No Place Like Nowhere

By Andrew Ross

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th># of lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Hunt</td>
<td>covert agent</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Chase</td>
<td>Hunt’s partner</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boss</td>
<td>Hunt and Chase’s boss</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boss’s Boss</td>
<td>boss of Hunt and Chase’s boss; legend in own mind</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilian</td>
<td>innocent bystander</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lola Lollabridgidida</td>
<td>pampered, self-centered movie star</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Max Von Hedron</td>
<td>Lola’s much maligned and loyal chauffeur</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dj</td>
<td>local radio personality; always in his pajamas</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anita Carr</td>
<td>waitress; kind of hippie</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donita Carr</td>
<td>Anita’s sister; a cook; kind of tough</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bubba Gass</td>
<td>reluctant actor and resident of Nowhere</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ray Don Gass</td>
<td>Bubba’s brother, also an actor</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. McPhume</td>
<td>frustrated director of local community theater</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rusty Ford</td>
<td>local sheriff</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cranston Snord</td>
<td>shady, money-obsessed congressman</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerry Mander</td>
<td>Congressman Snord’s aid</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paparazzi 1</td>
<td>irritating reporter who follows Lola; also plays CITIZEN 1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paparazzi 2</td>
<td>same; also plays CITIZEN 2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paparazzi 3</td>
<td>same; also plays CITIZEN 3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paparazzi 4</td>
<td>same; also plays CITIZEN 4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paparazzi 5</td>
<td>same; also plays CITIZEN 5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SETTING

Time: The present.
Place: Various locations in and around Nowhere, Nevada—a tiny town in the middle of the desert—and two locations in Washington, D.C.

The play utilizes area staging. The Lonesome Dog Café, Casino and Dinner Theater takes up the main stage, the DJ desk (which also becomes Congressman Snord’s office) is FORESTAGE RIGHT, a café in Washington D.C. is FORESTAGE LEFT, and the desert scenes take place across the FORESTAGE. Locations can be further set apart by shifts in lighting. Scenes in the desert, Washington D.C. and even the DJ’s scenes may even be played in front of the stage, somewhere in the audience, and/or spotlights can be used. Make the best use of your particular space.

At least five café tables with a dozen or so chairs are scattered across the mid-section of the stage from FAR LEFT to FAR RIGHT for the Lonesome Dog. EXITS LEFT and RIGHT lead outside the café; UP CENTER leads to the kitchen. DJ’s desk and chair are moved FORESTAGE CENTER to become the office of CONGRESSMAN SNORD, with a small American flag and a stack of papers. Beneath the desk is a microphone on a table stand. To represent the scenes with CIVILIAN in Washington D.C., there is a table with a cell phone and a chair FORESTAGE LEFT. (NOTE: For these FORESTAGE locations, the RIGHT EXIT is used for the DJ scenes, and the LEFT EXIT is used for the D.C. scenes.) Chairs are used to loosely represent various cars throughout the play.

Scene breaks are intended for rehearsal purposes only. Action should be continuous between scenes.
NO PLACE LIKE NOWHERE

ACT ONE

Scene One

LIGHTS UP FORESTAGE LEFT: CIVILIAN ENTERS, carrying a newspaper or magazine, looks around, sits at the table with the cell phone and reads. The CELL PHONE RINGS. CIVILIAN ignores it, looks around, then looks at the phone on the table.

CIVILIAN: (Answers the phone.) Hello?

BOSS: (ENTERS separate area of the playing space—perhaps even through the AUDIENCE or under a spotlight on the main stage. Talks into a cell phone.) Good afternoon, Mr. Hunt. The government has 500 tons of toxic waste that needs to be hidden where no one can find it. Due to the extremely dangerous nature of this waste, anyplace it’s stored will be contaminated for the next 150 years. For political reasons, the small town of Nowhere, Nevada, was selected as the repository for this toxic material. Your mission, should you decide to accept it, is to travel to Nowhere and get rid of the people so the toxic waste can be dumped. As always, should you or any of your force be captured or killed, we will disavow any knowledge that you ever existed. Good luck, Jim. This message will self-destruct in five seconds. (HUNT ENTERS and stands by the table. BOSS takes a box of matches from his pocket, holds the phone in his mouth and tries, without success, to strike a match.)

CIVILIAN: (To HUNT.) Is your name Hunt?

HUNT: (Suspicious.) Uh... maybe. Who wants to know?

CIVILIAN: (Hands HUNT the phone.) This is for you.

HUNT: (On phone.) Hello... Hello?

BOSS: (FREEZES, then puts the matches away and talks into his phone.) Hello?

HUNT: Yes. This is Mr. Hunt. Do you have something you want to tell me?

BOSS: Uh... I already told you.

HUNT: No, you didn’t.

BOSS: Yes, I did. I called. You answered. And I told you about the mission.

HUNT: You didn’t tell me about the mission!

BOSS: I told somebody about the mission!

BOSS/HUNT: Uh-oh! (CIVILIAN looks at watch, folds up newspaper and stands.)

HUNT: Don’t go anywhere. I may need to kill you. (A look of horror crosses CIVILIAN’S face.) Could I have that message again, please?
(CIVILIAN EXITS, crawling out on his hands and knees, unnoticed by HUNT.)

BOSS: (Into phone.) You’re supposed to get rid of the citizens of Nowhere so we can dump a bunch of toxic waste.

HUNT: Won’t the toxic waste get rid of the citizens for us?

BOSS: Probably. But we’re supposed to get them out BEFORE we dump the toxic waste!

HUNT: Where exactly is Nowhere?

BOSS: (Frustrated.) I don’t know! Try directory assistance! (Hangs up and EXITS. HUNT dials on his phone.)

HUNT: Hello? Directory assistance? I need the area code and number for Nowhere... It’s a place... for now... Yes, Nowhere... No, I’m not trying to be funny... You have an Anywhere in Utah? I don’t think that’s it. Keep trying. (BLACKOUT. Table and chair are removed.)

End of Scene One

ACT ONE

Scene Two

LIGHTS UP FORESTAGE: LOLA is ONSTAGE, talking on her cell phone.

LOLA: (Into phone.) What kind of agent are you? I’ve never seen a place like this! No lights! No phones! No cars! Not a single luxury! No kidding, Sid! It’s primitive as can be! When you told me I was going to do a film with Ron Scorsese DePalma Howard, I thought it would be one of those Academy Award winners, like Titanic II, or Alien Meets Gladiator. A nice, safe Hollywood film. Shot in Hollywood. I never dreamed I’d end up in the desert! I thought the only thing in Nevada was Las Vegas!... You’re right, Sid. I need the work. And the best part of all, the paparazzi haven’t found me yet. (Suddenly PAPARAZZI 1-5 ENTER RIGHT and LEFT, carrying notepads, pens and cameras that flash. They start asking questions all at once. They surround LOLA, who hangs up her phone and panics. Their questions are all delivered at the same time, creating a wall of incomprehensible noise.)


PAPARAZZI 2: Lola! This way! Lola! Give me a good shot! This is for The National Gossip News and Report! Can you look angry and disgusted? How about fat and ugly? How about a mean look? Etc.

PAPARAZZI 3: Is it true you’re dumping George Looney for Tom Banks? Or are you dumping Tom Banks for George Looney? Give me a break, Lola! Inquiring minds want to know! Etc.
PAPARAZZI 4: Did you walk off the set of A Terrible Mind because your boyfriend was jealous of the leading man? Or was it because you couldn’t memorize your lines fast enough? You’re not supposed to be real bright! Etc.

PAPARAZZI 5: The press and the public think you’re a spoiled brat because you have temper tantrums and throw things at fans and reporters! What do you say to that? Would you throw something at me so I can get a good shot? Etc.

LOLA: (Tries to scream above the noise.) Max! Help me! Get me out of here! Max! What am I paying you for? (MAX ENTERS RIGHT and observes the mob scene for a moment, then takes a police whistle from his pocket and blows it. LOLA covers her ears. The PAPARAZZI grab their ears in pain and back away. Some drop to their knees and shake their heads. LOLA quickly crosses to MAX.) What took you so long? Get the car, and get me out of here! (MAX quickly moves four chairs CENTER, angled slightly DOWN LEFT, in two rows of two. This represents LOLA’S car. MAX mimes holding the back door for LOLA, then gets in the driver’s seat.)

MAX: Sorry, Madame. I haven’t been sleeping very well since our arrival on this set.

LOLA: (Yells.) Drive! (MAX mimes starting the car and driving away.)

PAPARAZZI 1: What is that ringing in my ears?

PAPARAZZI 2: I’m seeing stars and planets and comets, and my head really hurts!

PAPARAZZI 3: (Shouts, points at LOLA and MAX.) She’s getting away!

PAPARAZZI 4: (Shouts.) What? I can’t hear you!

PAPARAZZI 5: (Shouts.) What?

PAPARAZZI 1/2/3: (Shout.) What?

PAPARAZZI 4/5: (Shout.) What?

PAPARAZZI 3: (Jumps to his feet.) She’s getting away! (ALL but PAPARAZZI 5 stand and, in slow motion, run backward STAGE RIGHT, away from the car, to give the impression that the car is driving off. ALL but PAPARAZZI 5 EXIT RIGHT, backwards, as MAX and LOLA “drive.”)

PAPARAZZI 5: (Shouts.) Where’d everybody go? (Looks around and EXITS FORESTAGE RIGHT.)

LOLA: What have I gotten myself into, Max?

MAX: (Still miming driving.) A film directed by Ron Scorsese DePalma Howard. One of Hollywood’s most respected directors.

LOLA: But we’re shooting out in the middle of nowhere!
MAX: We’re in Nevada, madame. This is where John Ford liked to shoot his westerns.

LOLA: Who?
MAX: John Ford. Famous American director.
LOLA: Never heard of him. Are you making this up?
MAX: No, madame. I am not.
LOLA: All I know is that I signed on to do a movie called Stagecoach II.
MAX: A remake of a John Ford classic.
LOLA: I thought it was about a fancy car that pulled up to the stage door of a Broadway show. And I was going to get to sing “We’re in the Money” and wear a nice costume and tap dance.
MAX: That’s 42nd Street. It’s already been remade.
LOLA: Well, it isn’t fair!
MAX: Where do you want to go, madame?
LOLA: Someplace with air conditioning. Drive to Las Vegas.
MAX: What about your contract with Mr. Scorsese DePalma Howard?
LOLA: I don’t care, Max! I needed to have a temper tantrum!
MAX: As you wish. (LOLA yawns, then goes to sleep. MAX also starts to nod off as he drives. BLACKOUT.)

End of Scene Two

ACT ONE
Scene Three

LIGHTS UP FORESTAGE RIGHT: The DJ’s desk in the back room of Bob’s Tire Shop and Chiropractic Clinic. Chairs for the “car” are returned to the tables. DJ ENTERS wearing pajamas, a bathrobe and slippers and carries a coffee cup and teddy bear. He pauses to yawn, then sits, sips his coffee, reaches under the table, takes the microphone and places it on the table. He places the teddy bear on the table.

DJ: (Into the microphone.) Good morning, Nowhere, Nevada! This is radio station KRUM, broadcasting from the backroom at Bob’s Tire Store and Chiropractic Clinic, where Bob will line up your wheels AND your spine at the same time. I’m a little late getting to the station this morning... (Looks at his watch.) ...I think a prairie dog crawled inside my alarm clock and made himself at home. Anyway, I have some announcements. (Thumbs through the stack of papers.) The Rotary Club will hold their annual snake fry this Friday night. There’s still plenty of tickets left. The cook promises all the snakes will be dead, and that you can rest assured that when you bite into your dinner, it won’t bite you back. Don’t forget
the Nowhere Community Theater’s two-man production of *Romeo and Juliet* at the Lonesome Dog Café, Casino and Dinner Theater opens next week. Mrs. McPhume, the director, says she has a real good cast, and the story’s not bad either. That’s it for the announcements. Now let’s hear a little music. This one is for Betty Sue and her customers down at the Desert Rose Hair Styles and Pest Control. That great country-western hit, “If It Weren’t So Hot, You Might Be Cool.” (Puts his head down on the table and goes to sleep. LIGHTS SHIFT to the Lonesome Dog. HUNT ENTERS LEFT and sits at a FAR LEFT table. CHASE ENTERS RIGHT and sits at a FAR RIGHT table. Both wear sunglasses. They pick up menus and fan themselves. After a count, HUNT stands and moves to a closer table. CHASE does the same. Finally they end up at the same table with their backs to each other. They speak in code.)

**HUNT:** What’s in a name?

**CHASE:** By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes.

**HUNT:** *(Taken aback.)* What are you talking about?

**CHASE:** I’m giving the proper signal. What are YOU talking about?

**HUNT:** I say, “What’s in a name?” And you say, “That which we call a rose by any other word would smell as sweet.” It’s from *Romeo and Juliet*.

**CHASE:** I’m supposed to say, “By the pricking of my thumbs, something wicked this way comes.” And you say, “Open, locks, whoever knocks.” It’s from *Macbeth*.

**HUNT:** Last week’s signal was *Macbeth!* This week it’s *Romeo and Juliet*. Didn’t you get the memo?

**CHASE:** Well, I guess not! I thought it was the week for *Macbeth*!

**HUNT:** That was last week. This week is *Romeo and Juliet*! Do you understand our present mission?

**CHASE:** We have three days to make the citizens of Nowhere disappear so the government can dump 500 tons of toxic waste here.

**HUNT:** Right.

**CHASE:** So what’s the plan?

**HUNT:** I’m still working on it. How about if we take them out individually, whack them on the heads and bury them in the desert?

**CHASE:** I see three problems. It would take a very long time, it would arouse suspicion, and it would be morally reprehensible. Other than that, it’s a pretty good plan.

**HUNT:** How about this—we persuade a major industry to locate its world headquarters here. The property values will soar, the residents won’t be able to pay their taxes, and they’ll have to move.
CHASE: That could take longer than three days. Where is the toxic waste now?
HUNT: Traveling across the country. It should be here in a day or so.
CHASE: I’m not sure you could persuade a major industry to locate its world headquarters here by Wednesday.
HUNT: Good point. (Thinks.) Hmm.
CHASE: How about if we purchase their property as cheaply as possible?
HUNT: Why not just go in and take it?
CHASE: They might get mad.
HUNT: And they won’t get mad if we drag them out in the desert and whack ’em? We’re taking away their homes. They just might find it kind of annoying.
CHASE: Why not just tell them we’re going to dump 500 tons of toxic waste in their back yards?
HUNT: The government doesn’t want anyone to know where toxic waste is dumped.
CHASE: Why not? People could avoid it if they knew where it was.
HUNT: (Thinks.) Hmm. That makes too much sense.
CHASE: This is such a crummy little town. I’d think people would be more than happy to leave.
HUNT: It does have a rustic feel to it.
CHASE: It feels like the oven at a pizza parlor. How can anyone live in this heat?
ANITA: (ENTERS UP CENTER and moves to HUNT and CHASE.) Like... Wow. Strangers. It’s strange to get strangers around here.
HUNT: Not many visitors, huh?
ANITA: Never. I gotta... like... get my sister. She won’t believe it. (EXITS UP CENTER.)
CHASE: This shouldn’t be too difficult. (ANITA ENTERS UP CENTER with DONITA, who wears a chef’s hat an apron and carries a spatula.)
DONITA: What’d you mean we got strangers? We never get strangers! The strangest thing around here is you! (Sees HUNT and CHASE.) Wow! We got strangers! (Moves to HUNT and CHASE and holds out her hand.) I’m Donita Carr, and this is my sister, Anita Carr. We’re the Carr twins.
HUNT: I’m Hunt. (Shakes DONITA’S hand.) You say you’re the Carr... uh... twins?
DONITA: We’re identical twins, unfortunately. (HUNT and CHASE exchange confused looks.)
ANITA: Our mother can’t... like... tell us apart. When we were little, we’d... like... play tricks on everyone. We still do once in a while. (HUNT examines his hand, then wipes it with a napkin. DONITA shakes hands with CHASE.)

CHASE: I’m Chase. (Quickly pulls her hand away.) What is on your hand? (DONITA examines her right hand. CHASE takes the napkin from HUNT and wipes her hand. HUNT wipes his hand on his shirt.)

DONITA: Lunch. (Holds out spatula.) Wanna taste?

CHASE: No, thank you!

DONITA: (Holds out the spatula to HUNT.) How about you? It’s really good.

HUNT: Maybe next time. (DONITA shrugs her shoulders then licks the spatula.) This is a nice little town. What do people do around here?

DONITA: We try and keep from fricasseeing.

ANITA: It’s... like... really hot, in case you didn’t notice.

HUNT/CHASE: We noticed!

HUNT: Isn’t this a casino?

DONITA: That’s right. The Lonesome Dog Café, Casino and Dinner Theater. (HUNT and CHASE look around.)

CHASE: Where are the slot machines and roulette wheel?

ANITA: They were... like... repossessed. We couldn’t make the payments.

CHASE: How do people gamble?

ANITA: We bet on the scorpion races.

DONITA: But we had to cancel them this year. Some of the owners were getting a little bit rowdy, if you know what I mean.

HUNT: Scorpion races?

CHASE: Owners?

DONITA: Yeah. You know how it is when you get a prize animal. Everybody wants a piece of it.

HUNT: A prize animal?

CHASE: Isn’t a scorpion a bug with a stinger?

DONITA: (Offended.) An arachnid with a stinger!

HUNT/CHASE: Sorry.

DONITA: So, are you lost, or are you here on purpose?

HUNT: (Same time as CHASE.) Lost.

CHASE: Purpose. (They look at each other for a beat and then try again.)

HUNT: (Same time as CHASE.) Purpose.

CHASE: Lost.
HUN: We got lost getting here, but we’re here on purpose.
ANITA: Where are you guys... like... from?
HUN: (Same time as CHASE.) Washington... Uh... New York!
CHASE: New York! Washington! (They look at each other.) Actually, we’re from the United States government—
HUN: (Interrupts.) Real Estate Company. We buy large tracks of land for development.
CHASE: For the government.
ANITA: I’m not... like... into destroying the earth’s natural resources and stuff.
HUN: We’re not going to destroy the resources. We’re going to... recycle them into something different.
ANITA: Oh. I guess that’s okay.
DONITA: (Hostile.) Did that smarmy little congressman send you?
HUN: What congressman?
ANITA: Congressman Snord.
DONITA: That gopher rat is supposed to represent us in Washington. But does he look after us? Heck no!
HUN: (Same time as CHASE.) Were from the EPA... I mean the Defense Department.
CHASE: The Defense Department... I mean the EPA. (Clears his throat.) We’re not from any congressman’s office.
ANITA: So where are you from?
HUN: Don’t ask. If you found out, we’d have to kill you.
ANITA: Would you like something to drink?
HUN/CHASE: Water. (ANITA EXITS UP CENTER.)
CHASE: This town seems kind of isolated.
DONITA: This is Nowhere. We’re not near anywhere.
HUN: Where is Anywhere?
DONITA: I already told you. Not near Nowhere.
CHASE: What are you talking about?
DONITA: I mean this is Nowhere. Nowhere is not near Anywhere. We’re closer to Somewhere, but not that close.
HUN: Where is Somewhere?
DONITA: I think it’s in Utah. And it’s near Anywhere. But we’re nowhere near Anywhere, Somewhere... or Utah. And just to make things worse, we ARE Nowhere. I got stew to cook. (Yells OFFSTAGE to ANITA.) And it ain’t vegetarian!
CHASE: Your sister is a vegetarian?
DONITA: My sister is a Fruit Loop. *(EXITS UP CENTER.)*
HUNT: *(Confused.)* Where are we again?
CHASE: Noplace. Which is closer to Somewhere than Anywhere, but not that close.

HUNT: *(Still confused.)* Does that make any sense to you?
CHASE: Unfortunately it does.
HUNT: Well, this should be a piece of cake. A casino without any gambling.
CHASE: The hottest, dullest town in the country.

HUNT: Maybe even the world.
CHASE: It’s 200 miles from the nearest highway.
HUNT: It’s hot, it’s dusty…
CHASE: And it’s badly in need of urban renewal.
HUNT: *(Sly.)* Or toxic waste.

CHASE: I bet nothing exciting ever happens in Nowhere. *(BUBBA and RAY DON ENTER LEFT, in character for their play.)*

BUBBA: *(As Romeo.)* What lady is that, which doth enrich the hand of yonder knight?
CHASE: Excuse me?

RAY DON: *(As a servant.)* I know not, sir.

BUBBA: *(Kneels in front of CHASE, taking her hand. RAY DON stands UPSTAGE at attention.)*
O, she doth teach the torches to burn bright!
It seems she hangs upon the cheek of night.

BUBBA: Like a rich jewel in an Ethiopian’s ear
CHASE: *(Flattered.)* Aren’t you smooth!

BUBBA: Beauty too rich for use, for earth too dear!
So shows a snowy dove trooping with cows…
As yonder lady o’er her fellows shalls…

MCPHUME: *(ENTERS LEFT, holding a script. Shouts.)* Cut! Enough already! I can’t stand this!

RAY DON: *(He and BUBBA deliver their Shakespeare lines as smoothly as British actors. As themselves, they talk like hillbillies.)* Hey! I was about to be a Caput.

MCPHUME: It’s Capulet, Ray Don, not caput. But let’s start with Bubba.

BUBBA: What’s wrong?

MCPHUME: You’re not delivering the lines correctly! *(Refers to her notes.)* The word is “Ethiope” not Ethiopian.

BUBBA: What’s the difference?
MCPHUME: Well... an Ethiop is a person from Ethiopia. And an Ethiopian is... well... the same thing. But Shakespeare wrote Ethiopie, so that’s how we need to deliver it. Also, it’s “trooping with crows,” not “cows.” We’re in iambic pentameter meter. Crows rhymes with shows. Which, by the way, you mispronounced.

BUBBA: I made it rhyme. Cows and shalls.

MCPHUME: I am really disappointed. (BUBBA and RAY DON hang their heads.) You two were supposed to have Act One ready! Now, go back to the hardware store and work on it! And don’t sell a single 2-by-4 or wood screw until you’ve learned Act One! (BUBBA slowly EXITs LEFT.)

RAY DON: I know my part, Mrs. McPhume.

MCPHUME: (Frustrated.) You didn’t even pronounce “Capulet” correctly! Go learn your part! (Shoves RAY DON OFF LEFT.)

CHASE: Excuse me. Are those two guys supposed to perform Romeo and Juliet?

MCPHUME: They’d better! We usually have a full house on opening night. (Sits at a nearby table.)

CHASE: But Romeo and Juliet is a love story.

MCPHUME: I know what it is! I’m the director! I’ve directed shows in this town for the past 20 years! And I tell you, I never had actors as poorly prepared as the Gass brothers!

HUNT: Gass brothers?

MCPHUME: Those were the Gass brothers. Bubba and Ray Don.

HUNT: Bubba... and Ray Don... Gass?

ANITA: (ENTERS UP CENTER and serves two glasses of brown water.) Hello there, Mrs. McPhume. How are the rehearsals going?

MCPHUME: Don’t ask!

ANITA: Okay. I won’t. (To HUNT and CHASE.) Here’s your drinks. (They study the glasses for a count. HUNT drinks.)

CHASE: We ordered water, but I guess sodas will be alright.

ANITA: That IS water. (Horrified, HUNT spits out the water and tries to get the taste out of his mouth. CHASE looks at her glass in horror and disgust. To MCPHUME.) Could I get you something, Mrs. McPhume?

MCPHUME: Sure. Anything BUT water.

ANITA: Donita made stew for lunch. But it’s not vegetarian.

MCPHUME: I’m too nervous to eat.

ANITA: The shows always come together. And everybody... like... grooves out. Last year was really cool.

MCPHUME: (Wistfully, to CHASE and HUNT.) One of my favorites. The Sound of Music.
ANITA: It was... like... groovy the way you did it with two actors.

MCPHUME: You’re right, Anita. It’ll work. It always does. I’ll have a bowl of your stew. By the way, who are these strange people, and what are they doing in Nowhere?

ANITA: They’re from the government.

MCPHUME: From that worthless congressman’s office?

ANITA: No. But don’t ask too many questions. They may have to kill us. (EXITS UP CENTER.)

RUSTY: (ENTERS LEFT.) I hear we got strange people in town. (To HUNT and CHASE.) Who are you strange people, and what are you doing in the middle of Nowhere?

MCPHUME: We’re not exactly in the middle of Nowhere. We’re on the south side of Nowhere.

HUNT: (Gag’s.) That water tastes like turpentine!

MCPHUME: It’s much worse than turpentine. It’s more like diesel fuel and sulfuric acid with a hint of bacon grease.

HUNT: (Grossed out.) I’ve been poisoned!

MCPHUME: Sheriff Rusty Ford. What are you doing out this early? It’s only... (Looks at her watch.) ...one o’clock in the afternoon.

RUSTY: We got strange people. This is the most exciting event around here since that last tumbleweed blew down the street. (To HUNT and CHASE.) So, who are you and what are you doing here?

MCPHUME: They’re from the government.

RUSTY: From Congressman Vulture Breath’s office?

CHASE: No.

HUNT: Do you have a poison control center around here?

RUSTY: No one comes to Nowhere for no reason... I mean, for any reason. There’s nothing here.

MCPHUME: There might have been. But that was before the highway incident.

RUSTY: Now, Mrs. McPhume. Don’t get started on that.

HUNT: Call 9-1-1!

CHASE: What highway incident?

MCPHUME: The new highway was supposed to pass through town. We thought we could open up restaurants and hotels, and travelers would discover Nowhere.

ANITA: (ENTERS UP CENTER with a bowl and a spoon, which she places before MCPHUME.) We were promised the new highway by a certain congressman who should... like... remain nameless.
RUSTY: That would be Congressman Cranston Snord. But we don’t mention his name around here.

MCPHUME: When the new highway was built, it missed us by 200 miles.

ANITA: It went through Rattlesnake City instead.

MCPHUME/RUSTY/ANITA: (With disgust.) Rattlesnake City!

CHASE: Rattlesnake City?

RUSTY: Our nearest neighbors. They got the highway, a shopping center, cable TV.

MCPHUME: REAL dinner theater with REAL actors!

ANITA: Fast food restaurants, a dry cleaner, a used car dealer.

RUSTY: They got a real nice sports arena for their scorpion races.

MCPHUME: And we got left in the dust!

HUNT: (Falls out of his chair and convulses on the floor dramatically.) I see a bright light at the end of a dark tunnel! I’m moving toward the light!

RUSTY: (Holds up a water glass. To ANITA.) Did you serve water?

ANITA: They wanted water. What was I supposed to do?

RUSTY: Serve the CLEAR water!

ANITA: I was saving that for the regular customers.

RUSTY: (Pulls HUNT to his feet and props him up.) I’d better drag this strange person over to the office and administer the antidote.

CHASE: (Suddenly concerned.) Is he going to be all right?

RUSTY: Sure. If he survives. Some people have a pretty bad reaction.

CHASE: What kind of reaction?

RUSTY: Really itchy skin. Like a couple thousand mosquito bites. But he should be okay. IF he survives, that is. (EXITS LEFT, dragging HUNT. CHASE follows them OUT.)

MCPHUME: (Picks up her spoon and stares into the bowl.) Anita! My stew is still crawling!

ANITA: (Picks up the bowl and looks into it.) They’re... like... part of nature. You should rejoice in their existence.

MCPHUME: They’re poisonous reptiles! And they’re shaking their rattlers at me! I’d better get down to the hardware store and see how Romeo and Juliet are doing.

ANITA: Is this going to be anything like the two-man production of Les Mis?

MCPHUME: It’s going to be worse. (EXIT LEFT. BLACKOUT)

End of Scene Three
PRODUCTION NOTES

PROPERTIES

ONSTAGE, ACT ONE: About five tables and a dozen or more chairs, napkins and menus on tables, small table with cell phone, desk with stack of papers, microphone on table stand and small American flag (both beneath desk). [NOTE: Desk and table may be brought on and offstage as needed for smaller spaces.]

BROUGHT ON, ACT ONE, Scene One:
Newspaper or magazine (CIVILIAN)
Cell phone, box of matches (BOSS)

BROUGHT ON, ACT ONE, Scene Two:
Cell phone (LOLA)
Cameras with flashes, notepads, pens (PAPARAZZI)
Whistle (MAX)

BROUGHT ON, ACT ONE, Scene Three:
Teddy bear, coffee mug (DJ)
Spatula (DONITA)
Script (MCPHUME)
Two glasses of brown water, bowl with spoon (ANITA)

BROUGHT ON, ACT ONE, Scene Four:
Sheet of paper (STAGEHAND)
Cell phone (MAX)

BROUGHT ON, ACT ONE, Scene Six:
Sheet of paper (STAGEHAND)

BROUGHT ON, ACT ONE, Scene Seven:
Cell phone (SNORD)
File folder with papers (GERRY)

BROUGHT ON, ACT ONE, Scene Eight:
Piece of paper (STAGEHAND)
Two glasses of water, bowl of stew, spoon (ANITA)
Briefcase with contracts, pens (CHASE)
Cell phone (GERRY)
Script (MCPHUME)

ONSTAGE: ACT TWO: Same as Act One.

BROUGHT ON, ACT TWO, Scene One:
Tabloid magazine (CIVILIAN)
Cell phone, box of matches (BOSS’S BOSS)

BROUGHT ON, ACT TWO, Scene Two:
Coffee mug with plastic bug inside (DJ)
Script, clipboard (LOLA)
Rubber snake (DONITA)
BROUGHT ON, ACT TWO, Scene Three:
   Cell phone (BOSS)

BROUGHT ON, ACT TWO, Scene Four:
   Bottled water (SNORD)

BROUGHT ON, ACT TWO, Scene Five:
   Optional taxidermy props (DJ)
   Two glasses of brown water, two glasses of clear water (ANITA)
   Cell phone (BOSS’S BOSS)
   Cameras with flashes, notepads, pens (PAPARAZZI)

   SOUND EFFECTS
   Cell phone ring tones (can be funny)

   COSTUMES
   HUNT, CHASE, BOSS and BOSS’S BOSS both wear secret agent style
   suits and sunglasses. They should stand out from the locals.
   CIVILIAN should wear contemporary clothes and a watch.
   LOLA is a diva and should dress accordingly. She could have a different
   outfit every scene, maybe a pantsuit when she is acting as director
   in rehearsal. She also wears a watch.
   MAX should dress as a chauffeur, including a hat.
   DJ always wears pajamas, slippers and has two different bathrobes, as
   outlandish as possible.
   ANITA and DONITA should look as different as possible physically.
   ANITA wears a waitress uniform with some hippie accents. DONITA
   wears an apron and a chef’s hat.
   BUBBA and RAY DON should look as hillbilly as possible, with overalls
   and boots. RAY DON also wears a Juliet costume and wig in Act
   One, Scene Eight.
   MCPHUME should dress in contemporary clothes and wear a watch.
   RUSTY wears a county sheriff’s outfit.
   SNORD and GERRY should dress like flashy politicians.
   PAPARAZZI should look like journalists, perhaps hats and camera vests
   to go with their cameras.
   CITIZENS can dress folksy and comfortable, much like BUBBA and RAY
   DON. All of the Shakespeare actors might have some part of a
   costume during the “performance.”

   FLEXIBLE CASTING
   Roles can be doubled, and many of the roles can be male or female:
   BOSS, BOSS’S BOSS, CIVILIAN, GERRY and PAPARAZZI/CITIZENS.
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