

All's
Well
In
Rosewell



Burton Bumgarner

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BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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All's Well in Rosewell

FARCE. After the treasurer steals the town of Rosewell's money, the mayor gathers the citizens together and gives them two options: A.) Raise taxes by 10,000% or B.) Come up with another plan to raise money. The residents overwhelmingly vote for plan B, but they have difficulty thinking up ways to raise money beyond hosting \$200 carwashes or \$600/plate spaghetti dinners. For inspiration, the citizens look to their prosperous desert neighbor of Roswell, NM, and realize that the only differences between Roswell and Rosewell is that Rosewell has an extra "E" and Roswell has aliens! Wanting to cash in on the alien craze and attract tourists to their town, the Rosewell citizens scatter pieces of a broken-down 1991 Yugo across the desert and then wait for the government to haul off the Yugo parts to a secret storage bunker and deny its existence. But all the extraterrestrial hoopla draws some unexpected guests to the town including a UFO enthusiast, a mob boss, two dimwitted hit women, a tabloid reporter, a Texas Ranger – and a real alien (or two)!

Performance Time: Approximately 90-120 minutes.

Characters

(7 M, 6 F, 13 flexible, opt. extras)
(With doubling: 7 M, 6 F, 7 flexible)

FRANK: Obsessed with UFOs and aliens.

BARB: Frank's wife.

STELLA STAR: Newspaper tabloid editor and proud owner of a 1991 oyster-colored Yugo.

TONY TAURUS: Writer for a tabloid.

MAYOR MARTY MOON: Mayor of Rosewell, NM.

MARY CLOUD: Dimwitted owner of a health food and taxidermy store.

MISS SKY: Mayor Moon's enthusiastic note-taking secretary.

NED NOVA: Local sheep farmer.

BENNY BOLOGNA: New York mobster.

SALLY THE STRANGLER: Dimwitted hit woman.

BETTY THE BUTCHER: Sally's sister and fellow hit woman.

GENERAL CALVIN SPACEY: Oversees a secret US government agency that investigates UFO activity.

WALKER: Texas Ranger.

ALIEN: Wears a green costume and a mask.

CITIZEN 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7: Citizens of Rosewell; flexible.

REPORTER 1, 2, 3, 4, 5: Flexible.

EXTRAS (optional): As Rosewell citizens.

Setting

The tiny desert town of Rosewell (not Roswell), New Mexico.

Sets

Mayor's Office: There is a desk and chair.

Town Hall: There is a desk upstage and a podium facing SR.

There are two or three rows of chairs facing the podium.

TV Studio: There are two chairs set downstage.

Tabloid Office: There is a desk downstage.

Synopsis of Scenes

ACT I

Scene 1: Desert outside Rosewell, NM.

Scene 2: Tabloid office at "The National Explainer," New York City. There is a desk downstage.

Scene 3: Town hall, Rosewell. There is a desk upstage and a podium facing SR. There are two or three rows of chairs facing the podium.

Scene 4: TV studio, New York City. Bare stage with two chairs.

Scene 5: Benny's office, New York City.

Scene 6: Desert, outside Rosewell.

Scene 7: Tabloid office, New York City.

Scene 8: Town hall, Rosewell.

Scene 9: TV studio, Rosewell.

Scene 10: New York City/Mexico.

Scene 11: Town hall, Rosewell.

Scene 12: Tabloid and Benny's office, NYC.

Scene 13: Main Street, Rosewell.

ACT II

Scene 1: TV studio, Rosewell.

Scene 2: Undisclosed location.

Scene 3: Another undisclosed location.

Scene 4: Town Hall, Rosewell.

Scene 5: TV studio, Rosewell.

Scene 6: Main Street, Rosewell.

Scene 7: Town hall, Rosewell.

Scene 8: Main Street, Rosewell.

Scene 9: TV studio, Rosewell.

Scene 10: Desert outside Rosewell.

Props

2 Sleeping bags	Binoculars
Stack of wood	Road map
2 Backpacks	Wristwatch
Coat, for Frank	Bathrobe, for Benny
Flashlight	Teddy bear
2 Desks	Desk phone
4 Cell phones	Bottle of water
File	Wallet
Car key	Money
Podium	Briefcase
Chairs	Stack of papers
Notepad	Luggage
Pen	Gasoline can
Tabloid newspaper	

Sound Effects

Cell phone ringing
Sound of spaceship taking off

"Wow.
Somebody left
the gate open
at the stupid farm."

-Stella

ACT I

Scene 1

(AT RISE: The desert outside Roswell, NM. Barb and Frank are lying inside their sleeping bags DSC, shivering. A stack of wood resembling a campfire is nearby. Two backpacks are beside the sleeping bags. Frank is sitting up with a coat wrapped around his shoulders. Barb is inside the sleeping bag with her head propped up, facing downstage.)

FRANK: Isn't this great, Barb? Camping out in the great Southwest!

BARB: Frank, this is the worst idea you've ever had.

FRANK: Come on, Barb. What's wrong?

BARB: People like us don't camp in the desert, that's what's wrong. We stay in hotels. That's why they make hotels. If people like us didn't exist, neither would hotels.

FRANK: I thought you might enjoy it once we got out here in the wilds.

BARB: I'm from New York. A shopping center in the suburbs is about as wild as I can handle.

FRANK: What's not to like? We've got clean air, the beauty of nature, a friendly campfire.

BARB: I'm freezing, Frank. The desert is cold at night. We're surrounded by snakes, coyotes, and mountain lions. And if that friendly fire gets out of control, we're going to be arrested for arson.

FRANK: Well, I'm sorry. I just wanted to commune with nature in the Wild West.

BARB: You wanted to go to Roswell and look for UFOs!

FRANK: Uh...that's Roswell. I wanted to go to Roswell and look for UFOs. And as long as we're here, we might as well have a look.

BARB: We're outside of Roswell. Not Roswell.

FRANK: I distinctly remember passing a sign for Roswell.

BARB: You need to get your eyes checked, Frank—after you see the psychiatrist.

FRANK: Well, if we're not near Roswell, why didn't you tell me?

BARB: I wasn't speaking to you. Remember?

FRANK: I don't know why you have to be so upset.

BARB: You've been obsessed with UFOs and space aliens ever since I've known you. And now you've finally succeeded in dragging me to this forsaken corner of the country so I can freeze to death while you wait for E.T. to come back. You're a nutcase, Frank! My mother told me not to marry you!

FRANK: But what if we *do* see a spaceship?

BARB: I'm going to make you regret this. If a mountain lion doesn't eat me, or I don't freeze to death, I'm going to make you sorry. *(She lies down and goes to sleep.)*

FRANK: Well, I guess that's only fair. *(Looking upward.)* All I want is to see one little UFO. That's all. Just one. *(A flashlight from the audience comes on and shines around the theater. The light crosses Frank's face. He stands up, excited. Shouts.)* Barb! Wake up! I see something! *(Looks left.)* I think it landed! I'm going to check. You stay here.

(Frank quickly exits SL. Alien enters SR, looks around, and crosses to Barb. Alien kneels above her. She opens her eyes.)

BARB: Oh, Frank! Grow up! *(She turns over and goes to back to sleep. Blackout.)*

Scene 2

(AT RISE: Office of "The National Explainer," New York City. Stella Star, the editor enters, and sits down at a desk downstage. She is talking on her cell phone.)

STELLA: (*Into phone.*) What'd ya mean the latest issue isn't selling? How can it not sell? It was well researched, well documented, and written with style. Tony Taurus actually got an interview with Boom Boom Tortellini from his prison cell. We're talking maximum security here. This guy's whacked more people than [Tony Soprano]...Okay, [Tony Soprano] is fictitious...Well, the public *should* want cutting-edge journalism!...Okay. Tell the Board of Directors I'll take care of everything. The next issue *will* sell. (*She hangs up. Yells.*) Tony! [*Or insert the name of another famous fictitious mobster.*]

(*Tony Taurus enters and crosses to Stella.*)

TONY: Here, boss. How's that special edition selling? Organized crime is always a winner. And I tell ya, Stella, when I was interviewing Boom Boom Tortellini, I felt the power and the fear of the mob. Boom Boom's whacked more people than [Tony Soprano].

STELLA: [Tony Soprano] is fictitious.

TONY: So is Boom Boom Tortellini...I mean...well...you know what I mean.

STELLA: We have problems, Tony.

TONY: I knew they'd find out about Boom Boom. I'm sorry, Stella. No real mobsters would talk to me.

STELLA: Our problem is not with your journalistic ethics, which are indisputably low. Our problem is with "The National Explainer." People aren't buying it.

TONY: Why not?

STELLA: Our stories have too much—dare I say it?—integrity.

TONY: I thought you wanted integrity. I thought you hired me to bring some legitimacy to the stories in “The National Explainer.”

STELLA: I hired you because you’re my cousin, and my mother made me hire you.

TONY: But what about integrity and honesty?

STELLA: I learned in journalism school, that a reporter’s integrity and honesty are the most important qualities he or she has. Ethics! High standards! Moral incorruptibility! Then I became the editor of “The National Explainer,” and I learned that there’s more to journalism than telling the truth.

TONY: What’s more important than telling the truth?

STELLA: Making stuff up. Now, we have one month to turn this paper around, or I’ll be back editing the classifieds in [Charlotte, North Carolina], and you’ll be back at the Burger Palace working the midnight shift. *[Or insert the name of your local newspaper or a nearby newspaper.]*

TONY: *(Frantic.)* Oh, no! Not the Burger Palace! Please! I’ll do anything!

STELLA: We need a story so ridiculous that it stands out from all of the other ridiculous stories people see on the newsstands.

TONY: Elvis sightings are always popular.

STELLA: Too common.

TONY: Big Foot? Killer insects? Cannibalism?

STELLA: I don’t know, Tony. Those are everyday kinds of subjects. We need something powerful.

TONY: There’s always the extraterrestrials.

STELLA: Now, there’s a thought. No one’s done an E.T. story since “The National Uncoverer” claimed half of Congress was from another galaxy.

TONY: Yeah. That was a great moment in bad journalism.

STELLA: It also got "The National Uncoverer" sued...which sold even more copies. Ever since then, the rest of the tabloid world's been afraid to go near the space alien genre. Maybe it's time we brought it back. Tony, where is the center of extraterrestrial activity?

TONY: Washington, D.C.?

STELLA: No! Roswell, New Mexico.

TONY: Where?

(She opens a desk drawer and pulls out a file.)

STELLA: Here is it. *(Reads from the file.)* "Roswell. Summer of 1947. A rancher rode out to check on the sheep. He noticed pieces of metal debris scattered across a large area of desert and a shallow trench several hundred feet long. A few days later, he drove into Roswell and showed some of the metal debris to the sheriff, who showed it to a government official. The debris sight was closed and the wreckage was cleared." Now that leads to a very significant question.

TONY: Yeah. What do sheep eat in the desert?

STELLA: That's not the question. Follow me here, Tony. A government report stated that wreckage from a crashed disk was discovered. Hours later, the government rescinded the first report and stated that the wreckage was from a weather balloon, and that the first report mistakenly reported the wreckage as being from a flying saucer.

TONY: That sounds typical. Weather balloons crash all the time...don't they?

STELLA: There's more. Back in Roswell, a mortician received a request for some small hermetically sealed coffins. When he drove out to the crash sight, he saw large pieces of wreckage with strange engravings. He asked a military nurse on the sight about it, and she drew pictures of bodies on a prescription pad. The military police forced him to

leave, and the next day, the nurse was transferred to parts unknown.

TONY: Hmm. That's sounding more like a story I can work with.

STELLA: The story also emerged that the military had been watching an unidentified flying object on radar for four days in southern New Mexico. On July 4th, radar indicated the object had crashed northwest of Roswell. And the government's been covering up ever since.

TONY: So you want me to go to Roswell and uncover the truth after 60 years of cover-ups!

STELLA: Actually, I want you to go to Roswell and make up something that will sell tabloids. Get some photos, some eyewitness reports, and write a story that will knock the socks off of our competition.

TONY: Do you think there really was an alien spaceship in Roswell?

STELLA: I don't care. I just want to have a job this time next month.

TONY: So, I'm off to Roswell.

STELLA: By the way, I can't afford to buy you a plane ticket.

TONY: How am I supposed to get there?

STELLA: You can borrow my car.

TONY: But your car's a piece of junk! How am I supposed to drive 2,000 miles?

STELLA: By sitting in the driver's seat, placing the key in the ignition, and starting the engine. By the way, if the "check engine" light comes on, just ignore it. There's not enough left to check.

(She hands him a car key.)

TONY: Stella, don't make me go to New Mexico. I can stay here and make something up.

STELLA: Bon voyage, Tony. *(She exits.)*

TONY: Well, there goes the weekend. (*He exits. Blackout.*)

Scene 3

(AT RISE: Town hall, Rosewell, NM. There is a desk upstage and a podium facing SR. Ned, Mary, and other Citizens enter SR, carrying chairs. They assemble the chairs in two or three rows facing the podium and sit. Mayor Moon and Miss Sky enter. Mayor Moon stands at the podium and Miss Sky sits at the desk and takes notes.)

MOON: As Mayor of Rosewell, New Mexico, I, the Honorable Marty Moon, call this meeting of the Board of Aldermen to order. *(Indicating Sky.)* Miss Sky, our esteemed secretary, will read the minutes of our last meeting.

(Sky crosses to the podium.)

SKY: *(Reads.)* "The last meeting of the Board of Aldermen was a month ago. Mayor Moon announced the hiring of the Honorable Leo "Light Fingers" Lite as our new treasurer. He came highly recommended, though Mayor Moon couldn't remember anybody who recommended him. Mr. Ned Nova complained that his sheep couldn't find enough to eat in the desert. Mayor Moon asked why Mr. Nova was trying to raise sheep in the first place. No further action was taken. We adjourned and went over to Mama Leone's Café. I ordered a Navajo taco with beans. It was delicious. I highly recommend it. I went home and watched [Letterman] on late night TV." *[Or insert the name of another late-night show.]*

(Sky returns to her seat to take notes.)

MOON: Thank you, Miss Sky. We did offer the position of treasurer of Rosewell to Mr. Leo "Lite Fingers" Lite, and he accepted. Mr. Lite served as treasurer until last week, which

brings me to new business. Under new business, I have the unpleasant task of reporting that our former town treasurer, the not-so-honorable Leo "Light Fingers" Lite disappeared...along with all of the revenues we'd been collecting for the past ten years.

(All moan and shake their heads.)

NED: What about my sheep? They're still hungry.

MOON: Buy some Sheep Chow.

CITIZEN 1: What about "Light Fingers"?

MOON: I'm happy to report that Mr. Lite has been located.

(All cheer.)

NED: So, where is he?

MOON: He's in Las Vegas.

CITIZEN 1: What's he doing in Las Vegas?

MOON: Sitting in a cell in a federal prison. I never should have hired a treasurer with the name "Light Fingers." You see, Mr. Lite absconded with the entire budget of Rosewell, and lost it all on the blackjack table. It seems Mr. Lite had a habit of taking money from small towns and losing every penny of it playing blackjack.

CITIZEN 2: Can we get the money back from the casino?

MOON: I looked into that, and the answer is a definite no. The casinos don't care where the money comes from. Once they have it, it's theirs. They did invite all of the citizens of Rosewell to come to Las Vegas and try and win it back.

CITIZEN 3: Should we go to Las Vegas and give it a try?

MOON: I'm thinking that would not be a good idea.

CITIZEN 4: Can you run the town without any money?

MOON: I've looked into that, and the answer is another negative. We have to have revenues to run Rosewell. So,

we have two choices: we can raise our taxes by 10,000 percent—

CITIZENS: (*Shout.*) Are you nuts?!

MOON: Or, we can come up with another plan.

CITIZEN 5: Why should *we* come up with the plan? *You* hired "Light Fingers."

CITIZENS: (*Shout.*) Yeah!

MOON: *You* have to come up with a plan because it's *your* money.

CITIZENS: (*Meekly.*) Oh.

MOON: Does anyone have any ideas about how we could raise revenues? (*Miss Cloud raises her hand.*) The chair recognizes Miss Mary Cloud, the owner of Mary's Health Foods and Taxidermy.

(*Miss Cloud stands.*)

CLOUD: Yeah. Like couldn't we...you know...think up...well...kind of like...when...like...with some really good...uh...

MOON: Miss Cloud, why don't you search for nouns and verbs, and let us know when you've found some.

CLOUD: Like...okay. (*Cloud sits.*)

MOON: Does anyone else have any ideas about raising revenues?

SKY: Wait a minute! (*Writes furiously to get Miss Cloud's words down. Reads back.*) "Like...uh...when...really good..."

MOON: Don't write that down!

(*Sky stops writing.*)

SKY: I'm the secretary. I'm supposed to write down everything everybody says at the town meetings.

MOON: You don't need to write down gibberish! Now...I need to hear some ideas. How can we raise money?

CITIZEN 5: How about a big bingo game? Only we don't give away any prizes. We just collect the money and people get to play bingo.

MOON: Why would anyone play bingo knowing there was nothing they could win?

CITIZEN 6: How about a big car wash? Two hundred dollars a car!

CITIZEN 7: A bake sale? We'll charge \$500 a cake.

CITIZEN 1: A spaghetti dinner? We'll charge 600 dollars for a plate of spaghetti—\$700 if you want sauce! Another \$100 for parmesan cheese and garlic bread!

MOON: Ladies and gentlemen, your ideas are all well intended, but they miss the basic point. If we do these things, we are only generating money from ourselves. We could place a big pot in the middle of the room, everybody in Roswell could toss in their life savings, and we wouldn't have to bake cakes or cook spaghetti. And the results would be the same.

CITIZEN 1: But I really like spaghetti.

MOON: Do you want to pay 600 dollars for a plate of it?

CITIZEN 6: Seven hundred with sauce.

NED: As long as everybody is going broke, could my sheep graze in your yards? You're not gonna want to take care of all that grass.

CITIZENS: (*Shout.*) No!

CITIZEN2: You must have something in mind, Mayor.

MOON: I do. Ladies and gentlemen...and others...we need to reach outside of Roswell.

CITIZEN 3: There isn't anything outside of Roswell but cactus and sand...and hungry sheep.

MOON: I mean, way outside of Roswell. What's the nearest town?

CITIZEN 4: Roswell.

MOON: What do they have in Roswell that we don't have in Roswell?

CITIZEN 4: A shopping center!

CITIZEN 5: A [Chick-fil-A]! *[Or insert the name of another fast-food restaurant.]*

CITIZEN 6: Streetlights that work!

CITIZEN 7: One less letter in the name of their town!

CLOUD: And like...other...you know...stuff!

MOON: You're overlooking the obvious. Think about 1947: spacecraft...UFOs...aliens...

CITIZEN 1: Oh, yeah! They have a movie theater!

MOON: *(Frustrated.)* No! They have the *real* UFOs! Every day people go to Roswell to see where the government claimed they didn't find a spacecraft. And what do these people do when they get to Roswell?

CITIZEN 2: They go to the movies?

MOON: They spend money! They buy food, they buy lodging, they buy little green inflatable space aliens, and they spend money! They have conventions and spend money! They make documentary films and spend money! Every time they turn around, they spend money!

CITIZEN 3: Uh...doesn't that get kind of expensive?

MOON: If we want to pull ourselves out of this financial disaster Mr. Leo Lite has so ungraciously put us in, we need to bring the weirdoes, and their money, here to Roswell!

CITIZEN 4: What do we have that the weirdoes would want to buy?

MOON: We need to provide the weirdoes with something they'll want.

CLOUD: I've got some...like...herbs...and...you know...animals that used to be alive...and stuff.

MOON: We need to provide the weirdoes with something they'll *really* want. Are you following me? *(All eagerly nod yes, then slowly change to no.)* Do I have to spell it out? We need our own extraterrestrials! Someone needs to witness a spacecraft crash to earth!

CITIZEN 5: Gee, Mayor. That could take a long time. I mean, we've got jobs and families.

MOON: Oh, for goodness sakes! We need to invent a spaceship crashing to earth! It crashes, we report it, we claim the government came and cleaned it up, and people stop going to Roswell to look for the truth and start coming here!

CITIZEN 6: Uh...how do we build a spaceship?

CITIZEN 7: And how do we get it to fly? None of us are engineers.

MOON: (*Frustrated.*) We don't need it to fly! We don't even need a spaceship! We just need to say we saw one crash. That's all. A spaceship crashed outside of Roswell. The government denies everything, just like they did with Roswell, and nobody believes them.

CITIZEN 1: But that's not honest.

MOON: Neither is Leo Lite stealing our money! We can either find new sources of revenue or lose everything we have here. Granted, we don't have much. But we do have something. And we're going to have to work to keep it. Now, who's with me? (*All raise their hands.*) Good.

CITIZEN 2: Let me get this straight. We're supposed to go out in the desert and wait for a UFO that doesn't exist to land?

MOON: I'll make this easy. Mr. Ned Nova and Miss Mary Cloud are to come up with a UFO. How's that?

CITIZENS: (*Shout.*) Great!

CLOUD/NED: (*Shout.*) Wait a minute!

MOON: Meeting adjourned!

SKY: Wait! (*Trying to take notes.*) You're saying we're looking for UFOs...only there aren't any. And you've assigned Mr. Nova and Miss Cloud the task to come up with what doesn't exist in the first place. Is that correct?

(*Moon thinks.*)

MOON: That's right. Now leave! *(All start to exit. To Ned and Cloud.)* Not you two.

(Ned and Cloud remain. Citizens exit, taking the chairs and the podium with them.)

NED: Why me?

MOON: You're a sheep farmer. The guy in Roswell who saw the first UFO was a sheep farmer. You'll give the story some credibility. If tourists and reporters come here, you'll be able to buy your sheep some food.

NED: But this isn't honest!

MOON: The town is broke. What should I do?

CLOUD: How about...like...you know...smell the coffee...

MOON: *(To Cloud.)* Do you realize that nothing you say makes any sense?

CLOUD: So?

MOON: *(To Ned.)* Think about your poor skinny little sheep. You'll be able to feed them.

NED: Sheep are kind of mean. I keep hoping they'll run off. Besides, outsiders will mess up the town.

MOON: The town's already a mess. And most of the citizens are about as smart as fence posts. *(To Sky.)* Don't write that down.

SKY: But I'm the secretary. I'm supposed to write down everything you say.

MOON: The meeting is adjourned! *(Moon takes her notes.)* Forget it! Run over to Mama Leona's and get some huevos rancheros. *(Sky exits.)* Now, I know this isn't saying much, but you're about the smartest citizens of Roswell. I want you two to come up with a UFO story we can sell to the press.

NED: Can't you think of something else? Something honest?

CLOUD: And...like...why should we...uh...what was the question?

MOON: If we don't get some money, no one's gonna be buying health foods or having their cats stuffed.

CLOUD: Uh-oh.

MOON: And nobody's gonna buy lamb chops.

NED: That's not good.

MOON: Go find us a UFO!

(They exit. Blackout.)

Scene 4

(AT RISE: TV studio, New York City. Reporter 1 and Citizen 1 enter DSL and sit.)

REPORTER 1: *(To audience ala TV newscaster.)* Good morning. Law enforcement agencies are at a loss to explain the blockbuster prison interview of convicted hit man Boom Boom Tortellini. The story broke, in of all places, a well-known tabloid called "The National Explainer." The interview with Mr. Tortellini gave names of mob members, descriptions of hits, and insight into the day-to-day activities of the Tortellini crime family. Law enforcement is not only denying that Mr. Tortellini is locked away in a federal prison, they're denying that he even exists. With me is the only member of the NYPD who agreed to speak on camera. *(To Citizen 1.)* What can you tell us about Tortellini?

CITIZEN 1: Tortellini? Well...it's served at a lot of Italian restaurants.

REPORTER 1: What about the sensational interview with crime boss Boom Boom Tortellini?

CITIZEN 1: Uh...I saw something about it at the checkout counter at my local supermarket.

REPORTER 1: *(Frustrated.)* Do you have personal knowledge of Mr. Tortellini's existence?

CITIZEN 1: I'm not sure what you're talking about.

REPORTER 1: You *are* with the NYPD, are you not?

CITIZEN 1: Oh, yes. I'm an inspector.

REPORTER 1: For an inspector, you don't seem to have a lot of knowledge of this particular criminal.

CITIZEN 1: Criminal? What would I know about criminals?

REPORTER 1: You're a policeman, aren't you?

CITIZEN 1: No. I'm with the NYPD...The New York Poultry Division. I inspect chickens. Now, I can tell you all about

chickens. Hens, roosters. Big chickens, little chickens. Baked chickens, fried chickens. Chickens are very interesting. They can get kind of mean...if they're alive, that is.

REPORTER 1: *(Frustrated.)* Never mind.

CITIZEN 1: May I leave now?

REPORTER 1: Please do.

(They exit. Blackout.)

Scene 5

(AT RISE: Office of Benny Bologna, New York City. Benny Bologna enters, sits at a desk DSC, and reads a tabloid. Sally the Strangler and Betty the Butcher enter and cross to Benny.)

SALLY: Hey, Benny. Me and Betty ran into Rudy down on the docks.

BETTY: He said youse looking for some muscle.

BENNY: Hey, it's the Slasher sisters. Good to see ya, girls. Have a seat.

(Sally and Betty look around. There are no chairs.)

SALLY: I think we'll stand.

BETTY: Yeah. Thanks anyway.

BENNY: What you girls know about this?

(He hands them the tabloid.)

SALLY: Wow! *(Reads.)* "Farmer Eaten by Large Pumpkin"! How come we never heard about this on the news?

BETTY: 'Cause we don't never watch the news.

SALLY: Oh, yeah. Well, this is a good thing to know about. Ain't no way I'm going near a pumpkin.

BENNY: I'm talking about this story at the top of the page. *(Points.)*

SALLY: *(Reads.)* "Imprisoned Hit Man Tells His Story." Hey, this is about Boom Boom Tortellini.

BENNY: Yeah. What'd ya knows about Tortellini?

BETTY: It's really good if you don't use too much garlic in the marinara sauce.

BENNY: I'm talking about Boom Boom Tortellini! The imprisoned hit man!

BETTY: Well...not just a whole lot. In fact, I ain't never heard of him.

(Sally reads the tabloid.)

SALLY: This guy names a lot of wise guys: Ronnie "the Wrench" Ravioli, Lenny "the Lizard" Linguini, Bobby "the Brick" Bruschetta. Wow! These must be some really important guys.

BENNY: Really? What makes you say that?

SALLY: I ain't never heard of none of 'em.

BETTY: And I'm thinking I might like Italian food for lunch...

SALLY: What's the story on this Boom Boom guy?

BENNY: That's what I wants youse two to find out.

BETTY: Okay. Where do we start?

BENNY: Ordinarily, I'd say start with Boom Boom, but if you two gets within a mile of a prison, they'll lock you up.

SALLY: Benny's got a point there. We shouldn't go looking for Boom Boom.

BETTY: We could try his mother.

SALLY: How do we find his mother?

BETTY: Look in the phone directory for "Boom Booms." There can't be that many.

BENNY: Why not try the reporter who wrote the story?

SALLY: Now there's an idea. Who's the reporter?

BENNY: Some guy named Taurus.

BETTY: No bull?

BENNY: No bull. Find Taurus and give him the old shakedown. Nothing too rough. Pull out a fingernail or two. Maybe a little plastic surgery on his face.

SALLY: Geez, boss. How do we do plastic surgery?

BENNY: With a plastic knife! Find this guy and make him talk! We can't have hit men I ain't never heard of before talking to the press about guys I ain't never heard of before.

BETTY: Right, boss.

BENNY: If there's a wise guy celebrity around here, it's gonna be me!

SALLY: We'll take care of things, boss. Uh...what exactly do we do after we give him the old shakedown?

BENNY: Find out about this Boom Boom Tortellini guy. Where'd he come from. Who's his captains? What's his favorite color and his hopes and dreams for the future. You know, the usual.

BETTY: Right, boss. The usual. Coming right up. *(Sally and Betty quickly exit then suddenly re-enter and cross to Benny.)*

Uh, boss. Where do we look for this Bull fellow?

BENNY: It's not Bull! It's Taurus!

SALLY: Ain't that...like...the same thing?

BENNY: Go by the office at "The National Explainer"! Do I have to do all the thinking?

SALLY: No. But it's a whole lot easier on us when you do.

(Benny stands.)

BENNY: *(Threatening.)* Get out of here! *(Sally and Betty exit. Benny sits down and reads his tabloid.)* How dare a guy I've never heard of get all this press coverage!

(Blackout.)

Scene 6

(AT RISE: *The desert, Roswell, NM. Ned Nova enters SL and crosses downstage. He looks out into the audience through binoculars. Frank and Barb enter SR, crawling on all fours. Frank drags his backpack.*)

BARB: (*Exhausted and dehydrated.*) You're going to regret this, Frank.

FRANK: I tell you, Barb, I saw a spaceship. In the distance. I'm talking bright lights and everything. It set down on the ground, then took off and disappeared into the heavens.

BARB: Did you get any photos, Frank?

FRANK: I...uh...forgot my camera.

BARB: You're delusional.

FRANK: Oh, come on, Barb! This is important.

BARB: Gas is important, Frank. In your eagerness to get to Rosewell, you forgot to put gas in the car.

FRANK: It's Roswell, Barb. Not Rosewell.

BARB: Let's ask that man over there if he can maybe help out a little bit and rescue us from certain death.

(*Barb and Frank crawl to Ned.*)

FRANK: Excuse me. Are you an optical delusion?

NED: Uh...I don't think so. Are you?

FRANK: (*To Barb.*) I don't know. Barb, are we?

BARB: (*To Ned.*) Mister, we have been crawling around the desert for the past four hours. We're tired, we're dehydrated, and we're badly in need of baths.

NED: I can see that... (*Sniffs the air.*) ...and smell that. Don't you know it's dangerous to go out in the desert unprepared?

FRANK: We're prepared. I brought a video camera, a digital camera, charts, maps, and all of the back issues of every tabloid ever published about UFOs.

NED: Did you bring food or water?

FRANK: We couldn't fit everything into the station wagon.

BARB: It's not that we're not happy to see you, but what are you doing out here?

NED: I'm looking for sheep.

BARB: Sheep? I didn't know sheep lived in the desert. What do they eat?

NED: Not much.

BARB: Could you possibly help us find something that resembles civilization? I would give anything for a traffic jam or the sweet smell of sewer gas quaffing from a subway station.

NED: Well, the town of Rosewell is just across that sand dune. I can give you a ride.

BARB/FRANK: Thanks.

FRANK: Did you see the UFO last night?

NED: *(Cautious.)* What UFO?

BARB: Don't listen to my husband. He's been out in the hot sun too long.

FRANK: I saw one pass slowly overhead. Not ten feet from the ground.

NED: What did this UFO look like?

FRANK: It was very bright. And I think it had racing stripes.

NED: *(Helping Frank to his feet.)* I think you'd better come with me.

(Ned escorts Frank off stage, leaving Barb.)

BARB: *(Shouts.)* Hey! What about me?! Come back here!
(She exits, crawling. Blackout.)

Scene 7

(AT RISE: *The office of "The National Explainer."* Stella enters, sits at a desk, and is talking on her cell phone.)

STELLA: (*Into phone.*) So, Tony. How's the trip?...The car broke down in Oklahoma. Wow. I'm surprised it made it that far. What's the problem?...It needs new tires, new seats, new doors, new windshields, and a new engine? Man, that sounds expensive. How much do they want to fix it?... (*Outraged.*) Five hundred dollars! The car didn't cost that much when it was new! Forget it! When you finish up in Roswell, pull it back to New York...Well, it's a 1991 Yugo...It's not *that* heavy...If you want to get the car repaired, that's fine. How much cash you got?...That's not enough. Let's see. You could go to work at a fast food place and make up the rest in a couple of months. But I really need that story about UFOs. Why don't you take your money and buy a bus ticket to Roswell?...Reimburse you? You get me that story, and I'll buy you anything you want, Tony! (*She hangs up her phone.*) I'll buy you anything you want all alright. Anything off the children's menu at the pancake house.

(*Sally and Betty enter and cross to Stella.*)

SALLY: All right, sister. Where's Taurus?

STELLA: It's northwest of Orion, visible between 90 and 65 degrees latitude. Best seen in January after 9 p.m. Why do you ask?

BETTY: What are you talking about?

STELLA: Basic astronomy. Have you ever heard of knocking? (*Betty knocks on the desk.*) Who is it?

BETTY: It's Sally the Strangler and Betty the Butcher. The Slasher sisters.

STELLA: I'm sorry. Nobody's home. Try again later.

SALLY/BETTY: *(Turning to leave.)* Okay.

(They suddenly stop, turn, and threaten Stella.)

SALLY: Very funny!

BETTY: Yeah! We ain't that dumb...yet!

STELLA: Okay. What do you two weirdoes want?

SALLY: You ran a story on a wiseguy named Boom Boom Tortellini.

STELLA: Yeah. And I can tell you that was one big mistake.

BETTY: Did the family come after you?

STELLA: No. We haven't sold so few papers since we ran the story on the [Central High School Cheerleaders]. *[Or insert the name of a local rival high school.]*

SALLY: What do you know about Tortellini?

STELLA: It's stuffed pasta.

SALLY: How about Boom Boom Tortellini?

STELLA: He's a guy in the joint. All I know's what I read in the paper.

BETTY: Tell us about the guy who wrote the Tortellini story.

STELLA: Tony Taurus. One of my best writers. Well, he *was* one of my best writers.

BETTY: Ain't he breathing no more?

STELLA: As far as I know he is. What do you two want with Tony?

SALLY: We wants to ask him a few questions. Then give him the old shakedown.

STELLA: Oh. Well, why didn't you say so. I was afraid you were going to hurt him or something.

BETTY: So, where is he?

STELLA: Somewhere in Oklahoma.

SALLY: Oklahoma? What's he doing in Oklahoma?

STELLA: Probably scratching his head and wondering why I ever bought a 1991 Yugo.

BETTY: How might we best go about finding him?

STELLA: He's tracking down a story. It's all kind of undercover. You know, confidential. That's all I can say about him.

SALLY: How about we take you swimming in the East River?

STELLA: Gee, that's a pretty nasty place to swim.

BETTY: You won't be doing much swimming.

SALLY: Yeah. It's hard to swim when you're wearing concrete shoes.

STELLA: Hmmm. I see your point. Okay. Tony is heading out to Roswell, New Mexico, to do a story on UFOs.

(Sally and Betty look confused.)

BETTY: *(Pronounces "UFOs" as if it's a word.)* Oofoze? What are oofoze?

STELLA: Uh...unidentified flying objects.

BETTY: You mean bugs? Man, I hate those things.

STELLA: If you two want to find Tony, you're gonna have to go to Roswell.

SALLY/BETTY: Right!

(They quickly exit then re-enter.)

SALLY: Uh...which way's Roswell?

(Stella points right. They exit SR.)

STELLA: Wow. Somebody left the gate open at the stupid farm. I wonder if I should warn Tony? Naw. Those two couldn't find Brooklyn Bridge, much less New Mexico. *(Thinks.)* I wonder if Tony can find New Mexico? *(She exits. Blackout.)*

Scene 8

(AT RISE: Town hall, Rosewell, NM. Moon and Sky enter. Moon sits at the desk.)

MOON: Miss Sky. I'm going to be very busy, so don't let anyone disturb me.

SKY: Another nap, Mr. Moon?

MOON: A nap? Is that what you think I do, Miss Sky? I happen to be the elected official who is charged with the day-to-day operations of the town of Rosewell! I take my responsibility seriously!

SKY: Including your beauty sleep.

MOON: Including my beauty sleep. So try and keep it quiet around here. I only slept 12 hours last night. I'm exhausted.

(Moon props his feet up on his desk, leans back, and goes to sleep.)

SKY: *(To herself.)* I've got to find a new job.

(She crosses left to exit. Ned, Barb and Frank enter.)

NED: We've got to see Mayor Moon.

SKY: He's not to be disturbed.

NED: Why not?

SKY: Because he happens to be the elected official who is in charge of the day-to-day operations of the town of Rosewell, and he takes his responsibility seriously.

NED: Sleeping again, huh?

SKY: He only got 12 hours last night.

NED: He'll want to see us.

SKY: Okay. *(She crosses to Moon. Shouts in his ear.)* Hey, Mayor! You got some visitors!

(Moon jumps up and falls from his chair.)

MOON: I told you I didn't want to be disturbed!

SKY: Sorry.

(Moon looks at Ned.)

MOON: Ned. What can I do for you, besides toss you in jail for disturbing the peace?

NED: I ran across these two out in the desert. I thought you might like to meet them.

MOON: Why? Do I look like the Welcome Wagon or something?

NED: They say they saw a UFO.

BARB: Frank saw the UFO. Not me.

(Moon sits up, interested.)

MOON: Really? A UFO?

FRANK: I saw it hover over the desert and then take off.

MOON: That's interesting. *(To Ned.)* How much did you pay this guy?

NED: Nothing. I was out watching my sheep try and eat cactus, and these two came crawling up and said they saw a spacecraft.

BARB: I never saw a spacecraft!

SKY: What were you two doing out in the desert in the middle of the night?

FRANK: I was looking for UFOs. That's why we came to Roswell.

MOON: Well, you didn't quite make it. This is Rosewell. *(To Barb.)* What were you doing while your husband was pretending to be on ["The X Files"]? *[Or insert the name of another science fiction show.]*

BARB: I was shivering inside a sleeping bag.

MOON: It gets cold at night. What'd you expect?

BARB: I'm from New York. I expect bagel stands, rude waitresses, and Madison Square Garden!

MOON/NED/SKY: (*Laughing.*) New York.

BARB: Is something wrong with New York?

MOON: Oh, no.

SKY: It just explains why you were out in the desert in the middle of the night looking for flying saucers.

NED: Can we use these two?

MOON: They're not exactly authentic.

SKY: But they *are* weird.

MOON: Weird enough?

SKY/NED: Maybe.

MOON: Miss Sky will work up a press release. (*Sky and Moon sniff and make sour faces.*) Whooooo! It smells like an old coyote met up with a campfire.

BARB: Is there someplace we could clean up?

SKY: I'll take them by the carwash.

(*All exit. Blackout.*)

Scene 9

(AT RISE: TV studio, Rosewell, NM. Reporter 2 and Citizen 2 enter DSR and sit. There are two chairs.)

REPORTER 2: (To audience, as if on television.) Last night residents of an isolated part of New Mexico reported seeing bright lights in the sky. With me is one of those citizens. (To Citizen 2.) What can you tell me about another possible UFO sighting in New Mexico?

CITIZEN 2: Not much.

REPORTER 2: Oh. What were you doing last night?

CITIZEN 2: Not much.

REPORTER 2: Were you out in the desert late last night?

CITIZEN 2: I think so.

REPORTER 2: Did you see bright lights in the sky?

CITIZEN 2: I saw stars. They were pretty bright.

REPORTER 2: Did you happen to see bright lights and a large cylindrical object hovering in the sky?

CITIZEN 2: Uh...maybe. What does "cylindrical" mean?

REPORTER 2: Did you fear for your life?

CITIZEN 2: Uh...sure.

REPORTER 2: Is there anything else you can tell us?

CITIZEN 2: Uh...not really.

REPORTER 2: Thank you. (To audience.) As you can see, we have yet another UFO sighting. Time will tell if this turns out to be another false alarm, or the real thing.

CITIZEN 2: Can I go home now?

REPORTER 2: Please do.

(Blackout.)

Scene 10

(AT RISE: Somewhere in Mexico/Office of Benny Bologna. There are two chairs DSC. Sally and Betty enter and sit as if in a car. Sally drives. Betty sleeps. Betty has a road map in her lap. Benny's office is represented with a desk and chair off to one side of the stage.)

SALLY: Hey, Betty. Wake up.

BETTY: (*Stirs.*) What?

(*Sally looks at her watch.*)

SALLY: Shouldn't we be in New Mexico by now?

BETTY: Why's it so dark? It's five o'clock.

SALLY: It's five o'clock in the morning. You've been sleeping for... (*Tries to count on her fingers.*) ...a whole bunch of hours.

BETTY: Man, I must have been tired. Where are we?

SALLY: That's what I was going to ask you.

BETTY: Why me? You're the driver.

SALLY: You've got the map.

(*Betty unfolds the map.*)

BETTY: Okay. I have the map. Now what?

SALLY: Where are we?

(*Betty studies the map.*)

BETTY: I have no idea.

SALLY: We crossed the border a couple of hours ago.

BETTY: What border?

SALLY: New Mexico.

BETTY: That's good. We're in the right state.

SALLY: Did you know you had to pass through customs to go to New Mexico?

BETTY: Hmm. When we crossed the border into New Mexico, did you happen to notice the word "new" on any of the signs?

SALLY: I don't know. I was busy trying to deal with the language issue. Did you know they speak Spanish in New Mexico?

BETTY: I think I'd better call Benny.

(Betty dials her cell phone. On the opposite side of the stage, Benny enters and crosses to his desk. He is wearing a bathrobe and carries a teddy bear. He sits down and answers the phone.)

BENNY: *(Into phone.)* Yeah?

BETTY: *(Into phone.)* Hey, Benny. It's Betty the Butcher.

BENNY: *(Into phone.)* Hey, Betty. You woke me up, and it's really early in the morning. I'm fighting this intense desire to rip your face off.

BETTY: *(Into phone.)* Me and Sally might have a little issue here.

BENNY: *(Into phone.)* Are you in New Mexico yet?

BETTY: *(Into phone.)* We're in a Mexico. We ain't sure how new it is.

BENNY: *(Into phone.)* Do you see any traffic signs or anything?

(Betty looks out the "window.")

BETTY: *(Into phone.)* Yeah. There's a sign that says "Juarez."
(Pronounces it JU-ar-ez.)

BENNY: *(Into phone.)* Uh...two things, Betty. Number one: it's pronounced Juarez *(Pronounces it whar-RES)*. And number two: you need to turn around and go the other direction.

BETTY: *(To Sally.)* We need to turn around.

SALLY: Are we going back to New York?

BETTY: *(Into phone.)* You want us to head back to New York?

BENNY: *(Shouts.)* No! I want you to find that Tony Taurus fellow in Roswell, New Mexico! Do you two have a map?

BETTY: *(Into phone.)* We got a map.

BENNY: *(Into phone.)* Do you know how to read a map?

(Betty looks at the map and turns it around in several directions.)

BETTY: *(Into phone.)* I think so.

BENNY: *(Into phone.)* Then find Roswell, New Mexico, find Tony Taurus, and find out who the heck Boom Boom Tortellini is!

(Benny hangs up his phone and exits. Betty hangs up her phone.)

SALLY: What did Benny say?

BETTY: He said it's pronounced whar-REZ. Not JU-ar-ez.

SALLY: Then why isn't it spelled with a "W"?

BETTY: I don't know. You'd better turn the car around.

(Betty studies the map.)

SALLY: Can you find New Mexico on the map?

BETTY: I found Michigan. It must be somewhere nearby.

(Blackout.)

Scene 11

(AT RISE: Town hall, Rosewell. Moon and Sky cross to the desk. Moon sits down, picks up the phone, and dials.)

MOON: *(Into phone.)* I'm telling you, we had a UFO sighting last night! You need to send reporters and photographers and lots of people to stand around and gawk and spend money! This is big, I tell you! It's the real thing!...Well, same to you! *(Moon hangs up the phone.)* So much for the "L.A. Times." And "The New York Times." And "The Washington Post." And the "Miami Herald." And the [insert the name of a local newspaper] and every other newspaper in the country! I can't get anybody to send a reporter to Rosewell! I would do anything for a reporter to walk in the door right now!

(Tony enters, exhausted and dirty. His clothes are in a shambles.)

TONY: Is this where they see the UFOs?

SKY: Maybe. Who are you?

TONY: Tony Taurus. I'm a reporter. *(He falls to the floor.)*

MOON: Oh, great. I ask for a reporter, and I get a nutcase. *(Sky helps Tony lean back against the desk.)* Miss Sky, what are you doing?

SKY: This man is dehydrated...and dirty. And he says he's a reporter.

MOON: If he's a reporter, I'm the star of a Broadway musical.

(Ned and Cloud enter.)

NED: I think we got Barb and Frank cleaned up. We had to send Frank through the carwash twice.

CLOUD: I had some special soap...only it didn't...like...work or anything.

NED: (*Sees Tony.*) Who's that?

SKY: Tony Taurus. He says he's a reporter.

(*Ned kneels down beside Tony.*)

NED: This man needs water.

(*Sky exits.*)

CLOUD: And...like...some herbal treatments for bad karma.

MOON: The man needs a one-way ticket to a homeless shelter! By way of the carwash!

NED: (*To Tony.*) What happened?

TONY: I pulled a 1991 Yugo from Oklahoma to Texas. I tried to leave it there, but the Texas Rangers wouldn't let me.

MOON: What'd they do...come after you with baseball bats?

CLOUD: That's like...totally un-cool.

NED: He's not talking about the baseball team.

MOON/CLOUD: He's not?

NED: No. Texas Rangers are law enforcement officers.

MOON: I knew that.

CLOUD: Yeah. That goes...like...double for me, too.

TONY: Actually, I think it was the baseball team. It was a bunch of guys with baseball bats.

NED: Where's the 1991 Yugo?

TONY: I left it at the state line and ran all the way to Roswell.

NED: Wow. You ran a long way.

CLOUD: And you're still...like...not in Roswell.

TONY: I had to get away from that Yugo. Where am I?

MOON/NED/CLOUD: Rosewell.

MOON: It's like Roswell, only with an extra letter.

(Sky enters carrying a bottle of water, which she hands to Tony. He eagerly drinks.)

TONY: Thanks. Man, I never want to see another Yugo as long as I live. By the way, I think I'm banned from ever setting foot in Texas again.

CLOUD: Why didn't you...like, uh...leave the Yugo in Oklahoma?

TONY: They wouldn't let me.

SKY: Why did you have a Yugo in the first place?

TONY: It was my boss's car. She's the editor of "The National Explainer."

MOON: So, you really *are* a reporter.

TONY: Kind of. Have you ever seen "The National Explainer"?

MOON: No. Have I missed anything?

TONY: Not really.

NED: Maybe Tony can help us with our situation.

TONY: I'd love to hang around...and drink water...but I've got to get to Roswell.

MOON: Why? We have everything Roswell has...except culture and modern conveniences.

TONY: I have to do a story about UFOs.

(Moon crosses to Tony and offers his hand.)

MOON: You have come to the right place. We had a sighting last night.

TONY: But this isn't Roswell.

(Tony takes Moon's hand. Moon pulls Tony to his feet.)

MOON: Roswell is the past. This is the *new* center of extraterrestrialness. And *you* are going to be first with the story. We're going to introduce you to witnesses and show

you where the UFO touched down. The government's denying the whole thing, you know. Just like Roswell. Mr. Taurus, you are on your way to a Pulitzer Prize! Or a psychiatric evaluation paid for by the taxpayers of this country. Either way works for us. (*Moon steps back, fanning the air.*) We might stop by the carwash first...

(They exit. Blackout.)

Scene 12

(AT RISE: New York City. Stella's office is SR. Benny's office is SL. Stella enters SR and is talking on her cell phone to Tony.)

STELLA: *(Into phone.)* So, Tony. I got a certified letter from the state of Texas saying a certain 1991 Yugo had better be removed from its boundaries, or I'm going to face prosecution.

(Benny enters SL and is talking on his cell phone to Betty.)

BENNY: *(Into phone.)* Have you two made it across the border yet?...I ain't got a map handy, but I think you go to Carlsbad and hang a left.

STELLA: *(Into phone.)* You're in Rosewell? I told you to go to Roswell!

BENNY: *(Into phone.)* Iowa? What's Iowa got to do with anything?...Try looking at another part of the map.

STELLA: *(Into phone.)* You say someone saw a UFO in Rosewell?...Hmmm. This could be good. Make sure you get the scoop. I'm talking photos, testimonials, copyrights. I think I can leak something to the "New York Times." I got an old boyfriend who works there.

BENNY: *(Into phone.)* What do you see on the map?...El Paso? I think you're in the right neighborhood. What do you see north of El Paso?...The dashboard? Look at the map! What's above El Paso on the map?...The roof of the car? *(Frustrated.)* Put your finger on El Paso and push it toward the dashboard. Now what do you see?...Your knee?

STELLA: *(Into phone.)* Rosewell should be overrun with reporters by tomorrow. You get the story today. You fax me the story, and we'll put out a special edition.

BENNY: *(Into phone.)* Look, Betty. I don't know how to say this nicely, so I'm gonna say it rudely. I'm giving you and your flaky sister one day to find Tony Taurus. If you don't find him, I'm gonna fly out there personally and do the old shakedown on youse two. I'm gonna break your bones, peel off your skin, set your hair on fire...and then I'm really gonna hurt you! *(Hangs up and exits.)*

STELLA: *(Into phone.)* One more thing, Tony. Get my Yugo out of Texas! *(Hangs up and exits. Blackout.)*

Scene 13

(AT RISE: Outside the town hall, Rosewell. Ned, Cloud, Reporters, and Citizens enter.)

REPORTER 1: *(Sarcastic.)* This is just great. I was supposed to cover the Kentucky Derby. Instead, I get pulled away and sent to Roswell!

CITIZEN 1: This is Rosewell, not Roswell.

REPORTER 1: What's the difference?

CITIZEN 2: One letter and a couple thousand people.

CITIZEN 3: And shopping centers and medical facilities...

CITIZEN 4: And bowling alleys! Don't forget bowling alleys!

REPORTER 2: I was supposed to cover the President of France!

REPORTER 3: I was supposed to cover the Queen of England!

REPORTER 4: I was supposed to cover the President of the United States!

REPORTER 5: I was supposed to cover an Elvis sighting in Las Vegas!

REPORTER 1/2/3/4: Lucky!

REPORTER 1: How do you rate great assignments like that?

REPORTER 5: What's the difference? Now I'm stuck in Rosewall.

CITIZEN 5: That's Rosewell! And if you can't say it right, you don't belong here!

CITIZENS: Yeah!

(Reporters turn to leave.)

CITIZEN 6: But we don't want you to leave!

CITIZENS: No!

CITIZEN 7: We want you to stick around and buy stuff!

REPORTER 2: The only reason we're here is because some sheep farmer spent too long out in the desert and thought he saw a UFO.

REPORTER 3: And we're helping the local economy. We've rented every motel room in town.

REPORTER 4: We've eaten at every crummy restaurant.

REPORTER 5: And as soon as we can discredit this stupid story, we're out of here!

CITIZEN 4: Who says it's a stupid story?

REPORTERS: We do!

CITIZEN 4: Oh. Well, does anyone besides you think it's a stupid story?

REPORTER 1: No. Because no one's going to even hear about it. Now, start this press conference, so I can get back to the horse races.

(Moon, Frank, Barb and Tony enter and cross center, surrounded by Reporters and Citizens.)

MOON: As Mayor of Roswell, New Mexico, I, the Honorable Marty Moon, call this press conference to order.

SKY: Do you want me to read the minutes from last month?

MOON: There wasn't a press conference last month. You don't have any minutes to read.

SKY: I've got all the stuff you said about how ignorant and ill-informed the citizens of Roswell are.

CITIZENS: *(Outraged.)* What?!

MOON: She's thinking of different stuff I said about you being ignorant and ill-informed.

CITIZENS: *(Placated.)* Oh. Okay.

REPORTER 2: Uh, Mayor? You don't call a press conference to order. You just start talking.

MOON: Fine. Have it your way. I'm turning this event over to Mr. Tony Taurus of "The National Explainer."

REPORTER 3: "The National Explainer"? That's a piece of garbage!

REPORTER 4: We came all the way to Rosewell to listen to a hack from a tabloid?

MOON: Yes, you did. Now be nice.

REPORTER 5: They did that story on the crime boss...Boom Boom Tortellini. (*Sarcastic.*) That was some pretty good journalism.

TONY: Thank you. That was good journalism.

REPORTER 5: Of course, no one can find Boom Boom Tortellini.

TONY: If I may begin... (*He reads from a notepad.*) "Last night, at approximately 2:35 a.m., a UFO was seen landing in the desert, ten miles north of town." (*Indicating.*) This is Frank and Barb, two witnesses, who were camping nearby and saw the spacecraft.

BARB: I didn't see anything.

TONY: (*To Barb.*) Yes, you did. Now play along here. (*Barb rolls her eyes. Tony continues reading.*) "The spacecraft was a cylindrical object approximately a thousand feet in length, with indentations that could be doorways, and dark surfaces that could be for observation. Engraved on the sides of the craft were symbols that could be letters from an interplanetary alphabet. The craft was a dark metallic silver in color and moved silently through the atmosphere, indicating an advanced scientific civilization." We have some photographs, but they are a little rough.

FRANK/BARB: What photographs?

TONY: (*To Frank and Barb.*) We'll paint a banana and take a photo. Trust me. (*Reading from his notes.*) "The spacecraft hovered above the desert floor. Searchlights explored the terrain. Then, suddenly, a cargo bay door opened."

FRANK: It did?

REPORTER 1: (*To Tony.*) What happened?

TONY: Those intergalactic litterbugs tossed out dozens of trash bags full of space garbage!

REPORTER 2: How do you know it was garbage?

TONY: What else would the stuff in plastic bags be?

FRANK: Wait a minute! I never –

(Tony covers Frank's mouth with his hand.)

TONY: Put a lid on it, Frank. This is how we break a story in the tabloids.

REPORTER 3: So, you're saying the aliens used our planet, with its delicate ecosystem, for a cosmic garbage dump?

TONY: That appears to be the case.

REPORTER 4: Where's the garbage?

TONY: I'm coming to that. *(Reads.)* "Frank and Barb wandered around the desert for a couple of hours. They were blinded by the spaceship's bright lights."

FRANK/BARB: We were?

TONY: Mr. Ned Nova, a local sheep farmer, found them and brought them to the Mayor's office. I was called in, as I am an expert on extraterrestrial events.

REPORTER 5: What was a sheep farmer doing out in the desert?

TONY: He was tending sheep. That's what sheep farmers do.

REPORTER 6: What do sheep eat in the desert?

TONY: Not much. May I continue? Following Frank and Barb's re-hydration, we all drove out to the garbage dump to see what those lunar litterbugs left.

REPORTER 5: What did you see?

TONY: We saw our government picking up the garbage and stuffing it in large transport vehicles. We were warned not to say a word about this or we could disappear.

REPORTER 1: So, the government did it again.

CITIZEN 1: They don't want us to know the truth!

CITIZEN 2: Just like Roswell in 1947!

REPORTER 1: We could have something here.

REPORTER 2: Or it could be a lot of bologna.

REPORTER 1: Can we take that chance?

TONY: Ladies and gentlemen, the truth is out there.

(Sally and Betty enter and cross center.)

SALLY: Is this Roswell?

SKY: It's Rosewell. Roswell's down the road.

SALLY: Close enough. Is there a guy named Tony Taurus around here somewhere?

TONY: Uh...who wants to know?

BETTY: We wants to know! We wants the lowdown on Boom Boom Tortellini!

SALLY: And if he don't come clean, we're gonna make him sorry he was ever born!

(General Calvin Spacy enters and crosses center.)

SPACY: Okay! Nobody moves! I'm General Calvin Spacey, and you're surrounded by the United States Army!

REPORTER 2: It's another cover-up!

ALL: Yeah!

SPACY: There is no cover-up! And I'm here to make sure the non-cover-up gets covered up! I can make every one of you disappear!

MOON: Uh, Mr. Taurus, this is getting a little bit out of control.

SALLY: So you're Taurus!

(Sally and Betty surround Tony.)

BETTY: You're gonna come clean about the Tortellini business, and then you're gonna go swimming. *(To herself.)* Say, can you drown somebody in sand?

(Walker enters and crosses center.)

WALKER: I'm looking for a guy who left a 1991 Yugo in Texas! And when I find him, it ain't gonna be pretty!

MOON: Who are you?

WALKER: My name's Walker. I'm a Texas Ranger.

MOON: So, you're like a baseball player?

WALKER: I am a law enforcement officer!

MOON: I knew that.

BARB: Frank, if we ever get back to New York, I'm going to make you sorry!

(Blackout. Intermission.)

[END OF FREEVIEW]