

Steven Stack

BIG DOG PUBLISHING

Copyright © 2013, Steven Stack

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Murder-Mystery Weekend of Doom: A Love Story is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, and all of the countries covered by the Universal Copyright Convention and countries with which the United States has bilateral copyright relations including Canada, Mexico, Australia, and all nations of the United Kingdom.

Copying or reproducing all or any part of this book in any manner is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this book may be stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form by any means including mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording, or videotaping without written permission from the publisher.

A royalty is due for every performance of this play whether admission is charged or not. A “performance” is any presentation in which an audience of any size is admitted.

The name of the author must appear on all programs, printing, and advertising for the play. The program must also contain the following notice: “Produced by special arrangement with Big Dog/Norman Maine Publishing LLC, Rapid City, SD.”

All rights including professional, amateur, radio broadcasting, television, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved by Big Dog/Norman Maine Publishing LLC, www.BigDogPlays.com, to whom all inquiries should be addressed.

BIG DOG PUBLISHING
P.O. Box 1401
Rapid City, SD 57709

Murder-Mystery Weekend of Doom
11

For Maggie, Chloe, Zoe, and Pants

Murder-Mystery Weekend of Doom: A Love Story was first produced by WCATY at Edgewood College, Madison, WI, July 2010.

NATASHA WINTERS: Maddie Cook
ADAIR SCOTT: Michala Tierney
BUTLER: Andrew Noble
BRIDGET: Gabbi Chwae
JOSIE MATTHEWS: Audrey Head
GRAYSON MATTHEWS: Eric Mattson
HAGATHA HORTON: Katherine Larson
AGATHA HORTON: Anna Welton-Arndt
DAISY FLANDERS: Teresa Baymon
ALEX LOOMIS: Carolyn Walters
MINA HOPEWELL: Madison Jewell
LADY DAME MADAM VON HEIDENSCHLAGER: Tina Bouril
MARGARET STRIKER: Sophie Wiswall
CLAIRE RAINES: Sade Williams

Murder-Mystery Weekend of Doom: A Love Story was produced by Newberry College Theatre, Newberry Opera House, Newberry, SC, April 5-6, 2013: Pat Gagliano, director.

NATASHA WINTERS: Mary Helblig
ADAIR SCOTT: Michael Newberry
BUTLER: Ederik Inocente
BRIDGET: Maria Rivas
JOSIE MATTHEWS: Kaycie Little
GRAYSON MATTHEWS: Alex Sanchez
DR. MARGARET STRIKER: Albert Padilla
AGATHA HORTON: Davida Goodwin
ALEX LOOMIS: Beth Briggs
DAISY FLANDERS: Crystal Boyl
MINA HOPEWELL: Amanda Williams
CLAIRE RAINES: Kenny Robinson

Murder-Mystery Weekend of Doom A Love Story

FARCE. At this murder-mystery weekend, guests have a chance to win a “priceless treasure” if they can solve a fake murder. The guests include an eccentric millionaire who carries around a dead cat, a poor southern girl from a family with a lot of possums, a world-weary criminal, an aging egotistical actress, and a woman with a heart condition in which her heart bursts if it gets filled with too much love. The guests face a major turn of events when instead of solving a fake murder, they are murdered one by one with a series of bizarre weapons including a half-eaten pomegranate, a barrage of acorns, a spatula, a charade’s rulebook, a stethoscope, and a garden spike. Will anyone survive to solve the mystery? With 12 eccentric characters, the laughs never end in this hysterical farce.

Performance time: Approximately 90 minutes.

Characters

(2 M, 9 F, 1 flexible)

NATASHA WINTERS: Host of a murder-mystery weekend; female.

ADAIR SCOTT: Natasha's partner who plays a detective who arrives to solve "The Case of the Purloined Pineapples"; Flexible.

AGATHA HORTON: Eccentric millionaire who carries around a dead cat and loves participating in murder-mystery weekends; female.

DAISY FLANDERS: Mina's half-sister who is disguised as a poor, naïve southern girl from a family with a lot of possums; female.

MINA HOPEWELL: Daisy's half-sister, an aging "world-famous," egotistical actress, who is preparing for the role of a lifetime; female.

ALEX LOOMIS: World-weary criminal who served time in prison and is trying to make a new life for herself; female.

JOSIE MATTHEWS: Married to Grayson and has a heart condition that causes her heart to burst if it gets filled with too much love; female.

GRAYSON MATTHEWS: Married to Josie and madly in love with her; male.

BUTLER: Natasha's underappreciated butler whose real name is Charlie but everyone calls him "Butler"; male.

BRIDGET: Natasha's maid, a woman who has a fascination with feather dusters; female.

DR. MARGARET STRIKER: One of Natasha's co-conspirators who is murdered with a spatula and isn't very good at playing charades; female.

CLAIRE RAINES: Investigative reporter who has been investigating Natasha and Adair; female.

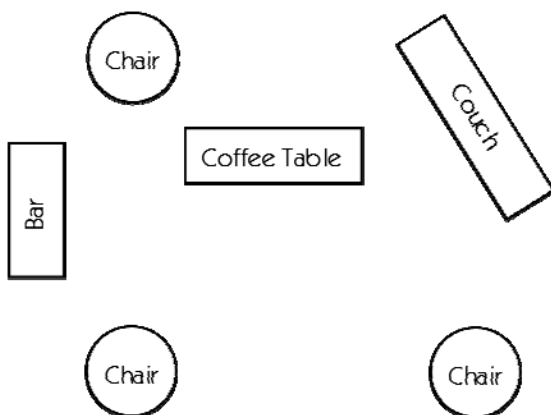
NOTE: Change script accordingly for flexible roles.

Setting

A mansion, evening.

Set

The set can be as simple or elaborate as your budget allows.



Mansion living room. There is a couch, three chairs, a coffee table, and a bar. The bar has a cabinet with glassware.

Note: For a simpler set, acting boxes can be used to create the living room.

Mina's bedroom. There is a makeup table with a mirror hanging above it, a chair, and a lamp.

Outside. A bench and some foliage are present.

Synopsis of Scenes

Scene 1: A mansion, evening.

Scene 2: Living room, earlier that evening.

Scene 3: Living room, present.

Scene 4: Living room, present.

Scene 5: Living room, earlier that evening.

Scene 6: Living room, present.

Scene 7: Upstairs hallway.

Scene 8: Mina's room.

Scene 9: Outside, evening.

Scene 10: Living room.

Props

Spatula	Rulebook
Stethoscope	Half-eaten pomegranate
Stuffed cat that has been made to look ragged	Book
Magnifying glass	Script
"Priceless" treasure	Flashlight
Feather duster	Coat, for Daisy
Watch, for Natasha	Ropes
List	Champagne bottle
Serving tray	Champagne glasses
Drink glasses	Bag/sack of stolen goods
Gloves	Notepad
Medical bag	Pen
Timer	Tea cups
Pieces of paper, for charades	Serving towel
Hat, for charades	Colorful purse
	Stockings, for Mina

Sound Effects

Screams
Doorbell
Shattering glass
Thump
Wind
Dogs howling

“But what kind of person
would kill an obviously dead cat?”

—Daisy

Scene 1

(AT RISE: A mansion, evening. Stage is black. Several screams are heard. Lights up. Grayson and Josie Matthews are holding each other tightly. Loomis, a former criminal, stands across from them. They look at each other with perplexed expressions and then notice that Dr. Margaret Striker is lying down in front of the coffee table with a spatula sticking out of her back. They scream again. Loomis approaches Dr. Striker and kneels down beside her but does not check her pulse.)

LOOMIS: *(To others.)* She's dead.

(Grayson and Josie scream. Natasha Winters and Butler enter USSR.)

NATASHA: What on earth are you doing?

JOSIE: We're screaming.

NATASHA: Why, Ms. Matthews?

GRAYSON: Dr. Striker is dead.

(Natasha takes a long look at Dr. Striker.)

NATASHA: That's rather unfortunate. *(Pause.)* How do you know she's dead?

GRAYSON: She... *(Points to Loomis.)* ...checked her.

NATASHA: Are you a doctor, Ms. Loomis?

LOOMIS: No, the doctor's right there. *(Points to Dr. Striker.)*
Dead.

NATASHA: Then how do you know she's dead?

LOOMIS: There's a spatula sticking out of her back.

NATASHA: Right, right, right. But since you are not a doctor, we must get a second opinion. Butler, check her.

BUTLER: But I'm not— *(Natasha gives him a stern look.)* Yes, ma'am. *(Crosses to Dr. Striker and sees a stethoscope. He picks it up then looks at everyone.)* A stethoscope. Or perhaps

now...a death-o-scope. (*Kneels down and checks Dr. Striker with the stethoscope.*) She does appear to be dead. And this spatula in her back makes it appear that she was... (*Looks up and out, dramatically.*) ...murdered!

(*Josie and Grayson scream.*)

NATASHA: (*Josie and Grayson.*) The screaming...it's getting on my nerves.

GRAYSON: There's something I don't understand.

NATASHA: About why the screaming is getting on my nerves? It's not the screaming, per se, but more the frequency of it.

GRAYSON: No. What I don't understand is why the killer used a spatula.

(*Butler stands.*)

BUTLER: You know what they say...if you want something done right, use a spatula.

NATASHA: No one has ever said that, Butler.

BUTLER: Sorry, ma'am. (*Backs away and moves near Natasha.*)

NATASHA: (*To group.*) Did any of you see anything?

GRAYSON: No, the lights went out and —

JOSIE: (*To Natasha.*) When they came back on —

GRAYSON: (*To Natasha.*) Dr. Striker was dead.

JOSIE: (*To Natasha.*) But we're sure she... (*Points to Loomis.*) ...killed Dr. Striker. She was in jail, you know.

LOOMIS: For stealing, not for murdering. And with the lights out, it could have been any one of us.

NATASHA: Oh. Butler, go bring everyone here. We have a situation on our hands...and a murderer in the house.

(*Worried conversations begin.*)

BUTLER: Yes, ma'am.

(Butler starts to exit, but before he can exit, Agatha Harrington enters, carrying her dead cat. She is followed by the Mina Hopewell and the Daisy Flanders. They appear to be talking about the screaming. Agatha crosses to Natasha.)

AGATHA: Ms. Winters, what's going on? We were enjoying our tea.

NATASHA: It is quite good tea, and I would never dream of interrupting anyone's tea, Ms. Harrington—

AGATHA: Then why interrupt us with the screaming?

NATASHA: Because...something tragic has happened.

MINA: Do tell...

NATASHA: Our delightful Dr. Striker...has been murdered. Murdered with...a spatula!

DAISY: No!

(Others begin to talk.)

NATASHA: And worse. I fear someone among us committed the murder. And we must—

LOOMIS: *(Realizes.)* Solve the crime. Nice.

(Everyone looks at Loomis.)

NATASHA: I don't see how Dr. Striker's being murdered is nice.

LOOMIS: Because the doctor isn't really dead. This is the fake murder that we must solve.

NATASHA: No, I—

JOSIE: *(Realizes.)* Oh, the game! It wasn't a real murder, Grayson, dear. It's just part of the mystery.

GRAYSON: You're right, Josie darling. I feel so silly now. We must look for clues if we are to win the priceless treasure.

(Everyone starts to talk excitedly.)

NATASHA: (*Shouts.*) No! Listen, everyone! (*Everyone stops talking.*) This isn't part of the game. The doctor really is dead. (*Everyone begins talking again.*) In the game, I was the killer, and I was supposed to kill Butler.

(*They all stop talking.*)

GRAYSON: Why? What has he done to you?

NATASHA: Nothing. It was to be part of the game.

AGATHA: It's not really much of a game when you reveal the killer's identity before the game begins...unless you're lying to us.

NATASHA: I'm not lying. I was supposed to kill the butler.

DAISY: Then why kill Dr. Striker?

NATASHA: I didn't, Ms. Flanders. She was murdered.

LOOMIS: "Killed," "murdered"...they're the same thing.

MINA: You would know.

NATASHA: They're not the — (*Realizes.*) Well, yes, they are.

But the point is that I was supposed to kill someone.

JOSIE: And you did: Dr. Striker.

NATASHA: No. Butler.

BUTLER: Yes, ma'am.

NATASHA: (*Annoyed.*) I wasn't calling you.

BUTLER: Oh, I thought —

NATASHA: I wasn't.

BUTLER: Sorry, ma'am.

AGATHA: Let me get this straight...you said you were supposed to kill someone, but someone who wasn't supposed to kill someone killed someone before you could kill someone, and one of those someones was Dr. Striker. Do I understand you correctly?

[END OF FREEVIEW]