

# AND THEN THERE WAS ONE A Spoof

By Michael Druce

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# AND THEN THERE WAS ONE – A SPOOF

By MICHAEL DRUCE

## CAST OF CHARACTERS (In Order of Appearance)

	<i># of lines</i>
MIMMS .....the maid	69
CLAYHORN.....the butler	109
ALBERT PRINCE .....the doctor	22
EMILY PLAIN .....the plain woman	37
HORATIO MILES .....the inspector	68
DELORES BIGGS .....the actress	64
PRESLEY YORK .....the singer	17
HEATHER STARLETT.....the ingénue	64
MATTHEW CHARISMA .....the handsome man	71
MARGARET LaRUE.....the first victim	11
VOICE RECORDING .....the unseen host	5

## SETTING

Time: The present or some time in the past (see PRODUCTION NOTES).

Place: The living room of the Reef Mansion.

## SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Scene One: Friday evening

Scene Two: A few minutes later

Scene Three: A few minutes later

Scene Four: Saturday morning

Scene Five: Sunday morning

## SET DESCRIPTION

The set may be as simple as a few furniture pieces or as elaborate as groups wish. Minimally, a sofa with a comforter and cushions occupies CENTER STAGE. Behind and to the left of the couch should be a floor lamp with a shade. STAGE RIGHT stands a fireplace with ten chocolate soldiers on the mantel. STAGE LEFT is a credenza or wardrobe large enough to conceal a person, with a vase of flowers on it. UPSTAGE of the credenza should be a chair, preferably with wheels. DOWN RIGHT is a working front door. UP RIGHT is the exit for the kitchen. DOWN LEFT exits to the bedrooms upstairs and UP LEFT to the basement.

## AND THEN THERE WAS ONE – A SPOOF

### Scene One

1 AT RISE: Friday evening. We hear mysterious MUSIC as the LIGHTS FADE UP. MIMMS hurries ON UP RIGHT from the kitchen, feather duster in hand. She crosses to the credenza, swipes at it with the duster and repositions the vase of flowers. MUSIC OUT.

5 **MIMMS:** Clayhorn! Clayhorn! (*Crosses to the sofa, fluffs a cushion, and sits.*) Oh, Clayhorn.

**CLAYHORN:** (*Springs up from behind the sofa, wearing a false nose and glasses, wielding a rubber meat cleaver.*) Aarrghh!

**MIMMS:** (*Completely unmoved.*) Clayhorn, what are you doing?

10 **CLAYHORN:** (*Pockets the false nose and glasses.*) Just having a little fun, Mimms. What's wrong?

**MIMMS:** It's this house. This island.

**CLAYHORN:** It's only for a weekend.

15 **MIMMS:** It doesn't bother you that we can't leave whenever we want to? That we're trapped here? That we can't call out?

**CLAYHORN:** It's true—there's no cell phone service here, nor any landline.

20 **MIMMS:** That we don't know why we were hired? That we don't know any of the guests coming here to spend the weekend? That we can't have pizza delivered?

**CLAYHORN:** That bothers me.

**MIMMS:** Oh, Clayhorn, I think it's... weird.

**CLAYHORN:** As long as we're getting paid, what difference does it make? Besides, it's a great place to hide out.

25 **MIMMS:** What if something was to happen? We couldn't leave.

**CLAYHORN:** Nothing is going to happen. We work the weekend, collect our money, and Monday morning we're out of here. Isn't that what Mr. Reef's letter said?

30 **MIMMS:** A letter from a man we've never even met with a list of guests we've also never met. Why doesn't Mr. Reef contact us in person, instead of sending letters?

**CLAYHORN:** Because he's a very wealthy man. People with money don't have time to visit the hired help. That's what lawyers are for.

**MIMMS:** Well, I don't like it.

35 **CLAYHORN:** Personally, I think it adds to the drama. (*SOUND EFFECT: DOORBELL.*)

**MIMMS:** What's that?

**CLAYHORN:** It sounds like a bell.

1 **MIMMS:** It sounds like a bell.

**CLAYHORN:** I'll get the door. It must be one of the guests. You better check on the rooms. (*MIMMS EXITS DOWN LEFT. CLAYHORN crosses DOWN RIGHT to the front door, opens it, and announces the first guest.*)

5 **DR. PRINCE:** (*Steps inside, carrying a suitcase.*) Thank you. Where is everyone?

**CLAYHORN:** You are the first to arrive.

**DR. PRINCE:** You mean it's just you and me?

10 **CLAYHORN:** And Mimms, my wife. She's upstairs.

**DR. PRINCE:** (*Suspicious.*) Have we met before?

**CLAYHORN:** I hope not.

**DR. PRINCE:** Are you sure I didn't do something with your gallbladder or something like that?

15 **CLAYHORN:** I'm sure I would have remembered.

**DR. PRINCE:** It will come to me. (*Surveys the room.*) This isn't what I expected. The invitation said something about a weekend party. All very mysterious, you know. I don't know this Mr. Reef. Mr. G. Reef. Maybe it was his gallbladder I'm thinking of. And this guest list. I don't know anyone on it. Pretty unusual, wouldn't you say?

20 **CLAYHORN:** Very. (*SOUND EFFECT: DOORBELL.*) If you'll excuse me, another guest has arrived. Perhaps you would like to freshen up. Your room is upstairs. Mimms will show you the way. (*Reaches for DR. PRINCE'S suitcase.*)

25 **DR. PRINCE:** Don't worry about it. I'll take care of it. (*EXITS DOWN LEFT.*)

**CLAYHORN:** (*Goes to the door, opens it, and announces the next guest.*) Miss Emily Plain.

**EMILY:** (*ENTERS, carrying a large handbag. Nervous.*) Am I the first to arrive? I do hate being first. You understand?

30 **CLAYHORN:** No.

**EMILY:** No, I'm not the first? Or, no, you don't understand?

**CLAYHORN:** Yes.

**EMILY:** Yes, you understand? Or, no, I am not the first?

35 **CLAYHORN:** Yes, you are not the first. And, no, I don't understand.

**EMILY:** I see. Perhaps you could show me to my room.

**CLAYHORN:** The San Jose Room. Mimms will show you the way.

**EMILY:** Mimms?

**CLAYHORN:** Ma'am?

40 **EMILY:** Mimms?

1 **CLAYHORN:** Maid.

**EMILY:** Mmmm. (*EXITS DOWN LEFT. CLAYHORN crosses RIGHT to the fireplace and carefully adjusts the chocolate soldiers on the mantel. DR. PRINCE sneaks IN DOWN LEFT. He is about to cross to the*

5 *kitchen when he sees CLAYHORN. He drops down behind the sofa. CLAYHORN crosses LEFT downstage of the sofa and readjusts the flowers on the credenza that MIMMS straightened earlier. SOUND EFFECT: DOORBELL. DR. PRINCE pops up from behind the sofa and*

10 *rushes OUT UP RIGHT unseen by CLAYHORN, who turns and goes to the front door to announce the next guest.*)

**CLAYHORN:** Inspector Horatio Miles.

**MILES:** (*ENTERS wearing a trench coat and hat. Looks the place over.*) Interesting.

**CLAYHORN:** (*Admires MILES'S coat and hat.*) May I have your coat and

15 hat?

**MILES:** Of course. (*Removes his coat and hat and hands them to CLAYHORN, who puts them on and wears them throughout the remainder of the scene.*) Have we met before?

**CLAYHORN:** (*Turns away from MILES and quickly reaches into his*

20 *pocket for the false nose and glasses. He slips them on.*) Clayhorn.

**MILES:** Clayhorn.

**CLAYHORN:** No. I don't think so.

**MILES:** You're...

**CLAYHORN:** Positive.

25 **MILES:** I thought you just told me your name is Clayhorn. You're Positive now?

**CLAYHORN:** That's right.

**MILES:** I see.

**CLAYHORN:** Then it's settled. Mimms will show you to your room.

30 You'll be staying in the Lestrade Room.

**MILES:** Thank you. (*Snaps his fingers, suddenly recalling something.*) London.

**CLAYHORN:** Clayhorn. (*MILES EXITS DOWN LEFT. SOUND EFFECT: DOORBELL. CLAYHORN removes his false nose and glasses and opens the door DOWN RIGHT. DR. PRINCE darts IN UP RIGHT from the kitchen and EXITS upstairs DOWN LEFT.*) Miss Delores Biggs,

35 the actress.

**DELORES:** (*Makes a grand entrance.*) Thank you, darling, thank you. (*Sees the room is empty.*) Oh, I expected...

40 **CLAYHORN:** An audience?

- 1 **DELORES:** Don't tell me I'm the only one here!  
**CLAYHORN:** As you wish.  
**DELORES:** Am I?  
**CLAYHORN:** Ma'am?
- 5 **DELORES:** The only one here?  
**CLAYHORN:** You told me not to tell you.  
**DELORES:** Quite right. I'll go to my room now.  
**CLAYHORN:** Very good. Mimms will show you the way. You'll be staying in the Big Room.
- 10 **DELORES:** (*Flirtatious.*) I'll see you later.  
**CLAYHORN:** I live for it. (*DELORES EXITS DOWN LEFT. CLAYHORN pulls out the guest list.*) Now, let's see. Only four more guests to arrive.  
**MIMMS:** (*ENTERS DOWN LEFT.*) Pssst. Quick, come here.  
**CLAYHORN:** Mimms. Can't you see I'm busy?
- 15 **MIMMS:** No.  
**CLAYHORN:** Well, look.  
**MIMMS:** What are you doing?  
**CLAYHORN:** Butlering.  
**MIMMS:** This can't wait.
- 20 **CLAYHORN:** What is it?  
**MIMMS:** That detective, Miles.  
**CLAYHORN:** Clayhorn.  
**MIMMS:** He's snooping about, asking questions.  
**CLAYHORN:** Questions? What kind of questions?
- 25 **MIMMS:** (*Rattled.*) Detective questions. You know, stuff like, just the facts, ma'am, just the facts. I think he suspects something.  
**CLAYHORN:** Compose yourself, woman. (*MIMMS pulls herself together.*) He thought he recognized me, but my disguise threw him off. He doesn't have a thing on us. Just do what I tell you and everything will be fine.
- 30 **MIMMS:** But what if I can't? What if the stress becomes too much? What if the pressure builds? What if my nerves can't take it? What if I just completely wig out?  
**CLAYHORN:** I can ease your stress with a piggyback ride.
- 35 **MIMMS:** For me? Please?  
**CLAYHORN:** Yes, all right. But quickly. (*Tosses the guest list onto the credenza. MIMMS hops onto CLAYHORN'S back, and they race around the room. SOUND EFFECT: DOORBELL. CLAYHORN stops abruptly and pitches MIMMS over his head onto the sofa.*) I'll get

1 that. Go to the kitchen and check on the snacks. (*MIMMS adjusts her outfit and EXITS UP RIGHT to the kitchen. CLAYHORN goes to the door to announce the next guest.*) Presley York, the singer.

**PRESLEY:** That's Presley York. (*There is no difference in PRESLEY'S pronunciation.*)

**CLAYHORN:** I see.

**PRESLEY:** Is this it?

**CLAYHORN:** Excuse me?

**PRESLEY:** The hash, the gig, the party. I mean you're talking to the  
10 world's number one party animal here. Umero noono. So, when I see the word "party" with a bunch of creeps I don't know, I think, hey, this might amuse me. All right, I'm here. I'm bored. I ain't amused.

**CLAYHORN:** The festivities will begin at seven. Our host has requested  
15 you remain in your room until then.

**PRESLEY:** Oh, yeah? Well, you tell our host that nobody tells Presley York what to do. Tell him.

**CLAYHORN:** That's impossible. He's not here.

**PRESLEY:** The host ain't here? Miss Manners ain't gonna like this.

20 **CLAYHORN:** It's all right here in this letter. (*Pulls out a red piece of paper cut into the shape of the letter A.*) Mr. Reef's instructions are quite clear.

**PRESLEY:** Let me see that letter. (*Snatches the letter from CLAYHORN and looks at it.*) Baloney, I'm leaving.

25 **CLAYHORN:** (*Takes the letter back.*) That's quite impossible. The boat that brought you has already left the island.

**PRESLEY:** Then I'll swim.

**CLAYHORN:** The waters are shark infested.

30 **PRESLEY:** (*Quickly convinced.*) Who knows, the party might be fun, after all. Where's my room?

**CLAYHORN:** I'll show you the way. You'll be staying in the Pompous Room. (*EXITS DOWN LEFT with PRESLEY. After a beat, MILES ENTERS DOWN LEFT and begins snooping around.*)

35 **MIMMS:** (*ENTERS UP RIGHT from the kitchen and stops abruptly when she sees MILES. Quickly she steps back into the kitchen, unseen by MILES. SOUND EFFECT: DOORBELL. From OFFSTAGE.*) I'll get it. (*MILES crosses LEFT and hides in the credenza. MIMMS RE-ENTERS, very much aware that MILES is hiding. She goes to the door to announce the next guest.*) Miss Heather Starlett. (*HEATHER steps into the room followed by MATTHEW CHARISMA, carrying a harpoon.*)  
40

- 1 **MATTHEW:** And Matthew Charisma.  
**MIMMS:** *(Surprised by the appearance of a second guest.)* And Matthew Charisma.  
**HEATHER:** *(Looks the place over.)* Not bad.
- 5 **MATTHEW:** If you like wealth.  
**HEATHER:** I do.  
**MATTHEW:** What else do you like?  
**HEATHER:** Handsome men.  
**MIMMS:** Pardon me, but I'm Mimms, the maid. Did you two arrive
- 10 together?  
**MATTHEW:** That's right.  
**HEATHER:** My boat broke down and Mr. Charisma's boatman was kind enough to give me a lift. Lucky for me.  
**MATTHEW:** Lucky for me.
- 15 **HEATHER:** You really are a charmer, Mr. Charisma.  
**MATTHEW:** Call me Matthew.  
**HEATHER:** All right, Matthew, you can call me—  
**MATTHEW:** Beautiful?  
**HEATHER:** Heather.
- 20 **MIMMS:** Excuse me, Beautiful Heather, but your rooms are ready. You'll find my husband upstairs. You'll be staying—  
**MATTHEW:** Together, I hope.  
**MIMMS:** Not a chance. We'll meet down here at seven.  
**MATTHEW:** Maybe. *(MATTHEW and HEATHER EXIT DOWN LEFT.)*
- 25 **MIMMS:** *(Pretends to look over the guest list on the credenza, while checking to see if MILES is still hiding. She looks at the time.)* Oh, the snacks. *(EXITS UP RIGHT to the kitchen, taking the guest list with her. MILES ENTERS from the credenza and EXITS UP LEFT to the basement.)*
- 30 **CLAYHORN:** *(ENTERS DOWN LEFT.)* Mimms. *(MIMMS ENTERS from the kitchen.)* Mimms...  
**MIMMS:** *(Claps her hand over CLAYHORN'S mouth and points to the credenza.)* Ssshhh, he's listening.  
**CLAYHORN:** *(Peels MIMMS'S hand away.)* The credenza?
- 35 **MIMMS:** Miles.  
**CLAYHORN:** Clayhorn.  
**MIMMS:** He's hiding in it. *(Crosses to the credenza and throws open the doors.)* Well, he was.  
**CLAYHORN:** That detective again?

1 **MIMMS:** He was spying on me. Something is going to have to be done about him, or our goose is cooked.

**CLAYHORN:** The only cooking of geese around here will be done by us. Did you check on the snacks?

5 **MIMMS:** Yes, they're fine.

**CLAYHORN:** We'll deal with Sherlock Holmes later.

**MIMMS:** Who?

**CLAYHORN:** Never mind. It's almost seven and we're still missing one guest.

10 **MIMMS:** Margaret LaRue. She should have been here by now. Maybe her boat sunk or something. Shouldn't we look for her?

**CLAYHORN:** In these shark-infested waters? There wouldn't be anything left.

**MIMMS:** Yuucckkk! *(The sound of a HEAVY THUD against the front door.)* What's that?

15 **CLAYHORN:** It sounded like a heavy thud against the front door. I'll see. *(Crosses to the front door and steps OUT DOWN RIGHT.)*

**MIMMS:** *(Crosses to the credenza and repositions the flowers. CLAYHORN RE-ENTERS, carrying the body of MARGARET. He drops her onto the sofa. MIMMS sees the body and screams. CLAYHORN stifles her scream with his hand.)* Who is it?

**CLAYHORN:** Margaret LaRue.

**MIMMS:** What's wrong with her?

20 **CLAYHORN:** *(Raises MARGARET'S head and lets it drop back onto the sofa.)* Blood.

25 **MIMMS:** What is it?

**CLAYHORN:** Blood? Blood? You don't know what blood is? Get a grip, Mimms.

**MIMMS:** Surely, you don't mean she's dead.

30 **CLAYHORN:** Shirley's your sister. I'm Clayhorn.

**MIMMS:** What are we going to do? Shall we tell the others?

**CLAYHORN:** No, if you're right about Miles, he'll think we're involved. We've got to hide her. *(SOUND EFFECT: CLOCK CHIMES SEVEN.)*

**MIMMS:** We don't have time. It's seven and the guests are coming. *(OFFSTAGE noises of the guests coming downstairs.)*

35 **CLAYHORN:** I've got a plan. *(BLACKOUT.)*

End of Scene One

Scene Two

LIGHTS UP: A few minutes later. The GUESTS are gathered in the living room. There is an awkward silence as the guests wait to be introduced

1 to each other. The floor lamp that had been standing UP LEFT has been removed. In its place sits the lifeless body of MARGARET with the lampshade on her head.

**CLAYHORN:** (*ENTERS from the basement UP LEFT.*) Good evening,  
5 ladies and gentlemen. I am Clayhorn, the butler. With the exception of Miss Starlett and Mr. Charisma, I don't believe any of you have met. Perhaps we could begin by introducing ourselves. (*There is much confusion as the guests greet each other. CLAYHORN pulls a whistle from his pocket and blows it.*) Please. Please. I've been  
10 instructed by our host to make you as comfortable as possible. I am assured he will be with us soon.

**DR. PRINCE:** Speaking of our host, I'd like to know if anyone here has met him. (*ALL shrug.*)

**MILES:** (*To CLAYHORN.*) Uruguay!

15 **CLAYHORN:** Clayhorn! (*MIMMS ENTERS UP RIGHT from kitchen with a tray of macaroons. To the GUESTS.*) My wife, Mimms. (*To MIMMS.*) How are the snacks?

**MIMMS:** Fine, thank you.

**PRESLEY:** Oh, my favorite. Macaroons. (*Scoops all of the cookies off  
20 the tray, stuffing one or two into his mouth.*)

**DELORES:** Really, was it necessary to take all of them?

**EMILY:** (*Crosses to the mantel.*) How odd.

**PRESLEY:** I can't help myself. I like sweets.

**EMILY:** (*Indicates the mantel.*) No, this tray of chocolate soldiers.

25 **PRESLEY:** Oh, good, more sweets. I'll get to those later.

**DELORES:** I don't know about the rest of you, but I'm terribly bored by all of this. Clayhorn, I thought you said there was to be a party.

**CLAYHORN:** Our host has requested I play this message. (*Takes out his smart phone and swipes the screen.*)

30 **VOICE RECORDING:** Ladies and gentlemen, please forgive me for not greeting you personally, but you will soon understand my reason. As you may already have guessed, my name is not G. Reef.

**HEATHER:** Good grief!

**MIMMS:** G-reef? Mr. Grief?

35 **EMILY:** That's odd.

**VOICE RECORDING:** Not really. You see, I am somewhat of an eccentric millionaire, and I prefer to keep my identity a secret. The reason I have called you together is because I am also an amateur mystery buff. I have always been fascinated by the idea  
40 of the perfect crime.

**DELORES:** Is there something else we could listen to?

## PRODUCTION NOTES

### PROPERTIES ONSTAGE

Sofa with cushions and comforter, floor lamp with shade, fireplace with mantel, ten chocolate soldiers, credenza or wardrobe, vase of flowers, chair with wheels.

### PROPERTIES BROUGHT ON

#### Scene One:

Feather duster (MIMMS)  
False nose and glasses, rubber meat cleaver, guest list, red piece of paper cut into the shape of the letter A (CLAYHORN)  
Suitcase (DR. PRINCE)  
Large handbag (EMILY)  
Trench coat and hat (MILES)  
Harpoon (MATTHEW)

#### Scene Two:

Whistle, smart phone, red piece of paper cut into the shape of the letter A (CLAYHORN)  
Tray of macaroons (MIMMS)  
Smart phone (PRESLEY)

#### Scene Three:

Length of rope, pistol (MIMMS)  
Large handbag, wooden coat hanger, blowtorch, toy machine gun (EMILY)  
Toy gun, floor lamp (CLAYHORN)  
Toy guns (DR. PRINCE, MILES, MATTHEW, DELORES, HEATHER)

#### Scene Four:

Coffee service (MIMMS)  
Shower cap, toy gun, flashlight, purse, length of rope (HEATHER)  
Shower cap, torn fishnet hose, toy gun (MATTHEW)  
Toy gun, flashlight (DELORES)  
Toy gun (MILES)

#### Scene Five:

Smart phone (CLAYHORN)

### SOUND EFFECTS

Mysterious music, doorbell, sound of heavy thud, clock chiming seven, PRESLEY'S prerecorded song, chase music, blood-curdling scream, explosion, gunshots.

## PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES

*And Then There Was One—A Spoof* is intended to be played broadly. Groups are encouraged to be inventive and creative in respect to sight gags and stage business. The play was created for audiences and casts to have fun.

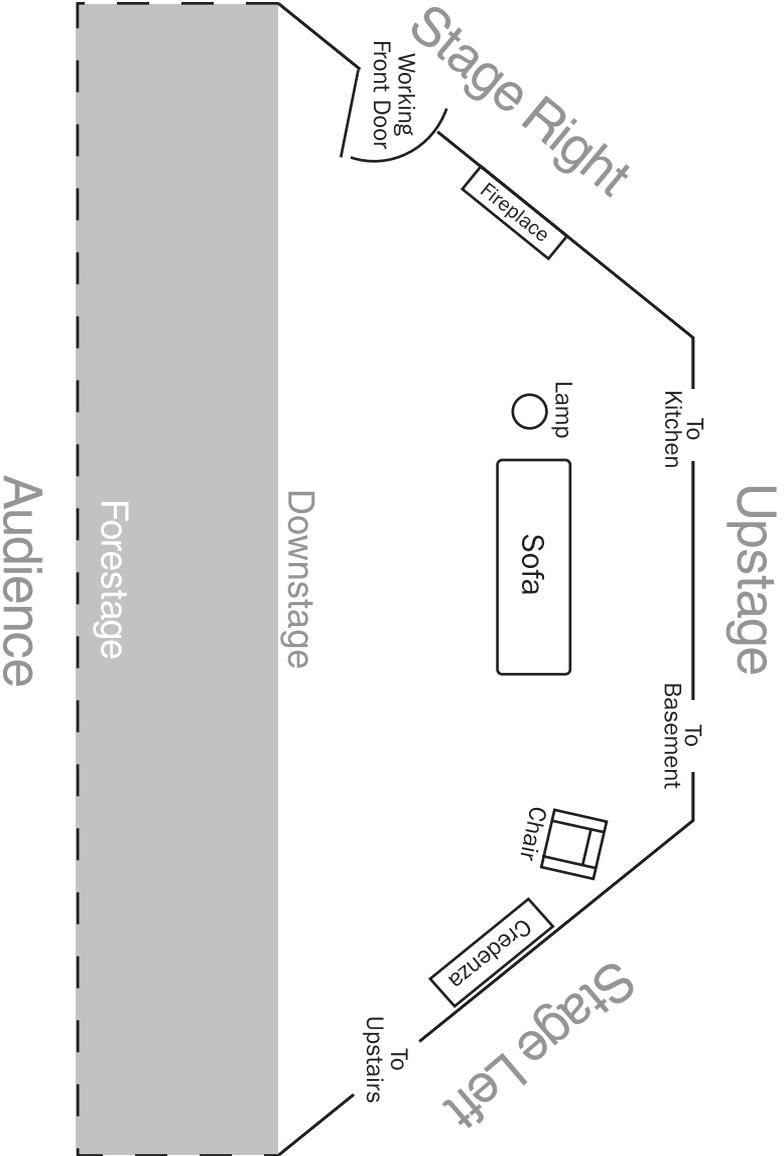
If you wish to set this in a different time period than the present, replace the smart phone playing the recorded voice with a different device such as a tape recorder or old gramophone.

PRESLEY'S song may be original or lip-synched to any public domain recording. The guests should participate by singing and dancing.

Anything from wax figures to chocolate bunnies may be substituted for the chocolate soldiers. It doesn't matter what is on the mantel, only that something is there.

To create the illusion of the chocolate soldiers disappearing, cut a small opening in the flat above the mantel. This opening can be covered with a piece of canvas, painted to blend with the flat. The canvas should be attached so it can be lifted up from the back by a stagehand to discreetly remove the necessary number of soldiers while play action is focused on a different part of the stage.

SET DESIGN



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