

Mobile Home, Sweet Home

A two-act comedy

By Pat Cook

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DEDICATION

To my dear friend, Arthur, who gave me the idea for this thing.

STORY OF THE PLAY

“How’d you like to be on television?” This question, posed by future daughter-in-law Anne, takes Loff DuVall by surprise. After all, he and May June had been running the Hampton Court trailer park for more years than either would care to admit. The last thing he’d want now is to be in some reality TV show. In fact, he was hoping he and May June could get away for a while, take a long vacation from the place. He wouldn’t have to listen to Goose Halford’s long stories, such as how his grandpa has a metal plate in his head. “The kids used to catch him asleep and put ‘frigerator magnets on his forehead,” he confides in Loff. Or having to help Lydia Spagway’s grandkid who just got her hand caught in a toilet. Add to this Rhonda DeFalco’s gossip, Vonell Rafferty looking for buried treasure with her metal detector, and Etta Frobisher’s threat to close down his business, he’s really at the end of his rope. But Anne’s idea, coupled with the fact she’s practically engaged to son, Larry, shows Loff a way out. Except that, for the show to succeed, Loff can’t leave! Throw in a conniving producer, a retired lieutenant colonel and everyone showing up looking like run-over hillbillies and Loff or May June just don’t know what’s to become of them, their tenants, or the trailer park. This two-act comedy is full of oddball characters and will have your audience laughing and falling in love with all those at Hampton Court Trailer Park.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 m, 6 w, 4 flexible.)

LAFAYETTE “LOFF” DUVALL: Rather cynical park owner, late 40s.

MAY JUNE DUVALL: Loff’s sweet-natured wife, also late 40s.

GOOSE HALFORD: Likeable but lazy oddball, around 30.

TYRONE “GENERAL” HUNKLE: Retired proper Army officer, mid - 50s.

ANNE CARNEY: Fresh-faced TV copywriter, mid-20s.

LYDIA SPAGWAY: Slightly nervous, 50.

VONELL RAFFERTY: (Flex.) Always looking to hit it big, 28.

RHONDA DEFALCO: May June’s gossipy best friend, 50.

ETTA FROBISHER: Pompous society type, around 50.

EDITH MAXWELL: Etta’s mousy little sister, mid-40s.

LARRY DUVALL: Loff’s son, a business type, mid-20s.

TERI MURDOCK: (Flex.) Wisecracking camera operator.

CARLA BETTIGER: (Flex.) Conniving TV producer, late 30s.

BENEDICT CROWNE: (Flex.) Level-headed network CEO, mid-50s

SETTING

Time: The present, spring.

Place: Courtyard of the office of Hampton Court.

The setting for this rural yarn is the yard in front of the Hampton Court Trailer Park office. The façade of the office, which runs US from SR to SL, is covered with older siding and gives the impression of once being an over-wide mobile home. There is an aluminum door in the center of the office as well as a screen door. This leads to the office itself. There is a screen-less window on this wall SR of the door. On both sides of the door, running along the base of the office, is a garden boasting odds and ends of flora. A placard, now a bit faded, is posted next to the door, which reads: OFFICE HOURS: Monday – Friday: 10 – 5 Saturday: 10 – 2 Sunday: Don't even think about it.

The furniture in front of the office is the usual patio items. A large round table with three folding chairs sits SR while a glider (self-supporting swing) resides SL. On both sides of the glider are two more lawn chairs.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: A lovely spring morning. SFX: Birds are singing and somewhere in the distance country-western music is playing. ANNE enters from SL, looking over the area. She smiles as her eyes fall on the office. She quickly pulls out a pad and pen and begins writing. This serene moment lasts briefly until LOFF opens the office door and yells off.)

LOFF: *(Oblivious to ANNE.)* I'M GOING TO SIT OUT HERE,
IF YOU HAVE TO KNOW EVERYTHING!

MAY JUNE: *(Offstage.)* I just asked where you was going!

(ANNE quickly sprints off SL.)

LOFF: *(Carrying a flyswatter.)* It's where I ALWAYS go ever'
morning, and ever' morning you ask the same dumb thing!

MAY JUNE: Well, I figger you might do something different
for a change, and then I'd drop dead!

(LOFF shuts the door and moves to the round table.)

LOFF: *(To himself.)* Mental note to myself. Next time do
something different. *(Stops, then looks SR.)* FILBERT!

(SFX: Suddenly the country music stops. LOFF then exhales deeply, pulls out a chair and, after placing the flyswatter on the table, pulls out a cruise brochure from his back pocket. He then sits and reads the brochure.)

LOFF: *(Cont'd.)* Finally get a little peace and quiet. People
don't know what I have to put up with.

(The window slides open and MAY JUNE looks out.)

MAY JUNE: I thought you had stuff to take care of in here?
You told me you had a lot to do.

LOFF: I do. Out here.

MAY JUNE: Look, Loff, it's the perfect time to get busy with a few things that need fixing, it being such a nice day and all.

LOFF: Yeah, but it's a nicer day out here.

MAY JUNE: And another thing. When are you going to fix this screen here? *(Indicates the window.)*

LOFF: Woman, you ain't making any sense.

MAY JUNE: How come?

LOFF: I mean you just told me to fix that screen and there ain't no screen there!

MAY JUNE: That's just what I want you to fix! *(Shuts the window.)*

LOFF: That woman is flat crazy, I been telling people for years that woman is crazy. *(Goes back to reading his brochure.)*

(GOOSE enters from SR, carrying a rolled piece of paper.)

GOOSE: Morning, Loff. *(Crosses to LOFF.)*

LOFF: I knew I should'a gone into the back yard. *(Slaps the brochure on the table.)* Morning, Goose.

GOOSE: Nice day, ain't it? *(Pulls up a chair and sits.)*

LOFF: It was.

GOOSE: Aw, heck fire, Loff, don't start in on me like that.

LOFF: You know another way? Oh, good glory! *(Looks up.)* Why me, why is it always me? *(To GOOSE.)* Okay, Goose, what is it THIS time?

GOOSE: Aw, you don't really want to know, do ya?

LOFF: Never stopped you before.

GOOSE: *(Straightens up.)* Well, the thing is we's getting real worried about Grampa.

LOFF: *(Surprised.)* Tin Man? *(Picks up the flyswatter as if he's spotted a fly.)*

GOOSE: Yeah, what with his medical bills and all. Just getting pricey is all.

LOFF: Uh huh. *(Slaps the table with the swatter then looks under it.)* Sorry to hear that.

GOOSE: Appreciate your concern.

LOFF: Say, how'd he ever get that nickname, that "Tin Man"?

GOOSE: Aw, his buddies give him that nickname on account'a all the parts he's had replaced. You know, him being a carpenter all his life and all.

LOFF: Well, I knew about them missing fingers.

GOOSE: Yeah, he lost them three early on, long as I can remember. And a'course he's got that aluminum hip on his left side...and that prosthetic leg on the right. And, uh, that artificial heart thingy...and his glass eye...and that metal plate in his head. And now, the thing is, he's just gotten so old all the warranties has run out on most of him. I mean we had to face the sad fact a few years ago that he's just hard to get parts for.

LOFF: Uh huh.

GOOSE: And now— (*Looks at LOFF*) —he's starting to squeak.

(*LOFF stares at HIM.*)

GOOSE: (*Cont'd.*) I mean it! He walks about the house and it sounds like somebody with bad brakes.

LOFF: Well, why don't you take him to Boston or someplace and get him fixed?

GOOSE: I done told you, we can't afford it. Besides, ain't nobody will let him on a airplane. Heck fire, he can set off a metal detector by just driving into the parking lot.

LOFF: I'd forgot he's got that metal plate in his head.

GOOSE: Oh sure, he's had that for as long as I can remember. Back when they was kids his nieces and nephews used to torment him. (*Leans in to LOFF.*) I ever tell you that story?

LOFF: Naw. What do you mean, they'd torment him?

GOOSE: Well, they'd catch him sleeping on the couch and stick 'frigerator magnets to his head. Then after a hour, hour and a half, he's wake up and he'd have this array of mottoes all across his forehead. (*Indicates his forehead.*) You know, "Things to Do" and "Let a smile be your umbrella." "Visit Carlsbad Caverns."

End of Freeview

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