TROUBLE IN
Paradise Junction

By Todd Wallinger

© Copyright 2017, by Todd Wallinger

Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that a royalty must be paid for every performance, whether or not admission is charged. All inquiries regarding rights should be addressed to Pioneer Drama Service, Inc., PO Box 4267, Englewood, CO 80155.

All rights to this play—including but not limited to amateur, professional, public reading and translation into foreign languages—are controlled by Pioneer Drama Service, Inc., without whose permission no performance, reading or presentation of any kind in whole or in part may be given.

All other rights in this play, including radio broadcasting, television and motion picture rights, are controlled by TODD WALLINGER to whom all inquiries should be addressed c/o Pioneer Drama Service, Inc. PO Box 4267, Englewood, CO 80155-4267.

These rights are fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and of all countries covered by the Universal Copyright Convention or with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, including Canada, Mexico, Australia and all nations of the United Kingdom.

ONE SCRIPT PER CAST MEMBER MUST BE PURCHASED FOR PRODUCTION RIGHTS.

COPYING OR DISTRIBUTING ALL OR ANY PART OF THIS BOOK WITHOUT PERMISSION IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN BY LAW.

On all programs, printing and advertising, the following information must appear:

1. The full name of the play
2. The full name of the playwright
3. The following notice: “Produced by special arrangement with Pioneer Drama Service, Inc., Denver, Colorado”
# TROUBLE IN PARADISE JUNCTION

By TODD WALLINGER

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JOE GOODE</td>
<td>easy-going owner of the Rise 'n' Shine Diner and part-time philosopher; our narrator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EDNA HOCHELMEIER</td>
<td>Ernie's giddy and excitable wife and head of the Women's Arts League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GERTIE DALRYMPLE</td>
<td>sensible doctor and chief judge for the pie-baking contest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRED MENDELBAUM</td>
<td>opinionated grocer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERNIE HOCHELMEIER</td>
<td>mailman and president of the Town Council; stickler for the rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CINDY</td>
<td>young teen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIG FINN</td>
<td>cop with a big heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOTTE LARUE</td>
<td>pretentious owner of the town's dance studio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHARLIE RUCKUS</td>
<td>town grump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISS CROTCHET</td>
<td>know-it-all schoolteacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAYOR FLO</td>
<td>mayor of Paradise Junction; would rather be fishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARTHA McGILLICUDDY</td>
<td>Horace's snobby wife and head of the Ladies' Culture Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARABELLA McGILLICUDDY</td>
<td>teenage daughter of Horace and Martha; groomed for stardom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WILBUR HOCHELMEIER</td>
<td>gawky teenage son of Ernie and Edna; has a crush on Arabella</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HORACE McGILLICUDDY</td>
<td>richest and most pompous man in town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLLY DAY</td>
<td>ambitious newspaper reporter and Joe's sweetheart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAM</td>
<td>lackadaisical auto mechanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAL</td>
<td>another</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VELMA PILCHER</td>
<td>Mayor's ridiculously efficient secretary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*For preview only.*
TV Crew
TINA POWERS ..................... cynical and hard-driving TV producer from the big city 46
WINK SMILEY ...................... slick, fast-talking host of *Paradise Lost* 100
NORA DAVIES ...................... camera operator for *Paradise Lost*; actually has a conscience 51

Others
TOURIST MOM .................... obnoxious tourist 8
TOURIST DAD ...................... another 8
TOURIST GIRL ..................... another 6
EXTRA TOURISTS .................. as needed

SETTING

Time: The present.
Place: Many locations in the idyllic little town called Paradise Junction. Each location is represented by minimal set pieces that can be moved on and off quickly.

Town Square has a fountain with park benches. Trees can be used to help set the scene.

The Rise 'n' Shine Diner includes a counter, a few stools, and an oven.

The Mayor's office includes a desk and an office chair.

S&S Auto Repair Shop has a sign spelling out the name of the shop. Two lawn chairs sit in front of it.

Madame LaRue's Academy for the Terpsichorean Arts takes place on a bare stage. A barre can help set the scene, if desired.

The Hochelmeiers' home has a kitchen table and chairs.

McGillicuddy Mart has a sales counter.

Wink's dressing room has a dressing table and chair.
SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE
Scene One: Town Square, one nearly perfect day.
Scene Two: Rise ’n’ Shine Diner, that same day.
Scene Three: S&S Auto Repair Shop, the next day.
Scene Four: Mayor’s office, a short time later.
Scene Five: Town Square, the next morning.
Scene Six: Rise ’n’ Shine Diner, immediately after.
Scene Seven: Madame LaRue’s Academy for the Terpsichorean Arts, a few days later.
Scene Eight: The Hochelmeiers’, early the next morning.
Scene Nine: Rise ’n’ Shine Diner, a week later.
Scene Ten: Town Square, the next day.

ACT TWO
Scene One: Town Square, a few weeks later.
Scene Two: Rise ’n’ Shine Diner, that same day.
Scene Three: Mayor’s office, a short time later.
Scene Four: McGillicuddy Mart, a short time later.
Scene Five: Wink’s dressing room, a short time later.
Scene Six: Town Square, immediately after.
TROUBLE IN PARADISE JUNCTION

ACT ONE

Scene One

1 AT RISE: Paradise Junction Town Square, one nearly perfect day. JOE ENTERS LEFT and crosses DOWN CENTER to address the AUDIENCE.

JOE: Welcome to Paradise Junction, the best little town in the world! We’ve got a saying around here. “If things seem too good to be true, then you must be in Paradise Junction.” Oh, it’s not perfect, not by any means. It just seems like everything works out a little bit better here. (EDNA ENTERS RIGHT. GERTIE ENTERS LEFT.) It’s the kind of place where the weather is always fine.

EDNA: Good morning, Gertie.

GERTIE: Good morning, Edna. Beautiful day, ain’t it?

EDNA: All day, every day.

GERTIE: Did you get any of that rain last night?

EDNA: Sure did. Left our car sparkling like it was brand new.

GERTIE: Only in Paradise Junction! (EXITS RIGHT. EDNA EXITS LEFT.)

JOE: (To AUDIENCE.) It’s the kind of place where every thumb is green. (FRED ENTERS RIGHT, carrying a bushel basket filled with red beach balls. ERNIE ENTERS LEFT.)

ERNIE: Where you going, Fred? To the beach?

FRED: What? Oh, no. These aren’t beach balls, Ernie. These are my tomatoes.

ERNIE: Tomatoes, huh? What did you feed them?

FRED: Nothing. I just dumped the cat’s litter box out the back door last night, and in the morning, I found these.

ERNIE: Only in Paradise Junction! (EXITS RIGHT. FRED EXITS LEFT.)

JOE: (To AUDIENCE.) It’s the kind of place where everybody’s willing to lend a hand, even if they each have their own way of doing it.

CINDY: (Runs ON LEFT and points OFF LEFT.) Officer Finn! Officer Finn! Mr. Whiskers is stuck in a tree! (BIG FINN, GERTIE, ERNIE, LOTTE, and CHARLIE ENTER RIGHT while EDNA, FRED, MISS CROTCHET, and MAYOR FLO ENTER LEFT, talking excitedly amongst themselves.)

BIG FINN: Hold on, Cindy. I’ll go get the fire truck. The ladder should be able to reach him.

LOTTE: You can’t use the ladder, Big Finn. Don’t you remember last time? You almost scared the poor thing to death.

CHARLIE: I say we cut the tree down. That thing’s been waiting to fall and crush us all to death.

For preview only.
MISS CROTCHET: Oh, no, Mr. Ruckus! We can’t cut down the tree. The town charter was signed under that tree. *(MARTHA and ARABELLA ENTER RIGHT and join the hubbub. The TOWNSFOLK are so busy chattering they don’t see WILBUR ENTER LEFT, a cat nestled in his arms.)*

MARTHA: Look, Arabella! A crowd! Now stand up straight and smile. You never know when the paparazzi will show up.

GERTIE: I could use my hot air balloon.

MISS CROTCHET: Sure, but once you get up that high, how will you grab the cat?

MAYOR FLO: You could grab him with my fishing net!

ERNIE: What if the balloon floats away?

FRED: We’ll have to tie it to something heavy.

BIG FINN: See! I knew the fire truck would come in handy!

CINDY: *(Notices WILBUR with the cat.) Oh, thank you, Wilbur! (Takes the cat, relieved.)*

BIG FINN: Wait a minute, Cindy. Is that Mr. Whiskers?

CINDY: It sure is.

BIG FINN: Good job, Wilbur. How did you get him down?

WILBUR: I didn’t. He got so tired of everybody arguing, I think he decided to come down on his own.

TOWNSFOLK: Only in Paradise Junction! *(TOWNSFOLK continue talking as they EXIT.)*

JOE: *(To AUDIENCE.) How did we get this way? Well, it all started 150 years ago, when Jedediah Hornblower founded the town. He took out advertisements in all the big Eastern newspapers. “Get rich quick,” they said. “The streets of Paradise Junction are paved with gold.” Folks streamed in from all over, hoping to strike it rich. The only problem? There was no gold, and that made people mad. In fact, they got so mad, they ran Jedediah out of his own town. Most of the people left after that. But the few that stayed looked around them, and they liked what they saw. No, the streets weren’t paved with gold, but when the sun came over Mount Paradise each morning, it almost looked like they were. And Paradise Creek may not have been made of silver, but when you knelt down and took a big long swig from it, you felt like the world was a treasure box. Yep, people were pretty happy here. At least, they were before the TV folks came… *(BLACKOUT.)*

End of Scene One
1 LIGHTS UP: Rise 'n' Shine Diner, that same day. HORACE sits at the counter eating a piece of pie. JOE watches him from behind the counter.

   JOE: What do you think of the pie, Horace? Horace?

5 HORACE: (Polishes off the pie, enraptured.) You’ve got magic in that oven, Joe.

   JOE: There’s nothing magic about it. You’ve just got to pay attention.

   HORACE: (Pulls out his checkbook and pen.) How much do you want?

   JOE: For the pie?

10 HORACE: For the recipe. Five thousand dollars? Ten thousand?

   JOE: I don’t want your money.

   HORACE: Twenty thousand dollars, and that’s my final offer.

   JOE: Why do you want the recipe so bad?

   HORACE: Martha has entered the pie-baking contest every year for the last three years, and she’s come home brokenhearted every time.

   JOE: And you want her to win?

   HORACE: No. I’m the one who has to eat those pies. I want them to stop tasting like they were scraped from the bottom of a garbage bin. Have you ever tried her onion pie?

20 JOE: Is that what was in there?

   HORACE: Yeah. She said she wanted to give it some bite.

   JOE: Look, if it means that much to you, I’ll just give you the recipe. (Hands him a recipe card.)

   HORACE: You’re a fool, Joe. I could have made you a rich man.

25 JOE: What do you mean? I’m already rich.

   HORACE: You? Rich?

   JOE: Why, sure. The sun’s shining, the trees are blooming, and I’ve got another pie just like that one about to come out of the oven. What more could I possibly want? (POLLY ENTERS DOWN LEFT with a notebook and pen.)

   HORACE: (Eyes POLLY.) I can think of one thing.

   JOE: You keep quiet now. (To POLLY.) Morning, Polly. Would you like to try a piece of my special huckleberry pie?

30 POLLY: Not today, Joe. I’m making my rounds for The Gazette. I don’t suppose there’s been any big news since yesterday?

   JOE: Oh, yeah. Haven’t you heard? The Hochelmeiers got broken into last night.
Polly: (Opens her notebook.) Really? What happened?

Joe: You know how soundly Ernie sleeps, right? Well, last night around three a.m., he was yanked out of dreamland by a deafening crash in the kitchen.

Polly: (Scribbles furiously.) Go on.

Joe: He grabbed his shotgun, and he went to confront the intruder. His hands were shaking, and his knees were knocking. It must have taken him fifteen minutes to get down the stairs. When he did, well, the kitchen was a disaster. Chairs were knocked over. Pots and pans were scattered everywhere. And then he saw it.

Polly: What?

Joe: A huge shadow, just past the table. He raised his shotgun, and he crept quietly towards it, keeping a steady finger on the trigger. Then, without a lick of fear, the intruder poked his head above the table.

Polly: Oh, my gosh! Who was it?

Joe: Goliath.

Polly: Goliath?! Ernie’s rooster?

Joe: That’s right.

Polly: (Shuts her notebook.) I should have known better than to come here looking for news.

Joe: Oh, I don’t know. I’ve always heard that no news is good news.

Polly: Not for a reporter like me, Joe. Ever since I was a little girl, I’ve dreamed of working for a big-city newspaper. The tap-tap-tap of the typewriters. The roar of the giant presses. I keep applying for jobs, but no one will give me a chance. And do you know why?

Joe: No.

Polly: Because all I ever write about is pie-baking contests and renegade roosters.

Joe: Forget the big city, Polly. Stay here and marry me. (Polly bursts out laughing.) What’s so funny?

Polly: You’ve asked me that in January, February, March, and now April. And each time, I’ve said no. When are you going to give up?

Joe: I don’t know. What month comes after never?

Polly: You want a ring? I’ll give you a ring. (Grabs a doughnut, kneels, and places it on her finger.)

Polly: (Gazes wistfully at it for a moment, then comes to her senses, yanks it off, and drops it on the counter.) Look, Joe, you know I love you, but let’s face facts. There’s no way you’re ever going to leave
Paradise Junction, and I absolutely refuse to spend the rest of my life in this one-horse town.

JOE: Didn’t you hear? We’re not a one-horse town anymore. Mr. Pinkley’s mare had twins.

POLLY: You know what I mean.

JOE: Come on, Polly. There’s got to be something that would convince you to stay here and marry me.

POLLY: Sure, Joe. If Paradise Junction made the front page of the New York Times, then I’d know the town had arrived. Well, goodbye, Joe. Goodbye, Mr. McGillicuddy.

HORACE: Goodbye, Polly. (POLLY EXITS DOWN LEFT.)

JOE: Hallelujah!

HORACE: What’s gotten into you?

JOE: Didn’t you hear? I’ve got a wedding to plan.

HORACE: Oh, yeah? How?

JOE: I don’t want to get bogged down in the details. I’m more of a big-picture guy.

HORACE: Uh-huh. Well, when the story comes out, save a copy for me, would you?

JOE: Will do, Horace. (HORACE EXITS DOWN LEFT.) Yahoo! (BLACKOUT.)

End of Scene Two

ACT ONE

Scene Three

LIGHTS UP: S&S Auto Repair Shop, the next day. SAM and SAL lounge in lawn chairs.

TINA: (Stumbles IN RIGHT.) Oh, great! My heel broke. Could this day possibly get any worse?

SAM: Can we help you?

TINA: Yes. My Lamborghini died about a mile down the road.

SAM: What do you want us to do about it?

TINA: I want you to fix it.

SAM: You mean, like, with a screwdriver?

TINA: Screwdriver, monkey wrench, mallet. Whatever it takes.

SAL: (To SAM.) I told you people would get confused by our sign.

TINA: You mean you don’t repair cars?

SAM: That depends on what you mean by repair.
TINA: I mean get them running again.
SAM: Well then, no.
TINA: Wonderful.
SAL: It’s not that we don’t want to.
SAM: It’s just that we don’t know how.
SAL: This is Paradise Junction. Nothing ever breaks around here.
TINA: Well, is there anything you can do?
SAM: Sure. We could slap some paint on it for you.
SAL: Yeah. Red will make it look real fast.
TINA: Listen, you melon heads. I don’t want my car to look fast. I want it to go fast.
SAM: Yeah, well, it don’t look like that’s going to happen, does it?
TINA: I don’t believe this! I’m supposed to be on my way to New York City for the most important meeting of my career, and instead I’m stranded in Mayberry R.F.D.
SAM: What are them letters? You some kind of secret agent?
TINA: No. I’m a TV producer, and I’m supposed to come up with a new reality show by five o’clock today.
SAM: Reality show? Ain’t that one of them oxygen morons? Like civil war?
SAL: Or jumbo shrimp?
TINA: I’ll have you know our network has a strict policy about accuracy in our shows. We check every fact twice before we ignore it.
SAL: (To SAM,) I like her. She talks funny.
TINA: Hold on. Did you say nothing ever breaks around here?
SAM: That’s right. And no one ever gets sick.
SAL: Unless you eat one of Mrs. McGillicuddy’s pies.
TINA: That seems too good to be true.
SAM: Hey, that’s our town slogan.
SAL: If things seem too good to be true...
SAM/SAL: ...then you must be in Paradise Junction!
TINA: You know, I just had an epiphany.
SAL: Don’t worry. Doctor Gertie can take care of that.
TINA: No, I mean I had an idea. If someone wanted to produce a TV show here, who would they talk to?
SAM: A TV show, huh? I guess they’d talk to Mayor Flo.
SAL: But they’d better hurry. She’s leaving for her fishing trip tomorrow.
TINA: Where’s her office?
SAM: City Hall. It’s in Town Square, just one block past Madame LaRue’s Academy for the Terpsichorean Arts.

TINA: Thanks. You’re a lifesaver. (EXITS RIGHT.)

SAL: I still say we ought to change our sign.

SAM: Yeah, but then we’d have to get out of these chairs.

SAL: You’re right. It’s not worth it. (BLACKOUT.)

End of Scene Three

ACT ONE
Scene Four

LIGHTS UP: The Mayor’s office, a short time later. MAYOR FLO practices casting her fishing rod.

VELMA: (Bustles IN DOWN RIGHT with a document.) One more for you to sign, Mayor Flo.

MAYOR FLO: Velma, can’t it wait until after my fishing trip?

VELMA: Not this time, Mayor. Horace McGillicuddy is pretty adamant.

MAYOR FLO: (Takes the document, reluctant.) A proclamation to name May “Arabella McGillicuddy Month”?

VELMA: She just won the Miss Paradise Junction Contest.

MAYOR FLO: She was the only contestant. For the third year in a row.

VELMA: Would it kill you to let her have her day in the sun? After all, Horace has contributed a great deal of money to this town.

MAYOR FLO: I know, and I’m grateful. But his money always seems to come with strings attached. Take the park he built.

VELMA: Horace McGillicuddy Park?

MAYOR FLO: Yes. It’s nice having a place for kids to play, but did he have to plaster advertisements for his store over every square inch of the playground?

VELMA: I’m sure he just wants to get an edge on the competition.

MAYOR FLO: What competition? He’s got the only store in town.

VELMA: Look, if you don’t sign this now, Horace will track you down wherever you’re going and make you sign it himself.

MAYOR FLO: I suppose you’re right. (SIGNS THE DOCUMENT.) Now, if you don’t mind, I’m going to go drown some worms.

VELMA: Is there a number I can reach you at?

MAYOR FLO: Not if I can help it. (LOOKS OFF RIGHT.) Uh-oh. It’s Joe.

VELMA: I thought you liked Joe.

MAYOR FLO: Everybody likes Joe. That’s not the problem. The problem is he’s liable to talk my ear off, and then I’ll never get to the lake.

VELMA: Duck behind the desk, Mayor. I’ll get rid of him.
MAYOR FLO: You’re a peach, Velma. (Hides behind the desk. JOE ENTERS DOWN RIGHT with a plate of pie and a fork.)

JOE: Hi, Velma. Can I speak with Mayor Flo?
VELMA: Sorry, Joe. She just left for her fishing trip.

JOE: That’s too bad. I brought her a piece of my huckleberry pie. I know it’s her favorite. (Sits on the desk, holding the pie just inches from where MAYOR FLO is hiding. MAYOR FLO swoons from the delicious aroma.)

VELMA: Just leave it here. She can enjoy it when she comes back.

JOE: But it’s still warm and fresh and gooey inside. (Waves the plate around as though tempting MAYOR FLO to come out of hiding.)

MAYOR FLO: (Jumps to her feet, unable to restrain herself.) Give it here! (Grabs the plate and shovels the pie into her mouth.)

JOE: (Laughs.) Hey, Mayor Flo. I thought you weren’t leaving until tomorrow.

MAYOR FLO: I just got a hot tip. The catfish are biting something fierce.

JOE: Oh, yeah. Where?

MAYOR FLO: Now, Joe, you know there isn’t enough money in the world to make me give away my secret fishing hole.

JOE: Can’t blame a guy for trying.

MAYOR FLO: Say, you didn’t come here just to bring me this pie, did you?

JOE: No. I wanted to talk to you about your nephew.

MAYOR FLO: My nephew?

JOE: Yeah. Didn’t you say he’s an editor for the Times?

MAYOR FLO: No. I said he was an editor for a time.

JOE: Oh. I guess that’s different then.

MAYOR FLO: Why do you want to know?

JOE: I was just thinking how nice it would be if we could get Paradise Junction in the newspapers. You know, boost our town’s image. (MAYOR FLO bursts out laughing.) What are you laughing at?

MAYOR FLO: Joe, you’re the last person in the world to be concerned about our town’s image. Aren’t you the one who wanted to take down all the signs so travelers would pass through without even knowing they’d been here?

JOE: All right, fine. If you must know, I asked Polly to marry me.

MAYOR FLO: Again?

JOE: Sure, but this time she said yes.

MAYOR FLO: Congratulations! When’s the big day?

JOE: Well, see, that’s the thing. I’ve got to get Paradise Junction on the front page of the New York Times first.
MAYOR FLO: Are you sure Polly wants to marry you, Joe?

JOE: Why, sure I’m sure. She’s just a little particular about how she does it.

MAYOR FLO: Sorry, Joe. I can’t help you there.

JOE: I was afraid of that.

MAYOR FLO: Now, if you don’t mind, I’ve got to get going.

JOE: Where you going?

MAYOR FLO: Oh, about fifty miles— (Catches herself.) Ah. You’re a sly one, Joe.

JOE: Have a good trip, Mayor Flo. (MAYOR FLO EXITS DOWN RIGHT.)

VELMA: Hey, Joe. Do you have a few minutes?

JOE: I always have time for you, Velma.

VELMA: Good, because the mayor’s chair has been making funny noises.

JOE: Are you sure it’s the chair?

VELMA: (Shoves a can of oil at him.) Just fix it… please. (EXITS DOWN RIGHT. JOE settles into the chair. It squeaks. He gets up and puts some oil on it. He sits in it again. This time, there’s no squeak. JOE proceeds to test the chair, making a fool of himself as he twists and squirms.)

TINA: (ENTERS DOWN RIGHT.) Excuse me, Mayor?

JOE: (Startles and scrambles out of the chair.) What? Oh, uh, no. I’m just the—

TINA: My name is Tina Powers. I want to produce a reality show here.

JOE: A reality show? What’s that?

TINA: Don’t you watch television?

JOE: Not if there’s something else to watch. (POLLY ENTERS DOWN RIGHT. Seeing TINA and JOE, she ducks behind the door to spy on them.)

TINA: Well, what we would do is show real people—your friends, your neighbors—living their day-to-day lives.

JOE: Heck, I can see that just sitting on my porch swing.

TINA: Well, sure you can. But think of all those poor ignorant souls in the rest of the country. Wouldn’t you like them to see how good you’ve got it?

JOE: I don’t know, ma’am. That kind of seems like bragging to me.

TINA: All right. Forget that. Think of the money.

JOE: Money?
TINA: Sure. We’ll pay the city five million dollars if you give us the right to film here. (Intrigued, POLLY starts jotting down notes in her notebook.)

JOE: Well, to be honest with you, ma’am, I don’t know what we’d do with all that money.

TINA: Oh, come on. You can think of something. You could build a municipal swimming pool. Or improve your schools.

JOE: Paradise Creek is just fine for swimming. And we already have the smartest kids in the county.

TINA: All right. Forget about the money. Think of the fame.

JOE: Fame?

TINA: If the show’s a hit, you’ll be covered by all the media—magazines, newspapers. Why, you might even make the front page of the New York Times.

JOE: Where do I sign?

TINA: Right here. (Pulls out a contract and hands it to JOE.)

JOE: (About to sign.) Wait a minute. What’s this?

TINA: What? Oh, that’s just the fine print.

JOE: It says you have the right to film us anytime, anyplace, and that you’re free to edit our words any way you see fit.

TINA: It’s standard, I assure you.

JOE: I’m sorry, Miss Tina, but I can’t sign this.

TINA: Have you lost your mind?

JOE: Maybe. But you know what? We’ve got a pretty good thing going here. (Absentmindedly picks up one of MAYOR FLO’S fishing rods.) Oh, we may not be as sophisticated as you, but we appreciate the little things that make each day worth living, and we know we can count on our neighbors whenever we need help. Can you say that about your neighbors?

TINA: I wouldn’t know. I’ve never met them.

JOE: Goodbye, Miss Tina. I hope you find success. Just not around here.

TINA: You’re going to regret not signing this.

JOE: Probably. But I’d regret signing it even more. (TINA EXITS DOWN RIGHT, oblivious to POLLY.)

VELMA: (ENTERS DOWN RIGHT.) Who was that, Joe? She looked pretty mad.

JOE: Don’t worry. We’re never going to hear from her again.

POLLY: (To herself.) Want to bet? (Closes her notebook and EXITS DOWN RIGHT. BLACKOUT.)

End of Scene Four
MISS CROTCHET: Oh, no, Mr. Ruckus! We can’t cut down the tree. The town charter was signed under that tree.

(MARTHA and ARABELLA ENTER RIGHT and join the hubbub. The TOWNSFOLK are so busy chattering they don’t see WILBUR ENTER LEFT, a cat nestled in his arms.)

MARTHA: Look, Arabella! A crowd! Now stand up straight and smile. You never know when the paparazzi will show up.

GERTIE: I could use my hot air balloon.

MISS CROTCHET: Sure, but once you get up that high, how will you grab the cat?

MAYOR FLO: You could grab him with my fishing net!

ERNIE: What if the balloon floats away?

FRED: We’ll have to tie it to something heavy.

BIG FINN: See! I knew the fire truck would come in handy!

CINDY: (Notices WILBUR with the cat.) Oh, thank you, Wilbur! (Takes the cat, relieved.)

BIG FINN: Wait a minute, Cindy. Is that Mr. Whiskers?

CINDY: It sure is.

BIG FINN: Good job, Wilbur. How did you get him down?

WILBUR: I didn’t. He got so tired of everybody arguing, I think he decided to come down on his own.

TOWNSFOLK: Only in Paradise Junction!

(JOE: (To AUDIENCE.) How did we get this way? Well, it all started 150 years ago, when Jedediah Hornblower founded the town. He took out advertisements in all the big Eastern newspapers. “Get rich quick,” they said. “The streets of Paradise Junction are paved with gold.” Folks streamed in from all over, hoping to strike it rich. The only problem? There was no gold, and that made people mad. In fact, they got so mad, they ran Jedediah out of his own town. Most of the people left after that. But the few that stayed looked around them, and they liked what they saw. No, the streets weren’t paved with gold, but when the sun came over Mount Paradise each morning, it almost looked like they were. And Paradise Creek may not have been made of silver, but when you knelt down and took a big long swig from it, you felt like the world was a treasure box. Yep, people were pretty happy here. At least, they were before the TV folks came…

(BLACKOUT.)

End of Scene One

PRODUCTION NOTES

PROPERTIES ONSTAGE

ACT ONE

Scene One: Town Square set consisting of park benches, fountain, optional trees.

Scene Two: Rise ‘n’ Shine Diner set consisting of stools, counter, oven, landline phone. Also piece of pie on plate, fork, recipe card, doughnuts.

Scene Three: S&S Auto Repair Shop set consisting of two lawn chairs, shop sign.

Scene Four: Mayor’s office set consisting of desk, office chair, pen, fishing rod soil can.

Scene Five: Town Square set.

Scene Six: Rise ‘n’ Shine Diner set, piece of pie on plate, ladle, pot.

Scene Seven: Madame LaRue’s Academy for the Terpsichorean Arts set consisting of an optional barre.

Scene Eight: The Hochelmeiers’ set consisting of kitchen table, chairs, pancakes, plates, and silverware.

Scene Nine: Rise ‘n’ Shine Diner set.

Scene Ten: Town Square set, table with trophy, fork, banner that reads “Paradise Junction Pie-Baking Contest.”

ACT TWO

Scene One: Town Square set, two lawn chairs.

Scene Two: Rise ‘n’ Shine Diner set, pie, plate, fork, can of whipped cream, burnt pie, potholder.

Scene Three: Mayor’s office set, contract.

Scene Four: McGillicuddy Mart set consisting of a sales counter, T-shirts, bumper stickers, coffee cups.

Scene Five: Wink’s dressing room set consisting of dressing table, chair.

Scene Six: Town Square set, shovels.
ACT ONE

Scene One:
Bushel basket with red beach balls (FRED)
Cat (WILBUR)

Scene Two:
Checkbook, pen (HORACE)
Notebook, pen (POLLY)

Scene Four:
Fishing rod (MAYOR FLO)
Document (VELMA)
Plate of pie, fork (JOE)
Contract (TINA)
Notebook, pen (POLLY)

Scene Five:
Newspaper (MISS CROTCHET)

Scene Six:
Towel (JOE)
Newspaper (MISS CROTCHET)
Contract (HORACE)

Scene Seven:
Two spoons (WILBUR)
Cigarette lighter (MARTHA)
Two batons (ARABELLA)
TV camera (NORA)

Scene Eight:
TV camera (NORA)

Scene Nine:
TV (FRED, ERNIE)

Scene Ten:
Pies (TOWNFOLK)
TV camera (NORA)

ACT TWO

Scene One:
Phones, cameras (TOURIST FAMILY)
Phone (MISS CROTCHET)
Phone (LOTTE)
Phone, cat (CINDY)

Scene Four:
Pen, paper (JOE)
Scene Five:
  Makeup kit (WINK)

Scene Six:
  TV camera (NORA)
  Newspaper (WILBUR)
  Bouquet (POLLY)
  Net with fish (MAYOR FLO)

COSTUMES
Although the play takes place in the present, Paradise Junction is a little behind the times, so clothes should have an old-fashioned, country feel. What you shouldn’t do is dress the characters like hillbillies. You might want to individualize some of the characters with costume items reflecting their occupations or interests, but be careful; these are real people, not caricatures.

Specifically, at the end of the play, POLLY wears a wedding dress. MARTHA wears a bathrobe during the pre-recorded scene.

PRE-RECORDED TELEVISION SCENE
The action in ACT ONE, Scene Nine takes place in two locations at the same time: inside the diner and on TV. The action on the TV should be pre-recorded and edited to fit with the live action.

Alternatively, place the TV DOWNSTAGE facing UPSTAGE so that the audience cannot see the screen. In this case, only the audio is then needed as a pre-recorded voiceover.

If creating a pre-recorded video, the lines of dialogue that take place in the McGillicuddys’ kitchen should look identical to the same lines performed in ACT ONE, Scene Eight. Of course, in the video, they are now presented in a different order to misconstrue their meaning. Exterior shots of the town and houses can be taken in an actual neighborhood. The doorway scene between Joe and Martha and the shots of Wink can either be shot on the stage set or in front of an actual house.

FLEXIBLE CASTING
For a smaller cast, the roles of SAM, SAL, and VELMA, as well as TOURIST MOM, TOURIST DAD, and TOURIST GIRL, can be doubled. In addition, several scenes involve large groups of townsfolk. Feel free to reassign lines as needed since it is not always critical which character says which lines. Just make sure the lines fit each character’s personality.

For a larger cast, EXTRA TOWNSFOLK and TOURISTS can be added. Again, feel free to reassign lines to these characters.
We hope you’ve enjoyed this script sample.

We encourage you to read the entire script before making your final decision.

You may order a paper preview copy or gain instant access to the complete script online through our E-view program. We invite you to learn more and create an account at www.pioneerdrama.com/E-view.

Thank you for your interest in our plays and musicals. If you’d like advice on other plays or musicals to read, our customer service representatives are happy to assist you when you call 800.333.7262 during normal business hours.