

The Play That Goes Wrong by Henry Lewis, Jonathan Sayer, & Henry Shields

THE STORY: Welcome to opening night of the Cornley University Drama Society's newest production, *The Murder at Haversham Manor*, where things are quickly going from bad to utterly disastrous. This 1920s whodunit has everything you never wanted in a show—an unconscious leading lady, a corpse that can't play dead, and actors who trip over everything (including their lines). Nevertheless, the accident-prone thespians battle against all odds to make it through to their final curtain call, with hilarious consequences! Part Monty Python, part Sherlock Holmes, this Olivier Award-winning comedy is a global phenomenon that's guaranteed to leave the audience aching with laughter!

THE CHARACTERS: All actors should be 21+ and possess strong comedic and dramatic acting ability. There are two main accents utilized in this show: American and Received Pronunciation, or RP for short, the instantly recognisable accent often described as "typically British". One character must also use a cockney accent in addition to the RP accent. As with any play-within-a-play, you have the complication of the characters of the actors doing the play-within-a-play and the characters within the play-within-a-play. To make it a little simpler, the names are laid out below in two lists: firstly the members of the Cornley Drama Society who are putting on the play, and secondly the characters of *The Murder at Haversham Manor*. The script always uses the actors' names rather than the characters' names. The challenge for those cast in *The Play That Goes Wrong* will be to develop the actor's character based on how they portray the play-within-a-play's character.

Members of the Cornley Drama Society (in order of appearance):

ANNIE, the company's stage manager. American accent. Annie has a strong technical background but is shy onstage. This changes gradually and drastically as she is forced into certain situations throughout the play.

STAGE CREW, the Cornley Drama Society's stage crew.

TREVOR, the company's lighting and sound director. American accent. Trevor is only working with the drama society for a course credit and is often easily distracted. He is also thrown into the onstage mayhem later in the play.

CHRIS, the head of the drama society and director of the play-within-a-play. RP accent. Also plays Inspector Carter. A typically perceived "community theatre director", Chris often knows what should be going on despite the fact that he may not have communicated it effectively to his cast and crew. Gets visibly frustrated and tries to correct things while performing in the play-within-a-play.

JONATHAN, plays Charles Haversham. RP accent. Although he spends most of the play "dead", he is placed in situations where he must physically adjust his performance to accommodate for the mistakes of others (and of his own). He is also a key component of the play-within-a-play's epic conclusion.

ROBERT, plays Thomas Colleymore. RP accent. Robert has a booming stage presence and is concerned with performing his role perfectly while also rolling with the punches and doing his best to compensate for the play-within-a-play's mishaps.

DENNIS, plays Perkins. Submissive RP accent. Dennis is a very "green" actor who often writes difficult words on his hand and has trouble recovering from the unexpected. He is also very concerned with how the audience reacts to him.

MAX, plays Cecil Haversham and Aurthur the Gardener. RP and cockney accents. Max is a true "ham" and thrives off of the audience's response to his overacting. In spite of his overabundance of confidence, he is typically unwilling to go "all the way" in his romantic scenes with Sandra.

SANDRA, plays Florence Colleymore. RP accent. Sandra is the ego-driven leading lady whose actions are exaggerated and whose instincts often miss the mark. She is very protective of her role in the play-within-a-play as well as her role in the drama society as the best (that they can get) female performer.

Characters in *The Murder at Haversham Manor* (in order of appearance):

CHARLES HAVERSHAM, the deceased.
THOMAS COLLEYMOORE, Charles' old school friend
PERKINS, Charles' butler
FLORENCE COLLEYMOORE, Charles' fiancée and Thomas' sister
ARTHUR THE GARDENER, the gardener at Haversham Manor

The Play That Goes Wrong:

Director - Josh Martin (jacemartin@gmail.com)
Assistant Directors - Susan Courtney and Ethan Schaffer
Production Assistant - Rachel Martin
Costumers - Veronica Fields and Ronnie Talbott
Props & Special Effects - Marsha Mueller
Technical Director - John Gradwohl

Auditions: March 13, 14

Show Dates:

Friday, June 16 @8pm

Saturday, June 17 @8pm

Sunday, June 18 @6pm

Friday, June 23 @8pm

Saturday, June 24 @8pm

Sunday, June 25 @2:30

An audition pack will be available at a later date.