917 by Kalmar, Puck & Abrahams

(Verse 1 – *Sung by a strong lead)*

They have writ-ten songs of ev'ry city and of ev'ry state
From Mo-bile Bay to Iowa, to 'Frisco's Golden Gate
But there is one the best of all that so far they have missed
They've got them all except the one that head-lines on my list.

(Chorus – Sung by the whole cast as a full production number)

San Juan the pride and envy of them all
San Juan as staunch and solid as a wall
San Juan where men get out and dare and do
San Juan the home of ev'rything that's true
San Juan my heart and soul will always stay (in)
San Juan I am so sad when I'm away.
San Juan there is no place I would rather go.
San Juan Capistrano.

(Repeat Chorus at least one more time)

JUDGE – I'll drink to that. *(The Judge EXITS)*

DUSTY – *(Holding the same bag he first arrived with)* Well ...
We best be off Lacie. I'll be on the train getting things situated.

LACIE – But ... I ...

NATALIE – Welcome to San Juan Capistrano ... Ma'am.

HELEN – What brings you to beautiful San Juan?

JOSIE – My husband owns a couple of saloons and a hotel
down in San Diego and now we're heading north for Nome,
Alaska. There's a gold rush you know.

JUSTIN – *(Walking over)* Yes, I may have heard that
somewhere. *(Holding newspaper reading "Alaska Gold Rush")*

JOSIE – Well then ... Maybe you've heard of my husband too
... Wyatt Earp.

(Wyatt Earp enters from train tracks)

WYATT EARP – *(Putting his arm around Josie)* You'd be a fool
to let her go, son.

JUSTIN – Excuse me? How do you know what's been going on
here?

WYATT EARP – *(Holding up the script with his lines since this
can be a "walk on" bit role)* ... I read the script ... son.

LACIE – Really?

WYATT EARP – I don't know what I'd do without my Josie.
(Said slowly) I do ... love ... her ... so.

JUSTIN – But I've got my position ... people are counting on me. My father told me ...

WYATT – I knew your father and he was the kind of man who never walked away from a fight. If you want her, son ... fight for her.

JUSTIN – You knew my father?

WYATT – Your father was one of the bravest men I have had the privilege to call friend. He knew what he had to do when that train derailed. Your father died dragging passengers off a burning train. Every passenger got out safely and only one man died that day. *(Removing his hat)* A hero to the very end.

LACIE – Oh ... my!

WYATT – So the question is, son, how do you want to be remembered? ... As a raging fire or a diein' ember. Don't let people tell you how to live your life. You know best what you've got to do.

JUSTIN – Thank you.

(Wyatt puts his arm around his wife Josie and they EXIT.)

WYATT – Come now Josie ... We 'best be off to Alaska.

(Wyatt and Josie EXIT arm in arm)

(Justin drops what he is doing and runs after Lacie as she heads towards the train platform)

JUSTIN – Lacie ... I can't tell you to stay! But I ...

LACIE – *(Interrupting)* I just need to know one thing... Justin ...

do you think I am PRETTY?

JUSTIN – Pretty ... well ... no ... actually ... I ...

LACIE – (*Quickly interrupting*) I just needed to know ... (*Sadly turning to get on the train putting a handkerchief to her eyes.*)

JUSTIN – Lacie ... You're not just pretty ... to me you're 'BEAUTIFUL'. You always have been ... Don't walk away! Not now after we've found each other again. Please don't go.

(Lacie walks over to Justin and shows him the distinctive book of poetry that he had given her when they were younger. Opening it to a bookmarked poem.)

JUSTIN – That is the poetry book I gave you when we were young?

(Lacie reads the poem then closing the book gives the book to Justin)

LACIE – “Some reckon their age by years, Some measure their life by art ...but some tell their days by the flow of their tears ... and their lives ... by the moans of their hearts.”

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – AAAAH

LACIE – (**ASIDE TO THE AUDIENCE:** No matter which way I choose ... somebody's heart gets broken ... What should I do? Who should I choose?) (*pause ... listening to the audience*)

LACIE – (**ASIDE TO AUDIENCE:** Thank you.)

LACIE – (*To Justin*) My father has made plans for me and so ... I must do what I must do. (*Gently touching his cheek with her hand outstretched.*)

OFF STAGE VOICE – All Aboard!

LACIE – I'm so sorry ... I must go now.

(Putting a handkerchief to her eyes. Lacie rushes off through the station to catch the

leaving train. Lacie EXITS.)

JUSTIN – Lacie ... wait.

(Justin reaches out to the departing Lacie takes a stride then stops letting his arm drop lifeless as he realizes that she is leaving without him.)

(SOUND EFFECT – train whistle)

(SPECIAL EFFECT – Steam from train as it leaves the depot station. Move the locomotive panel behind the archway.)

EXTRA – A Passenger *(Rushing up to the ticket booth and demanding Justin's attention.)* Am I too late? Do I still have time?

JUSTIN – I think we are both too late. *(pause)* I just can't let her go ... *(Justin takes off his hat and leaves it on the ticket counter)* Lacie wait for me. *(Justin quickly EXITS)*

(LIGHTS BEGIN TO FADE as everyone EXITS the Depot except Cy and Helen)

CY – *(Walking over to the ticket booth)* So Justin ... when will there be a train that will take me to New York City? I have a hankering to see a good play ... not one of those local community theatre plays ... the kind you'd seen in a town like ... Hemet. *(Or other local town that you want to make fun of)*

PAIGE TURNER – **CUE-CARD** – Hemet?

EVERYONE BACK STAGE – Hemet?

CY – Justin are you there? Justin? I don't think he's in there.

LIGHTS FADE OUT

(All EXIT the stage)

EPILOGUE

The Place: Outside the Capistrano Train Depot
The Date: March 4th, 1929
The Time: Same evening that began the Melodrama

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – San Juan Capistrano 1929

(The old Depot's Stationmaster is again sitting on a bench dressed as an older man. He holds and fidgets with the small book of poetry.)

JUSTIN – Well that about brings you all up to date. *(pause)* Lacie's train sped away full of hopes and dreams. They carted off the "Professor" to jail. Claire was good to her word and waited for that old scoundrel ... even married him. Later I heard they made a fortune selling worthless shares of stock in a Santa Ana tin mine ... Not worth a hill of beans ... should have figured that. Claire finally married herself a millionaire. Our Piano player left for New York City and became a big star in Vaudeville ... no surprise ... a boat load of talent in that one. Helen joined the suffrage movement that finally got women the vote in California back about ...

... I think 1911. It took another 9 years before the whole country agreed with her. *(pause)* It wasn't too long before the telegraph was replaced by the telephone and the train was replaced by the auto-mobile and even that aeroplane. *(pause)* I always said that "If God had meant for us to fly, he wouldn't have given us the Railways." *(pause)* *(a small chuckle)* ...

Where was I ... oh yes ... Wyatt and his wife Josie got rich in the Alaska gold fields and then returned to California for keeps. As for me ... I decided to see the world ... you know "Life is too short not to live your dreams" *(quoting Lacie's Mother from the last act)*. In case you were wondering ... yes I ran after Lacie's train, but *(a long pause)* I couldn't catch it.

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – AAAAH

(Lacie comes around a flat in a grey wig, a shawl wearing glasses. She is now standing behind Justin sitting on the bench.)

LACIE – ... Are you boring these nice folks with that old story again? (*Referencing the audience*)

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Applause ... Hooray!

LACIE – ... (*Said to the audience*) I had to do what I had to do... I had to tell that son of a buffalo rancher to leave without me. I got off the train in Barstow and headed back here ... to you. Father got over my not marrying Dusty... I'm not sure if Dusty ever did. It didn't hurt any that your father's insurance money helped save the "Camisole Ranch". (*Said to Justin*) You and I were married that spring. It was a beautiful ceremony and we spent the rest of our lives raising a family and visiting far off places. (*Lacie kisses his head.*)

JUSTIN – (*Standing from the bench slowly*) We've had a wonderful life ... haven't we Lacie? Traveled the world and now back again here where it all began years ago.

LACIE – Hey ... there's my poetry book! (*Taking it from Justin and opening it to a page to read a poem*) "Grow old along with me! The best is yet to be. The last of life ... for which the first was made." (*Closing the book again and handing it to Justin*)

JUSTIN – You know ...I always loved poems by Robert Browning.

LACIE – You know ... I always ... loved you ... you old "train man". (*pause*) Come on now ... the grandchildren are waiting for us over at that (*Local Restaurant's Name Here*).

PAIGE TURNER – CUE-CARD – Shameless Plug

(Justin and Lacie start to very slowly walk off stage with her arm around his Justin's back. And Justin walking with assistance of a cane.)

LACIE – Now don't have too much pie ... you know what the doctor said." ...

JUSTIN – Yes dear.

(Lacie and Justin both EXIT)

(SOUND EFFECT – A train whistles)

FADE TO BLACK

(Curtain Call and reprise of the Song San Juan as cast takes their bows. You can print the words to the song in your Playbill, if you want an audience participation sing along.)

CURTAIN CALL SONG

SONG – San Juan

Public Domain Music and Lyrics by Edwin Weber
Lyrics modified by Gary McCarver

[OPTIONAL VERSE – Sung by a strong lead or whole cast]

They have writ-ten songs of ev'-ry ci-ty and of ev'-ry state
From Mo-bile Bay to I-o-wa, to 'Fris-co's Gold-en Gate
But there is one the best of all that so far, they have missed
They've got them all ex-cept the one that head-lines on my list.

CHORUS (repeat several times)

San Juan the pride and en-vy of them all
San Juan as staunch and sol-id as a wall
San Juan where men get out and dare and do
San Juan the home of ev'-ry-thing that's true
San Juan my heart and soul will always stay (in)
San Juan I am so sad when I'm away
San Juan there is no place I would rather go
San Juan Capistrano.

PROPERTY LIST

RECOMMENDED PROPS & SET DRESSING

They say that “clothing makes the man” I prefer to think that “Wardrobe makes the Melodrama”. There are countless sources for clothing and props that are appropriate for the late 1800s. Here are a few of the author’s favorites. The Professor has a top hat, Justin has a conductor’s hat, both wear vests, Lacie dresses in fine Victorian style western wear, Helen can be outfitted similarly or more “Calamity Jane” style if you desire. And don’t forget millinery for Lacie.

Wild West Mercantile	www.wwmerc.com
Texas Jack’s Outfitter	www.texasjacks.com
Gentlemen’s Emporium	www.gentlemansemporium.com
Western Stage Props	www.WesternStageProps.com
Village Hat Shop	www.villagehatshop.com

Most of what you need in the way of props will be found in any theatre’s prop room others you can build (like a life size cut out of a steam locomotive. But a few you might have to find elsewhere. A red metal bucket painted with the word FIRE written in white. Black feathers and a mud nests for swallows in Depot eaves. Old suitcases or carpet bags for travelers.

A “cannon ball” bomb and fuse (Less imposing than dynamite). Have a few piles of newspapers with headlines of the ALASKA GOLD RUSH around. A couple of holsters, and maybe a replica peacemaker for The Professor and the Sheriff. One important prop you will have to create is The Professor’s Miracle Elixir of Life Traveling Medicine Show Trunk. It was created from an inexpensive trunk found in a container store, decorated with old style hotel travel stickers, shelves installed to hold an assortment of Potions, Pills, Tonics, and elixirs. Plus a few Phrenology props and a hole drilled for his cane.

He has a black cape or old west rifle frock, wears a bright vest and has garters on each sleeve to match. Get a supply of small “medicine style” bottles and print out labels from the templates available at the website.

visit [www. heroandvillain.com](http://www.heroandvillain.com)

LIST OF CUE-CARD SIGNS

A LIST OF PAIGE TURNER'S CARDS

San Juan Capistrano 1929

San Juan Capistrano 1895

AAAAH

Hemet?

(Or another local town to poke fun at.)

Hiss ... Boo!

Later that Day

Shameless Plug!

Applause ... Hooray

ADDED BONUS

A GUIDE TO MELODRAMATIC EMOTIONS

Melodrama is essentially a theatre of emotions ... a gesture here, an inflection there. “Over the Top” facial and physical expressions that you might typify as sensational, sentimental or thrilling ... an exuberance of emotions rather than the more realistic motivations we normally experience. Melodrama is an audience participation style of entertainment and your villain may want to memorize several dozen snappy “come backs” to the inevitable heckler’s remark.

Anger – The actor’s hands are both shoulder high ... eyebrows are pushed toward each other ... with the actor’s face tense with a grimace ... hands in tight fists.

Fear – The actor’s face is turned to the right side... eyes wide ... with the right hand to the mouth, fingers curled under touching the top of the palm. Optionally both hands can come to the cheeks with the fingers extended.

Grief or Sorrow – The actor’s shoulders rounded ... head down and hands cupping the face. Shoulders rise up and down ... with an optional sobbing noise.

Villainous Scheming – One eyebrow up, the other down, a grimace on the face and hands rubbing together, if it is a really good plan, the Villain’s fingers often twiddle or there is some identifiable repeated affectation of some sort or another.

Villainous Sneaking – Shoulders hunched over, one arm raised to cover the nose on down, eyes free to shift around the room, legs bent on the cross of the stage. If you have one ... twirl your black cape or duster as you enter the scene.

Feeling Overwhelmed – Chin up bringing the face to look up, one arm dropped limp to the side, the other hand open with palm towards the audience on the top of the forehead.

ADDED BONUS

A FEW VILLAINOUS HECKLER RESPONSES

Here are just a few heckler responses that your resident villain can use to keep control of the performance when a barrage of heckles ensue. A comprehensive compendium of responses can be found online at <http://www.heroandvillain.com>

I'm glad to see you're not letting your education get in the way of your ignorance.

A sharp tongue is no indication of a keen mind.

I can't seem to remember your name, and please don't help me! I'm not as dumb as you look.

He is always lost in thought -- it's unfamiliar territory.

I can't talk to you right now; tell me, where will you be in ten years?

I hear that you're a self-made man. It's nice of you to take the blame!

The trick, my friend, is to keep an open mind, but not so open that your brains fall out, my friend.

I'm busy working now. Can I ignore you some other time?

Some people don't hesitate to speak their minds because they have nothing to lose.

Obviously inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity.

What he lacks in intelligence, he more than makes up for in stupidity.

Nature not content with denying him the ability to think, has unfortunately endowed him with the ability to wildly make incoherent comments when other people are working.

CHARACTER NAMING

“A rose by any other name ... would be just as thorny.”

Unlike melodramas, plays, and musicals provided by other companies ... with a HeroAndVillain.com play you have the freedom (and permission) to rename characters or even the play itself to better match your venue, town history, or even your own peculiar sense of humor. Just be sure to keep it family-friendly and G-rated. Should your town have a seaport instead of a stage station or train depot ... feel free to make the modification. If you want a “tannery” instead of a “cannery” or an “orchard” instead of a “vineyard” ... go for it.

Melodrama is historically a platform for community involvement and people love local references. That is why the Cue-Card “shameless plug” is can be added several times during your performance to poke fun at local people, places or businesses. One such poke at a local town called “Hemet” can be changed to any other town you wish.

As for character names ... additional choices can be found on the heroandvillain.com website should you need inspiration.

Here are a few names if you wish to remoniker a character.

Alan Rench	Forrest Green
Kylian Moore	Foster Child
Corey Publican	Harden Rock
Sal Ubrius	Noah Way
Adam Baum	Owen Cash
Hooker Crooke	Pierce Hart
Lance Boil	Pierce Hyde
Bill Foldes	Ray Zenz
Brighton Early	Richard Mann
Chris Cross	Seymour Paine
Craven Cash	Stan Still
Craven Money	Ty Coon
Craven Power	William Wynn
Craven Moore	Reed Toomey
Craven Green	Lou Scannon

WHY PUBLIC DOMAIN MUSIC IS USED

Here are a few reasons why the songs used in this Melodrama are derived from music with expired copyrights (i.e. in the Public Domain). Besides the fact that they “feel” right for the time period ... since they came from the late 1800s ... Under U.S. copyright law, any edition of sheet music that was first copyrighted before January 1, 1923 is in the public domain in the U.S., even if the copyright was renewed, the book that contained the sheet music is still in the public domain as long as it was initially copyrighted before January 1, 1923. Prior to 1998, U.S. copyright law featured a "75 year" rule whereby copyright on a musical work lasted 75 years from the first year it was copyrighted. In 1998, that was changed to 95 years. However, the 1998 law was not retroactive and works that were out of copyright before the law was passed are still out of copyright and anyone is free to use its music and lyrics in the U.S. without permission.

Even though this manuscript is protected by copyright, since the songs are in public domain ... they stay there and cannot be copyrighted again in their original form. However, some of the lyrics share only a passing resemblance to the original works from which they were derived, and as such, the new lyrics written specifically for this play are protected. Any copyright notice in this manuscript is for the play content and modified lyrics only. There are many Web sites with enormous data bases of works in the Public Domain and that is where the songs selected for this melodrama were found. If however some work used as the basis for this Melodrama’s music wound up in a purported Public Domain database by mistake, please inform the author and immediately actions will be taken to remove that song from future publications of this manuscript.

**MELODRAMA REHEARSAL TRACKS Available Online
visit www.HeroAndVillian.com for details**

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REGARDING USING MELODRAMA OR MUSIC SCORE

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One last thing: On all programs or playbills that you print, it is important that the following notice should appear:

**This is a www.HeroAndVillain.com
Great American Melodrama**

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

**THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE FOR THE CAST AND CREW
TO MAKE NOTES REGARDING THIS MELODRAMA.**

**USE THIS FOR BLOCKING NOTES, CHOREOGRAPHY,
AND MUSICAL DIRECTIONS. HAVE A GREAT PLAY.**

