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At the end of each script is a list of what is included in the Production Packet for that show.

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(text box: 1)

an audience-participation
murder mystery
by
Eileen Moushey

CONTAINS TWO VERSIONS

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CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that THE CURSE OF THE HOPELESS DIAMOND is subject to a royalty. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, and of all the countries covered by the International Copyright Union.

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THE FULL VERSION

is the one we did at the Akron Civic Theatre and most other performances. For this version, the audience is usually divided into teams/tables. It is comprised of the following sections:

1. Pre-show. This is the segment during which the characters circulate, introducing themselves, relationships, and lay the groundwork for what is going to be unfolding.
2. The Play. Running time for this scripted segment is about an hour.
3. The Clue Hunt. This can be as long or as short as you want and can even be eliminated. The Production Manual and the DIAMOND Production Packet provide directions for designing your clue hunt. We send you our clue hunt, answer key, and flow chart to assist you. The object of the clue hunt is to find a newspaper clipping, which is reproduced within this script and a master copy is provided as part of the Production Packet. At the end of the Clue Hunt, tables/teams turn in the last page of the clue hunt - the solution sheet. Again, all this is explained and samples are included with the Production Packet.
4. The Solution Scene. Running time for this segment is about 7 minutes.

THE MINI-VERSION

of THE CURSE OF THE HOPELESS DIAMOND is very condensed. This version came about as a result of doing shows on the Cuyahoga Valley Railroad. We had limited time to do the play before boarding the train.

While the Mini-Version is usually done as an individual/couple event, it can also be done as a table/team activity, ala the Full Version.

1. Pre-Show. Like the Full Version, the characters circulate, but more background is provided. We gave out a program that included a "history" of the Potter Diamond. Our version is on the last page and is sent with the DIAMOND Production Packet.
2. The Play. Running time on this scripted section is about 15 minutes.
3. Circulating and Improv. This can be as long or as short as you want. Basically, this 'fills in the gaps'. We gave the audience members a copy of a newspaper clipping and a sheet to on which to take notes. Rather than a solution sheet, the audience casts ballots for who they think "dunit." Samples of all these materials will be sent as part of the DIAMOND Production Packet.
4. Solution Scene running time is about 7 minutes.

IT IS POSSIBLE TO COMBINE ELEMENTS FROM EACH VERSION. It is certainly possible to use the Mini-Version script with the Clue Hunt from the Full Version, for example.

Should you decide to produce DIAMOND, printed Production Materials will be sent for BOTH VERSIONS of the script. This includes supplemental items that can be used for both or are specific to one version.

Finally, there ARE some plot point differences between the versions. But, rather than describing the differences here, we suggest you read both and treat each as a standalone.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Reginald Potter - The owner of the Hopeless Diamond. Reggie is in his 50's, is sweet, a bit muddled, and a sucker for a pretty girl. Money means little, if anything, to him. He believes in the curse and panics at the mention of it. Dressed in suit and tie or tux.

Daphne Lee Potter - Reggie's younger wife (20's,- 30's). Daphne is glamorous, a gold-digger, with a determination to live the good life. A former Vegas show-girl, Daphne Lee, misses the bright lights and glare of the spotlight. Dressed in glitz and sparkle.

Felicity Crump - A sweet old thing, (60's or able to play it) but sharp as her ever-present knitting needles. She's British (Cockney-ish) a world-famous detective, (think Jane Marple) with her "specialty" being able to see evil

lurking in the most innocent of facades - especially physical attributes.. Dressed in suitable sweet-old-lady-garb, including sensible shoes, cardigan sweater (or shawl), etc. She has an ever-present large purse, where she keeps her knitting (and other things!).

Basil Benchley - A very superior gentlemen in his 40's. Not quite British, Basil has a tendency to "lord" it over the others. His "specialty" is his ability to "connect point A to point B" using the most far-fetched scenarios. And he never tires of recounting all the cases he's solved. Wears a smoking jacket and ascot.

Kelly Boggs - Kelly is Nancy Drew a couple of decades later. She's still living in the past, when, as a teenage detective, she solved some rather famous cases. Dressed in the classic trench coat and hat, Kelly likes to think she is serious and hard-boiled. Her "specialty" is her supposed scientific knowledge.

Harry Dinker - Harry is a young man (20-30's) who accidentally solved several mysteries during his brief stint as a traffic cop. He quit the force to solve mysteries fulltime and believes he's the next Columbo. His "specialty" is his ability to disguise himself.

Host/ Hostess - This is the person who introduces things, explains the clue hunt, awards prizes, etc. For clarity's sake, the script refers to the HOSTESS.

FULL VERSION

PART ONE - PRELUDE TO MURDER

Please refer to the Production Manual for general adaptations - including dinner, eliminating the clue hunt, etc. The script describes the mystery as performed originally at the Akron Civic Theatre in 1998.

As the audience members enter, all the characters are in evidence. What follows is a description of some of the improvisational confrontations that can occur. When we rehearse, we usually work on the PLAY first. I've found that after actors are comfortable with characters and relationships, it's easier to "go back" and decide the kind of interacting which will occur during the improvisational sections.

REGGIE is circulating and welcoming everyone to this "showing" of the Diamond. He is acutely aware of security and is on constant lookout for anyone who may be a gypsy. The Diamond's curse has taken its toll on his family. Death has followed the Potters through generation after generation - supposedly because of "the curse." REGGIE has hired world-famous detectives to protect him as well as the jewel.

REGGIE'S new bride, DAPHNE, is unhappy. She married REGGIE after they met in Vegas, where she was in the chorus at Casinorama. She's already disillusioned - she thought because REGGIE owned the Diamond, he must be fabulously rich. She's since learned that the gem is REGGIE'S only asset. His only income comes from touring with the Diamond and the scholarly books he's written on gemology. DAPHNE misses Vegas. During pre-show, she's going to recruit and rehearse a group of men to serve as backup singers to help her sing "Diamonds Are A Girl's Best Friend." (We did this as a kind of "Half-Monty". The guys took off their shirts and sang barechested with bow ties and top hats. The crowd went nuts - it was a great way to kick off the show.) One of these - referred to in the script as "Dandy" should be someone who's obviously a good sport and won't mind getting teased. BASIL BENCHLEY greets people, in his superior way, and makes wild assumptions about them, based on the flimsiest of evidence. For example, he may remove a piece of lint from a jacket and surmise that they did laundry before they came. Towels, to be exact. Another might be a hair, which BASIL will claim comes from the rare, tail-less cat, the Manx, which originally comes from Egypt, therefore, this person took a recent trip to Egypt, as he also spies mud on their shoes of an odd color - the only mud of that color is the mud of the Nile.

KELLY is circulating, looking suitably mysterious. She carries an "evidence" kit. She'll stop people from drinking, saying, "Wait, I smell burnt almonds!" Using an eyedropper, she'll suck up a sample and taste a drop, before

announcing it is okay and they may drink. She also will take “fingerprints” using a stamp pad. And she’ll check surfaces for fingerprints using a loose container of face powder and a make-up brush. Also among her tools is a magnifying glass, which she uses on a variety of items, including things that BASIL claims to have found. Her kit can also include: tweezers, various vials of liquid, stamp pad for taking fingerprints, a nutcracker, turkey baster, whatever! One thing needed is some rubber tubing about 3 feet long. (You’ll see why.)

HARRY circulates and tries on different disguises. (He has a bag with hats, wigs, facial hair, glasses, etc.) He gives “disguising lessons” to audience members, encouraging them to try and fool their friends. (“See, even they don’t know you!”) Several times he makes announcements to the entire group, all in a different persona. These announcements include paging himself, statements about being on the lookout for the world’s greatest detective, Harry Dinker, and making disparaging comments about his fellow detectives. If time permits, he can even make complete changes - clown, priest, etc.

FELICITY circulates as well, carrying her ever-present purse with needles sticking out. She greets everyone nicely - at first - but then sees “the evil” lurking behind some. She can tell - “it’s all in the eyes” . . . “or the nose” . . . “or the way you part your hair.” Whatever, she cannot be fooled.

The detectives will lose no opportunity to confront each other. They are extremely competitive and convinced of their own superiority as sleuths. They’ll recall the failures of the others and try to involve audience members into taking their side. Audience members will have the chance to ask questions of the detectives during the play. To make sure that certain questions are asked, each detective should have a “plant” with their question and take note of the name of the person asking it.

BASIL - “Is it true, Mr. Benchley, that besides being the world’s greatest detective, you are also an accomplished musician?”

FELICITY - “Miss Felicity, we love hearing about your cases. You’ve got more detective experience than all the others. Tell us about your favorite case.”

KELLY - “We know you began detecting as a teenager and solved some big cases before you were 21. What was your last case as a teenager?”

HARRY - “Harry, you’re obviously a master of disguise. Who taught you the art of camouflage?”

FULL VERSION

PART TWO - THE PLAY

At our original production, we had pre-show music as the audience arrived. The stage area is empty except for the display area for the Diamond and three chairs - one of which is a rocker for FELICITY. The Diamond’s display can be as simple or elaborate as you want. It can simply be a stand, covered with a black velvet draping. Or a series of curtains and screens which will be removed as the Diamond is revealed. Lighting also can highlight the Diamond. A colored “laser-like” effect could be utilized, or a spotlight.

All of the actors, except REGGIE, are backstage or in the rear of the house. REGGIE is seated in the house. The house lights dim. The Diamond alone is lit.

HOSTESS: And now, ladies and gentlemen, (your group) is proud to present, straight from her engagement as first understudy standby at Casinorama in Las Vegas - Daphne Lee and her Diamond Dandies!!

DAPHNE and the men she has recruited and rehearsed perform “Diamonds Are A Girl’s Best Friend.” The men are in top hats and bow ties. Following the number, DAPHNE leads the applause and introduces the men. She directs them all to go back to their seats, except DANDY, with whom she flirts shamelessly. As “the act” ends, the detectives are in the back of the house and make catcalls, heckle, etc. regarding her “talent”, etc., and yell for her to wrap it up, etc. She “shooshes” them which only encourages them.

DAPHNE: Okay, that’s it! I’ve had it. Reggie. Daddy? Where are you? I’m a professional and I am

not going to work under these conditions. Daddy, you're just going to have to do something with them. All my boys deserved their applause, especially Dandy (she gives him a little hug).

REGGIE: Great number, Daphne Lee! You can take the girl out of Vegas, but you can't take Vegas out of the girl.

DAPHNE: Thanks, pumpkin. You see why we have to go back? Anyway, I think Dandy has some real talent and you know I've been looking for a partner and he's perfect and now all your so-called detectives wouldn't let the darling man. . .(BASIL comes onto playing area, followed closely by KELLY and FELICITY.)

BASIL: Look here, Potter, you'd better get a leash for that wife of yours.

FELICITY: I think that girl is hiding something. Look at her nails. Those are the cuticles of someone with something to hide.

DAPHNE: What the hell are you talking about? I've got great cuticles.

KELLY: It's okay, I can get her fingerprints.

REGGIE: Um, Basil, Kelly. . .

DAPHNE: How are you gonna get my. . .Hey, why would you WANT to get my fingerprints?

BASIL: If you want her prints, all you have to do is dust Dandy over there. . .she was all over him.

KELLY: Consider it done. (Goes to DANDY) Okay, you. Turn around. Bend over. (He does. KELLY, using a large powder brush, brushes "powder" and checks his rear for prints.)

FELICITY: Actually, if you find any, they might be mine. I had a little talk with Dandy myself..

DAPHNE: My prints, my cuticles. What's next, you creeps? You gonna start tapping my phone? (HARRY enters, disguised as a maintenance man with a bad wig and goatee.)

HARRY:(Bad Italian accent) Imma sorry to interrupt. Imma from the phone company, justa here to ch ecka da lines.

ALL: Hi, Harry.

HARRY: You knew it was me?

DAPHNE:(To KELLY who is still examining DANDY) Kelly, what are you doing? Dandy, you just ignore her. You and I will get together later. Okay, punkin? Honey-babe? Sweetums?

BASIL: Somebody get the hose.

KELLY: Okay. I've seen more than enough. (She sends DANDY back to his seat. DAPHNE gives him a little wave.)

HARRY: What was it that gave me away?

FELICITY: Later, Dandy, honey. . .

REGGIE: Daphne Lee. . .

HARRY: Maybe I shouldda done my Indian. (Indian accent) Pardon, memsab, for I'm about to check your phones.

KELLY: Just so you know, I've been keeping Daffy Lee here under surveillance and this afternoon I tossed her room. . .

DAPHNE: You been messing with my stuff??? How'd you like to wear that magnifying glass rightup you r. . .Dandy, we'll talk later about, you know, the act.

FELICITY: Leave it alone, Basil. (She settles in the rocking chair and gets out her knitting. She continues to knit throughout the scene.)

HARRY: C'mon you guys, how'd you know it was me? How am I gonna learn what works if you don't help me out?

KELLY: None of it works, Harry. Although the bag lady outfit fooled me in Fresno.

HARRY: I didn't do a bag lady in Fresno. Musta been Felicity.

BASIL: By the way, Dandy, if you want to keep in touch you can e-mail her at Daphne Lee at Bimbo dot com.

FELICITY: That young man certainly has some nice buns.

REGGIE: Well, Really, people.

KELLY: Sorry, Reggie. But you're the one who goes nuts over security. And, I, for one, take my business very seriously.

HARRY: Oh, like we don't? Do you have any idea how much a good disguise costs?

BASIL: No, and, obviously, neither do you. (HARRY exits in a huff to where his costumes are kept - offstage or a nearby room.)

FELICITY: You can tell a lot about a person by their buns. Not as telling as cuticles, but. . .

REGGIE: Well, ladies and gentlemen, as your host this evening. . .

DAPHNE: Oh, great, again with the cuticles.

BASIL: This reminds me of one of my cases. .. (collective groan)

KELLY: You, know, I just remembered. I never got a urine sample from Dandy. (Or a prominently known individual in your group.)

REGGIE: (Attempting to start again) The Potter Diamond, ladies and gentlemen, was first discovered

in 1856 by a band of roaming gypsies. They traveled in caravans, throughout Rumania

BASIL: I was working on a case for Valerie Harper. . .

DAPHNE: 35 bucks on a manicure and I gotta listen to the cuticle police.

REGGIE: The . . .gypsies came to the small town of Svedalin where my great, great, grandfather, Taras, was the village idiot.

FELICITY: I always loved her as Rhoda.

REGGIE: One day, the gypsies were playing Platski, which is a stone balancing game. . .

KELLY: Is that like Jenga? I love that game.

BASIL: Val hired me to look into the disappearance of her chihuahua, Zippy. Of course, it was easily solved.

REGGIE: They decided to let Taras play.

FELICITY: I hate those yappy little things.

REGGIE: What the gypsies didn't know was that, Taras, though an idiot, could really stack the stones.

BASIL: I discovered, among other things, a partially thawed Lean Cuisine in Zippy's basket.

REGGIE: The game escalated, the wagers grew higher, until finally, the gypsies had lost everything, including the Diamond. And, of course, being crude, ignorant people. . .

FELICITY: Much prefer cats.

KELLY: I love the glazed chicken Lean Cuisine. You'd never guess it was low fat.

REGGIE: The gypsies had no idea of its worth. Taras took the Diamond to the mayor, Borislav, in hopes of trading it for beans.

DAPHNE: Wait a minute, wasn't that a cow?

BASIL: Then, I came upon a receipt for a mail order ThighMaster and an empty box of Dexatrim.

FELICITY: I love to watch them chase my ball of yarn.

DAPHNE: Glazed chickens chase your yarn?

REGGIE: Borislav recognized what it was at once, and offered Taras the hand of his daughter in marriage.

KELLY: That's men for you. My father would have sold me for beans, too.

DAPHNE: No, no, he didn't get her for beans. That was the cow.

BASIL: From all of that I immediately deduced that Valerie was on a diet. And then, I knew exactly what had happened to her Zippy.

REGGIE: Actually, Taras held out for the beans, but, in the end, married the mayor's daughter, Bulba.

FELICITY: I always thought she was funnier when she was fat.

KELLY: She was kinda chunky as Rhoda, but I don't think she was ever a cow.

DAPHNE: Okay, okay, so who was fat? Bulba or the glazed cat?

FELICITY: Do those ThighMaster's really work, does anyone know?

BASIL: Of course, the contents of the microwave confirmed it.

REGGIE: ANYWAY, at the wedding, the gypsies returned. And just as the priest was about to pronounce them man and wife, the gypsy king shouted a curse upon them and all their children as long as they possessed the Diamond.

FELICITY: One of the ladies in my bridge club got shingles from her microwave.

BASIL: Dexatrim, Lean Cuisine, ThighMaster, a microwave. Valerie was a little loopy from dieting and that spelled a recipe for disaster. I call it the Case of the Zapped Zippy.

REGGIE: And that is how the Potters came into possession of the most famous gem in the world.

DAPHNE: What happened to the cow?

REGGIE: Oh, dammit. I give up. Ladies and gentlemen, . . .the Potter Diamond. (With musical fanfare, the Diamond is unveiled. Ooh, aahs, applause.)

KELLY: What I can't figure out is how the gypsies were stupid enough not to know that was a Diamond
Looks pretty obvious to me.

REGGIE: It wasn't until 1918 that my grandfather, Molar, (Just then, gypsy violin music is heard.
REGGIE is immediately terror-stricken, even more so as HARRY enters, disguised as a gypsy,
carrying a violin and pretending to play.) AHHHHHH! (There is confusion, ad-libbing, etc., as
REGGIE collapses onto the floor.)

DAPHNE: Reggie! Daddy! (Hopefully.) Is it your heart?

KELLY: Should we get an ambulance?

BASIL: Is there a doctor in the house?

FELICITY: Let me through. I know CPR. And I can do the Heimlich.

DAPHNE: Don't you touch him. No one touch him. And don't call an ambulance!

HARRY: Hey, I gotcha good this time.

BASIL: I think we should get help.

KELLY: Right now! He could have a heart condition. (To DAPHNE) Does he have a heart condition?

DAPHNE: No, yes. . .look, all I know is that Reggie wouldn't want to be kept alive with machines.
He'd

want to go peaceful-like. So if it is his heart, let's just let him go.

HARRY: This disguise is definitely a keeper.

FELICITY: I think he's coming around.

(REGGIE tries feebly to sit up.)

DAPHNE: (Pushing him back down with her foot.) No, he's not. I think he's fading.

KELLY: If he goes I've got my autopsy kit in the car.

REGGIE: What happened? (He sits up)

HARRY: (Wiggling his fingers) Booga-Booga-Booga. (REGGIE immediately passes out again.)

BASIL: I think he's just fainted.

DAPHNE:(Kneeling down next to him.) No he's not. He's going fast. It's okay, Reggie darling. Let go. I'm with you. Go to the angels, sweetie.

FELICITY: Give him air. He probably needs air. (DAPHNE immediately puts her hands over his face.)

DAPHNE: No he doesn't. He's stopped breathing. Turn away, all of you! Reggie wouldn't want anyone to see him die. (She straddles him and starts "choking him". REGGIE can use his foot to hit the floor to match DAPHNE'S attempts to throttle him. If done in "sync" it looks and sounds as if his head is hitting the floor as DAPHNE chokes him.) HE-WAS-SUCH-A-PROUD-MAN.

KELLY: For Pete's sake, you're choking him, Daphne.

FELICITY: If his airway is blocked, we could do an emergency tracheotomy with my knitting needles.

HARRY: Cool.

REGGIE: (Struggling against DAPHNE'S hands, which are now around his throat) Whaaaa. . . Daphne Lee, let go of me!

DAPHNE:(Seeing that he isn't going to die.) Thank God! It's a miracle. (REGGIE struggles to his feet as DAPHNE wraps her arms around his legs.) Oh, Reggie. Darling! I hoped, I mean, I thought you were dead! Well, that's it, then. We are going to get rid of that filthy Diamond!

REGGIE: You may be right, Daphne. If Harry can scare me silly with a really bad gypsy costume.

HARRY: Hey, old guy, it was good enough to fool you.

BASIL: Like that's a challenge.

FELICITY: I think it may be premature to think about getting rid of the Diamond, Reggie. After all, it's been in your family for generations.

KELLY: The old girl is right. Think it through. Think of all the people who'll be disappointed if they

don't get to see it.

HARRY: Think of them. Probably lots of children. (The detectives agree, "children, yes, children".)

BASIL: Orphans. Waifs. Little tykes whose world is filled with ugliness. Who need to find a bit of beauty in their sad little lives. I can see them now, their little soulful eyes blinking back the tears when all they have to look forward to is the next Play Station game. Think of all those disappointed children.

KELLY: Next thing you know, they'll be teenagers. Teenagers. They'll join gangs. Gangs of roving hooligans, waiting on their prey. Waiting in darkened doorways, in the fog. Waiting to mug old ladies for their Social Security checks.

FELICITY: Oh, goodness. It's more serious than I thought!

DAPHNE: WAIT A MINUTE! You're not thinking about children or gangs or cows or glazed chickens or anything else. You're thinking about yourselves. If Reggie sells the Diamond there will be four detectives out of a steady job. (The detectives all deny.) Yes, you are! Look, Reggie. Remember what I told you about Pia Zadora. Her husband bankrolled her career and look where she is now.

BASIL: Where is she now?

HARRY: Who's Pia Zadora? Another one of Reggie's relatives? Bulba's sister?

DAPHNE: Sell the damned Diamond so you won't have to worry about gypsies around every corner.

REGGIE: If only I could. That wretched curse! (He puts his head in his hands.)

FELICITY: How many relatives have you lost to the curse, Reggie?

REGGIE: Well, there was Taras himself. He and Bulba were both poisoned. Someone spiked their Mus hka.

ALL: MUSHKA?

REGGIE: That's home-made vodka.

KELLY: Could have been an accident. Could have been a bad batch of Mushka.

REGGIE: Every one else who drank from the Mushka Pit was fine. Then the Diamond passed to their son, Grigor. He was found buried under a pile of Platski stones. His younger brother, Felix, only had the Diamond for 10 years before he was killed, by a stake through the heart.

HARRY: A steak through the heart? Like a t-bone or sirloin or something?

KELLY: And we are back to the cows again. No, dimbulb, a stake - like a stick, through the heart. Like the old vampire treatment.

BASIL: He didn't have a propensity for drinking blood, did he? 'Cause if he did, we have a whole new ball game here.

REGGIE: No, no, after the Mushka thing with his parents, Felix never drank anything at all, without using a taster. He wasn't a vampire.

HARRY: I wouldn't be too sure. Those dudes are tricky. They can look like Tom Cruise or Brad Pitt.

Neat disguises.

DAPHNE: Okay, look, enough of this! Reggie, if you love me you'll sell that cursed Diamond.

FELICITY: Who got the Diamond next?

REGGIE: From there it passed to my grandfather, Molar. He's the one who had it cut and polished. Molar died at the dentist's.

BASIL: Why am I not surprised?

REGGIE: He was in the chair and the dentist was getting all ready to yank a tooth. But a horse whinnied outside and the dentist yanked out his uvula instead.

HARRY: His uvula??? I didn't know guys had those.

KELLY: It's that little thing that hangs in the back of your throat. (The detectives all inspect each others' mouths.)

FELICITY: You can tell a lot about a person by their uvula.

REGGIE: The Diamond went to my father, Kreptor. He brought his family to America. And he shortened our name from Potteresceau to Potter. He married my mother, Fran, and they had me. For awhile it looked like they'd escaped the curse, but then Dad died under very mysterious circumstances.

ALL: We'll bite.

REGGIE: He was attacked by moths. Gypsy moths. Killer gypsy moths. Very rare outside of Rumania. He probably could have survived the attack except he was wearing woolen long underwear and. . .

HARRY: Oh, wow. That is so freaky.

REGGIE: It wasn't pretty.

KELLY: Oh, A gypsy moth attack never is.

REGGIE: All that was left of him was his Mason pin and a Fruit of the Loom label.

DAPHNE: Okay, so we are all up to date. Reggie, you've got to sell that thing. End this. Once and for all.

REGGIE: You may be right, Daphne Lee. We'll get rid of the Diamond and we can live off the proceeds of my books.

KELLY: Your books?

REGGIE: Textbooks on precious stones. I'm a gemologist. A specialist in jewels. (He picks up the Diamond and looks at it as he speaks.)

DAPHNE: Honey, why would we do that? We'd probably get a zillion dollars for the Diamond.

REGGIE: Oh, I'd never SELL it, sweetie. I'd donate it to a museum. So the children can see it.

DAPHNE: WHAT!! Are you nuts, Daddy? Donate it? Give it away!!

BASIL: Don't worry, Daphne Lee, you'll have all those proceeds from the books. They sell, what, 2 to 3 dozen a year?

REGGIE: We'll have to scale back a bit, baby. But you said "for richer and for poorer" at the chapel in Vegas, remember?

FELICITY: This is so romantic.

KELLY: Yeah, I can see Daphne now, living in a little apartment, fixing chili.

HARRY: Or Lean Cuisines.

BASIL: If they can afford a microwave.

DAPHNE: OK, OK, that's enough. Maybe we should just keep the Diamond for a while, do the tour thing, see what happens.

REGGIE: I don't know, cupcake. The curse and all. . .

FELICITY: Oh, we can protect you. (The detectives and DAPHNE all agree.)

REGGIE: Well, we'll see. Anyway, for tonight, let's just move along with the program. Part of the reason you're all here tonight isn't just to see the Diamond, I know. I'm sure that having all these famous detectives in one place is very exciting. You must have some questions for all of them. Can we have full lights, please? (There will be some trouble with the lights, foreshadowing the blackout that will come later.) Okay, okay, forget the house lights.

(During the questioning, audience members may ask some real questions, interspersed with the planted questions that the detectives have ready. Also, some of the plants may volunteer their questions without being called on. Basically, each detective has to make sure his questions get asked. The following describes each detective's question.)

REGGIE: Any questions for Harry Dinker, our disguise expert?

(After others have given theirs and if his "plant" hasn't spoken up. . .)

HARRY: I know that (HARRY'S PLANT) has a question.

HARRY'S PLANT: Harry, you are obviously a master of disguise. Who taught you the art of camouflage?

HARRY: Gosh, I guess it all started with my mom. She sold Avon and then moved on to Mary Kay. Sometimes at the parties she wouldn't have anyone to demonstrate with, so she'd use me.

KELLY: You musta been one strange kid.

FELICITY: Some people just shouldn't have children.

DAPHNE: Can you get me a discount? I'm almost out of blush.

HARRY: It was cool. She had some really neat wigs. Then I started wearing disguises to school.

BASIL: I imagine that went over big.

HARRY: Hey, those smartasses were laughing out of the other side of their mouths when I showed up in the pink Caddy. And I had a drama teacher that really made an impression on me. She saw my potential and helped me start my collection. Gee, we had fun at the mall.

KELLY: None of this struck you as weird, huh?

DAPHNE: My mom just sold real estate. Talk about boring. And all my teachers were hung up on the grade thing. High school was a waste, except for the pep rallies.

HARRY: My talent DID kinda leave me out of the usual career track. I thought of clown school but instead I joined the police force so I could be an undercover detective, but they just had me doin' traffic. And, man, I was good. Let me tell you, traffic stops for a cop in sequins.

BASIL: I would imagine so.

HARRY: But I still wasn't realizing my potential, y'know. And the cops said they didn't have anything in the budget for my disguises and they wanted me to just wear a uniform and they wouldn't give me a bigger locker and. . .man, it was not a cool scene. So I switched to working security at Target. That was neat. Had a walkie talkie and everything. But still, it wasn't enough.

FELICITY: Oh, and I had hoped it was.

HARRY: So my mom lent me enough money to open the Dinker Detective Agency and I started solvin' real big cases and got like a real name for myself.

KELLY: Oh, I'm willing to bet you had a name before that.

REGGIE: Thank you, Harry. Very enlightening. (HARRY exits to change into another disguise.) Now, do we have any questions for Felicity Crump?

(There may be others, and FELICITY'S PLANT may volunteer. If not, she'll call on him or her.)

FELICITY: I was talking to this very nice man/woman before the show and they were going to ask me something. Where are you, (name of FELICITY'S PLANT)?

FELICITY'S PLANT: Miss Felicity, we love hearing about your cases. You've got more detective experience than all of the others. What's your favorite case?

FELICITY:(Still rocking and knitting.) Oh, dear, there have been so many. Let's see. Oh, I know. It would have to be Budgie. You may have read about him in the papers. Well, actually, his real name was Bernard Bigwick, but everyone called him Budgie.

KELLY: Wasn't he the forger?

FELICITY: Yes, yes, yes. A real artist. There wasn't anything that dear boy couldn't copy. I've got some of his work at my condo. Including the one that got him caught.

BASIL: I remember. He tried to sell a supposedly newly discovered Michelangelo.

FELICITY: That's right, Basil dear. A nude statue of David. And no one would have known it from the

genuine article except for one little flaw. Budgie wasn't Jewish, you see, and David WAS Jewish and. . .well, nothing tells more about a man than his privates.

DAPHNE: Ain't that the truth, honey.

FELICITY: I immediately spotted the forgery and before you could say "Bob's your uncle", Budgie was off to prison. I visit him all the time. Him and me other lads. I keep in touch with all my little convicts. And send them homemade goodies. (Holds up knitting) I'm working on some slipper socks for Marvin Crocker.

KELLY: Marvin Crocker??? "Carvin" Marvin Crocker? The guy that hacked up the postal workers?

DAPHNE: You're making slipper socks for Carvin' Marvin?

FELICITY: Tssk, tssk, I hate that nickname. To me he's just a little nipper who gets cold tootsies in the slammer. Those cells are soo drafty. Especially the ones on Death Row. Marvin's had the sniffles for months, poor baby.

BASIL: Liable to catch his death, huh? Seems to me he's scheduled to warm up real good next month. Say, Reggie, why don't we move on to me? There must be lots of people who want to know about some of my cases. (Collective groan).

(HARRY re-enters in a sombrero and poncho.)

HARRY: We don't want to hear your stinkin' stories.

FELICITY: Harry's right, Basil.

HARRY: I am not thees Harry. I am Pancho Garcia. In my country, I am called "El Camaro."

DAPHNE: If I hear one more of your stories I'm gonna lose my lunch.

BASIL: Did I tell you the one about. . .

ALL: YES!

HARRY: I am but a simple Mexican pheasant. . .

FELICITY: I think you mean peasant, Harry.

KELLY: A pheasant is a bird, Harry. Similar to a glazed chicken.

HARRY: It is? I mean, of course, I knew that. I was giving you a test. In Spanish, "El Camaro" means "the one who tests" and I, Pancho Garcia, am not called El Camaro for nothing.

BASIL: And then there's the one about the. . .

ALL: HEARD IT.

REGGIE: Maybe there's someone here with a question that doesn't directly involve a story. . .

BASIL: I'm sure I didn't tell you the one about the caterer

ALL: WHO PUT THE POISON IN THE CREAM CHEESE

BASIL: Who put the poison in the cream cheese. . .

HARRY: Even I, Pancho Garcia, have heard this cheese story in my far away homeland of Me-hi-co.

DAPHNE: Give it up, Harry.

REGGIE: Non-story questions for Basil, audience?

(Again, there may be questions and BASIL'S PLANT may volunteer. If he/she does not, BASIL will call on him or her.)

BASIL: I think (BASIL'S PLANT'S NAME) has a question.

BASIL'S PLANT: Is it true, Mr. Benchley, that besides being the world's greatest detective, you are also an accomplished musician?

BASIL: Ah, yes, yes, that is true. I studied music at the Conservatory of Detroit. Specifically, the violin. And I played with the Frankenmuth Symphony Orchestra for several seasons. In between cases. The critics raved over my "Flight of the Bumblebee" which I rehearsed while working on a particularly baffling case involving a zookeeper and it turned out that. . .

ALL except HARRY: THE MONKEY WASN'T ALBINO AFTER ALL.

HARRY: "El Camaro" has not heard thees monkey story.

DAPHNE: Take him to lunch, Harry. Daddy, are we almost done? I want to talk to Dandy before he leaves.

FELICITY: He's still here. Dandy, dear, don't forget to dust off your buns. . . I mean pants.

KELLY: I've gotta develop a new formula for my fingerprint dust. Stuff is so messy.

FELICITY: And it tastes terrible. Reggie, dear, why don't you let the audience ask Kelly a few questions?

DAPHNE: Like "who does her hair, Mr. Mixmaster?"

KELLY: I'd be happy to answer questions, Reggie, if you can get the Vegas Vamp to shut her big over-made-up face.

BASIL: Here they go again.

HARRY: It ees true. I theenk Miss Daphne could use some tips from "El Camaro".

DAPHNE: Shut up, Harry.

FELICITY: And Kelly could use a little help in the hair department. You might want to try one of those home perms, dear. Give it a little body. Right now, your hair is a dead giveaway to your sexual frustration. Hair tells, dear.

KELLY: You know, you would think that we girls could get a little sisterhood going. But, Daphne Lee,

you especially have been on my ass this entire tour.

DAPHNE: Well, you've got the ass for it, Kelly.

(A shouting/hair-pulling match ensues with the others attempting to break it up - except FELICITY who still knits and rocks.)

REGGIE: Stop it both of you.

FELICITY: Personally, I love a good cat fight.

REGGIE: Any questions for Kelly?

(Again, there may be some, and KELLY'S PLANT may volunteer. If he or she does not, KELLY will call on him or her.)

KELLY: I think (PLANT'S NAME) had a question.

KELLY'S PLANT: Kelly, we know you began detecting as a teenager and solved some big cases before you were 21. What was your last case as a teenager?

DAPHNE: If you can remember back that far.

KELLY: Well, my last official teenage case was "The Clue in the Cafeteria." When someone stole the plans for the kindergarten bulletin boards, I sprang into action. Using infrared lights, I followed footprints to the school cafeteria. And after analyzing hairs found in the Johnny Marzetti, I knew immediately that the lunch ladies weren't the only ones with their mitts in the macaroni.

FELICITY: Curly or straight? Hair tells.

KELLY: I also found minute traces of chalk in the lime jello. Obviously, we were dealing with a diabolical academic mind. Just as I was digging into the fruit cups in my quest for further evidence, Vice-Principal Spork showed up. He became my number one suspect.

FELICITY: Did you check out his cuticles?

HARRY: "El Camaro" is lost.

DAPHNE: You ain't the only one, Paco Bell. And one more cuticle crack, Felicity, and I'm gonna break my rule about sluggin' senior citizens.

KELLY: I immediately disarmed him by applying pressure to his groin area and began an oral exam, using my patented Kelly Boggs Dental Detecting kit. Just as I discovered that he had a terrible buildup of plaque and a really bad case of gingivitis, the wrestling coach arrived and pinned me to the turnstile.

FELICITY: How was his uvula?

BASIL: That's a different kit.

KELLY: He got away scot free with the plans and I wound up doin' a month in detention.

FELICITY: If it makes you feel any better, gum disease can be worse than prison. He was punished by a higher power.

KELLY: Still, it's the one case I never solved. But I learned then that detecting is a science. Every crime scene contains a clue.

(The lights flicker and go out. There is much shouting, screams, etc. All will shield the display - in case there's any incidental light left - as one of them pockets it. IT DOESN'T MATTER WHICH - THE DIAMOND MUST DISAPPEAR! At a pre-arranged cue - we used BASIL shouting "Where the hell's the lights" - the lights return. Everyone onstage is facing out, in a line, so that the Diamond display is visible when the lights return. The characters do not notice that the Diamond is gone, but the audience SHOULD..)

REGGIE: Does anyone see a maintenance man? This light business is unnerving. (All completely clear the area around the display so that no one in the audience can miss that the DIAMOND is gone.) Well, it seems to be okay now. . . (The lights go out again. In this blackout, the Diamond is returned, once again, to the stand, with actors again blocking the display and ad-libbing. Once it is back, whoever replaces it shouts a cue, which will bring back the lights.)

HARRY: Oh, gee, now I gotta go and get in my repair man outfit again. Wish someone would have told me. (He exits.)

FELICITY: Well, I'll be back in a second too. When you get to be my age, you don't like to get too far from the loo. (She exits.)

KELLY: What's with the lights? I think somebody is long overdue with a urine sample, don't you, Dandy? (She pulls out tubing.) I've got to go get my funnel. (She exits.)

BASIL: (Following her) You know this reminds me of one of my cases.

DAPHNE: You'd better not even think of touching my Dandy-kins. (As she follows Kelly & Basil.)

REGGIE: Your Dandy-kins? Daphne! Wait a minute! Come back. Don't leave me alone. I'm supposed to be guarded by at least two of you at all times. The gypsies!! The Diamond!

REGGIE goes to the Diamond, picks it up, weighs it in his hand. He looks confused, then alarmed, makes an exclamation, then replaces the Diamond and rushes offstage. As soon as he is "clear" for a few minutes, there is another blackout, we hear gypsy music and, a moment later Reggie screams. The gypsy music continues. In the dark, the others return. DAPHNE, makes her way to DANDY and sits on his lap. The following dialogue is done in the dark.

DAPHNE: Oh, Dandy, I'm so glad you are here. I'm so frightened. Hold me.

KELLY: Has anyone seen my night vision goggles?

HARRY: Look, I can't change in the dark. . .

BASIL: In Vermont, back in '86, I ran into just this kind of a problem.

KELLY: Where's Reggie?

(The lights return. Everyone looks for Reggie, calling, etc. DAPHNE drags DANDY up to the playing area. The actors ad-lib, then . . .)

BASIL: Okay, who screamed?

DAPHNE: Who DIDN'T scream?

FELICITY: Oh, dear, this is so upsetting. Has anyone seen Reggie?

HARRY:(In a hushed voice) Did you hear that music? It was . . . gypsy music.

KELLY: Somebody has some explaining to do. . .

DAPHNE: Oh, come on. You don't believe all that gypsy garbage, do you? The Diamond isn't cursed, it's. . .

(REGGIE staggers onstage, a knife protruding from his bloodied chest. The others react as he comes toward them and then collapses in a chair. He tries to say something. They all gather around trying to hear what he is trying to say. DAPHNE pushes DANDY to the forefront .)

KELLY: He's trying to say something.

(REGGIE appears to be pointing at something. They move aside as he gestures toward the Diamond.)

BASIL: What is it, Reggie?

HARRY: Talk to us, Potter.

FELICITY: Oh, dear. . .it looks like it's really his heart this time.

DAPHNE: Reggie, Reggie. . .

(REGGIE grabs DANDY and mutters "URSE" before dying.)

DAPHNE: He's dead this time.

BASIL: The poor old guy.

KELLY: Stabbed in the heart. (Pulls out rubber gloves from her pocket.) Well, I've got some work to do, people. Back off.

HARRY: Wow - oh - wow!!! I've got it.

DAPHNE: What are you talking about, Harry?

HARRY: Someone stabbed him in the heart. Betcha he was a vampire. Betcha underneath his disguise he looks just like Brad Pitt.

KELLY: Don't be ridiculous. This is clearly a crime of passion. It's obvious who killed Potter. (She bends over the body.)

BASIL: Yes, Kelly, I follow your reasoning. Who gains most from Reggie's death? (They all look pointedly at DAPHNE.)

DAPHNE: Who? Me? But, I couldn't. . .he was my husband!! (She falls sobbing on top of REGGIE. They stare at her. She stops.) Not buying it, huh? (They all shake their heads "no".) I didn't kill

him, okay. You heard him. . .right before he died, he said, "Daphne didn't do it." Clear as day.

HARRY: I heard him say something, but it didn't sound like that.

FELICITY: And his diction was always so nice, I'm sure if that's what he said, we would have understood him.

BASIL: It wasn't even a complete sentence. You were closest, Dandy, old man, did you hear him?

(Hopefully, DANDY will repeat "URSE." If he doesn't, then all of the others will suddenly "know" what he said.)

DANDY: URSE.

ALL: URSE?

DANDY: Yes, URSE.

KELLY: That's what it sounded like to me, too.

HARRY: Me too, but I thought I heard him wrong.

(They all stand there thoughtfully, repeating "urse" and variations of it.)

FELICITY: Maybe he was calling for a nurse. Perfectly natural, considering his condition.

DAPHNE: Or maybe he knew he was as good as dead and he wanted us to call a hearse.

HARRY: CURSE! He said "curse"! The curse killed him!

KELLY:(Turning from her "ministrations" on the body. She has a tiny bit of newspaper.) Aha!!

ALL: What is it? What is that?

KELLY: Physical evidence. Like all murderers, Reggie's killer left a clue. This was stuck in the knife. It's a little piece of newspaper.

(Somewhere in here, DAPHNE sits on the dead REGGIE'S lap and systematically begins to strip him of valuables - wallet, ring, watch.)

HARRY: Cool. I'm gonna have to get one of your kits.

BASIL:(Looking at it.) And if this case is anything like the one I solved back in '67, the rest of this newspaper will reveal who the murderer is.

DAPHNE: I know who it is - it's one of you! It has to be. You all had opportunity.

FELICITY: Yes, dear, as did you. And you had the motive as well.

HARRY: Wow, right! With Reggie dead, you get the Diamond.

DAPHNE: Hold it right there. You don't think I did it, do you, Dandy?

(I always introduce the clue hunt at my events. If you decide to produce a sample clue hunt with answer key will be provided. Using that, and the Production Manual, will enable you to adapt - or

eliminate - your clue hunt.

What follows is the directions I gave for CURSE OF THE HOPELESS DIAMOND when we performed at the Civic. You will want to alter this speech to your event. Also, we always keep a tablecloth handy to cover "the body" for this part. Body removal can be done after the introduction of the clue hunt. We've used a stretcher, luggage rack, and appliance dolly among other things.)

HOSTESS: Perhaps I can be of assistance. Mysteries are my game. And I know a thing or two about hunting for clues. Welcome to "The Curse of the Hopeless Diamond." Tonight you will have the opportunity to solve the murder of Reggie Potter. You will also be able to personally interrogate the suspects. During this interrogation, the characters will do their best not to lie. But, of course, one or more has things to hide and will do their best not to be trapped by your questions. It would be a short mystery indeed, if guilty parties just came right out and admitted their guilt upon being questioned.

In a moment, mystery helpers will distribute clue packets on clipboards. This will lead you to the newspaper clue and explain how to offer your solution. These are pretty much self explanatory so it is of the utmost importance that you read and follow the directions on it. You will not save time by jumping right in and running off in all directions. Take a moment right after I am finished to go over the top page of your clue packet. It will tell you where to start - which clue to do first - and then you will do them in order after that. This prevents all of you from heading to one location at the same time. But besides reading the opening instructions carefully, read the directions for each clue.

THIS IS NOT A RACE. Winners will be drawn at random from the correct solutions. Prizes will also be awarded for the most confused, most creative, and most outrageous solutions.

That's about it, Happy Detecting!

The object of the Clue Hunt is a fragment of newspaper. Both sides are shown here. A print copy is sent with Production Materials. For a small fee, the clipping can be sent electronically if you would like to edit.

Side 1 of the newspaper clipping

Side 2 of the newspaper fragment

FULL VERSION
PART THREE - THE CLUE HUNT

The Mysteries by Moushey PRODUCTION MANUAL provides instructions for designing clue hunts. It also provides options for adapting the clue hunt, or even eliminating it altogether (although if you can do it, they are always VERY popular with audiences!)

Each team will receive a clue packet (we put ours on clipboards). This includes trivia, decoding, fill-in-the-blank, puzzles, etc. Putting them all together will lead the teams to the object of the clue hunt - the missing newspaper fragment.

The last page of the clue packet is the solution sheet. Once each team has found the newspaper, interrogated the suspects, and reviewed the case, they are ready to complete and submit their solution.

If you order production materials for THE CURSE OF THE HOPELESS DIAMOND you will receive sample clue

hunts and a flow chart. Production materials also include a “clean copy” of the newspaper clue, which you may photocopy.

The actors circulate during the clue hunt, answering questions. They will try not to lie, except when necessary (particularly FELICITY). Also during the clue hunt, as participants show the actors the newspaper, they will respond to it and articles in which they figure. Finally, audience members are sure to tell the characters about the disappearance and reappearance of the Diamond. All will be incredulous, then believing.

THE VERY BRIEF SOLUTION SCENE IS NOT INCLUDED IN REVIEW SCRIPTS. IF YOU ABSOLUTELY MUST HAVE THE ENTIRE ACTING COPY BEFORE MAKING A DECISION ABOUT PRODUCING, PLEASE CONTACT US:

330-678-3893

info@mysteriesbymoushey.com

FULL VERSION PART FIVE - POST-MORTEM

Following the solution scene, the cast is introduced and prizes are awarded. The Production Manual explains how to handle this section.

For “gag” prizes, we gave a box of rocks labeled “LET’S PLAY PLATSKI” - the “home version” of the game. And we gave rubber tubing and a funnel - THE KELLY BOGGS URINALYSIS KIT.

(text box: 2)

MINI-MYSTERY VERSION An Audience-Participation Murder-Mystery by Eileen Moushey

NOTE: Even if your group chooses to perform the Mini-Version of DIAMOND, the Full Version is full of fun lines and “bits” you can use.

THE MINI-VERSION PART ONE - PRELUDE TO MURDER

As the audience members enter, all the characters are circulating. On stage is the pedestal where the Diamond will supposedly be displayed. As the audience enters, all will be given programs which outline the history of the Potter Diamond and brief bios of the principals. (See back of script.) REGGIE is welcoming everyone to this “showing” of the Diamond. He is acutely aware of security and is on constant lookout for anyone who may be a gypsy. The Diamond’s curse has taken its toll on his family. Death has followed the Potters through generation after generation - supposedly because of “the curse.” REGGIE has hired world-famous detectives to protect him as well as the jewel. Intermittently, we hear gypsy music. REGGIE will go nuts and demand that it be turned off.

REGGIE'S bride, DAPHNE, is unhappy. She married REGGIE after they met in Vegas, where she was in the chorus at Casinorama. She's already disillusioned. She thought because REGGIE owned the Diamond, he must be fabulously rich. But she's since discovered that the gem is REGGIE'S only real asset. He's "rock rich" and his only income comes from touring with the Diamond and the scholarly books he's written on gemology. DAPHNE misses Vegas. She will get the names of some men in the audience who would be wonderful "Daphne's Dandies."

The famous detectives are also in evidence. BASIL BENCHLEY greets people, in his superior way, and makes wild assumptions about them, based on the flimsiest of evidence. For example, he may remove a piece of lint from a jacket and surmise that they did laundry before they came. Another might be a hair, which BASIL will claim comes from the rare, tail-less cat, the Manx, which originally comes from Egypt, therefore, this person took a recent trip to Egypt, as he also spies mud on their shoes of an odd color - the color is the mud of the Nile. KELLY is circulating, looking suitably mysterious. She carries an "evidence" kit. She'll stop people from drinking, saying, "Wait, I smell burnt almonds!" Using an eyedropper, she'll suck up a sample and taste a drop, before announcing it's safe to drink. She'll take "fingerprints" using a stamp pad. And she'll "dust" for fingerprints using a loose container of face powder and a make-up brush. Also among her tools is a magnifying glass, which she uses on a variety of items, including things that BASIL claims to have found. Her kit can also contain tweezers, vials of liquid, a nutcracker, turkey baster, whatever! One thing needed is some rubber tubing about 3 feet long. (You'll see why.)

HARRY circulates and tries on different disguises. He has a bag with hats, wigs, facial hair, glasses, etc.) He gives "disguising lessons" to audience members, encouraging them to try and fool their friends. Several times he makes announcements to the entire group, all in a different persona. These announcements include paging himself, statements about being on the lookout for the world's greatest detective, Harry Dinker, and making disparaging remarks about his fellow detectives. If time permits, he can even make complete changes.

FELICITY circulates as well, carrying her ever-present purse with needles sticking out. She greets everyone nicely - at first - but then sees "the evil" lurking behind some. She can tell - "it's all in the eyes" . . . "or the nose" . . . "or the way you part your hair". Whatever, she cannot be fooled.

THE MINI-VERSION PART TWO - THE PLAY

The stage area is empty except for the display stand for the Diamond and three chairs, one of which is a rocking chair for FELICITY. DAPHNE & REGGIE enter onstage.

DAPHNE: Reggie. Daddy? I think I've found my backup dancers! (She names the men in the audience and has them stand.) C'mon, sweetie. All I need is an itty-bitty bankroll and I can headline in Vegas.

REGGIE: Oh, geez, Daphne, you know I don't. . . (BASIL enters)

BASIL: Look here, Potter, you'd better get a leash for that wife of yours. (FELICITY enters)

FELICITY: I think that girl is hiding something. Look at her nails. Those are the cuticles of someone with something to hide.

DAPHNE: What the hell are you talking about? I've got great cuticles. (KELLY enters.)

KELLY: It's okay, I can get her fingerprints.

REGGIE: Um, Basil, Kelly. . .

DAPHNE: How are you gonna get my. . .Hey, why would you WANT to get my fingerprints?

BASIL: If you want her prints, all you have to do is dust the buns of half the men here.

DAPHNE: My prints, my cuticles. What's next, you creeps? You gonna start tapping my phone?
(HARRY enters, disguised as a maintenance man with a bad wig and goatee.)

HARRY:(Bad Italian accent) Imma sorry to interrupt. Imma from the phone company, justa here to ch
ecka da lines.

ALL: Hi, Harry.

HARRY: You knew it was me? What was it that gave me away? Maybe I shouldda done my Indian.
(Indian accent) Pardon, memsab, for I'm about to check your phones. (He exits.)

KELLY: Just so you know, I've been keeping Daffy Lee here under surveillance and this afternoon I
tossed her room.

DAPHNE: You been messing with my stuff??? How'd you like to wear that magnifying glass rightup you
r..

BASIL: Oh, hahaha. Now, THAT reminds me of one of my cases. (collective groan)

DAPHNE: See, Daddy. They are persecuting me. Just think. If we sell the Diamond, you can fire all
of them, and you won't have to be afraid of gypsies around every corner. . .

REGGIE: You may be right, Daphne Lee. That wretched curse! (He has an idea.) I suppose we
could get rid of the Diamond. We can live off the proceeds of my books.

KELLY: Your books?

REGGIE: Textbooks on precious stones. Remember - I'm a gemologist. A specialist in jewels.
Granted, they don't sell very well, but. . .

DAPHNE: Honey, why would we do that? We'd probably get a zillion dollars for the Diamond.

REGGIE: Oh, I'd never SELL it, sweetie. I'd donate it to a museum. So the children can see it.

DAPHNE: WHAT!! Are you nuts, Daddy? Donate it? Give it away!!

REGGIE: We'll have to scale back a bit, baby. But you said "for richer and for poorer" at the chapel
in Vegas, remember? Just think, long, long evenings together, you and I, playing Platski.

FELICITY: This is so romantic.

DAPHNE: Platski??? OK, OK, that's enough. Maybe we should just keep the Diamond for a while, do
the tour thing, see what happens.

REGGIE: I don't know, cupcake. The curse and all. . .

FELICITY: Oh, we can protect you. (The detectives and DAPHNE all agree.)

BASIL: Yes, yes. Of course we can. Why, I remember a time when I was in Casablanca on a case. (collective groan.) No, no, this is a really good story.

REGGIE: Well, if we're going to go on with the tour, we might as well display the Diamond. It's locked in a box on the train. Um. . .tell the audience about yourself while I go get it. (HARRY enters in his clown costume) Oh, hi, Harry. Nice shoes. (REGGIE exits)

HARRY: I'm not Harry. I'm Boffo The Birthday Clown. A-yuck, a-yuck, a-yuck.

KELLY: Harry, fer pete's sake. How the hell did you ever start with the costumes?

HARRY: Gosh, I guess it all started with my mom. She sold Avon and then moved onto Mary Kay. Sometimes at the parties she wouldn't have anyone to demonstrate with, so she'd use me.

KELLY: You musta been one strange kid.

FELICITY: Some people just shouldn't have children.

HARRY: It was cool. She had some really neat wigs. Then I started wearing disguises to school.

BASIL: I imagine that went over big.

HARRY: Hey, those smartasses were laughing out of the other side of their mouths when I showed up in the pink Caddy. And I had a drama teacher that really made an impression on me. She saw my potential and helped me start my collection. Gee, we had fun at the mall.

KELLY: None of this struck you as weird, huh?

HARRY: Then my mom lent me enough money to open the Dinker Detective Agency and I started solvi n' real big cases and got like a real name for myself.

KELLY: Oh, I'm willing to bet you had a name before that. (HARRY exits in a huff which is tough when you're wearing magnificent shoes.)

FELICITY: You know, I was talking to this very nice man/woman before the show and she wanted to know about my favorite case. And I was thinking, it would have to be Budgie. You may have read about him in the papers. Well, actually, his real name was Bernard Bigwick, but everyone called him Budgie.

KELLY: Wasn't he the forger?

FELICITY: Yes, yes, yes. A real artist. There wasn't anything that dear boy couldn't copy. I've got some of his work at my condo. Including the one that got him caught.

BASIL: I remember. He tried to sell a supposedly newly discovered Michelangelo.

FELICITY: That's right, Basil dear. A nude statue of David. And no one would have known it from the genuine article except for one little flaw. Budgie wasn't Jewish, you see, and David WAS Jewish, and. . .well,

nothing tells more about a man than his privates,

DAPHNE: Ain't that the truth, honey.

FELICITY: I immediately spotted the forgery and before you could say "I've Got Platski", Budgie was off to prison. I visit him all the time. Him and me other lads. I keep in touch with all my little convicts. And send them homemade goodies. (Holds up knitting) I'm working on some slipper socks for Marvin Crocker.

KELLY: Marvin Crocker??? "Carvin" Marvin Crocker? The guy that hacked up the postal workers?

DAPHNE: You're making slipper socks for Carvin' Marvin?

FELICITY: Tssk, tssk, I hate that nickname. To me he's just a little nipper who gets cold tootsies in the slammer. Those cells are soo drafty. Especially the ones on Death Row. Marvin's had the sniffles for months, poor baby.

BASIL: Liable to catch his death, huh? Seems to me he's scheduled to warm up real good next month. Alright. Well, now, I was also talking to some of these lovely people and they said they really, really, really wanted to hear some of my stories. (Collective groan. HARRY re-enters in a sombrero and poncho.)

HARRY: Stories? STORIES??? We don't want to hear no steenkin' stories.

FELICITY: Harry's right, Basil.

HARRY: I am not thees Harry. I am Pancho Garcia. In my country, I am called "El Camaro." And I have heard all your stories in my far away homeland of Me-hi-co.

BASIL: Puh-lease, Dinker. (To the audience) I actually started out as a musician, you know. Studied music at the Conservatory of Detroit. Specifically, the violin. And I played with the Frankenmuth Symphony Orchestra for several seasons. In between cases. The critics raved over my "Flight of the Bumblebee" which I rehearsed while working on a particularly baffling case involving a microwave and a poodle and. . .

DAPHNE: A poodle? That reminds me, Kelly, who does your hair anyway?

KELLY: Can any of you get the Vegas Vamp to shut her big over-made-up face?

BASIL: Here they go again.

HARRY: It ees true. I theenk Miss Daphne could use some tips from "El Camaro".

DAPHNE: Shut up, Harry.

FELICITY: And Kelly could use a little help in the hair department. You might want to try one of those home perms, dear. Give it a little body. Right now, your hair is a dead giveaway to your sexual

frustration. Hair tells, dear.

KELLY: Shut up, Felicity. (To audience). Look, would any of you like to hear about my first case? (She urges them to yell out.) After all, I started solving crimes when I was a teenager. . . I called it "The Clue in the Cafeteria." Someone stole the plans for the kindergarten bulletin boards. Using infrared lights, I followed footprints to the school cafeteria. And after analyzing hairs found in the Johnny Marzetti, I knew immediately that the lunch ladies weren't the only ones with their mitts in the macaroni.

FELICITY: Curly or straight? Hair tells.

KELLY: I also found minute traces of chalk in the lime jello. Just as I was digging into the fruit cups in my quest for further evidence, Vice-Principal Spork showed up. He became my number one suspect

FELICITY: Did you check out his cuticles?

HARRY: "El Camaro" is lost.

DAPHNE: You ain't the only one, Paco Bell. And one more cuticle crack, Felicity, and I'm gonna break my rule about sluggin' senior citizens.

KELLY: I immediately disarmed him by applying pressure to his groin area and began an oral exam, using my patented Kelly Boggs Dental Detecting kit. Just as I discovered that he had a terrible buildup of plaque and a really bad case of gingivitis, the wrestling coach arrived and pinned me to the turnstile. Spork got away scot free and I wound up doin' a month in detention.

(We hear screaming/moaning just as REGGIE returns, groping his way

and clutching a wooden box. He is completely disheveled and his shirt front and cuffs are torn and covered with soot, as is his face and hair, which is wild and standing up. The others help him to the stage while ad-libbing.)

DAPHNE: Reggie, Reggie, what happened? Shut up, everyone, he's trying to talk.

REGGIE:(struggling to get breath) Booby. . .booby. . .booby

HARRY: Hey, Reg, she's only got two. (To the others.) I think he's got one of them concession things.

KELLY: Concussion. Stand back, give him air. (She starts digging in her bag.)

REGGIE: Can't see. Daphne, Daphne, where are you?

FELICITY: Oh my goodness. I think he's been blinded.

BASIL: I say, old man, what happened?

REGGIE: Went to get Diamond. . . Box. . .lock gone. . .opened. . .big flash. . .blind.

FELICITY: The box was rigged!

KELLY:(Examining his eyes with a turkey baster.) Booby-trapped!

DAPHNE:(Shoving Kelly out of the way.) Oh, my poor baby. And it exploded right in your . . .WAIT A MINUTE - THE BOX WASN'T LOCKED??? GIMME THAT THING. (She grabs the box from REGGIE.) Oh, hell, he's right - the lock is gone but I can't. . .get it open. . .

HARRY: The blast musta like welded it shut.

KELLY: Just a minute. (She digs into her bag and puts on a mask and small torch. Facing upstage, with the others crowded around her, she supposedly uses her torch to get it open.) Ah, that ought to do it. (Everyone turns and faces downstage, KELLY holding the box.) I think it will open now. (Everyone starts grabbing for it. Ad-libbing. REGGIE starts to wander around the stage, bumping into people and things.)

REGGIE: Daphne, Daphne, where are you?

DAPHNE: I said "Gimme that!" (They're all still pulling on the box.)

REGGIE: Daphne, Daphne. . .where are you?

HARRY:(Letting go of box.) Hey, wait a min. I don't know why were fighting over it. I mean, like whoever rigged it musta taken the Diamond.

FELICITY: Goodness, I never thought I'd say this, but. . . I'm afraid Harry's right. (One by one, they all relinquish their hold on the box, leaving it in DAPHNE'S hands.)

REGGIE: Daphne, help me! I'm blind!!

DAPHNE: Put a Platski in it, Reg! (Slowly, she opens the box and then looks inside. She starts to cry.)

REGGIE: Could someone point me towards Daphne, please?

BASIL: Looks like you're out of luck, dear girl.

DAPHNE:(Dropping box and holding diamond high, sings): VIVA, LAS VEGAS! (Much ad-libbing and crowding around DAPHNE as REGGIE stumbles around.)

REGGIE: What is it? What is it?

DAPHNE:(Rushing to him and handing him the diamond.) It's still here, Daddy, it's still here!

HARRY: But why would anyone go to the trouble of. . .

DAPHNE: They were trying to kill Daddy, that's why! (All agree, ad-lib) Luckily, they only blinded him

BASIL: Yes, that was a stroke of good fortune.

HARRY: Yeah. And best of all we still have jobs! (as he picks up the box.) Hey, you guys, there's a little bit of newspaper in here.

HOSTESS: (entering) and I just happen to know where you can find the rest of it. Good evening, everyone, and welcome to _____. In a few moments we will be boarding the train. At

your seats you will find a clipboard. Attached to the clipboard is a newspaper fragment. In order to discover who rigged the lock box and tried to kill Reggie, you

will need to examine this clue and interrogate the suspects. Keep in mind, during this interrogation, the characters will do their best not to lie. But, of course, one or more have things to hide and will do their best not to be trapped by your questions. It would be a short mystery indeed, if guilty parties just came right out and admitted their guilt upon being questioned. Finally, on your clipboard is a ballot. All you need to write on the ballot is your name - and your email address if you'd like to be notified about future Mysteries by Moushey. Remember, you write YOUR name on the ballot. After the train trip is over, and you disembark, the suspects will be lined up, each holding ballot bags. Cast your ballot for the suspect you think is guilty. Prize winners will be drawn from the correct solutions. That's about it, this will be more fun than a Platski Tournament. Happy Detecting and ALL ABOARD!

THE MINI-VERSION PART THREE - CIRCULATING/IMPROV

Audience members will be given clipboards. On each is:

1. A copy of the newspaper clipping.
2. A page for taking notes, with suggested questions, which include the following. (Use information from the FULL VERSION to answer the questions.) Obviously, the "killer question" is Felicity's.

- Does Kelly Boggs resent the Vice-Principal who gave her the detention?
- Where does Harry Dinker get his costumes?
- When Felicity Crump visits her little nippers in the slammer do they ever give HER presents?
- Does Reggie have a will and what does it say? Is the Diamond insured?
- What's a Vegas wedding like anyway, Daphne?
- Does Basil ever play Platski? And what WAS the story about the microwave and the poodle?

3. Ballots. Copies of these will be sent with the DIAMOND Production Package.

At the end of this section, audience members will cast their ballots for the suspect they think is guilty. Directions for voting are included with the Production Packet.

AGAIN, THE SOLUTION SCENE IS NOT INCLUDED IN REVIEW SCRIPTS. IF YOU ABSOLUTELY MUST HAVE THE ENTIRE ACTING COPY BEFORE MAKING A DECISION ABOUT PRODUCING, PLEASE CONTACT US:

330-678-3893

info@mysteriesbymoushey.com

PROPS, COSTUMES, TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

large purse for FELICITY

Platski stone for FELICITY'S purse (put it in before solution scene)

sound system or karaoke machine with microphone for gypsy music, DAPHNE'S intro, and FELICITY'S last line.

taped gypsy music

KELLY BOGGS detecting kit - include anything you like. Must have rubber tubing, brush, small jar with fingerprint "dust" (we used talcum powder), rubber gloves. We also had kitchen tongs, a test tube, tweezers of various sizes, goggles, magnifying glass, plastic straws, eyedropper, some dental instruments, etc. For the kit itself we used a tool bag with side pockets.

Something diamond size for slipper sock - we used an apple.

Yarn and knitting for FELICITY, including an oversize sock (Carvin Marvin's slipper sock)

Costume disguise kit for HARRY. Must have maintenance man gear (overalls, wig, thick glasses) gypsy costume (tight pants, pirate shirt, sash, kerchief for head), Mexican (sombbrero, fake mustache/beard, poncho), Arab (tunic with banded headpiece, sunglasses) French (beret, striped shirt, neckerchief). Other things for the "kit" can include glasses w/fake nose, grey wig, clown wig/nose, cowboy hat/vest, priest, anything else you can find. . . Also need an

eye pencil so he can draw on 1/2 of his moustache.

Wig and gypsy costume for FELICITY

Black bow ties and top hats for DAPHNE'S DANDIES (Full Version)

Typed Questions for audience "plants"

Rocking chair

Hopeless Diamond & display (we used a pedestal with a mirror tile on top, with the Diamond on a small stand covered by velvet draping. For the Diamond itself, we used a large (4"x5") glass paperweight. It's got to be large enough to be visible to the audience.)

Violin (for HARRY) and case (for BASIL)

Gun for FELICITY (does not need to fire.)

Bloodied shirt for REGGIE, identical to the one he wears earlier. This one has a gash in the front, which is saturated with stage blood. We usually do this ahead of time so that it's dry - will still look wet and avoids the mess when putting it on. (Full Version). OR Dirtied shirt (Mini Version)

Knife effect for REGGIE. (Full Version) The knife effect is made by breaking/sawing off the all but 4 inches from the handle of a large knife. One-half inch of the remaining blade is then hammered and glued into a thin 6x6 piece of wood. REGGIE, during his change, switches shirts and stuffs the knife effect under his shirt, so the handle and part of the blade should stick out of the prepared bloodied shirt described above.

Something for body removal (Full Version). See Production Manual.

INCLUDED IN PRODUCTION PACKET – sent electronically.

Clue Packets with Answer key and flow chart

Blank flow chart to help in making your own clue hunt.

2 different ballot samples (to be used instead of full solution). Suitable for copying.

A "clean copy" of newspaper clue for you to photocopy.

2 sample printed programs, including 1 with Diamond history

Production Manual (The same for all shows.)

OPTION

For a small fee, we can send everything in the Production Packet in printed format.

Similarly, we can send a set of business cards for everyone, suitable for copying or printing.