

MY FAVORITE WIFE

ANNOUNCER SCREEN DIRECTORS' PLAYHOUSE

Tonight the American Museum of Radio and Electricity brings you a romantic treat for Valentine's Day, our adaptation of Leo Mc Carey's production for RKO ...

MY FAVORITE WIFE.

1.MUSIC SCREEN DIRECTORS PLAYHOUSE THEME

ANNOUNCER And now the first act of tonight's play, MY FAVORITE WIFE, starring _____ and _____ as

Nick and Ellen Arden. Consider a bottle floating in the Pacific Ocean. Ah ... if only fate would cast it on some shore where human eyes would read the note inside.

The note that says:

ELLEN Ellen Arden is alive and well. I survived the sinking of the freighter Milton A on August 5, 1943. I'm living on an island, approximately 200 miles south of the point of sinking.

Please notify my husband, Nicholas Arden, San Francisco, California, USA.

ANNOUNCER If only these words might reach the ear of Nick Arden.

But... no! Fate would have it otherwise. [MORE]

ANNOUNCER For seven years, the bottle floats, and now Nick has fallen into the clutches of another woman, Bianca Bates
The bottle floats and Nick is stuck.

BIANCA Nick, darling, isn't it about time we thought about marriage?

NICK Hmm? Marriage, Bianca?

BIANCA Marriage!

NICK Well ... uh ... let's think about it some time.

BIANCA Now! Nick.

NICK All right ... I'm thinking.

BIANCA You can't go on brooding over Ellen for the rest of your life.

NICK Wonderful woman, Ellen. You should have known her.

BIANCA But ... what about me?

NICK All right, let's talk about you. Have you read any good books, lately?

BIANCA (IGNORES THIS) I'm talking about marriage.

NICK I'm just wondering if my children would understand that.

BIANCA I'll be a mother to Timmy and Chinch..

NICK As a lawyer, here's the way I look at it.

BIANCA Nick, it isn't law, it's us! A man ... and a woman!

NICK Yes, Bianca.

BIANCA You're lonely, aren't you?

NICK Yes, Bianca.

BIANCA You love me ... don't you?

NICK Yes, Bianca.

BIANCA Well, Nick ...?

NICK Hmm? I've got an idea.

BIANCA What?

NICK Let's get married.

2.MUSIC RAUCUS BRIDGE

3.SOUND` MUSIC FADES TO FOOTSTEPS ON MARBLE

NICK (FOOTSTEPS UNDER) This is the room, Bianca.
Court of General Sessions (FOOTSTEPS OUT).

BIANCA Nick, I don't see why we have to be married by a judge.

NICK We can do everything in one place. The judge can rule Ellen
legally dead ... and marry us.

BIANCA It's morbid. Nick, why do you insist on wearing that black tie?

NICK It's a sign of respect.

BIANCA But, darling ...it's our wedding day!

BIANCA Nick, I bought this other tie for you to wear. It's far more suitable for a wedding.

NICK I can't put it on now, dear.

BIANCA Well, put it on for the ceremony, then..

NICK Hurry, Bianca, we're already a little late.

4.SOUND FOOTSTEPS ON MARBLE. DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES

JUDGE (OFF) Where are the parties in Arden versus Arden?

NICK Right here, your honor.

JUDGE Well ... it's about time.

NICK Sorry, your honor. (PAUSE) Stand right here, Bianca.

BIANCA Very well, darling.

JUDGE Young woman, what are you doing with that tie in your hand?
Are you selling ties? (OFF) How did this salesman get in here?

NICK She's with me, your honor.

JUDGE Oh ... are you a tie salesman?

NICK No, your honor ... Nicholas Arden.

JUDGE Arden ... hmm ... that's a familiar name.

NICK Arden versus Arden, your honor. The brief is on your desk.

JUDGE (FLUSTERED) Wh...why didn't you say so? Humph...
You're an attorney, Mr Arden. Why weren't you here on time?
Now, you'll just have to wait. I'm supposed to marry someone.

NICK Me, your honor.

JUDGE You? You got a license? Got a ring? Got a bride?

NICK Yes, your honor. But first, the matter of Ellen Wagstaff Arden,
my former wife.

JUDGE Young woman, are you his former wife?

BIANCA I should say not!

JUDGE Don't raise your voice. There's such a thing as contempt of
court, you know.

NICK But your honor, Ellen Wagstaff Arden was lost at sea.

JUDGE Yes, yes, I remember now, got it all here in your brief.

NICK My former wife was a news photographer during the war.
She was aboard the freighter Milton A when it hit a reef.

JUDGE Er... will you let me read the brief?

NICK Sorry...

JUDGE Hmm... it says here you have two children. My, that's sad,
very sad.

NICK It happened seven and a half years ago.

JUDGE Yes, I know, I know. I can read, can't I?

NICK There's a final summing up, your honor. You'll find it on
page ten.

JUDGE I'll find it myself!

NICK (LOW VOICE- UNDER BUSINESS) ... page ten

5.BUSINESS PAGES FLIPPED THROUGH

JUDGE Here it is, on page ten

NICK If I can explain, your honor ...

JUDGE Nothing to explain... sworn affidavit, lost at sea, no evidence
to the contrary ...the law is clear!

6.SOUND GAVEL COMES DOWN ONCE

JUDGE I hereby pronounce Ellen Wagstaff Arden legally dead!

BIANCA Oh, Nick, we're finally free.

JUDGE Young woman! Stop waving that tie in my face.

NICK Your honor, this is the woman I intend to marry.

JUDGE You mean ... this tie salesman?

BIANCA I am not a tie salesman, I am his bride.

JUDGE Amazing. Man's wife hasn't been dead five minutes and he's getting married again. (PAUSE) Nicholas Arden, are you sure you want to marry this woman?

BIANCA Of course he's sure.

NICK Of course I'm sure.

JUDGE Well, where would you like him?

NICK Right here, your honor.

BIANCA Now will you take off that horrible necktie?

JUDGE Huh? What's wrong with my necktie?

NICK Oh, no, no ... nothing your honor.

JUDGE But I distinctly heard her ...

NICK She meant me, your honor. Pardon me, your honor...
I just want to change ties.

JUDGE I don't understand this at all. Clerk, do you understand this?.

NICK (STRUGGLING) I can't get the knot undone.

BIANCA` Let me help you, dear.

NICK Your choking me, Bianca...

7.BUSINESS JUDGE STARTS UNDER- NICK, BIANCA FUSS RE:TIE

8.MUSIC CONFUSION BRIDGE ENDING PART ONE

ANNOUNCER Fate is playing a strange trick on Nicholas Arden; for even as he is getting married, a figure garbed in ragged sea-faring clothes is walking up to the door of the Arden home.

9.SOUND THREE FOOTSTEPS ON SIDEWALK - THEN HALT

CHINCH Hello, who are you?

TIMMY She's a ferret. I can tell ..

ELLEN Hello there.

TIMMY Are you a lady ferret?

ELLEN In a way.

CHINCH Our mommy was drowned at sea, wasn't she?

TIMMY Uh huh. We're not supposed to know.

ELLEN Timmy, do you miss her very much?

TIMMY Oh, sure. How come you know my name?

ELLEN Oh, I know. And your sister's name is Kim.

(WISTFULLY) Gosh, you're swell-looking kids.

CHINCH Daddy says we look like our mommy.

ELLEN Would you like to have her back?

TIMMY We can't have her back. She's drowned.

ELLEN But maybe ...

TIMMY I'm sorry, ma'am. We're not allowed to talk to strangers.

10.SOUND CHILDREN'S FOOTSTEPS SCURRY AWAY

ELLEN But Timmy ...

CHINCH (OFF) We're not allowed to talk to strangers.

ELLEN Is your daddy home?

CHINCH (OFF) No, just grandma.

11.SOUND FOOTSTEPS ON PORCH - DOOR OPENS

MOTHER Pardon me, but I heard you talking. Is there something I ...

ELLEN Hello, darling.

MOTHER (GASPS) Ohhhh.

ELLEN Don't faint.

MOTHER (WEAKLY) What makes you think ... I might faint?

ELLEN Oh, don't be a sissy.

MOTHER Good heavens! (RECOVERING) Ellen!

ELLEN Alive and eating well ...

MOTHER After all these years ...

ELLEN Well, aren't you going to kiss your daughter in law?

MOTHER Oh, Ellen ...

ELLEN I... I think I'm going to cry.

MOTHER (SLIGHT SOB) Don't be a sissy!

ELLEN Let's go in ... in to my house!

12.SOUND DOOR CLOSES

MOTHER I just can't believe it ... when ?.. how ? We thought you'd drowned.

ELLEN No darling ... definitely not drowned.

MOTHER Where have you been?

ELLEN An island, a horrible island. How's Nicky?

MOTHER Nicky?

ELLEN Yes, your son ... my husband.

MOTHER Oh, uh ... he's fine.

ELLEN Handsome?

MOTHER As ever.

ELLEN Prosperous?

MOTHER Reasonably. uh...Ellen...

ELLEN Yes?

MOTHER He ... uh ... married again.

ELLEN What did you say?

MOTHER (SOME DISTRESS) He's married.

ELLEN Oh... I never thought of that.

MOTHER Seven years, Ellen...

ELLEN Oh, yes. Seven years. (PAUSE) Is she nice?

MOTHER No ...

ELLEN Anyone I know?

MOTHER No, her name is Bianca Bates.

ELLEN Bianca Bates. Oh.. well, at least Nick hasn't lost his sense
of humor. (PAUSE) Mother, how long did he wait?

MOTHER Oh, a long time. Until today.

ELLEN Until today?

MOTHER You were declared legally dead this morning, and then,
Nick married Bianca and they're driving up to Yosemite
for their honeymoon.

ELLEN Yosemite? Not the Awahnee ... our hotel?

MOTHER Well, Nick had business in the city

ELLEN Not the same room? Oh, he couldn't.

MOTHER Ellen, my dear ... I'm so sorry...If only you could have
gotten here yesterday.

ELLEN I'm thinking ..It all happened this morning: me legally dead,
Nick and Bianca married ... some business in the city,
driving up to Yosemite ... mother, does he love her?

MOTHER No, he doesn't love her ... just married her.

ELLEN Do planes still fly to Yosemite?

MOTHER I guess so. What have you got in mind?

ELLEN It's what Nicky has in mind that I'm worried about.
Mother ... I'm flying to Yosemite!

13.MUSIC FLYING BRIDGE

ANNOUNCER Ah, fate. Think how it messes with men's lives. See what a
stunning blow it is about to deal to Nick Arden.

14.SOUND SNEAK IN CAR STOPPING AND PARKING

As he and his bride Bianca park in the lot at the Awahnee
Honeymoon Hotel, disaster lurks at the reservation desk ...

15.SOUND SNEAK IN HOTEL DESK NOISE AND FOOTSTEPS

It's name is Ellen Arden. (STEPS STOP -NOISE UNDER)

PENTWHISTLE Front, please Take this gentleman to Room twelve (PAUSE).
Now madam, what can I do for you? My name is Mr.
Pentwhistle.

ELLEN Mr. Pentwhistle, I wonder if my husband has arrived yet.
 Mr. Nicholas Arden.

PENTWHISTLE Oh, yes, the honeymoon couple. Are you his bride?

ELLEN I'm one of them.

PENTWHISTLE Well, the Awahnee caters to honeyuh ... one of them?

ELLEN One of them.

PENTWHISTLE The way you say that makes my blood run cold.

ELLEN I'll bet I shocked you.

PENTWHISTLE Heh, heh...silly old-fashioned me....

ELLEN You still haven't answered my question.
 Has Mr Arden arrived yet?

PENTWHISTLE No, he hasn't.

ELLEN Thank goodness, I'm still in time.

PENTWHISTLE Uh...I hesitate to ask this question: in time for what?

ELLEN You know, I bet this sounds silly to you, but I'd just like to
 bite his ear and run my fingers through his hair.

PENTWHISTLE Not in this hotel you don't!

ELLEN Oh, it's perfectly all right.

PENTWHISTLE Yes, I'll bet it is. Do you want to tell me all about it?

ELLEN No offense, Mr Pentwhistle, but I think I'd like to freshen up.

PENTWHISTLE Fine. You'll find a powder room in another hotel, about eight miles back down the road.

ELLEN Oh, I won't be going that far.

PENTWHISTLE Hey, maybe I'm just narrow-minded.

16.SOUND TELEPHONE RINGS, HE ANSWERS IT.

PENTWHISTLE` Pentwhistle speaking.

17.BELL CAPTAIN (FILTER) Mr and Mrs Nick Arden are on their way up.

PENTWHISTLE Oh, my goodness. **17 b.** (PHONE ON HOOK)

NICK (COMING ON) Good evening, are you Mr Pentwhistle?

PENTWHISTLE Yes, I'm Pentwhistle.

NICK Nick Arden. I have reservations for my wife and myself.

PENTWHISTLE You're Nicholas Arden?

NICK Yes. Is something wrong?

PENTWHISTLE` If you don't know, then I'm not going to tell you.

NICK I don't understand you.

PENTWHISTLE YOU don't understand ME?

BIANCA Nick, let's go to our room.

NICK Mr Pentwhistle, my wife is tired.

PENTWHISTLE Ah, so she is one of the brides.

NICK What do you mean, one of the brides? Do you have more?

PENTWHISTLE Do YOU have more? That's what this hotel is worried about.

NICK Now, please, this is my wife.

PENTWHISTLE Yes, I'm sure she is

NICK Just show us to our rooms.

PENTWHISTLE Very well. (BELL RINGS) Front! Suite A!

NICK Suite A? But I don't want Suite A

BIANCA Nick ... why not?

PENTWHISTLE But sir, it's one of our very best.

NICK You'll have to find something else.

PENTWHISTLE Well, I'll look ...

BIANCA It's one of the best, Nick.

NICK I know, Bianca, but for you, the best just isn't good enough.

PENTWHISTLE I can let you have Suite C. It's just been redecorated. Can you stand the smell of fresh paint?

NICK I love it.

BIANCA I hate it.

NICK We'll take it.

BIANCA But, Nick...

NICK You go on up, Bianca. I'll stay behind and register

BIANCA All right, darling, (GOING OFF) I'll be waiting for you.

PENTWHISTLE Please sign here.

NICK (INTIMATELY) I couldn't take Suite A. I've been here before. You understand, don't you?

PENTWHISTLE Yes, and it gives me goose flesh. Here's the pen.

NICK Thank you.

PENTWHISTLE Mr Arden, there's something I'd like to get off my chest.

NICK Hmm? What is it?

PENTWHISTLE There's a woman around here; she wants to bite you on the ear.

NICK Which ear?

PENTWHISTLE I don't know. What difference does it make: which ear?

NICK Is this some kind of joke?

PENTWHISTLE Oh, yes, you can laugh. You're not a hotel manager.

(HE GIGGLES) Oh my goodness.

NICK What's the matter now, Mr. Pentwhistle?

PENTWHISTLE She's coming ba-ack.

NICK Who's coming back?

PENTWHISTLE The other bride.

NICK What other bride?

PENTWHISTLE The one with the teeth!

NICK What teeth? (PAUSE) Ow... my ear!

ELLEN Hello, Nicky darling.

NICK Oh, hello, Ellen. (SECOND TAKE) Ellen? ... is it Ellen?

(HE SCREAMS- SHE GIGGLES) Ohh... Ellen!

18.SOUND HE COLLAPSES ON THE FLOOR

ELLEN Oh... oh... he fainted. What do we do, Mr Pentwhistle?

PENTWHISTLE Do you really want my advice?

ELLEN Yes.

PENTWHISTLE Put a cocoanut in his mouth and pretend he's a potted palm!

Front!

19.MUSIC BEMUSED BRIDGE

ELLEN Are you feeling better, Nick?

NICK Dizzy ... very dizzy.

ELLEN It was nice of Mr Pentwhistle to let us use his office.

NICK Ellen, we've got to talk.

ELLEN Yes, we certainly do. What's the idea of your getting married?

NICK That's just it ... my wife ...

ELLEN (INTERRUPTS) I'm your wife!

NICK Bianca isn't going to like that.

ELLEN Well, I'm not going to like Bianca.

20.SOUND DOOR OPENS

PENTWHISTLE Well, Mr Arden ... how do you feel?

NICK As if I'm going in circles.

PENTWHISTLE The next time you pass this way there's a phone call for you.

NICK Who from?

PENTWHISTLE Your wife. Uh... the other one.

NICK Oh, thanks.

PENTWHISTLE You can use the phone on the desk. This I have to hear.

ELLEN Nick ... before you pick it up ...

NICK Yes, Ellen?

ELLEN A kiss?

NICK (THEY KISS) Hmm.

PENTWHISTLE Mr Arden ...would you please stop scuffing my rug?

ELLEN (PLEASED SIGH) That's all I wanted to know.

NICK Oh.... my, my, my, my....Nothing's changed ... not a thing.

ELLEN (GIGGLES) Now you can talk to Bianca.

NICK Bianca? Oh, the phone. Who's this?

21.SOUND HE PICKS UP THE PHONE

BIANCA (FILTER) Nick?

NICK Oh, hello, Bianca. What's new?

BIANCA (FILTER) Don't I rate a "darling" now ?

NICK Darling, I ...Ow...

22.BUSINESS A CLUNK - ELLEN GIGGLES

BIANCA (FILTER) What happened?

NICK I barked my shins. Just a minute, Bianca.

(LOW VOICE) Ellen, stop kicking me.

ELLEN You cut out that "darling."

NICK Just don't kick me. Hello, Bianca

23.BIANCA (FILTER) Where are you?

NICK The barber shop.

BIANCA (FILTER) What for? I'm waiting for you, darling.

NICK Need a haircut.

BIANCA (FILTER) You don't need a haircut.

NICK Suite A, if you still have it.

PENTWHISTLE But you don't like Suite A.

ELLEN Hmm. He does now.

24.MUSIC COMPLICATED CAPER BRIDGE

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25.SOUND A CRACKLING FIRE

ELLEN Then along came the freighters and I lit the fire on the hill;
and that's all there was to it.

NICK Hmm. Seven years on an island.

ELLEN Seven years.

NICK I missed you, Ellen. So did the children.

ELLEN I saw them. They're darling.

NICK Did you tell them yet?

ELLEN No, not yet, Nick. I want to do it gradually.

It's kind of a shock.

NICK Shock? The most shocking thing is I'm married again
and I'm still terribly in love with you.

ELLEN If you think that's shocking, how'd you like to come home
after seven years and find your husband checked in to a hotel
with another woman?

NICK She's not just another woman, she's my wife.

ELLEN Seems to me you've just bagged more than the legal limit.

NICK How in the world did this happen to me? How did I suddenly
become a bigamist ?

ELLEN The question is: what are you going to do about it?

NICK Well ... I want to do the right thing by everyone.

ELLEN Oh fine, then ... you start by telling Bianca ...

NICK Oh...no, can't do that!

ELLEN Why not?

NICK You wouldn't understand. Sensitive ... high strung...

ELLEN Not as 'high strung' as I'd like to see her.

NICK You just leave this to me.

ELLEN Just march right into her room and tell her that your
wife's come back.

NICK On her wedding night?

ELLEN Tell her she got bumped by a higher priority.

NICK Oh... you can't bump Bianca.

ELLEN Why, nothing could be farther from my mind.
Nicholas Arden, do you love that woman?

NICK No.

ELLEN Do you love me?

NICK Yes.

ELLEN Then do something. Go in there.

NICK As soon as I get a shave and a haircut.

ELLEN Darling! Quit stalling.

NICK Ellen, be reasonable, I can't just walk in there like a dope and say "sorry, my mistake, marriage is off," can I?

ELLEN If you won't say it, I will.

NICK All right, in that case, I'll say it.

26.SOUND KNOCK ON DOOR, DOOR OPENS

PENTWHISTLE Mr Arden, I hate to be prissy about this, but your wife would like to see you.

NICK Which wife? Which wife?

PENTWHISTLE The one in Suite C.

NICK Oh, that wife.

PENTWHISTLE So follow me, please, Mr Arden.

NICK Ellen, I'm off to see Bianca. I'll be strong.

ELLEN You'd better be, or I'll tell her myself.

27.SOUND DOOR CLOSES - FOOTSTEPS IN HALLWAY- UNDER

PENTWHISTLE Right down this hallway, Mr Arden, is your suite.

It's a nice suite. Your wife is a nice woman.

NICK Which wife?

PENTWHISTLE The one in Suite C, right inside this door.(FOOTSTEPS OUT)

Why don't you go inside and stay there?

NICK Now let me explain, it's as simple as A, B, C.

PENTWHISTLE (PANICS) Don't tell me you've got another one in Suite B?

NICK Why don't you just forget about me and my problems?

PENTWHISTLE (ABRUPTLY) Good night, Mr. Arden.

NICK Good night. Hmm. I don't want a problem. Let's see...

"Now, Bianca ..." No. That's not strong enough.

"Now, Bianca, something's come up. This is the situation."

"Truth is stranger than fiction. Bianca, there's something between two people being married ... you don't get between two people who haven't been married ..." Now, let me see:

"Be big, Bianca, be brave. You will? That's a girl..."

28.SOUND HE OPENS THE DOOR AND GOES IN

BIANCA Nick ...? (DOOR CLOSES)

NICK Bianca, something's come up.

BIANCA What?

NICK My wife!

BIANCA Nick, you're talking so strangely.

NICK Bianca, there's a situation between two people who've never been married. Truth is stranger than a Frenchman.

BIANCA Nick ... I don't understand you.

NICK You don't? Well, in that case, good night.

BIANCA Darling! Oh .. ho, ho, darling. Are you just bashful, is that what's wrong?

NICK Uh... bashful, that's it. Well, see you later.

BIANCA Nick ...?

NICK Going downstairs to get a deck of cards.

BIANCA Come inside, Nick.

NICK Uh... come inside, huh? Well, all right.

29.SOUND FOOTSTEPS COME IN - DOOR CLOSES

BIANCA (SEDUCTIVELY) I've sent down for some champagne.

NICK Oh, champagne, huh? Can't drink the stuff, gives me hiccups.
(THROAT SOUNDS) Just like that. (AGAIN) Terrible!.

BIANCA All right, darling. Now why don't you just relax and put the dressing gown on .. just like me?

NICK I couldn't relax with your dressing gown on.

BIANCA Darling, don't be afraid of me. I'm your wife!

NICK That's what I'm afraid of.

BIANCA Nick, come on. Put your arms around me.

NICK Uh... are you sure your mother won't mind?

BIANCA We're man and wife, darling. (PAUSE)

Now... what would you like to do?

30.SOUND TELEPHONE RINGS

NICK Answer the phone! Hello...hello ...

31.ELLEN (FILTER) This is Ellen. Did you tell her yet?

NICK (LOW VOICE) Not yet. I'm working on it.

ELLEN (FILTER) I'll be right in!

NICK Oh no.. no. Hello ... hello!

BIANCA Who was that, Nick?

NICK Uh... it's a client, very important. Got to go out into the corridor... to take care of something very important...

BIANCA How can you leave me like this? Where are you going?

NICK Have to file a quick affidavit!

BIANCA Oh, Nick ...

NICK No time to explain. Hurry... hurry ...

32.SOUND DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES

ELLEN Don't try to stop me.

NICK You've got to give me more time.

ELLEN What were you doing in there?

NICK Uh .. briefing her.

ELLEN Get out of my way!

NICK Ellen .. Bianca and I are not spending the night in the hotel.

ELLEN Oh ... you aren't?

NICK No. We're driving back home. Why don't you catch
the next plane back to San Francisco, and we'll settle this
whole thing in a nice, civilized manner.

ELLEN I know your "civilized manner." That's what got me into this
hotel seven years ago.

NICK I promise you ... I promise you I'll tell her. Come on.
Let's go back to your room

33.SOUND FOOTSTEPS DOWN THE CORRIDOR - GOING UNDER

ELLEN Seven lonely years. Seven lonely years on an island with
no one to talk to. Nothing but memories, my love for you
and the will to stay alive. Hoping against hope that you'd wait.
And then to come home and find myself legally dead.

NICK I know, I know, Ellen. I'll make it up to you.

34.SOUND FOOTSTEPS OUT- KNOCKING ON A DOOR - IT OPENS

PENTWHISTLE Yes. Well, you are fickle, aren't you?

NICK Just leaving, Mr Pentwhistle.

PENTWHISTLE Before leaving, would you deliver a message to your ... uh ...
to that woman ... to whoever she is in that room with you?

NICK Right. Fire away.

PENTWHISTLE A Mr. Steven Burckett phoned earlier. He says to tell her he
left her things from the island with her mother-in-law...

NICK Things from the island?

PENTWHISTLE ... and those seven years were not "nearly enough."
He says he'd like to see her again. Goodbye and good luck.

NICK Steven Burckett?

ELLEN Steven?.. ah .. what did he say?

NICK "Things from the island" ... seven years ... Ellen? Ellen?

ELLEN Nicky, Nicky, I can explain.

NICK Was there a man on that island with you?

ELLEN What island?

NICK You know: "what island."

ELLEN Oh, that island.

NICK Was there a man with you?

35.BUSINESS FOOTSTEPS - TRYING TO GET AWAY

ELLEN Pardon me, dear...

NICK Where are you going?

ELLEN For a shave and a haircut!

36.MUSIC COMPLICATIONS BRIDGE ENDING PART TWO

ANNOUNCER Nicholas Arden is not a happy man. Wife number one has fled ... he knows not where, leaving behind only one thought: that she has spent seven years on an island with another man.

37.SOUND SNEAK IN AUTOMOBILE INTERIOR SOUNDS

And wife number two sits glaring beside him in his car going back to the city --- as they contemplate this ghastly mess.

38.SOUND INTERIOR SOUNDS UP BRIEFLY - CONTINUE UNDER

BIANCA Nicholas Arden, don't you think you owe me an explanation?

NICK Yes, I do.

BIANCA Well?

NICK I can't think of one.

BIANCA (GASPING, THEN SOBBING) Boo hoo...

NICK Bianca, you must think that I've behaved very strangely.

BIANCA (SOBBING) I certainly do...

NICK Well, it runs in the family. The night my father was married he pitched horse shoes until four in the morning.

BIANCA I don't care about your father. We've driven all day without stopping and soon it'll be night again...(STARTS TO CRY)

NICK Mother never forgave him. Pitched horse shoes all night.
Never won a single game.

BIANCA Oh... (SOBS AGAIN)

39.MUSIC DISTRESSFUL BRIDGE

ELLEN Timmy... no more stories.

TIMMY Not even one?

ELLEN No. It's time for bed.

TIMMY Do I have to go to bed, grandma?

BIANCA Nicky, aren't you going to carry me over the threshold?

ELLEN (SOUTHERN ACCENT) Well, look what the wind blew in!

NICK Oh, my, my. It's uh..somebody from Virginia.

ELLEN (S.A.) Let me give the bridegroom a big kiss... for luck!

BIANCA (PAUSE) Okay, let go of him, sister, he's lucky enough...

MOTHER Hello, Bianca, this is an old friend of the family ...
er .. from the south ...her name is .. uh...uh...

ELLEN (S.A.) Effie... Effie... and you're the bride.

NICK Yes, she is. Go to your room ..."Effie" ...

BIANCA I'm still waiting ...

ELLEN (S.A.)Now, you carry her over the threshold, Nicky darlin'.

NICK Well, okay....(HE STRUGGLES TO LIFT BIANCA)

ELLEN (S.A.) Ain't he too sweet for words?

BIANCA He's just a doll.

NICK Over the threshold, Bianca ... Oh ..oh

BIANCA Look out, Nick.

43.SOUND THEY FALL TO THE FLOOR

NICK I tripped on Effie.

ELLEN (S.A.) It was my clumsy ole foot!

MOTHER Are you all right, dear?

NICK Let me help you up, dear.

ELLEN (S.A.) I'm so sorry ... will ya all forgive me?
I hope it doesn't mean bad luck.

BIANCA Couldn't give this marriage a worse start than it already has.

ELLEN (S.A.) Oh my, tell us about it.

NICK Not now, Effie.

ELLEN (S.A.) Just crazy about your husband, crazy about him.
He was the dullest boy you ever did see until he got gawky.
Don't you think he's gawky? I think he's gawky.

NICK I wasn't aware that I "gawked".

BIANCA Nicky, I'm awfully tired.

MOTHER Let me show you to your room.

BIANCA Nick will show me.

ELLEN (S.A.) Nick and I want to talk about "old times." Don't we?

NICK No, we "don't we."

ELLEN (S.A.) We can do it right here if you want.
Nick, remember the night we were marr...

NICK (INTERRUPTS) Bianca, why don't you go off to bed?

BIANCA Are you coming?

NICK In a minute, yes.

ELLEN (S.A.) I'll let cha have 'im when ah'm through with 'im.

NICK Why don't you hush your big mouth?

ELLEN Don't make me mad, "honeychild," or I'll blab my head off.

NICK Bianca, I'll see you upstairs.

BIANCA (ANGRY-GOING OFF) Oh, good night.

ELLEN Good night, chile, sweet dreams. Oh, Nick, you're in a terrible pickle, aren't you? You haven't told her yet.

NICK No, I haven't. And... what about that Steven Burckett? You ran out of the Awahnee fast enough when I brought up that topic of conversation.

ELLEN Well, I can explain about him.

NICK Seven years on an island together. Why didn't you tell me?

ELLEN Well, I knew you would jump ... no, fly to conclusions.

NICK That's seven years with noplac else to fly to.

ELLEN Little old Steven. Why would you be concerned about him?

NICK Stop talking as though he were a casual acquaintance.

ELLEN Poor Steven. He broke his leg. It took a whole year to mend. ..

NICK What about the other six years?

ELLEN Nick, if you could only meet him, you would see how silly you are.

NICK What's so silly?

ELLEN Well ... he such a little man. I don't think he weighs over a hundred and twenty pounds. He spent most of his time pursuing his hobby.

NICK What hobby?

ELLEN Nature. (PAUSE) I mean flowers... and plants and things. Oh, Nicky, he's so harmless. After all, a man over sixty.

NICK Uh... sixty?

ELLEN Yes, darling.

NICK Well, why didn't you tell me?

ELLEN I had a hunch you might carry on this way.

BIANCA (FROM OFF) Nick, are you coming up?

NICK (A LITTLE OFF) Coming right up.

ELLEN Nick, I'm insulted. You cross-examinng me this way, while that woman....yells for my husband in my house.

NICK Yes, the poor girl. She thinks we're married, just because
we had a wedding ceremony.

BIANCA (OFF) Nick!

NICK Coming....

ELLEN Are you going to tell her?

NICK Sure.

ELLEN When?

NICK Now...

ELLEN Stout fellow.

NICK That's me.

ELLEN A kiss good night?

NICK G' night. (THEY KISS)

ELLEN (SIGHS) Ah, you Casanova, you.

BIANCA (OFF) Nick, I'm waiting!

44.MUSIC IRONIC BRIDGE

BIANCA Nick, I just want to know one thing.

Do you love me?

NICK Bianca, you're one of the most attractive young women
I've ever met.

BIANCA (PRACTICALLY SCREAMING) I'm your wife!

NICK Well, that's what I was coming to, Bianca In the course of human events, it sometimes happens that two people get all fouled up.

BIANCA For the love of heaven, tell me ... what's wrong with me?

NICK Nothing. Under other circumstances, who knows?

BIANCA Oh... (STARTS CRYING)

NICK Let's start at the beginning. Once there was a man who met a woman, I'm the man and you're the woman, ya see? Isn't that simple?

BIANCA What are you trying to say?

NICK Just this.

45.SOUND (OFF) DOOR BELL RINGS

NICK Oh, the door bell's ringing, down stairs ... I'll get it...

46.SOUND FOOTSTEPS SOME DISTANCE TO THE FRONT DOOR
DOOR OPENS

NICK Yes?

STEVEN Hi, I suppose you're Nick.

NICK I suppose I am.

STEVEN Glad to meet cha. Shake!

NICK Why, yes ... Ohhh...(PAIN IN HANDSHAKE)

STEVEN Hurt your hand? Don't know my own strength.

NICK Who are you?

STEVEN I'm "Adam" from the island.

NICK Adam?

STEVEN I guess Ellen hasn't told you about our nicknames.
I'm Steven Burckett.

NICK You are Steven Burckett?

STEVEN Yep. I guess we've got a lot in common, huh?

NICK Oh ... undoubtedly. Tell me about this nickname business.
(PAUSE) What did you call Ellen?

STEVEN Eve. (PAUSE) Adam and Eve.

NICK Yeah. That's very clever

STEVEN You mind if I come in? (SMALL BUMP) Oops... you got a
low door there...almost bumped my head.

NICK At one hundred and twenty pounds, Mr Burckett, you should
have made it easily.

STEVEN Aww ... you're kidding me, Mr Arden.

NICK I wouldn't kid you, Mr. Burckett. You look amazingly spry
 for a man of sixty...

STEVEN I'm not sixty.

NICK You're not? My, that is a surprise.

 And how is your broken leg, Mr Burckett?

STEVEN I didn't break my leg, old man.

NICK I'm sorry.

STEVEN Once I sprained my toe when I kicked an alligator.

NICK Now imagine a nature lover like you, kicking an alligator.

BIANCA (OFF) Nick, come up here.

NICK Yes, Bianca.

STEVEN Who was that?

NICK That was a female alligator, calling to her mate.

 You see, Adam ... you don't mind if I call you Adam...

STEVEN Oh, not at all.

NICK You see, Adam, I too am part of nature -- the part that goes

 over the fence last. If you spent seven years on an island with

 my wife, I'm in trouble.

47.MUSIC NATURE LOVERS BRIDGE

ANNOUNCER Once again the fates laughed at Nicholas Arden as he approached the room of wife number one. The fates laughed and Nick knocked on the door.

48.SOUND DOOR KNOCKS -- TWICE, DOOR OPENS

ELLEN (YAWNING) Nick? I was just going to bed.

49.BUSINESS NICK TAKES A FEW STEPS INTO ROOM

NICK Ellen. I'd like you tell me again about Steven Burckett.

ELLEN Poor old Steven.

NICK (CHUCKLES) With the broken leg.

ELLEN (GIGGLES BACK) A hundred and twenty pounds

NICK Sixty years old.

ELLEN (LAUGHS) Nature lover....

NICK (LAUGHS BACK) Poor little ole Adam.

ELLEN (STARTS TO LAUGH) Adam?

NICK Yeah. Adam. That puny half-pint is downstairs doing hand stands for exercise.

ELLEN Steven, here?

NICK Adam and Eve. I guess that makes me the viper in the garden of paradise.

ELLEN Oh no. You're the apple.

BIANCA (OFF) Nick! Where are you?

ELLEN There's the viper.

NICK Why did you lie to me about Steven Burckett?

ELLEN I did nothing on that island to be ashamed of.

NICK What did you do for seven years? Swat tse-tse flies?

STEVEN I heard your voices in here, and just thought I'd pop in.
and say "hello."

NICK Well, you can just pop right out again. My wife is dressed
for bed.

STEVEN Ah, I've seen her in a lot less than that, haven't I, Eve?

ELLEN Yes, but it was pretty foggy most of the time.

NICK If you don't mind, let's not talk about the weather.

STEVEN See here, old man, there's no cause to get excited.

NICK My whole life is falling apart, and I can't get excited in
my own home. What are you doing here, anyway?

STEVEN I was lonely for Eve. After all, we used to see quite a bit
of each other.

NICK Yah ha ...Yah ha!

STEVEN I might as well state my case right now, old man.
 I love your wife.

ELLEN Steven.

STEVEN I can't help it, Ellen, you're an extraordinary woman.
 If Nicholas doesn't want you, I do.

ELLEN Do you want me, Nick?

NICK I'm not so sure.

BIANCA (COMING ON) Nick!

NICK Bianca, it's time you knew. I'm a married man.

BIANCA What are you doing in this woman's room?

NICK This is no woman. She's my wife.

BIANCA I'm your wife. Nick, what are you trying to do?

ELLEN Yes, Nick. Explain to us, what are you trying to do?

BIANCA What have you got to do with this, Effie?

ELLEN Yes, Nick, what's Effie got to do with it?

BIANCA What's going on here? Am I going crazy?

NICK That's what I've been trying to tell you, Bianca.
 This is my wife: Ellen Wagstaff Arden.

BIANCA The dead one?

STEVEN She's pretty lively, I can vouch for that.

NICK We've got to face it. My wife Ellen came back ...
all a mistake, we'll laugh about it some day, ha, ha, ha....

50.BUSINESS SHE SLAPS HIM AND WALKS AWAY

BIANCA Bigamist.(GOING OFF}I'm seeing my lawyer in the morning.

ELLEN Nicholas Arden, you deserved that slap.

NICK Why? All I did was tell her the truth.

ELLEN The poor girl's in love with you, and what do you do?
You walk all over her.

STEVEN All I want to know is which one of us gets Eve.

NICK Stop calling my wife Eve.

ELLEN He doesn't like it, Adam.

NICK Now, stop that!

ELLEN You're just jealous. Making mountains out of molehills.

NICK Some mole hill. A desert island...

STEVEN Which one of us do you want, Eve? I'm strong and healthy.

NICK I'm just gawky.

ELLEN Well, I have to think about it.

NICK You're legally dead. It's against the law for you to think.

ELLEN Well, we'll see about that tomorrow.

NICK Good.

ELLEN In court! Bigamist!

51.MUSIC ANGRY RESOLUTION BRIDGE

52.BUSINESS CAST WALLA - A FEW SHOUTS - A COURT ROOM

53.SOUND GAVEL COMES DOWN TWICE

JUDGE Quiet! Uh... don't I know you?

NICK Who?

JUDGE I said, don't I know you?

NICK Why, you married me, your honor.

JUDGE Oh, yes. You're the lawyer. This is a civil court, Mr Arden, we don't handle bigamy here. What kid of lawyer are you?
What school did you go to?

NICK Harvard, your honor.

JUDGE I'm a Yale man, myself. Where is the "kissless" bride?

BIANCA Here, your honor.

JUDGE Bianca Bates ... hmm... are you sure you're kissless?

BIANCA Ask this miserable lawyer I was married to.

NICK She's kissless, your honor.

JUDGE Harvard man.

BIANCA I want an annulment.

JUDGE Granted!

54.SOUND GAVEL COMES DOWN ONCE

BIANCA This is the happiest day of my life.

JUDGE I used to know a girl just like her. She sold neck ties.

STEVEN Your honor, what about Ellen Wagstaff Arden?

JUDGE Well, what about her?

STEVEN You declared her legally dead.

JUDGE Yes, so I did. The Harvard man here prepared the brief.

ELLEN But I'm not dead, your honor.

JUDGE What do you want me to do, reverse myself?

Take it to the court of appeals, they always reverse me anyway.

NICK Your honor, may I approach the bench?

JUDGE Of course.

55.BUSINESS JUDGE CONFERS WITH NICK UNDER STEVEN'S TALK

STEVEN (LOW VOICE) Ellen, what about it? Will you marry me?

ELLEN Oh Steven, I am so flattered. But it's still Nick.

STEVEN All right, Ellen, I tried. (NICK AND JUDGE UP & OUT)

JUDGE Mr Arden, get off my lap.I know how to read a brief.
Get down there with that woman.

NICK Yes, your honor. I have a precedent for this case.
I cite Mulligan vs. Mulligan-Benson ...City of Fresno, 1879.

JUDGE Are you going to complicate this thing?

NICK No, your honor. You see, the wife of Mulligan returned after
a considerable time to find that her husband had remarried.

JUDGE Well, I don't see the relevance ...

ELLEN It's sort of a Mulligan stew.

JUDGE Young woman, I could hold you in contempt of court for
that remark. Don't let me hear you again.

NICK When the first wife returned, the second wife sued for an
immediate annulment, leaving Mulligan free to remarry either.

JUDGE So what did he do?

NICK He dropped dead of Cirrhosis of the Liver

ELLEN They never found out if he slept with his beard under the
covers or over the covers.

JUDGE Now, that remark is going to cost you twenty-five dollars!

ELLEN But your honor, I'm legally dead.

JUDGE All right, you're legally alive!

56.SOUND GAVEL COMES DOWN ONCE AGAIN

JUDGE Make that fifty dollars. Pay up in front. Court's adjourned.

NICK Thank you, your honor.

JUDGE I'm going to go home and tell my wife about this case.
(GOING OFF) She thinks most of my cases are dull.

NICK There you are, alive and kicking. Now you and Adam can get
"back to nature."

ELLEN Nick, why would you say a thing like that?

NICK An hour ago I was a bigamist. Now I don't have a wife at all.
Not even one solitary wife.

ELLEN It's your own fault.

NICK What did I do?

ELLEN You were a jealous brute.

NICK Well, I have a right to be jealous. Ellen, you know, I have
to think about our whole future very carefully.

ELLEN Maybe then you'll make up your mind to forgive me for
not drowning.

NICK It isn't that.

ELLEN I've got some thinking of my own to do. I'm not so sure
I want you ... the way you're acting.

NICK Ellen, it's not that I don't love you..

ELLEN But you don't really approve of the "new Ellen", do you?
I think I'll go away with the children for a few weeks, so
we can get to know each other again; and I can tell them
I'm their mother ... and think about "us."

NICK Where are you going to go?

ELLEN The Awahnee in Yosemite, I guess.

NICK How are you going to get there?

ELLEN I'll drive.

NICK There's still snow up there.

ELLEN It's not so bad with tire chains.

NICK Oh, no, not with the kids. I'll drive you myself.

ELLEN You can if you want to. I'll stay until the end of the month.
That'll give us both time to know if it's what we want.

NICK Leave tomorrow?

ELLEN Yes, tomorrow.

57.MUSIC UNRESOLVED BRIDGE

58.SOUND HOTEL FRONT DESK AMBIENCE, UNDER

PENTWHISTLE Front! Room one twelve, please. May I help you, sir?

NICK I'm Nicholas Arden. I brought my family.

PENTWHISTLE You! Mr.Arden, this is a hotel, not a harem.

ELLEN Just one wife, Mr Pentwhistle. Me.

PENTWHISTLE What happened to the other one? Or am I being nosy?

ELLEN She was annulled yesterday morning.

PENTWHISTLE Well, congratulations.

NICK I want two rooms: one for my wife and one for our two children.

PENTWHISTLE Uh... children? Where did they come from?

NICK Mr Pentwhistle, how would it be if I just told you the story of my life?

PENTWHISTLE My wife wouldn't approve. We have just two rooms left, they're adjoining.

NICK Fine. We'll take them. (PAUSE) Where are the kids?

ELLEN They're on the front porch, admiring the out of doors.
Kim... Timmy ...

TIMMY Golly, wbat pretty trees.

ELLEN But didn't we agree to put everything on hold until
the end of the month? This is only February 13 th..

NICK Yes, yes ... I know....

ELLEN Well ... good night, Nick.

NICK I hope I get back all right.

ELLEN Well, I'm sure you will.

NICK Uh... well ... (GOING OFF) Good bye.

ELLEN Good bye.

NICK Good bye.

61.SOUND DOOR CLOSES

ELLEN (SHOUTS AFTER HIM) Nick?

62.SOUND DOOR OPENS

NICK Yes, Ellen?

ELLEN I ... just wanted to say "good bye."

NICK Oh... good bye.

63.SOUND DOOR CLOSES

ELLEN Chinch, ...Timmy?

TIMMY We were just going to bed.

ELLEN I want you to sit down, Timmy. You too, Chinch.

CHINCH Sure.

ELLEN I want to tell you something ... about your mommy.

TIMMY We're listening.

ELLEN It's just ... we're all staying together ... I love you both
very much. And that's because you're wonderful children...
and I used to know you a long, long time ago.

CHINCH Go on, mommy.

ELLEN What did you say?

TIMMY Well, you are our mother, aren't cha?

ELLEN Wha... you knew?

CHINCH We eavesdropped on you and grandma.

ELLEN Oh, you kids... come here!

TIMMY Hello, mother.

CHINCH Mommy?

ELLEN Oh... what an armfull you two are!

64.SOUND KNOCK ON THE DOOR

NICK (OUTSIDE) Ellen?

ELLEN (LOW VOICE) Hurry up, you two ... get to bed.

NICK (OUTSIDE) Ellen, it's me!

ELLEN (LOW VOICE) Go on, now.

CHINCH Goodnight, mommy.

TIMMY Goodnight...

65.BUSINESS LONG WALK TO THE DOOR - SHE OPENS IT

ELLEN Well, is something wrong?

NICK Uh... the car won't start.

ELLEN Are you sure?

NICK Positive!

ELLEN Well, I guess you'll have to stay in the hotel for the night.

NICK I tried... no rooms left.

ELLEN Well, what will you do?

NICK Sleep in the snow.

ELLEN Hmm. Maybe I can help you.

NICK Can you, Ellen?

ELLEN How about a blanket?

NICK (HE COUGHS)

ELLEN Oh dear. What's that?

NICK (CLEARS HIS THROAT) Doesn't mean anything.

ELLEN Oh, well then ... good night.

NICK Hmm. Nice room you have here.

ELLEN Yes, I like it.

NICK Nice bed.

ELLEN Fine bed.

NICK Room for two.

ELLEN Oh, yeah, plenty room. Good night, Nick.

NICK What about me?

ELLEN What about you?

NICK What about me staying?

ELLEN Where?

NICK Here?

ELLEN Oh, no couldn't do that.

NICK I wouldn't be any trouble.

ELLEN Well, it's the principle of the thing.

NICK Oh... I could even sleep on the floor.

ELLEN Could you?

NICK No bother to you ... none at all.

ELLEN Well, okay then.

66.SOUND HE WALKS IN

NICK The floor?

ELLEN The floor.

67.MUSIC SOME RESOLUTION BRIDGE

68.SOUND DOOR QUIETLY OPENS

CHINCH Someone's sleeping in mommy's room.

TIMMMY Maybe it's daddy.

69.BUSINESS LIGHT FOOTSTEPS AS NICK SNEAKS OUT

CHINCH It is daddy. Where's he going?

TIMMY Let's follow him and find out.

70.SOUND ANOTHER DOOR OPENS - MULTIPLE FOOTSTEPS

TIMMY He's going in to the gift shop. It's still open.

(PAUSE) He's coming out

CHINCH He's got two big boxes that look like red hearts!

71.SOUND HASTY FOOTSTEPS - BACK INTO ROOM

72.MUSIC NIGHT CREEPING BRIDGE

ELLEN Are you asleep, Nick? (PAUSE) Nick ... Nick!

Where's that darn light? Nick...

73.BUSINESS LIGHT FOOTSTEPS AS NICK SNEAKS IN

NICK Happy Valentine's Day, darling.

ELLEN (SHE LAUGHS) Oh, Nick, what's in those two red boxes?

NICK Tons of candy. You only go down lover's lane once a year.
For us ... it's once in a lifetime.

ELLEN (MOVED) Come here, darling.

NICK Are we married?

ELLEN Yes, it's Valentine's Day.

NICK I haven't really said it yet: welcome home, Ellen.

ELLEN (MOVED SOME MORE) It's good to be home, darling.

NICK Can I come to bed, now?

ELLEN For the rest of your life, Nicky... for the rest of OUR lives.

74.MUSIC FINAL SCREEN DIRECTORS THEME

ANNOUNCER Tonight the Midnight Mystery Players have presented
MY FAVORITE WIFE, a little Valentine's Day melodrama
arranged for you by "the fates." and by the American
Museum of Radio and Electricity. The script for the original
motion picture starring Irene Dunne and Cary Grant was
written by Leo Mc Cary and Samuel and Bella Spewasck.

ANNOUNCER The SCREEN DIRECTORS PLAYHOUSE radio adaptation was by Milton Geiger and featured the original stars in the broadcast of Dec. 7, 1950, on the NBC network. Our players were _____ as Ellen Wagstaff Arden and _____ as Nicholas Arden, with _____ as Steven, _____ as Mother Arden, _____ as Mr Pentwhistle, and _____ as Bianca Bates. The Judge was _____ and Timmy was played by _____ Chinch by _____. Sound effects were created by _____ with _____ as our Sound Engineer. Music cues were composed by Henry Russell. MY FAVORITE WIFE was directed by _____. This is your announcer, _____, speaking. This live broadcast was produced by _____ for KMRE LP FM 102.3 and the American Museum of Radio and Electricity by _____.

BROADCAST NOTES

The motion picture MY FAVORITE WIFE was produced in 1940 by Leo Mc Carey and directed by Broadway regular Garson Kanin. The script was by Mc Carey and the screenwriters Samuel and Bella Spewack, who spiced up the dialogue for stars Irene Dunne and Cary Grant. Randolph Scott played Steven Burckett, Gail Patrick, Bianca Bates and Scotty Beckett was Timmy. The plot revolved around news photographer Ellen Arden, who survives a freighter shipwreck in the Pacific in 1933. Seven years later she is rescued from a desert island only to find that her husband Nick has remarried just before she returns. The radio script for the Screen Directors Playhouse was updated from the movie script in 1950 by Milton A. Gieger. In the intervening years World War Two had altered conditions in the Pacific, so that the shipwreck suffered by Ellen, now in 1943, would likely have been caused by a Japanese torpedo. But by 1950 American radio audiences were trying to put the war behind them. The radio script not only retained the lively repartee between Grant and Dunne but added punchy lines for Peter Leeds as Pentwhistle and Jack Benny regular Frank Nelson who played the Judge.