

Excerpt terms and conditions

This excerpt is available to assist you in the play selection process.

Excerpts are not intended for performance, classroom or other academic use. In any of these cases you will need to purchase playbooks via our website or by phone, fax or mail.

A short excerpt is not always indicative of the entire work, and we strongly suggest you read the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

A Trip to the Moon **(One-Act Version)**

By

TRACY WELLS

Dramatic Publishing Company

Woodstock, Illinois • Australia • New Zealand • South Africa

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., without whose permission in writing no performance of it may be given. Royalty must be paid every time a play is performed whether or not it is presented for profit and whether or not admission is charged. A play is performed any time it is acted before an audience. Current royalty rates, applications and restrictions may be found at our website: www.dramaticpublishing.com, or we may be contacted by mail at: THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., 311 Washington St., Woodstock, IL 60098.

COPYRIGHT LAW GIVES THE AUTHOR OR THE AUTHOR'S AGENT THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO MAKE COPIES. This law provides authors with a fair return for their creative efforts. Authors earn their living from the royalties they receive from book sales and from the performance of their work. Conscientious observance of copyright law is not only ethical, it encourages authors to continue their creative work. This work is fully protected by copyright. No alterations, deletions or substitutions may be made in the work without the prior written consent of the publisher. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, videotape, film, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. It may not be performed either by professionals or amateurs without payment of royalty. All rights, including, but not limited to, the professional, motion picture, radio, television, videotape, foreign language, tabloid, recitation, lecturing, publication and reading, are reserved.

For performance of any songs, music and recordings mentioned in this play that are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

©MMXXIII by
TRACY WELLS

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(A TRIP TO THE MOON [ONE-ACT VERSION])

ISBN: 978-1-61959-296-4

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

All producers of the play *must* give credit to the author of the play in all programs distributed in connection with performances of the play and in all instances in which the title of the play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the play and/or a production. The name of the author *must* also appear on a separate line, on which no other name appears, immediately following the title, and *must* appear in size of type not less than fifty percent (50%) the size of the title type. Biographical information on the author, if included in the playbook, may be used in all programs. *In all programs this notice must appear:*

“Produced by special arrangement with
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, INC., of Woodstock, Illinois.”

A Trip to the Moon was premiered by Episcopal Collegiate School in Little Rock, Ark., in November 2021.

CAST (playing multiple roles):

Jillian Berry
Nikko Curtis
Hans Edwards
Mary Katherine Griffin
Julia Hall
Elle Hill
Ella Claire Moore
Sarah Wallace Moore
Lena Nelson
Dylynn Smith
Solomon Trice
Matthew Vano
Annie West

PRODUCTION:

Director/Designer..... James Mainard O’Connell
Stage Manager Victoria Bravo-Bowles
Assistant Stage Manager..... Ryan Utecht
Props and Costumes.....Katie Greer
Light Board Operator..... Anna Lien
Sound Board Operator Khristian Neal
Poster Design Elisa Delorme
Additional Crew..... Lucian Baugh, Garrison Brister,
Evelyn Calhoun, Lena Hansen,
Jorie Lien, Mary Kate Tursky,
Matthew Vano, Finley Young

A Trip to the Moon

(One-Act Version)

CHARACTERS

Scene 1: Bad Moon Rising

WOMAN (w): A woman trying to get a job at NASA.

MAN (m): A stressed-out employee of the space program.

Scene 2: Too Busy Thinking About My Baby

MARY (w): A mother worried for her son.

GLADYS (w): A neighbor excited about the moon landing.

HANK (m): A mail carrier.

Scene 3: You Can't Always Get What You Want

MEADOW (w): A teen who wants to go to Woodstock.

PAUL/PAULA (a): Her younger sibling.

MOTHER/FATHER (a): Her parent, who won't let her go.

Scene 4: Come Together

CHRIS (a): A young adult protesting for civil rights.

JESSIE (a): A young adult protesting the war.

SUZANNE (w): A young adult protesting for women's lib.

SARA (w): A teen who is ready to learn.

Scene 5: I Can't Get Next to You

RANDY (m): A guy who just wants to sit next to his crush.

LISA (w): Randy's crush.

JEFF (m): Randy's friend.

CINDY (w): Lisa's friend.

MOM (w): Randy's mom.

DAD (m): Randy's dad.

JACK/JACKIE (a): Randy's younger sibling who keeps getting in the way.

Scene 6: Suspicious Minds

CARL/CARLA (a): Believes the moon landing was a hoax.

MAUREEN (w): A waitress.

Scene 7: Fortunate Son

BRETT (m): A young soldier from a wealthy family who is out of his element in Vietnam.

JIMMY (m): A young soldier from the other side of the tracks.

Scene 8: Here Comes the Sun

WOMAN (w): A woman who gets the job.

MAN (m): Her surprised new boss.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Information regarding casting, setting, cutting and properties, among other production notes, can be found in the back of the book.

A Trip to the Moon

(One-Act Version)

Scene 1: Bad Mood Rising

AT RISE: *Interior of an office. A desk is C with a chair behind it, and files, paperwork, a telephone and an intercom are on top. MAN is seated at the desk, looking through paperwork, and is obviously stressed.*

MAN. Where are those specs? They're supposed to be right here. *(Puts down a folder, chooses another and starts leafing through it.)* This isn't it. *(Puts it down and chooses another, leafing through it.)* Why is it that I can never find what I need! *(Slams down the folder and pushes a button on the intercom.)* Sharon, can you come in here for a second?

(He releases the button and listens. We hear the sound of loud static.)

MAN *(cont'd)*. Great. Now the intercom is broken. *(Sighs, exasperated.)* This is NASA—the technological marvel of the world—and I don't even have a working intercom. *(Calls offstage.)* Sharon! *(Waits a moment, but no one comes. He grows angry.)* Sharon!!!

(WOMAN enters, holding a briefcase. MAN is confused.)

MAN *(cont'd)*. You're not Sharon.

WOMAN. No, sir.

MAN. Who are you?

WOMAN. I'm here for the interview.

MAN (*confused*). Interview?

WOMAN. For the engineering job.

MAN. How did you get an interview for an engineering job?

WOMAN. You mean because I'm a woman?

MAN. No. Because we've just sent the Apollo 11 to the moon in the hopes of achieving the first crewed lunar landing in human history! Who in their right mind scheduled a job interview at a time like this?

WOMAN. I would suspect someone in your human resources department.

MAN (*pushes the button on his intercom*). Sharon!

(Sound of loud static is heard.)

WOMAN. Your intercom isn't working properly.

MAN. You think? (*Calls offstage.*) Sharon!

WOMAN. Sharon isn't out there.

MAN. How do you know? You don't even know who Sharon is.

WOMAN. I assume it's the woman who's supposed to be sitting at the desk out there. (*Points offstage.*)

MAN. Yes. Sharon is my secretary.

WOMAN. Well, then you should probably know that Sharon is gone.

MAN. What do you mean she's gone?

WOMAN. I mean, her desk is empty.

MAN. She probably just went to powder her nose.

WOMAN. No, I mean her desk is empty. Spotless. Like no one lives there anymore.

MAN (*as he crosses toward offstage, as if looking out the door*). That's not possible.

WOMAN. I think Sharon quit.

(WOMAN crosses to the intercom and picks it up, looking at it.)

MAN *(looking offstage)*. She's gone!

WOMAN *(as she opens her briefcase, pulling out a small screwdriver kit)*. Like I said ...

MAN *(turning back to WOMAN, aghast)*. I think Sharon quit!

WOMAN. I wonder why ...

(She uses a screwdriver to fix the intercom during the next few lines as MAN continues to look offstage during his lines.)

MAN. That's the third secretary I lost this month!

WOMAN. You don't say?

MAN. People just don't want to work these days.

WOMAN. Or they don't want to work for you.

MAN *(ignoring her)*. What am I going to do without a secretary?
Who's going to answer the phones?

WOMAN *(puts the finishing touches on the intercom and sets it down)*. I'm sure you'll manage.

(She puts the toolkit in her briefcase, closes it and sets it on the floor.)

MAN *(gets an idea)*. Hey!

(He finally turns and crosses back to WOMAN.)

MAN *(cont'd)*. You don't have any secretarial skills by any chance, do you?

WOMAN *(annoyed)*. Absolutely not.

MAN. I thought you were here for a job.

WOMAN. An engineering job.

MAN. 'Cause I could hire you on the spot if you were interested in the secretarial position.

WOMAN. Like I said, I'm here for the engineering job. *(Holds out her resume.)* Here's my resume.

MAN. Right. *(Scans her resume quickly.)* School. Internship. Great. *(Throws it on the pile on his desk, then picks up a folder and starts leafing through it.)* Like I said, we're about to land a spacecraft on the moon tomorrow. It's not a good time for a job interview.

WOMAN. But your human resources department set this up and your secretary Sharon confirmed this appointment with me yesterday.

MAN. Sharon doesn't work here anymore.

WOMAN. I'm aware.

MAN *(not looking up)*. You're just going to have to reschedule.

WOMAN. With who?

MAN. My secretary.

WOMAN. You don't have a secretary.

MAN *(looking up at her, with a smile and a question in his eyes)*. I would if you're interested ...

WOMAN. Not a chance.

MAN *(looks back at the folder)*. Then I'm afraid you're just going to have to come back next month.

WOMAN. Next month! But I drove two hours to get here. Are you sure you can't spare a few minutes?

MAN. I'm sorry you've come all this way, but the spacecraft is scheduled to land in *(Looks at his watch.)* T-minus twelve hours, and I just don't have time for this.

WOMAN. I understand. *(Picks up her briefcase.)*

MAN *(looking around on his desk)*. And if I don't find the specs for the lunar module soon, we could have a real disaster on our hands!

WOMAN (*picks up a folder*). You mean *these* specs?

(*MAN rips them out of her hand.*)

MAN. Hey! Those are classified. (*Looks at them, then up at WOMAN.*) How did you find those? Are you some kind of Russian spy or something?

WOMAN (*pointing to the folder*). The label says “lunar module specs.”

MAN. Ah. Right. (*Smiles, sheepishly.*) Thanks.

WOMAN (*holds out her hand*). So, next month then.

MAN (*shaking her hand*). Next month. Just call my secretary to set it up. (*Smiling.*) Unless ...

WOMAN. Nope. Not a chance.

MAN. I had to ask.

(*WOMAN exits as he looks at the specs. He finds what he's looking for on the specs.*)

MAN (*cont'd*). There! I knew there was a tiny flaw in the axle. (*Closes the folder.*) I need to let mission control know right away! (*Pushes the button on the intercom.*) Sharon! (*Waits a minute, then remembers.*) Oh, right. (*Turns to exit, then turns back, realizing that there is no static.*) Hey! The intercom's fixed. (*Looks where WOMAN exited.*) Did she? (*Shakes his head.*) Couldn't have.

(*He starts to exit, stops, looks back, thinks, shakes his head and then exits as lights fade to black.*)

Scene 2: Too Busy Thinking About My Baby

(*Two mailboxes, either adjoined or side by side, are C. HANK enters, whistling and carrying a mail-carrier's bag.*)

He stops at the mailboxes, reaches into his bag, pulls out some letters and starts sorting them. MARY rushes onstage, then slows, composes herself and crosses to HANK.)

MARY. Good morning, Hank.

HANK. Morning, Mrs. Thompson.

MARY. Mary, please.

HANK. Sorry, Mrs. Thomp—er, Mary. *(Smiles sheepishly.)*

MARY *(takes a deep breath, nervously)*. Got anything good for me today?

HANK *(solemnly)*. Well, actually there is something.

MARY *(trying to remain calm)*. Oh?

(HANK looks down at the letters he's sorting and pulls one out that has a large government stamp on it.)

HANK. Now, it might not be anything.

MARY. I know.

HANK. Just because it's from them, doesn't mean—

MARY *(interrupting)*. But it's addressed to Jimmy?

HANK *(after a beat)*. Yes.

MARY *(takes another deep breath)*. OK.

(GLADYS enters.)

HANK. It's going to be OK, Mary.

GLADYS. What's going to be OK?

(MARY looks down and swipes at her eyes as HANK tucks the letter back in his stack.)

HANK *(quickly)*. Mrs. Thompson and I were just discussing the moon landing.

GLADYS. You worried about those astronauts, Mary?

MARY (*looks up, then waves her hand dismissively*). No, no, I'm sure they will be fine.

GLADYS (*clicking her tongue*). Oh, would you look at that?

You are worried, Mary! I can see the tears in your eyes.

MARY (*swiping at her eyes*). It's just a bug.

GLADYS. A bug went in your eye?

MARY. I don't know. Maybe. Or maybe it's an eyelash.

GLADYS. That's probably it.

MARY. I'm sure. (*Gets lost in thought during the next few lines.*)

GLADYS. Well I'm not worried about the astronauts either.

I'm just excited. Can you believe that the Apollo 11 is going to land on the moon tonight?

HANK. It's quite an achievement.

GLADYS. I know President Kennedy said we would make it to the moon by the end of the decade, but I have to say I never really believed him. God rest his soul.

HANK. Hard to imagine such a thing was actually possible.

GLADYS. I'm having a party tonight to watch—the whole family's coming over. (*Turning to MARY.*) You having a party too, Mary?

MARY (*not understanding*). A party?

GLADYS. For the moon landing. You having a party tonight?

MARY. Tonight? (*Finally snapping out of her thoughts.*) Oh, no. No party tonight.

GLADYS. But it's the moon landing!

MARY. Honestly, Gladys, I haven't put too much thought into the moon landing.

GLADYS. How can that be? The whole world is thinking about it!

MARY. I just have a lot on my mind, that's all.

GLADYS. Well, clear your mind and come to my party. It's the moon landing!

MARY. I don't think so.

GLADYS. But, Mary—

HANK (*interrupts as he reaches into his bag, puts the stack he was holding inside, then pulls out another stack, which includes catalogs and magazines*). Here you go, Mrs. Stevenson. Looks like you got the latest issue of *Modern Housewife* there.

GLADYS (*looking through her mail*). Ooh, great!

HANK. The newest issue of *Glamour* should be in there too.

GLADYS (*pulling out a magazine and looking at the cover*). Oh, this one's more for Janey. She just loves all those fashion tips and quizzes. (*Smiles at MARY*) Teenage girls, you know? You're so lucky you don't have to deal with that.

MARY (*with a tense smile*). Yes. So lucky.

GLADYS (*leafing through the magazine*). I have to admit, I do enjoy some of the beauty tips. (*Shows MARY the magazine*) What do you think about this shade of lipstick? Think it'd look good on me? (*Puckers up her lips and looks at MARY*)

MARY. I'm sure it would look great, Gladys.

GLADYS. I think so too. (*Starts sorting through her mail then stops and looks at MARY*) Well?

MARY. Well, what?

GLADYS. Where's your mail? (*To HANK*.) Hank, you didn't forget Mary's mail back at the post office, did you?

HANK (*looks at MARY, then reaches into his bag*). No. I've got it right here.

GLADYS. Then give it to her already. You know Mary and I like to exchange catalogs.

HANK (*places the government letter on top of the stack and hands it to MARY delicately*). Here you go, Mrs. Thompson.

(MARY takes the stack and stares down at the letter. HANK watches her sympathetically as GLADYS looks through her mail.)

GLADYS *(pulling out a catalog)*. I have the latest Penny's catalog right here if you want it, although I do need some new kitchen towels and Penny's always has the best color selection. *(Puts the catalog on the bottom of her stack and pulls out another one.)* Now the Sears catalog is advertising some beautiful nighties— *(Looks up quickly at HANK.)* sorry, Hank.

HANK *(holds up his hands)*. No worries, Mrs. Stevenson.

GLADYS *(continuing, unphased)*. In case you and Mr. Thompson have any romantic evenings planned. *(Chuckles.)* I know just seeing those astronauts in their space suits stepping out onto that moon tonight will get any woman's blood flowing! Isn't that right, Mary?

(MARY doesn't respond. She drops her stack of mail, holding up the government letter. GLADYS looks up.)

GLADYS *(cont'd)*. Mary? Is everything all right?

HANK *(solemnly)*. She's gotten a letter from the government.

GLADYS *(suddenly solemn)*. No. Not that letter.

HANK. Yes. *That* letter.

MARY. A letter from the draft board.

HANK. Vietnam.

GLADYS. For Jimmy?

MARY. For Jimmy.

GLADYS. No wonder you haven't been thinking about the moon landing.

HANK. Are you going to open it?

MARY. I don't know if I can.

HANK. We're right here with you.

GLADYS (*putting her arm around MARY*). We're not going anywhere.

MARY (*takes a deep breath*). Here goes.

(MARY tears open the letter and starts to read. GLADYS and HANK move closer to read as lights fade to black.)

Scene 3: **You Can't Always Get What You Want**

(A small sofa is C facing out toward the audience. A comfortable chair is next to it, facing the wings. In front of the sofa are two TV trays, and on each sits a TV dinner, fork, napkin and a glass of orange drink. A third TV tray with the same setup is in front of the chair. FATHER and PAUL are seated on the sofa, facing out to the audience, as if watching television, eating from their dinners throughout the scene. The sound of a news broadcast on the lunar module landing is heard.)

PAUL. Wow! I can't believe it. They did it! They actually did it.

FATHER. The lunar module made it to the moon! We won the space race!

PAUL (*imitating the announcer*). Houston, Tranquility Base here.

FATHER (*also imitating the announcer*). The eagle has landed.

PAUL. So when are Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin going to walk on the moon?

FATHER. Not for a while. I'm sure they have a lot to do to prepare for the moon walk.

PAUL. I can't wait!

FATHER. I think the whole world feels the same way you do, Paul.

(FATHER and PAUL resume eating as MEADOW enters.)

FATHER (*without looking up*). Barbara, sit down and eat your dinner.

MEADOW. My name's Meadow.

FATHER. I'm pretty sure it's Barbara. I was there when we named you.

MEADOW. No, you weren't. Mom was in the delivery room by herself. You were too busy passing out cigars.

PAUL. Meadow's a stupid name anyway.

MEADOW. No it's not! It represents the beauty and majesty created by Mother Earth. It means field of grass or vegetation.

FATHER. Well, field of grass, sit down and eat your vegetation.

MEADOW (*crosses to the TV dinner and looks down at it scornfully*). Are you sure there's even any vegetables in this?

PAUL. Don't worry, they're in there. Just dig around under the brown sauce.

MEADOW (*puts down her fork with disgust*). Yeah, I can't eat this.

FATHER. It's not that bad. Your mother's at bridge tonight, so it's TV dinners for us.

PAUL. It's Salisbury steak—your favorite.

MEADOW. I don't eat meat anymore.

FATHER. Since when?

MEADOW. Since River opened my eyes to the torture and mistreatment of animals that occurs just to put that gravy-soaked carcass on your plate.

PAUL (*holding up a bit of meat on his fork*). Yum! Good gravy carcass, Dad.

FATHER. Thanks!

(FATHER holds up his own forkful of meat. They clink forks in a "cheers," then eat.)

PRODUCTION NOTES

CASTING: This play is designed to be very flexible. There are many possibilities for double or triple casting (or more). You may also assign genders or races as needed to any character, except those that are specifically indicated, due to the time period in which the play is set.

If casting Mother instead of Father in Scene 3, cut the following line said by Meadow: “No. You weren’t. Mom was in the delivery room by herself. You were too busy passing out cigars.”

Additionally, you are encouraged to cast the role of Chris in Scene 4 as a person of color. However, race is not specified for the role, so if you are working with a less diverse cast, you may cast the role with an actor of any race, as during the civil rights protests in 1969, people of all races came together to protest the inequalities and injustices that Martin Luther King and others fought so hard against. You are also encouraged to research and discuss the issues of civil rights, women’s equality and the Vietnam War, to better understand this important moment in United States history.

SETTING: Since this play takes place in many different settings, you just need to suggest where each of the scenes take place.

TIME: The summer of 1969, around the time of the moon landing and a month later.

CUTTING: The runtime of this script performed in its entirety is approximately 45 minutes. It can be shortened by cutting any scenes you would like. Each scene runs approximately 5 to 7 minutes.

PROPERTIES/SET SUGGESTIONS: The set for this play can be as simple or elaborate as you would like. One option would be to designate 2 to 3 playing areas on the stage and alternate scenes between the playing areas. You could use projections or a backdrop behind the scenes or use lighting changes. For each scene, set and prop requirements are as follows:

Scene 1: A desk with files, paperwork and office supplies; an intercom; a résumé; and a small screwdriver kit.

Scene 2: Two mailboxes, a mail-carrier bag and assorted letters, magazines and catalogs.

Scene 3: A sofa, a chair, three metal TV trays, three TV dinners, three forks, three napkins, and three glasses of orange drink.

Scene 4: Intersecting street signs on a pole with one sign reading “Here” and the other reading “Now,” three large protest posters on wooden handles (one each with a message for civil rights, women’s equality and anti-Vietnam War), one blank poster with a wooden handle and a marker.

Scene 5: A 1960s style television, a sofa, two chairs, a coffee table, a bowl of snacks and a tray with a pitcher of lemonade and seven glasses on it.

Scene 6: A diner table with two chairs, a pot of coffee, a coffee cup and saucer, a notepad and pencil, a newspaper, a tray, a dinner plate, a small side plate and a bowl.

Scene 7: A green canvas tent (optional), at least three wood crates, a couple of sandbags, a piece of wood, a pocketknife, a rucksack with various items inside (including a toothbrush) and two faux rifle ends.

Scene 8: A desk with files, paperwork and office supplies; an intercom and a résumé.

You may also use boxes or other nontraditional set pieces to represent sofas, tables, chairs, etc. This piece is meant to be easy to produce no matter your location, budget or style.

COSTUMES: Attire should reflect styles worn in 1969. A waitress costume or apron is required for Scene 6. 1960s Vietnam soldier fatigues or green cargo pants and a tank top are required for Scene 7. All other scenes are either casual or business attire of the time period.

SOUND/VIDEO: The sound of a televised comedy program is required for Scene 3. Also, the broadcast of the moon landing is played during Scene 5. For the moon landing, you can use the video from the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum. One minute and 25 seconds in you'll hear a beep and then "Buzz this is Houston F211 60th seconds for shadow ... " to two minutes and 38 seconds, which is just after Neil Armstrong says, "One giant leap for mankind."