

HIDDEN FEES

By Mike Willis

Copyright © 2018 by Mike Willis, All rights reserved.

ISBN: 978-1-60003-993-5

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Brooklyn Publishers LLC. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Brooklyn Publishers LLC. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers LLC. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Brooklyn Publishers LLC.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

AUTHOR CREDIT: All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this Work must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this Work. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the Work. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this Work is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice: ***Produced by special arrangement with Brooklyn Publishers LLC.***

COPYING: Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Brooklyn Publishers LLC.

BROOKLYN PUBLISHERS LLC
P.O. BOX 248 • CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA 52406
TOLL FREE (888) 473-8521 • FAX (319) 368-8011

HIDDEN FEES

A Comedy Duet

by Mike Willis

SYNOPSIS: Cheap Cable Company, is offering new customers an exclusive cable TV package that includes seven hundred and eighty-six channels for the low price of just fifty-nine dollars and thirty-two cents a month. New customer, Alvin, has come to the Cheap Cable offices to question his first bill which totaled almost twice what he expected. Cheap Cable's, quirky billing clerk Henny, patiently explains to Alvin that there are additional charges which include an activation kit, licensing, and various equipment charges and taxes. According to Henny, those charges are what everyone at Cheap Cable refers to as, *Hidden Fees*, but don't tell anyone, it's a secret.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(1 female, 1 male)

HENNY (f).....A perky and pleasant employee
for The Cheap Cable Company.
(58 lines)

AL (m).....A mildly sarcastic and very
dissatisfied customer of The
Cheap Cable Company.
(55 lines)

TIME: The present.

SETTING: The office of The Cheap Cable Company.

SET: The stage is bare, with the exception of a single chair center stage.

PROPS

- ☐ Cell Phone (optional)
- ☐ Clipboard with a Sheet of Paper (optional)
- ☐ Cable Bill (optional)

SPECIAL EFFECTS

- ☐ Cell phone rings (optional)

AUTHOR'S NOTE

Hidden Fees, is very flexible. The play can be performed simply on a bare stage with the use of a single chair and miming of the cell-phone and cable bill. This form of staging makes it ideal as a competition piece. In addition, the play may also be staged with a complete office setting and props.

AT RISE: *HENNY enters carrying her cell phone and a clipboard with a sheet of paper on it and sits in chair. SFX: Cell phone rings. HENNY answers her phone.*

HENNY: Thank you, for calling Cheap Cable. This is Henny speaking, how may I help you? *(Pause.)* Your wife saw our ad in the newspaper and insisted that you call about our new customer special. Why, that is excellent! That is a one-time offer and exclusive for new customers only. You and your wife would be new customers, wouldn't you sir? *(Pause.)* You, would. Wonderful. *(Pause.)* No, she wasn't mistaken, here at Cheap Cable, we are offering seven hundred and eighty-six of the most popular television channels for the low introductory price of only fifty-nine dollars and thirty-two cents. *(Pause.)* Of course, we have the garden channel. *(Checks her clipboard.)* As a matter of fact, your wife will be happy to hear that there are twenty-seven garden channels included among the seven hundred and eighty-six channels offered in the package. *(Pause.)* Yes, I heard....your wife said, "sign us up." Is that correct? Would Friday be a good day for our installer to come by and hook you up? *(Pause.)* Sooner? *(Checks her clipboard.)* Well, I could possibly work you in early tomorrow morning. *(Pause.)* Fine, you can expect our installer there promptly at eight a.m. Thank you, for choosing Cheap Cable. Have a good day. Goodbye. *(Disconnects and realizes she forgot something.)* Oops! *(To herself.)* I forgot to get his name and address. Oh well, I'm sure that when the installer isn't there at eight a.m. tomorrow his wife will have him call back.

ALVIN enters carrying his cable bill and crosses to HENNY.

AL: Hello, is this Cheap Cable?

HENNY: Yes, it is. How can I help you?

AL: Great. My name is Alvin...

HENNY: Like the chipmunk?

AL: Chipmunk?

HENNY: You know, those singing Chipmunks; Alvin, Simon, Theodore...

AL: Uh, yeah, okay...like that Alvin, fine, I get it. Look, why don't you just call me Al.

HENNY: Sure, and you can call me, Henny.

AL: All right, Penny. The reason...

HENNY: Not Penny...Henny.

AL: Jenny?

HENNY: No, Henny. It's short for Henrietta.

AL: That's confusing.

HENNY: (*Smiling and giggly.*) For you maybe. Not for me.

AL: Why don't I just call you Henrietta?

HENNY: Because, Henrietta is an old woman's name and I'm not old. Why do you want me to call you Al?

AL: I don't know, maybe...

HENNY: (*Kidding.*) Maybe, because Alvin sounds like a name that should belong to a singing chipmunk, and you're not a chipmunk?

AL: All right. Can we just start over?

HENNY: Sure. Hello, welcome to Cheap Cable. My name is...Henny. How may I help you?

AL: Nice to meet you...Henny. My name is Al and I have a few questions regarding my cable bill.

HENNY: Certainly, Al...I would be happy to answer any questions you might have. What can I help you with?

AL: Well, I signed up for your new customer introductory special, the one advertised with over seven hundred channels for...

HENNY: Seven hundred and eighty-six.

AL: Right, that one and...

HENNY: And, didn't you get the seven hundred and eighty-six channels as promised?

AL: Yes, I got them, but half of them were in Spanish and...

HENNY: Oh my, and you're not bi-lingual.

AL: No, I'm not bi-lingual.

HENNY: Pity.

AL: Isn't it? Also, there were twenty-three stations devoted to various religious denominations.

HENNY: Let me guess, you're not a religious person?

AL: No, I am. I am a religious person, but I'm Jewish and...

HENNY: And there is no Jewish channel.

AL: That's right. But, forget about the Spanish and religious channels, that's not the problem here. The problem is with my bill.

HENNY: I see. And do you have your bill with you.

AL: Yes, I have it right here.

AL hands cable bill to HENNY.

HENNY: (*Flirting, while looking at the bill.*) And what seems to be the problem, Al?

AL: (*Disbelief but not angry.*) What's the problem? The problem, Henny...is that I signed up for the special introductory offer for cable at a cost of fifty-nine dollars and thirty-two cents and my bill is almost double that.

HENNY: Why, of course it is.

AL: Of course, it is? If you knew my bill was going to be more than fifty-nine dollars and thirty-two cents when I signed up, why didn't you tell me?

HENNY: Because, my boss told me not to.

AL: Well then, I guess I would like to speak to your boss, where is he?

HENNY: Hawaii.

AL: Hawaii? Your boss is in Hawaii? What's he doing there?

HENNY: Basking on the beach, I imagine.

AL: I don't believe it.

HENNY: (*Teasing.*) Are you calling me a liar, Alvin?

AL: No! I was not calling you a liar.

HENNY: (*Faking hurt feelings.*) Sounded like it.

AL: It's this whole situation...look, all I want is for someone to explain to me the charges on my cable bill.

HENNY: Well, why didn't you just say so?

AL: I was trying to, but...

HENNY: Well, you weren't trying hard enough, Al.

AL: I'm sorry, Henny, can you please explain to me why my cable bill, which I thought was going to be fifty-nine dollars and thirty-two cents is actually, one-hundred and sixteen dollars and eleven cents?

HENNY: (*Showing cable bill to AL.*) As you can see right here, your monthly cost for cable is, as advertised, fifty-nine dollars and thirty-two cents.

AL: *(Takes cable bill back from HENNY.)* All right, I see the charge for the cable, but that still doesn't explain why my total bill is over one hundred dollars.

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from HIDDEN FEES by Mike Willis. For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script, please contact us at:

Brooklyn Publishers, LLC

P.O. Box 248 • Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406

Toll Free: 1-888-473-8521 • Fax (319) 368-8011

www.brookpub.com