

Chaos at the Cannery

Also Known As

Miss Faye Sees All and Tells All

By

Gary McCarver

A Full Length Melodrama

Including Music & Staging Resources

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CHAOS AT THE CANNERY

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Up for a little adventure? Welcome to the small western town of San Juan Capistrano back before the turn of the century ... no not this one ... the last century. That's right ... the year is 1881 and California is still one of the last great frontiers. The president is James Garfield, the flag has only 38 stars on it and the one big employer in San Juan is the Belford and Company Cannery, purveyors of dried fruits, olives and of course their very popular fig marmalade all marketed under the label of "San Juan's Best".

This is the story of a new sheriff, an old profession, a loyal family and a rowdy town. Mix in an ample amount of mayhem, murder and mystery with a dash of schemers, scalawags and scoundrels, one hero, two generations of heroines, a stolen badge and a whole slew of toe tapping authentic old time music and you'll get a good idea of what shenanigans are about to occur. Even our Piano Player and Cue Card Maven join in the action.

Now sit back ... take off your J. B. Stetson ... grab a foam rock or three to throw at the villain and prepare yourself ... to return to a day when the men were strong, the liquor was stronger and all the women wore corsets ... well that's our story and we're sticking to it.

Music chosen for this Melodrama is modified from Public Domain (Published before 1923). Sheet music and CD sample tracks for rehearsals as well as graphics for Paige Turner's Cue Cards can be purchased online at: <http://www.heroandvillain.com>

THE CAST

Dan Belford – The owner of the Belford and Company Cannery. Dan is a gentle mannered man with an unfortunate past of gambling.

Cora Belford – Dan's wife. Not long ago the talk of the town and now the kind mother of two lovely girls ... Felicity and Nellie.

Felicity Belford – The Cannery Owner's Eldest Daughter & Heroine

Nellie Belford – Belford's young Daughter & Heroine in Training

Snake – The New Town Sheriff intercepted by The Professor on the West bound train. (His given name is Mort but don't ever call him that)

Professor Phineas T. Mack – A Gambler, Con-Man, Scoundrel, and Villain impersonating the town sheriff as part of his scheme.

Des Berado – The Professor's former Sidekick & the Melodrama's Master of Sound Effects. If it clanks, creeks, crashes or kerplunks Des was probably behind that lively Melodramatic sound.

Oliver Sudden – Handsome New Cannery Foreman

Percy Veer – Hard Working Cannery Worker

Drew Blood – Contentious Cannery Worker

Owen Money – Cautious Cannery Worker

Cody Pendant – Overly Helpful Cannery Worker

Faye Tality – The Notorious owner of the Paloma Linda “Dance Hall” and Palmistry Parlor. A bigger than life character wearing several layers of lace and veils with heavy eye make-up.

The “Girls” of the Paloma Linda “Dance Hall”

Sue Fley (with a French Accent) • Shirley Knott • April May

In addition to the Main Players there are some very critical roles for the success of this melodrama ... or any melodrama for that matter. Without a great piano player ... there is no “melo” in melodrama ... and where would we be without fun live sound effects and extras.

Piano Player – Natalie Drest – Bringing melodramatic antics to life, our resident musician tinkles out the tunes and themes that you’d expect from an authentic old west style melodrama.

Cue Card Maven – Paige Turner - For those that don’t come to melodramas often enough ... it is nice to have someone to remind the audience of their part in the production. Paige helps by popping in holding up cue cards such as “Hisss ... Booo”, “Aaah” or “Shameful Plug” when actors give free commercials to local merchants.

The Train Conductor – An important one scene walk-on role

Train Passenger – Al Beback – A nice simple walk-on role

Optional extra non-speaking roles “Paloma Linda Girls” –

Ellie Gant • Allota Fun • Freda Livery • Penny Less • Sadie Word

Betty Diddent • Joanna Dance • and maybe even ... Holly Wood

SONG LIST FOR THE MELODRAMA

**Music is from the public domain and modified for this
Melodrama. Songs listed in order of Performance.**

1. SAN JUAN (1881)

Music by Con Conrad and J. Russel Robinson – Words by Gary McCarver

2. KEEP THE LOVE LAMP BURNING

Music by Hugo Riesenfeld – Words by Harry B. Smith and Gary McCarver

3. I'M ALWAYS WATCHING CLOUDS ROLL BY

Words and Music by Al Piantadosi and Gary McCarver

4. THIS IS THE LIFE

Music by Irving Berlin – Words by Gary McCarver

5. ALONG CAME YOU

Music by Irving Berlin – Words by Irving Berlin and Gary McCarver

6. WAY BACK IN OLD TIME SAN JUAN

Music by I James S. Rule – Words by Gary McCarver

7. DADDY FOUND ME OVER BY THE GARDEN WALL

Music by Raymond Egan, Jessie Greer and Abe Olman

Words by Gary McCarver

8. GIVE ME THE CHANCE

Music by Abe Glatt – Words by Ben Bard and Gary McCarver

9. I WONDER WHY I LOVE YOU SO

Music by May Greene – Words by W. A. Lang

10. FINALE REPRISE OF THE SONG: SAN JUAN (1881)

Music by Con Conrad and J. Russel Robinson – Words by Gary McCarver

SET DRESSING NOTES

The set has a movable wall depicting the inside of an old style Pullman Locomotive Car. The New Sheriff and the Professor will soon be playing cards facing each other across a table in the train. The Train folds back to open up the stage revealing a city street of old town San Juan Capistrano. In History, this street scene was just across from the railroad tracks although we do compress the real estate a bit for the stage. The new "Depot" won't be built for another four years, so you will just have to wait until the Second Melodrama in this Trilogy for details on that part of Old California History.

When the train car is folded away ... the audience sees the front of an old warehouse with a sign hanging over it boldly identifying it as the "Belford and Company Cannery" "Home of San Juan's Best". Also showing is the front of the Paloma Linda "dance hall" (although it was rumored that more than dancing went on in that building), and the front of the rough & rowdy Swallows Inn Saloon. A couple of tables are in front of these facades for the action to pour out from each of these establishments onto the stage. Each has a door and a working window. The Paloma has a porch ... the Saloon has a couple of wine or whiskey barrels in front. Large boxes ready for shipment are scattered around the stage and labeled to indicate dried fruit, fresh produce, canned pickled olives, and "San Juan's Best" Fig Marmalade. A table and chairs for card playing is near the Cannery facade and a few copies of the local newspapers of the time ... the Los Angeles Daily Globe and Santa Ana Standard are within easy reach. There is another small table off to the side with live sound effect paraphernalia, noise makers, a train whistle, and coconuts for horse hooves effects ... what have you. The other wall of the stage near the saloon reveals the bar's Piano with a sign on the front of the piano declaring "Carry Out Your Own Dead". The piano has a money jar on one end so Trudie can make ends meet.

PROLOGUE

The Place: Inside a Pullman Train Car heading West
The Date: March 2nd, 1881
The Time: Late in the Evening

LIGHTS: Spotlight on the Narrator standing at the front of the stage.

THE PROFESSOR (AS THE NARRATOR to the Audience) – The year eighteen eighty one was a prolific time for conmen, gamblers, and the like. It was a time of unfettered capitalism across these United States. As a professional gambler ... I should know. I have made a fortune from those seeking a quick road to riches. The game is "*Find the Lady*" ... Never played it? It's a simple game of chance.

(The Professor pulls out three cards showing the Queen and begins shuffling them back and forth in classic three Card Monte fashion)

*"A little fun, just now and then,
Is relished by the best of men.
In just one minute I'll show to you,
Just, what all the winners do.
The Queen of Hearts, she is your friend
Find her when the shuffle ends.
If you have nerve, you may earn plenty;
Five draws you ten, and ten draws twenty.
If the Lady's the one you choose;
you're right, you win, if not, you lose;
The game itself is lots of fun,
My chances, though, are two to one;
And I'll tell you your chance is slack
To get your money back from Mack."*

I would like to think that history will remember me as the King of the Three Card Monte ... and ... quite handy with the ladies ... if you know what I mean. (Making advances to a lady in the front row.) But excuse me ... where ARE my manners ... my name is Phineas T. Mack, (Handing his business card and a flower) Ah ... my dear. Just call me “Professor”. “Professor of cards”. “Professor of love” ...

LIGHTS: Lights start to come up on the Pullman Train Car

SOUND EFFECTS: Train whistles & clanking of wheels on track

(PAIGE TURNER enters to side of stage with a CUE CARD)

CUE CARD: Heading West on the Santa Fe Train – 1881

PAIGE TURNER – Aaheem ... Professor? (Clearing her throat loudly and tapping her foot awaiting the Professor’s attention as she enters)

(The Professor finally notices the arrival of PAIGE TURNER)

THE PROFESSOR – I suspect you’d like me to get on with the story?

PAIGE TURNER – That would be nice! ... If you don’t mind.

THE PROFESSOR – Very well then ... as you wish, my dear.

(PAIGE TURNER EXITS)

(The Professor walks back towards the Pullman Train Car and sits across a table from a man reading a newspaper; the man is dressed in standard western apparel but has a short top hat with a wide rattlesnake hatband. The Stranger lowers the newspaper from his face when spoken to by the Professor. There is an additional passenger looking at his pocket watch and a dime novel western.)

(Optional Extras can get up from sitting with the Passenger to EXIT)

THE PROFESSOR – So ... What's the news ... "Stranger"?

SNAKE – 500 feet of that NewPORT pier got washed out to sea with three train cars right on it after that big storm ... (laughing) Must've been a real stump-floater, a gully-washer ... (reading) not much else to report. I'm afraid that the salad days of my career are all but over.

THE PROFESSOR – What are you talking about?

SNAKE – According to the Census bureau (Hitting the newspaper with his hand) ... the frontier era is all but finished except maybe for Alaska ... homesteading is pretty much over too ... so it looks like its time to settle down.

THE PROFESSOR – Tell me ... by the look of that Peacemaker on your side (gesturing to the gun) you don't look like the "settling down" type. ... I suspect you're some kind of 'shootist' or 'gun slinger'. What did your mother name you, stranger?

SNAKE – My mother named me Mort (Getting angry)... but not many men ALIVE call me that! I hate that name! (Composing himself) You can call me 'Snake'. (Pointing at his snakeskin hatband) As for being a 'shootist'... most of what you've read about gun fights in the West is a lot of bunk. For instance ... no such things as two-gun 'gun slinger' or "pistoleer" ... just a tall tale ... no such thing.

PASSENGER – (Entering the conversation) Really! I had heard ...

SNAKE – (interrupting) Well ... you heard wrong! The story of the outlaw that comes to town with a pair of revolvers strapped to his hips. Nothing but bunk!

PASSENGER – Really? But it says here ... (holding up a dime novel)

SNAKE – Those stories are all the same ... ‘At the first sign of trouble, the outlaw pulls both guns with a movement faster than an eye can see ... (As he tells his story he puts a hand on his gun) ... Firing both guns simultaneously and accurately hitting his mark.’

(SNAKE quickly grabs the dime novel from the Passenger’s hand)

SNAKE – Bunk! No person, no matter how talented, can use two guns at the same time. I’ve tried ... just can’t be done. Any man that says he can ... is either a fool or a fake! And ... it’s tiring enough carrying one four-pound gun ... let alone two.

PASSENGER – (Catching his breath) Just a tall tale? ... (Holding up a dime novel he’d been reading) Sure ... I always knew these things were a bunch of malarkey ... (He moves closer to SNAKE or SNAKE moves closer to him ... whichever blocking looks best)

SNAKE – (hushed) But ... I will let you in on a secret ... tenderfoot.

PASSENGER – Oh?

SNAKE – The real outlaws of the frontier do still carry two guns, but it’s not like those Buntline dime novels you’ve been reading. (Tossing the dime novel back to him) One gun is worn outside, where everyone can see. (Pointing at his Peacemaker) But the second ... is ooh ... well ... concealed in a hat, a sleeve, or the top of a boot ...

THE PROFESSOR – (Interrupting) ... or like this beauty here in my suspenders. (Reaching into his suspenders to display a derringer.)

SNAKE – That’s a fine derringer you have there. Is that a ‘Henry’?

THE PROFESSOR – ‘Henry’s’ are fine, but my favorite derringer is this ‘Williamson’, just like the one Wild Bill Hickock carried. Won this one in a card game back in Topeka Kansas.

SNAKE – So, I take it ... you’re a gambler?

THE PROFESSOR – Not just any gambler ... the name is Professor Phineas Mack ... maybe you’ve heard of me?

SNAKE – No ... can’t say I have.

THE PROFESSOR – Well in that case ... how about a ‘friendly’ game of cards ... just to pass the time, of course.

(The Professor takes out a deck of cards and starts dealing them out between the three men across the table).

SNAKE – (Laugh) I reckon’ a friendly game would be nice.

(The PASSENGER tries to stand up and walk away)

THE PROFESSOR – (To The PASSENGER) Sit down and bet!

(The PASSENGER complies and puts a few dollars on the table)

THE PROFESSOR – Poker it is! (Dealing out one more card to the two other men) So what is it that you DO for a living ... ‘Snake’?

(Pulling a sheriff’s badge from his pocket and placing it on the table. The Professor is surprised but keeps playing cards ... nervously.)

THE PROFESSOR – Why you’re ... Sheriff!?!)

SNAKE – Back in Kansas and Iowa that’s what they called me. Now I’m on my way to a little town in California called San Juan Capistrano ... ever heard of it?

THE PROFESSOR – No ... Can’t say that I have ...

SNAKE – It’s the nicest little town you’ll ever see, there’s a Saloon called the Swallows Inn ...

(PAIGE TURNER enters to side of stage with a CUE CARD)
CUE CARD: SHAMELESS PLUG (PAIGE TURNER EXITS)

SNAKE – ... and a great Hot Springs, oh ... and yes ... a Cannery where they make the best fig marmalade.

THE PROFESSOR – Been away long? ... Raise you five dollars.

SNAKE – Never been there ... I’ll see your five and raise you five.

THE PROFESSOR – How can you know so much about a town if you’ve never been there before?

PASSENGER – (Throwing in his cards) Too rich for my blood.

SOUND EFFECT: TRAIN WHISTLE

PASSENGER – We should be coming up to a tunnel in a few minutes ... I’m going to check on my family. If you’ll excuse me.

(The Passenger grabs his bag and leaves walking down the aisle towards the end of the train “to go to another compartment”. The same direction from which the Conductor will enter.)

SNAKE – Professor ... When you intend to live in a place the rest of your life, you should learn about it. The town needs a new sheriff. So they sent me this badge ... sight unseen ... based upon my reputation I suppose ... I'm coming out West to take the job.

THE PROFESSOR – So let me get this straight ... the man that steps off the train with that BADGE is the new sheriff?

SNAKE – I guess that's about the size of it. (Looking at his hand of cards) ... Raise you five more. (Putting in five dollars)

THE PROFESSOR – And you've never been there before?

SNAKE – I guess they are having a heap of trouble with Mashers, Scallywags and Bamboozlers in that little town. California outdistances even Iowa for pure, trusting simple-minded folk. Apparently San Juan is full of 'em.

THE PROFESSOR – Sounds like the perfect place.

SNAKE – What are you mumbling about?

THE PROFESSOR – Oh nothing ... nothing. I'll see your raise.

SNAKE – The trouble with justice is that the worst scamps, cheats and chisellers are NEVER CAUGHT!

THE PROFESSOR – I'm counting on that too.

SNAKE – Speak up if you want to be heard?

THE PROFESSOR – Oh nothing. CALL ... So what have you got?

(Both men lay down their cards. The Professor reaches across to collect his winnings with one hand not even looking at any cards)

THE PROFESSOR – Looks like I win.

SNAKE – What did you say your full name was?

THE PROFESSOR – Phineas Mack ... why?

SNAKE – I just want to make sure they get it right ... on your TOMBSTONE! You didn't even pretend to look at what cards I laid down. (Both men stand up, backing away from each other and begin reaching for guns) You picked the wrong man to cheat!

SOUND EFFECT: A train's whistle blows three times

BOTH MEN IN UNISON – (Looking at the Audience) The Tunnel!

LIGHTS: BLACK OUT just as the men pull out their guns

SOUND EFFECT: Two gunshots ring out one after another

SOUND EFFECT: A woman screams

SOUND EFFECT: The sound of a large sand bag hitting the floor.

LIGHTS: Back to previous level

(When the lights come back we only see the Professor sitting at the table gathering his money, shoving it into his pockets. He then picks up the badge from the table, holds it up for all to see then pins to his vest. He is now wearing the short top hat with a rattlesnake hatband.)

(A CONDUCTOR enters from the back of the train)

CONDUCTOR – Next stops are Wichita ... Trinidad ... Las Vegas ... Albuquerque ... Needles ... Barstow and ... Hemet.

(PAIGE TURNER enters to Center Stage with a CUE CARD)
CUE CARD: HEMET? (PAIGE TURNER EXITS)

CONDUCTOR – What was I thinking? (Noisily unfolding a train map)
... of course this train doesn't stop at Hemet?

THE PROFESSOR – Does this train go all the way to (beat) San Juan Capistrano?

CONDUCTOR – Of course Sir ...

(The professor points at his badge and clears his throat loudly)

CONDUCTOR – I mean Sheriff. ... excuse me.

LIGHTS: Begin to fade to black

THE PROFESSOR – Looks like the little town of San Juan Capistrano WILL be getting a new sheriff after all. (Maniacal laughing)

(PAIGE TURNER enters to Center Stage with a CUE CARD)
CUE CARD: BOOO!
(PAIGE TURNER FREEZES AS LIGHTS FADE TO BLACK)

SOUND EFFECT: Two Long Train whistles

FADE TO BLACK

ACT 1 SCENE 1

The Place: The Streets of Old San Juan Capistrano
 Just outside the Belford and Company Cannery
The Date: March 4th, 1881
The Time: It is just beginning to approach dusk

LIGHTS COME UP SLOWLY on the street scene of old San Juan Capistrano ... the train wall has been rolled back revealing the stage.

(There are 4 Doors ... the Train Station (before the Depot was built), the Paloma Linda (the town 'dance hall'), the Cannery, and finally the Swallows Inn (the town saloon). In real life the Paloma Linda (name changed) was 20 yards away from the Cannery, but due to stage space constraints ... hey we make due. Each 'establishment' has a light fixture on the outside that comes on as night approaches.)

(PAIGE TURNER enters to hold up a Cue Card)
CUE CARD: (Welcome to Old San Juan 1881)

(PAIGE TURNER Exits and the entire stage comes to life. Noisy conversation is coming from behind each façade. Much of that simultaneous conversation is below ... improvising more based upon characters is fine. Dialogue is fast paced and overlaps just a bit. People come through the doors. Gentlemen kiss the hands of ladies from the Paloma Linda, drunkards and Cannery workers come out of the Swallows Inn with beers in hand. Some cast members peer out from windows. DES has obviously had a little too much to drink.)

PERCY VEER – (Entering from the Swallows Inn door with a beer)
Why is it that Dan doesn't join us at the Swallows Inn.

CODY PENDANT – Forget about it. You'll never see Dan in here. He promised the misses he's given up gambling for good.

DREW BLOOD – ... You won't see me being hen pecked by a pair of bloomers ... I decide where I'm going ... and what I'm doing.

OWEN MONEY – You've never been married have you?

DREW BLOOD – To some - marriage is a word ... to me it's a sentence.

SOUND EFFECT: Rim Shot (Badum-Ching)

CODY PENDANT – Very funny.

DREW BLOOD – I thought so ...

DES BERADO – (A little tipsy) I wanted to play a game of cards once, but we only had half a deck. (beat) It was no big deal. (DES turns to approach the ladies coming out from the Paloma) Get it?

SOUND EFFECT: Rim Shot (Badum-Ching)

CODY PENDANT – Des ... why not just go home and sleep it off.

DREW BLOOD – (To CODY) I never thought he was playing with a full deck anyway. (To PERCY) Did we get that supply of fresh blotting paper in yet? When Dan gets back today he'll want to do invoices.

PERCY VEER – That's right ... I better go check. (EXITING into the door of the Cannery for a minute then returning in a few moments)

DES BERADO – Hello Ladies ... Two hats were hanging on a hat rack in the hallway. One hat says to the other, 'You stay here and I'll go on a head.' (DES walks over into the Swallows again)

SOUND EFFECT: Rim Shot (Badum-Ching)

SUE FLEY – (To SHIRLEY) Iz zat supposed to be ... how you say ... funny? (Walking away from DES talking with SHIRLEY)

SHIRLEY KNOTT – I guess that depends upon what the word “Iz” is?

SUE FLEY – (To another Girl) Ooooh ... he is just sooo sweet.

SHIRLEY KNOTT – You can't possibly mean it? Him ... sweet?

SUE FLEY – Not him (pointing at DES) ... I am talking about him over zere (Pointing at CODY) ... I believe his name is Cody... No?

APRIL MAY – Cody ... YES. His name's Cody Pendant, but I'd keep looking if I were you. He's just one of those Cannery workers. At the end of the day they all start smelling like ... fig marmalade.

SUE FLEY – Perhaps oui, perhaps no ... but steel ... I zink that Mr. Cody... iz sooo sweet. Oooh La La.

PERCY VEER – (Entering from the Cannery door ... looking at the Paloma beauties) There are two theories to arguing with a woman ...

DREW BLOOD – ... yes ... and neither one works. (Laughing)

(The Paloma Ladies wave at the men coming out from the Saloon)

SUE FLEY – Ooooh ... Hellooooo? Mr. Cody? Hellooooooooooooo.

OWEN MONEY – Cody ... your “girlfriend” is back. (pause) Haven’t you worked up the nerve to tell her how you feel about her?

CODY PENDANT – (To DREW) Not yet. (Waiving to SUE) Hello Sue.

(DES comes through the door of the Swallows Inn towards the ladies)

SHIRLEY KNOTT – Oh no! Here comes that no-account man again. They say he used to be an outlaw ... his name is ‘Des Berado’... An Outlaw? ... Honestly I just don’t see it.

SUE FLEY – Oh my! A desperado in town?

APRIL MAY – I don’t believe he’d hurt a living soul, but I wonder ...

DES BERADO – (Interrupting the ladies) ... I went to the butcher’s the other day and I bet him \$20 that he couldn’t reach the meat on the top shelf. He said he wouldn’t take my bet, ‘The steaks were too high.’

SOUND EFFECT: Rim Shot (Badum-Ching)

DES BERADO – (Laughing to himself) ... ‘The steaks were too high’.

APRIL MAY – (To DES) Thanks for not annoying me any more than you do.... Hurrumph! (She walks away from him)

SHIRLEY KNOTT – (To DES) Can I ignore you some other time?

DREW BLOOD – (Crossing to the ladies) Is this worthless cuss of a man bothering you ladies? (Grabbing DES by the arm)

PERCY VEER – Drew ... aaaah ... just leave the guy alone.

CODY PENDANT – (Walking over and removing the grip that DREW has on DES's arm putting a coin in DES's hand) Des, at least get yourself some coffee and stop making a spectacle of yourself.

(DES mutters something in Spanish to himself then heads over to the Swallows Inn ... He goes in and gets a mug then returns to the stage)

PERCY VEER – You'll excuse him ladies ... he means no harm. His porch light is just a bit dim I suppose. (Noticing her dress) Goodness ... what a beautiful dress that is you're wearing Miss Shirley.

SHIRLEY KNOTT – Thank you kindly.

APRIL MAY – Goodness had nothing to do with it, 'hun'. (joking)

SHIRLEY KNOTT – April! (Embarrassed SHIRLEY turns away)

(The sound of commotion over at the Train Station Door as boxes are brought over to the Train Station by CODY and OWEN)

PERCY VEER – (Kissing SHIRLEY's hand) If you'll excuse me ... ladies. Duty calls. (PERCY moves a crate to the Train Station)

(The cannery owner DAN BELFORD steps out from the train station door explaining business to his new foreman with OLIVER walking)

DAN BELFORD – In Santa Ana sheep sheering has been bringing in more money than raising porkers. Grapes and most fruit is still bringing in \$17 to \$20 a ton, but when you CAN the fruit ... well that's when you make some real money.

(Dan notices CODY and OWEN moving boxes over to the train station as PERCY grabs a box and brings it over to them.)

DAN BELFORD – Good to see you ‘Cody’ and ‘Owen’. Be sure to get those crates of fig marmalade on the train before it heads south.
(Dan continues his walk over the Cannery with OLIVER)

(CODY walks over to the Cannery to grab a box of Fig Marmalade.
OWEN ENTERS from the Cannery doorway and helps CODY)

CODY PENDANT –Owen ... that must be the new foreman that Dan hired ... ‘Oliver Sudden’.

OWEN MONEY – So what is the name of the foreman he hired ‘All of a sudden’.

CODY PENDANT – That’s right.

OWEN MONEY – What’s right?

CODY PENDANT – “Oliver Sudden’.

OWEN MONEY – Sure ... sure ... he hired him ‘All of a sudden’

CODY PENDANT – That’s right (pause) his name is “Oliver ... Sudden”.

OWEN MONEY – Oh ...

(The action shifts over to OLIVER and DAN who have walked over to the front of the Cannery by now ... they stop to talk)

OLIVER SUDDEN – So ... Dan ... has it been a good year for the Cannery so far?

DAN BELFORD – Good? We buy apples for a penny a pound, peaches for two cents a pound ... then we multiply that by twenty just by mixing in some sugar and putting it in a can. It's hard work, but I always say.... 'nobody ever lost his shirt with his sleeves rolled up'.

THE GIRLS OF THE PALOMA – Hellooo ... Mr. Belford.

DAN BELFORD – Hello Ladies. (Then continuing with his walk and conversation with OLIVER) Oliver... I'm glad you decided to come on board as foreman for my Cannery. The truth is ... we wouldn't have gotten those winery accounts if it hadn't been for you.

OLIVER SUDDEN – ... Just glad to do my part.

DAN BELFORD – I'll tell you (patting OLIVER on the back) it's great time to be living in California! Just great ...

NELLIE BELFORD – (Rushing out from the Cannery) Father ...

CORA BELFORD – (Walking out from the Cannery) Darling ... I'm so glad you're home.

DAN BELFORD – Where's Felicity?

CORA BELFORD – Oh I suspect that she'll be by shortly.

(FELICITY comes in from the side of the stage and hugs her Father)

FELICITY BELFORD – Father ...

DAN BELFORD – So ... Felicity? Have you been helping your sister with her reading and arithmetic?

FELICITY BELFORD – Yes, Father ... (FELICITY turns to OLIVER)

NELLIE BELFORD – (Interrupting her Father) And what about me?

(OLIVER and FELICITY stare transfixed at each other)

LIGHTS: A special ‘falling in love’ lighting effect

DAN BELFORD – NELLIE ... you’re growing like a weed. Look how tall you’ve gotten. Oh I almost forgot ... I found you a little something on my trip. Now where is that ... (looking in his pockets) ... yes ... here it is. (Getting down on one knee and giving NELLIE a small doll)

NELLIE BELFORD – You didn’t forget! (Excitedly) Thank you. Thank you. (Hugging her father ... NELLIE rushes to her sister to show her new toy, but FELICITY ignores NELLIE) Felicity look! Felicity?

CORA BELFORD – She really is growing up, you know.

NELLIE BELFORD – (Still trying to get FELICITY’s attention) Felicity?

DAN BELFORD – Little Nellie’s going to be grown before we know it.

CORA BELFORD – ... I’m not talking about Nellie.

(OLIVER and FELICITY gaze longingly at each other.)

(CORA redirects DAN’s gaze to OLIVER and FELICITY)

DAN BELFORD – Oh ... Yes ... I see.

(DAN BELFORD walks between FELICITY and OLIVER)

DAN BELFORD – (Clearing his throat to get his attention) ... Oliver?

(DAN direct OLIVER over to his wife)

DAN BELFORD – (To his wife CORA) Darling ... I would like to introduce our new foreman 'Oliver Sudden'.

FELICITY BELFORD – (Still gazing at OLIVER) Oh My!

DAN BELFORD – I hired him to run the Cannery while I'm on the road drumming up business.

DAN BELFORD – Oliver ... I would like to introduce my wife Cora ...

CORA BELFORD – ... My pleasure Mr. Sudden

OLIVER SUDDEN – Pleased to meet you Maam.

DAN BELFORD – ... And my daughter Nellie ...

NELLIE BELFORD – ... Hello ... pleased to meet you. (NELLIE curtsies then goes over to stand beside her mother CORA)

OLIVER SUDDEN – Hello there.

DAN BELFORD – ... And my eldest daughter ... Felicity ...

OLIVER & FELICITY (Their eyes meet ... in unison) – Oh my!

OLIVER SUDDEN – What a beautiful name ... Felicity.

FELICITY – Pleased to meet you. (She makes a 'cooing' sound)

DAN BELFORD – (Loudly clearing his throat) Felicity ... I think it is about time you continue helping your sister with her numbers.

FELICITY BELFORD – But ... I thought I might ...

CORA BELFORD – Felicity ... Now listen to your father.

FELICITY BELFORD – You always treat me like a child. (beat)

FELICITY BELFORD – Come NELLIE it's time for lessons. NELLIE, let's start with twenty minus nine ... (FELICITY takes NELLIE to the table in front of the Cannery. She writes a new addition problem for her to solve on the slate. The girls continue talking quietly)

NELLIE BELFORD – Oh ... I know that one. (Writing the answer)

CORA BELFORD – You know Felicity's becoming a young woman whether we like it or not. They can't stay babies forever ... Dan.

DAN BELFORD – I know Cora ... I know. I miss so much when I'm away. I'm just glad to be back home in San Juan!

(DAN walks over to join OLIVER and bring him center stage)

(PAIGE TURNER enters to side of stage with a CUE CARD)
CUE CARD: I Hear A Song Coming On (PAIGE TURNER EXITS)

(CODY walks over to Natalie and puts a dollar in her tip jar)

CODY PENDANT – I believe I hear a song coming on ...

NATALIE DREST – (Reading the Cue Card) Thank you kindly Cody.

SAN JUAN

(Sung by DAN BELFORD then joined by Everyone Else)

(Formerly entitled Margie)

Music by Con Conrad and J. Russel Robinson

Words by Gary McCarver

You can travel almost anywhere ...
visit cities big or small.
(but) Let's tell you about this town right here ...
she is the greatest of them all.

CHORUS:

Our little San Juan ... we're always thinking of you.
San Juan ... we'll tell the world about you ...
from the mountains right to the sea ...
you won't find a better place to quit the rat race.

San Juan ... You've been our inspiration ...
days are never blue ...
after all is said and done ...
there is really only one ...
and San Juan ... San Juan ... it's you.

REPEAT CHORUS EVERYONE JOINS IN DANCING & SINGING

OLIVER SUDDEN – Dan ... does the whole town always break into
song and dance at the mention of its name?

DAN BELFORD – (To OLIVER) Interesting now that you mention it?

(Dan walks over nearer to the Paloma Linda Façade)

DAN BELFORD – Until the Paloma Linda Dance Hall and Palmistry Parlor ... opened its doors a few years ago ... entertainment in town was relegated to the local saloons and the occasional brawl ... now townsfolk break into song and dance every chance they get.

OLIVER SUDDEN – ... Interesting indeed.

PERCY VEER, DREW BLOOD, OWEN MONEY – Ladies.

SHIRLEY KNOTT, SUE FLEY, APRIL MAY– Gentlemen.

(The Cannery workers go into the Cannery and the Ladies of the Paloma Linda go into their front door. A new sign reading: Séances held Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays is placed on some hooks on the front of the Paloma Linda. FAYE supervises its installation)

DAN BELFORD – (To OLIVER) The “Paloma” is run by a lady who claims she became skilled in the science of palmistry while visiting the Far East. I don’t know if that is true, but people say she can read a person’s past, present and future just like an open book. They call her ... ‘The Mysterious FAYE TALITY’.

OLIVER SUDDEN – I meant to ask you about that. Is it a house of ... if I may be so blunt ... let us say ... certain amorous activities ...

(MISS FAYE bursts into the conversation rushing in from her front door where she was overseeing the installation of the new sign on her business. Vociferously interrupting OLIVER’s comment.)

MISS FAYE – I emphatically take exception to your inferences ... and ‘insinuates’ Sir. Prevarications and rumors I assure you. The Paloma Linda is merely a place to share some good company and maybe a dance or two with ... local townsfolk.

DAN BELFORD – Hold your horses there ... Miss Faye. I'm sure Oliver meant no offense. Did you Oliver?

OLIVER SUDDEN – No ... I meant ...

MISS FAYE – (Grabbing OLIVER's hand and looking at his palm) I suppose not ... still ... Mr. Sudden are you curious about the future?

OLIVER SUDDEN – Well ... I guess no more than any fellow?

MISS FAYE – ... Do you ask yourself questions like ... Will I be rich? ... Will I be famous? ... (beat) ... Will I find TRUE love?

OLIVER SUDDEN – I meant no harm ... I just (pause) ... True Love?

MISS FAYE – If you are looking for answers ... come to the Paloma Linda. A place with all the answers you seek. (grandly) 'Miss Faye Sees All and Tells All'. (She presents her hand for DAN to kiss)

DAN BELFORD – Always a pleasure Miss Faye. (He kisses her hand)

MISS FAYE – Mister Belford. (She EXITS through her front door)

OLIVER SUDDEN – A bit touchy. I didn't mean "touchy", I meant ...

DAN BELFORD – (interrupting) I know what you meant ... it takes some getting used to... the way things are here in San Juan ...

(PAIGE TURNER enters to side of stage with a CUE CARD)
CUE CARD: I Hear A Song Coming On (PAIGE TURNER EXITS)

NATALIE DREST – I know. ... I hear a song coming on ...

(SUE FLEY, SHIRLEY KNOTT, APRIL MAY (and Extra Girls if any) come center stage then break into song while men at the Cannery and at the Swallows Inn, peer out windows and peek out of doors)

KEEP THE LOVE LAMP BURNING

Music by Hugo Riesenfeld

Words by Harry B. Smith and Gary McCarver

Through storm or radiant weather,
at noon-day or at night.
While lovers true are together ...
they need no guiding light.
But if from California you ever chance to roam
then like a dream our light will gleam to lead you safely home.

CHORUS:

We'll keep our love lamps burning in the window through the night.
And help the pilgrim yearning for our hidden paradise.
Absence makes the Heart grow fonder ... so ... they ... say ...
Hearts that some how wander all return one day ...
So if we may be parted by the chances ... come what may?
But if ... we stay true hearted you'll return to us one day.
So should the fates divide us ... There's a star to guide us.
We'll keep our love-lamps burning in our hearts for you.

(The girls go back inside humming the tune that they were singing)

OLIVER SUDDEN – I thought you said the Paloma Linda was only...

DAN BELFORD – It's been a long day ... Head over to Mendolson's Inn then come over to "Belford Terrace" early for a hot breakfast.

(DAN EXITS. We hear an offstage whimper and then our lovely heroine FELICITY enters to gaze at OLIVER as he slowly EXITS)

FELICITY BELFORD – (AS ASIDE TO AUDIENCE) – Did you see that new foreman? Lands Sake! Isn't he the most handsome thing in San Juan? But he probably doesn't even know I'm alive.

(PAIGE TURNER enters to side of stage with a CUE CARD)
CUE CARD: I Hear A Song Coming On (PAIGE TURNER EXITS)

I'M ALWAYS WATCHING CLOUDS ROLL BY
Words and Music by Al Piantadosi and Gary McCarver

Why should my heart be breaking ...
when there is love somewhere.
Still mine is always aching ...
nobody seems to care.

CHORUS (Sung twice):

I'm always watching clouds roll by, for my castles in the air.
Chasing the rainbow in the sky.
I wake to find ... no castle there.
For my prince charming I await ...
I often wonder why ...
I see him and then ... he leaves me again.
Always watching clouds roll by. (FELICITY ends with a long sigh)

CUE CARD: Ahhhhh! (PAIGE and FELICITY both EXIT)

LIGHTS FADE OUT

ACT 1 SCENE 2

The Place: The Streets of Old San Juan Capistrano
Just outside the Belford and Company Cannery
The Date: The Next Day ... March 5th, 1881
The Time: It is early in the morning as another train arrives

(**LIGHTS COME UP** on the street scene of old San Juan Capistrano. DAN and CORA are having a cup of coffee at a table just outside of the Cannery, NELLIE is with them reading. SUE FLEY is fussing with the Paloma's drapes in their window. Cannery workers are moving boxes from the Cannery to the front of the Train Station for shipping out. There is a new sign put on hooks on the front of the Swallows Inn: 'TATTOOS DONE WHILE YOU WAIT' and a new sign on the Cannery: '7 DAYS WITHOUT CANNED FRUIT MAKES ONE WEAK')

(DES walks on one side of the stage with the DREW BLOOD)

DES BERADO – Drew ... Lately I've had this real problem ... I just can't stop singing the song 'The green, green grass of home.'

DREW BLOOD – I've heard of that problem ... it sounds like... 'Tom Jones Syndrome.'

DES BERADO – ... Is it common?

DREW BLOOD – (beat) ... 'It's not unusual'.

SOUND EFFECT: Rim Shot (Badum-Ching)

(DREW waits for the reaction then EXITS. DES sits at the Station)

SOUND EFFECT: A train's whistle wails off in the distance

CORA BELFORD – So Dan ... word has it that the new sheriff is arriving on this morning's train?

DAN BELFORD – I recon' so ... it's about time law came to town.

SOUND EFFECT: Multiple train whistles sound of train stopping

SPECIAL EFFECT: Steam streams out from behind the station

(The Paloma ladies and Cannery men come to greet the New Sheriff)

SUE FLEY – (Waving at CODY) Hellooooo ... Mr. Cody.

CODY PENDANT – Hello ... Sue. (Waving back shyly)

(OLIVER and FELICITY walk on the stage out of view of her parents)

FELICITY BELFORD – I probably shouldn't say anything.

OLIVER SUDDEN – Probably not.

FELICITY BELFORD – But some things are important to be said ...

OLIVER SUDDEN – Or left unsaid ...

(OLIVER and FELICITY walk to the far side of the stage)

FELICITY BELFORD – I wouldn't want you to think that am normally so forward with a gentleman that I only met yesterday ...

OLIVER SUDDEN – Yes ... And what would people say?

FELICITY BELFORD – I don't care. Let them say what they want.

OLIVER SUDDEN – Has anyone told you how beautiful you are when you get all riled up? ...

(FELICITY extends her hand OLIVER takes it and they both EXIT)

(THE PROFESSOR enters from the station wearing his newly found badge, a hat with snake hatband and carrying a bag and a fancy cane. DES sees him and decides to hide behind a barrel or boxes)

(PAIGE TURNER enters to side of stage with a CUE CARD)
CUE CARD: BOO! HISS! (PAIGE TURNER EXITS)

THE PROFESSOR – (Stopping to assess the town) The antiquated dilapidated ramshackle décor. The saloon of which I have been told. Actually ... I think this town looks much better from a distance.

DAN BELFORD – (Walking over and interrupting THE PROFESSOR)
... Excuse me ... Sheriff?

THE PROFESSOR – Where!?! (beat) Oh yes ... sheriff ... that's me.

DAN BELFORD – I understand that you are here to assure that good order in town prevails. (Offering a hand shake) ... As the owner of the biggest business in town, 'The Cannery' ... I bid you Welcome.

THE PROFESSOR – ASIDE TO AUDIENCE – I never thought that I would be asking this question ...

THE PROFESSOR – "Sheriff" Mack ... reporting for duty. If you could just direct me to ... the San Juan Jail.

(PAIGE TURNER enters to side of stage with a CUE CARD)
CUE CARD: I Hear A Song Coming On

NATALIE – I know ... I know ... 'I hear a song coming on'...

PAIGE TURNER – It doesn't take a Pinkerton to figure that one out,
Natalie. (PAIGE TURNER EXITS)

THIS IS THE LIFE

Music by Irving Berlin Words by Irving Berlin & Gary McCarver

Verse: (Sung by DAN BELFORD)

Welcome to Old San Juan
Be sure to take in the sights
Rolling hills and other thrills will take up most of your nights
To our hot springs you must go
After meeting May and Flo (hello) (Girls greet THE PROFESSOR)
After Several Days or so ... this is what you'll say ...

CHORUS 2: (Sung by THE PROFESSOR)
(THE PROFESSOR has call-back ad-libs as indicated by P:)

You keep your New York City 'cause this is the life (P: I tell you)
This is the life (P: Oh baby)
I love a town that's gritty, where the girls are waiting, it's invigorating.
You keep your French Champaign there
Make mine "rot-gut" whiskey. (He is handed a full shot glass)
No more two bit cons now ...out here I'm the law now
This is the life (P: Oh honey)
this is the life (P: I tell you) this is the life for me.

CHORUS 2: (Starts with everyone singing then as indicated)

You keep your New York City 'cause this is the life (P: I tell you)

This is the life (P: Oh baby)

(MEN ONLY) I love a town that's gritty ...

it's invigorating when poker I'm playing

(LADIES ONLY) You keep your French Champaign there

(MEN ONLY) I'd much rather have gin ... leave your crowded cities

(LADIES ONLY) out here it's so pretty

(ALL SING) This is the life (P: Oh honey) this is the life

(P: I tell you) this is the life for me.

(DES has avoided being seen by THE PROFESSOR and MISS FAYE has been off stage since THE PROFESSOR has arrived in town.)

PERCY VEER – Welcome to our town ... Sheriff. (PERCY EXITS)

SHIRLEY KNOTT – If you ever need anything Sheriff ... anything ...

(MISS FAYE comes out from her front door and walks over to THE PROFESSOR shooing away SHIRLEY who quickly EXITS)

MISS FAYE – (To THE PROFESSOR) “Like two ships passing in the night ...”

THE PROFESSOR – (Turning to MISS FAYE and recognizing her) “And speak to each other in passing ... Only a signal shown and a distant voice in the darkness ...”

MISS FAYE – “... And so on the ocean of life we pass.”

MISS FAYE – Ten years is such a long time ... Phineas.

THE PROFESSOR – You look just the way I remembered you.

MISS FAYE – I'm not the woman I was when we last met.

THE PROFESSOR – Faye ... you're just as beautiful as ever.

(Pulling a flower from his coat THE PROFESSOR offers it to FAYE)

MISS FAYE – And you ... are still the 'charmer' ...

THE PROFESSOR – You always brought out the best in me, Faye.
(beat) By the way ... that COST me a fortune.

(FAYE tries to slap THE PROFESSOR's face ... Instead he intercepts her hand caresses it and then kisses it)

MISS FAYE – And you're still the 'cad' I remember! You come walking into town wearing a smile and a fancy top hat ... some nerve! Leaving me in Denver and then from out of the blue you show up again!

THE PROFESSOR – My ... aren't you 'Melodramatic'!

(Everyone pauses and looks at the Professor and MISS FAYE)
(MISS FAYE and THE PROFESSOR slowly turn to the audience)

MISS FAYE – (Beat) ... Aren't we all?

(Action now resumes in town and THE PROFESSOR moves back his duster to reveal his vest with the purloined Sheriff's badge)

MISS FAYE – (Surprised) So ... what are you doing here and where on earth did you get that shiny new sheriff's badge? I thought

THE PROFESSOR – (interrupting) ... After days of mind-numbing travel ... fortune finally smiled on me. I was playing cards with a lawman and through a strange turn of fate ... this hat and this badge came into my possession.

MISS FAYE – A lawman? What was his name?

THE PROFESSOR – What does it matter?

MISS FAYE – (Moving Closer to him) Just interested.

THE PROFESSOR – Called himself “Snake” but I think his name was Mort ... Mort ... something or other.

(FAYE looks at a letter she has had in her hand ... then hides it)

MISS FAYE – (ASIDE TO THE AUDIENCE) – Oh my! Poor Mort ...

MISS FAYE – (Getting closer) So ... what ever happen to him?

THE PROFESSOR – Let us just say ... I have the badge now and he never completed his journey. (Laughing) But enough about me ... what brought you to this dusty ‘hole in the wall’ town?

MISS FAYE – A few years back on my way to San Diego I fell in love with this town and decided to take a building here near the Cannery. I call my place the Paloma Linda ... that’s Spanish for “Pretty Dove”.

THE PROFESSOR – (Said snidely) Well named.

MISS FAYE – It’s a “Dance Hall”. (indignantly) A place where local men folk can spend a little time ...

THE PROFESSOR – (interrupting) “Dancing” I suppose. Whatever happened to your ‘Fortune Telling’ racket?

MISS FAYE – (Quickly correcting him) It was ‘Palm Reading’.

THE PROFESSOR – Of course ... ‘Palm Reading’.

MISS FAYE – But enough about the past ... Isn’t that badge burning a hole in your chest as we talk? (A giggle)

THE PROFESSOR – You haven’t lost your sense of humor ... funny. Honestly I didn’t know what to expect here as sheriff in San Juan.

(PAIGE TURNER ENTERS beside NATALIE’s Piano)

PAIGE TURNER – Oooh ... Natalie ... he said ...

NATALIE – I’m not objecting ... mind you playing this piano keeps me in tips. (PAIGE puts a dollar in the tip jar)

(PAIGE TURNER holding up her CUE CARD Sign)

CUE CARD: I Hear A Song Coming On (PAIGE TURNER EXITS)

(SUE FLEY rushes across the stage to be near NATALIE as she begins the introduction to the song)

SUE FLEY – Miss Natalie ... zee sheriff said San Juan.

NATALIE DREST – Yes I heard what he said.

(SUE EXITS with the rest of the cast EXITS to starting positions ...Ladies to the Paloma Linda, Men to the Cannery ... except for DES who is still trying to stay somewhat hidden behind a barrel or box.)

(THE PROFESSOR sings to MISS FAYE an 'odd' love song)

ALONG CAME YOU

(From the original song entitled "Along Came Ruth")

Music by Irving Berlin Words by Gary McCarver

I've known girls by the score
Yes a Hundred or more
each one as nice as could be
But now I regret every girl that I've met
('cause) you still look so lovely to me.
While I tried my best to forget you
I met some wonderful girls.
They came tripping along like a Beautiful song
Setting my mind in a whirl.

CHORUS:

I was growing very fond of Molly,
But I remembered you ... remembered you.
I saw an awful lot of Dolly. There was Sadie then Sue
then Jane then June and Ruby and Ruth.
In ... Cheyenne I met Polly ... and then Eloise and May ...
But when I met you ... I must tell the truth ...
you stole my heart a-way.

MISS FAYE – Thank you for the song, Phineas ... I think?

THE PROFESSOR – I had no idea I would find you here. Just
between the two of us ... I had hoped to hit town ... make a few big
scores then take my leave much richer than when I arrived in this
'one horse town'.

MISS FAYE – (Indignantly) So ... and what's stopping you?

THE PROFESSOR – I don't know ... maybe seeing you here?

(PAIGE TURNER holding up her CUE CARD Sign)

CUE CARD: Ahhhhhhh! (PAIGE TURNER EXITS in a moment)

MISS FAYE (And the voices of the GIRLS of the Paloma Linda OFFSTAGE and PAGE TURNER) – Oh my!

THE PROFESSOR – Or maybe ... I just feel more comfortable being in the kind of town where a gun can go off at any moment ... and no one will care.

MISS FAYE – I have never really have had much use for guns ... but I did have to shoot a coyote once.

THE PROFESSOR – Was it mad?

MISS FAYE – We'll it wasn't exactly pleased about it.

(DES BERADO tries to stealthily and nonchalantly walk off stage. The Professor notices him then stops him with his cane.)

THE PROFESSOR – Is that 'Des Berado' trying to 'Vamoose'? ... The Infamous outlaw bandit wanted in five states?

DES BERADO – I think it is only four. If you don't mind not mentioning that so loud ... I've gone straight. Working over at the livery and doing odd jobs over at 'Agua Caliente'.

THE PROFESSOR – I will have to catch up with you later Faye.

MISS FAYE – I had expected as much ... ‘till then. (She EXITS)

THE PROFESSOR – (To DES) As ‘Sheriff’, I suspect I could rustle up a wanted poster with your face on it if I looked around the jailhouse.

DES BERADO – You wouldn’t! I mean ... (resigned to doing the Professor’s bidding) ... Fine, what do you want me to DO Professor?

THE PROFESSOR – It’s ‘Sheriff’ now. (beat) I need you to set up a card game over at the saloon ... just like old times ... and make sure that rich owner of The Cannery is there.

DES BERADO – But, I never see Señor Belford play cards.

THE PROFESSOR – All the more reason to have him there. Suffice it to say ... I’m the law here in town now and if you don’t want to get on my bad side you’ll go set up the game!

(PAIGE TURNER enters to side of stage with a CUE CARD)
CUE CARD: BOO! HISS!

DES BERADO (AN ASIDE TO THE AUDIENCE) – When he’s not fleecing the gullible with his Three Card Monte ... The Professor is cheating townfolk out of their deeds. First he loses a hand of poker after wagering some worthless deeds ...

THE PROFESSOR – Good! I’ve got the worthless deeds here to prime the pump for a big score. (Maniacal laugh) Let’s see ... a ranch and 200 acres in the land of the “Midnight Sun” a paradise in the last great frontier ... (Laugh) ... A Frozen Frontier. That should do ...

(PAIGE TURNER enters to side of stage with a CUE CARD)
CUE CARD: BOO! HISS! (PAIGE TURNER NOW EXITS)

DES BERADO (AN ASIDE TO THE AUDIENCE) – Then he makes sure his “mark” is dealt what looks like an unbeatable hand. The Professor then ups the stakes betting deeds and insisting that everyone at the table do the same ... then he springs his trap.

THE PROFESSOR: So ... Des ... What will it be? Are you in? ... Or would you prefer to spend some time behind bars?

DES BERADO – I’ll get you your poker game ... Professor.

THE PROFESSOR – Remember ... call me ‘Sheriff’.

DES BERADO – Si ... Sheriff. ... Gringo! (DES EXITS)

(DREW and men from the Cannery come onto the street.)

DREW BLOOD – Hey look ... the new sheriff is carrying a cane. What kind of a pansy sheriff carries a cane? (Laughing and poking his buddies to laugh also ... they stay silent as the Sheriff approaches)

THE PROFESSOR – My good man ... this is no ordinary cane ... it is the “cane of justice” how dare you make light of the “cane of justice”.

DREW BLOOD – I’m so sorry ... I didn’t know.

OWEN MONEY – Drew ... If you find yourself in a hole ... stop digging. He’s the new law in town. Maybe you should buy him a drink.

DREW BLOOD – Sheriff ... if I ... well ... we were thinking ...

THE PROFESSOR – Sure ... I’ll take your drink ... but I’d much rather prefer a good poker game. You wouldn’t happen to know one would be?

DREW BLOOD – Only one place in town ... the Swallows Inn.

(PAIGE TURNER enters to side of stage with a CUE CARD)

CUE CARD: Shameless Plug!

THE PROFESSOR – (ASIDE TO AUDIENCE) You just watch. Soon I'll own this entire town ... lock, stock, and barrel. (Maniacal Laugh)

(PAIGE TURNER holds up a different CUE CARD)

CUE CARD: BOO! HISS!

PAIGE TURNER – Things are never so bad that they can't be made a whole lot worse.

(THE PROFESSOR AND MEN enter the Swallows Inn)

LIGHTS: FADE A BIT AS IT APPROACHES DARK

SOUND EFFECT: Crickets and music from the Swallows Inn

(PAIGE TURNER holds up a different CUE CARD)

CUE CARD: Three Hours Later!

(THE PROFESSOR and The Men ENTER from the Swallows Inn. He is laughing with handfuls of money and deeds then EXITS the stage.)

(PAIGE TURNER holds up a different CUE CARD)

CUE CARD: BOO! HISS! (NOW PAIGE TURNER Finally EXITS)

(DAN and OLIVER come out from the Swallows Inn in shock)

OLIVER SUDDEN – I tried to stop you Dan.

DAN BELFORD – I know ... I know ...

OLIVER SUDDEN – I can't believe you lost the deed to The Cannery.

DAN BELFORD – I had a winning hand ... no way I could have lost.

OLIVER SUDDEN – But you did ...

DAN BELFORD – When I get gambling I just can't control myself. How will I tell Cora that the Sheriff now holds the deed to the Cannery? and all I have to show for it are these worthless deeds to a ranch in (looking at then reading from one deed) 'Alaska'.

OLIVER SUDDEN – She's a good woman ... I'm sure she'll understand.

DAN BELFORD – You've never been married have you? (Pause) How will I tell my girls we have to move from San Juan ...

(PAIGE starts to return to the stage and NATALIE starts to play)

OLIVER SUDDEN – Stop right there ... (PAIGE TURNER freezes in place and NATALIE stops playing) ... we don't have time for a song right now ... the first Act ran a little long and these fine folk look like they want to head out to the concessions stand and to the wine bar for some refreshments. I myself could use a Donna B's cookie about now.

CUE CARD: SHAMELESS PLUG! (NOW PAIGE TURNER EXITS)

DAN BELFORD – You're right of course ... Oliver. We will just have to make up the time in Act Two. (Everyone EXITS)

LIGHTS FADE OUT

ACT 2 SCENE 1

The Place: The Streets of Old San Juan Capistrano
 Just outside the Belford and Company Cannery
The Time: The Next Morning

LIGHTS: Early Morning effect ... it is just dawning

SOUND EFFECT: Early Morning birds and perhaps a rooster

(PAIGE TURNER enters to side of stage with a CUE CARD)

CUE CARD: Early The Next Morning (PAIGE TURNER EXITS)

(There is a new sign on the front of the Paloma Linda that reads: "Miss Faye Sees All and Tells All". When the lights slowly come up we see MISS FAYE sitting at the front porch of the Paloma Linda doing a reading with some Tarot cards ... a disturbing reading.)

MISS FAYE – Oh My! ... I just can't see any other outcome.

MISS FAYE – (ASIDE to the Audience) – Oh ... excuse me ... I didn't know you were there.

(MISS FAYE s quickly gathers the cards together and sets them aside and then stands up to address the audience again.)

MISS FAYE – (ASIDE to the Audience) – You know ... The future is sometimes hard to predict ... even for a professional such as I. (Pointing at her new "...Sees All..." sign behind her. She now walks to the front of the stage to start singing. To be joined by other cast members to sing their specific lines as indicated.)

WAY BACK IN OLD TIME SAN JUAN

(Originally entitled “All Over Nothing At All”)

Music by James S. Rule and Words by Gary McCarver

(MISS FAYE to Audience) One Dreamer ... One Schemer ...

(MISS FAYE) Once shared love's flames.

(DAN BELFORD) One careless wager, caused so much pain.

(MISS FAYE) Will Dan get his deed again?

(CORA BELFORD) When will these heartaches end?

REFRAIN 1

(MISS FAYE to Audience) Miss Faye Sees All and Tells All.

(MISS FAYE) No question too big or small.

(MISS FAYE to FELICITY) You ask “must you go on like this?”

(FELICITY BELFORD) “Without the Bliss ... of his Sweet Kiss?”

(MISS FAYE) You wonder ... “Is he sorry he made you cry?”

(MISS FAYE to CORA) You can patch it up if you try.

(MISS FAYE) Our new sheriff's living a Lie ... (PROFESSOR) Baaah!

(MISS FAYE & PROFESSOR) Way back in Old Time San Juan.

REFRAIN 2

(EVERYONE) Way back in Old Time San Juan

(EVERYONE) A town of which we are fond ...

(ALL WOMEN to the MEN) Must we go on living like this ...
without the bliss ... of your sweet kiss?

(ALL MEN to the WOMEN) We're so sorry ... we made you cry...

(EVERYONE) We could patch it up if we try.

(EVERYONE) One more ACT 'till we say goodbye ...

(EVERYONE) Way back in Old Time San Juan.

(Everyone EXITS except for MISS FAYE and the Paloma Linda Girls)

LIGHTS: increase a bit as MISS FAYE sits down again on her porch

SUE FLEY – (To APRIL MAY) I zink Miss Faye has been out here all zee night ... Just reading zee cards? I have never seen her so ... what is zee word ... oh oui ... “troub-belled”.

APRIL MAY – (To SUE and SHIRLEY) It’s that new sheriff in town ... A varmint if I’ve ever seen one!

SHIRLEY KNOTT – (To MISS FAYE) Faye? ... Are you all right?

MISS FAYE – Oh ... Don’t worry Girls ... I just have a lot on my mind. (Pause) You know ... when you’re young it is far too easy to be attracted by the gaudy plumage of any well dressed scoundrel ... I mean ... gentleman ... that might come along.

APRIL MAY – Sounds like your talking about that new Sheriff?

MISS FAYE – I met Phineas while we were both working with Barnum’s Roman Hippodrome ... The biggest circus of its day. I just loved the ballyhoo, the parades, the Persian Steam Calliope. It was where I perfected the art of reading palms, you know ...

SHIRLEY KNOTT – I wood like to know what happened? Do Tell.

MISS FAYE – Well, the Professor was a barker and his younger brother Thaddeus worked as a roustabout. When the Circus packed up in Denver ... Thaddeus headed off with a traveling medicine show ... peddling snake oil or hokum or what have you. Phineas was nowhere to be found ... I never thought my heart would ever heal. (MISS FAYE begins to tear up and SUE hands her a hankie)

(PAIGE TURNER enters to side of stage with a CUE CARD)
CUE CARD: Ahaaaaa! (PAIGE TURNER EXITS)

MISS FAYE – I never thought I'd see him again. In all the small towns ... in all the west ... he has to walk into mine.

SUE FLEY – (Interrupting to change the subject) It looks like he's ... how you say ... 'done well for himself' ... being zee new Sheriff.

MISS FAYE – I suppose that's what it might look like.

APRIL MAY – He doesn't strike me as the sheriff type though.

SUE FLEY – Faye ... you don't seem so happy to zee him. Oui?

MISS FAYE – Oui. I mean no ... I mean ... it's much more complicated than that. (Looking at her hidden letter then sighing)

(FAYE EXITS into the Paloma followed by SUE , APRIL and SHIRLEY)

LIGHTS: Start to brighten just a bit more as the morning comes

(FELICITY and NELLIE walk on stage talking ... NELLIE has a doll ... FELICITY is carrying a small chalkboard for NELLIE's lessons with a two or three additon problems written on it in chalk)

FELICITY BELFORD – ... Only a few more problems and we're done.

NELLIE BELFORD – Felicity? ... Did Father tell you the story when you were young like me?

FELICITY BELFORD – What story are you talking about? ...

NELLIE BELFORD – You know the story... The one about how he found me 'by the garden wall'. Mother told me something different.

FELICITY BELFORD – Oh! You mean ... where babies come from?

NELLIE BELFORD – Yes. Did he tell you that story too? Is it true?

DADDY FOUND ME OVER BY THE GARDEN WALL

Music by Raymond Egan, Jessie Greer and Abe Olman

Words by Gary McCarver

(Verse and Chorus Sung by NELLIE BELFORD)

I asked a simple question ... But I just don't understand.
Mother says a big stork brings us all the way from far off baby land.
And grandma says the doctor brings us
and the trip takes 9 months long
(But) Daddy told me where I came from ...
and my Daddy's never wrong!

CHORUS:

(He said) The angels heard how much he loves our mother...
And then they turned his wish into an image of her.
They brought me to our garden wall
Tucked in a basket like a doll.
And as I peeked out in to the skies ...
two stars fell in my eyes.
And then he scooped me up and took me home to mother.
And that's the story that he told me ... every word.
But I have heard ...they say I'm growing like a weed ... you know ...
But, really I'm a Rose ...
'cause Daddy found me over by the garden wall.

(Piano vamp verse while lines are read then sisters sing together)

NELLIE BELFORD – So tell me ... (pause) is it the stork or the doctor or is daddy right?

FELICITY BELFORD – (Pause) NELLIE ... well ... the truth is ... (pause) it's just what Father said ...

CHORUS: (Sung by FELICITY then Joined by NELLIE)

(He said) The angels heard how much he loves our mother...
And then they turned his wish into an image of her.
They brought you to our garden wall **(Now both sing together)**
Tucked in a basket like a doll.
And as (you) I peeked out in to the skies ...
two stars fell in (your) my eyes.
And then he scooped (you) me up and took (you) me home to mother.
And that's the story that he told me ... every word.
But I have heard ...
they say (you're) I'm growing like a weed ... you know ...
But, really (You're) I'm a Rose ...
'cause Daddy found (you) me over by the garden wall.

FELICITY BELFORD – I think it is about time we head on home ...

(CORA BELFORD rushes in after DAN BELFORD enters the scene)

CORA BELFORD – (angrily) Dan ... How could you!

DAN BELFORD – But dear ... it was supposed to be ...

CORA BELFORD – You promised that gambling was behind you ...

DAN BELFORD – I was told it was nothing more than just a friendly game with the new Sheriff ... how was I to know that ...

CORA BELFORD – It doesn't matter ... you lost the deed to the Cannery ... Our business ... How could you! What were you thinking? Obviously not about me or our daughters. You promised!

(Crying CORA runs off stage repeating ... 'You promised!')

(DAN starts to follow then quickly stops when he sees his girls at the table in front of the Cannery)

DAN BELFORD – Girls, there you are ... Felicity you stay with Nellie ... just come home when you're done helping with her lessons.

FELICITY BELFORD – Father ... take your time with mother. If you need any help? I have a little money saved up. (grabbing her purse)

DAN BELFORD – You know ... your mother is right. You have become a wonderful young woman. I am so very proud of you. For now though, just take care of Nellie ... and I will see you home later.

(DAN BELFORD EXITS rushing after his wife)

DAN BELFORD – Cora ... please wait up!

FELICITY BELFORD – Father ... I know it will all turn out all right!

NELLIE BELFORD – Felicity ... was it my fault? (almost in tears)

FELICITY BELFORD – What?

NELLIE BELFORD – Mommy was crying ... Was it my fault?

FELICITY BELFORD – No ... No ... Nellie ... adults sometimes ... they just have ‘disagreements’. I’m not sure what it was about ... but it was definitely NOT about you. Let’s go inside and finish your lessons ... then we’ll go home. I’m sure everything will be all right.

(FELICITY and NELLIE go into the Cannery door)

(MISS FAYE and the Girls of the Paloma Linda come out of their front door with parasols, towels and lunch baskets. Some wearing bloomers and others wearing 1890’s style bathing suits.)

MISS FAYE – Girls ... let’s close for the afternoon and all go to the steaming pools of Rancho ‘Agua Caliente’ ... away from the hubbub of this town.

SUE FLEY – I am sorry ... what is zis ... ‘Agua Caliente?’

SHIRLEY KNOTT – She’s talkin’ about... “Lizard Flats” ... you know ... that’s what the locals call ‘The Hot Springs’.

SUE FLEY – Oh ... zee ‘Hot Springs’.

MISS FAYE – We’ll go to the pavilion and be back by evening ... and then I am certain I will know exactly what must be done.

SUE FLEY – Your problem ... she sounds impossible to solve?

MISS FAYE – Sue ... Impossible only defines the degree of difficulty. I am sure a solution will come to me. Quit your lollygaggin Ladies ... we are off to the Hot Springs.

SUE FLEY – If you do not mind Miss Faye ... I will stay behind ... I am not zee one for too much of zee sun.

MISS FAYE – Suit yourself. (To her Girls) Come ... Ladies?

(MISS FAYE and the Girls of the Paloma Linda all head off stage towards the Hot Springs except for SUE FLEY who remains behind)

(SUE grabs a feather duster and begins to dust the front porch area of the Paloma Linda singing a French tune. Meanwhile CODY PENDANT comes around the corner to watch SUE from a distance)

SUE FLEY – (Not looking) I know you are zere ... Mr. Cody.

(CODY now comes forward out of ineffective hiding)

CODY PENDANT – I meant no harm Miss Sue.

SUE FLEY – Are you stalking me ... or are you just shy?

CODY PENDANT – (Fumbling for words and almost tripping over his own feet) ahhh ... well ... I ...

SUE FLEY – I see ... Just shy! ... You want to tell me something?

CODY PENDANT – Well I was hoping ... I mean ... I would be honored if ... I'm pleased ... ah ... well ...errr ... (he shakes her hand)

SUE FLEY – I zink I know what you are trying to say ... and I feel zee same way about you. (She kisses his cheek) Oh my ... look at you. Why (pause) you are blushing? Zat is just so ... so sweet.

CODY PENDANT – I've got a nice little home just outside San Juan and I've got a little money salted away. If we got married you wouldn't have to work here at the Paloma anymore ... if you'll have me?

(PAIGE TURNER holding up her CUE CARD Sign)
CUE CARD: I Hear A Song Coming On (PAIGE TURNER EXITS)

SUE FLEY – Have you? You'd do zat for me? Why?

GIVE ME THE CHANCE

(Formerly entitles “Give Me The Right To Love You”)

Music by Abe Glatt • Words by Ben Bard and Gary McCarver

I've known lots of pretty girls ...
who wanted me be their beau ...
but you're the only one for me
and I'm sure you know that's so.
I tried so many times to tell you ...
That my heart is true ...
we can start a life together ...
if you'll say the words ... “ I do”.?

CHORUS (He sings except where noted) (Sung twice):

Give me the chance to prove I love you ... for all my life.
Tell me that you love me too and you'll be my wife.
We'll build a nest and fill it just full of love.
(She sings) Where we can coo like the doves,
pretty doves, turtle doves, lovely doves.
(He sings) Give me the chance to drive off your sorrows and fears ...
(She sings) And we'll start a family darling within a year.
My heart is open ... honey ... (oh) can't you see ...
you are the one and only love for me.

CODY PENDANT – So ... Sue ... (pause) will you ... marry me?

SUE FLEY – (AN ASIDE TO THE AUDIENCE) – Zee word 'marriage' does have a nice ring to it. (Lifting her left had to examine it)

SUE FLEY – (To CODY) Of course I will marry you ... My Mr. Cody!

CODY PENDANT – Then let's go see Judge Egan right now.

(As SUE and CODY hurriedly EXIT hand in hand ... CORA runs on stage and stops with DAN entering a second or two behind her)

DAN BELFORD – Cora ... I'm so sorry.

CORA BELFORD – You should be!

DAN BELFORD – Blazes! I just don't know what I'd do without you.

(CORA walks over to DAN and they Embrace then sing)

I WONDER WHY I LOVE YOU SO

Music by May Greene

Words by W. A. Lang

(SUNG BY CORA first then by CORA and DAN BELFORD)

I wonder why I love you so my dear ...

I wonder why you love me too.

I wonder why I never loved another one as I love you.

I wonder why I love to have you near ...

and tell me things I long to know.

When we are far apart my own sweet-heart ...

I wonder why I love you so.

CORA BELFORD – Whatever happens dear ... I will be there for you. When we wed I promised to help you write the story of our lives ... I guess that includes both the good chapters ... and the bad.

DAN BELFORD – I couldn't ask for a better wife. I hope you are by my side when we're writing the last page of that story.

CORA BELFORD – Dan ... we had nothing when we came to this town except each other. Even without the Cannery we have some money saved. (beat) We DO still have some money saved?

DAN BELFORD – Yes dear ... all of it.

CORA BELFORD – Good ... and two lovely daughters ... what more could we ask for. (CORA and DAN embrace again)

(NELLIE and FELICITY who were off to the side of the set watching their parents sing to each other now rush towards them to hug)

FELICITY and NELLIE BELFORD – Father ... Mother ...

FELICITY BELFORD – I just KNEW that everything would work out.

LIGHTS FADE OUT VERY SLOWLY

SOUND EFFECT: Crickets begin to be heard for ACT 2 SCENE 2

ACT 2 SCENE 2

The Place: The Streets of Old San Juan Capistrano
 Just outside the Belford and Company Cannery
The Time: As Night Begins To Fall

(THE PROFESSOR steps out from the Cannery with a big sign that reads "UNDER NEW OWNERSHIP", and he hangs it on a couple of hooks then tosses NELLIE's small doll off the table into the rubbish. MISS FAYE is looking out of the window of the Paloma Linda)

THE PROFESSOR – I just KNEW that everything would work out.
(Another maniacal laugh)

(PAIGE TURNER enters to side of stage with a CUE CARD)
CUE CARD: BOO! HISS! (NOW PAIGE TURNER EXITS)

THE PROFESSOR – (TO THE AUDIENCE) – Baaaah!

(A Maniacal Laugh and THE PROFESSOR EXITS inside)

(MISS FAYE walks out towards the Audience center stage front)

MISS FAYE – (SAID AS A MYSTERIOUS ASIDE) – Since ancient times, people have foretold the future, and they didn't need a crystal ball to do it. There is much to be discerned of past, present and future even by the simple act of looking at a person's palm.

(Stepping off the front of the stage and walking to a gentleman in the first row of the audience MISS FAYE prepares to take his hand)

MISS FAYE – Everyone watch closely ... I will show you by picking a gentleman from the audience ... (To the selected gentlemen only) Sir, if you will permit me ... have we ever met before? Go ahead ... you may ... tell the audience ... please.

(A gentleman almost always answers 'no'. If he answers 'yes' ... jokingly say ... 'I thought you weren't going to tell your wife. He is obviously not a gentleman' ... simply pick another victim or continue with your first choice if you feel daring and so choose.)

MISS FAYE – My, what a handsome man you are. Your palm please. Thank you. (Gaze intensely at his palm) Very interesting! Oh my! (Act Shocked) Oh my ... you HAVE had an interesting life. Oooh La La. (pause) Do you ask yourself questions like ... Will I be rich? ... Will I be famous? ... Will I find TRUE love?

(Wait for an answer then improvise or say, 'Well do you?' or say 'Of course you do ... everybody does!' or for other answers say in a mysterious voice ... 'I just knew you were going to say that.')

MISS FAYE – 'Miss Faye Sees All ... and Tells All!' Here is what I see about YOUR past and future. (Be confident in each prediction) You have a great need for other people to like and admire you. You have a great deal of unused capacity, which you have not turned to your advantage. That is sad ... but don't worry ... I predict that will all change in the future. You also prefer a certain amount of change and variety and become easily dissatisfied when hemmed in by restrictions or limitations. (Giving him her card) Come and see me sometime. And most of all ... you pride yourself as an independent thinker and do not accept others statements without proof.

MISS FAYE – Sir ... not having met you before this night ... would you say that I have told the audience the truth about you?

(Wait for the answer ... it will probably be 'yes')

(ONLY USE THIS LINE IF THE AUDIENCE MEMBER SAYS 'YES')

MISS FAYE – You must come here more often. I won't tell. (wink)

(ONLY USE THIS LINE IF THE AUDIENCE MEMBER SAYS 'NO')

MISS FAYE – In the future don't go to a mind reader to see the future ... go to a palmist ... I know you've got a palm.

(FAYE leaves the audience and returns to the main stage)

MISS FAYE – (AS A MYSTERIOUS ASIDE) – The next few minutes will be very 'enlightening' ... I can just feel it.

(THE PROFESSOR Laughs and comes out from the Cannery)

(MISS FAYE walks over getting real close to THE PROFESSOR)

MISS FAYE – So ... you OWN the Cannery now?

THE PROFESSOR – Lock ... stock ... and barrel. Just the beginning.

MISS FAYE – Nice shirt ... Phineas.

THE PROFESSOR – Egyptian cotton ... the finest in the world.

(MISS FAYE begins to feel the fabric of his shirt vest then turning him around so his back is to the audience and she is all but hidden)

MISS FAYE – You never were one to settle for second best.

THE PROFESSOR – Life is too short for that ...

MISS FAYE – That is so true. (Moving away) I'll never forget you.
(Breaking away from The Professor to EXIT behind the train station)

THE PROFESSOR – ... No one ever does.

(VOICE OF SNAKE LOUDLY FROM OFF-STAGE) – Professor
Phineas Mack ... could I have a word with you ... outside?

(THE PROFESSOR places his cane next to a bag at his front door)

THE PROFESSOR – (ASIDE) – Probably someone from the
Chamber of Commerce or City Council I suppose ... hardly let you
open for business before they come with their hand out.

(A figure in a white hat come from around the Train Station. It is
SNAKE. You know ... the man that was supposed to be the sheriff
and who we thought was killed by the professor.)

SNAKE – (Said to THE PROFESSOR with one hand on his gun)
Professor ... I don't think this town is big enough for the two of us.

DES BERADO – (AS ASIDE TO THE AUDIENCE) – And you thought
I was a cliché western character?

SNAKE – I think you have something that belongs to me, my badge.

(EVERYONE except FAYE comes out from all parts of the stage to
witness what will happen next. Make sure that FAYE is positioned just
out of sight lines behind THE PROFESSOR. The following townsfolk
lines are delivered fast paced and somewhat overlapping)

SHIRLEY KNOTT – Tarnation! I just knew he wasn't the sheriff type.

SUE FLEY – Oh my! Will zere be ... how you say ... a ‘shoot up’?

CODY PENDANT – It’s ‘Shoot out” ... but that’s close enough. We’ll just have to wait and see what happens next.

CORA BELFORD – Dan ... the Children ...

DAN BELFORD – Stay behind me Nellie ... you too Felicity.

(THE PROFESSOR and SNAKE now situate themselves for a gunfight somewhere near center stage)

THE PROFESSOR – Shouldn’t you be dead?

SNAKE – If you weren’t such a bad shot maybe. I lost my footing in between train cars and must’ve fell off the train. DRAW ... Professor!

OLIVER SUDDEN – (Cautioning the crowd) Stand back folks ...

EVERYONE – (Gasps or says something like ... Oh My!)

(As they gasp everyone take a pace backwards simultaneously)

SOUND EFFECT: Two loud train whistles are heard

SPECIAL EFFECT: Steam rushes out from the train station

A CONDUCTOR VOICE (Offstage) – (Loudly) ALL ABOARD!

(A Pile of Newspapers is thrown from the train onto the stage)

SNAKE – (Firmly to The Professor) Draw! (With hand over holster)

THE PROFESSOR – (Loudly) Just a moment. This was just a terrible misunderstanding. Instead maybe I can make this worth your while.

SNAKE – (More loudly to The Professor) Go ahead and Draw!

THE PROFESSOR – Just a moment while I wipe my brow. (Reaching up for his suspenders he can not find his derringer) Where is that? It should be here? (Finally wiping his brow)

SNAKE – (Pleading to The Professor) Come on now Professor, Draw!

THE PROFESSOR – Well if I must ... I must. (Putting on a glove)

SNAKE – On three it is. (pause) One (pause) Two ...

(Both men reach for their guns but before they reach “three”, a shot rings out without either of them pulling their guns from their holsters.)

SNAKE – (Surprised. To THE PROFESSOR) Did you shoot?

THE PROFESSOR – No ... I thought it was you? No bullets in you?

SNAKE – No ... (checking) none so far as I can tell. How about you?

THE PROFESSOR – As far as I can tell I’m fine ... Oh wait. I take that back. (Showing a white glove covered in blood) I didn’t think you were that fast ... fast on the draw. (Taking a step then slumping over)

SNAKE – Actually ... I’m not.

(MISS FAYE steps into view from behind The Professor holding up the derringer She fired ... stolen from the Professor’s suspenders)

MISS FAYE – You might not be ... but I am.

(MISS FAYE walks over to stand by SNAKE)

MISS FAYE – Mort...

SNAKE – I have asked you not to call me that name ... remember?
They call me 'Snake' now.

THE PROFESSOR – But ... Faye ... Why?

MISS FAYE – Because I just couldn't let you kill Mort ... twice ... After
all ... he is (pause) MY BROTHER!

EVERYONE – (Gasps of surprise) Your Brother? (Some say 'Oh My!')

SHIRLEY KNOTT – (Loudly) Mort-TALITY ... and Faye-TALITY ...
you couldn't figure that one out Professor ... come on now?

THE PROFESSOR – I guess I wasn't paying close enough attention.
(Moving away) You've not seen the last of Professor Phineas Mack ...
(A weak maniacal laugh and then several coughs and The Professor
collapses) Well ... maybe you have. (He lets out a final gasp)

(DES BERADO goes over to check him out)

DES BERADO – He's dead. You've just killed the sheriff.

OLIVER SUDDEN – Haven't you been paying attention ... he was an
impostor. That man is the REAL sheriff. (Pointing at SNAKE)

(DES solemnly shakes his head "no" several times)

THE PROFESSOR – (Sitting up) I'm feeling much better now. (pause) Oooh ... Maybe not! (beat) Curses! Foiled Again! (Collapsing again) (DES looks at The Professor again ... quickly taking his pulse then he shakes his head "no" several times. Taking a handkerchief out of his pocket he places it over THE PROFESSOR's face then removes his own sombrero and solemnly places it over his own heart. DES also takes the sheriff's badge from The Professor to give to SNAKE)

DES BERADO – He's gone now. Dead as a doornail.

DREW BLOOD – Good riddance!

(Everyone takes a moment to look over at The Professor's body then they ignore him and gradually move to the other side of the stage)

CODY PENDANT – They say ... Life is just a game of chance ...

SUE FLEY – ... and I guess zee Professor's luck ... just ran out.

SNAKE – Normally I don't condone shooting a man in the back Faye, but in THIS CASE ... I will make an exception.

DES BERADO – (DES hands SNAKE the Sheriff's badge) You might be needing this. Here's your badge ... Sheriff.

MISS FAYE – Mort ... do you want your old hat? I can ...

SNAKE – (interrupting and getting angry) Stop calling me 'Mort' ... you know I always hated that name. (Pausing to compose himself) And ... No ... let The Professor keep that hat ... Actually I think this J.B. Stetson suits me better. (Tipping his new white Stetson hat to CORA who is rushing towards him) What do you think ... maam?

CORA BELFORD – (Approaching & Interrupting SNAKE) You couldn't have made it to town before we got cheated out of our business for some worthless deeds. (Reading the deeds in her hand) Look ... 200 acres and a ranch in Harris Creek, Alaska. Worthless!

OLIVER SUDDEN – (Rushing over with Newspaper in hand) Did you read the news ... just in on the train ... they found gold in Alaska! Biggest strike in history, just outside of Juneau ... in a place called (reading) 'Harris Creek'. (OLIVER Shows the Newspaper Headlines)

EVERYONE – Gold in Alaska! (General pandemonium breaks out)

CORA BELFORD – Honey, I believe we will need some warm winter coats. Sell the house ... we're off to Alaska! Pack your bags girls!

(FELICITY walks over to join hands with OLIVER SUDDEN)

FELICITY BELFORD – Father ... Mother ... Oliver and I will be staying here. We are to be married. (Showing her engagement ring)

ALL THE PALOMA GIRLS – Oh My!

APRIL MAY – (To SHIRLEY) See I told you!

DAN BELFORD – Then since that phony Sheriff won't be needing the Cannery ... consider it a wedding present for you ... for you both.

BOTH OLIVER SUDDEN and FELICITY BELFORD – Thank you.

DAN BELFORD – (To OLIVER) Now ... you take good care of her.

OLIVER SUDDEN – I will.

CORA BELFORD – I know you will. Come on over to our home for a going away party! (Hugging OLIVER and FELICITY she leads them and DAN and NELLIE to the edge of the stage. Then loudly says to everyone) Oh come on ... you're all invited!

(Everyone EXITS except FAYE, SNAKE, and THE PROFESSOR)

SNAKE – Any loose ends, Faye?

MISS FAYE – I just hope The Professor's brother doesn't find out what happened to Phineas ... Thaddeus was always a real hot head.

SNAKE – I get the feeling that you're trying to tell me something about the future?

MISS FAYE – Just never assume that the last word IS the last word.

SNAKE – (Starting to walk off stage the direction all the others went) So, are you going to go to 'The Professor's' Funeral?

MISS FAYE – Don't think so Mort ... I'm just not a 'mourning' person

SNAKE – I've asked you really nice to stop calling me that.

MISS FAYE – Let's hurry or we will miss the party ... Mortimer.

(MISS FAYE EXITS with SNAKE EXITING QUICKLY BEHIND HER)

OFF STAGE VOICE OF SNAKE – I said 'STOP calling me that!'

LIGHTS: START TO FADE but then come back up to the previous level with a small spot or extra light on THE PROFESSOR

(DES BERADO ENTERS and walks over towards THE PROFESSOR then looking down at his lifeless body. DES looks around the stage)

DES BERADO – Psssst ... The coast is clear Professor.

(THE PROFESSOR reaches up and takes the handkerchief off his face stealthily looks around then stands up dusting off his hat.)

THE PROFESSOR – Finally! I thought they'd never leave.

(THE PROFESSOR now walks over to grab his cane that was leaning against the Cannery and perhaps the soft bag he came to town with)

DES BERADO – Time to disappear before they come back.

(They both start to walk off stage the opposite way that FAYE went)

DES BERADO – I'm amazed how you always know these things.

THE PROFESSOR – You mean that Faye would steal my gun and use it against me?

DES BERADO – Good think you put blanks in your derringer and rigged up that phony glove to make everyone think you were shot.

THE PROFESSOR – (laughing) The 'Mysterious Miss Faye' isn't the only one around here that can predict the future.

(THE PROFESSOR pauses to look around and is lost in thought)

DES BERADO – Un-de-lea Professor! If you expect to reach Mexico by dawn we need to leave. (pause) What are you scheming now?

THE PROFESSOR – Nothing Des. Except ... I do have this strange feeling that we've got one more song coming on in ... San Juan!

(THE PROFESSOR laughs again DES grabs NATALIE's tip jar from the Piano as they head off stage)

(THE PROFESSOR and DES EXIT)

SOUND EFFECT: A train whistle wails off in the distance

MUSIC BEGINS FOR THE CURTAIN CALL: SAN JUAN REPRISE

FADE TO BLACK

CURTAIN CALL

(You may want to print the words to this song and fit them somewhere in your Playbill so the audience can sing along joining in on the fun.)

LIGHTS: COME UP TO FULL

FINALE REPRISE OF THE SONG: SAN JUAN

(Formerly entitled Margie)

Music by Con Conrad and J. Russel Robinson

Words by Gary McCarver

CHORUS: (SUNG TWICE)

Our little San Juan ... we're always thinking of you.
San Juan ... we'll tell the world about you ...
from the mountains right to the sea ...
you won't find a better place to quit the rat race.

San Juan ... You've been our inspiration ...
Days are never blue ...
After all is said and done.
There is really only one ...
And San Juan ... San Juan ... it's you.

**Everyone takes their bows and then
A FINAL FADE TO BLACK**

PROPERTY LIST

RECOMMENDED PROPS & SET DRESSING

Bad puns and over the top acting is one thing ... but “Wardrobe is what makes the Melodrama”. Get creative! There are countless sources for clothing and props that are appropriate for the late 1800s. Here are a few of the author’s favorites. Stick with top quality brands like Wah Maker, Frontier Classics or Scully. Our Fortune Teller has lots of veils. The Professor has a half top hat with wide snakeskin hatband a black rifle frock (think ‘Tombstone’) and wears a vest with suspenders. The Belford ladies dress in Victorian style western wear and the ‘Ladies’ of the Paloma Linda all wear corsets and lace

Wild West Mercantile

www.wwmerc.com

Texas Jack’s Outfitter

www.texasjacks.com

Calico Annie’s

www.calicoannie.net

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 or can be build like the inside of an old Pullman car steam locomotive.



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SCENE DESIGN
CHAOS AT THE CANNERY MELODRAMA

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.

In Melodrama every character, every action, every predicament stays true to character. The good guys are really good and the villain is really bad ... that’s just how it is. Happy endings are the rule and the villain always gets what he deserves in the end.

Conflict, misadventure and desperation that are resolved at the very last moment, unexpected revelations, unexpected twists or turns are all ingredients of the successful melodrama. On stage however, the results of small actions taken are not necessarily recognized, but the consequences are foreshadowed to increase the tension inherent in the play. It is not telegraphed, but set up so that there is some sense of expectation of what might occur. The decisions that characters ‘might take’ and ‘might not’ take are presented as possible alternatives and the audience envisions several outcomes. As a result, when things do not go as might be expected, the audience is moved into a state of wondering of what might happen next. The actors knowing what is actually going to happen can help push the limits of audience frustration and take them where they never thought they would go and it can be a lot of fun.

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.

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.

Love (Male) – The actor's chest is held high with his right hand crossing the chest and resting upper left over the heart - opening out to the right and his loved one.

Love (Female) – The actor's chest is held high with her head cocked a bit to one side the opposite leg goes out with foot pointed ... hands under the chin ... fingers entwined and bent at the first and second knuckles (almost praying), hands then go out towards her beloved with a broad beaming smile on her face.

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 twiddle.

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. Twirl black cape or duster as you enter.

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 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 more comprehensive compendium of retorts and responses can be found online at <http://www.heroandvillain.com>.

Not playing with a full deck? Heck, he's not even in the game!
Ignore him. He's a few swallows shy of a full flock.
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.
Any friend of yours ... is a friend of yours.

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!
I like your approach, now let's see your departure.

I'd hate to see you go, but I'd love to watch you leave!
The trick, my friend, is to keep an open mind, but not so open that your brains fall out.
Some people don't hesitate to speak their minds because they have nothing to lose.

A FEW MORE VILLAINOUS HECKLER RESPONSES

Sir ... I'm not as dumb as you look.

What he lacks in intelligence, he more than makes up for in stupidity.
Obviously inebriated with the exuberance of his own verbosity.

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.

He is as useless as a pulled tooth.

Some folks are wise ... and some are otherwise.

I firmly believe that there's one too many people in this playhouse ...
and sir ... I believe that it's you.

He just got lost in thought ... It was unfamiliar territory.

You can lead a man to knowledge, but you can't make him think.

(For repeat Hecklers)

I think I'm experiencing a bit of "Deja Moo".

A strange feeling that I've heard this bull before.

Sir ... It has been my profound lack of pleasure not to be able to avoid meeting you.

WHY ONLY 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 can not 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 Melodrama 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 immediately and actions will be taken to remove that song from future publications of this manuscript.

For more Melodramas and Melodrama Materials visit

www.HeroAndVillain.com