

TILL DEATH DO THEM PART



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TILL DEATH DO THEM PART

3

TILL DEATH DO THEM PART was first performed at Nottingham High School, Hamilton, NJ, Nov. 16, 2012: Mike Steele, director.

HELGA: Joely DeMonte

ANNA: Shawntaya Hightower

MICHAEL: Kevin Moffatt

SIMONE: Roberto Salas

MAUDE: Tataniqua Glover

QUAGMIRE: Robert Salay

IVAN: Joey Donnoli

TRUDY: Mia Salenetri

DRAGONFLY: Cynthia Pierre

BARBARA: Elizabeth Clifford

ROXIE: Rachel Vause

BILLY RAY: Derek Jovain

VIVIAN: Tricia-Rae Parent

JOE: Caleb Riggins

MR. GIGGLES: Chris Palmer

PENELOPE: Carly Goldman

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Tim Rohdes

NATHAN: Christos Nyktas

WEDDING GUESTS: Adrianna Cheeks, Robin Clifford, Rachel Radler, Alex Riccardi, Tim Rohdes, and Mckenzie Scarpati.

TILL DEATH DO THEM PART

INTERACTIVE MYSTERY/FARCE. No doubt about it...this is definitely the worst wedding day in the history of mankind. There are feuding relatives, a dropped wedding cake, a few earthquakes...and then the bride and all of her wedding guests are murdered during the ceremony. And even worse, an apocalypse has trapped all of the survivors inside including the murderer. Luckily, the minister also happens to be a private investigator because someone has to figure out this whodunit before all the remaining wedding guests are murdered. Suspects include a community theatre actor dressed as an alien, a silent butler, a roller-skating clown, a wannabe rapper, a hippie, a makeup saleswoman, a bodybuilder, an overly confident singer, a frazzled wedding planner, an insulting housekeeper, and a woman who thinks she's attending a Charleston dance competition. This madcap, interactive murder-mystery will have your audiences laughing all the way to the end...the end of the world, that is!

Performance Time: Approximately 100-120 minutes.

CHARACTERS

(4 M, 7 F, 7 flexible, extras)

- HELGA/HENRY:** Nasty owner of a mansion; dressed elegantly, wears a wristwatch and carries a pocketbook; flexible.
- ANNA:** Beautiful bride; wears a wedding gown and has a cone-shaped updo hairstyle; female.
- PENELOPE:** Anna's bitter sister who used to date Michael; dressed entirely in a black outfit with no pockets and wears dark lipstick; female.
- MICHAEL:** Groom and wannabe rapper; wears an untied tie and a tuxedo modified with bling to reflect his hip hop passions; male.
- BILLY RAY:** Michael's father, the town's womanizing mayor; wears a tuxedo; male.
- ROXIE:** Billy Ray's girlfriend, a dimwitted woman; wears a dress that shows off her curves; female.
- VIVIAN:** Michael's mother, a loony woman who thinks she lives in the 1920s and is attending a Charleston dance competition; wears a flapper dress and carries a pocketbook; female.
- DRAGONFLY:** Michael's older sister, a free-spirited barefoot hippie; wears denim jeans, a vest, a headband and a scarf with a designer tag on it; has ragged hair and wears little makeup; female.
- IVAN/IVANNA:** Michael's older brother/sister, a buff but meek bodybuilder; wears a tank top and exercise shorts; flexible.
- SIMONE:** Fabulous wedding planner; wears a business suit or other professional attire that has pockets to pull items out of; flexible.
- MAUDE/MANUEL:** Insulting housekeeper; wears a housekeeper's uniform that has pockets to pull items out of; flexible.
- QUAGMIRE:** Quiet butler; wears a butler's uniform; male.
- TRUDY:** Obnoxious Mavon Makeup saleswoman; wears a skirt, thick makeup, and carries a pocketbook; female.
- BARBARA:** Overly confident singer with a high-pitched voice; wears a flamboyant dress and carries a pocketbook; female.
- JOE/JOSEPHINE:** Loud and pushy workaholic; wears a dress shirt and pants and should have pockets to pull items out of; flexible.
- MR./MRS. GIGGLES:** Roller-skating circus clown who loves to laugh; wears a clown costume with a flower that squirts water pinned to the lapel, clown makeup, and roller skates; costume should have pockets large enough to pull items out of; flexible.

Till Death Do Them Part

6

RADIO ANNOUNCER: Radio news announcer; flexible. Note: dialogue can be pre-recorded or actor can voice the lines live from offstage.

NATHAN: Community theater actor; has green skin and antennae on his head; wears an alien costume with pockets large enough to pull items out of; male.

EXTRAS: As Wedding Guests.

NOTE: For flexible roles, change the script accordingly. If Mr. Giggles is played as Mrs. Giggles, the line "Cousin Donald? The one who ran off..." should be changed to, "Cousin Donna? The one who ran off..."

Setting

Helga's mansion.

Set

Mansion living room. DSR is a set of double doors that serve as the mansion's main entrance. These double doors lead to a front porch. A standing coat rack is next to the DSR doors. USR is a staircase with a banister that leads to an unseen second floor, which contains the grand ballroom, bedrooms, and other unspecified rooms. A table that holds a chocolate fountain, a stack of napkins, a radio, a vase with flowers in it, and a newspaper is positioned against the staircase CSR. A tablecloth, which hangs to the floor, covers the table. USL is an archway that leads to a hallway, which contains an unseen bathroom and other unspecified rooms. DSL is a door that leads to an unseen kitchen. Two rows of benches are positioned CSL. A statue that resembles Helga is against the wall between the SL exits.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1: Michael and Anna's wedding day.

Scene 2: Later that day.

Intermission

ACT II

Scene 1: Later that day.

Scene 2: Much later that day.

PROPS

Wristwatch, for Helga	Newspaper
Pocketbook, for Helga	Handkerchief
Cell phone, for Maude	Shopping list
Serving tray	Can of whipped cream
Glasses of "champagne"	Bowl of candied cherries
Plate of sweets for dipping in chocolate fountain	Rope
Purse, for Trudy	Roll of masking tape
Nail file	Skin-soothing lotion
Mavon Makeup catalog	Eye shadow
Scarf with designer tag	Nail polish remover
2 Perfume atomizers	Lip liner
Sunglasses, for Trudy	Uninflated balloon
Purse, for Trudy	Songbook
Purse, for Barbara	Teapot
Purse, for Vivian	Handgun
Chocolate fountain	Tablecloth
Napkins	Balloon filled with water
Business cards	Tissues covered in "blood"
Clergy collar	Pen
Squeeze horn	Liquid blush
Quarter	Tiered wedding cake with butter cream frosting
Bridal bouquet	Tissues
Radio	Bottle of "champagne"
Cell phone, for Simone	Bucket filled with "liquid chocolate" (chocolate syrup, etc.)
Laser gun	Vase with flowers in it
Pitch pipe	
Rubber chicken	

SPECIAL EFFECTS

Doorbell

Cell phone ring

Rumbling noise

Electric buzz

Gunshots

Fake blood

Lightning

Thunder

U.F.O. blasting off

Cone-shaped hairstyle for Anna. (Can be created by pinning a Styrofoam cone under the actress' hair)

Barbara is struck by lightning. (Have a stage crew member stand offstage near the DSR exit with black powdered makeup and a large sponge. After Barbara steps offstage, the lights flash, and makeup can be applied in one quick motion with a sponge, making her face look charred.)

Blood dripping from victims' foreheads. (The actors can each carry a small vial of stage blood in their pockets that they can remove in the dark and pour on their foreheads. The actors can return the empty vials to their pockets before the lights come on.)

NOTE: For safety, keep a rag onstage so that any stage blood, foods, or liquids that land on the floor can be promptly cleaned by Maude and/or Quagmire.

Audience Interaction

The audience interacts with the character of Joe throughout the play. Whenever Joe claps his hands to stop or start time, a lighting change and/or sound should be used to indicate to the audience that time has been altered. Whether the actor allows the audience to call out, or whether he requires individual audience members to raise their hands to answer his questions, is up to the director. The actor playing Joe may need to coax the audience to respond.

Toward the end of Act II, scene 1, the audience has the opportunity to interrogate the characters with Joe's assistance. Joe asks the audience if they have any questions that they think should be asked of the suspects. Joe should control which audience members ask their questions and write these questions on a napkin. The actors onstage then improvise a short segment as Joe asks the questions that have been written on the napkin. This improvisation can be a lot of fun for both the actors and the audience, but the director should make sure that the cast is well prepared. During the rehearsal process, the director can feed questions to the actors that the audience might ask. The number of questions that Joe gathers is up to the director. Popular questions may include, "Why doesn't Quagmire speak?" "Why did Billy Ray and Vivian divorce?" and "Why is Ivan such a wimp?" In the original production, eight to 10 questions were gathered at each performance, creating an improvisation segment that lasted roughly 10 minutes.

If desired, this improvisation segment may be removed from the play. Barbara's line, "Some investigator. You haven't figured out who murdered anyone yet. Why should any of us listen to you?" can be followed directly by Joe's line, "My money is still on Penelope." The scene can then continue as written.

**"THE WORLD SHOULD
JUST HURRY UP AND END ALREADY
BECAUSE I CAN'T HANDLE
YA PEOPLE NO LONGER."**

—Maude

ACT I

SCENE 1

(AT RISE: Mansion living room, Michael and Anna's wedding day, 40 minutes before the wedding. Helga enters via the stairs USR. She drags Anna on. Anna is wearing a wedding gown and her hair is in a cone-shaped updo. Anna struggles to escape Helga's grasp.)

HELGA: If that low-down scum of a man thinks he's going to lay one eye on you before the ceremony, he's got another thing coming. Who does he think he is...trying to talk to you on your wedding day? Michael just wants a sneak peek of his bride-to-be.

ANNA: But, Mother—

HELGA: Did I give you permission to speak? Doesn't that little vagabond know anything about wedding superstitions? Seeing you in your gown before you walk down the aisle is bad luck. He's asking for a disaster to occur. *(Anna escapes Helga's grasp and heads toward the USL exit. Helga grabs Anna and pulls her back.)* And I'll eat my head if that boy makes a disaster out of my special day... *(Realizes.)* ...I mean, my precious daughter's special day. There are already enough disasters in this wedding to begin with. The groom is a disaster. The groom's family is a disaster. And your hair is a disaster. Why you chose an updo is beyond me.

ANNA: But, Mother—

HELGA: Quiet! I know Michael likes your hair up. Well, why does Michael get a say in anything? You know I despise him and his entire family. He only wants to marry you because you're rich. *(Anna escapes Helga's grasp and heads toward the USL exit. Helga grabs Anna and pulls her back.)* Oh, no, you don't, Anna. Whatever Michael wants to talk about can wait until after the ceremony. This is going to be a traditional wedding with traditional traditions. I'll see to it, no matter what I have to do. *(Anna escapes Helga's grasp and heads toward the USL exit. Helga grabs Anna and pulls her back.)* When your father passed away, I was left to care for two children on my own. I did the best I could. I thought I raised you the right way...the proper way. I thought I taught you to be the kind of girl who would always obey her mother's wishes... *(Anna escapes Helga's grasp and heads toward the USL exit. Helga grabs Anna and pulls her back.)* ...the kind of girl who would always make the right

decisions... *(Anna escapes Helga's grasp and heads toward the USL exit. Helga grabs Anna and pulls her back.)* ...the wise decisions. *(Anna escapes Helga's grasp and heads toward the USL exit. Helga grabs Anna and pulls her back.)* And now, I hardly recognize you...partly due to that horrid updo. But mostly because a nincompoop has completely warped your once-innocent spirit. Look at you: my precious daughter...a beautiful bride. I've never been so ashamed. You're even more of a disgrace than your rotten sister. It's a good thing you chose me to be your matron of honor. Someone has to help you make proper bridal decisions.

ANNA: But, Mother—

HELGA: All right, I chose to be your matron of honor, but you would have chosen me anyway.

MICHAEL: *(Offstage USL.)* Yo, yo, yo! Anna!

(Anna escapes Helga's grasp and heads toward the USL exit. Simone enters DSL. Simone grabs Anna and pulls her back.)

SIMONE: *(To Anna.)* Hey there, darlin'. Don't make any harsh movements. You don't want to ruin your fabulous hair.

HELGA: Ruin it. Then we can start from scratch.

SIMONE: *(To Anna, indicating Helga.)* Oh, she doesn't mean that, darlin'. She's just joshing you. You love Anna's hair, don't you, Helga? I set it myself when the hairstylist phoned that she couldn't make it. The top skill a wedding planner can possess is the ability to improvise.

HELGA: It looks like she got her head stuck in a parking cone, Simone.

SIMONE: Now, Helga, we simply had to pin all of that hair up. It couldn't be down in Anna's face. The temperature outside is warmish for this time of year. She would be sweating worse than a Canadian on an African safari.

HELGA: This is a wedding. No one cares how the bride feels. They care about how she looks. And this one looks like she's been forced to wear a dunce cap. *(Looks at her wristwatch.)* But I guess it's too late to change her hair now. The wedding is set to begin in 42 minutes, and you know how my family is...punctual, punctual, punctual. We always arrive at events exactly on time.

SIMONE: Everything's almost ready, darlin'. I know you've decided to invite only family members to this small, private wedding, but have no fear, the day will be hugely fabulous.

HELGA: It had better be. If you ruin my special day... *(Realizes.)* ...I mean, my precious daughter's special day, I'll sue you for everything you're worth.

(Maude enters DSL, talking on a cell phone. Quagmire follows behind, carrying a tray. He places the tray on the table CSR. On the tray are glasses of champagne and a plate of sweets that can be dipped into the chocolate fountain.)

MAUDE: *(Into cell phone.)* Look, Vinnie, I want ya to put the body in the trunk... *(Notices others onstage.)* ...I mean, I want ya to drop off some extra air-fresheners. The bathroom smells like a skunk. *(To others.)* We're all out of toilet bowl disinfectant. *(Into cell phone, stage whisper.)* And don't forget to tie it up nice and secure. *(Hangs up.)*

HELGA: Is the caterer in the kitchen preparing dinner, Maude?

MAUDE: There wasn't no one in there but me and Quagmire. I may keep this place spick and span but ya know I ain't no cook.

SIMONE: *(To Helga.)* I'm sorry to report that the caterer hasn't arrived yet.

HELGA: Simone, you know that tardiness disgusts me. And when I get disgusted, my actions become disgusting. The caterer had better get here in a jiffy. I've hired you to plan my special day... *(Realizes.)* ...I mean, my precious daughter's special day. It's all about what she wants. So see to it that things go my way.

SIMONE: I'll try calling the caterer again...and the minister, wedding singer, and organist. They haven't arrived yet, either.

HELGA: No hairdresser, no caterer, no minister, no wedding singer, no organist. Who, out of the staff you've enlisted, is present?

SIMONE: Why, darlin', I'm here...your fabulous wedding planner. I'm all you need.

HELGA: This wedding smells like a disaster waiting to happen. And if my smelling senses sense smell correctly, and you ruin this wedding, my lawyer will get a phone call.

SIMONE: Don't worry. All will go as planned.

HELGA: Quagmire, bring the sculpted-ice swan inside. With the heat we're having, the front porch will be a giant wading pool by

the time all of the guests arrive. I think an ice sculpture would fare better upstairs in the grand ballroom. *(Quagmire slowly points to DSR doors.)* Yes, the ice sculpture on the front porch. Bring it around the exterior of the mansion and into the kitchen through the back door so you don't track melting swan through my beautiful living room. You can figure out how to get it upstairs later. Maude, help him. And then shine the replica of me, over there. *(Indicates SL statue that resembles herself.)* I want guests to ogle over the gorgeous creature who owns this mansion.

MAUDE: What do we look like to ya...servants?

HELGA: That's exactly what you look like. I pay you a fair weekly wage to keep the mansion in tip-top shape, so I expect it to be in tip-top shape. Now chop-chop, tip-top, move the swan before it melts. I don't want the porch to look like a swampy mess.

MAUDE: *(Under her breath, indicating Helga.)* Your face looks like a swampy mess.

HELGA: Did you say something?

MAUDE: Nope. *(Maude and Quagmire give each other a high-five. Shouts.)* To the front porch, Quagmire!

(Maude and Quagmire exit DSR.)

MICHAEL: *(Offstage USL.)* Yo, yo, yo! Anna!

(Anna heads toward the USL exit. Simone catches Anna and pulls her back.)

SIMONE: No, no, no! Darlin', you stay here. We don't want Michael to snatch a glimpse.

HELGA: Listen to orders, Anna, just like you've been trained to do.

SIMONE: And you just take yourself a big old chill pill, Helga. Keep calm and let me see if I can get a hold of that caterer. *(Heads toward USL exit.)*

MICHAEL: *(Offstage USL.)* Yo, yo, yo! Anna!

(Simone notices Michael about to enter USL.)

SIMONE: The groom is coming! Quick! Hide the bride!

(Helga grabs Anna and drags her toward the stairs USR.)

HELGA: Bring her into the library. Her future husband is too dimwitted to ever enter a room full of books.

(Simone grabs Anna and drags her toward the DSR doors.)

SIMONE: Bring her onto the porch. She can help carry the ice sculpture.

(Helga drags Anna toward the stairs USR.)

HELGA: My precious daughter will not lift a finger.

(Simone drags Anna toward the doors DSR.)

SIMONE: The ice sculpture isn't that heavy. It's probably already melted a little, so it's even lighter than you'd think.

(Helga drags Anna toward the stairs USR.)

HELGA: I don't care. My precious daughter deserves to be treated like the delicate flower that she is.

MICHAEL: *(Offstage USL.)* Yo, Anna,
It's your precious boo,
And I really want
To talk to you.

(Helga shoves Anna onto the floor behind a bench CSL. Helga and Simone stand in front of the bench, blocking Anna from sight.)

ANNA: But, Mother—

HELGA: You do not have my permission to speak, Anna! *(Michael and Ivan enter USL. Michael is wearing an untied tie around his neck. To Michael.)* What do you want, you street rat?

MICHAEL: Was that my pretty bride's
Happy voice that I heard?
The sound so melodic,
Like the song of a bird.

SIMONE: Anna's voice? I don't think so, darlin'. Anna's not down here.

(Anna pops her head up from behind the bench. Helga pushes it back down.)

HELGA: *(To Michael.)* You must be hearing things in that schizophrenic brain of yours.

IVAN: Hey, now. That isn't a very nice thing to say. You could have hurt my little brother's feelings. Seeing other people's feelings get hurt makes me feel sad inside.

MICHAEL: *(To Helga.)* You can't make me cry,
You can't make me break,
It's just the absence of my bride
That makes my heart ache.

SIMONE: How poetic.

IVAN: How sweet.

HELGA: How perverse. My precious daughter may fall for your silly rhymes, Michael, but you can't butter me up with poor poetry.

MICHAEL: A rapper can't keep
His poetry bent.
A rapper must rap
One hundred percent.

HELGA: You aren't a rapper...at least, not a talented one. You will never be a successful hip hopper. You are just as delusional as your whackadoodle mother.

(Ivan gasps.)

IVAN: *(To Michael, indicating Helga.)* Oh, no, she didn't!

MICHAEL: *(To Helga.)* You can talk about my looks,
You can talk about my drama,
But I'm warnin' you right now,
Don't be talkin' 'bout my mama!

SIMONE: I'm a little out of the loop here. *(To Helga.)* What's wrong with Michael's mother?

HELGA: Let's just say she's a blast from the past. You know, Michael, I only hope your marriage with my precious daughter sires no children. Your DNA is contaminated and should not be mixed with the purity of ours.

IVAN: There's nothing wrong with our family's genetics. *(Indicates Michael.)* My little brother is as cute as a button. And I'm pretty strong, if I do say so myself. I lift weights six days a week and

guzzle protein powder by the gallon. Look at how cut my biceps
are today. (*Flexes biceps.*)

MICHAEL: Our family's got talent

What can I say?

My brother's gonna win

A strongman competition one day.

[END OF FREEVIEW]