

Excerpt terms and conditions



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

You may view, print and download any of our excerpts for perusal purposes.

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 reading the whole play before planning a production or ordering a cast quantity.

Dramatic Publishing

FERRIS WHEEL

A Play in Two Acts

by

JANYCE LAPORE



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

*** NOTICE ***

The amateur and stock acting rights to this work are controlled exclusively by THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY 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: DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY, 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 which are in copyright, the permission of the copyright owners must be obtained or other songs and recordings in the public domain substituted.

©MM by
JANYCE LAPORE

Printed in the United States of America
All Rights Reserved
(FERRIS WHEEL)

ISBN: 0-87129-973-9

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 of Woodstock, Illinois”

For
Nicky
Christina, Deborah
Mother

* * * *

Dramaturge
Ellen Rae Littman

FERRIS WHEEL was produced at the Florida Shakespeare Theatre in March 1998. Juan F. Cejas was the artistic director, Juan F. Cejas and Juan Besares were the directors, scenic design was by Gary Armstrong, lighting design was by Casey Clark and the stage manager was Ricky Martinez.

FERRIS WHEEL

A Play in Two Acts
For 4 Women*

CHARACTERS

LISA MARIE . . . 32, sweet, vulnerable. Married to Manny.
Has five children.

CELIA . . . 33, conservative. A high school English teacher.
Has two children.

BABS . . 34, has the look of a glamorous, yet aging movie star.

ANTONIA (TONI) 30, hairdresser, with a wild,
orange-colored hairdo.

(All the women are cousins from the same Italian family.
Celia and Antonia are sisters.)

SETTING: It is the summer of 1970 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, at the Cherrywood amusement park. There is a picnic table and a large tree with a swing. A transistor radio hangs from the tree by a scarf. L is a small wooden bridge. From the picnic table, the amusement park lights and rides can be seen and the echoes of carnival music can be heard. Music and lights are used to intensify action of players.

Running time: 90-95 minutes

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT ONE

Scene One: The picnic area. Early afternoon.

Scene Two: The Ferris wheel (one seat). Same day,
afternoon.

The picnic tables. Same day, afternoon.

ACT TWO

Scene One: The picnic area. Late afternoon.

Scene Two: The picnic area. Twilight.

Scene Three: The picnic area. Twilight.

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

(In the darkness, we hear the girls screaming their welcome to LISA MARIE. Lights up. The girls rush to meet LISA.)

TONI. LISA!

(TONI wears a colorful scarf around her hair, only a shock of orange-colored hair comes through. The picnic table is set with loads of Italian food. They are ready for a picnic. CELIA wears a straw hat. BABS is dressed in short shorts, a halter top and outlandish high-heeled shoes. CELIA and BABS rush to embrace LISA. Their dialogue overlaps.)

TONI. She's here!!

CELIA. Oh, my God, Lisa!!

BABS. Lisa! Lisa! Lisa!

TONI. You're here!

BABS. She's here! She's here!!

CELIA. Oh, Lisa! Lisa! Lisa! We been waitin' for ya!

LISA *(softly and under dialogue)*. Oh, hi...hi...

TONI. Yeah...we been waitin' and waitin' for ya!

CELIA. Oh, God, Lisa!

BABS. Oh, God, we missed ya...

LISA (*softly, looking from girl to girl*). Ah...

TONI. Yeah, we missed you! Missed you! Missed you!

LISA (*softly*). Oh, me too. Me too.

CELIA. Oh, God, Lisa, I can't believe you're here! I just can't believe you're finally here!

BABS (*screaming, jumping up and down*). Lisa! Lisa! Lisa!

TONI. Lisa...Oh, God...you look so pretty...

LISA. Thanks.

BABS. Oh, you do!

CELIA (*dialogue overlap can end here*). You do...you do...your hair, your dress...everything...

LISA. Oh, thanks, girls...thanks...

TONI (*embracing her again*). Oh, God, we missed you, honey...we missed you missed you...missed you...

LISA (*softly*). Ah...

TONI. And, here you are!

CELIA. Yeah, you're finally here! You're finally here!

(The girls stop. They are looking at one another, not knowing what to say. There is an awkward moment.)

TONI. Yeah...yeah... (*Beat.*) So...how are you, honey? How are you?

LISA. Good. (*Looking at each girl.*) I'm good. I'm really, really good. (*A horn beeps several times.*) Oh, oh...that's Manny...anybody wanna help me get my...

BABS. Me! Me! Me!

(As BABS and LISA walk off to get her picnic basket.)

CELIA. Oh, go ahead, honey...we'll wait right here till you get back...right here...

(CELIA and TONI sit down at the table. CELIA takes off her straw hat. She is almost whispering the following dialogue, to TONI.)

Oh, I been looking forward to this all week. I'm a little nervous, but...

TONI. Well, we all are.

CELIA. Yeah, and, I just hope we cheer her up.

TONI. Oh, we will.

CELIA. I mean, it seems like she's been gone for years, and I missed her SO much.

TONI. Oh, I know.

CELIA. Yeah... And, I hate to say this, but...I been thinking... No...no...*I been* thinking. I just "hope"...they didn't let her out too soon.

TONI. Oh, they didn't let her out too soon...

CELIA. 'Cause, I mean, if it's too soon...she could start acting a little, you know... *(Waving her hand with uncertainty.)*

TONI. She's not gonna start acting a little anything. We just have to be sensitive to her...when she gets back here, we just have to be very, very sensitive to her.

CELIA. Well, I hope so... 'Cause, I mean, we wouldn't know what to do if she starts acting a little "different," or a little *(Whispering.)* strange. I mean, we're not qualified.

TONI. Celia...

CELIA. What?

TONI *(whispering)*. Why are you whispering? *(Louder.)* They're gone.

CELIA. Oh, I'm sorry. I'm just so nervous. I been up all night thinking about it...this picnic...her getting outta the...everything...

TONI. Oh, I know. I know.

CELIA. I mean, just think about what she's *been* through... so, when she gets back, please be nice to her.

TONI. I will.

CELIA. I mean, REALLY nice.

TONI. I will. I will.

CELIA. She needs that. We're her cousins. She needs all the love and support we can possibly give her...

TONI. Cel, we know...we been over this a hundred times, and we're ready...we're absolutely, one hundred percent ready... (*Almost to herself.*) Well, I am.

CELIA. Well, it's hard when you haven't talked to someone for months. We have no idea what she's like now and... Oh, my God...what are we gonna say to her?! I mean, think about it. What are we gonna say to her?

TONI. We're gonna act normal...when she gets back, we're just gonna act very normal...

CELIA (*begins practicing*). Lisa! How are you, honey...no, no, that's not normal. Ah, Lis, how ya doin', honey...no, no, too worried. Lisa... Lisa, are you okay, honey? Oh, I know you're fine... I'm just askin'...but I know you're just...

TONI. Normal, Cel...we're going to act normal.

CELIA. Well, I just don't know how she did it...bein' all alone in that room...away from her kids and her...

TONI. Oh, if only we coulda visited her...

CELIA. ...husband...Yeah, but would they let us...no...

TONI (*with CELIA*). No...

CELIA. God! This is scary... (*Really realizing it.*) This is so scary. We have no idea how to handle a situation like this. And I just know Babs is gonna say somethin' that'll get her all upset. Or, I'm gonna say something. (*To TONI.*) Or you! Oh, God...I just know you're gonna say somethin' that'll "push" her right over the edge, and then we're gonna have to call Manny, or the paramedics, or the...

TONI. Cel, nobody's gonna call anybody. When she gets back, we're all gonna be very calm. We're gonna act like nothin' ever happened, and be very, calm...

CELIA. How we gonna act like nothing ever happened? Something definitely happened.

TONI. I don't know, Cel...but we're gonna have to. For her sake. We're just gonna have to.

(LISA and BABS return with LISA's picnic items.)

BABS (*to LISA*). Oh, I love this place! No other park in the world puts their picnic tables right next to the rides...all you got a do is park your car... (*She is looking through LISA's cooler.*) and walk a few feet and... Oh, my God! (*She pulls out a six-pack of Rolling Rock beer.*) She brought Rolling Rock! I love Rolling Rock!

CELIA (*under dialogue*). We know.

BABS. I bet you brought it just for me!

LISA. Oh, yeah, Manny picked it up this morning... Oh, and when I told him "no men or kids," he said, "Well, that's a hell of a thing"...

(BABS rearranges the ice in the cooler to accommodate the beer.)

BABS (*under dialogue, she is bubbling*). I'll chill it... (*Singing and doing the cha-cha.*) chill it...chill it...chill it...

LISA. ...and I told him, Toni says I'm with you 365 days of the year, and since this is *my* day, I should be able to come here by myself...

TONI. Oh, that's right.

BABS (*lifting her drink*). Oh, absolutely!

CELIA (*to LISA*). Yeah, hey, I've been trying to call you. We should get together. My kids are dying to see yours. Hey, how's Carlos?

LISA. Good.

TONI (*untying the scarf around her head*). Good.

CELIA. Gina?

LISA. Good.

CELIA. Good. We checked up on 'em. Everyday we gave 'em a little callie...

TONI. Yeah, we're so glad everything turned out okay for ya. But, I knew everything'd be all right once you got out of the... (*The scarf is off.*)

CELIA (*suddenly, to TONI about her hair*). Oh, my God! Wait a minute!! Everybody just *wait a minute...* (*A beat while CELIA takes TONI's hair in, then points with both fingers to the hair.*) WHAT...is that?

TONI. What?

BABS. Oh, I love it. It's great.

CELIA (*touching her hair*). That.

TONI. It's my hair. I'm a hairdresser.

CELIA. It's orange.

TONI. It is not. It's sculptured red.

LISA. Oh, it's pretty.

BABS. Very.

TONI (*to BABS as she works on her hair*). Thankee youee...

CELIA (*still stunned by TONI's hair*). It looks just like a carrot...

BABS (*wild laughter, under CELIA*). A carrot!! A carrot!!

CELIA. I mean, the shape of it and everything. It looks just like a... (*She is touching TONI's hair.*) ...a...

BABS. Oh, I think it's fabulous. Absolutely fabulous.

CELIA (*still looking at TONI's hair and shaking her head*). A vegetable.

TONI. Anyway... (*To LISA.*) we're so glad you could come, honey. It must feel great to be back in your own house after nine months in the...

CELIA (*whispers*). Toni. (*She puts her finger to her lips.*)

LISA. Oh, it does. It does. (*To CELIA.*) And, I know what you mean about the kids, Cel.

(*Under LISA's dialogue, CELIA continues to check out TONI's hair.*)

But, they're always so busy...they have Girl Scouts, and Cub Scouts, and...

CELIA. Oh, mine too. Every time I turn around, it's something new.

TONI (*to LISA*). Oh, honey, I'm just so glad you're home... (*Into the air with joy.*) It's the Scarletta family reunion!

CELIA. Yeah, yeah! (*To LISA, as she clears a space at the picnic table.*) Hey, let's take a look in Lisa's basket and see what she...

BABS. Hey, hey...who's ridin' the Ferris wheel today?

TONI (*raises her hand*). Me! Me! Me! Me!

CELIA (*pulling a chocolate cake out of LISA's basket*).

Ow, look, it's her famous chocolate cheesecake!

BABS (*overlapping, to TONI*). It's my favorite ride.

TONI (*to BABS*). We know, honey.

CELIA (*tasting the cheesecake, exaggerated*). I love her cheesecake!

LISA (*overlapping, to BABS*). Oh, Manny makes me ride everything from the Jack Rabbit to that caterpillar ride.

TONI. Hey, we been ridin' the Jack Rabbit since 1952.

BABS. Oh, you better believe it... I love this park!

CELIA. Oh, me too.

BABS. It's like our second home.

CELIA. Since we were babies... (*To LISA, still tasting her cake. Shaking her head like it is wonderful.*) Oh, delicious. (*She turns her head and spits the cake into a napkin. It's not that good.*)

TONI (*to LISA*). Hey, hey, hey, you had your Sweet 16 Party here, remember?

LISA (*remembering*). Oh, yeah, that's right. That's the night Manny bought me my very first opal ring.

BABS (*looking for something*). And, you screwed him that night, right?

CELIA. Babs! What's wrong with you?!

LISA (*giggling, to TONI, under the dialogue*). Oh, you told 'em...you told 'em...

BABS. What? She did... (*She finds the can opener, holds it up.*) Oh, here it is.

CELIA. We just got here, and we got a lot of stuff to unpack so will you *please* just...

(*BABS affixes the can opener to her necklace.*)

LISA (*softly, giggling*). Well, we did. That's the first time he ever put my legs up over his shoulders while he pushed his...

CELIA (*overlapping*). Lisa! Honey, we don't wanna hear about your legs up over your...

BABS (*takes a small bottle of tequila out of her purse and prepares a shot*). Oh, I do. I wanna hear about her legs...

TONI (*to BABS, laughing*). ALL up over his shoulders...

CELIA. Toni! (*Not very sensitive.*) Be sensitive.

(*TONI takes a tray of lasagna out of LISA's basket.*)

TONI (*opening tray and speaking in a very sensitive way*).

Ow...lasagna...you brought lasagna... I love lasagna...

(*LISA smiles, she is delighted her cousin notices.*)

CELIA (*taking out tablecloth, plastic silverware, plastic plates and a few regular glasses*). We got a million things to do here, so will you *please* just start unpackin'...

LISA (*to CELIA*). Oh, it's okay, Cel. She didn't say anything...really, she didn't say...

TONI. Forget it... She's always pickin' on me. I'll be leavin' soon...then she'll miss me...

CELIA. You always say that.

TONI. Yeah, but this time I mean it. So, everybody just listen up...listen up... I have a very big announcement to make...a very, very big... I been holdin' this in for weeks, but this is the perfect day to say it...so here it is...ready...here it is...besides this being a party for Lisa Marie...I think we should consider this...my official going-away party...

BABS (*clapping*). Oh, you're gonna do it! You're gonna do it!

CELIA. Oh, right.

LISA. Oh, you're going away, Ton? I don't want you to go away...

TONI. Okay...okay...listen up...listen up...everybody, listen up... (*She has all of their attention.*) ...okay... Ready... I...Antonia Scarletta...am moving to Manhattan.

BABS (*screaming and embracing her*). Oh, congratulations! You're goin'! You're goin'!

LISA (*softly*). Oh, Toni...when'd this happen... I don't want you to go to...

CELIA. And, I suppose you're gonna do hair in Manhattan?

TONI (*stops and seriously considers, then says*). No, I'm gonna do brain surgery in Manhattan.

BABS (*laughing wildly*). Brain surgery in Manhattan!

TONI (*seriously considering again*). No, I think I'll do heart surgery in Manhattan.

BABS. Heart surgery in Manhattan!

TONI. No, I think I'll do brain AND heart surgery in Manhattan.

BABS. Brain AND heart surgery...in Manhattan!

TONI. No, heart friggin'...brain friggin' surgery...in Manhattan.

CELIA (*singsong*). It'll never happen...it'll never, never happen...

TONI. Oh, yes it will, Cel...you just don't understand... 'cause you're small town, and I'm not.

CELIA (*to TONI*). Small town? I don't think I'm small town, Ton.