

Who Done It



Laura Botsford

Neverlands Little Rascals Cast - 1994

Who Done It Play Edition

Performance

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Laura Botsford, Neverlands Theater Class of 1994

Creative Process

Coalescing the Vapors

The cast members are given a theme, possible characters are discussed, and then through imaginative improvisations of flurry, flair and folly, a walking script is written. The script is rehearsed, making changes occurring to the students as they block and read the dialogue on stage until it is completed to their satisfaction.

The final script is written and produced as a play for audiences, with the students participating in all aspects of production; set design, scène change, music, costumes and advertising.

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Neverlands Studio, Portland, Arkansas, November 1994

Characters

Madeline: Owner of the Bed and Breakfast “By The Sea”

A polished woman with an arrogant attitude- sweetly deceiving voice with a manipulative underhanded manner

Bridget Spielberg: Movie Director

An over dramatic woman with a French accent.

Ellie Viss: Leading Actress

Temperamental and demanding

Sherry Holmes: Detective

A forties style gumshoe detective- dry and logical-smart

Ida Potato: Boarder-Sister 1

Scrawny feisty woman, a little hunched with age

Orea Potato: Boarder-Sister 2

A cheerful spunky woman with a lot of facial reactions

Watsina: The detectives peppy little assistant

The Butler: Very formal and a bit eccentric

African Princess: Regal and delicate

Bungalow Bill: Hunter and Body Guard to the princess-

Stern gaze-Leader-wears a safari hat

Jeanette - Upstairs Maid: Quiet & pleasant

The Scenes of the Play

Act 1

The B&B & The Detectives Office

Act 2

Time Present

Place Any Country

Opening Scene

Stage: Dark- Inside the Lobby of the B&B, frozen in tableau is Madeline sitting in a chair about to be poured tea by the upstairs maid. Down stage left (DSL) is another set on a riser that is the detectives' office. (Through the back of the audience, Detective Sherry Holmes enters to the music of the Pink Panther, magnifying glass in hand, occasionally stopping to look at a persons face closely or examine the bottom of their shoe. Music fades as Sherry takes her place in front of her desk.

Stage Direction: center stage (thunder and flickering light up on Madeline & the maid, still in tableau) (spot light on Sherry.)

Sherry Holmes: Good evening everyone. My name is Detective Sherry Holmes. Tonight's murder mystery is an interesting story of intrigue and bewildering events that take place at Madeline's B & B BY The Sea. She had a house full of Hollywood types making a movie called "Row Your Boat". I was sitting at my desk running down more clues when Watsina, my pint sized assistant came in with important information in the local "Daily Snooze."

Stage Direction: (Spot off, Sherry sits behind desk in the dark). (Thunder and flickering light up on Madeline, and the maid are still in a frozen tableau) lights up on Sherry.

Sherry Holmes: Watsina bring me the paper please.

Watsina: *(enters stage left reading a newspaper.)* There is a huge sale at Sams!

Sherry Holmes: Not that (amused) Let me look please I need details, clues about the murder.)

Watsina: Okey dokey boss lady *(hands the paper to Sherry then sits of on the desk).*

Sherry Holmes: *(stands up & crosses in front of Watsina reading to her self turns to her and speaks)*

Sherry Holmes: Saturday November 17th at 7:00 pm, Actress Ellie Viss was stabbed with a ginzu knife In the B&B By the Sea. All guests are being held in house arrest pending the investigation. *(Crosses to edge of the desk rolling the paper into a tube to swat a bug. She pauses and faces the audience)* The murder weapon was suspicious to me. Could it be linked to the kitchen help? Could an irate guest have smuggled it in? Could it still slice a tomato? These questions and more such as where in the house was it done and who did this dastardly deed? Madeline's guests were making a movie until the murder. You were all given a ballot with the names of the suspects on it. At the end of the play mark down who you think was the culprit. *(Lights flicker)* I remember that night clearly... as if it were yesterday.

Watsina: It **WAS** yesterday

Sherry Holmes: Oh yeah, any way it began very quietly as I was told by Madeline, the owner of the B&B By The Sea. The film people were coming down from New York to shoot their new movie Row Your Boat. They were all staying at her place when things got a little crazy.

Watsina *(laughs sarcastically)* A little crazy you got to be kidding Ha! That's an understatement. *(Takes a file and exits down stage left-DSL)*

Sherry Holmes: This is what happened.

Scene 2

(Lights fade on Sherry. She exits stage left in the dark. Lights up on the maid and the Madeline. Jeanette is pouring tea)

Madeline: Jeanette could you get me another cookie from the kitchen and don't forget to bring it on a silver plate with a little paper doily. *(Wipes her mouth and waves her off with the napkin)*

Jeannette: *(pleasantly)* Yes mamn *(turns away from her and speaks under her breath)* your majesty.

Madeline: *(raising her eyebrows and her voice.)* Now, now dear, we won't have anymore of that attitude around here; after all if it weren't for me, you would still be in the streets. Since your note isn't quite paid off, you best be grateful that you still have me to keep a roof over your head.

Jeannette: *(turns to her and curtsies)* Yes mamn. *(Exits center stage left- CSL)*

Madeline: *(sips her tea)* It's so hard to get good help these days *(wearily)* The things I must endure.

(Doorbell rings, Butler enters center stage right-CSR, Opens the door to greet them in a grand over the top voice.)

Butler: Come In *(turns facing the audience announcing)* The Princess Oona and Bungalow Bill are here. *(He escorts them to Madeline who curtsies to her.)*

Madeline: Your Highness, welcome to my humble Inn.

Oona: *(graciously)* No need for formalities I am so glad to be making my cameo appearance in America.