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Norman Maine Publishing

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To my family

The Night Titus Barnaby Muttered "Macbeth"

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The Night Titus Barnaby Muttered "Macbeth" was first performed on May 1, 2013 at Sabino High School, Tucson, AZ: Kyla Muller, assistant director; Evan Lewis and Melissa Arnaud, stage managers; Erika Teige, lights; and Kenzie Morgan, sound.

DEAD BODY: Scout Harrison
GRETCHEN: Katelyn Houston
ALFRED: Logan Penisten
DEE DEE: Marli Ray
SUZANNE: Mackenzie Carstens
MRS. WEMBLY: Christina Kartchner
SHADY CHARACTER: Zac Brooner
MARGARET CONOVER: Alex Totillo
CARL CONOVER: Nate Sidles
FREDERICK FRYER: Randy McDonald
TERESA LANGLEY: Adara Lialios
TRISH: Joscelyn Anguiano
BRIDGET: Paige Gardner
JEANNE: Esperanza Vasquez
CONNIE CHASTAIN: Hailey Roesly
TIMOTHY FROST: Thomas Willis
WILL ROCKSON: Caleb Skolnik
PAUL MARCO: Steven Renteria
CLAIRE ANWAR: Demi Rodriguez
DONNA MILLER: Caroline Sanford
STACY SINGLETON: Lauren Krause
SHAWNA SAYLES: Samantha Thrall
JIM CROSS: Connor Lewelling
TITUS BARNABY: Dylan Gonzalez
PETER PUCK: Brandon Schenck
DETECTIVE CANELLA: Conner McCain
OFFICER PAUL: Alyssa Winkle
AMBULANCE WORKER 1: Cassie Birch
AMBULANCE WORKER 2: Kylie Warren
MR. ALBERT JENKINS: Ivan Rodriguez
MRS. BERNICE JENKINS: Zoe Brown
DARLA JENKINS: Dafne Zapata

The Night Titus Barnaby Muttered "Macbeth"

FARCE/MYSTERY. Several actors converge at a country inn to rehearse *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for their annual Countryside Shakespeare performance. They meet their new cast member, a shoe store owner, Titus Barnaby, who, much to their horror, inadvertently mutters "Macbeth," placing a curse on their production. But before they can find a way to reverse the infamous curse, victims begin to mysteriously drop dead one by one. With a giant tree blocking the road, the cast finds that they are trapped inside the inn with a pile of dead bodies and a mysterious shady character lurking about. The laughs never end in this fast-paced comedy featuring an ensemble cast and unlimited opportunities to showcase physical humor.

Performance Time: Approximately 120 minutes.

Characters

(11 M, 17 F, 4 flexible)

- SUZANNE:** The inn's manager, an all-business go-getter; wears a business suit; female.
- GRETCHEN:** The inn's maid; wears a maid's uniform with an apron and a feather duster holster; female.
- ALFRED:** The inn's butler; wears a butler's uniform with tie and jacket; male.
- DEE DEE:** The inn's groundskeeper/engineer/janitor; wears khakis, boots, a baseball cap, a sports jersey and a tool belt; female.
- MRS. WEMBLEY:** The inn's old, grumpy Cook; short, round, and blind; holds a cane in one hand and wears a uniform with a dirty apron and a hairnet; female.
- CARL CONOVER:** Play producer and guest at the inn; male.
- MARGARET CONOVER:** Play producer married to Carl and a guest at the inn; female.
- STACY SINGLETON:** Stage manager who is a guest at the inn; female.
- CONSTANCE CHASTAIN:** Play's director and a guest at the inn; female.
- TITUS BARNABY:** Constance's friend from college who owns a chain of shoe stores; new actor who has been cast as an officer and utters the M-word; male.
- FREDERICK FRYER:** Pompous actor and guest at the inn; tall and handsome with a moustache, perfect hair, and dark aviators; male.
- SHADY CHARACTER:** Veteran actor, aka Glenn Crazyface, who spent his whole career as Frederick's understudy; male.
- TIMOTHY FROST:** New actor who worships Frederick Fryer and is cast as Bottom; male.
- TERESA LANGLEY:** Glamorous actress cast as Titania and a guest at the inn; female.
- TRISH:** Teresa Langley's niece, a teenage girl who likes to text and is cast as a fairy; female.
- BRIDGET:** Teresa Langley's niece, a teenage girl who likes to text and is cast as a fairy; female.
- JEANNE:** Teresa Langley's niece, a teenage girl who likes to text and is cast as a fairy; female.
- DEAD BODY:** Actress who is supposed to play a fairy; female.

WILL ROCKSON: Actor who is a guest at the inn; male.

PAUL MARCO: Actor who is a guest at the inn; male.

CLAIRE ANWAR: Actor who is a guest at the inn; female.

DONNA MILLER: Actor who is a guest at the inn; female.

SHAWNA SAYLES: Actor who is a guest at the inn; female.

JIM CROSS: Actor who is a guest at the inn; male.

PETER PUCK: Actor who is a guest at the inn; male.

DETECTIVE CANELLA: Investigating murders at the inn; flexible.

OFFICER PAUL: Investigating murders at the inn; tends to have trouble keeping track of his gun; flexible.

AMBULANCE WORKER 1, 2: Arrive at the inn to remove the dead bodies but discover that they cannot leave; flexible.

ALBERT JENKINS: On vacation with his family; would like to use a Groupon coupon at the inn; male.

BERNICE JENKINS: Albert's wife; female.

DARLA JENKINS: Albert's daughter; female.

Setting

A country inn, summer.

Set

Sitting/dining room at a country inn. The room is bright, airy, and pleasant. The SL sitting room has a sofa with a coffee table in front of the sofa. The coffee table has magazines on it. A large window with drapes is USC with a window bench under it and a large banner that reads, "Welcome Countryside Shakespeare." The dining area at SR has a large dining room table with chairs. There is a drink cart upstage of the table. The closet door is USR next to the drink cart. The closet is full of cleaning supplies including a broom, a dustpan, and a vacuum. At SR is an entrance to the offstage kitchen. An entrance DSR leads to the offstage rooms. An entrance USL leads to the offstage lobby. An entrance DSL leads to the offstage grounds.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1: Country inn, midday.

Scene 2: Country inn, a short time later

Scene 3: Country inn, that evening.

Intermission

ACT II

Scene 1: Country inn, a short time later

Scene 2: Country inn, a short time later.

Scene 3: Country inn, a short time later.

Scene 4: Country inn, later that evening.

Props

Bed sheet	Dark aviator glasses, for Frederick
Feather duster	Small bowl of mints or candies
Misc. bottles for drink cart	Board large enough to carry a body
Furniture covers/sheets	Jar of peanut butter
Furniture pillows	Chainsaw
2 White gloves	Blanket
2 Tablecloths	Lamp
Vacuum	Plate of food
Large plastic tarp	Mug of tea
Scissors	Teacup with saucer
Rope	Robes, for Claire, Donna, Paul, Peter
2 Rolls of duct tape	Bathing suits, for Claire, Donna, Paul, Peter
Shovel	4 Towels
Safety goggles	Icepack
Weed whacker	Frying pan
Papers	Curling iron
Coat, for Suzanne	Quarter
Clever	2 Guns (toy)
Cane	Paddle and ball
Suitcases	Cup of water
Bagels, chips, fruit, etc.	Rope
4 Cell phones	Book, <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>
Wristwatch, for Jim	
Large binder	
2 Drink glasses	
Misc. magazines	

SOUND EFFECTS

Rattling	Flashlight beam
Thump	Loud metallic clap
Crash	Moaning
Clanking	Clanging noise
Blood-curdling scream	Gunshot
Girlish scream	Smack
Clap of thunder	

"Detective...
HOLD ONTO YOUR HAT,
FOR I AM ABOUT TO RELATE TO YOU
A TALE OF TERROR...
OF ANCIENT CURSES AND WITCHCRAFTERY
SO UNBELIEVABLE
IT WILL LEAVE YOU TREMBLING
IN YOUR VERY MOCCASINS."

—Frederick

ACT I

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: The sitting/dining room of a bright, airy, country inn. On the dining room table is a large sheet covering a body. Gretchen, the maid, enters SR from the kitchen and immediately begins cleaning: dusting, removing covers from furniture, fluffing pillows, etc. She cleans for a while, even piling things on the table, and doesn't notice the body. Eventually, she crosses USR to a drink cart upstage of the table to take an inventory of the bottles. She picks up a couple bottles that are low and starts to cross off SR. Just before she exits, she stops. Slowly, she turns back to the table and stares at it curiously. She crosses upstage of the table and examines the covered body. She puts the bottles back on the cart, turns back to the table, takes her feather duster out of a "holster" on her costume, and pokes at the body. It doesn't move. Slowly and carefully, she grabs the edge of the sheet and lifts it up, halfway uncovering the body of a woman in her 20s. She stares at the body in shock and then quickly looks around in all directions, clutching her duster. She goes slowly back to the body and reluctantly puts her ear near the woman's face. Hearing nothing, she reluctantly picks up the woman's hand and puts her wrist to her ear, listening for a pulse. She gasps and drops the woman's hand on the table. She quickly steps back a couple of steps, never taking her eyes off the body. Then she notices something tucked under the body, which is upstage and out of view of the audience. She steps in, takes a closer look, and grabs it. She pulls at it but can't get it out. She puts her feather duster down on the table and uses both hands to pull. She finally gets it loose and reveals a white glove. Shocked, she holds up the glove.)

GRETCHEN: (Whimpering.) Alfred? (Looks around in all directions and decides to look more closely at the body. She lifts the sheet, looks around the body, and appears to see something deep under the sheet near the woman's feet. She reaches under the sheet, but can't quite reach the object. She climbs on the table and under the sheet. She emerges at the end of the table from underneath the sheet. She tumbles off the edge of the table and ends up in a sitting position on the ground, holding up a second glove. Shocked, she slowly rises to a standing position.) Alfred? (Pause. A sudden look of realization comes over her face. She crosses back to the body and examines the woman's face, looking back and forth from the glove to her face.) Oh, Alfred. (Looks around the room one last time and shoves the gloves into her apron. Determined, she quickly covers the body

back up, leaving her feather duster on the table under the sheet. She grabs the covers from the furniture and the bottles she was going to take and starts to exit SR. She stops briefly and turns back to look at the body. To Body.) Um...don't go anywhere. (Starts to exit, stops, and turns back. To Body.) I'll be right back.

(Long pause. Alfred, the butler, enters USL. He has obviously just gotten dressed, as he is straightening his tie, fiddling with his jacket, etc. He looks about the room, does not notice the body, and sets about his duties. He opens the drapes at the window and arranges magazines on the coffee table, undoing some of the things Gretchen had just done. He goes USC to the window seat and opens it. He takes out a new tablecloth and approaches the table with it. He puts the new tablecloth down on a chair and, in one swooping motion, removes the old tablecloth from the table, turning in such a way that he still does not see the body. He puts down the old tablecloth. He grabs the new tablecloth and goes to put it on table. He sees the body and jumps back. In shock, he freezes for a moment.)

ALFRED: *Oh, my. (Looks about the room and then leans down to the Body. To Body.) Um...excuse me. Excuse me, ma'am. (Backs away.) Hmm... (Puts down the tablecloth and repeats the same actions as Gretchen had done: puts his ear to the woman's face and then takes her hand and feels for a pulse. Finding no signs of life, he drops her hand.) Oh my, indeed. (Spies the duster lying next to the body, slowly picks it up with two fingers, and stares at it.) Gretchen? (Looks around the room.) Oh, dear. (Pause. Not sure what to do. Shaking head.) Oh, Gretchen...*

(Alfred decides that he must do something. He crosses upstage to the window to close the curtains and then turns downstage, assessing the situation. He places the feather duster, handle first, in the back of his pants so that the feathered part is sticking out. He approaches the Body. He takes the woman under her arms and slides her off the table. He starts to drag her toward the USL entrance.)

DEE DEE: *(Offstage, calls.) Alfred? You in here? (Alfred freezes and thinks of what to do. He drags the Body to the sofa in the sitting area and lays her down. He then takes the cushions out from under the body and puts them on top to try and hide her. He realizes that won't work. He takes the cushions off and rolls the body onto the floor. He replaces the cushions and then, with no small amount of difficulty, gets the body onto*

the sofa in a seated position. Once he places her there, he starts to cross USR toward the table, but the Body starts to fall over. He runs back to hold her up. Once he thinks she's balanced enough to sit up, he adds a finishing touch by grabbing a magazine and placing it in the woman's hands. (Offstage, calls.) Hey, Alfred! (Alfred scrambles back to the table and tries to appear as if he's nonchalantly doing his job. The Body starts to fall forward. He scrambles back and pushes the Body back up to a sitting position just as Dee Dee enters. When Alfred realizes Dee Dee has entered, he simply throws himself onto the floor in front of the sofa. Dee Dee crosses USC to the window.) Hey, Alfred, do you know where the cast is working today? (Looking out of the window.) If they want to work outside, we really need to do some tidying up. (Turns away from the window but not far enough to notice the back of the Body's head.) Alfred? (Crosses USR, calls.) Alfred? You around? (Turns back and notices the messy table and two tablecloths.) Huh...strange. (Thinks a moment, shrugs it off, and turns to exit the way she came in. She goes USC and then notices the Body. She stops upstage of the sofa. To Body, startled.) Oh! I'm sorry, I didn't see you there. You're a quiet one. (Pause.) Scared me a little, actually. (Pause.) I didn't think anyone was arriving until later this afternoon. (Pause.) Yeah, well...did you just get here?

(Alfred realizes he must do something.)

ALFRED: *(In his best woman's voice.)* Yes.

DEE DEE: Ah, well that explains why Alfred's not around. He's probably scrambling around trying to get your room ready, I'm sure. Have you met Alfred?

(Alfred grabs the feather duster out of his pants and puts the handle end under the woman's chin to make her head nod.)

ALFRED: *(Woman's voice.)* Mmmm-hmmm.

DEE DEE: Good, good. You'll like him a lot. He really goes out of his way to make sure the guests here are comfortable.

ALFRED: *(Surprised.)* Oh?

DEE DEE: Yeah, great guy. I was just trying to find him to ask him something. Any idea which direction he went?

(Not sure what to do, Alfred hesitates.)

ALFRED: *(Pushing the woman's head in circles.)* Mmmmmurrrrrrr.

(Pause. Dee Dee thinks this is weird.)

DEE DEE: Well, if you see him, could you tell him I'm looking for him? I need to know if the cast is planning on working outside after they arrive.

ALFRED: *(Regular voice.)* They are. *(Realizes. In woman's voice.)* Ahem, ahem. I mean, we will be, dear.

DEE DEE: Oh, wait a minute. So you're with the cast? I'm sorry. I had no idea any of you had arrived yet. I thought you were one of our other guests. I'm Dee Dee. *(Goes to shake her hand. Alfred grabs the woman's hand and throws her arm over the back of the couch. Dee Dee shakes her hand. Thinking this is a bit strange.)* I'm the groundskeeper-slash-engineer-slash-janitor-slash-just-about-whatever-else-you-need. *(Letting go of the woman's hand. Pause.)* I didn't get your name, Mrs. —

ALFRED: *(In woman's voice.)* Oh, uhh... *(Thinks.)* Mum...bley...bug.

DEE DEE: Huh. Well, okay there...Mrs. Mumblebug, was it?

ALFRED: *(In woman's voice.)* Mmmmmm.

DEE DEE: Yeah, all right. Um, you need anything...I'll just be, you know, like I said before...anything at all.

ALFRED: *(In woman's voice.)* Thank you, dear.

DEE DEE: All right, see ya.

(Dee Dee hurriedly exits USL. Alfred waits a moment, making sure she's gone. He slowly peeks over the back of the sofa, gets up, and rushes USL to make sure Dee Dee is gone. He breathes a sigh of relief. He then notices Body falling forward off the sofa. He rushes over to get the Body off the ground. He begins to drag the Body USL, gets an idea, and stops. He glances at the closet door USR next to the drink cart. He suddenly drops the Body and starts off toward the closet door. Her head falls on the ground and a thump is heard [sound effect]. Alfred reacts to the sound and turns back.)

ALFRED: *(To Body.)* Sorry. *(Goes to the closet door and opens it. The closet is full of cleaning supplies: a vacuum, brooms, dustpan, etc. He removes the vacuum, places it next to the door, and goes back to get the Body. He drags the Body to the closet and is about to shove the Body into the closet. To Body.)* Terribly sorry about this...

(Alfred pushes the Body into the closet and slams the door. A few rattling, crashing noises are heard. He turns back to the table and finishes putting the new tablecloth on. He takes the old tablecloth, gives the room one last look, and exits USR. Just after he exits, Gretchen enters DSR. She is carrying a giant plastic tarp, some scissors, a rope, a couple rolls of duct tape, and a shovel. These are all balanced in such a way as to obstruct her view of the table as she enters. She stops DSR, faces full front, and drops all her supplies. She hurriedly spreads the tarp on the ground, grabs some duct tape, and unrolls a bit of it.)

GRETCHEN: All right, Gretchen, you can do this. *(Turns toward the table, sees that the Body is gone, and freezes. Shrieks.)* Ahhh!

[END OF FREEVIEW]