

A Dinner Theatre Murder Mystery
by

Andrew Hull



Published by Lazy Bee Scripts

Customer Taster

Rehearsal for Murder

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About this pack

This is a scripted murder evening that will also require some background character knowledge to enable the cast to answer questions put to them by their audience. A full script and character notes are provided as well as a pack of “table clues” for each team within your audience.

This show is mostly a **scripted performance**. The cast have set lines to learn, which contain the clues and information the audience need to work out “Whodunit.” There is also opportunity to **interact with the audience** between Acts and for the audience to question the suspects.

There is a cast of nine as well as one narrator who will guide your audience and help organize the questioning sections of the evening.

The murder evening is intended to be run in a hall with a stage or suitable acting area, with tables around the hall for your audience. The setup is much the same as you would have for a quiz evening, e.g. teams of 6-8 people per table. Each table has a set of table clues to read through and will also have the opportunity to ask questions as the evening progresses.

Structure

The full murder mystery pack contains:

- **The Organiser’s Overview** (*extracts in this taster*)
- **The Script** - for the actors to memorise before the event (*extract in this taster*)
- **A Set Of Table Clues** and other material
 - An introduction to the evening
 - A copy of the Siddlington Times (*extract in this taster*)
 - extract from a newspaper report
 - a lawyer’s letter
 - a doctor’s letter
 - a coroner’s report
 - a cast list for SOADS’ My Fair Lady (and other productions)
 - a plan of the backstage area
 - a coded message sent from Kathy to Graham
- A decode of the coded message (not for the audience!)
- **The Accusation Sheet** - for the audience to enter their solutions

Organiser’s Overview Contents

- Plot Overview and Synopsis
- Character List
- General Staging Notes – Brief description of each step of the production
- Event Guide
- Character Backgrounds – including alibis for all characters
- Character Briefs & Example Questions
- Production Notes
- Props List
- Table Clues Overview – for the producer’s benefit showing the clues, and red herrings within the table clues.

Synopsis

It is October 2015 and the SOADS are rehearsing for their production of Twelfth Night. A number of prospective members are in attendance to watch the rehearsal and they are in for a bit more than they expected. This is a close knit society of members from the village, but before long some skeletons begin climbing out of a few closets. The prima donna about to inherit a fortune, the company owner with a wandering eye, a grumpy stage manager, a community care project and is everyone exactly who they say they are? It's all coming to a head tonight, but can the director keep everyone in check or will there be bloodshed?

Character List

Andrew Hart, Director and local businessman

Elizabeth Hart, Heir to the Trumpington-Smythe fortune, married to Andrew

Graham Hetherington, Owner of an extruded plastics company and well known womaniser

Lynne Hetherington, Production manager and long-suffering wife of Graham

David Boothroyd, Runs local building firm, married to Kathy

Kathy Boothroyd, Runs a local dance school, married to David

John Bradley, Stage manager, local odd job man

Jo Deacon, New member

Gary Collins, New member

Narrator, an extra person to ensure the smooth running of the evening

General Staging Notes

Casting & Rehearsal

Choose your performers and issue them with a copy of the entire pack.

The first rehearsal should concentrate on reading through the pack and familiarising yourselves with the characters, backgrounds and format of the evening, before moving on to a read through.

Subsequent rehearsals should be used for moving or blocking the action. This may need to be revised to suit your venue.

It is impossible to rehearse every possible question you may be asked, however this pack does contain an example questions sheet, that details some of the questions encountered in the past.

Facilities required for the performers

You will need a separate and private room in which to change and base yourselves when not required on stage. The victim will also use this room after being murdered.

The performers should also be given the same food as the audience. It is always a good idea to visit the venue a few weeks before the performance and to tailor the hall plan to suit your venue.

Hall layout and event format

The script has been written to be performed on a stage, although this could be amended with some creative setting. The stage curtains should be closed at the start of the performance and will be opened as part of the script. On the stage there should be a couple of chairs for your actors to sit on at various points during the play. The rest of the stage is bare. The audience members are potential new members and sit at tables which can be scattered around the hall. Make sure you allow space between the tables for the cast to be able to move from the back of the hall to the stage. For extra entertainment value, you can encourage your audience to enter into the spirit of the evening, and style tickets for the event appropriately.

Suggested Timetable

7:30 pm Guests arrive and are seated.
7:45 pm Once all have arrived, Andrew arrives and the play begins
8:15 pm End of Act One, Narrator wraps up and supper is served
9:15 pm Cast returns and Narrator organises questioning
9:25 pm Act Two
9:35 pm End of Act Two and short break
9:45 pm Cast returns and Narrator organises questioning
9:55 pm Short break while guests complete Accusation forms
10:05 pm Narrator calls for a spokesman from each table to read their accusation
10:20 pm The big reveal
10:30 pm End.

Table Clues – Contents

Newspaper Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidence. To be handed out after act one by narrator.
Coroner's Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evidence. To be handed out after act two by narrator.
Solicitor Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Details Jo's claim on the estate, but not why she could claim.
Dr Foster Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corroborates other information.
Coded Letter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• For a secret assignation.
Backstage Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Shows where rooms and telephone are located backstage
Siddlington Times (page one)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corroborates other information.
Siddlington Times (page two)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corroborates other information.
Siddlington Times (page three)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mainly about the show, customisable with a photo of the cast
My Fair Lady Cast	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifies who played whom
Harvey / Outside Edge Casts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• (To be cut into separate sheets) Shows some of the cast in other roles that SOADS have performed

What else is in the table pack?

Intro Sheet	A basic introduction to the evening
Accusation Sheet	To be filled in by each team

The table clues should be printed and a copy of each forms one pack, to be put on each table.

Please note that the coroner's report and the local newspaper report of Elizabeth's death should not go on the tables with the rest of the clues as they should be handed out at specific stages of the evening. Please see the script and Organiser's Overview instructions for details of when they should be handed out.

Character Backgrounds

The play is set during a rehearsal for SOADS forthcoming production of Twelfth Night. Some local people have expressed an interest in joining the society, so they have been invited along to meet some of the current members and watch what happens at a rehearsal before they decide whether to join. Rehearsals have been going for a few weeks, but one of the original cast members, Jeff, has had to drop out following a motorbike accident. A new member, Gary, has just joined the cast to take Jeff's place and this is Gary's first rehearsal.

SOADS rehearse in the Trumpington-Smythe Memorial Hall, which was kindly donated by their wealthy patron, Sir George Trumpington-Smythe. Sadly Sir George passed away a couple of months ago leaving a vast estate to his only known living relative, Elizabeth Hart.

Andrew Hart

Long standing member and director of the show, Andrew is married to Elizabeth. He runs his own business, Hart Associates, from their house in the village, but the business has been struggling of late and Andrew has run up numerous debts and faces the collapse of his business and bankruptcy. He is however confident that Elizabeth will bail him out once she comes into her inheritance. His relationship with Elizabeth is a fiery one and he is often on the receiving end of her spiteful jibes, but he fully believes that there is a strong mutual love at the heart of their marriage.

Elizabeth Hart

Elizabeth comes from a wealthy family and delights in dressing in expensive clothing to show this off. She is set to inherit the Trumpington-Smythe fortune following the death of Sir George. She believed that she was the sole heir, but has recently been made aware of another potential claimant on the estate. Far from being pleased that she may have a long lost half-sister, she is doing everything she can to disprove the claim. She is not a well-liked person, but this doesn't bother her. She speaks her mind and doesn't care if this upsets others. She has a much inflated opinion of herself and believes that she is a cut above everyone else, be that on stage or in everyday life. She is used to getting her own way and isn't above using less than savoury means to get it.

She recently started a feud with Graham, who wants to build a small factory on some wasteland just outside the village. Elizabeth owns riding stables on the land next to the proposed site and, although she has no interest in horses or the riding school, she has done her utmost to get his planning permission denied. She has also found out about Graham's affair with Kathy and is using this knowledge to force Graham to withdraw his plans completely.

David Boothroyd

Married to Kathy and owns DeeBee Construction, a local building firm. He loves to be at the centre of things and has been on SOADS general committee for years. He is a great believer in the society being at the heart of the community and jumped at the suggestion to help rehabilitate patients back into the community. He recently won the contract to build Graham's new factory, if the project gets the go ahead, although he has no idea that he only won it because his wife is having an affair with Graham. Most of the time he is a placid, peaceful man, but he has a wicked temper and doesn't like to be crossed or made a fool of.

Kathy Boothroyd

It is Kathy's birthday today. She is married to David and a trained dance teacher. She runs a small dance school in the village and choreographs most of the musicals for the society. She enjoys taking on some of the smaller roles, although she doesn't believe she has the ability to take on a lead role. She has recently started an affair with Graham, but she is terrified that David will find out. She knows what a temper he has and panics when Elizabeth confronts her with evidence of the affair. She is desperate to break off the affair as quickly as she can.

Graham Hetherington

Owner of Hetherington Extruded Plastics, he is a suave and sophisticated man, or so he likes to think. A real ladies man, he is married to Lynne, but has had a string of affairs. His latest conquest is Kathy,

the wife of his friend, David, and the man he has just given the contract to build his new factory to. Supremely confident, he doesn't bother to hide his affairs from Lynne as he believes she will stick with him no matter how he behaves.

He is a ruthless businessman with a bit of a cruel streak and is furious that Elizabeth is standing in the way of his new factory. He is happy to use any means possible to get his way, but has he met his match in Elizabeth, especially as she is threatening to reveal his latest affair to David? He is well aware of David's temper and is more than a little wary of the possible consequences.

Lynne Hetherington

Lynne is married to Graham. She loves to feel useful and has found her niche within the society where she works hard offstage as prompt, production secretary, props, costumes, etc. She isn't overly confident and would never be brave enough to appear on stage. She is fully aware of Graham's philandering, but turns a blind eye most of the time even though she is very hurt by the way he treats her. She gets on really well with Andrew and loves working with him on productions, but there is a mutual disliking between her and Elizabeth.

Recently she has noticed that Graham seems to be more stressed than usual. She has put this down to him trying to sort out his new factory, but she is unaware of the full extent of the problems he is facing. She does however know that she and Graham have been rowing more than usual and that does worry her a bit.

John Bradley

John is a fairly grumpy individual who firmly believes that everyone else is incompetent and that he has to do everything himself. He stage manages all of the society's productions and his word backstage is law. He runs a constant battle with the WI who also use the hall, especially over the stage lighting. He was made redundant a few years ago and now earns a living as an odd-job man around the village. He tries not to get too involved with other people, preferring his own company, but he has recently become infatuated with Elizabeth. He keeps a photo of her in his toolbox and often tries to speak to her, although she wants absolutely nothing to do with him.

Jo Deacon

Jo is a qualified nurse and also the long-lost half-sister of Elizabeth. Sir George had two children, a son and a daughter. The daughter was Elizabeth's mother, but the son disappeared in his early twenties following a family row and was never heard of again. He made his own way in the world, married and had a daughter, Jo. It was only after her father's death that Jo learnt of her family and, by the time she had decided to approach Sir George, he too died. She has a legitimate claim on the Trumpington-Smythe fortune and has been pursuing the claim through her solicitors. She learnt that she had a half-sister and decided that she wanted to get to know her before revealing who she really was. The plan being that if Elizabeth proved to be a nice person, she would come clean and tell her who she was. If however she turned out to be not so nice, Jo would keep quiet, take her inheritance and disappear again, just as her father had done all those years ago. The second option has proved to be the case, but Jo has recently become involved in the new care-in-the-community project and so will stay to see out her duties. These involve looking out for Gary while he's at rehearsals and to provide written reports of his progress to the hospital.

Gary Collins

Gary's brother, John, was involved with Elizabeth while they were both at university. When Elizabeth dumped him for a richer man, John took it very badly and ended up committing suicide. Gary was devastated as he had always looked up to his older brother. He had a mental breakdown and has spent the last fifteen years in and out of various hospitals and institutions. When he heard that SOADS were going to help with the care-in-the-community project, he did all he could to get himself enrolled onto the program. He knew Elizabeth was a member as he had been following her life very carefully. He wanted to confront her about what had happened between her and John. He knows that he'll see her tonight and he is quite frightened by the prospect. He's still fairly delicate emotionally, so he's bought along some cans of lager to help give him courage and he always carries his medication... just in case.

Rehearsal for Murder

[*Script Extract*]

Act One

(Andrew enters carrying a clipboard and a bottle of water. He speaks to the audience as he hurries the length of the hall to the stage.)

Andrew: Good evening, good evening. So sorry I'm a little late.

(He climbs onto the stage and disappears into the wings to open the main tabs. If there are mid tabs, these should be closed. The stage is bare, apart from a couple of chairs placed conveniently at the sides of the stage. He also turns on the stage lights before re-appearing to address the audience properly.)

Andrew: Sorry I'm late. I'm glad to see you all here this evening. I must say that when I was informed that there were a few people who were interested in joining our little group, I had no idea there would be quite so many of you. Before the cast start to arrive, I'd better tell you a bit about ourselves. Our official title is the Siddlington Operatic and Dramatic Society or SOADS, but most of the membership drop the A. There was an attempt to change the society's name a few years ago to the Siddlington Amateur Players, but we thought that the SAPs was just as bad as the SODS, so we didn't bother. We have been performing for a little over forty years now and the vast majority of our shows have been put on in this very hall. We put on three shows each year, a play in the early part of the year, something with a bit of music around June-July time and a good old fashioned drama or thriller in December. We're currently rehearsing for the January play and this year we thought we'd have a bash at something a little different, so we're putting on Twelfth Night. This is the first time the society has attempted a Shakespeare and we are all quite excited about it; or at least I am anyway. I won't tell you too much about the storyline as hopefully you'll be able to pick it up as we go along. (He pauses for breath and takes a good swig of water before continuing.) We like to rehearse twice a week if we can; once here in the hall and once in someone's home. So beware, if you're cast in a future production, you may well be asked to turn your front room into a stage for the odd evening. We are quite fortunate that we are able to leave our scenery, props and costumes here at the hall, but that's one of the perks of having a wealthy patron, our president Sir George Trumpington-Smythe. Unfortunately Sir George passed away recently, however he left the hall to the village in his will, so we should be fine for a number of years, subject to his wishes being carried out of course. For those of you who don't get a part or who don't fancy treading the boards there are plenty of other things to keep you out of mischief. We are crying out for extra hands backstage to help build sets, paint scenery, sew a few costumes and, of course, make the tea. Now where are my manners? I really ought to introduce myself rather than standing up here waffling on at you all. My name is Andrew Hart and I joined the society about thirty years ago. My first show was Oklahoma and it was an unmitigated disaster. Since then, I have steered clear of musicals and concentrated my efforts on the drama side of things. Ten years ago, I hung up my acting shoes and turned my hand to directing. I think I must have directed almost every play we've put on in the last ten years! I live just across the village and I work from home, which means that I have no trouble turning up for rehearsals on time, unlike some I could mention. Now before the cast starts to arrive, does anyone have any questions?

(Andrew fields any questions that may arise, but before the audience can get too carried away, Gary enters wearing a baggy raincoat and carrying a plastic bag which contains cans of lager and his script.)

Gary: Mr Hart?

Andrew: That's right. Gary, isn't it? Just come on over here, the others will be arriving soon.

(Gary makes his way down the hall, speaking as he goes. He glances around nervously at all the people in the audience.)

Gary: I wasn't sure if this was the right place. They just dropped me off and...

Andrew: Oh you're definitely in the right place.

Gary: (Fishing his script out of his bag and brandishing it at Andrew.) I've got this book, but I don't know what to do with it or nuffin.

Andrew: That's okay, you just hop up here onto the stage and take a look at this. (**He takes a membership leaflet from his clipboard and hands it to Gary.**) I'll explain what you need to do a bit later on when everyone else arrives.

(**Gary takes the leaflet and wanders onto the stage mumbling to himself.**)

Andrew: (**To the audience.**) That's Gary, a new member of the society. He recently joined us and has a small chorus part in our musical in the summer. Unfortunately one of the cast members for this play has had to drop out at short notice and Gary has kindly volunteered to fill his shoes. This is Gary's first rehearsal so we will all have to bear with him.

(**Lynne and Graham enter, arguing. Lynne is questioning Graham of his whereabouts the previous evening.**)

Andrew: Ah, here are our old faithfules, Graham and Lynne. Lynne fulfils a number of roles within the society. In this particular play she is prompt and production secretary. I really don't know what we would do without her sometimes. And this is Graham who is playing one of our leads.

Graham: (**To the audience.**) Hi, Graham Hetherington, Hetherington Extruded Plastics. Good to see you.

(**Lynne takes him by the arm and leads him away, giving an apologetic smile to the people Graham has inflicted himself on.**)

Lynne: Come on dear, they're here to join the society not listen to you. Not everyone is fascinated by extruded plastics.

Graham: Just being friendly, my love. You remember friendly, don't you?

(**Lynne glares at him and storms off onto the stage and disappears into the wings. Graham leans nonchalantly against the stage smirking to himself.**)

Andrew: Graham, this is Gary, he's the most recent addition to our team.

(**Graham gets onto the stage and meets Gary centre stage to shake his hand. There is a moment's confusion as Gary is left-handed and Graham is right-handed, but they sort it out eventually.**)

(**They both stand awkwardly for a moment, then Graham claps Gary on the back and jumps back off the stage and begins studying his script. Jo enters and makes her way towards Andrew.**)

Andrew: And this is Jo, another recent member. This is her first show as well and we're expecting great things from her. Jo, this is Gary.

(**Jo goes onto the stage and says hello to Gary. They have a small mimed conversation and then stand awkwardly next to each other, not knowing what to say or do next. David and Kathy then arrive. David is a loud and confident character, shaking hands with members of the audience as he makes his way down the hall. Kathy rushes straight over to Graham and they begin a hushed and urgent conversation.**)

Andrew: (**Speaking as they walk down the hall.**) Here are David and Kathy, I think we're nearly all here now. David is one of our more versatile actors and appears regularly in both plays and musicals. He's very into the society as a whole; runs committees and that sort of thing, loves to organise people.

(**David goes straight onto the stage and gives Jo a peck on the cheek. He also shakes Gary's hand and, as they are both left-handed, there is no problem. He then moves towards the front of the stage.**)

David: Andrew, I've got a couple of ideas I'd like to run past you about the play, when you've got a couple of minutes.

Andrew: Sure, but it will have to be a bit later. I've got a lot on my plate just at the moment. (**Nods towards the audience.**)

David: Of course, no problem, whenever is convenient.

(**David moves back to Jo and they have a mimed conversation. Graham and Kathy now seem to be having a bit of an argument. This has been building during the above.**)

Graham: We'll talk about this later.

(**He moves away and finds a chair to sit on where he studies his script. Kathy goes onto the stage and David goes to put an arm around her, but she shrugs him off and exits.**)

Andrew: (**Speaking to the audience while the above is going on, oblivious to any issues that seem to be arising.**) Kathy is usually one of our singer, dancer, choreographer type people. She tends to stick to the musicals, where she's one of our leading lights.

(John now enters the hall carrying a clipboard under his arm. He is a bit grumpy most of the time. He makes his way quickly onto the stage, ignoring everyone. He looks up at the lights and mutters something about incompetence under his breath before disappearing into the wings.)

Andrew: And this is John, our ever-happy stage manager. John is a very technical person and doesn't have much time for actors, but he is a wonderful stage manager. He does all of our shows and I truly believe that if he were ever to fall ill, we would have to cancel the show completely.

(John enters carrying a large, heavy toolbox and slams it down at the side of the stage. He gives Andrew a glare and the storms down the length of the hall to have a look at the lighting box.)

Andrew: Well we just appear to be waiting for our leading lady, Elizabeth, my wife. She wasn't ready when I left this evening so I come over without her. I don't know why, but it seems to take her hours to get ready to go anywhere. Oh well, I suppose we'll just have to start proceedings without her... again.

(He turns to address the cast and everyone stops what they are doing to listen. Lynne and Kathy appear from the wings, but John remains out of the hall. Lynne has a large walking stick in her hand.)

Andrew: Okay, can I have everyone's attention please? As I'm sure you all know by now, Jeff has had a nasty accident on his bike and won't be able to appear with us for this production. However, I'd like to introduce you all to Gary who has volunteered to step into Jeff's shoes. Now this is Gary's first rehearsal and, as he hasn't done a great deal of acting before, I'd like to take things a bit slowly to begin with. There are some scenes from last week that we need to talk about and I'd...

(John enters from upstage and interrupts as loudly as possible.)

John: Who's been mucking about with the lighting again? I don't know, I can't leave anything for five minutes without somebody sticking their oar in. I bet it was that bloody WI again. When I get hold of them... **(He exits.)**

Jo: Do we have the crowd scene now?

Andrew: Not just yet, Jo. Gary, if I can get you to stand stage left for a moment...

(Gary looks at both sides of the stage and then moves stage right. David goes to help and quickly explains the difference between stage left and stage right. Gary looks completely bemused, but moves across the stage as indicated by David.)

David: **(To Andrew.)** Have you gone through upstage, downstage yet?

Andrew: No, not yet. I'll tackle that one a little later. Right, Gary, I will call you when you're needed, but you've got a little while yet, so if you want to watch and keep an eye on how things work, I'm sure you'll find it very interesting.

(Gary cracks open a can of lager from his bag and swigs at it while he stands and watches.)

Andrew: Okay, we can't hang on any longer, we'll just have to start without Elizabeth.

(At that moment Elizabeth makes a loud and dramatic entrance. She is dressed immaculately with a scarf in her hair and carrying an expensive looking handbag. She is most annoyed that the rehearsal has started without her.)

Elizabeth: How dare you start without me, I'm the lead, you can't possibly start without the lead.

Andrew: Well I've got all these people here tonight, we can't leave them all waiting until you decide to turn up. Everyone else has made it on time.

Elizabeth: I really don't think that has anything to do with it. You knew I had an important call to make to our solicitor. Someone has got to sort these things out.

(This conversation takes place as she walks the length of the hall, studiously ignoring the audience. The others are used to her behaviour and make a few quiet comments about prima donnas, etc. Elizabeth gives Andrew a withering look and moves towards Graham. Andrew huddles the rest of the cast together in the centre of the stage and has a mimed conversation with them about what he wants them to do when the rehearsal starts.)

Elizabeth: Ah Graham, just the person I wanted to see.

Graham: I wish I could say the same.

Elizabeth: There's a little something I wanted to share with you... before I share with anyone else.

(She digs an envelope out of her handbag, opens it and shows a photo to Graham. He looks shocked and makes a grab for the photo, but Elizabeth is too quick and tucks it safely back in her bag.)

Graham: Where did you...

Elizabeth: Never mind that. I have plenty more like it and a memory stick full of them.

Graham: Jesus.

Elizabeth: I'm not sure he can help you Graham, but maybe I can.

Graham: What do you want?

Elizabeth: You know exactly what I want, but let's talk about it later shall we?

(She turns her back on him and crosses to Andrew just as he finishes his chat with the cast and moves towards the side of the stage.)

Andrew: Okay everyone, ready? Action.

(Nothing happens. Everyone looks at each other, not quite sure what was supposed to happen.

Andrew shakes his head and moves back to address them all.)

Andrew: Look, we're doing the entrance of Sir Toby. It's an important scene as it sets the tone for his whole performance. Elizabeth, David and Graham; from the top of page seventeen, please.

Everyone else clear the stage, but stay close as I'll need you all soon.

David: Oh right, sorry. I thought we'd done this last week.

Elizabeth: We did, but apparently not well enough for his Lordship.

Gary: Is it my line now?

Andrew: No not yet, Gary. I'll call you when I need you, okay?

Gary: Right.

(Gary continues to swig away at his lager, while David eyes him nervously.)

David: Erm, Andrew. Strictly speaking we shouldn't have any alcohol on stage. It's against regulations.

Andrew: For a performance, yes. I'm not sure the same rules apply to rehearsals.

(David doesn't look convinced and quickly crosses to Jo for a quiet word.)

Lynne: Do you want me to prompt, Andrew?

Andrew: I think it might be best if you do. Thank you, Lynne. Come on David.

(David, Graham and Elizabeth move to centre stage. Lynne gives the walking stick to David and then sits on a chair at the front of one side of the stage with her script and Andrew goes to stand at the front of the other side. Jo moves towards Gary and they stand together near the wings, but just visible and next to John's toolbox. Kathy is on the other side, watching the performance.

The three leads try to do the scene without referring to their scripts. David waves his walking stick around enthusiastically throughout.)

Andrew: Okay, let's try again. When you're ready.

Elizabeth: By mine honour, half drunk. What is he at the gate, cousin?

Graham: A gentleman.

Elizabeth: A gentleman? What gentleman?

Graham: 'Tis a gentleman here – a plague o' these pickle-herring! How now, sot?

David: Good Sir Toby!

Elizabeth: Cousin, cousin, how have you come so by this lethargy?

Lynne: Come so early.

Elizabeth: What?

Lynne: Come so early. That's the line.

Elizabeth: That's what I said.

Lynne: No, you missed early.

Elizabeth: I hardly think one little word really matters.

Lynne: Of course it does, it's Shakespeare, every word matters.

Elizabeth: (To herself.) I don't believe it. (She takes a deep breath and composes herself.)

Cousin, cousin, how have you come so *early* by this lethargy?

(She scowls at Lynne, who smiles smugly to herself.)

Graham: Lechery! I defy lechery. There's one at the gate.

Elizabeth: Ay, marry, what is he?

Graham: Let him be the devil, an he will, I care not. Give me faith, say I. Well, it's all one.

(Graham wanders off to stand next to Kathy.)

Elizabeth: What's a drunken man like, fool?

David: Like a drowned man, a fool and a mad man; one draught above heat makes him a fool; the second mads him; and a third drowns him.

(During his speech, David has been pacing and waving his stick around, really getting into the part. Elizabeth isn't impressed with his antics.)

Elizabeth: Does he have to do that? He's upstaging me. I am the lead.

Kathy: Oh David, just say the lines and keep still or we'll be here all night.

David: Right, yes, of course. Sorry.

(He smiles at Elizabeth, but she turns away, obviously annoyed. David looks towards Andrew.)

David: Shall I go back a bit and come in again?

Andrew: Just the last line will be fine.

David: Right, okay. The last line.

(John suddenly enters from the back of the stage looking cross.)

John: Who's been messing about with my toolbox? (To himself) Honestly, you leave something for five minutes and some bugger goes and moves it.

(Jo is about to tell him that his toolbox is right there where he left it, but John storms off before she has the chance. Everyone else just ignores him.)

David: Like a drowned man, a fool and a mad man; one draught above heat makes him a fool; the second mads him; and a third drowns him.

Lynne: Go thou and seek the crowner...

Elizabeth: I know! Go thou and seek the crowner, and let him...

Lynne: Sit...

Elizabeth: Sit o' my coz; for he's in the third degree of drink, he's...

Lynne: Drowned...

Elizabeth: I do know this, Lynne. I would be helpful if you didn't keep jumping in all the time. Have you never heard of a dramatic pause?

Lynne: My mistake, I just assumed that you hadn't learnt your lines as usual.

Elizabeth: Cheek!

Lynne: You go ahead.

(Lynne closes her script and settles back to watch what happens, smiling sweetly at Elizabeth.)

Elizabeth: For he's in the third degree of drink, he's drowned... he's drowned... he's...

(She is really struggling to remember the rest of the line and Lynne is enjoying her discomfort, as are the rest of the cast. Lynne slowly opens her script, but still doesn't prompt.)

Elizabeth: Oh for God's sake, what's the line?

Lynne: Go...

Elizabeth: Go...

Lynne: Look...

Elizabeth: Go look...

Andrew: Maybe we should...

Elizabeth: (Screaming at Lynne.) You petty minded little woman! Just who do you think you are?

(She turns on her heels and storms into the wings, bumping against Jo as she goes. There is a moment of stunned silence and then Gary steps forward.)

Gary: Is it my line now?

Andrew: No, Gary. Not yet.

Gary: Oh, I just thought it had gone a bit quiet and maybe I'd missed something.

(He picks up his bag and takes out another can of lager. He cracks this open and takes a long swig. David takes Andrew's arm and leads him to the front of the stage.)

David: I don't like this drinking at all. Someone should say something before it gets out of hand.

They never said anything about drinking.

Andrew: Who never said?

(David realises he may have said too much and just shrugs.)

Andrew: Look, he's not doing any harm, but be my guest if it's worrying you that much.

(David looks over at Gary, but changes his mind. He notices the toolbox at Jo's feet.)

David: Has anyone seen John? His toolbox is right there.

(He exits into the wings past Graham and Kathy to look for John.)

Andrew: Okay, well that was... interesting. Let's move on. Kathy, Jo, you're up. Lynne, we're going to move on to Act Five, could you sort out any props we might need please?

(**Lynne goes backstage, passing Elizabeth as she re-enters.** They glare at each other, but don't say a word. **Graham crosses to intercept Elizabeth and leads her across the stage where they have a huddled and mimed conversation.** Kathy and Jo move to centre stage and find their places in their scripts. Andrew joins them and begins telling them what he wants from the scene. Lynne re-enters carrying a large brass candlestick. As she walks past Elizabeth, she pointedly feels the weight of it. **Graham suddenly takes a step away from Elizabeth.**)

Graham: No, no more!

(Elizabeth laughs and exits. Kathy rushes over to Graham and tries to talk to him, but he shrugs her off and moves to the back of the stage.)

Andrew: Okay, is that clear? Where's Kathy. Come on Kathy, let's crack on shall we?

(Kathy returns to centre stage and joins Jo to do their scene.)

Kathy: Where goes Cesario?

Jo: After him I love more than I love these eyes, more than my life, more, by all mores, than e'er I shall love wife. If I do feign, you witnesses above punish my life for tainting of my love!

Kathy: Ay me, detested! How am I beguiled!

Jo: Who does beguile you? Who does do you wrong?

Kathy: Hast thou forgot thyself? Is it so long? Call forth the holy father.

(John enters and points at Gary.)

John: What are you doing with my toolbox?

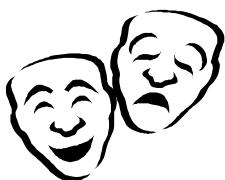
[The scene continues in the full Murder Mystery Pack.]

[Extract from the "Siddlington Times"]

SHAKESPEARE COMES TO SIDDINGTON

(Insert your own photo of cast
and crew here)

The cast and crew of SOADS production of Twelfth Night getting ready to rehearse.



ONCE again, The Siddlington Operatic and Dramatic Society are set to entertain us, but this production is

a first for the company as they have never attempted a Shakespearian play before. The classic story Twelfth Night is vintage Shakespeare. The main plot surrounds a Lord and his devoted love for a neighbouring Lady of

the manor. The plot thickens when twins are shipwrecked and also become involved in the love games. Pictured above are the cast during one of their rehearsals at the Trumpington-Smyth Memorial Hall (built by a founder member and

patron of the company).

The show will be staged at the hall from 21st to 23rd January next year. Anybody interested in tickets should contact the society's box office on 0182 938403

The Siddlington Operatic and Dramatic Society would like to wish the Little Heath and Potters Bar Operatic and Dramatic Society lots of luck with their forthcoming production 'A Slice of Saturday Night'. This production is being held at the Wyllyotts Centre in Potters Bar from the 23rd to 27th September and promises to be a very entertaining show. Tickets available on 01707 657801.

SIDDINGTON COLLEGE TO JOIN THE SUPERHIGHWAY

Governors of Siddlington College were celebrating last night after hearing that they are to receive £500,000 from an anonymous benefactor. The money will be used

to provide the college with the latest multimedia computers and fast connection to the internet. The facilities will also be made available to local business and industry.

This will put the college at the forefront of computer technology for the next three years. A spokesman for the college said 'It's a dream come true'.

See our
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