

The Masquerade Murders

A Dinner Theatre Murder Mystery in Three Acts

By
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Preview

**This is a partial script to provide an idea of what the play is about,
prior to licensing.**

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Premise

Everyone is nervous about Heather Glen High School's Faculty Masquerade Party. Morale has never been lower, and the domineering principal has warned that "heads were about to roll." As the party revs up, shots ring out. Someone is very dead. But why? And who is responsible? The sexy English teacher? The manipulating school nurse? The pocket-pool playing math instructor? It's sure to be an evening of mystery, mayhem, and murder!

Characters

Tonya Tototski- Senior English teacher. Gorgeous, curvy and totally unassuming. Straight-laced and prudish. Very scholarly and well focused on her job. Frustrated by her many non-teaching duties.

Phil Lipsucker - Biology teacher. Ladies man through and through (and from 6-60). Pseudo-shrink with everyone he encounters. Very touchy-feely. Low BS tolerance in the educational bureaucracy. A child of the '60's.

Dr. Elizabeth (Liz) Kabitchka - High School Principal. Self-important. Ambitious and power-hungry. Speaks edu-babble. Enjoys pulling rank. Creates meaningless busy work for staff. Married to Walter. Closet dominatrix.

Ted Feelinfrau- Head custodian. Lazy...unenlightened....a philanderer.... brother-in-law of the Board of Ed. President. Rarely without his walkie-talkie. Liz has his number and uses him to her advantage.

Mary Smith- School nurse at Heather Glen High School. A relative newcomer, in that it's only her second year on the job. She seems to be attracted to Ted. A bit of a manipulator.

Dave Toastmilk- Math teacher. Nerd. Liz' protégé. Very shy. He has eyes for Tonya. Stutters a bit.

Penny Withany- Another English teacher. School newspaper advisor. In charge of teacher sign-in. A pretty poor teacher, but quite the apple polisher. A snitch, she's in good stead with Liz. Somewhat promiscuous.

Peter Piquer- Head of security. Ex-marine. Overly official. Wants desperately for staff to respect him, to little avail.

Walter Kabitchka- Liz' husband. Night janitor. Patronage job. Wimp and whipped. Abused by just about everyone, especially Liz.

Jazzy Jayy- DJ booked to play the masquerade party. Also, undercover detective investigating corruption in the Heather Glen School District.

Prior to the show, the company members should engage in "table-talk" with the audience members. They may introduce themselves, discuss the personality conflicts that exists among the characters and endeavor to create a rapport. It is suggested that character descriptions be included in the program in order to compliment this process.

Scene 1

Host: Good evening and welcome. You are about to embark on a journey that will bring you to Heather Glen High School in Curtainsville, Pennsylvania. If you've spoken to any of the staff, you may have discovered that morale at the school is at an all time low. In fact, you may clearly have sensed that a dictatorial atmosphere exists, encircled with perceptions of jealousy, vengeance and conspiracy. For this reason, everyone is hoping that a planned faculty get-together might lift spirits and improve the educational climate at the school.

Liz: (on mic): Good morning staff. There will be a brief North Team faculty meeting in the teachers lounge immediately. MOVE IT!

Host: Take notice of your resolution forms, ladies and gentlemen. Make notes if you wish. Later you'll have the chance to become involved in the investigation. But for now, take heed....for you are in for an evening of mystery, mayhem, and maybe even *murder*. And now.... on with the show.

Scene 1- Faculty lounge

Phil: Why the hell do we have to have a meeting before school starts? Doesn't she realize we have things to do.

Dave: Yeah....I h-h-had a few more qui-quizzes to grade.

Tonya: Well, all I know is that in my last review she raked me over the coals for not taking her meetings seriously enough, so here I am.

Phil: You certainly are! (He tries to embrace her) You know Tonya, I could give you some tips on how to deal with Liz. Maybe we should get together for a drink after school and....

Tonya: No thanks, Phil, I'm quite capable of handling Liz on my own. (She removes herself from his grip) But, thanks. (She backs away from Phil and bumps into Dave) Oh, excuse me!

Dave: Oh, th-th-that's okay T-Tonya. H-h-hi! Uh...whwh-what do suppose the meeting's about?

Tonya: Who knows!

Penny: Well, I know that Liz would not be calling us together before school, unless she had a *very* good reason. And Phil, she is quite aware of all we have to do. *Definitely!!* You people just don't appreciate how lucky we are to have a caring administrator like Dr. Elizabeth Kabitchka. Believe me!

Phil : Okay, Penny. Whatever you say. Oh, by the way, you seem to have a little brown on the tip of your nose there.

Penny: Really? (She pulls out a compact to check. Everyone starts to laugh) You're *not* funny! *Any* of you!

Ted:(Entering) Anybody know what this meeting is about? Liz called me early this morning to make sure the faculty room was unlocked . What a pain. This is my coffee time!

(General negatory ad libs)

Mary: (Entering) What's going on?

Ted: No one seems to know. (He takes her hand and places it on his wrist) I thought since, as the school nurse you have your finger on the pulse of the school, maybe you would know.

Mary: Teddy dear. Your pulse is racing.

Ted: I'm not surprised.

Mary: You know....you should really stop by my office later and let me check you out more thoroughly.

Ted: Is that so?

Mary: Yes. You should .

Ted: I will.

Mary: Promise?

Ted: Oh, yeah! (Walter enters, distracting them) What the hell are you doing here?

Walter: Liz wants me to stay for the meeting before I go home.

Ted: Did you get all the rooms cleaned overnight.

Walter: Yeah, Ted, of course.

Ted: That's what you said the night before, but I was the one who got his butt chewed out because the marker boards weren't erased.

Walter: Gee, I'm sorry Ted but.....

Ted: Don't be sorry...just do your job. Look, you know I would never have hired you on my own. If you weren't married to Liz, you would never have gotten this job. But I'll be damned if I'm gonna take crap from her because of your total incompetence. Got it?

Walter: Okay, Ted. I've got it.

Peter: (entering) All right folks.

Penny: (Very flirty) Oh, hi Colonel.

Peter: Liz is on her way down. She just wanted me to be sure you were all present and accounted for. She didn't want to waste any of her time.

Phil: No, but it's all right if she wastes our time.

Peter: That's uncalled for Mister!

Penny: Oh, Colonel Piquer. They just don't appreciate what a wonderful boss she is (meaningfully) like we do.

Phil: Excuse me, Colonel Pecker....

Peter: That's Colonel Piquer, U.S. Marines, Retired. Got it, Pal!!!!

Phil: Oh, yeah, whatever. But do you have any idea what this meeting is all about?

Peter: I think Liz just wants to lay out a few things that she and I both agree are being frequently overlooked by the staff.

Penny: Can I lay out a few things with you Colonel? Huh?

Tonya: Frequently overlooked, like what?

Penny: Now, Tonya, you're just going to have to wait for Dr. Kabitchka

All: (Overlapping)

Tonya: I wish you wouldn't patronize me Penny. I'd just like to know what's going on.

Phil: I'd just like to know what's so damned important.

Dave: H-H-How much longer do you think it's gonna b-b-be?

Peter: She should be here any minute.

Walter: Yeah, I saw her coming down the hall.

Mary: (To Ted) So you'll stop by later for a little check up?

Ted: Yes, indeed, you can count on it.

(Liz enters)

Penny: (Topping all) Good morning Dr. Kabitchka.

Liz: Good morning everyone. Thanks for getting together so early. But people...things have so deteriorated around here that I just could not put this off until after school. Ladies and gentlemen...our students appear to be totally out of control. We've had fifteen disciplinary referrals to the office in the past two weeks. You are obviously doing little or nothing to control your classrooms. This *has* to stop and it has to stop *now*! And while we're at it, I must admonish you for the inconsistent manner in which you are reporting your lesson plans. Half of you are turning in your class sequences in horizontal block format, while others are utilizing the vertical configuration.

Phil: Oh, God..not the *vertical configuration!!!*

Peter: Hey! (Gives Phil the "I'm watching you" gesture)

Liz: This will never do!! How can we bring consistently high standards to our classroom instruction when we can't even provide uniformity in our lesson planning structure. I'm totally embarrassed by the performance of this staff this year. Ms. Biggin's I'm finding your dress to be totally inappropriate and distracting to the academic environment. Do something about it! Ms.

Smith, why is it that whenever I walk past the nurse's office you are either on the phone, engaged in non-school business, or you can't be found at all. Mr. Lipsucker, you must keep your hands to yourself at all times, but especially around your students. Mr. Feelinfrau, don't think your kidding anybody with your official demeanor. Just because your brother-in-law is on the school board, don't think you're fooling anybody! The condition of this building is absolutely atrocious and *you* are responsible. Please see that the overnight staff is competently cleaning the classrooms every night. And it wouldn't kill *you* to pick up a broom once in a while either! I'll speak to the rest of you privately about my concerns. Now I'm not going to beat around the bush. Unless things change around here...and change quickly.....*heads are going to roll!* Got it?
(Silence) *GOT IT?!*

All: (Various affirmative ad libs)

Liz: Good. I'm glad I got that off my chest. Now on a lighter note, I'm looking forward to seeing all of you tonight at our annual Faculty Masquerade Party. It should be lots and lots of fun. Have a good day everyone. (She starts out)

Walter: Honey, what time should I have dinner ready.

Liz: (Freezing ...slow turn to Walter) If I've told you once...I've told you a thousand times, when we are here, I am your boss and you will address me appropriately! You are embarrassment enough to me as it is. Do not escalate the matter by addressing me with familiarity. Now, get out of my sight.

Walter: (Taking her hand) But.....

Liz: (Snapping her hand away) NOW!

Walter: (Sees others watching) Yes....Dr. Kabitchka. (He exits)

Liz: Colonel Piquer. I need to see you in my office, as soon as possible.

Peter: Yes, ma'am.

(Liz exits)

Phil: Better not keep her waiting Colonel Pecker.

Peter That's Piquer!!!! (glares and exits)

Penny: You're disgusting...all of you. Oh, Colonel, wait for me!!

Phil: Penny is so far up her Kabitchka's rear-end , she can taste her Aquanet.

Tonya: I know I'm gonna lose my job. She doesn't like me at all.

Dave: She's always been very n-n-nice to me, but she sure w-w-was mad just now.

Ted: See you later, Mary?

Mary: Oh, yes, Teddy dear, I'll definitely see you later!

Bell rings all exit

Scene 2

Liz: (Enters fuming) Damn...but did you ever hear such a pack of whiners. How can I bring this school up to any kind of standard when I'm forced to deal with such morons?

Peter: I know...it's disgusting. I can't understand how you continue to put up with it.

Liz: Penny, would you be a dear and excuse us for a few minutes?

Penny: Huh? Oh sure. I'll see you at lunch Colonel?

Peter: Okay. (Penny gives him a flirty look and leaves) Yes, ma'am, if I were in charge, believe me, butts would be kicked...yes sir..things would get pretty rough.

Liz: Yeah? Rough, huh?

Peter: Yes, ma'am

Liz: You like it rough don't you, Colonel?!

Peter: Ohhh (starts to pant), you know I do.

Liz: Tell me.

Peter: Huh?

Liz: Tell me how rough you like it.

Peter: *Real rough!*

Liz: Like this? (She pushes him to his knees) Is that rough enough for you Colonel?

Peter: Harder, Mistress, please harder!

Liz: Okay!!! (She kicks him between his shoulder blades and he flattens out on his stomach)

Peter: (Moaning) Oh, Mistress, hurt me some more! Please!

Liz: (Grinding her heel in his back) How's this baby?

Peter: Oh...you are the best, Lizzie...you're the best there is.

Liz: (She stomps him) And what else?

Peter: Huh?

Liz: (She stomps him again) AND WHAT ELSE!!!!!!

Peter: Oh, yeah...(he gets up) and you should be promoted to Superintendent

Liz: (She twists his arm around his back) ...AND WHY IS THAT?

Peter: Owwww-heh-heh-heh-ohhhh!!! (Orgasmically) ...so you can straighten this place out!!!

Liz: Yes!!!! (She releases him) Now get out of here..you piece of slime. I've got work to do!

Peter: Yes, mistress..uh..ma'am. (He embraces her) Will I see you later?

Liz: Stop by after school. I may have a job for you. Meanwhile, why don't you do a little spying on Tonya and Phil. I think maybe they're up to some hanky-panky. If I could just catch them, I could dump them both.

Peter: Whatever you say, Mistress. I live to serve!

Liz: Good boy. (He exits)

Scene 3

Tonya: (entering reading a book)

Dave: (Following) Oh, T-t-Tonya. H-hi.

Tonya: Hi Dave.

Dave: How did your classes go this morning?

Tonya: Pretty well. We're doing *Gatsby*, which I love. Do you like *Gatsby*?

Dave: Uh... I-I-I'm not familiar with G-Gatsby. What is it?

Tonya: What is it? Dave surely you read *Gatsby* when you were high school.

Dave: Oh, i-i-it's a book? No...I n-n-never did very well in English. I didn't r-r-really relate to literature. But I am fascinated by Algebra and Geometry. I l-l-like sh-shapes. (He eye's Tonya...who gets it)

Tonya: Uhh right! We'll Dave it's been nice talking to you. (she starts off)

Dave: (He grabs her) Tonya, I've got to tell you something. (Liz enters unseen) I -I've always been shy...and believe it or not, I've never had a steady girlfriend.

Tonya: Really? That's so hard to believe!

Dave: B-but Tonya... I r-r-really think you're the one for me. I-I-I think ab-bout you all the time. M-my mother has even noticed a change in me. She mentioned it last night when she brought my dinner up to my room. (He advances on her.) T-Tonya, do you wanna go to the Faculty Masquerade Party w-w-with me to-n-night? (He clumsily embraces her.)

Tonya: Geeee...Dave...I-I-I-

Liz: What do you think you're doing, Ms. Tototski!

Dave: Uh-uh-uh D-d-dr. Ka-b-b-bitchka. No, d-d-don't b-b-blame T-T-Tonya. It was all m-m-my fault

Liz: Nonsense. I saw the whole thing. She deliberately seduced you to the compromising position in which I found you.

Tonya: Seduced? Dr. Kabitchka..I assure you I was not the aggressor here.

Liz: And I suppose he was the aggressor? (Dave is playing pocket pool) Really!!! Well, you'll certainly have an opportunity to explain your side to the Board of Education.

Tonya; Board of Education?

Liz: That's right...at your dismissal hearing! Dear, if I were you, I'd start cleaning out my desk.
(She exits)

Dave: S-s-s-o Tonya...do you think you could a-a-t least d-d-dance with me at the party tonight?

Tonya: Oh, Dave. SHUT UP!!!!!!

Scene 4

Mary: (On telephone) Listen....I'm telling you..you don't have worry about that....you're coming to my house for Thanksgiving and that's that..... I don't want to argue with you..... yes....yes..... Look, I'm just glad you're going to be with us this year. I hated it when you were away.....(She sees Ted enter. She waves) All right look, I've got to get to work. I'll call you later, okay? Love, you. Bye.(To Ted) Hey there, fella. I was wondering when you were gonna stop by.

Ted: Who was that? Your boyfriend?

Mary: Huh? Oh, no that was myDad.

Ted: Oh. I thought maybe....

Mary:So ...anyway...how's your pulse?

Ted: My pulse is...doing fine. Interested in any other part of my anatomy? (He embraces her)

Mary: Hey, you don't waste any time do you. Actually, I might be very interested.

Ted: Oh, yeah...that's what I want to hear.

Penny: (Entering) Mary, do you have any midol, I'm feeling so bloated and I.... (notices Mary & Ted in embrace) Oh...excuse me.....

Mary:That's okay Penny. Here you go. (Gives her tablets) Hope you feel better.

Penny: Thanks...a lot. (Giving them the once-over) Well, I guess I should be running along. I'm working on my costume down in the faculty room. I'm definitely going to win the prize for best costume.

Mary: What is your costume?

Penny: Well, I can't tell you. It's a secret.

Ted: Hey, Penny. You'd better be careful, working on your costume at work. I hear Liz has got her snitches out

Penny: Excuse me?! Why would I have to worry about that? Liz.... Dr. K., says I'm her favorite.

Mary: Really?.....How nice.

Penny: Actually, I feel I should be warning *you!* I don't think Liz would appreciate knowing what you two were up to when I walked in just now.

Mary: What do you mean Penny? What were we doing?

Penny: Oh, c'mon...you know!

Ted: (Grabbing her) NO I DON'T KNOW...AND YOU'D BETTER NOT KNOW EITHER!!!!

Penny: You two are disgusting. This is just what Liz was talking about this morning. You're just like animals. Somebody needs to throw cold water on you both. Yeaughhhh! (exiting)

Mary: (Calling out the door) Hope you feel better Penny.

Ted: (laugh with Mary...then) I think we're both in trouble.

Mary: Ya' think?

Ted: You know she can't get to Kabitchka's office fast enough.

Mary: What's she gonna tell her.

Ted: Well, I guess she'll tell her about us.

Mary: (Moving in) What about us? There's nothing to tell....yet!

Ted: I sure do hope I'm getting the message I think I'm a'gettin'.

Mary: Why, sir...whatever are you talking about? Now are you going to make my repairs or not?

Ted: Repairs? What do you mean?

Mary: Never mind, just follow me into the back room....I need you to fix something....and don't forget your drill. (Ted revs it up)

Scene 5

Penny: (At mirror...pleased with herself) Oh....I look good! I mean really. I look spectacular. I can't wait until Dr. Kabitchka announces that I am the winner of the costume contest. And then Colonel Piquer will be certainly and uncontrollably attracted to me. And he'll ask me to run away with him to Acapulco and we'll buy a tour boat and I'll have a dozen or so of his babies. And we'll live happily ever after. Anyway....I think if I just get a few more well placed accessories.....

Walter: (entering) Oh, excuse me. I didn't know anyone was in here.

Penny: Well, Walter you might consider knocking before come barging in.

Walter: Sorry Ms. Withany. I thought everyone was in class.

Penny: Well, I have another teacher covering my class right now. I just gave my students a bunch of busy work to do. Those kids are hopeless anyway...and after all....when else am I supposed to get my costume together.

Walter: Oh, yeah....I see.... That's your costume for the party tonight?

Penny: Yes it is, as if it were any of your business. Hey..isn't it kind of early for you to be here.

Walter: Uh...yeah..actually Liz told me to (remembering).....Dr. Kabitchka.....told me to get in early to start setting up for tonight

Penny: Oh. Walter you are so lucky to be married to such a wonderful woman.

Walter: (unconvinced) Yes.

Penny: Well, that was pretty noncommittal. You know, I've always wondered about something. Now, Walter, I hope you're not offended by this. You and Dr. K. don't appear to have a whole lot in common. I mean after all she's a brilliant woman and you....well...how did you two get together, anyway?

Walter: Well, it's simple really. I had been working over at the University, while Liz...Dr. Kabitchka...was a student there. I had seen her around the campus and of course thought she was very attractive.

Penny: And....

Walter: Well, she ran into a few problems....had to take a kind of a medical leave from her classes...but she continued to live on campus. She asked me to help her out. Of course I said

yes. And one thing led to another. Of course I fell head over heels in love with her. And I guess she was grateful to me for my help...and eventually we got married.

Penny: Walter...isn't it hard being married to someone so much above you?

Walter: I really don't think of it like that Ms. Withany.

Penny: I'm sure. Well, you'd better get to work.

Walter: Yes, ma'am.

Penny: And Walter...remember to knock next time. (She goes)

Walter: (Saluting) YES, MA'AM!!!

Scene 6

Phil: (alone grading papers)

Tonya: Hi Phil...can I talk to you for a minute?

Phil: Hello Tonya, of course, anytime? You look upset.

Tonya: Do I?

Phil: Yes, poor thing....you've been crying (He embraces her.)

Tonya: Is my make-up running?

Phil: No..you look fine. (He hugs her again) Tell me what happened.

Tonya: Oh..Phil. It's Dr. Kabitcha. She walked in on me and Dave...and she thought.....but believe me it wasn't and.....(Lucy cry)

Phil: (Hugging her tighter) Now..now. It's all right. Don't let that witch bother you.

Tonya: Phil, she's bringing me before the Board of Education for dismissal. She told me to clean out my desk.

Phil: She did huh? Listen, Tonya. She may think she's running the show around here, but believe me...she doesn't have as much power as she thinks...yet.

Tonya: What should I do?

Phil: First of all.....we need to contact our union. In spite of what *she* might think, you still have a few rights. Then we have to get Dave to tell the Board what really happened. Will that be a problem?

Tonya: Oh, who knows. That guy's kinda "out there".

Phil: Yeah, well maybe you can work on him at the party tonight.

Tonya: Party? Oh, Phil I don't exactly feel like partying.

(Peter enters, unnoticed)

Phil: Listen, after the day you've had, it's probably the best thing you could do. (Hugs her again) C'mon it'll be fun.

Tonya: Do you really think so?

Phil: (The hug gets more aggressive) I'm here for you baby.

Peter: (Takes picture) Very nice. Dr. Kabitchka will be glad to know about the academic collaboration going on during school hours. (He exits)

Tonya: Oh, shit (cries)

Phil: What a prick that Pecker is!!!

Tonya: Now what?

Phil: I think it's time for some serious biological intervention (FX out)

Scene 7

Dave: Y-Y-You wanted to s-see me Dr. Kabitchka?

Liz: Yes David. Thanks for stopping by. How are your classes going?

Dave: F-fine, ma'am. Th-things are progressing pretty well. S-some of my kids are st-still not working up to th-their potential, b-but I'm still trying to m-m-m-motivate them.

Liz: Have you utilized the strategies I suggested to you?

Dave: Yes ma'am. I'm so grateful for all your help. I couldn't have asked for a better mentor than you.

Liz: Good boy (She pats his behind) Now, David. When I walked in on you and Ms. Tototski before, it seemed clear to me that she had lured you into a very compromising position. (She smacks his butt)

Dave: W-w-w-well.....

Liz: Now David, it will be very important that you confirm her inappropriate behavior when I bring her before the Board of Education....you understand?

Dave: Da-Da-Da-Da-Da-Da-Da-Da.....

Liz: Good boy (one more smack) Because I certainly wouldn't want anything to derail such a promising career.

Dave: Y-y-y-y-y-y-y-y....

Liz: Yes David. That will be all.

Dave: Y-y-y-y-y-y-y-y....(He exits)

(Peter and Penny enter from kitchen)

Peter: It doesn't appear we'll have any problem with him.

Liz: No...I think not.

Penny: I'll be so glad to get Tonya out of here. She is such a distraction.

Liz: Indeed. Things are falling into place

Peter: What about Mary and Ted?

Liz: Ted has connections on the Board, so I don't want to go there quite yet, but this photograph of Tonya and Phil, will be very useful. (She embraces Piquer...noticed by Penny) Thank you so much for your help.

Penny: I had an interesting conversation with Mr. Kabitchka, today.

Liz: (Still gazing at Piquer) Really! I just can't imagine any conversation with him being "interesting"

Penny: I see. Well, I'd better get going. I've got a million things to do before the party starts. I have to meet the DJ early so I can give him the music list.

Liz: Thanks Penny. I'm actually looking forward to this evening. I'm planning on shaking things up a bit by announcing Tonya's suspension tonight.

Peter: Do you really think that's a good idea?

Liz: I do! (She twists his wrist)

Peter: (Aroused) *I DO TOO!*

Penny: (Hiding rage) See you both tonight. (Exits)

(Liz and Peter embrace...Walter walks in and watches. FX out)

Lights fade.

Scene 8

The Party

Jazzee Jayy: Hey Hey Hey..it's party time at good ole' Heather Glen High. And I wanna tell ya, in all sincerity, that this has got to be the best lookin' faculty within a mile. (Laughs) Truly...Anyhow, lets slow things down a bit with this golden oldie from the Duprees.

(Couples Dance: Ted/Mary, Penny/Peter, Tonya/Dave)

Dave: Oh, T-t-Tonya, I'm having such a wonderful time. I was so surprised when you asked me to dance.

Tonya: Well, Dave..I've always found you rather cute. I just didn't think it was appropriate for me to approach you during working hours.

Dave: Oh, y-yes you're right Tonya. But this is fine.

Tonya: Good.

Penny: So Colonel. You and Liz seemed pretty tight this afternoon.

Peter: C'mon Penny, what are you suggesting? You know our relationship is strictly professional

Penny: It looked pretty touchy-feely to me.

Peter: You're imagining things.

Penny: I hope that's true.

Mary: Will you relax. Why are you so uptight tonight?

Ted: Are you joking?

Mary: No. Now there's absolutely nothing to worry about.

Ted: Maybe not for you.

Mary: Look it's very simple. (Very alluring) You've got something I want, and I've got something you want. Right?

Tonya: So Dave, about this afternoon. You'll stick up for me with the Board of Education, won't you?

Dave: Uh-uh-uh I-I-I don't kn-know what you m-m-mean, T-Tonya.

Tonya: Look, Dave. You realize Dr. Kabitchka is trying to get me fired on the trumped-up accusation that I seduced you today. Dave...you're a sweet guy. But we both know what happened.

(Liz appears in doorway. Walter is a few steps behind)

Dave: I-I-I'm s-s-sorry Tonya. B-b-but I've got to go. (He exits)

(Liz moves to Peter, pushes Penny aside and begins dancing with Peter.
Penny and Walter encircle the clinching couple. Both showing anger.

Jazzee Jayy: Hey, Hey, Hey. It's Jazzy Jayy playin' all the hits for the happenin Heather Glen High School staff. And before we go any further let's bring up a fine fella with a few choice words for all the gang. Let's make him feel like the cool dude we all know him to be... the director of school security.....Colonel Peter Pecker.

Peter: That's Piquer!

Jazzee Jayy: Whatever, man...

Peter: I just wanted to say that some of you are parked in the wrong spaces out in the lot. Now I hate to have to do this to you, at a party and all, but those illegally parked cars will be towed. Now I'll hold off on calling the tow truck until after Dr. Kabitcha's remarks. But believe me! You will be ticketed and towed if the situation is not corrected.

Phil: *Asshole!*

Peter: Hey, Mister....you better watch yourself.... Now let's bring up our leader, the wonderful woman who has worked so hard to make our school what it is today . Please put your hands together for our principal, Dr. Liz Kabitchka. (To Jazzy) Hit it!

(Musical flourish and lighting FX. Most of the house is dark)

Liz: Thank you Colonel. He's a hard act to follow. (Walter exits angrily--Ted Follows. Liz giggles.)Anyway I hope you're all having a fine time. And I really hate to bring up business tonight. But I think it's really important that you all know that as of Monday morning, Ms. Tonya Tototski is on temporary suspension for conduct unbecoming a teacher. (Buzz among the characters) I also want you to know that I will do everything in my power to see that the suspension becomes permanent. And finally, Ms. Tototski is the first in what I hope will be a rapid succession of exits among this pathetic staff. Some of you have gotten away with unprofessional behavior for many years, but I assure you that the more powerful I become the more of you will find yourselves on the outside looking in. (pause) Okay, back to the party...and have a wonderful time!!!! (She starts doing a celebratory dance) Oh yeah! Yeah! Yeah, baby! (Light dim, Walter re-enters from kitchen, Ted re-enters) It's all good! Colonel...where are you???? (Total blackout)

Various (over music):

Penny: What happened to lights?

Tonya: I can't see--

Phil: Shut up !

Colonel: Watch it!

(**Gunshot**----Bang....Liz falls....gun drop...all approach...general ad libs)
Mary screams!! Ad libs--separation (Lights on)

Phil: Holy crap! I think she's dead! Where's the nurse?

Mary: Here I am. (She checks) Yes...she's definitely dead.

Penny: Oh, my God! Dr. Kabitchka. Oh, my God!

Walter: Lizzie....no!

Jazzee: All right folks. I guess I'm gonna hafta blow my cover. This DJ stuff is just a ruse...my real name Detective Jay Johnston, Pennsylvania State Police Special Investigation Unit. For the past six months, I've been looking into alleged corruption in the Heather Glen School District. But as of tonight, it appears I am investigating a murder. I must insist that nobody leave the premises. Now...did anybody see anything? (Hopefully, someone in the audience will find the planted gun. If not, one of the characters will spot it, and point it out to Jazzee. Jazzee picks it up with a pencil. He examines it and smells the barrel.) This gun was just fired. All right, I must report to my superiors, but when I return..I'll definitely need to question the following individuals....Miss Tonya Tototski (reactions after each name)....Mr. Phillip Lipsucker.....Ms. Penny Withany....Ms. Mary Smith.....Mr. David Toastmilk.....Mr. Ted Feelinfrau.....Mr. Walter Kabitchka.....and Mr. Peter Pecker....

Peter: *That's*..... oh, never mind.

Jazzee: I will return shortly . We will have to get the body to the medical examiner., right away.... le'ts get this Kabitchka outta here. (They all assist in carrying Liz out)

Host: Ladies and gentlemen, there is a murderer among us. Please, trust no one. And, oh yes, please.. enjoy your dinner.

End of Act I

Dinner is served.

As dinner winds down cast members return to engage in table-talk with the audience.

Act II is comprised primarily of the detective, Jazzee, questioning his major suspects in the murder. Here's how a typical suspect interrogation looks....

Jazzee: Ladies and gentleman, I will now be interrogating my major suspects. These are not my only suspects, but the ones at this time I consider to be major. After I have finished with each suspect, you will have the opportunity to ask questions. Tonya Tototski...will you come forward please. (Tonya moves up. She is seated on a stool for the interrogation.)) Now, Miss Tototski, how long have you been a teacher at Heather Glen High School?

Tonya: This is my third year. I graduated from East Stroudsburg University in May of.... (fill-in year). I was lucky enough to be hired here right away.

Jazze: How do you like teaching?

Tonya: I love teaching, and I don't mind saying, I'm very good at it. It's so rewarding to inspire young minds.

Jazzee: Yes, now Ms. Tototski, isn't it true that after three years of service, teachers are awarded tenure?

Tonya: Yes. That's right.

Jazzee: Did you expect to receive tenure this year?

Tonya: Well, to tell the truth, probably not.

Jazzee: And why is that? I thought you said you were a good teacher.

Tonya: I *am* a good teacher, but let me clue you into something Jazzee boy, sometimes how good you are has nothing to do with it.

Jazzee: You're going to have to explain that one.

Tonya: Look a school district is like any other organization. Alliances are formed, and you're either in or you're out. Unfortunately, I was out.

Jazzee: With whom?

Tonya: With who else? Dr. Kabitchka of course.

Jazzee: Do you know why you were out with her?

Tonya: She just didn't like me. She said I was distracting to both teachers and students.

Jazzee: Distracting? How so?

Tonya: She thought my physical attributes caused my students to lose focus on their studies.

Jazzee: Physical attributes?

Tonya: C'mon do I have to spell it out for you. *MY BOOBS!*

Jazzee: Oh, I see.

Tonya: Of course you see. Everybody sees! That, apparently, was the problem! But what was I supposed to do? I am who I am, and *they* are what *they* are!

Jazzee: (somewhat mesmerized) They certainly are....(snapping out of it.) So, having obviously been the object of Dr. Kabitchka's disapproval, and almost certainly that disapproval would cost you your job, you had every reason to want her out of your life. Isn't that true?

Tonya: Well, lets' put it this way...she wasn't on my Christmas list.

Jazzee: So you shot her!

Tonya: No!

Jazzee: You waited until the lights were out...

Tonya: No!

Jazzee: You secured a gun.....

Tonya: No.

Jazzee: And you murdered her in cold blood.

Tonya: No! No! No! That's not what happened. Look, I admit I didn't like her. But I did not kill her. I swear!

After being questioned by Jazzee, the audience may question each of the suspects. This is where the improvisational skills of your actors will come into play. I recommend that during the rehearsal period, you suggest possible audience questions to provide practice for your cast. I also suggest you have Jazzee repeat each question from the audience, so all can hear.

Jazzee: Are there any questions from the audience for Ms. Tototski.(Audience questions Tonya)

Following the interrogations, the Host instructs the audience regarding the resolution form. We recommend you ask audience members to suggest the murderer(s) – motive, method and opportunity. "Winner" chosen from all correct solutions. It's also fun to provide a prize for the most creative solution. You'll usually get some additional good laughs from this.

Intermission: (Dessert is served)

Dessert is then served as the audience members fill out their forms. Have someone collect the forms as they are completed. They should be delivered to whomever will determine the winners. (We usually have the cast decide the winners)

***Act three** is the resolution of the play and the crime. The detective (Jazzee) eliminates each suspect, until the murderer is finally revealed. Here's an example of how this goes.*

Jazzee: All right., all right! Ladies and gentlemen, I believe I now know the identity of those responsible, for the atrocious acts witnessed here tonight. It grieves me to say this, but on face

value, the murderer could well have been ANY OF YOU!!!!!! (All ad lib incredulously) Yes indeed, any one of you had the means and could have been motivated, especially when it came to Elizabeth Kabitchka.. Right, Ms. Tototski!!!!

Tonya: What are you talking about?

Jazzee: Well, certainly you couldn't have been pleased about being placed on suspension.

Tonya: No I wasn't. Who would be?

Jazzee: You admitted that Kabitchka didn't like you, and you knew she would do everything in her power to make her suspension permanent. Right?

Tonya: Yes. So what?

Jazzee: With her out of the picture, you might have a chance of being reinstated. So you waited for just the right moment, and you shot her dead.

Tonya: No!! It's not true. Look, everyone knew she didn't like me, and yes, I was probably going to be fired. But I'm a good teacher, and I would have found another job. I wasn't going to throw my life away, just to get even with her.

Jazzee: No..... that would have been foolish. I believe you. Obviously, when it comes to good judgement, Ms. Tototski.....you are stacked.

Tonya: (Smiling) Oh, thank you detective.

Jazzee: But good judgement was not at a premium around here was it Colonel Piquer!....

Following Act Three and your curtain call, your director, or perhaps a cast member, announces the winners and awards. Hopefully, a good time will have been had by all!