

MORNINGS WITH JUNE

A comedy in two acts by

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CHARACTERS

3W, 2M

- JUNE TARVELA: W, 30s-40s. Till recently a highly successful radio DJ and programmer. Has returned to her hometown after a series of personal and on-air disasters. She isn't thrilled about it.
- MELANIE BONER: W, Same age as June, who she tormented in middle and high school. Melanie owns several businesses in Agate Cove and loves nothing more than reminding people of it. Has some ego and control issues.
- KYLE PILE: M, June and Melanie's classmate. June's childhood and high school friend. Has also returned home after some personal disasters. Has always had a thing for June.
- WILBERT: M, 50s-60s. Has been running the station and doing most of the work on it for a few years now. Strong "Yoopers" (upper Michigan) accent. Kind-hearted. Devoted to WCOV.
- SALLY TARVELA: W, 60s. June's widowed mother who loves her daughter but has also enjoyed some newfound freedom and hobbies in recent years.

Casting note: Diversity in casting is encouraged! Is it in the rural Midwest? Yes. Are the residents mostly white? Okay, probably. But BIPOC do live in these areas too!

There are also several on-air callers which will need to be recorded.

SETTING

Agate Cove, Michigan.

A small town in Michigan's upper peninsula.

2021.

Most scenes take place in a radio station and Sally's front porch.

Additional scenes take place in a grocery store and a bar.

The set can be as detailed or minimal as necessary.

ACT ONE

Scene One

(Lights up on JUNE. She stands there in her bathrobe, staring out. She has dreaded this day.)

(Her mother SALLY enters another part of the stage. When she talks to June, it's not a conversation happening right now, but a series of recent talks.)

SALLY

Everybody down at the Co-op was talkin' about ya. Our big city DJ is comin' back home! Back to where she started.

I know this ain't one of your big fancy stations, but you'll have half the U.P. listenin', I bet!

Who knows? Maybe you'll even like it.

So ya had a string of bad luck. *(Pause.)* Okay a long chain of bad luck.

Ya gotta start fresh somewhere! Why not your good ol' hometown?

I bought a coffee pot with a timer so you'll have a cuppa Joe waitin' when you get up.

You're gonna do just great, Junebug. Agate Cove won't know what hit 'em!

(Lights out briefly.)

(Lights up on June, glum, sans bathrobe, dressed for work.)

(She forces an "on" smile. If you didn't know her, you'd assume it was genuine.)

JUNE

Stay tuned for Mornings with June on 103.9 WCOV-FM Agate Cove.

(Her smile freezes for a moment, then quickly fades.)

(Lights out.)

ACT ONE
Scene Two

(Lights up on WCOV-FM. WILBERT sits at the radio station's console. The console is nothing fancy, definitely an old model. The station has no separate offices for its tiny staff, just a couple of desks where the business of running a radio station gets done. The décor might include posters from local events, high school athletics calendars, an American flag and a State of Michigan flag. The console overlooks main street of Agate Cove, where just about everyone knows just about everyone.)

(Wilbert is the General Manager, General Sales Manager, Traffic Manager, Business Manager and currently the main host/producer of the station's morning show, such as it is.)

(Wilbert is currently on the air.)

WILBERT

(Reading) ... For a decade or so, Helmi (HEL-mee) hosted a weekly cooking segment on Peninsula Today. Known best for her bread and baking skills, she shared her special recipes and even wrote a cookbook of her favorites. Proceeds went to her beloved nonprofit “Daughters of Finland,” which provides social resources for Finnish-American ladies.

(Off-script) ... Oh, geez. Anyone remember Peninsula Today? That show ran on channel 4 outta Pinevale for ages. I never knew Helmi too good, but I remember those segments. I think it was called “Someone’s in the keittio (KAY-tey-uh) with Helmi.” Keittio’s Finnish for kitchen. Anyways, Helmi would always be wearing an apron with a funny saying. Like a play on words about bread and baking. Like “North, Yeast, South, West.” Or “It’s a bird! It’s a plane! It’s SOUP-ercook. As in S-O-U-P.”

(June enters. Wilbert waves as he talks. She observes.)

(Wilbert laughs a second or two longer than he should.)

... Where was I? *(Finds his place in script)* Oh, yah. Helmi Paakola (PAW-kuh-luh) passed away in her sleep in her home. She was 92. Helmi is survived by five children, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Miami. *(Pause)* Wait, that can’t be right.

(June looks on, stunned. This is terrible radio.)

Oh, yah. I guess that’s her name. And, let’s see ... 20 grandchildren. Wow. In lieu of flowers, the family has asked for donations to Daughters of Finland ... *(strains to read for a second)* ...or, what’s that say ... in Helmi’s name. Services will be held Saturday at 3 at Wykowski Funeral Home in Boggsville. *(Pause)* Or the Humane Society! ... You can donate in Helmi’s name to the Humane Society.

(Wilbert presses a button. Organ music plays.)

(cont'd) Well, that's it for today's obituaries. Brought to you by Dick Johnson's Rod and Reel. And our friends at Mel's Grocery Hub, where ground beef fresh from Kleppy Farms is on sale. From Kleppy's pasture to his meatgrinder right to your plate. That's fresh.

(June stares. How has she ended up here?)

(Wilbert stops the music and looks out.)

Nice day out today. Oh, who's that? *(Waves)* Herbie Tucker just walked by. Looks like he got new swampers. Must be headed out for some fishin'. First day of the season! I hope they're bitin', Herbie! Time for tunes before we start our all new morning show, coming up here at 9. Going back to the 60s with this one from Jerry Lewis and the Playboys. Jerry Lewis?

JUNE

(At a loss, whispers) ... Gary. It's Gary Lewis and the ...

WILBERT

What's that? Gary Lewis. Oh, yah. Right. Well, here she comes! Fire in the hole!

(Music starts up full for a second or two. Wilbert brings it down.)

(Wilbert removes his earphones and swivels to face her.)

Well, good mornin'! You June?

JUNE

That's me.

WILBERT

I'm Wilbert. We talked on the phone. I'm General Manager. Business Manager. General Sales Manager. Traffic Manager. Account Executive. Morning show host and producer.

JUNE

Good to meet you, Wilbert. You sure wear a lot of hats.

WILBERT

(Confused) No, I tend to rotate between three. *(Adjusts cap.)*

JUNE

What I meant was ... um, you've been doing this solo for a while then.

WILBERT

Ever since Marie left last year. She was our big star.

JUNE

Marie Keskinen (KES-kih-nen)? Right?

WILBERT

The same. 40 years she hosted her show. I was just along for the ride. 30 years I was her co-host. Now it's just me. Well, till today.

JUNE

I thought she'd host her show till the day she died.

WILBERT

Well, fame brings a lot of pressure. She's beachin' it up in Florida with her sisters now. Good for her, I say. She owns the station but she's pretty hands-off. We're a small outfit.

JUNE

Yeah. So how about a quick lay of the land here, Wilbert? Are there other staff members? Offices upstairs?

WILBERT

What you see is pretty much what you get. See that desk in the corner? That's the business desk. I do all my general manager and business stuff there. This one here? This is where I do sales stuff. Talking to our advertisers and whatnot. See? We got a landline here and everything.

JUNE

Where should I work?

WILBERT

Right here at the console. It ain't a fancy set-up but she still gets us out on the air...

JUNE

But is there a place I can do show prep and writing?

WILBERT

Show prep? I usually just go off the cuff. Now that you mention it, Marie used to make a list of things to talk about.

JUNE

Let's um, do that from now on. I have a rough rundown sketched out, some ideas. For today.

WILBERT

Need a tutorial on the board here?

JUNE

I've worked them all, Wilbert. Some of the biggest stations I've worked at still had equipment older than this.

WILBERT

That's right. You're an old pro.

JUNE

I was, yeah. Anyway, so we're on from 9 to noon, right? Who's on after us?

WILBERT

Oh, that's me. I'm on from noon to 4. That's when Joe Tanner comes in. He's on from 4 to 7, then we switch to a national feed. I do the business work from 4 till whenever I get hungry.

JUNE

Wait. What? How early do you start?

WILBERT

Oh, I'm an early riser. I take over when the overnight feed is up. 5:30.

JUNE

You're working 12, 14 hour days? Wilbert, that's insane.

WILBERT

(Exhausted) It's a living.

JUNE

How 'bout I do the heavy lifting on the show? Sound good? You produce. We'll see how we work together. Okay?

WILBERT

Yah. Sounds good.

JUNE

(Sits at console, this is clearly her zone) Okay, so here's what I have as a rough rundown for this morning. I'll do a quick intro, thank you for holding down the fort, and then I'll read some news. What's your news source?

WILBERT

News source?

JUNE

Never mind. I subscribe to the AP on my phone. I took notes earlier on the big stories. We'll do national first, state ... looks like the wolf hunt is still a big topic, huh? The governor made a big property tax announcement ... local news? Is there any?

WILBERT

(Seated at other side of console) Ah. Well, there was a barn fire. Whole volunteer fire department put it out.

JUNE

Oh, wow. Local hero stories are great. When did it happen?

WILBERT

About two weeks ago.

JUNE

Not really news then. Hmm. Did you say someone was going fishing earlier?

WILBERT

That's news?

JUNE

Well, no. But fishing season has started? Today? That's a story. Okay. Then we'll go to break and maybe take some calls on the wolf hunt story. Can you manage the phones? Good. Any advertising live reads? Endorsements we need to cover?

WILBERT

Oh, yah. When you get a chance, you oughta read some plugs for our sponsors.

JUNE

Absolutely. You have copy points for me?

WILBERT

Um ...

JUNE

(Putting headphones on) How about if you do the sponsor reads for today. I'll ... take notes. I'll cue you. Sound good?

(Wilbert nods, puts his headphones on.)

Let's go.

(The end of a classic oldies pop song fades up, then out.)

Good morning, Agate Cove. It's a beautiful sunny morning in Upper Michigan. Last I looked, the temp was 50 degrees and it looks like it will get up to about 65 today on this gorgeous first day of fishing season. My name is Junie T, your new morning show host here on WCOV-FM. Coming at you with my trusty producer Wilbert here with the latest news and local flavor.

Ready for the morning, Wilbert?

WILBERT

(A little in awe) Huh? Oh! Yah! Ready for the morning!

(Lights out. Then back up. 20 minutes later.)

JUNE

We want to hear your thoughts on the state's decision to once again allow wolf hunting now that wolves are no longer considered endangered. So give Wilbert a call here at the station.

(Brief moment of silence.)

It's a controversial topic, with strong views on both sides. Wilbert here is on phones. Let's talk.

(Wilbert's cell phone rings. He points to it.)

Give us a call on the station line. That's 884-5554.

(Wilbert's cell rings again.)

(Lights out. Back up. 15 minutes later.)

CALLER/CLIFF

(VO) So anyway, them buggers ate my chickens. Every last one. And I know there's other farmers in the area who lost more than that. So yah. I don't feel a bit bad about cullin' the dang wolf herd.

JUNE

Well, thank you for your thoughts, Cliff. Fair points to be sure. Anything else you want to add?

CALLER/CLIFF

(VO) Yah. Hey, Wilbert. You comin' bowlin' this Saturday?

WILBERT

Oh, heck yah, Cliff! I'll be there!

JUNE

(She silently but physically sighs) Moving on ...

(Lights out. Back up. An hour or so later.)

WILBERT

Brought to you by Bonnie's Antiques and Treasures. Located on Perch Street. Bonnie's is also where your high schooler can order their customized class ring. Ya know I didn't know kids still did that. Back when I was in school, I gave my class ring to my first girlfriend Doris and wouldn't ya know, she lost it. Then she had the nerve to break up with me and say ...

(June gives him an impatient signal to speed up.)

(Wilbert just talks faster.)

She said she was pretty sure she lost it in Bobby Jorgenson's truck. Anyways, Bonnie's Antiques and Treasures. Also brought to you by Mel's Grocery, where ground beef from Kleppy's Farm is on sale...

(June slumps in her chair.)

(Lights out. Back up.)

JUNE

That's going to do it for me today. My thanks to Wilbert for ... running the board. Thanks for the warm welcome back to Agate Cove. It's gonna be ... just great. This is Junie T out for WCOV-FM. Have a great day.

(June removes her headphones.)

WILBERT

Mind if I give you a few notes?

(Lights out.)

ACT ONE
Scene Three

(Lights up. Two days later. An afternoon live remote at Mel's Grocery store. June stands at a table with a WCOV-FM sign and station swag.)

(June nods and gives a slight wave to passersby.)

(June checks the time on her phone and dials.)

JUNE

Hey, Wilbert. Ready to do the first callback? There's two, right? What do you mean, maybe three? It's pretty standard to know that ... okay. Sure. Play it by ear. Ready for this one?

(Pause.)

3, 2 ... That's right, Wilbert. It's a busy day here at Mel's Grocery on Business Highway 35 Agate Cove. Lots of friendly people have already come by to say hi. Lots of really helpful feedback on the show. I've had a few requests for bringing back Radio Bingo? You'll have to fill the new kid in on that, Wilbert.

Mel's Grocery is your local center for all your grocery needs and more. This week Mel is running a special on ground beef fresh from Kleppy's Farm. *(Reading, unimpressed)* You've heard of farm to table? How about farm to grinder straight to your plate?

I sure hope there's a pan in there somewhere.

(MELANIE enters and observes.)

(June notices her and tenses up a little.)

Kleppy's Farm ground beef is just three-seventy-five a pound, a steal for this quality of beef. Just in time to get your grill out for the season.

Mel's Grocery is your grilling headquarters. Wondering what to do with all that fresh rainbow trout you just caught? There's nothing like trout on the grill. Mel's Grocery has all you need, charcoal, lighter fluid, matches, propane. You name it.

I'm Junie T and I'm here until 3. That rhyme was not intentional. I'd love to meet you. We have some awesome WCOV prizes on hand for anyone who pops by. Mel's Grocery on Business Highway 35, Agate Cove. Back to you, Wilbert.

All good, Wilbert?

Yeah. See you later.

(June hangs up. Tense smiles all around.)

(These two are not friends.)

MELANIE

Nice job, June.

JUNE

Melanie, hello. Nice of you to stop by.

MELANIE

Oh, it's the least I can do. This is my store.

JUNE

You're Mel. Got it.

MELANIE

Truth be told, I own a few businesses in town. There's this one, the souvenir shop, the flower shop, Melanie's Diner. I'm also both Ms in M and M Plumbing.

JUNE

Wow. You've built a regular EM-pire for yourself.

MELANIE

I like to keep busy. Especially now that the kids are gone.

JUNE

Gone?

MELANIE

One's in college. The other's in the Navy. That's what I get for starting so gosh darn young. How many kids did you say you have?

JUNE

I didn't ... I don't ...

MELANIE

Oh, I'm so sorry. Are you still married?

JUNE

Divorced. Twice.

MELANIE

Of course you are. I knew that. Sorry to ask. You'll probably see me around quite a bit. I'm the station's biggest advertiser. I see it as a little "side investment," ya know?

JUNE

Is that so?

MELANIE

I feel a kind of responsibility. At this point if I pulled my support the station would be down the toilet faster than Drano on a hair clog. *(She laughs.)*

(June laughs uncomfortably.)

MELANIE

So tell me about you, Miss Radio Star. What have you really been up to? I mean, I've only heard rumors and you know what those are worth.

JUNE

Rumors?

MELANIE

Oh, you know how little towns are. People talk. I mean one day your name came up and I heard your second husband left you and you were bankrupt. The next I heard you lost your big radio job because you had a little hissy fit on the air. Then I heard your mom had to talk you into moving back home so you could regain your senses a little. You know. Talk.

JUNE

Yeah. Talk.

MELANIE

I'll tell you this. High school never ends. No matter where we go, what we do. In your hometown's eyes, we are still locked in time. Forever.

JUNE

I should get ready for my next callback.

MELANIE

Of course. I just wanted to come and say hi. I'm so glad there's some new blood at that radio station. I have big ideas but that Wilbert just doesn't want to listen. I plan to pop by later this week. I'll see you then.

JUNE

See you then.

MELANIE

Oh, by the way, what a cute top! Did you get that on the clearance rack at Walmart? It really suits you.

(Melanie exits.)

(June, self-conscious, wraps her jacket around her top.)

(Lights out.)

ACT ONE
Scene Four

(Lights up on Sally. Friday evening. She is in a bathrobe, having recently come out of the sauna. She sits on her front steps and pours a beer.)

(Sally soaks in the sounds. Birdsong, a lone vehicle rumbling by. She looks up at the sky.)

(June enters, joining her. June looks a little more relaxed, fresh out of the sauna. Note Finnish pronunciation common in the U.P., SOW-nuh)

SALLY

You look five years younger, Junebug.

JUNE

Thanks?

SALLY

Nothin' like a good sauna (SOW-nuh) to burn off a little stress.

JUNE

That was heavenly. What made you decide to fix up the old sauna?

SALLY

I missed it! All the bones were still there. It just needed some TLC. And a new stove and chimney.

JUNE

I never understood why Dad let it go.

SALLY

When woodstove went kaput, he just never got around to replacing it. We just let it go. Life, eh?

JUNE

Downright poetic.

SALLY

Want a beer?

JUNE

Yes, please.

(Sally starts to pour a glass of beer.)

Mom, bottle's fine. I don't need a glass.

SALLY

I'm pourin' a glass. It tastes better in a glass!

JUNE

Oh, it does not! What's the difference?

SALLY

(Continuing to pour) Listen, smarty. 70 percent of beer's flavor comes from the aroma. Your nose can't take it in when you're drinkin' from a bottle. Plus, pouring the beer releases carbonation which forms the head of your beer. Every time those little bubbles in the foam pop, it releases C-O-2, enhancing the aroma even more.

(Sally hands June a glass of beer.)

JUNE

Listen to you.

SALLY

Heck yah, listen to me. It also reduces beer bloat.

JUNE

Oh, stop. It does not.

SALLY

Know how I said pouring it reduces C-O-2? Well, that means there's less gas in your gut. Now, here, Snarky-pants. *(Raises glass.)* A toast.

JUNE

(Glass up) What are we toasting?

SALLY

Your first week on the job! How ya feelin'?

JUNE

How much beer do you have?

SALLY

That good, eh?

JUNE

Oh my god. Every rule of good radio I've ever learned ... just utterly dismissed. Wilbert's overworked and flying by the seat of his pants. And whole obituaries on the radio? The same people call every day and every day we have to tell them to turn their radio down because of the feedback.

SALLY

Think you'll ever bring back radio bingo?

JUNE

What IS that?

SALLY

I think it's self-explanatory. You set up your bingo cards. Wilbert calls out numbers on the air. When someone gets a bingo, they call in and win a prize.

JUNE

Bingo numbers on the radio?

SALLY

What'd ya think radio bingo was?

JUNE

I thought I had to be wrong! So half an hour of/

SALLY

/an hour.

JUNE

An hour! A full hour of "B ... 6. O ... 14." Really?

SALLY

It was a lot of fun. Some people got really into it. My friend Joyce won a free night's stay at the casino.

JUNE

Oh my god. Kill me.

SALLY

(Suddenly serious) Don't you talk like that.

JUNE

Mom. It's okay. I'll buck up. It's ... temporary. This is a restart. Get some money saved. Keep

(cont'd) my chops intact. Build my courage back up.

SALLY

I've seen you go through so much these last few years. I don't wanna see you so down again.

JUNE

It wasn't a joyride for me either.

SALLY

(Trying to change the mood) Ya know I bump into Carrie sometimes. She always asks about ya. Youse two were good friends.

JUNE

Carrie's a good person.

SALLY

Maybe you could see what she's up to. Instead of hangin' with me on a Friday night.

JUNE

And miss my lessons on beer consumption? Perish the thought, Mother. How'd you get to know so much about beer anyway?

SALLY

Well, I kinda had the hots for this guy. His name was Glenn and he was a big craft brew guy.

JUNE

Do I want to hear this?

SALLY

Not much to hear. I set my cap for Glenn and signed up for a craft beer enjoyment class at the senior center 'cause I heard he was takin' it.

JUNE

Really? Did you go out with him?

SALLY

Nah. He took a shine to Shirley. They're an item now.

JUNE

I'm sorry, Mom.

SALLY

It's okay. I took a shine to good beer! Thought about tryin' to make home brew. Is that crazy?

JUNE

You making home brew? Yeah, maybe a little crazy.

SALLY

Seems a little complicated. Would you help me if I bought the stuff?

JUNE

(Assuming this will never happen) Sure. Why not?

SALLY

Alright. Maybe I'll do it then. What I was sayin' about callin' Carrie ...

JUNE

Mom, we were good friends a long time ago. But who knows how much we even have in common anymore, you know?

SALLY

She was the first person here, droppin' off food and a hug, when your dad died a few years ago. That's an always-friend. People might change, but them bonds don't.

Anyway, I haven't seen or heard you talk to any of your friends. Not your college pals. Not your radio buddies. You ain't even on Facebook anymore. Does anyone even know you're here?

JUNE

Mom! Crawling back to my hometown and living with you. Starting all over at the crudest radio station I've ever heard. Because my finances are so screwed that my eight-bucks-an-hour amateur hour job is a blessing. I was the number one DJ in Cincinnati and I had a shot at syndication. I was just starting to really break. The National Broadcasters Association Award I won for programming? Nobody cares. I'm a joke.

SALLY

You ain't a joke.

JUNE

It's just not a very funny one.

(A little silence here is okay.)

And before I find a friend, what I need is a goddamn producer.

SALLY

What about the guy who runs it? Wilbert?

JUNE

Wilbert needs a break. He needs to be the general manager. And I need a producer I can count on to not make bowling dates live on the air. I'll even train someone. Wilbert says the station can afford it, they just haven't tried.

SALLY

Wanna hire me? I'm kiddin'! Plenty of beer here, by the way. It's a craft beer outta Pinevale.

JUNE

It's good. Ugh, you know who I saw this week? And will see more of? Melanie Bingman.

SALLY

Oh, geez. That little snot. Acts like she owns half the town.

JUNE

She practically does! And she's the station's biggest advertiser.

SALLY

Watch out for that one. She's a sneaky little shit. Course I never got over how she treated you in school.

JUNE

I'll just have to suck it up.

SALLY

Don't let her push you around. By the way, Bingman ain't her last name anymore. *(She chuckles.)*

JUNE

I know she's married. What is it?

SALLY

Boner. Who says God don't have a sense of humor?

JUNE

Melanie BONER? Maybe there is justice in the world.

(They toast.)

(Lights out.)

ACT ONE
Scene Five

(A couple weeks later. Morning. Wilbert is running the board and at this moment he is not on air.)

(He sips coffee and looks out the front window peacefully for a moment.)

(Oldies music is playing. Wilbert takes this opportunity to practice his “radio voice.” Actor playing Wilbert—have some fun with this.)

WILBERT

It’s 8:32 here on WCOV-FM.

It is 8:32 (TER-dee-too) in the A-M here on WCOV-FM.

Comin’ atcha from WCOV-FM, this is Wilbert da Wildman. Broadcastin’ live from downtown Agate Cove.

It is 8:32 ... ope! Make that 8:33 in the mornin’ on WCOV-FM.

(He realizes the song is almost done and he adjusts quickly.)

Well, shoot.

(On-air, normal voice) Well, good mornin’. It’s ... 8:33 *(rustling papers)* and it sure is a purdy mornin’ here in Agate Cove. Comin’ up we got some news and music and today’s obituaries.

(Melanie enters. They wave to each other.)

Then comin’ up at 9 it’s our mornin’ show with Junie T. Wonder what we’re gonna talk about today. Oh, that’s right! Ahh ... let me look at the rundown here. *(This takes a little too long.)* Ah, let’s see what she got planned ...

(Melanie rolls her eyes.)

Oh! Yah! We’re gonna talk about industry in the U.P. and what’s keepin’ businesses from bringin’ more jobs our way. That’ll be a spicy topic, I bet.

We’ll be back with news and music after this.

(Wilbert adjusts and removes his headphones.)

WILBERT

Mornin', Melanie.

MELANIE

Good morning, Wilbert. When's June comin' in?

WILBERT

I suspect she'll be here any minute. She usually rolls in around quarter to.

MELANIE

Well, good. It's mainly you I wanted to talk to. Oh, and I've got your check right here. This is a pretty big chunk this month since I got Kleppy's Farm to co-op some of my grocery ads.

WILBERT

Well, as always ... thank you for your business, Melanie. What would we do without ya?

MELANIE

Yes. I know. That brings me to some business we should discuss. How are things goin' with June?

WILBERT

Pretty good, I think. This ain't exactly her cup o' tea after all them big city radio stations. She definitely don't approve of the way we do things here. Get this. She thinks we should cut the mornin' obituaries.

MELANIE

Oh, dear. We'd have a revolt on our hands.

WILBERT

Well. I dunno. I thought so too, but then I got to thinkin' and I figured who listens unless they got a loved one who just died? I mean, who's sittin' there waitin' to see who died this week.

MELANIE

We have a tight-knit community and most of them are seniors, Wilbert. You know that.

WILBERT

Yah. Might not hurt us to change a thing or two though.

MELANIE

You know I had, still have, my reservations about June. She's a loose cannon, Wilbert. Did you hear what happened? I mean it even made some of the national news. She lost her mind on the air! Her show was number one until her marbles got loose! She was always an odd duck, even back in school. But now. Loose cannon. Don't let her call the shots.

WILBERT

Well. She didn't get as far as she got without knowin' a thing or two about radio.

MELANIE

Don't wanna see you get crushed by a cannonball, Wilbert.

WILBERT

At the end of the day, I'm still general manager, ya know. I'm still her boss.

MELANIE

That's right. Now ... I have some ideas I wanna talk about again. As the station's biggest investor, and a community leader, I think I deserve a bigger presence on this station.

WILBERT

You want more ads?

MELANIE

No. I think the community would like to hear one of their leaders—a mover and shaker—talking about what's happening in the area. We can have a recipe swap like Marie used to do. Bring back radio bingo. We could do a grandchild spotlight where people can have their grandbabies talk on the air—wouldn't that be fun? It's something for everyone!

WILBERT

A mover and a shaker, eh? Who, ya thinkin'?

MELANIE

Me, Wilbert! I'm talking about me.

WILBERT

Still got an interest in being on the radio then, eh? Ah ... well. It's a lotta work. You already run a bunch of businesses. You got time? And ya gotta have a ... I dunno. People gotta like ya.

MELANIE

People like me! I'm NICE! Let's face it, Wilbert. You can't keep workin' all hours at this station. And that June is already upsettin' the apple cart with her ideas. She cut down the hunter's roundup to a two-minute segment. How are people gonna find out where the partridge are?

WILBERT

I been in this a while, Melanie. It looks easy. But ... ah, can ya let me think about it? And ah, figure out how, ah, we might use your ... talents.

(June enters.)

MELANIE

Look who's here! Good morning, sunshine! Must be nice to have a job where ya get to sleep in every day.

JUNE

Melanie Boner! Good morning!

MELANIE

I was just talking some business with Wilbert here. I better scoot. We got a new shipment of toilets coming into the plumbery.

JUNE

Potty time.

MELANIE

(Insincere) So funny. Have a super day!

(Melanie exits.)

JUNE

How are you, Wilbert? You look a little worse for wear this morning.

WILBERT

Nah, I'm just fine. That Melanie ... she likes to throw her weight around.

JUNE

She always has.

WILBERT

Well, I s'pose we oughta get this show on the road, eh?

JUNE

Hey, Wilbert. Have you thought any more about my producer idea? I mean, I think that would take a huge load off you. And even if it's 20 hours a week.

WILBERT

Yah. We could swing it. Where you gonna find someone who'd wanna drive to Agate Cove for a part time job though?

JUNE

There's gotta be someone we could train. I mean high school students learn to produce. I was 18 years old in college and producing radio.

WILBERT

I guess we could put an ad in the paper ...

JUNE

Let's think a little bigger, eyes on the prize, right?

(Kyle enters. June turns around.)

KYLE

June Tarvela.

JUNE

Kyle Pile. *(A pleasant surprise)* Hi!

KYLE

I'm here to pick up a prize for my mom. She won pies for life.

WILBERT

Oh, yah! Boy, that was a while ago. Here! Lemme dig out the certificate!

(Wilbert goes and rifles through his various desks through the following.)

KYLE

She doesn't get around too much anymore, so it was hard for her to get over here. And she's always paranoid things will get lost in the mail.

JUNE

Are you ... home? It's been ages.

KYLE

My mom had a few health scares and well, she's old. I had some ... time on my hands. So I'm here taking care of her for a while.

JUNE

It's really good to see you.

KYLE

I've been listening to your show.

JUNE

Stop bragging.

KYLE

(Whispering) It's already an improvement.

JUNE

That's very nice of you. Thank you.

(Wilbert finds the certificate.)

WILBERT

Ah! Here we go!

(He brings the certificate to Kyle.)

Technically it's only pie for a year, but what are ya gonna do?

KYLE

That's fine. She can't even eat pie, but ... it's a "major award."

WILBERT

Well, shoot. It's just about time, June.

JUNE

Well, if you need a place to unload it, I am a fan of pie. *(Awkward.)* I better get on the air.

KYLE

See ya, June.

(Kyle exits. June sits at the console. We see her watch Kyle walk past.)

JUNE

Good morning, Agate Cove. I'm Junie T. and if I'm not mistaken, I think I saw a robin this morning. I think spring might just be here to stay.

(Lights out.)

ACT ONE
Scene Six

(Sally's front step. Evening. A couple days later.)

(Sally sips contentedly from a tall glass as she reads a book by porchlight.)

(June joins her, also carrying a glass.)

JUNE

This is delicious, Mom.

SALLY

I tried black tea this time. *(Sipping)* Isn't that nice?

JUNE

It is. When did you get into kombucha?

SALLY

I saw 'em talkin' about it on Dr. Oz one day. Lots of health benefits, ya know? I'm gettin' up there. I need all the help I can get.

JUNE

What are you reading?

SALLY

It's a book on craft beer.

JUNE

(Reading cover) How to brew beer at home. You're still thinking about it, huh?

SALLY

You can help me. Sounds complicated. The yeast and the mash and the fermentation and whatnot. And they keep talkin' about a carboy. What the heck is a carboy?

JUNE

(Shrugging) Google it.

(They sip their teas while Sally searches on her phone.)

(Kyle enters. He carries a pastry box.)

Hey, June. KYLE

Kyle Pile. Oh, my heavenly days. SALLY

Hi. KYLE

Hey. JUNE

It's kombucha night, Kyle. Can I get you some? SALLY

Kombucha night? KYLE

Wednesday. JUNE

Sure. KYLE

(Rising.) Okay then. I'll be back in a flash. SALLY

(Sally enters the house.)

Every night of the week is a special beverage night. Monday is smoothie night. Tuesday is soda stream night. You get the idea. JUNE

No beer night? KYLE

That's Friday. JUNE

Of course. *(Hands her the box)* Here. KYLE

JUNE

Oh my god. Is this pie?

KYLE

It is. Now, I can't speak to the freshness of it. Turns out pie for life is how Donny unloads his days-old stuff.

JUNE

It's apple rhubarb. Thank you. Do you want some?

KYLE

I'm good.

(Sally comes back out with a glass of kombucha for Kyle.)

SALLY

Here's your kombucha, Kyle. I bet your mom is so glad to have you home. I've gotten used to having this one around. It's not so bad, sharin' the house again.

(June is slightly offended.)

KYLE

It's hard to say. I think I get in her way.

SALLY

I'm sure that's not true.

KYLE

No, I mean literally. It's tight quarters in that house and she's got a walker now so it's like I'm constantly in her way. She likes the help around the house but she also hates the way I do things.

SALLY

You're a good kid, Kyle. Hey, I'm headin' in. Gonna keep googlin' to see where the heck I can buy a carboy. 'Night Junebug.

(Sally heads inside.)

KYLE

Carboy?

JUNE

She wants to take up home-brewing.

KYLE

Wow. That's pretty great, actually. Wish my mom would get a hobby. Besides word search.

JUNE

Parents.

Thanks for the pie.

I was so surprised to see you walk into the station the other day. Like, a good surprise.

KYLE

How are you liking being back?

JUNE

Next question.

KYLE

How long do you think you'll be here?

JUNE

I don't know. I'm kind of starting over. Just getting through this moment, I guess. Maybe I'll end up changing careers—or maybe the dust will settle and I'll try to hold my head up in the bigger markets again.

KYLE

I've only heard rumors, so ...

JUNE

Here's the abridged version. I got into some financial trouble. My first husband left me because he hated all the moving around. That's the business, you know? It's how you move up. So I was still in a tizzy when I met my second and I just blew it. Was living like a rock star and I made some really stupid business decisions. Went bankrupt. Second husband left me. My dad died. I was a mess. Then one day I'm on the air, in Cinci. My show's about to be syndicated in like six markets. Normal day. News break. I was handed the wrong news story and I caught it halfway through—like it was old news and it was obviously from the previous day. And stuff like that can happen, but I just started crying—like a full-body sob—and I couldn't stop. On the air.

After that, everything kind of happened around me. I barely remember my next steps. Somehow I got here, sleeping in my old twin bed. Working for minimum wage at a radio station that doesn't think twice about personal phone calls live on the air.

To top it all off, I have to deal with Melanie Bingham. Excuse me (*with glee*) Melanie Boner. Sorry, she makes me thirteen again.

KYLE

It's a funny name.

JUNE

Anyway. My life's not in the shitter at all. Let's talk about you. Give me a recap.

KYLE

I got divorced a few years back too. It was messy. She went back to her old boyfriend, who's our kid's—Jacy's—biological dad. Jacy was like my own. I raised her for five years. I tried to get at least some kind of custody. Spent all kinds of money on lawyers. I lost. My ex said I could take Jacy for a weekend here and there though. Poor kid doesn't understand—it was so hard. My ex and I had this big fight because I didn't like some of the things I was hearing. I wanted to know if they were true. I heard he was a big partier, an abusive jerk. I asked my ex about it and she said I couldn't see Jacy anymore, and he came home and said I was trying to break up their family. That I'd turned Jacy against him. So I did a stupid thing—I punched him in the face. They called the cops. I had to stay away. I got depressed and missed a bunch of work and lost my job. I wasn't sure what else to do. I'm not Jacy's dad so I have no real rights.

My mom needs some help around the house. So here I am.

Life's going just great for me!

(They laugh.)

JUNE

I'm sorry.

KYLE

Yeah.

JUNE

Know what I just thought of?

KYLE

What's that?

JUNE

Physics club.

KYLE

You had no business being in Physics Club.

JUNE
I tried!

KYLE
You just wanted the trip to Great America.

JUNE
Lies.

KYLE
When we had to build a model rollercoaster? I totally carried you.

JUNE
I thought the car needed a longer running start before the loop-de-loop thing.

KYLE
What it needed was gravity and momentum.

JUNE
What about the egg drop? We won third place in the physics Olympiad.

KYLE
There were only three competitors. And the judges just missed—or overlooked out of pity—the crack in the egg.

JUNE
Great America was fun. So ... thank you.

KYLE
You're welcome.

JUNE
Confession: I only joined Physics Club because of Dirk Nester.

KYLE
You don't say.

JUNE
Was it that obvious?

KYLE
You've heard of poker face?

JUNE
Yes.

KYLE
You're more of a Crazy Eights face.

JUNE
Crazy eights. That sounds about right.

(A nice moment of comfort and friendship. It feels good to laugh.)

I guess I owe you.

KYLE
Big time.

(June has an idea.)

JUNE
Hey ... your mom doesn't necessarily need you full time. Does she?

KYLE
No. I mostly get things off of shelves and fix things.

JUNE
So ... are you looking for a job?

KYLE
I'm open to a job. I'd kind of given up.

JUNE
Would you like to be my producer?

KYLE
(Pause. Shrug.) Sure.

JUNE
Good. Let's give it a try.

(They laugh.)

(Lights out.)

ACT ONE
Scene Seven

(Two weeks later. June and Kyle are on the air. They have found a groove.)

JUNE

Once again we're talking this morning about tourism opportunities in the area. With larger employers not setting roots in or near Agate Cove, are there other ways we could be using our assets to draw new money to the community?

We'd love to hear your thoughts. We'll open up the phone line here in just a moment after a brief commercial break.

(Kyle adjusts the controls. He grins at June.)

KYLE

It's your favorite.

WILBERT (V.O.)

When nature calls ...

(SOUND: Wolf howl)

You need a toilet that works.

(June and Kyle crack up.)

(SOUND: Toilet flushes)

Don't let that cranky piece of porcelain stop up what needs to go down. If you're using a plunger every time you flush, maybe it's time to call M and M Plumbing. M and M Plumbing has the latest in low-flow, high-efficiency toilets. Waste less water and less time plunging.

JUNE

Gross.

WILBERT (V.O.)

Your low-flow toilet gets you a hundred-dollar rebate from the government to boot!

(June and Kyle lip sync parts of the V.O.)

When you gotta go, but it won't go down, go to M and M Plumbing, Agate Cove.

(cont'd) When nature calls ...

(SOUND: Coyotes yipping)

You'll be glad you called us.

(Kyle takes down the audio on next ad.)

JUNE

Maybe we should see if Wilbert would like some help producing spots.

KYLE

I think your favorite person is coming in today to record some of her own.

JUNE

Melanie? Hide the glassware. It's gonna crack.

KYLE

I suggested it to Wilbert. He's on like every other ad. A little variety couldn't hurt.

JUNE

Yeah, yeah. Maybe voicing her own ads will keep her off Wilbert's back.

(Wilbert enters. There seems to be a slight spring in his step and he seems less rumped than usual.)

WILBERT

Mornin', team!

JUNE

Wilbert, you seem a bit ... bouncier than usual.

WILBERT

It's that extra three hours of sleep I get now! With Kyle here producing the morning show and runnin' the board at sign-on, I don't have to get up with the birds anymore. It's pretty darn nice. I even started thinkin' about a vacation!

JUNE

A vacation! Wow! Where to?

WILBERT

Thought about goin' to visit Marie down in Florida. *(A little solemn)* Sure would be nice to see her again. I'll tell her all about our radio star come home!

KYLE

We're back in five.

JUNE

(On Kyle's cue) And we're back. Good morning, Agate Cove. We want to hear your ideas about tourism in our little town. We have a beach. A great lake. Hiking in the national forest. Campgrounds. Some local business owners are for it. Others are worried. What are your thoughts?

(Kyle signals to June that there's a call.)

Oh, and remember to turn your radio off or way down before you call.

KYLE

This is Jory on line one.

JUNE

We've got Jory on the line. Jory, what do you think about tourism in Agate Cove?

JORY (V.O.)

Hello? Yah, so I'm on the side of the fence that says we gotta keep the tourists out.

JUNE

And why is that, Jory?

JORY (V.O.)

Because once we open ourselves wide to tourists, then more and more of these big chains will wanna open up shop and drive out our small businesses. I mean first it's some tourists comin' to camp and hike and sightsee. Next thing you know we got a McDonald's. And a local diner closes. Then it's a Walmart and there goes half of Main Street.

JUNE

And you think Agate Cove is going to boom that fast if we promote ourselves a little more?

JORY (V.O.)

I'm just sayin' there ain't nothin' wrong with bein' the state's best kept secret is all. Besides, we don't need tourists comin' in and raisin' all kinds of heck.

JUNE

And has that happened before, Jory?

JORY (V.O.)

Oh, sure. There was some reported gang activity a few years back. Coincided with a big music festival goin' on out by the lake.

JUNE

Gang activity in Agate Cove? What happened?

JORY (V.O.)

Some hoodlums knocked over a bunch of oversized flower pots on Main Street. It was a real mess.

JUNE

And you're sure this was tourists?

JORY (V.O.)

Just followin' my gut. Tourists got money, but they can also be up to no good.

KYLE

(Into mic, participating) I think I see one now. June, is that a tourist coming down Main Street?

(They look out the window onto Main Street.)

JUNE

I think you're right, Kyle. Strutting around like a wealthy peacock. Wearing an "Agate Capital of the World" tee shirt. Looking for trouble, you can tell.

KYLE

Call the mayor. Someone better lock up the flower pots. They're coming this way.

JUNE

We do appreciate the call, Jory. And your input.

(Melanie enters. She hovers.)

We want to hear what others have to say. Are you for or against more tourism in Agate Cove?

KYLE

We have Betty on the line.

JUNE

Good morning, Betty. Thanks for calling in. How do you feel about opening our town up to more tourism dollars?

(Betty is a very old caller.)

BETTY (V.O.)

Our little town is just a treasure. With our sparkling water ... our billowing forest ... and millions of agates of every color and shape ...

JUNE

Absolutely, Betty/

BETTY (V.O.)

/It's a treasure, June. We're so very blessed. I understand that some people are afraid of what could happen. And who we could attract. And I just want to say that I think they need to, as my late husband would say, lighten the fuck up ...

JUNE

Betty! Betty! You can't say that word on the radio!

(Kyle gives a 'what do I do' signal.)

(Melanie is in shock.)

(Wilbert races over and does a "cut" motion.)

BETTY (V.O.)

But they say it on the TV all the time. It's always 'fuck this, fuck that.'

JUNE

Betty, I'm sorry, but that's the end of your call.

Well, that was surprising. Friendly reminder, callers. We can't say bad words on the air. And just when we were starting to remember to turn down the radio. If you wouldn't say it in front of your grandmother ... or your grandchild ... you can't say it on the air. If you pardon us, we're going to take a short break.

(Moves mic, removes headset.) And hope the F.C.C. doesn't somehow find out. Jesus.

KYLE

Sorry. I panicked.

MELANIE

Well, I am shocked! How did you let this happen, June? I thought you were the expert in radio. Don't you use those delay thingies they use on Saturday Night Live.

JUNE

Pardon me for not expecting Betty from Agate Cove to drop an F bomb when I asked her about tourism!

MELANIE

Wilbert, this is unacceptable. How could you as general manager let this happen? We have seniors who rely on this station for company. They expect us to have standards.

WILBERT

Melanie, you know well as I do that everyone in town's gonna get one heck of a chuckle about this for a long time to come. It ain't the end of the world.

MELANIE

I don't know if I want to keep my ad dollars here, Wilbert. You have disregarded my input and ideas, even though I am this station's biggest advertiser. And now as a business owner, my reputation is compromised because of the incompetence of your staff.

JUNE

Call me incompetent one more time.

MELANIE

Look at that look in her eyes, Wilbert. I told ya she's a loose cannon!

JUNE

I'm not a loose cannon! No one could have seen that coming!

MELANIE

I thought you were a seasoned pro, June. And this was such a low point for you.

JUNE

I know the radio industry. I know what works and how it works.

MELANIE

Well, then you know it doesn't work at all without advertising dollars, does it? You don't scare me, June Tarvela. You're still the June the Moon as far as I'm concerned.

JUNE

You're still ... a mean girl. The meanest girl!

MELANIE

That is untrue. Wilbert, there's something I think you need to hear.

(Melanie takes out her phone, fiddles with it.)

JUNE

What are you doing?

MELANIE

I am protecting my investments.

(Melanie hits 'play' on her phone, holding it up.)

JUNE (V.O.)

And in national news, Presidential candidate Len Thomas was arrested for drunk driving outside Austin, Texas. Turns out this was Thomas' second O-W-I.

(June listens, stoic.)

Oh. Wait ... My apologies. That was yesterday's news. I'm not sure what happened there. I've got the latest right here. Somewhere ... turns out it was just a man who shares a name AND a strong resemblance to the presidential ... candidate.

(Silence. Followed by a sob.)

I'm so sorry. *(More sobbing)* I don't know what's happening. I can't stop crying. I can't ... move. Someone? My life is a mess. Everything. A complete fucking mess. Sorry.

(We hear a distinct big ugly cry.)

Someone help me. I can't ...

(On the recording, a random pop song starts to play, as if she scrambled to erase what just happened.)

(Awkward silence in the room.)

KYLE

June? You okay?

JUNE

I hadn't actually listened. I was there. That was me. But I hadn't actually ...

MELANIE

Do we want this to happen on our little station? Wilbert? A nervous breakdown complete with another F bomb.

WILBERT

All's I know is June's been doin' a good job here.

MELANIE

I think there needs to be a ... stabilizing force here. How about this? I won't pull my dollars, but I get to be a part of your morning show. And not just some two minute segment. I wanna be a part of it.

WILBERT

I think June should stay.

MELANIE

On a probationary basis, sure. Kyle too. But I want to be co-host.

WILBERT

June? My hands are kinda tied.

JUNE

Who do you think you are? Not just anyone can come in and do this well.

MELANIE

Kyle did!

JUNE

Yes. But being on the air ... filling three hours of airtime with content that's actually worthwhile ... it's work!

MELANIE

Doubt me again, June. I dare you.

(June is defeated, takes a moment.)

JUNE

You have to let me train you.

MELANIE

Of course. Give me a week or so to rearrange my schedule. We'll be in touch! Buh-bye!

(Melanie exits.)

KYLE

We have to get back on the air in a minute. You okay?

JUNE

Let's finish the show.

(June resumes her spot, puts headset back on.)

Guys. Please stop staring at me.

Welcome back, Agate Cove. We are just full of surprises here at WCOV-FM. If your morning coffee didn't wake you, I'm sure Betty did. Looks like we have a beautiful weekend up ahead. It's almost patio season. As always, Mel's Grocery has all your grilling needs and more ...

(End of Act One.)

ACT TWO
Scene One

(Lights up on Sally's porch. June pours herself a beer.)

(It's ten days later. Evening. June is quietly stressing out. Sally eyes June.)

JUNE

Stop watching me.

SALLY

I'm not! I'm just ... lookin' to see if ... makin' sure the beer, ya know ... I mean, I'm not watchin' you.

JUNE

I had a breakdown during a very stressful time. It was a blockbuster—so now everyone's expecting a sequel.

SALLY

I didn't say/

JUNE

/You don't have to.

SALLY

Just sayin'/?

JUNE

/Mom!

SALLY

/That's your third beer! You wanna be on your toes tomorrow. Don't give that Melanie one reason to doubt you.

JUNE

I know. This is it. I just needed to unwind. I'm anxious. I hate the feeling that someone's got it in for me. And she always has.

SALLY

Y'know, I took this workshop at the Senior Center about dealing with conflict. Boy, was that useful. They said no one ever sees themselves as a villain. It can help when you're dealing with a prickly pear to remember they got their reasons, and most of the time, those reasons aren't evil.

JUNE

Why has Melanie always hated me.? It's like we're still 12 years old.

SALLY

Yah. What'd you do to her?

JUNE

What did *I* do *to her*? Breathed the same air? Wore school clothes from K-Mart? I have no idea.

SALLY

Some people are just bullies. Or jealous. But they got their reasons. That's what I learned. Even if those reasons don't make a lot of sense to anyone else.

JUNE

And what's with her owning half the businesses in town? Like, as a woman, I want to think that's kickass. But it's just Agate Cove. It's not Wall Street. It's just Melanie Boner's fiefdom. Who's Mr. Boner, by the way?

SALLY

That's a whole 'nother can of worms. I only heard rumors about that.

JUNE

What are the rumors?

SALLY

I'm not spreadin' gossip. I don't know if it's true.

JUNE

You're just talking to your daughter. That's not gossip. Who am I gonna tell?

SALLY

(Reluctantly) Hmm ... okay. The rumor, okay, *the rumor* is ...

JUNE

Yeah, yeah. I got it.

SALLY

The rumor is her husband is a cheater. Not just a fling here and there either. He's the biggest runaround the western U.P.'s ever seen. Girl in every county's what I heard. But it's just a rumor.

JUNE

So she knows how it feels to be treated like shit. Good!

SALLY

You sure you never did anything? Said anything?

JUNE

Yes, I'm sure! We started junior high when all the county schools come together, right? Second week of school, in art class, she started going out of her way to say mean things about everything from my hair to my clothes, to my taste in music and TV. It was awful. And she never stopped, all through high school.

SALLY

Well, sorry you gotta deal with her again.

JUNE

I literally have no choice. Just like then. *(Takes a swig of beer)* And you refused to call the school. Or her parents.

SALLY

We let you fight your own battles! That's what your dad always said.

JUNE

Even after she and her underlings pantsed me at homecoming. Started calling me June the Moon.

SALLY

Daddy had his reasons. I trusted him.

JUNE

(Pause.) So you took a conflict workshop?

SALLY

Yah. After your dad died I was always findin' excuses to do things at the Senior Center.

JUNE

Who were the "prickly pears" you were hoping to manage conflict with?

(Sally shoots June a look and swigs her own beer.)

SALLY

No one in particular.

I started doin' stuff there just to stay occupied. Get outta the house. Ended up makin' new friends I never expected. Learnin' about all kinds of new things. My world kinda opened up, y'know? Guess it was about time.

JUNE

Aren't you the enlightened one. Share some of that new wisdom with your only child, would you?

SALLY

I do all the time. But I can't tell her what to do. She hates that.

JUNE

I could really use some answers though. Not just about the stupid radio job. I just ... don't know what to do. I don't know what comes next.

SALLY

No senior center workshop covers that, Junebug. Except the one about heaven or hell the Catholics put on. That was a downer. Anyway. Your dad used to say, "Work hard. Be decent. Nuff said." I always liked that.

JUNE

Yeah.

SALLY

(Stands up) Well, I'm turnin' in. All this enlightenment wears me out.

JUNE

Good night, Confucius.

SALLY

'Nighy night. Hey. Here's a crazy thought. Maybe Melanie won't be so bad. Maybe show her how good you are at your job by *showin' her* how to be good at it. Lift her up. Who knows—maybe she needs it. If it all goes to crap, hey, at least you can look back and say you took the high road. *(Heading inside)* Make sure you turn off the porch light.

(Sally exits.)

(June sits and thinks.)

(Lights out.)

ACT TWO
Scene Two

(Lights up on the station. Kyle is at the board while June paces.)

KYLE

Sit down. You look like a duck in one of those carnival shooting games.

JUNE

I can't. I need to burn this anxiety off so I don't throttle Melanie. I'm going to try to stay *(through her teeth)* positive.

KYLE

You should roll one of Wilbert's chairs over here.

JUNE

Yeah, I guess she'll need one.

KYLE

I'm talking about for you. You know she's going to take your chair.

JUNE

The poofy chair? It's the comfiest one here.

KYLE

My point exactly.

(June frets as she crosses to get a new chair. As she wheels it back over, Melanie enters.)

MELANIE

Morning, you two! It's like a regular high school reunion!

JUNE

I was just bringing you a chair, Melanie.

(Melanie looks at both chairs.)

MELANIE

(Sitting on June's chair) Oh, I'll take this one if you don't mind. It's better for my back.

(June gives a tight smile.)

KYLE

(To June) Stay positive.

JUNE

Okay. So, Melanie ...

MELANIE

Wait. Can I just say something?

JUNE

Sure.

MELANIE

I know this didn't exactly happen the way ... we all would have liked. But I really do have the station's best interests in mind. The community loves this station. And I've always wanted to sort of ... help it along. I think you'll find I have great ideas. You might even like them!

JUNE

I'm ... staying positive.

KYLE

What's our rundown, June? We're gonna need to test your levels, Melanie.

MELANIE

That's to check how I sound, right? So I don't sound all funky on the air? See, I know some of the radio lingo.

(June hands Kyle and Melanie a rundown, then sits.)

KYLE

Speak into the mic.

MELANIE

Oh. Okay. It's go time, then.

(Softly) Melanie Boner here on WCOV-FM, Agate Cove. It's, um, really nice outside today. One of those days you understand why they call this God's country/

KYLE

You're a little soft. Just talk in your normal voice.

MELANIE

(Too loud) Good morning, Agate Cove! I'm Melanie Boner!

KYLE

Can you say that on the air?

JUNE

You can when it's a personal noun. *(Hands Melanie headphones)* Here ... put these on.

MELANIE

(Putting them on) Oh, just like the pros! Oh! That's me!

Oh ... that's what I sound like. I mean, I hear myself in my ads, but this ... I don't have a really good voice for radio like you do, June.

JUNE

Wow. Thanks. Uh, just try not to worry about it. We're just ... having conversations. Okay?

MELANIE

(Clearly focused on the sound of her voice) O. Kay.

JUNE

Let's take a look at this rundown. You listen to the show. You probably have an idea of what our order usually looks like. I'll introduce you as our new morning show personality. You tell us a little about yourself.

MELANIE

But everyone knows me.

JUNE

I know you're a real ... *pillar* of the community. But I assure you that not everyone in our listening area knows you. We don't need your life story. Just why you're excited to be here.

MELANIE

Well, if you insist.

(June shoots Kyle a look.)

JUNE

It's important to try and stay on track so we don't ramble. For our first talk segment, I thought we should mention the return of Maxwell Street days this weekend. Sounds like the marching band is planning to parade down main street. Gray's Dairy is giving away ice cream and cookies to kids. We talk about the history of Maxwell Street, then we ask folks what their favorite community event is. Nothing too hard-hitting on your first day.

MELANIE

Hmm. But does anyone really care about Maxwell Street Days and the history of it? I mean ... snore out loud. No offense.

JUNE

Did you have a story in mind?

MELANIE

The yard thief!

JUNE

The yard thief?

MELANIE

Someone's been going around mixing and matching people's lawn ornaments in the middle of the night!

JUNE

Stealing lawn ornaments?

MELANIE

Well, sort of. Estelle Martin has that whole family of Fanny Farmers bending over, you know? On Shakkala (SHA-kuh-luh) Road as you come into town? She's got the lady, the farmer, the kids, the cow, the whole shebang. Or she did.

JUNE

Did someone tip her cow?

MELANIE

No! Someone took the farmer and replaced it with Cindy Bartlebee's giant lawn gnome!

JUNE

Let me guess, the farmer/

MELANIE

Bendin' over Cindy's flower garden!

JUNE

So are there other stories like this?

MELANIE

Well. No. But people have been talking about it a lot.

JUNE

Sounds like Estelle and Cindy got pranked. When it becomes a “rash” of pranks, we’ll cover it.

MELANIE

But/

JUNE

(Thinking fast) /We also don’t want to give any ideas to copycat thieves. See what I mean?

MELANIE

Oh, yeah.

KYLE

It’s almost time.

MELANIE

Oh. I’m actually kinda nervous!

JUNE

It’ll be fine. Kyle will cue us in. Okay?

(Kyle and June exchange a “here goes nothing” look.)

JUNE

Happy Monday morning, Agate Cove. You’re tuned in to WCOV-FM. I’m Junie T. with producer Kyle at the helm on this gorgeous day. Today we also welcome a new member of the morning team. She is a familiar face to many of us as she’s the driving force behind a handful of local businesses ...

MELANIE

/Six. Six local businesses.

JUNE

Uh ... yes. Who could forget? Let’s welcome Melanie Boner to the WCOV Morning Crew. Good morning, Melanie.

MELANIE

Good morning, June. I’m just so excited to be here. This past weekend we were finishing up inventory at M and M Plumbing, where we just got a new shipment of ... get this ... motion detection faucets! Can you believe it? Just like the ones in the gas station bathrooms!

JUNE

Wow, Melanie. In less than ten seconds, you managed to score yourself a live endorsement.

(cont'd) Let's take it out of her check, Kyle.

MELANIE

Oh, I don't think you'd dare, June. Even if you did have any say in the matter. Ha ha. Just be glad I didn't make you all hungry by mentioning the fresh bakery at Mel's Grocery Hub.

JUNE

(Painful fake laugh) Okay ... if you're going to taunt us, at least bring in some samples, Melanie.

MELANIE

You're funny. I don't think either of us need the extra calories, June.

JUNE

Thanks for looking out for me. Anyway, Maxwell Street Days is returning to Agate Cove/

MELANIE

/Before we talk about Maxwell Street Days, June, I brought in a little something special to share, speaking of bakery. In the last few years, our bakers at Mel's Grocery Hub have really gotten a following for their Grandma's Mistakes bars. I was able to pull a favor and get them to share the recipe!

JUNE

On our new Facebook page, you mean! That's a great idea, Melanie! I know you don't want to read an entire recipe. Out loud. On the air. If you haven't already liked us/

MELANIE

/Not everyone trolls around on Facebook, June. Now who's with me? Who wants to hear the recipe right here on the air? Get your pens ready! Give us a call and tell Kyle you want to hear the recipe!

JUNE

(Seething) Or send us your email address and Melanie will send it to you personally/

(The studio line rings. Kyle answers.)

KYLE

WCOV ... okay then.

(He hangs up. The phone rings immediately.)

One for reading the recipe now ... *(answering)* WCOV ... yep, thanks. *(Hangs up.)*

(Uneasy) That's another one.

(The phone continues to ring through the following. We don't have to hear Kyle to get the gist of the calls.)

MELANIE

I think our listeners have spoken, June.

JUNE

Great. *(Through a tight smile)* I can't wait to hear what's in these scrumptious treats.

MELANIE

Got your pens out? Okay, here are the ingredients ... *(slowly)* two sticks of thawed, unsalted butter ... three-quarters cup baking cocoa ... *(as lights fade)* one cup quick cook oatmeal ... two cups sugar ... one teaspoon vanilla extract ...

(Lights out.)

(Lights back up. Two hours later.)

(The phone has stopped ringing.)

MELANIE

(Talking directly to a listener/caller) ... Really? Now, remember what happened with the flower pots on Main Street a couple years ago. For all we know it's the same vandals.

(June is staring at Kyle, dumbfounded.)

CALLER/ESTELLE VO

Y'know it might seem like a prank to these people, but I had a real emotional attachment to my Fanny Farmer farmer.

MELANIE

Well, he was the first of the collection, right?

CALLER/ESTELLE VO

Yah! It all started with him. Then I added his wife, then the kids, then the cow, then the dog/

(June is pissed.)

MELANIE

And Cindy loves that gnome! I was talking to her in the bank a few days ago and I know she was just heartbroke. But back to my point about the flower pot vandals. I mean, they never caught the perps, right? It's the same kind of selfish, destructive behavior ... I think it tracks.

(Kyle points to his watch.)

JUNE

Well, we'll have to solve this mystery another day, Melanie. Thanks for calling in, Estelle. I truly hope your farmer stays in your yard from now on.

We didn't get around to talking about Maxwell Street Days today or *(rifles through papers)* any of your favorite community events. But just a reminder that Maxwell Street Days is coming up this weekend. Check out the Agate Cove Chamber of Commerce website or Welcome to Agate Cove on Facebook for a full list of events and sponsors.

MELANIE

Or stop by Mel's Grocery Hub, Melanie's Diner or Agate Cove Souvenirs for a special refrigerator magnet listing the events.

JUNE

And aren't we all so glad to welcome Melanie Boner to WCOV-FM. Join us again tomorrow. Up next is news and music. Make it a great day, Agate Cove.

(June slowly removes her headphones as she fights to keep her cool.)

MELANIE

(Removing her headphones) Well, I think that went well!

(Wilbert enters. He is livelier than we've seen him.)

WILBERT

Morning, morning crew! How goes it?

JUNE

(Smiling through gritted teeth) Great. Just great.

MELANIE

Wilbert, were you listening? Was it as good as I think it was?

WILBERT

It, uh, it was a show, that's for sure!

KYLE

Wilbert. You look downright spry this morning.

WILBERT

I tell ya, Kyle, I'm this close ...

(Wilbert holds his finger and thumb together and does a little jig.)

... to closin' a sale with Fricker Propane.

JUNE

Fricker Propane? Uh, well, that's great, Wilbert. New business is important.

MELANIE

Oh, Wilbert. You've been trying to get them to advertise for years. Once a year they take pity on poor Wilbert and give him a meeting. He does a proposal. They say no.

WILBERT

Well, Ms. Boner ... I got news for you. Ol' man Fricker has his grandson running the business and young man Fricker majored in marketing. And he likes radio. And ah, now that June got us set up on the Facebook, we can do cross-promotions and whatnot. He's more than interested. Woohoo. I just might treat myself to one of them fancy beers down at Rummy's tonight.

MELANIE

Don't get your hopes up, Wilbert. And when, I mean if, it doesn't come through, this station always has me. Thanks for a great show today, June. Can you try to work in something about grilling safety in tomorrow's rundown?

JUNE

Grilling safety? Melanie, I don't think/

MELANIE

/Sorry, June. I have to go sign for a delivery at my grocery store. See you tomorrow morning. Email me the rundown when you get a sec!

(She exits.)

(June stands there, too angry to speak ... at first.)

(Wilbert calmly strolls over to fill his coffee cup.)

KYLE

Uh-oh.

JUNE

I don't care. I don't care. Right? Why should I care? It's just a job. Nothing. It's only my life's work. The ONE thing I'm good at. The ONE thing I can come back to LITERALLY ANYWHERE. Even here! The one place I never wanted to crawl back to. It sucked. I didn't

(cont'd) want to, but I could. Thought maybe I could maybe start to feel normal, like me, like I can still do this. And I was. And now ... GAAAHHHH!

(June looks around for something to destroy. She picks up a sweater Melanie sweater left behind. She pulls on it, trying to rip it but it's a hearty knit. She throws it across the room.)

(Kyle looks on awkwardly. Wilbert watches calmly, almost like he has a secret. June catches her breath.)

JUNE

I'm sorry. I think maybe I oughta go home.

KYLE

You need anything?

JUNE

What I needed was a fresh start.

WILBERT

Go on home, June. But hey, I'd like to impart some wisdom if I could.

JUNE

I'm not looking for advice right now, Wilbert.

WILBERT

Nah, it ain't advice. Just that ... sometimes trouble has a way of ... taking care of itself, paving its own way to what's right. Sometimes you gotta play the long game.

JUNE

How much longer?

KYLE

Can I drive you home?

JUNE

I'm okay, Kyle. I'll see you tomorrow.

(June exits.)

(Kyle takes a step after her and stops.)

(Lights out.)

ACT TWO
Scene Three

(A few days later. A doctor's office waiting room.)

(Kyle is seated, reading a magazine.)

(Sally enters and sits by him.)

SALLY

Kyle Pile! It's nice to see you.

KYLE

Hey, Sally. I brought my mom. How are you?

SALLY

Oh, just fine. Just here to get my ear wax flushed out. Y'know.

KYLE

Yeah. Plugged ears are no fun.

SALLY

(Straining) What's that?

KYLE

(Louder) I said plugged ears are no ... fun.

(Sally is laughing.)

SALLY

Gotcha. Nah, I can hear for the most part. Just dang annoying. So tell me, how is your ma?

KYLE

Cranky. Annoyed. Y'know. A ray of sunshine.

SALLY

Tell her to come by the Senior Center. I'll tell ya, I can honestly say ... they got resources there ... and fun stuff too ... changed my life. I'll call her and invite her if you think she'd like that.

KYLE

Worth a try. She won't listen to me.

SALLY

Well, she lived alone a long time. Sure it's hard for her.

KYLE

Yeah.

SALLY

So. How about the other cantankerous woman we know?

KYLE

I can't imagine who you mean.

SALLY

(Laughing) You still got that dry wit. Y'know, that's what June always said about you. She used to say you were the funniest person she knew.

KYLE

She did, huh?

SALLY

She still does. Boy, were you a godsend to her at that station. I'm sure she hasn't said so.

KYLE

No, but I think she likes having me there. She knows I like her, I mean ... that I like having something to do. Work. Getting out of the house. I know, she knows. Yeah.

SALLY

(Knowingly) M-hm. *(Pause.)* She had a rough time there, y'know.

KYLE

Yeah. I heard.

SALLY

That Sten, her first husband, nice enough guy but ... I knew he wouldn't put up with her career. She had a passion and she was gonna follow it, even if she had to bounce around. Broke her heart. What kinda name is Sten anyway? Well, then she started making big bucks and spending it. We didn't have much when she was growin' up so she was makin' up for it, I guess. Racked up debt. Married that slimebag Rick. He left. She was winnin' awards but livin' paycheck to paycheck and dodgin' debt collectors.

KYLE

That's rough. Money problems take a toll.

SALLY

Well. If you ask me—she sure won't--she's so busy lookin' for what's next or what's better, she doesn't see what's good around her. She never stops to take a breath.

KYLE

Maybe she thinks she doesn't deserve it.

SALLY

Who knows. I'm glad you're around. I heard you had a pretty hard stretch too.

KYLE

I was every country song cliché rolled into one for a while. Now I just drive a truck and occasionally cry into a beer.

SALLY

I think she was startin' to get her sea legs back. Then that Melanie had to weasel her way in. Makes me so mad.

KYLE

I think they both need to let go of high school. Outgrow the stupid rivalry. It was literally decades ago. Move on.

SALLY

Thing is, they're more alike than they'd ever see. Oh, looks like I'm up.

KYLE

Enjoy your ... treatment.

SALLY

Nice to see you, Kyle. Thanks for being there for my daughter. You oughta stop by again.

KYLE

Should I bring another pie?

SALLY

It can't hurt. 'Specially if it's ever key lime.

(Kyle ponders as Sally exits.)

(Lights out.)

ACT TWO
Scene Four

(The station, two weeks later.)

(June, Melanie and Kyle are on the air, seated at the console. Melanie is having a great time. June seethes quietly.)

MELANIE

This next segment is brought to you by Agate Cove Souvenirs, where memories CAN be bought and sold. Stop by this weekend for their handcrafted jewelry sale, with jewelry designed by local artisans. This Saturday only—say you listened to the show and get a five percent discount! You might say I'm in good with the owner. Right, June?

(June musters a slight grin and nods.)

I suppose it's time we move on. What do we have next, June?

(This is painful ...)

JUNE

B six. Once again, that's B six.

MELANIE

Someone's gonna have a Bingo soon. I can just feel it.

JUNE

N twelve. That's N twelve.

MELANIE

Is that N as in Nancy or M as in Mary?

JUNE

There's no M in Bingo, Melanie.

MELANIE

Oops. Carry on.

JUNE

G sixteen. Once again, that's G sixteen.

MELANIE

We should play the Jeopardy theme. Kyle, can you play that?

KYLE

I'll get right on that.

JUNE

O forty two. O forty two.

MELANIE

Oh, forty two, you're not so old. *(Laughs at her own joke.)*

(The station line rings. Kyle picks up.)

Oh, I think we have a bingo. How exciting! Put them on the air, Kyle!

Hello, there! Hi! Who is this? Do you have a bingo?

CALLER/AMY

What? No! My name is Amy and I do not have a Bingo!

MELANIE

Oh, well ... sorry, we've got to keep the line open for Bingo winners. Bye!

(Kyle kills the call, shrugs.)

KYLE

Wrong number?

MELANIE

Sorry, Amy!

(The phone rings again.)

Here's our first winner of radio bingo, I bet!

(Kyle picks up.)

KYLE

WCOV ... you're on the air.

MELANIE

Hi! Who's calling and do you have a bingo?

CALLER/BILL

My name is Bill and I wanna talk about your radio bingo here.

MELANIE

Oh, did you fill up your card, Bill?

CALLER/BILL

No! I'm calling because I want to know what you're doing. Radio bingo? You're the only station I get in halfway decent out here on 30 mile Road and you guys were just starting to sound like you knew what you're doin'. Who wants to listen to this crap?

(Melanie is aghast.)

JUNE

Thank you for calling in, Bill. We appreciate your tuning in and taking the time to give us your feedback.

CALLER/BILL

Oh, I got plenty of feedback!

JUNE

(Cautiously optimistic) Well. Drop us a line via email or on Facebook, Bill. I'd like to open up the lines and see what others think? Consider this your forum. Your marketplace. Give us a call.

(The phone rings. Kyle picks up.)

KYLE

WCOV, you're on the air.

CALLER/AMY

Yeah, hi! It's me, Amy again. That wasn't a wrong number. Y'know, I majored in broadcasting and I know good and bad radio. And this is terrible! June, you're legit! I listened to you when I went to Wayne State! Why the hell are you reading freaking Bingo numbers? Who wants to listen to this trash?

MELANIE

Amy, I bet you have a grandmother who just loves it!

CALLER/AMY

You mean my grandmother who has a gambling problem? Oh, yeah! This is exactly what she needs!

(Melanie is at a loss as the phone continues to ring.)

KYLE

WCOV, you're on the air ...

JUNE

I'm so sorry to hear that, Amy. I hope your grandma has a great support system. Our phone lines

(Kyle holds up one finger)

... our phone *line* is burning up. We'd love to hear your thoughts ... who am I talking to now?

CALLER/TOM

Yah, this is Tom out Covington Way.

JUNE

What are your thoughts on radio bingo?

CALLER/TOM

My wife used to play it when youse had it on years ago.

JUNE

So she was a fan?

CALLER/TOM

For a while. She and her girlfriends played a little but it wore out its welcome pretty quick. In fact they turned it into a drinking game.

JUNE

A drinking game?

CALLER/TOM

Yah. Every time a B number was called out, they'd do a shot of brandy. Or another time it might be a shot of gin for every G number. They'd be bombed by 10am. It was gettin' to be a real problem.

(Wilbert enters, hoisting a two-liter of ginger ale in celebration.)

KYLE

(To June, smiling) Almost out of time.

JUNE

(Smugly, to Melanie) We are so glad you called in and gave us your feedback today. It's good to know your real feelings about the station and our return to radio bingo. You listen to us. We listen to you. We are your station, Agate Cove. Have a great day.

KYLE

And we're out. Is that Vernor's?

MELANIE

Why are you so happy? This isn't a time for ginger ale, Wilbert!

WILBERT

I beg to differ. Melanie. But it's a little early for champagne.

(Wilbert opens the ginger ale.)

MELANIE

That is not how you talk to your station's biggest advertiser.

WILBERT

Well, you got a point there, Melanie.

MELANIE

I don't believe for one minute those people calling weren't planted or something. This was all fake. You can't lie to me!

KYLE

Wilbert, what's going on?

WILBERT

(Pours ginger ale into coffee cups) A toast ... to our biggest advertiser.

JUNE

Oh. Fracker signed?

WILBERT

Not yet.

MELANIE

Oh, Wilbert! Stop kidding yourself! They're never gonna sign with you! We're small potatoes to a big outfit like them!

WILBERT

You're right about one part Melanie. They're never gonna sign with us on one condition. But I'll get to that. Morning crew, I'd like to raise a toast to our newest client, S and R Timber! Three year contract, seven days a week, one remote a month.

(Wilbert holds up the signed contract.)

JUNE

The big logging equipment chain? Powersaws and stuff?

WILBERT

That, they are, June.

JUNE

(Reading contract) Holy shit, Wilbert! Congratulations!

MELANIE

That is not fair, Wilbert! I'm going to call and tell them you just disclosed their contract details to another client. I'll call and tell them about the terrible way you treat your advertisers!

JUNE

Wilbert, what about Fracker, then?

WILBERT

Thanks for asking, June. Fracker wants to sign, but only on one condition.

JUNE

What condition?

WILBERT

The morning show goes back to what you were doing, June. Melanie, they won't sign unless it's just June here on the air. They never advertised with us before 'cause they, well, they thought we were a joke. June made us sound the way a radio station oughta sound. Professional.

MELANIE

After all I have done for this station! You can't treat me this way. People will revolt, Wilbert. This town. THEY LOVE ME!

WILBERT

After all you've done? Throwing tantrums and demanding this and that? Threatening to pull your advertising every time we made a programming change you didn't like?

MELANIE

I have kept this station afloat for years!

WILBERT

Thank you for your business.

MELANIE

(To June) This is all you! You put him up to this!

WILBERT

I gave June a shot. And she gave the station one in the arm. Freed me up to do what I'm good at, the business part. That's what radio is, Melanie. A business! Now we got listeners from all over the county! That's all June.

MELANIE

Fine. Maybe I'll just pull my ads ... for all my businesses.

WILBERT

That's how she goes. Now about this toast ...

(Wilbert raises his mug. June and Kyle follow.)

To new clients. And new beginnings.

KYLE

To June.

WILBERT

To June.

(June is moved. They clink mugs.)

JUNE

Cheers.

MELANIE

Well, good luck when she loses her shit on the air again. I'll be waiting for it.

JUNE

That's it, Boner! Gloves off.

(Hands cup to Kyle) Hold my ginger ale.

MELANIE

Everybody knows you came back here with your tail between your legs. Always acting like you were so much smarter than everybody. Now you're a full-on failure.

JUNE

Well, you're a full-on bitch! And you have been since junior high!

MELANIE

You're still stuck in junior high. Right back in Agate Cove is right where you belong.

JUNE

At least I saw some of the world. High school never did end for you, did it? Still pushing people around, acting like the queen of your fiefdom.

MELANIE

My what?

JUNE

Fiefdom. It means a small kingdom where ... What it means is after all this time, you're still a bully.

MELANIE

I am not a bully. You're the bully.

JUNE

You're the same girl who made fun of me because my family didn't have money.

MELANIE

You're the same girl who never washed her hair.

JUNE

You dressed up as me for Halloween!

MELANIE

You called me Airhead Barbie.

JUNE

You nicknamed me Free Lunch!

MELANIE

You turned people against me!

JUNE

You pulled down my pants in front of the whole school!

MELANIE

I'd do it again. June the Moon!

JUNE

What's wrong with you? No wonder your husband cheats on you!

MELANIE

Liar! You're a liar!

(Melanie starts to cry.)

JUNE

How does it feel to be humiliated? Mrs. Boner?

MELANIE

About how it felt when you told everyone at school my mom was a drunk.

JUNE

(Pause.) What? I would never ...

MELANIE

You did!

JUNE

Melanie, how would I even ... *(remembers something)* oh.

MELANIE

Your dad was in A.A. with my mom. He and some of their ... friends ... came and cleaned her up when she fell off the wagon. You told everyone.

JUNE

I told Sandy Gleason! And ... oh. Sandy the mouth. She told everyone ... Shit.

MELANIE

Anyway, have fun with your consolation prize. That's what this job is to you, right? This town? So much better than us. Well, June. Welcome to your new low.

Wilbert, when she has another breakdown on the air, and your new clients pull out, don't call me.

(Melanie exits.)

(June ponders this. Kyle hands back her mug.)

JUNE

I need something stronger.

(Lights out.)

ACT TWO
Scene Five

(Hanson's Saloon. Late morning.)

(Lights up on two stools and a small section of the bar. Melanie is sipping a glass of wine. She looks upward, at a TV we don't see.)

(June, carrying a beer, looking at TV, approaches and sits by Melanie.)

JUNE

My dad loved westerns.

(Melanie doesn't look at her.)

(June ponders leaving. She sips her beer. This is not easy.)

I can't believe *I'm* about to say this to *you*. After all these years. But ... I'm sorry, Melanie.

MELANIE

Yah, sure.

JUNE

I understand. Maybe not the years of revenge, but ... I started it. I'm ... sorry.

MELANIE

Just stop. We're not gonna suddenly be friends.

JUNE

I don't wanna be your friend.

MELANIE

I don't wanna be *your* friend.

JUNE

Good. *(Pause.)* Wow. Listen to us.

MELANIE

I don't have to listen to you. Or the station. Ever again. I gave so much. I thought if I kept giving more, maybe ... no. I'm not talking to you.

JUNE

You don't have to accept my apology. And I won't expect one from you. I dreamed of this day, you know. Telling you off. Finally telling you how much you hurt me. I used to dread going to school. What new nickname was going to start today? What new story about how gross I am? And you were the popular girl so everyone went along. It's why I lost myself in music, then in radio. I couldn't wait to leave Agate Cove, become famous, win an award and call you out by name on national television. "Look at me now, Melanie Bingham." I thought you were just cruel. Now I know. Thank you for that. And I guess, thank you for driving me out of here. It was a pretty fun life until I screwed it up.

(They sip their drinks and watch the TV.)

MELANIE

Popular doesn't mean lucky. It's just what you see.

JUNE

Seems pretty lucky when you're on the other side.

MELANIE

She fell off the wagon so many times. Nobody knew, not really. Her girlfriends knew she liked her cosmos but they didn't know she kept at it when she got home from girl's night. Once I had to clean up after her when she ... it was a secret. I kept it for her. Then you blabbed it.

JUNE

My dad had some rough years too. But he was a good guy.

MELANIE

My mom is a good person! Sober twenty years now.

JUNE

Of course! I'm sorry. I feel weird having this conversation over drinks.

MELANIE

Are you an alcoholic?

JUNE

No.

MELANIE

Then it's not weird. We're not our parents.

JUNE

True enough.

MELANIE

If I apologized, could I have a segment on the show?

JUNE

Why do you even want this? You have so much else to do.

MELANIE

Because Peter told me I can't! I want to prove I can! Okay?

JUNE

Um ... let's let Wilbert enjoy his big sale. Then let's just give it time.

MELANIE

My husband calls me a busybody. I'm not trying to be. I just like to keep things under control.

JUNE

My dad used to say you can't control anyone but you. Controlling anyone else is "too much goddamn work."

MELANIE

I'm not an idiot. I just ... love him.

(We hear June's full-body sob on VO—it's Melanie's phone.)

I made it my ringtone. I need to go.

(Melanie steps off her bar stool. She starts to walk away.)

(June sips her beer as Melanie comes back.)

Okay, fine. I'm sorry. And I accept your apology too.

(They nod to each other. Melanie exits.)

(June picks up her own phone. Puzzled, she sets it down.)

(Kyle enters, holding a beer.)

KYLE

What, no broken glass?

JUNE

I think Melanie and I just aged about 20 years. In a good way.

KYLE

Maturity suits you.

JUNE

I didn't even laugh when I realized her husband's name is Peter Boner.

(June glances at her phone again, quizzically.)

KYLE

Everything okay?

JUNE

Yeah. An old friend of mine is texting me.

KYLE

I just realized ... I don't think I've heard you mention any friends.

JUNE

So many were in the industry. I haven't wanted to really talk to anyone.

KYLE

Why? They're your friends, aren't they?

JUNE

Conditional friends. Work friends. Some were real. I needed to move on from all that happened.

KYLE

I get that.

JUNE

Anyway. Look at us. I can't remember the last time I was in a bar during the day ... or in any bar.

KYLE

Y'know, there's a supper club out on Fern Lake. I heard they have a great view. I mean, good food too ...

JUNE

What is a supper club? What does that mean?

KYLE

I don't know. I think it's a Wisconsin thing we stole. Anyway, the place is called Watershed.

JUNE

I still can't believe Wilbert today. He really went to bat for me.

KYLE

Why can't you believe it?

JUNE

I started this job out of desperation. I hated myself for taking it, like I was letting myself down. I'm sure it showed. Wilbert took my side. I'm not used to that.

KYLE

Really?

JUNE

Yeah.

KYLE

You've always had people on your side, June.

JUNE

Who, like my mom? Carrie? You?

KYLE

Maybe. Why has that never been good enough?

JUNE

I'm not saying that/

KYLE

Yeah, you are! You think your mom didn't love having that house to herself before you came back? But you needed to come home, so ... she made it work. Even way back, you were always talking about how you had nothing here and how you couldn't wait to get away. Well, you did. And that's great. We were all happy for you. But it's like you never thought twice about people who cared about you. The ones who weren't afraid to tell Melanie and her cronies to leave you alone.

JUNE

Because it was humiliating! Having to dust myself off in front of you all the time.

KYLE

It happened in front of us because we were there with you.

JUNE

Wow. When it rains, it pours. I guess I deserve everything I've been through then.

KYLE

I'm not saying that/

JUNE

What other sins of my past are going to come up today?

(June's phone rings. She answers.)

Jerome! Hi! How are you? What horrible thing did I do or say to you?

(June listens.)

No, it's just ... been a long day and it's barely noon. What in the world is up?

... Yeah, I've heard. That's awesome for you. You're a hard worker and you deserve it all.

... M-hm. Wait. What?

(Kyle observes.)

You're kidding. After Cincinnati, I mean you can't possibly ...

(June puts her hand to her mouth and gets emotional.)

(Kyle moves closer to June.)

When? Please don't say this is a joke ... why me?

(She listens, a little overcome.) I'm just so surprised. Can I ... take a day?

Jerome, you have no idea what this means to me ... Okay. Right. Bye.

(June stands there.)

My old production assistant from years and cities ago. When I was in Detroit. He's huge now. He's got the number one morning show in the Twin Cities and a podcast.

KYLE

Twin Cities?

JUNE

He's building a team. Writing, on-air. He says I took a chance on him. And he wants to take a chance on me.

KYLE

Of course. Well, that's great for you.

JUNE

Everything you said ...

KYLE

I was wrong. Well, no. I wasn't. But ... this sounds like a new chance, I guess. A real one.

JUNE

Oh, no. *(Pause.)* The station. Wilbert.

KYLE

Yeah. Wilbert.

JUNE

Can you ... not say anything?

KYLE

Sure. Of course.

JUNE

I need to get home before anything else happens. Holy crap.

You wanna walk with me? Around the block? I think I need to clear my head.

KYLE

No. Go think. Go get your life back.

(June exits.)

(Lights out.)

ACT TWO
Scene Six

(Lights up at the station. A weekend has passed. Monday's show is coming to a close.)

(Kyle is at the console. June enjoys running the show. Wilbert works at his desk.)

JUNE

And before we sign off today, we want to congratulate Agate Cove's own Bonnie Parker for *(reading)* winning the Midwest Living Magazine pie contest! Bonnie will be featured on Midwest Living's YouTube channel where she'll demonstrate her triple berry pie technique, of course using berries grown right here in Agate Cove. Bonnie also wins a full Le Creuset baking dish set and a weekend getaway to ... to Belcherville.

Okay. Well, thank you, Bonnie, for putting Agate Cove on the map. Tune in tomorrow morning for a conversation about new EPA regulations that may affect those who burn their trash at home. And we'll talk to former Michigan State football coach Sam Anderson about his predictions for the upcoming football season.

(Kyle gives her the wrap-up signal.)

Thank you, Agate Cove. Thank you, sponsors, and thank you, Kyle Pile for up and learning to produce a radio show.

Friends ... this is Junie T for WCOV-FM. Make it a great week.

(The show wraps up. June removes her headset.)

KYLE

You didn't have to say that.

JUNE

Yeah. I did. Wilbert, how are you feeling?

WILBERT

Well, I got this meeting with Fracker to go finalize the contract. Fracker Junior just texted me and said he liked the show this morning.

JUNE

Whew!

WILBERT

I think I need to make some changes around here.

JUNE

Yeah? Maybe it's time to remove another of your hats?

WILBERT

I think my clients like my hats.

JUNE

I meant/

WILBERT

/I'm pulling your leg, June.

JUNE

You're a one-man show, Wilbert.

WILBERT

I think those days are done. With these new contracts, I think I can hire a part-time traffic manager to run the schedule. And maybe a new account exec. Bring in some more money.

JUNE

Will Marie be cool with the new hires?

WILBERT

If the station's making money and she can stay in Florida, she's happy as a clam. Speaking of money, I better head out for the big presentation.

JUNE

One second, Wilbert. Kyle, Wilbert ... I'd like to invite you to my mom's place this evening. I have something exciting to share with you.

KYLE

June, I think you should just tell us now. Before Wilbert goes to sign his new client that wants you on the air.

JUNE

Kyle, Wilbert has business to do. I'd like you both to come to my mom's at 7 tonight. Please.

WILBERT

Yah! I'll be there. I'll swing by that Jerry's Meat Shack for hors d'oeuvres!

JUNE

You do that. Just be there at 7. We'll also be sampling my mom's first batch of home brew. So be forewarned ...

WILBERT

Your mom's a brewmistress, eh? Well. I'll see ya later, June. Have a gooder, Kyle.

(Wilbert exits.)

(Kyle quietly walks away from June.)

JUNE

You're coming, right?

KYLE

To help Wilbert figure out what he'll do next? Yeah, that seems like the decent thing to do.

JUNE

Kyle, come on.

KYLE

I'm sorry, June. I know you have a big new thing you get to leave and go do. And I'm happy for you. I am. But you let Wilbert go off and sign this client? Without telling him your plans? Now he'll have to back track to them, possibly lose this client, have Melanie gloating ... you helped build this place up and now you're just gonna desert it! That's shitty, June.

JUNE

I think I see what you're saying.

KYLE

I suppose you'll want me to bring pie!

JUNE

Just be there by 7. Pie would be great.

(June exits.)

(Lights out.)

ACT TWO
Scene Seven

(Sally's front porch and yard that evening.)

(Sally and June stand at a table, putting labels on beer bottles.)

SALLY

I'm a little nervous. This is my first batch, y'know.

JUNE

Well, if it's bad, hey, you can unload some of it tonight. If it's good—more to enjoy.

SALLY

You're awful chipper.

JUNE

Well, I've had what marketers call a paradigm shift.

SALLY

Sounds like math.

JUNE

Not really. It's just changing the way you see something.

SALLY

Paradigm shift, eh? Huh. Like me and the senior center. I used to think that place was just a bunch of old bitties and old coots looking for a way to kill time. And y'know what? I was right.

JUNE

Mom. You love the senior center.

SALLY

You're darn right. Know why?

JUNE

Why?

SALLY

'Cause I'm an old bittie and they got FUN ways to kill time!

(Kyle enters the yard.)

Kyle Pile!

SALLY

Hi, Sally.

KYLE

(Kyle thrusts a pie at June.)

Pie of the month.

JUNE

(Opens the box) Ooh, looks like key lime.

KYLE

It's bitter.

JUNE

Perfect for me then, I guess.

SALLY

Want a beer, Kyle?

KYLE

(Accepting) You brewed this, huh, Sally?

SALLY

Sure did. Here's a bottle opener. Okay, June. You take one too. It's the moment of truth.

(They take turns opening their beer bottles through the following.)

JUNE

I hope Wilbert gets here soon. And Carrie.

SALLY

Carrie? You called Carrie?

JUNE

I figured it was about time. She wasn't sure she'd make it. If not, we'll get coffee next weekend.

SALLY

Nice girl, that Carrie.

(Wilbert enters the yard. He carries a paper sack.)

JUNE

Well, if it isn't the man of the hour! Get your contracts signed, Wilbert?

(Kyle shoots her a look.)

WILBERT

Sure did! I gotta tell you, June. I never made a sale like that before. And they pre-paid the first month. I almost wept.

KYLE

I think Wilbert deserves a beer.

(June hands Wilbert a beer and the opener.)

SALLY

So you're Wilbert.

(Wilbert awkwardly removes his hat. He hands her the paper bag.)

WILBERT

Yah, that's me. For the hostess.

SALLY

Thank you.

JUNE

Should we try the beer?

WILBERT

Uh ... could I have a glass?

(This is like music to Sally's ears.)

SALLY

Oh, you betcha, you can! June, get everyone a glass.

(June pulls out some beer glasses, hands them out and everyone pours through the following.)

WILBERT

Sorry to be picky. It's just better in a glass. The aroma's /part of the ...

SALLY

/Part of the taste! Yah!

WILBERT

Now this looks like a red ale.

SALLY

Thank goodness. 'Cause that's what it is! Well ... let's hope so anyway. That was the recipe I followed.

(Wilbert inspects the beer.)

WILBERT

Nice deep amber color. Tannish head, pretty foamy but that's probably my pour.

(He sniffs the beer. Suddenly he's all sophistication. His way.)

Hm. Moderate malt aroma. Hints of caramel. That's nice. Notes of a toasted toffee.

(June and Kyle exchange a glance.)

SALLY

You know your beer!

WILBERT

I took some classes at JCC. Haven't brewed in a long time though.

SALLY

Well, you gave us a preview. Now let's watch the movie.

JUNE

Wait! I have something to say first. Thank you, guys, for coming tonight. I have some news I'm excited to tell you.

(Kyle shakes his head.)

I'm moving.

WILBERT

You're moving?

JUNE

I figured it was time and something just fell into my lap.

SALLY

Boy, did it! She got a deal!

WILBERT

Where ... where ya moving to?

JUNE

Spar Street.

(Kyle looks at her.)

My mom's been awesome. And she'd let me stay longer. But I know she likes having her house to herself sometimes too. And I'll just be a mile away.

KYLE

You're staying.

JUNE

I just wanted to tell you both. I wasn't thrilled to return home. I guess it was obvious. I felt like a failure. At everything. Then Wilbert took a chance on me. Kyle never produced a radio show before and learned the job. He brought me pie. And Mom has put up with my mopey ass long enough.

SALLY

Can we try it now?

JUNE

I'm almost done.

(Sally mimes talking with her hand to infer June is gabby.)

Thank you. To all three of you. I thought coming home would just tide me over until I could figure out a new beginning. But I found a fresh start right here. So I raise a glass to you. Cheers.

(She raises her glass, they follow suit.)

ALL

Cheers!

(They toast and sip their beers.)

(Sally looks around nervously.)

Well?
SALLY

It's good!
KYLE

It is, Mom! It's great!
JUNE

Uh, Wilbert?
SALLY

WILBERT
It's a little flat. Coulda used maybe another week or two in the bottle.

SALLY
Yah. I worried I got overanxious. I'll let the rest of this sit a while longer.

WILBERT
It's a real nice ale though! Especially for your first time. Holy wah!

SALLY
I gotta sit down. Wanna join me up on the porch? I got these Adiron-deck chairs.

JUNE
Adirondack, Mom.

SALLY
Huh?

JUNE
Nothing.

(Sally and Wilbert go up to the porch to converse.)

(June and Kyle stroll downstage.)

KYLE
So what's the great deal you found?

JUNE
It's this cute little house that someone inherited and decided to rent out cheap. Two bedrooms. Tiny bathroom. The shower is in the basement.

(cont'd) BUT it's got a fire pit in the backyard.

KYLE

What about your friend in Minneapolis?

JUNE

I'm not ready. Don't get me wrong. I might be someday. Jerome says I'll always have a job waiting for me. I believe him.

KYLE

You miss it? The bigger stations and the competition?

JUNE

The rush of finding out you're number one in your time slot? Then having the pressure to maintain it so the ad rates can keep going up? The panic and stress when you slide down in ratings? I loved it. But no. Right now I just need to ... do good radio. And be in one place. With people who care about me. Who ... I care about.

SALLY

(From the porch) Is this Jerry's meat? I love Jerry's meat!

JUNE

I ... I can't follow that.

KYLE

I'm glad you're staying.

(June suddenly hugs him. Hard. He hugs back.)

(The world just kind of stops for a few seconds.)

(Melanie power walks by. She notices, removes ear buds and stops.)

MELANIE

Finally!

(June and Kyle take a step back.)

JUNE

Melanie. Hi.

MELANIE

I always knew this would happen.

JUNE

Hugs?

MELANIE

Yeah, sure. Hugs.

Oh, wait. This was a first hug so I just made it weird. I'm sorry. I'm trying not to be such a ... anyway. Is that Wilbert?

(Calling) Wilbert! I'm keeping my ads running! Six businesses. My sales went down in all six during my ill-fated radio career. What was I thinking?

Anyway. Have a nice evening, you two. I saw nothing!

(Melanie power walks away.)

JUNE

Am I becoming ... friends? With ... Melanie?

KYLE

It's a small town. Pickin's are slim.

JUNE

Well, if I ever miss the chaos I ran from, I bet she'd deliver.

KYLE

Chaos is overrated.

JUNE

Some chaos is fun. In small doses.

KYLE

Taking chances. Chaotic.

JUNE

Also brave.

KYLE

Starting over. That's pretty brave.

JUNE

You'd know about that.

(Kyle raises his glass.)

KYLE

To bravery.

(June raises hers.)

JUNE

To chaos.

KYLE

To new beginnings.

(They clink and sip.)

That's some sunset.

(June looks out thoughtfully.)

JUNE

So Kyle, there's this supper club out on Fern Lake. I heard they have a great view.

(They exchange warm, joyful smiles as they watch the sun go down.)

(Lights out.)

(End of play.)