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*Dramatic Publishing*



# They Came from Somewhere

A Full-Length Comedy

By  
WILLIAM GLEASON



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY



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WILLIAM GLEASON

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THEY CAME FROM SOMEWHERE  
*A Full-Length Comedy*  
For Seven Women and Eight Men

C H A R A C T E R S

ARLIN PITTS . . . . . Mayor of Latigo, Texas  
QUEENIE . . . . . his wife  
BETHESDA . . . . . their seventeen-year-old daughter  
ROB BOB . . . . . their fifteen-year-old son  
HERB LIVERMAN . . . . insurance salesman from Poughkeepsie  
EDNA . . . . . his wife  
SHIRLEY . . . . . their fifteen-year-old daughter  
ALBERT . . . . . their fourteen-year-old son  
BLAKE STANFORD . . . . . ad man from Los Angeles  
ELVIS GARCIA . . . . . Sheriff of Latigo  
TINY TEMPLETON . . . . . Bethesda's boy friend  
CASSANDRA SPOILS . . . . . beauty shop owner  
VERNA SAMPLES . . . . . Arlin's secretary  
JOANIE . . . . . her thirteen-year-old daughter  
GARNER FITE . . . . . local rancher

TIME: The Present.

PLACE: In and around the town of Latigo, Texas

**ACT ONE**  
**SCENE ONE**

SCENE: The office of Mayor Arlin Pitts, Latigo, Texas. The office consists of a desk which is cluttered with papers and old paper cups. The office is in the Latigo Feed 'N Seed Store, separated from the store proper by a short railing. Verna's desk is DL of the Mayor's desk. Various items, such as seed bags, shovels and other implements are UL and UR of the office. Entrances are L and R. A rickety wooden table and chairs are DR.

AS LIGHTS COME UP: JOANIE SAMPLES, wearing jeans, boots, and cowboy hat is seated at Verna's desk. She is reading a *National Enquirer* with a morbid intensity.

JOANIE (nose buried in the paper). Mercy! (She shakes her head, continues to read.) Oh, man! (Her nose moves closer to the page. She reaches the bottom of the page, flips it quickly, continues reading.) Uh-huh, uh-huh! You bet. Just like I've been sayin' all along – (Waves her arm in the air.) – Those suckers are everywhere. Everywhere. (Buries her nose and continues to read.)

(ARLIN enters from L dressed in Western attire. He sees JOANIE, removes his hat and hangs it on a rack.)

ARLIN. Mornin', Joanie. (JOANIE stays buried in the paper.)  
Joanie?

JOANIE (looking up). Oh, hi. How ya doin', Mr. Pitts?

ARLIN (crossing to his desk). Can't complain. How 'bout you?

JOANIE. Did you know that the earth has been invaded at least one hundred times in the last five years?

ARLIN. Is that a fact? (He sits at his desk and shuffles papers.

He is used to Joanie's flights of fancy.) Invaded by what?

JOANIE. Aliens. Aliens from distant worlds. This guy has proof.

ARLIN. That's nice.

JOANIE (holding paper toward him). Look at that.

ARLIN. Amazing. What is it? (He looks in the top drawer of his desk.)

JOANIE. It's a trailer park in Florida. That's the last place they invaded. See that black spot on the trailer? (Points to picture.) Right next to the bird bath? You see that?

ARLIN (nods, not looking). Right.

JOANIE. Well, that's where the engines burned the trailer when they took off. And that guy standin' there with the crisp birds – he lived in the trailer. He says they gave him a physical and stole his television set. His wife is in the hospital.

ARLIN. That's too bad.

JOANIE. She tried to hit one of the aliens with a broom and threw her back out. Now they're gonna sue the U.S. Air Force for failing to protect them from alien invasions. Fifty million dollars is what they're asking for. You think they'll get it?

ARLIN. Get what?

JOANIE. Fifty million dollars.

ARLIN. For what?

JOANIE. Are you listenin' to me, Mr. Pitts?

ARLIN. Not really, Joanie. No.

JOANIE. Why doesn't anybody listen to me?

ARLIN (looking at some papers). Beg your pardon?

JOANIE. I said nobody listens to me. As soon as I open my mouth, it's like everybody goes into a coma or somethin'. I got lots of important things to say.

ARLIN (looking at her). Where's your mother, Joanie?

JOANIE. She stopped by Mrs. Spoils' to get some hair conditioner. She told me to stay here and answer the phones.

ARLIN. Have you answered any calls for me?

JOANIE. One.

ARLIN. From who?

JOANIE. I can't remember. I was right in the middle of a story on how movie stars stay young by eating raw bees.

ARLIN. I was expecting a call from California, Joanie. Was the call from California?

JOANIE (looking under the paper). I wrote it down here some place. (Shuffles papers, can't find it. Finally remembering, she looks on the margin of the newspaper.) Here it is. (She crosses to Arlin's desk with the newspaper and puts the paper down on his desk.) Right there next to the picture of Cher with a mouthful of bees.

ARLIN (tilting his head to read the message). Ah, good. He's on his way then.

JOANIE. You ever eat a bee, Mr. Pitts? I ate a grasshopper once. You think that's why I'm so immature?

ARLIN. Sounds logical to me. (He picks up his phone and begins to dial.)

JOANIE. Betty Jacobs bet me I couldn't eat that sucker. Bet me a dollar. So I just popped it in my mouth and gulped it down . . . Stayed sick as a dog for two days. Still can't even look at a grasshopper without gettin' queasy, you know?

ARLIN (smiling weakly, speaking into phone). Queenie? It's me. That Blake Stanford is on his way . . . Right. So make sure Rob Bob has his room cleaned up. Tell him to put those snakeskins in the garage or somethin' . . . I'll be leavin' for the airport in a minute. That should give me plenty of time . . . I will. Okay. 'Bye, hon. (He hangs up phone.) Things

are lookin' up, Joanie.

JOANIE. Can I go now?

ARLIN. What's the big hurry?

JOANIE. I want to take Pepper out for a ride before it gets too hot. And I'm supposed to get my hair done up at one o'clock 'cause Mama's takin' me and Betty over to Chandlerville to the Pizza Hut tonight and I think I got a crush on one of the waiters over there. Then we're goin' to see Death Screams at the drive-in while Mama plays canasta over at Mrs. Spoils'.

ARLIN. Death Screams?

JOANIE (smiling). Yes, sir. Good movie. Everybody gets killed. One with an axe, one with a knife, one with a pitchfork, one with a chain saw and one with a trash compactor. It's a love story.

(VERNA enters from L carrying a small paper sack.)

VERNA. I'm back. (She crosses to her desk.)

ARLIN. Mr. Stanford is on his way from California, Verna. I'll be leaving in a minute to meet him at the airport. I'll have Bethesda come on down and help out with the store.

VERNA. That'll be just fine. I sure hope this Stanford fella can help us out.

ARLIN. He's supposed to be good. Guess we'll just have to wait and see.

JOANIE. I'm goin' now, Mama. Can I go now?

(GARNER enters from R.)

GARNER. Arlin? You in here?

ARLIN (waving). Hey, Garner. What can I do for ya?

GARNER. Need a couple of salt licks. (He tips his hat.)  
Mornin', Verna, Joanie.

VERNA. Mornin', Garner.

ARLIN. You need any help loadin' 'em, Garner?



GARNER. Already got 'em loaded. Just thought it might be honorable to tell you about it before I left. Put 'em on my tab, will ya?

ARLIN. Will do. You ever find those missing head of cattle?

GARNER. Not yet. Gonna do me some cruisin' with the Sheriff this evenin'. Maybe they'll turn up. Hate to think we got a rustler problem.

ARLIN. Wouldn't be the first time.

JOANIE. You goin' by my house, Mr. Fite?

GARNER. Reckon I am, Joanie. You want a ride?

JOANIE. If you don't mind.

GARNER. Don't mind at all. Go ahead and jump in the truck.

JOANIE (crossing R). Thanks. (Waves.) See ya'll later.

VERNA. You be careful on that horse, Joanie.

JOANIE. I will. I will. (She exits. GARNER starts to follow her.)

ARLIN. I'm pickin' up that ad agency guy in a little while, Garner. Are you gonna be at the meeting tomorrow?

GARNER (stopping). I already told you how I feel about that whole mess, Arlin.

ARLIN. You're a member of the community, Garner. Don't you at least want to put your two cents, in?

GARNER. Waste of time, Arlin — and a waste of money, too.

ARLIN. Sorry you feel that way about it.

GARNER. Yeah. Well, I do. Better get goin'. I got a heap of work to get done today. (He crosses off, saying:) Adios.

VERNA (calling after him). 'Bye, Garner. (To ARLIN.) Hard-headed.

ARLIN. If he wasn't, that ranch of his would've folded up long ago. Rancher in these parts has to be hard-headed. (The telephone rings.)

VERNA (picking up the phone). Mayor's office. (She listens.) Just a minute. (To ARLIN.) Are you in? It's Tiny Templeton.

ARLIN. Just what I need. (He sighs.) I guess I'm in. (He

picks up his telephone.) Whatcha need, Tiny? (VERNA listens in on the conversation on her telephone.) Yeah, Tiny. He'll be stayin' over at our house. I know. (Pause.) 'Course he'll be takin' a shower, Tiny. Is somethin' wrong with that? (VERNA listens and laughs.) I'm not gonna let him walk around the house naked, Tiny, for gosh sakes! (VERNA rolls her eyes, covers the mouthpiece.)

VERNA. Hollywood types? Is he serious?

ARLIN. You don't have to worry about Bethesda, Tiny. She's not gonna fall for any big-city dude. The man is gonna be here for business, Tiny, not pleasure. He's probably a little short, fat guy with thick glasses anyway . . . Right. You got nothin' to worry about.

VERNA (covering mouthpiece again). What if he looks like Robert Redford? (ARLIN motions for her to be quiet.)

ARLIN. I got a lot of things to do this mornin', Tiny. (Another pause, a tired sigh.) Okay. Okay. You can come over to dinner tonight. I gotta go, Tiny. Good-bye. (He and VERNA hang up the phones. ARLIN looks toward VERNA and shakes his head.) I think Tiny's been readin' too many movie magazines.

VERNA. He's just crazy about Bethesda, is all. You know how young love is.

ARLIN. I got more important things to worry about. If Mr. Blake Stanford of Timmons, Stein and Stanford doesn't come up with something fast and flashy. Latigo, Texas is gonna drop right off the map. That's what I'm worryin' about. Won't be nothin' left but a greasy spot on the road and memories.

VERNA. I'm sure he'll come up with somethin'. Turn Latigo into a tourist mecca. We'll have tourists comin' out of our ears. You watch.

ARLIN. Hope you're right, Verna. That's why I hired the man. Nothin' we've come up with seemed to work. We need some fresh ideas, a new approach. We've got to change our image, generate some interest.

VERNA. Guess it would help if we had more to offer than tarantulas and dust storms.

ARLIN. That Tarantula Festival was one of our biggest flops.

VERNA. Rattlesnake Roundup was a dud, too.

ARLIN. As was the Chili Cookoff, the Cowchip Chucking Contest, the Dune Buggy Scorpion Classic, Stage Coach Days, and the Greater West Texas Frisbee Tossoff.

VERNA. How many people showed up for that anyway?

ARLIN. Four. Five if you count that hippie who stole the Frisbees.

VERNA. It still infuriates me every time I think about it.

ARLIN. I try not to think about it.

(BETHESDA enters from L wearing a fancy Western outfit, carrying a baton and cassette recorder.)

BETHESDA. Mornin', mornin', mornin'.

VERNA. Why, Bethesda! Don't you look nice.

BETHESDA. Thank you, Verna.

ARLIN. What's with the get-up, Bethesda?

BETHESDA. It's not what you think, if you're thinkin' what I think you're thinkin'. It's not that at all. I've just been workin' on my routine for the Lion's Club Loonies over in Chandlerville. Thought maybe Verna could give me some constructive criticism.

ARLIN. Verna's gonna be busy this mornin', Bethesda. We're all gonna be busy. Can't this wait?

BETHESDA (frustrated pout). Daddy! If you knew anything at all about the performing arts, you'd know that practice is everything. Aside from Lottie Bender, I will be the only performer representing Latigo at the Loonies. Our reputation is at stake.

ARLIN. Is Lottie gonna shear a sheep again this year?

BETHESDA. While reciting The Charge of the Light Brigade. Same old thing. Makes me wanna gag every time I see that

mess. I told her flat out that I was goin' before her this year. (To VERNA.) Last year I came on right after her. Had so much wool stickin' to me after my routine, I looked like a Q-Tip. Ruined everything. Now -- (Puts cassette player on desk.) -- this won't take but a couple a minutes. Surely Verna can take a couple of minutes to watch me perform.

ARLIN. That's up to Verna. I've got to get over to the airport. (He rises.)

BETHESDA. You're not gonna watch my routine?

ARLIN. I'm runnin' late, sugar.

BETHESDA. Maybe I can show you tonight? Maybe that guy from Hollywood would like to see it, too? (Sly smile.)

ARLIN (shaking his finger). Bethesda. Remember what I told you. This man is comin' to save Latigo, Texas. That's what we're payin' him for, not so you can audition. Is that understood? (BETHESDA pouts.) Is it?

BETHESDA. I guess so. But it doesn't seem fair.

ARLIN. I expect you to stay here and help Verna out with the store while I'm gone. I should be back around noon.

BETHESDA. Whatever you say, Daddy.

ARLIN. And no performing for Mr. Stanford. Promise?

BETHESDA (her hands behind her back). Promise.

ARLIN. Good. (He kisses BETHESDA on the cheek.) See you two later.

VERNA. Have a nice trip, Arlin. (ARLIN exits.) You got your fingers crossed, Bethesda?

BETHESDA (showing her hand). You bet. Daddy can't expect me to pass up an opportunity like this. It may never come again. I wonder what this Mr. Stanford looks like. He's got a dreamy voice. Bet he's a real hunk. I already told Mama that I'm gonna sit next to him at dinner tonight.

VERNA. Tiny called this morning. Your Daddy invited him over to dinner at your house.

BETHESDA. Oh! I could just puke! What did Daddy ever do a

thing like that for? How could he?

VERNA. I think Tiny put a little pressure on him. You know how Tiny is when it comes to you bein' around other men.

BETHESDA. I know how he is, all right. He's stupid. Ain't got the brains of a mud fence. Oh . . . I didn't mean that. I like Tiny. It's just that he's so . . . provincial. All he likes to talk about is how much gas he pumped today, or the Dallas Cowboys, or horses.

VERNA. You could do a lot worse, Bethesda. Listen to the voice of experience.

BETHESDA. Tiny's got no claim on me. He thinks he does, but he doesn't. Just 'cause we go out to the movies every once in a while, he thinks we're betrothed or somethin'. Well, I got news for Tiny Templeton. I'm goin' to college and from there . . . who knows. I've got no intention of spendin' the rest of my natural life in Latigo, Texas. Sometimes I wish this town would just curl up and die. Then we'd have to move.

VERNA. You might just get your wish if Mr. Stanford doesn't come up with something.

BETHESDA. And speaking of Mr. Stanford — (She crosses to desk and prepares her cassette player.) — let me run through my number. I tried to spice it up some this year.

VERNA. Not too spicy, I hope.

BETHESDA. Nothing vulgar, if that's what you mean. I just decided it was time to bring a certain emotional range to baton twirling, a maturity, if you will. I want to combine the physical, the artistic, and the intellectual in my routine. It's time to bring baton twirling out of the closet. And that's precisely what I intend to do. (She turns on cassette.) Here goes. (Bethesda's voice is heard on the tape. As she listens to her own introduction, she emotionally prepares herself.)

BETHESDA'S VOICE. "Ladies and gentlemen, the Lion's Club of Chandlerville is proud to present Bethesda Pitts of Latigo in a twirling odyssey entitled . . . Cradle to Grave."

(BETHESDA strikes a majestic pose DC. Beethoven's Fifth is her choice of music and her routine is supposed to symbolize everything from birth to death. After the initial four opening chords, BETHESDA screams and says quickly to VERNA.)

BETHESDA. Labor pains. (Four more chords and she makes the sound of a crying baby, saying quickly to VERNA.) Birth. (Music takes off and BETHESDA takes off with it, twirling and yelling out the following as she goes through her routine.) Diapers, pain, love, pain, pimples, school, pain, books, more love, more pain.

(ROB BOB enters from R, just as BETHESDA starts her routine. He moves up behind her and starts mimicing her actions, adding a few of his own touches. She doesn't see him and continues on her odyssey.)

BETHESDA (dancing and twirling). True love blooms. Marriage. (She screams.) Children are born. Wrinkles, bills, threats of war. (ROB BOB keeps up with her.) More pain. (The pace increases.) Famine, flood, pestilence, doubt, fear, confusion. (Starts to slow down.) Old age . . . dentures . . . memories. (She stops twirling, uses the baton like a cane and speaks in an aged, raspy voice.) Seems like only yesterday, could it be? Was it really that long ago? My, how time flies. (She twirls toward the finale.) Death! (She stabs herself with the baton, pinning it under her arm as if transfixed and staggered. ROB BOB staggers with her. She drops to one knee and raises an imploring hand to the heavens.) I'm comin', Lord. Tell Saint Peter to meet me at the gate.

ROB BOB (calling off). Saint Peter? You wanna get on down to the gate? (BETHESDA pauses, gives ROB BOB a cutting look. VERNA "shushes" him.)

BETHESDA (back in character). And Lord?

ROB BOB. Yes?