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**HAVE I GOT NEWS FOR YOU!**

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# Have I Got News For You!

A two-act comedy play  
by  
Craig Sodaro



Meriwether Publishing Ltd.

**Contemporary Drama Service**

PO Box 7710 • Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7710

# Have I Got News For You!

A two-act comedy play

by Craig Sodaro

## *CAST OF CHARACTERS*

HOPE COUTURE: 20s, news anchor at KRUD  
RITA: 40s, secretary  
JOSH: 20s, cameraman  
ANGUS SLADE: 40s, KRUD station manager  
SAMMY CALZONE: 30s, would-be gangster  
SOPHIE: 20s, broadcast intern  
RENA: 20s, broadcast intern  
BEULAH BUCKSWORTH: 50s, TV station owner  
MRS. CALZONE: 50s, Sammy's mother  
CORA: 50s, cleaning lady  
DORA: 50s, cleaning lady  
LARRY: 20s, Rita's son  
TOODLES: 20s, her other son  
SANDY: 30s, an electrician  
CANDY: 30s, another electrician  
PROFESSOR HANS KLINK: 50s, a professor of journalism  
MISS KLANK: 30s, his associate  
MS. PEERWELL: 30s  
.

## *PRODUCTION NOTES*

### **Props**

Papers on top of KRUD news desk  
Compact and mirror (Hope)  
Manila envelope (preset on desk)  
Fashionable purse (Hope)  
Cell phone (Beulah)  
Papers (Angus)  
Large purse (Mrs. Calzone)  
Buckets and mops (Cora and Dora)  
Makeup (Hope)  
Card (Larry)  
Plane ticket (Larry)  
Dolly preset up right (Rena and Sophie)  
Work Order (Sandy)  
Tool box (Candy)  
Money inside manila envelope (Angus)  
Suitcases (Klink and Klank)  
Note (Klink)  
Audition notice (Angus)  
Pin-on microphone (Josh)  
Papers from safe (Beulah)

Piece of wall paneling with framed certificates still attached  
(Sandy and Candy)  
Date book (Rita)  
Notepaper and pen (Sophie)  
Two video games (Super Sandman and Megadice) (Rita)  
Purse (Beulah)  
Badge (Peerwell)  
Cell phone (Peerwell)  
Bag of chips (Cora and Dora)  
Video camera (Josh)  
Large books (Sophie and Rena)  
Heavy bags like unmarked bank money bags (Sandy and Candy)  
Gun (Sammy)  
Box of doughnuts (Rita)  
Gun (Peerwell)  
Ropes (Beulah)  
Handcuffs (Rita)  
Keys (Beulah)

### **Sound Effects**

Phone ringing, land line and cell  
Loud “whack” Off-stage Center  
Loud explosion Off-stage Right

### **Costumes**

HOPE — The most fashionable clothes possible, far more dressy than they should be. The actress playing Hope can change costumes as many times as she would like to get across the idea that Hope is truly a fashion diva.

RITA — Modern office attire.

JOSH — T-shirt, faded jeans, sneakers.

ANGUS — White or pale long-sleeve shirt, dark pants, suspenders, and loosened tie, making him look like an old-fashioned newspaper editor.

SAMMY — Flashy suit with a flower in the lapel.

SOPHIE and RENA — Modern office attire.

BEULAH — Business clothes that bespeak her wealth and position. Possibly a light cape that she can swing around to her advantage.

MRS. CALZONE — Cloth coat over a plain dress in contrast to her flashy son.

CORA and DORA — Cleaning uniforms. They might want to wear matching dresses or blouses and skirts so they are in contrast to Sandy and Candy.

LARRY and TODDLES — Ill-fitting suits to look like they borrowed their clothes for this event, which they did.

SANDY and CANDY — Jumpsuits with “Shock Electric” on back with a thunderbolt logo.

**KLINK** — Suit and tie along with beard and mustache, a derby hat, and horn-rimmed glasses. In the last scene he needs a dress, wig, and shawl so he can try to look like an old lady.

**KLANK** — Frumpy dress, glasses, flowered hat.

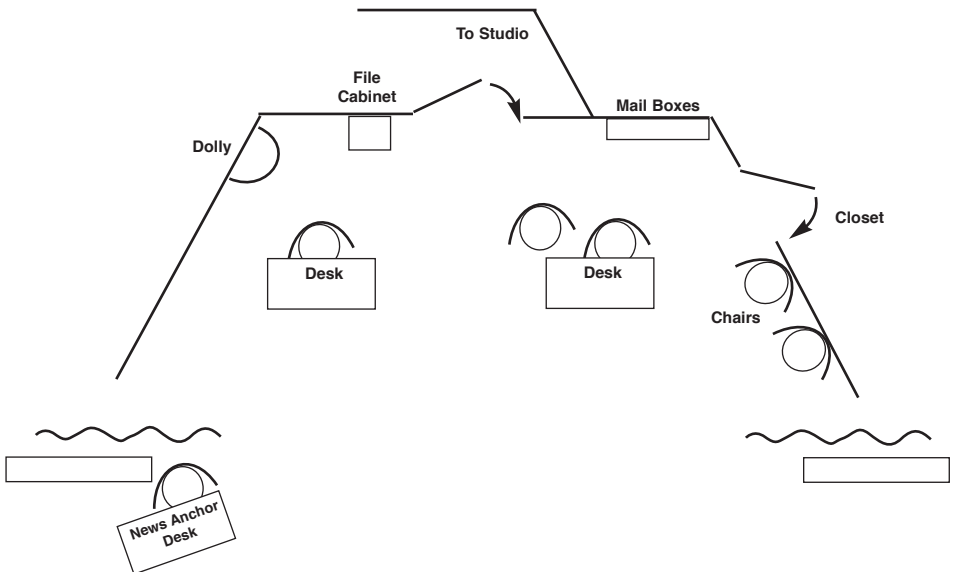
**PEERWELL** — Dark suit, if possible. Otherwise, dark skirt and blouse.

### Setting

**News Anchor Desk** — Played before the curtain, a desk with one or two chairs behind it. Call letters “KRUD” on front of desk. A spot illuminates the anchors as they present the news.

**KRUD Newsroom** — Wing entrances Down Left and Down Right, left leading to main entrance, right leading to Angus’s office and storerooms. Center exit (with or without door) leads to television studio. Closet Up Left with door. Two desks, one left and one right, both with telephones and computers on top. Tall filing cabinet Up Right. Chairs behind each desk, ideally one behind right desk, two behind left one. Two waiting room chairs left. Mailbox cubbies up right or on right wall with the names of characters on each cubby (Mr. Slade, Josh, Rita, Hope, Cleaning Staff). Posters, schedules, news clippings and so on decorate the walls giving the room a cluttered, busy appearance. On one of the walls the call letters “KRUD” are emblazoned along with the town name, “Rudland.” A station logo would be very appropriate with the call letters.

### Set design



## Synopsis of Scenes

### ACT I

Scene 1: The news anchor desk before the curtain, 6:00 p.m. broadcast.

Scene 2: The newsroom, immediately after.

Scene 3: The news anchor desk before the curtain, 10:00 p.m. broadcast.

Scene 4: The newsroom, immediately after.

### ACT II

Scene 1: The news anchor desk before the curtain, 8:00 a.m. broadcast.

Scene 2: The newsroom, immediately after.

Scene 3: The news anchor desk before the curtain, noon broadcast.

Scene 4: The newsroom, immediately after.

### Synopsis:

Local TV station KRUD is falling apart. Advertisers are canceling their accounts in droves, viewers are dwindling, and newsroom morale has plummeted to an all-time low. The cause? Hope Couture, the fashion-minded but brainless news anchor holds the job because her uncle, Angus Slade, is the station manager. Hope's news reports cover more fashion talk and gossip than news, and her on-screen comments have dragged broadcast journalism to new lows. When station owner Beulah Bucksworth drops by after the evening news, she drops a bombshell: she's closing KRUD.

What Beulah doesn't expect, however, are two brand new interns, Sophie and Rena, who refuse to accept that their jobs have vanished before they've even started. The young women, along with cameraman Josh and secretary Rita, manage to convince Beulah to give them one more week to get the station back on track. But to do that, they need to get rid of Hope for the week. Thanks to Hope's boyfriend's mother who wants Hope out of the way just as much, they send Hope off to Paris for the week to cover the latest fashions.

With several major news stories developing locally — the Can Opener Bandits striking a nearby bank and a renegade CEO who has absconded with pension funds — the news team dives into rejuvenating the broadcasts. But they keep getting interrupted — first by a pair of grouchy cleaning ladies, then by a couple of suspicious electricians, and finally by a professor who looks like Sigmund Freud but acts like he's wearing a disguise and hiding from the law.

It doesn't take long for Sophie and Rena to figure out that the Can Opener Bandits are operating right under their noses. But they don't know which of the odd pairs is up to robbing the bank next door. And when they ask the professor questions about a book he claims to have written and he gives them ridiculous answers, they know he and his assistant are up to something. The arrival of an FBI agent confirms their suspicions and they figure out a way to unmask the bandits. Unfortunately their sleuthing backfires and only the unexpected return of Hope Couture manages to tie up (literally) the criminals and save KRUD from closing.

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ACT I

Scene One

*(Anchor desk at TV station KRUD. Desk with one chair set against cityscape of Rudland, a small city somewhere in the middle of the U.S. This scene is best set Downstage of curtain extreme left or right. AT RISE, HOPE, seated behind desk, rubs a last spot of lipstick off her front teeth aided by her small compact mirror. She suddenly snaps mirror shut and brightens.)*

**HOPE:** Oh, hi there! This is Hope Couture, your six o'clock news anchor here at station K-R-U-D, where our nose for news smells the best! Our top story tonight is something about the president ... *(HOPE begins to search the papers on her desk.)* Oh, dear ... I know I've got that top news story here somewhere ... it had something on it about a man on a mission ... and one of those planets like the moon ... or Pluto ... or Goofy. Oh, here it is! In our top story tonight, the president has indicated in a news conference that the United States is going to put a man on Mars. *(Looking up from her paper)* Mars! I should have guessed! Anyway, the manned Mars landing is projected for the year 2025. *(Looking up again)* 2025! I'll need a nip and a tuck by then! So, what else does this say? *(Reading again)* Officials at NASA accepted the president's directive, and John P. Martinez, head of flight operations, said that if funding is provided, the Mars mission is, and I quote, "Entirely within the realm of possibility." *(Looking up)* It had better be a sure thing if any of my tax dollars go for it! Honestly! What is the point? *(Reading again)* Scientists at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida are already busy on constructing a brand new — *(HOPE sets page down and reads from next page)* pink Cadillac and a pair of diamond earrings as big as cowbells. "I don't care what gifts he sends me," the angry country singer said in an interview, "He won't be getting so much as a smile from these lips!" *(Realizing her mistake, with a smile)* You go, girl! Send him to Mars! In other news ... *(HOPE shuffles papers again and picks one to read.)* There was an accident on Route Eight, but you don't want to hear about that. It's just all gruesome and ugly. And there's some silly thing here about a CEO who's run off with the pension fund of ... let's see ... WorldCom Dot Com. But right now, let's talk fashion! That's the real news. I mean, how about that dress that we all saw you-know-who wearing at that gala Washington, D.C., fundraiser? I mean, really! She couldn't have looked more like a turnip if she tried. What was with that balloon thing



1 she was wearing? Of course she was only trying to outdo  
2 that other Washington maven who made Times Square look  
3 square. Those sequins glittering on her looked like she'd lit  
4 a match in a Chinese fireworks factory. It's a wonder people  
5 didn't go blind. And actually, I think a couple of them did ...  
6 at least from what they were wearing. (*Looking to her left*)  
7 What? The news? Well, there really isn't much else. All right,  
8 all right! (*HOPE picks up paper and scans it.*) Congress passed  
9 a new tax bill that will raise income taxes to twenty-five  
10 percent ... and the Eiffel Tower collapsed due to rusty rivets  
11 ... Big deal! Let's get back to what really matters here at K-  
12 R-U-D! (*Blackout*)  
13  
14

## 15 Scene 2

16 (*The newsroom at KRUD. AT RISE, RITA is alone On-stage talking*  
17 *on phone at desk right. On desk is a manila envelope.*)

18 RITA: I know this is the only station you get without cable, Mrs.  
19 Periwinkle. I know we should be reporting the news. Yes, I  
20 realize that she's just a bimbo with big hair. But you see,  
21 Mrs. Periwinkle ... Mrs. Periwinkle? Hello? (*JOSH enters*  
22 *center as RITA hangs up.*)

23 JOSH: (*Angrily*) The Eiffel Tower collapses and she gives it less  
24 air time than a cat stuck in a tree!

25 RITA: Or so-and-so's turnip dress.

26 JOSH: Rita, we've got to do something!

27 RITA: Look, Josh, you're a cameraman. I'm a secretary. What can  
28 we do?

29 JOSH: I got into this business because I thought I'd be doing  
30 something to help humanity, not oppress it. (*Phone rings.*  
31 *RITA answers it.*)

32 RITA: K-R-U-D Television Station. (*Nervously*) Mr. Jamison ... how  
33 nice. Did you like your new ad? What? Oh, now, Mr.  
34 Jamison, please don't do that. We need your account. You're  
35 very important to us, Mr. Jamison. Well, I realize the news  
36 is important, but ... Mr. Jamison? Mr. Jamison? (*RITA hangs*  
37 *up slowly.*)

38 JOSH: Another advertiser gone?

39 RITA: They're dropping like flies.

40 JOSH: Hope Couture kills 'em faster than Raid. How did she ever  
41 get this job? I mean, there must be dozens and dozens of  
42 broadcast school graduates who'd love to get their start  
43 here! (*HOPE sweeps into the room from Center carrying her purse,*  
44 *which she sets down dramatically.*)

45 HOPE: Was I wonderful or what?

1 RITA: Or what.  
2 HOPE: (*Angrily, to JOSH*) But next time, Joshua, make sure the  
3 papers on my desk are in the right order!  
4 JOSH: They were in the right order until you dumped all your  
5 makeup all over them!  
6 HOPE: Joshua, don't get testy with me! You're a cameraman, but  
7 I'm the star!  
8 JOSH: Look, star, you wouldn't even get your mug on TV if it  
9 weren't for me!  
10 HOPE: Cameramen are a dime a dozen, Joshua, so don't get your  
11 stinger too far out of joint or you'll be looking for another  
12 gig!  
13 JOSH: You know, Hope ... it's high time somebody clued you into  
14 the truth! (*ANGUS enters right, shirt-sleeves rolled up, ready for*  
15 *business.*)  
16 ANGUS: Hope, baby, you were spectacular!  
17 HOPE: (*Coyly*) Did you really think so, Uncle Angus? (*She casts a*  
18 *killing glance at JOSH.*)  
19 ANGUS: My favorite niece has the prettiest eyes, and they sure  
20 do light up the screen!  
21 HOPE: I'm glad you think so. But some people aren't quite so  
22 taken with them. (*HOPE glances again at JOSH.*)  
23 ANGUS: Like who, buttercup? Everybody loves you! You're the  
24 linchpin of this television station.  
25 HOPE: Really? Can I quote you on that?  
26 ANGUS: Why, honey, you can quote me 'til the cows come home.  
27 (*RITA hands ANGUS manila envelope.*) What's this?  
28 RITA: No idea, but it came by courier a few minutes ago. It's  
29 marked personal and underlined three times, so I figured it  
30 wasn't any of my beeswax. Oh, and Mr. Slade? Mr. Jamison  
31 just called. He's cancelled his advertising account.  
32 ANGUS: (*Furiously*) What? He can't do that! We got a contract!  
33 RITA: He told me what you can do with that contract. He said  
34 you should take it and —  
35 ANGUS: (*Stung*) Oh, well ... maybe you ought to just ... write it on  
36 a piece of paper and put it on my desk.  
37 HOPE: Jamison owns a furniture store, doesn't he, Uncle Angus?  
38 JOSH: Five furniture stores! Our biggest account! And you want  
39 to know why he cancelled the account?  
40 HOPE: I'm sure Uncle Angus would just love you to tell him,  
41 Joshua.  
42 ANGUS: What do you know about it, boy?  
43 JOSH: (*Weakening*) It's all because ... because ...  
44 ANGUS: Because what?  
45 JOSH: Oh, forget it!

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